

# The Influence of Co-Worker Social Support and Job Satisfaction on Job Stress among Mechanics and Engineers in the Aviation Industry

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## ABSTRACT

The aviation industry is a field of work that requires high precision and concentration, leading to a high level of job stress. One prominent issue in aviation is the increasing frequency of incidents and accidents. This study aims to examine the influence of co-worker social support and job satisfaction on job stress among mechanics and engineers. The sample consists of 100 individuals working as mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry. Multiple linear regression analysis using Pearson correlation is employed for data analysis. The results indicate that co-worker social support and job satisfaction jointly account for 49.2% of job stress. Overall, the participants' co-worker social support and job satisfaction are moderate, while job stress is significantly high. The study shows that co-worker social support has a greater impact on job stress compared to job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** *co-worker social support, job satisfaction, job stress, mechanics, engineers.*

## INTRODUCTION

Aviation safety is the most crucial aspect of aircraft operations because in a flight operated by an airline, safety is the top priority. One prominent issue in aviation is the increasing frequency of aircraft incidents and accidents. The rise in these incidents and accidents can serve as an indicator of the operational readiness of the aviation industry. Aviation accidents can be caused by various factors, such as aircraft engine failures or adverse weather conditions

(Mustopo, 2011). Other reasons for aviation incidents or accidents can stem from errors at the individual level (pilots or other aircraft crew members) or air traffic controllers (ATC) (Susanti & Wahyuningsih, 2013).

Investigation data on aviation accidents from the National Transportation Safety Committee (KNKT) from 2010 to 2016 stated that the highest contributing factor to aviation accidents in Indonesia was human factors, accounting for 67.12% (Komisi Nasional Keselamatan Transportasi, 2016). The aviation industry requires a high level of precision and concentration, leading to a high level of job stress. Among the various job roles in the aviation industry, mechanics and aircraft engineers are significant positions. According to the engineering glossary, engineers and mechanics have the same meaning, referring to technical experts.

Engineers and mechanics are responsible for the maintenance and care of aircraft, both routine maintenance at airports and major repairs usually conducted in hangars (Ardhiani & Ma'ruf, 2017). The psychological aspects of this type of work demand more attention, as one of the effects is maintenance failure that could lead to aircraft accidents. Marx & Graeber (1994) reported that approximately 12% of aircraft accidents were caused by errors in aircraft maintenance and inspection processes. In recent years, various efforts have been made to prevent aircraft accidents, but these

efforts have not significantly reduced the number of aviation accidents caused by human errors (human factors) (Marx & Graeber, 1994). The high stress and concentration required in this line of work affect the psychological well-being of engineers and mechanics.

According to Davis, Keith, and Newstrom (1985), stress is a state of tension that affects an individual's emotions, thought processes, and physical condition. Handoko (2008) defines stress as a state of tension that affects an individual's emotions, thought processes, and condition. Leaving stress unaddressed by the company can lead to employees feeling pressured, unmotivated, and frustrated. In more severe cases, stress can cause employees to become ill or even resign. To address this, employees need social support, including support from superiors, co-workers, and family members (Dodiansyah & Dwityanto, 2014).

Anderson, Litzenberger & Plecas (2002) state that the role of social support in reducing stress depends on the specific work environment in which an individual operates. Quick & Quick (1984) suggest that social support can come from an individual's social network, including the work environment (superiors, co-workers, subordinates) and the family environment (spouse, children, siblings). Corsini (as cited in Darmasaputra & Satiningsih, 2013) defines social support as the benefits individuals gain from their relationships with others. Individuals with close relationships with others, such as family or friends, enhance their ability to manage everyday challenges.

Based on research by Isnovijanti (2002), social support significantly affects job stress, which, in turn, significantly influences job satisfaction. Additionally, Jayaratne and Chess (1984) found a negative relationship between social support and job stress. Setiawan (2013) stated that there is a significant relationship between social support and job stress. Furthermore, Novia & Zaenal (2013) mentioned a significant relationship between co-worker social

support and job stress among military personnel in Semarang. Babin and Boles (2002) conducted a study and found that co-worker and supervisor social support can reduce job stress and increase job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction reflects employees' feelings toward their work. If employees exhibit a positive attitude towards their work, they experience job satisfaction. Conversely, if employees have a negative attitude (dislike) towards their work, they experience job dissatisfaction (Hasibuan, 2001).

