

# The Effect of Workload and Work Stress on Employees' Work Motivation and Productivity in a Manufacturing Company

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## Abstract

Manufacturing companies belong to a huge industry that needs long working hours to sustain high demand of production and customer needs. They experience a high absentee rate that affects the production, efficiency, and key performance indicator of the company due to some factors. The identified factors that result in the high absentee rate are workload, work stress and work motivation. This research focused on assessing employees' perception on their current workload and work stress and determined if these have significant effects on their work motivation and productivity. The researcher employed a descriptive-causal research design and gathered data using survey questionnaires from 125 employees of ink head section in ABC Manufacturing Company. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the perception of the respondent employees on their level of workload, work stress, work motivation, and productivity while multiple linear regression was done to test the effect of workload and work stress on work motivation and on productivity. The study found that workload and work stress do not significantly affect work motivation while work stress does not significantly affect productivity. Results also revealed that workload and work motivation significantly affect productivity. The proposed strategic management plan is an application system that monitors the output of each operation in a period of time which will help to improve processes, employee's motivation, and productivity.

Keywords: Workload; Work Stress; Work Motivation; Productivity; Manufacturing

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## 1. Introduction

Workloads and work stress are inevitable that can cause burnout to employees and be unproductive in their work in various industries. However, workloads may vary in the field that employees are working on. Work-related stress arises when work demands exceed the person's capacity and capability. Thus, it is a growing problem around the world that does not only affect the health condition of employees but also the productivity of the organizations (Department of Health & Human Services, 2001).

The workload is the amount of work that was assigned to or from a worker in a specified period of time. It is also defined as the perceived relationship between the amount of mental processing capability or resources

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that is required to complete a task. Employees workload also refers to the intensity of assignments (Inegbedion, et. al., 2020). According to Greenwood (2017), workload can take a heavy toll on employees in the workplace that has negative effects like debilitating stress, illness, and mood disorder. It can also lead to burnout when the employee has a little control on overwhelming workload that employers tend to lose their talented staff. In addition, the increase in workload includes multiple responsibilities and task that can increase errors and be less productive at work on which the overall quality of work is reflected because it makes it harder for the employees to pay close attention and lose their focus on their given task. As a result, it could also lead to the employee's dissatisfaction, employee churn and increased absenteeism (Benenden Health, n.d.). According to Picincu (2021), heavy workloads have a negative impact on the employee relationship, teamwork and decision making that they may lose motivation, have difficulty in time completing their task, and engage in conflicts.

Work stress is defined as a challenging combination of physical and emotional responses to work-related pressures and job demands (White, 2022). However, there are common sources of work stress such as environmental stress, job uncertainty, issues related to coworkers and performance pressure. Environmental stress is related to physical environment or the workplace in which the employees are working while there is a job uncertainty when employees does not know about where they stand at their jobs. Also, issues related to coworkers are a source of work-related stress due to difficulty of coping with co-workers, other poor leaders, and ineffective bosses. Performance pressure in order to produce certain quality and quantity if work or product can also be a work-related stressor. However, there is also a positive stress called Eustress on which this type of stress results from something positive like taking a vacation, getting a new job or even riding a rollercoaster and has a positive impact on emotional well-being and can even increase productivity (Chang, 2022). Some examples of Eustress at work are taking on a new project that will encourage employees and requires them to improve existing or new skills. But work-related projects will only make eustress if it is challenging yet realistic and if the deadlines are unrealistically tight, juggling numerous projects (unrealistic workload) or working with a toxic team culture, employees are more likely to experience distress and negative consequences (Lindberg, 2019). On the other hand, signs or symptoms of work-related stress can be physical, psychological and behavioural. Behavioural symptoms include an increase in sick days or absenteeism, aggression, a drop in work performance, diminished creativity and initiative, mood swings and irritability problems with interpersonal relationships, disinterest, lower tolerance of frustration, and impatience and isolation (Department of Health & Human Services, 2001).

Excessive workload and work stress may lead to poor work motivation and hence lower productivity if not properly managed. According to Oboreh, et. al. (2016), employees who are under stress are much less motivated to give their energy into continuous improvement initiatives and creative problem solving. However, when an employee is experiencing negative work-related stress it will reduce productivity. It is difficult for the employee to work to a maximum level and takes longer time to complete tasks if stress and fatigue prolonged on which it results to suffer the employee's quantity and quality of work. Thus, it lowers the productivity level of the company (Sahoo, 2016). It is important for companies to find ways to help the employees manage their workload, reduce their stress and keep them motivated since poor motivation leads to lower productivity.

