



Role of Psychological Capital in Moderating the Influence of Employee Engagement and Creativity on the Performance of Nursing Staff at Class a Regional Hospitals in East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the impact of employee engagement on organizational performance in government hospitals, with particular attention to the moderating role of Psychological Capital – comprising resilience, optimism, self-efficacy, and hope – in strengthening this relationship. Grounded in theories of employee engagement and Positive Organizational Behavior, this research positions Psychological Capital as a critical construct that enhances an individual's motivational and cognitive resources. By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the study elucidates how engagement and Psychological Capital jointly influence performance outcomes. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected via structured surveys from hospital employees in various administrative and clinical departments. Statistical analyses were then conducted to assess the direct influence of employee engagement on performance, as well as the interaction effect (moderation) of Psychological Capital. Findings confirm that employee engagement has a significant positive effect on performance, underscoring the importance of motivational and supportive work environments in government hospitals. Moreover, the moderating role of Psychological Capital is evident, as higher levels of resilience, optimism, self-efficacy, and hope substantially strengthen the engagement–performance linkage. These results underscore the necessity of strategies – such as organizational learning programs, clear alignment with the hospital's vision and mission, and active employee participation – to cultivate both engagement and Psychological Capital. By highlighting the combined importance of engagement and Psychological Capital, this study offers practical insights for hospital management to refine human resource strategies. Interventions designed to enhance Psychological Capital can bolster engagement, thereby improving service quality and operational efficiency, ultimately contributing to better patient outcomes. While previous research has established the positive association between engagement and performance, this study uniquely contributes by empirically testing the moderating role of Psychological Capital within the government hospital context. The findings offer a novel framework for developing targeted interventions that elevate employee motivation, well-being, and organizational success in a setting marked by administrative challenges and resource constraints.

Keywords: Creativity, Employee Engagement, Nursing Staff Performance, Psychological Capital, Regional Hospitals.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hospitals play a vital role as the main guardians of public health, with service quality and patient safety being key indicators of performance. In East Kalimantan, two Class A regional general hospitals in Samarinda and Balikpapan have been designated as national referral hospitals (Kementrian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2022). However, despite their strategic status, the performance of these hospitals remains suboptimal. One key indicator, the Bed Occupancy Rate (BOR), is below the national standard, highlighting the need to improve service quality and staff performance, particularly nursing personnel (Mawikere et al., 2021). Nurses, as the dominant human resource in patient care, bear significant responsibility for ensuring high-quality health services. However, they face challenges such as high workloads, psychological pressure, and increasing task complexity (Anitha, 2014). These conditions often result in stress, fatigue, and decreased performance, leading to substandard service quality and impacting patient satisfaction. Addressing these challenges requires fostering creativity among nursing staff to innovate and improve service efficiency. Creativity helps nurses provide effective solutions to meet patient needs. However, to nurture creativity, optimal employee engagement is essential. Engagement reflects the level of commitment, motivation, and emotional connection employees have toward their work. Previous research suggests that actively engaged employees are more productive, creative, and contribute significantly to organizational goals (Slåtten and M. Mehmetoglu, 2011). Psychological Capital (PsyCap) also emerges as a critical factor in moderating the relationship between employee engagement and performance. PsyCap encompasses self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism, providing a psychological foundation to motivate and equip employees to handle work challenges effectively. Studies like those by Alessandri et al. (2018) & Avey et al. (2008) and Badal & Harter (2013) affirm that PsyCap enhances employee productivity and helps manage work stress. Despite its importance, the role of PsyCap in moderating the relationship between employee engagement and performance, particularly in healthcare settings in Indonesia, remains underexplored (Aminuddin et al., 2021; Bakker and Bal, 2010). This research aims to fill this gap by examining how employee engagement and creativity influence nursing staff performance in East Kalimantan's regional hospitals and the moderating role of PsyCap. Creativity in healthcare often faces organizational barriers such as rigid work cultures, time constraints, and hierarchical structures (Amabile et al., 1996; Zhou and Geogre, 2001). Understanding the interplay of employee engagement, creativity, and PsyCap is critical for addressing these challenges and improving overall performance. This study employs a quantitative approach using validated and reliable questionnaires to collect

data. In-depth interviews with experienced nurses complement the quantitative findings, providing a comprehensive understanding of work dynamics in government hospitals. Combining these methods aims to deliver robust insights into improving nurse performance. By examining PsyCap as a moderating variable, this research not only contributes to filling gaps in the existing literature but also provides practical recommendations for hospital management. Findings are expected to support the development of policies and training programs that focus on enhancing employee engagement and creativity, ultimately improving efficiency, service innovation, and patient satisfaction at regional hospitals in East Kalimantan.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of an article outlines the procedures employed to conduct the research, including the type of study, sample selection, data collection and analysis methods, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. Its detailed and transparent description is essential to guarantee the replicability and reliability of the results, in addition to providing a solid basis for the interpretation and generalization of the findings. This study adopts a causal research design to analyze the relationships among variables and test hypotheses. The survey method was employed for data collection, targeting nursing staff from Class A public hospitals in East Kalimantan. The research framework consists of two models: the first examines determinants of Employee Engagement (EE), and the second evaluates how EE influences performance through creativity, moderated by Psychological Capital (PsyCap). The model development was inspired by Anitha's (2014) framework applied to the healthcare sector.