Many companies believe that salary is the main factor influencing employee satisfaction, so when employees feel they receive sufficient pay, they become satisfied. However, various other factors that employees often do not obtain as desired can lead to stress. Based on research by Wibowo, Riana, Syah, and Indrawati (2016), there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job stress. Syah & Indrawati (2016) also state that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job stress.

It is interesting to explore the influence of social support and job satisfaction on job stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry, as this line of work demands high precision, concentration, and requires more attention due to the potential consequences of maintenance failure, which can lead to aircraft accidents.

Based on the explanations provided above, the following hypotheses are formulated for this study:

H<sub>1</sub> : Co-worker social support and job satisfaction have an influence on job stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry.

H<sub>2</sub> : Co-worker social support has an influence on job stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry.

H<sub>3</sub> : Job satisfaction has an influence on job stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The data collection technique used in this study is a quantitative method. The type of measurement instrument utilized is a questionnaire or survey. The respondents in this research consist of 100 individuals who work as mechanics or engineers in the aviation industry. Among the 100 respondents, the majority are male mechanics and engineers, totaling 90 individuals (90%), while the remaining 10 individuals (10%) are female mechanics and engineers. Additionally, it is known that 30 individuals (30%) among the mechanics and engineers are married, while the rest, 70 individuals (70%), are unmarried. The sampling technique employed in this study is purposive sampling.

There are three scales used in this research, namely the job stress scale, co-worker social support scale, and job satisfaction scale. These scales employ a response format with five options, which serve as responses to statements in the form of items. The meaning of the response choices is as follows: SS (Strongly Agree), S (Agree), N (Neutral), TS (Disagree), and STS (Strongly Disagree).

### **Work Stress**

According to David and Newstrom (2002), job stress is a condition that affects an individual's emotions, thought processes, and physical state. Rivai and Mulyadi (2009) define job stress as emotional and psychological reactions that occur when individuals face obstacles and are unable to overcome them. The job stress variable is measured using the OSI-RTM (Occupational Stress Inventory-Revised Edition) scale developed by Osipow and Spokane (1998). The scale is structured based on sources of stress, such as role ambiguity, role overload, role insufficiency, role boundary, role responsibility, and physical environment. An example item is "I feel bored with my job." The total number of items in the scale is 25. Out of these, 14 items were found to be of good quality, while the remaining 11 items were

rejected. The results of item discrimination testing showed that the total scores of the good-quality items on the job stress scale ranged from 0.351 to 0.805. The reliability testing of this scale used Cronbach's Alpha, and the obtained value was 0.876.

### **Co-worker social support**

According to Sarafino (2008), social support is the pleasure, attention, appreciation, or assistance that an individual perceives from others or a group. According to Quick and Quick (1984), social support can be derived from an individual's social network, which includes the work environment (such as superiors, co-workers, subordinates) and the family environment (such as spouse, children, siblings). The variable of co-worker social support is measured using the Co-Worker Support Scale by Lane (2004), which refers to Beehr and Newman's theory (2000). Co-worker support consists of two aspects: instrumental support and emotional support.

Instrumental support focuses on providing tangible or objective support, while emotional support involves assistance based on friendship and a high level of care from the person providing support (Beehr and Newman, 2000). An example item is "my co-workers will help me solve work-related problems." The total number of items in the co-worker social support scale is 12. Out of these, 11 items were found to be of good quality, while the remaining 1 item was rejected. The total scores of the good-quality items on the co-worker social support scale ranged from 0.525 to 0.763. The reliability testing of this scale used Cronbach's Alpha, and the obtained value was 0.896.

### **Job satisfaction**

According to Robbins (1994), job satisfaction is a general attitude of an individual towards their work, which involves interactions with co-workers, superiors, organizational policies and performance standards, working conditions, and other factors.

The variable of job satisfaction is measured using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967) based on job satisfaction dimensions, such as skill utilization, achievement, activity, promotion, authority, company policies, compensation, co-workers, workload, creativity, freedom, moral values, recognition, responsibility, security, social service, social status, supervisory relationship, technical supervision, variety, and working conditions.