Work motivation energizes, pushes, and inspires employees, which is an element for a self-motivated and successful workplace. Motivation increases efficiency and innovativeness in the workplace, increases job satisfaction and job security, and helps the company to sustain in challenging situations (Jaiswal, 2022). Generating high level employee motivation in production will increase the number of products produced, reduces the occurrence of quality control issues and minimizes downtime that results to employees retain in the company in a long-term span and helps the company to reduce costs associated with training new and recruiting employees (Starkey, 2022). However, stress and lack of motivation affect most of the population

and also the main reasons for sick leave causing instability within the companies and economic losses (Hensel, 2019).

The manufacturing company is one of the industries that requires a production target that leads to a higher workload to sustain and maintain customer satisfaction in a given time which determines the work stress risk level (Kusuma, et. al., 2022). The most source of stress is the qualitative workload on which it needs to reduce on employees in the manufacturing industry and make improvements in productivity in the company. Meanwhile, the absence rate has also an impact on the productivity in a company and included in the key performance indicator (KPI) of the company. According to McAsey (2017), the major cause of absenteeism and presentism of employees is stress which means the workplace is understaffed and unproductive that results in a negative impact for the manufacturing company. It can also make employees more prone to cause accidents. Knowing the factors and causes of stress in manufacturing employees could be a key part of absence management, help business stress management, and provide a healthier and safer workplace.

Long working hours are needed in the manufacturing industry to sustain the high demand for products. However, according to Sari, et. al. (2021), long working and non-standard working hours have greatly contributed to work stress on which the study suggests that companies must review employees' working hours to a duration that the workers improve productivity. If the stress level can be measured, it could help to assess the stress level that can increase worker productivity.

The manufacturing industry is a huge part of the economy that needs long working hours to be able to sustain the demand of its customers. However, there were instances that the working hours are not enough to achieve the target output that results in an extension of hours at work. Manufacturing companies like ABC Manufacturing exercise compressed working schedule to sustain the demands of the customers. The ABC manufacturing company is well known for its quality printer products around the world. However, it experienced a high absentee rate and absence without official leave that affect the production and KPI of the company, especially in one of their sections.

The ink head section produces the expensive part of the printer that is composed of office staff, operators, and technician. Office staffs monitor the status and ensure that the production line has enough stocks and is in good condition, conducts line audit and monitors its manpower. They are also responsible for giving instructions and disseminating important announcements related to the product and HR announcements. However, operators do the assembling process of raw materials to produce finished goods while the technician conducts repair and assembles workbench needed in the production.

As observed in the section, there is an occurrence of high absentee rate (Figure 1) that causes the reduction of the number of production lines that eventually results to decreasing output quantity of products (Figure 2). Figure 1 shows the production manpower attendance rate in ink head section while in Figure 2 is their corresponding production output. The decrease in output quantity affects sustaining the demand of the customers in which the section extends its working hours that results to not achieving the section's target efficiency. This section is unable to achieve its target output and accomplish their task that results in having a work schedule during rest days just to recover their stocks and able to supply the demand for the products. Thus, it leads to employees' burnout and stress at work. Burnout and stress, excessive workloads, and lack of motivation may affect the quality of work of employees and produce defective products. These defective products will cause losses in the company's profit.

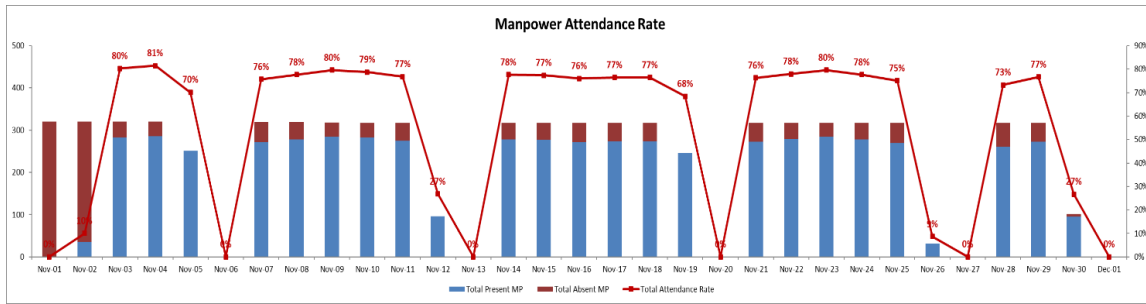


Figure 1. Production Manpower Attendance Rate

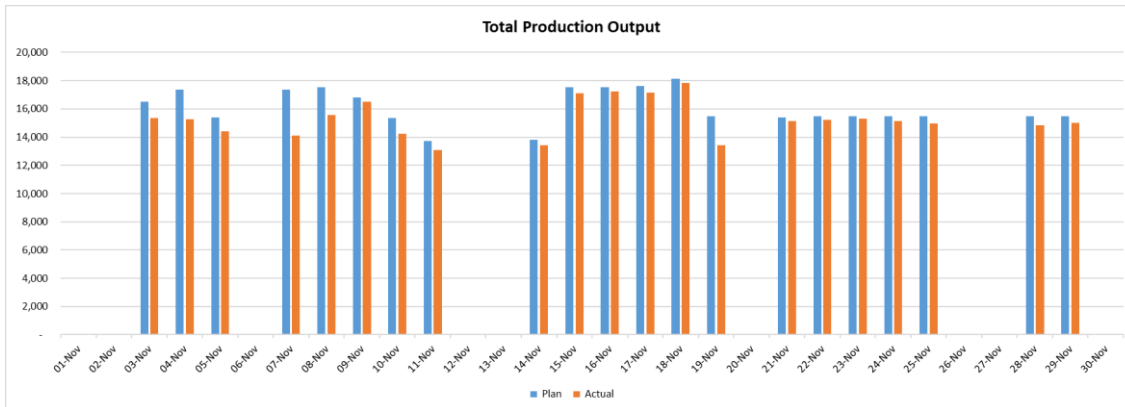


Figure 2. Production Output

Based on the problems identified in ABC Manufacturing Company specifically in ink head section, the researcher deemed it necessary to determine how employees in production perceive the workload and work stress that are currently being experienced in the company and if their perception of their current workload and work stress significantly affects their work motivation and productivity.

The study will be beneficial to ABC Manufacturing Company in assessing if the workload and stress have effects on the employees' work motivation and productivity. Thus, it will help the company to formulate improvements and provide strategic plans for handling its employees. As under UN SDG's Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being, it is necessary for the company to sustain good health among its employees. This study helped the company to determine factors that affect the employees' health and provide such activities to keep the employees' health in good condition while working in the company. Moreover, this study is also in line with UN SDG's Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth on which it helped the company to create a fulfilling job and promote innovation to increase the employees' productivity.

### 1.1 Conceptual Framework

This research study was anchored on the study of Astria Semaksiani, Agung Wahyu Handaru, and Mohamad Rizan (2019) entitled, "The Effect of Work Loads and Work Stress on Motivation of Work Productivity (Empirical Case Study of Ink-Producing Companies)". The study analyzed the effect of workload and influence of motivation on the employees, effect of workload and motivation on productivity and influence of motivation on productivity as shown in Figure 3.