An example item is "I receive recognition or praise when I perform my tasks well." The total number of items in the job satisfaction scale is 20. Out of these, 12 items were found to be of good quality, while the remaining 8 items were rejected. The total scores of the good-quality items on the job satisfaction scale ranged from 0.466 to 0.781. The reliability testing of this scale used Cronbach's Alpha, and the obtained value was 0.920.

Reliability is considered satisfactory if it reaches  $\geq 0.70$ . The reliability testing in this research was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha formula with the SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Science) version 20.0 for Windows computer program. The data analysis technique used in this study is multiple linear regression. Multiple linear regression is a method for analyzing the influence between two or more variables that have a cause-and-effect relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables (Sugiyono, 2009).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Work Stress				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig
Coworkers Social Support	-0.880	0.159	-0.499**	-5.524	0.000
Job satisfaction	-0.333	0.108	-0.277**	-3.073	0.003

Note:  $R^2 = 0.492$ ,  $F = 46.891$ ,  $p < 0.01$

\*\*  $p < 0.01$  level (one tailed)

Based on Table 1 of the regression test for the variables of co-worker social support and job satisfaction on job stress, the results

indicate that co-worker social support and job satisfaction simultaneously have a significant influence on job stress ( $F = 46.891$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

The influence of co-worker social support and job satisfaction on job stress has an  $R^2$  coefficient value of 0.492, which means that 49.2% of job stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation world is determined by the variables of co-worker social support and job satisfaction, while the remaining 50.8% is caused by other factors outside the study, such as workload, role conflict, work environment factors, physical or health conditions, emotional conditions, and individual competence (Putranto, 2013). Based on the above description, the hypotheses in this study are accepted, which means that co-worker social support and job satisfaction affect job stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation world.

This also shows that co-worker social support can predict job stress ( $\beta = -0.499$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and job satisfaction predicts job stress ( $\beta = -0.277$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results of this study indicate that the higher the co-worker social support and job satisfaction among mechanics and engineers, the lower the job stress perceived by them in the aviation world. Conversely, the lower the co-worker social support and job satisfaction among mechanics and engineers, the higher the job stress perceived by them in the aviation world.

Table 2. Zero Order Correlation

Variable	Work Stress	Coworkers Social Support	Job satisfaction
Work Stress		-0.665	-0.576
Coworkers Social Support	-0.665		0.598
Job satisfaction	-0.576	0.598	

Table 2 above shows that there is a negative correlation between the variables. Additionally, it is also found that the contribution of co-worker social support is  $0.499 \times 0.665 = 0.332$  or 33.2%, while the contribution for job satisfaction is  $0.277 \times 0.576 = 0.16$  or 16%.

**Table 3. Mean Empiric and Mean Hipotetic for All Variables**

Variable	ME	MEH	Standard Deviation	Category
Work Stress	67.02	42	9.33	Very high
Coworkers Social Support	32.18	33	7.33	Moderate
Job satisfaction	30.28	36	8	Moderate

On Table 3, it can be seen overall that work stress for mechanics and engineers in the aviation world is classified as very high. However, coworker social support and job satisfaction are considered moderate.

This study aims to test and understand the influence of coworker social support and job satisfaction on work stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry. Based on data analysis results, it is shown that coworker social support and job satisfaction significantly predict work stress among mechanics and engineers, with a total contribution of 49.2%. The remaining 50.8% is attributed to workload, role conflict, work environment factors, physical or health conditions, emotional conditions, and individual competencies (Putranto, 2013).

According to Sarafino (2008), social support from coworkers provides physical and psychological comfort derived from the knowledge that an individual is loved, cared for, and valued by others, and is also a member of a group with shared interests. This is supported by research conducted by Jayaratne and Chess (1984) on the impact of social support on stress and tension among employees in social work and full-time employment, which found a negative relationship between social support and work stress and tension.

Cassel and Cob (1996) have suggested that consistent perceived support can enhance psychological health and protect individuals from stress conditions. Masbow (2009) stated that individuals with lower social support are more likely to experience negative psychological consequences. The benefits of individuals receiving high social support include increased optimism in facing current and future life situations, improved psychological fulfillment, a higher support system, lower anxiety levels,

heightened interpersonal skills, and the ability to cope with stress.