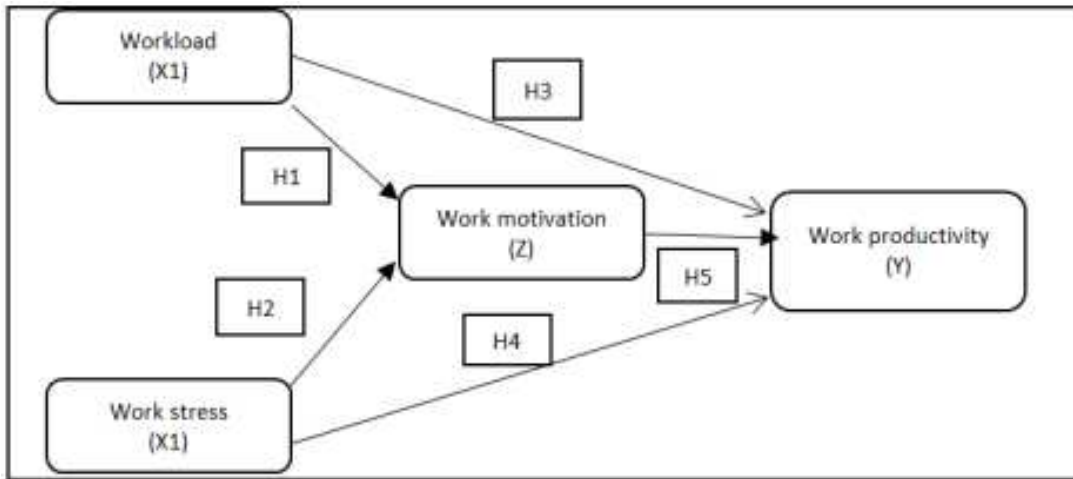


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

Source: "The Effect of Work Loads and Work Stress on Motivation of Work Productivity (Empirical Case Study of Ink-Producing Companies)" (Semaksiani, Wahyu Handaru, & Mohamad Rizan, 2019).

The research study was conducted on 147 employees at PT. Sumber Harapan, a supplier of dataprint ink content located on the street of Garuda No. 12, Kemoyoran, Central Jakarta. However, the researcher used Lisrel tool to saturated sample as their sample technique and SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) as their data analysis technique. The independent variables are workload, work stress, and work motivation while the dependent variables are work motivation and productivity. However, work motivation serves as an independent variable in relation to productivity while it is a dependent variable in relation to workload and work stress. Based on the study of Semaksiani, et. al. (2019), workload has a negative effect on motivation on employees because the workload is considered as somewhat that burdens employees that results to decreased work motivation. However, it also has a negative effect on productivity on which it depends on the employee's insight on workload, but when employees see workload as a challenge it will increase productivity. Work stress also has a negative effect on motivation and productivity, in which stress arises when employees did not meet the demand of their jobs, increases the absenteeism and decreased productivity. Meanwhile, motivation has a positive effect on productivity.

## 1.2 Operational Framework

This study adopted the framework of Semaksiani, et. al. (2019) as illustrated in Figure 4. It measured the perception of ink head section operators of ABC Manufacturing Company related to workload, work stress, motivation, and productivity. This study measured their perception towards workload by means of work or tasks given while work stress was measured through their perception on the factors that contribute to work stress. This study also measured work motivation through their perception towards work motivation and productivity through their perception on productivity.

Specifically, the study ascertained the independent variables workload and work stress affect work motivation while independent variables workload, work stress and work motivation affect work productivity.

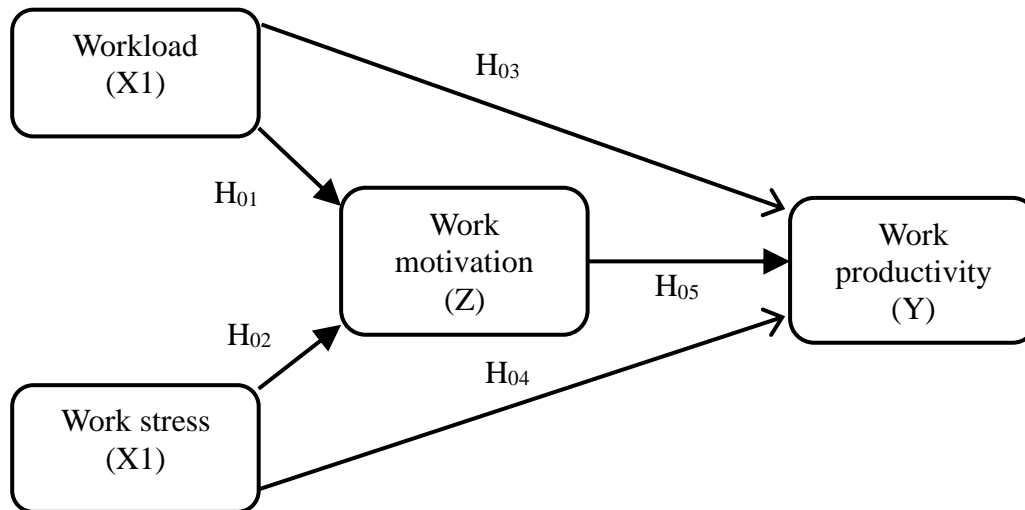


Figure 4. Operational Framework

### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

In general, this study aimed to evaluate the perception of workload, work stress, work motivation and productivity in the Ink Head Section of ABC manufacturing company. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. determine the effects of workloads and work stress to employee work motivation.
2. determine the effects of workloads and work stress to employee work productivity.
3. determine the effect of work motivation to employee work productivity.
4. provide a strategic management plan that will keep the work productivity of employees.

### 1.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study to address the objectives of the study:

- H<sub>01</sub>: Workload has no significant effect on employee work motivation.  
 H<sub>02</sub>: Work stress has no significant effect on employee work motivation.  
 H<sub>03</sub>: Workload has no significant effect on employee work productivity.  
 H<sub>04</sub>: Work stress has no significant effect on work productivity.  
 H<sub>05</sub>: Work motivation has no significant effect on work productivity.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Research Design

The research employed descriptive-causal research design. It described the effect of workload, work stress and work motivation of employees on productivity.

### 2.2 Locale of the Study

This research chose the ink head section as the locale of the study. This study was conducted to be able to

determine the factors that cause high occurrence of absence rate. Also, it assessed the employee's perception of such factors as workload, work stress and work motivation that affect an employee's productivity. Thus, the study was conducted to the operators on Ink Head Section since it has the highest contributor of absentees.

### 2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the operators both male and female with an age ranging from 18 and above 25 years old in the ink head section in ABC Manufacturing Company located in Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

### 2.4. Sampling Design

Using G-Power, with an effect size of 0.15 with parameters of F test family, linear multiple regression, an error probability of 0.05 and predictors of 3, a minimum sample size of 119 was required for the study. However, the study used 125 samples to reflect the characteristics of the population in a well-represented manner.

### 2.5 Research Tools and Instruments

The survey instrument used is adopted from the studies of H. H. D. P. Jayani Opatha and K. I. Ureshathe (2022) for workload, Eaviraj Nair (2020) for work stress, the study of Semaksiani, et. al. (2019) for work motivation, and the study of Jalal Rajeh Hanaysha (2016) for productivity (Appendix A). Upon tabulating the gathered data from 30 respondents in different manufacturing industry during the pilot testing, the variables included in the instrument specifically work stress, work motivation and productivity passed the reliability test with 0.833, 0.734, and 0.821 Cronbach alpha coefficients, respectively. However, the workload has a 0.627 Cronbach alpha coefficient which according to Daud, et. al. (2018) is accepted. Thus, Cronbach alpha values in the range of 0.60 – 0.80 are considered moderate, but acceptable, and values in the range of 0.8 – and up to 1.00 are considered very good.

The survey questionnaire consists of two (2) parts whereas Part I is about the profile of the surveyed employee then Part II is their perception about workload, work stress, work motivation and productivity. The workload variable was measured through the perception of employees on the amount of work or tasks while work stress variable was measured through the perception of employees on the factors which contribute to work stress. However, work motivation was measured through the perception of employees towards work motivation and productivity through perception employees on productivity. In order to measure the survey questionnaire, Likert scale was used in terms of level of agreement such as strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Likert scale was used in the survey research to measure the respondents attitude towards a certain subject (Elliott, 2021). Shown in Table 1 is the questionnaire specification.

Table 1.

Questionnaire Specification

| Part | Variable     | Item No. | Response                               |
|------|--------------|----------|--|
| I.   | Demographic  | 1 to 3   | -                                      |
| II.  | Workload     | 1 to 4   | Strongly Agree to<br>Strongly Disagree |
|      | Work Stress  | 5 to 13  | Strongly Agree to<br>Strongly Disagree |
|      | Motivation   | 14 to 20 | Strongly Agree to<br>Strongly Disagree |
|      | Productivity | 21 to 25 | Strongly Agree to<br>Strongly Disagree |

## 2.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Collection of data was administered on the second up to third week of May 2023. Survey questionnaires were distributed randomly to operators in Ink Head Section through pen and paper. However, the resulting data was analyzed via SPSS using multiple linear regression for null hypothesis 1, 2, 3 and 4 while linear regression for null hypothesis 5 stated on page 7 of this paper.

The statistical test used in the study describing the perception of the respondent employees on their level of workload, work stress, work motivation and productivity was by getting the mean and standard deviation. Table 2 shows the mean data analysis and interpretation as the mean score 3.01 - 4.00 are at a high level while mean scores 1.00 - 2.00 are at low level. However, the effect of workload and work stress on work motivation and on productivity was tested thru multiple linear regression while linear regression was used to test the effect of work motivation on productivity.