Coworker social support and job satisfaction show variations in their contributions to work stress. Coworker social support accounts for 33.2% of work stress among mechanics and engineers. This indicates that coworker social support, when provided separately, significantly affects work stress. This study shows that the higher the coworker social support, the lower the work stress experienced by mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry, and vice versa. This is in line with Fisher's theory (2012), which explains that coworker social support helps compensate for individual shortcomings and thereby alleviates work stress. This is further reinforced by the research conducted by Bateman (2009) on the influence of coworker social support on job satisfaction, work stress, and turnover intentions, which found a negative relationship between coworker social support and work stress among employees in two women's fashion companies in New Zealand. Other studies by Adams, King, and King (1996), conducted on 163 full-time workers in Michigan, showed that social support directly affects stressors, with social support and work stress having a negative relationship. Another study by Novia and Zainal (2013) found that one of the factors influencing work stress among members of the TNI AD Denharsabang Lanud Ahmad Yani Semarang is coworker support. This study also aligns with Cooper's theory (in Munandar, 2001), which states that poor social support is one of the causes of work stress. Better social support received results in lower risk of work stress.

Furthermore, job satisfaction contributes 16% to work stress. This indicates that job satisfaction, when provided separately, significantly affects work stress. According to Robbins (2008), individuals with high job satisfaction have positive feelings about their jobs, while those who are dissatisfied have negative feelings. If a company neglects to address employee job satisfaction, where company policies do not

meet their needs and expectations, it can lead to stress among employees. A study by Mansoor et al. (2011) on job satisfaction and work stress among employees in the telecommunications sector in Pakistan found that employees with low job satisfaction experience more work stress in terms of workload, role conflict, and physical environment compared to those with higher job satisfaction. Additionally, a study by Silverthorne and Chen (2008) on certified public accountant (CPA) employees in Taiwan showed that job satisfaction influences job performance and work stress. Similar research by Andini et al. (2018) also found that job satisfaction significantly and negatively affects work stress among employees. This shows that low job satisfaction is one of the causes of work stress.

The average coworker social support variable for participants is considered moderate. This aligns with the results of interviews with three mechanics and engineers who mentioned that the work pressure for aircraft technicians is quite high because they are responsible for ensuring that aircraft equipment and systems function according to standard functions and operations, so the aircraft is deemed airworthy. However, this pressure can be minimized by supporting each other within the team, maintaining good communication among colleagues and superiors to ease difficulties in work, being willing to help colleagues facing challenges, and spending leisure time outside of work for shared hobbies like sports.

The average job satisfaction variable for participants is considered moderate. This shows that mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry are quite satisfied with their current jobs. This is in line with the results of interviews with mechanics and engineers who mentioned that, for now, they feel that their efforts and potential are adequately valued by the company. This is evident through training programs provided to mechanics and engineers to enhance their knowledge and skills, as well as promotions

for those who have been officially certified as competent by the aviation authorities.

Finally, the average work stress variable for participants is considered very high. This indicates that the work stress experienced by mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry is significant because aircraft maintenance and repair involve the safety of many people. This aligns with the research by Faiza et al. (2019) that one of the health issues experienced by aircraft engineers is work stress, mainly due to the high demands of the job in terms of speed and accuracy in completing tasks within tight deadlines.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that coworker social support and job satisfaction influence work stress among mechanics and engineers in the aviation industry. This study also indicates that coworker social support has a greater impact on work stress compared to job satisfaction. Based on the analysis of empirical and hypothetical mean comparison, it can be observed that participants experience very high levels of work stress, while their coworker social support and job satisfaction are considered moderate.

This research is expected to contribute valuable literature for the advancement of psychology, particularly Industrial and Organizational Psychology, by providing tested empirical data. For companies, this study is expected to serve as a basis for their development, especially in reducing work stress levels among mechanics and engineers. For future researchers, it is hoped that this study will contribute to their work and serve as a foundation for research models to further explore the discourse within the corporate world, particularly regarding coworker social support, job satisfaction, and work stress of employees, with a broader scope. Additionally, future researchers can investigate other variables that also influence work stress, such as workload, role conflict, family conflict, and work environment factors.

### Declaration by Authors

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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