Table 2.

Mean Data Analysis and Interpretation

| Mean Score  | Interpretation |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1.00 – 2.00 | Low            |
| 2.01 – 3.00 | Moderate       |
| 3.01 – 4.00 | High           |

## 2.7 Ethical Considerations

The data gathered on this research project in the ABC manufacturing company were collected through a self-administered survey that each employee freely answered. A letter of consent was provided to each employee before conducting the survey to ensure and keep the confidentiality and privacy of an employee's information needed in the survey. In addition, this study has undergone an ethics review.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 presents the resulting mean of each variable of the study. It shows that the operators in ink head section have high level of perception towards work motivation ( $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = 0.42$ ) and productivity ( $M =$



3.05, SD = 0.43). It means that these factors can cause high absenteeism of operators in ink head section. Operators are not interested in competing to achieve the targets set by the company and their work outcomes are of high quality. Meanwhile, the perception level of operators towards workload ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ) and work stress ( $M = 2.69$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ) are moderate. It means that these factors can affect the operation and output of operators. The operators must have to go to the workplace even on holidays and have very long working hours to complete their job tasks and duties.

Table 3.

The Descriptive Statistics for the Variables of the Study

| Variables       | Mean | Standard Deviation | Interpretation |
|-----------------|------|--------------------|----------------|
| Workload        | 2.75 | 0.43               | Moderate       |
| Work Stress     | 2.69 | 0.47               | Moderate       |
| Work Motivation | 3.22 | 0.42               | High           |
| Productivity    | 3.05 | 0.43               | High           |

### 3.2 The Effect of Workload and Work Stress on Work Motivation

Table 4 presents the effect of workload and work stress on work motivation. Results showed that the effects are not significant for the workload ( $\beta = .411$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and work stress ( $\beta = .066$ ,  $p > .05$ ) respectively. Overall, the results of the regression indicated that workload and work stress explained 2.80% of the variance of work motivation ( $R^2 = .028$ ,  $F = 1.725$ ,  $.182$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

Table 4.

Effect of Workload and Work stress on Work Motivation

| Model                                  | Unstandardized Coefficients |             | Standardized Coefficients | T                       | Sig. | Interpretation  |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------|-----------------|
|  | B                           | Std. Error  | Beta                      |                         |      |                 |
| (Constant)                             | 2.993                       | .270        |                           | 11.083                  | .000 |                 |
| Workload                               | -.081                       | .099        | -.083                     | -.825                   | .411 | Not Significant |
| Work Stress                            | .169                        | .091        | .187                      | 1.857                   | .066 | Not Significant |
| a. Dependent Variable: Work Motivation |                             |             |                           |                         |      |                 |
| $R^2 = .028$                           |                             | $F = 1.725$ |                           | $p\text{-value} = .182$ |      |                 |

However, it can be noted that the results showed that workload negatively affects work motivation while work stress positively affects work motivation. This means that the higher the workload the lower the work motivation, while the higher the work stress, the higher the work motivation would be. According to Aliyyah, et. al. (2021), growing workload makes employees less accountable for work such as lack of self-development to improve performance and work that cannot be accomplished by the deadline. However, the work's performance is affected due to increasing workload without considering the capabilities or capacity of the employees resulting in a decrease in employee work motivation. Work stress comes about as a positive, can be vital for our lives and has a beneficial response like for example when we are experiencing a highly challenging situation, our body produces adrenaline that makes people alert and react or respond quickly (Walters, 2020). However, stress motivates the employees to get the work done when they are faced with an unexpected and looming deadline.

### 3.3. The Effect of Workload, Work stress and Work Motivation on Work Productivity

Table 5 presents the effect of workload, work stress and work motivation on Work Productivity. Further, such effect is significant for the workload ( $\beta = .002$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and work motivation ( $\beta = .000$ ,  $p < .05$ ) respectively. However, the effect is not significant for work stress ( $\beta = .484$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Overall, the results of the regression indicated that workload, work stress and work motivation explained 41.9 % of the variance of work motivation ( $R^2 = .419$ ,  $F = 29.080$ ,  $0, p < .05$ ).

Table 5.

Effect of Workload, Work stress and Work Motivation on Work Productivity

| Model           | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T     | Sig. | Interpretation  |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|-----------------|
|                 | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |                 |
| (Constant)      | .490                        | .303       |                           | 1.616 | .109 |                 |
| Workload        | .247                        | .078       | .248                      | 3.154 | .002 | Significant     |
| Work Stress     | -.051                       | .073       | -.056                     | -.702 | .484 | Not Significant |
| Work Motivation | .626                        | .072       | .613                      | 8.730 | .000 | Significant     |

a. Dependent Variable: Productivity

|              |              |                         |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| $R^2 = .419$ | $F = 29.080$ | $p\text{-value} = .000$ |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|

Results showed that workload positively affects work productivity while work stress negatively affects work productivity. However, work motivation positively affects work productivity. This means that the higher the workload the higher the work productivity. The operator's workload pertains to the given output quantity that needs to be achieved in a specified time which means that the higher output quantity needed the higher the productivity. According to Shah, et. al. (2011), workload is an opportunity for the employees to learn and prosper more quickly on which when they do their jobs, they gain more experience that enrich their exposure on which workload can be positive leading to increased productivity.

In addition, the higher the work stress the lower the work productivity would be. Employees who are stressed at work are more likely to engage in unhealthy behaviors that reduces employee productivity, increases absenteeism and also linked to higher turnover rates (Corporate Wellness Magazine, 2023). Also, work stress can lead to negative changes in interpersonal relationships and behavior that can affect work productivity (Timeular, 2023). On the other hand, the higher the work motivation, the higher the work productivity. Motivation has a great impact on employee's performance at the organization (Rene, 2016). Workload can have an impact to the performance of employee on which the higher the workload and creates difficulties for employees to perform it, resulting decline employee's performance (Munandar, et. al., 2018). High level motivation employees are the greatest source of any business on which high level employee motivation will increase employee's productivity and performance (Morrow, 2022).

## 4. Conclusion

The study found out that workload and work stress do not significantly affect work motivation, therefore  $H_{01}$  and  $H_{02}$  are accepting. However, workload significantly affects productivity thus  $H_{03}$  is rejected. It is also found out that work stress does not significantly affect productivity resulting to acceptance of  $H_{04}$ . Work motivation significantly affects productivity and therefore,  $H_{05}$  is not accepted.

The study shows that high level employee motivation will affect employee productivity by stimulating the

production of better and higher quantity work. However, there is more likely to be a high level of job satisfaction and increase long term employee retention if the employees are motivated (Morrow, 2022). Productivity improves when employees feel that they are part of a team and valued as a member of the organization, which includes sharing of knowledge and ideas. Also, it is necessary to allow employees to express their ideas and innovative ideas on which their skills will be recognized that results in encouraging a high level of motivation.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The ink head section can pay attention to the tasks or workloads given to employees based on their capabilities so that they may not feel burdened to their jobs and other colleagues. However, it is also necessary to develop an organizational strategy to easily trace employee's workload such as planner system.

The study recommends having training to employees to enhance their skills. It is also necessary to conduct surveys on what employees need to identify the causes of stress in the workplace and take countermeasures such as stress management by promoting activities that lessen stress.

The ink head section can make a policy regarding the leave of absence of its employees and reporting to work during holiday. Employees who are absent before a holiday or day off cannot render and report to work during holiday and day off work. In addition, the section can make a policy of giving incentives or rewards to their employees if there are no absences in a whole month. Giving incentives or rewards can boost an employee's motivation to report to work and that results to high attendance rate. It is also recommended to make intervention programs such as stress management, AI and machine learning, and training.

### 5.1 Limitations

The study did not use demographics in evaluating the effects of the variables. However, it could be used in future studies or research to evaluate the effects of variables including demographics such as age, gender, and civil status. In addition, a mediator can be used in future studies to determine the mediating effect on other variables.

### 5.2. CAPSTONE

The proposed strategic management plan was a CAPSTONE project that was an application system that monitors the output of each operation in a period of time. Through this application system, the section was able to track processes that contribute to work stress and difficult to manage that were subject for automation and improvement. This will also provide information that the ink head section will have proper management in terms of workload such as line balancing and line improvement. In addition, a survey for satisfaction and feedback is included in the application system to easily tabulate if the processes possess stress to the employees that can affect productivity.

It also assessed the employees' work productivity. The application system will be implemented to the ink head section at ABC Manufacturing Company.

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