2.1. Sample Preparation

The target population includes 1,527 nurses working in Class A public hospitals in East Kalimantan. The sample size was determined based on the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) guidelines, ensuring statistical reliability. A purposive sampling method was applied to focus on nursing staff who met predefined criteria. This sampling strategy ensured the inclusion of participants directly relevant to the study's objectives. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire validated through pilot testing. The questionnaire included multiple Likert-scale items to measure (1) Employee Performance. Assessed using a 13-item scale (Tsui et al., 1997), covering work quantity, quality, professional standards, and problem-solving skills, (2) Creativity. Evaluated using a 19-item scale adapted from Zhou (2001), which measures idea generation, implementation, and innovative problem-solving, (3) Employee Engagement. Measured through the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9), which assesses involvement, enthusiasm, and extra effort, and (4) Psychological Capital. Assessed based on four dimensions—self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism—following Luthans et al. (2007). The data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. This approach enabled simultaneous testing of measurement models (validity and reliability of constructs) and structural models (causal relationships among variables). The hypothesis testing employed a t-statistic threshold of >1.640 for one-tailed tests to determine significance. The study's conceptual model is shown in Figure 1, illustrating the relationships among Employee Engagement (EE), Creativity (Y1), Performance (Y2), and Psychological Capital (Z). EE directly influences performance and creativity, while PsyCap moderates these relationships.

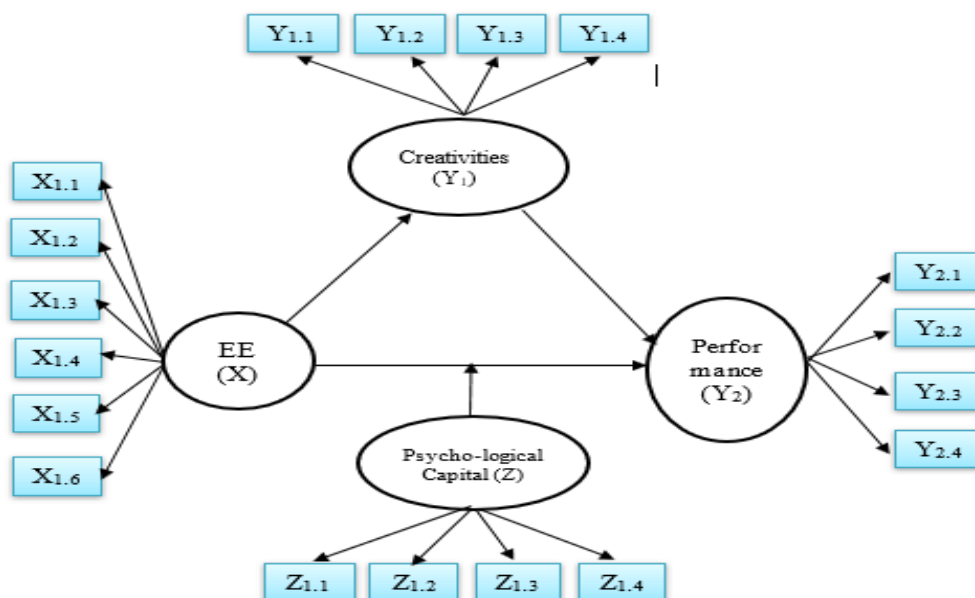


Figure 1: The Relationship Between EE and Performance Through Creativity, Moderated by Psychological Capital.

2.1.1. Sample Selection

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In the sample selection process, the focus was on medical staff nurses serving in two hospitals, namely AWS Sjahranie Hospital Samarinda and Kanujoso Hospital Balikpapan. In this context, the selected sample is functional nurse employees. The decision to select functional nurse employees was based on the consideration that they are directly involved in providing direct services to patients in hospitals. In contrast, structural employees were excluded from the sample because their work does not involve direct interaction with patient care, thus not representing the relevant population for the purpose of this study. In anticipation of a low response rate, we decided to distribute the questionnaire or conduct sample selection at three times the lowest limit set at the beginning of the study. By doing so, we hoped to increase the chance of obtaining an adequate number of respondents and representing the desired sample. This action was taken to reduce the risk of bias that may arise from a low response rate, thus ensuring that the data collected is more accurate and reliable for analysis. In addition, by expanding the range of questionnaire distribution or sample selection, it is expected to increase respondent participation and ultimately strengthen the validity of the research results. With this strategy, we hope to overcome the potential problem of low response rate and ensure the completeness of the data required for our research. By compiling a sample consisting of functional nurse employees from both hospitals, it was expected to obtain a more representative picture of the characteristics and experiences of the nursing medical staff in the context of health care in the region. As such, this sample selection was designed to ensure that the data collected could provide relevant and useful insights to understand the role and contribution of medical nurses in the delivery of health services in the two hospitals.

Table 1: Sample Selection Process Using Non-Probability Snowball Sampling.

No	Selection Criteria	Samples
1	Number of Respondents collected at the beginning	570
2	Non-employees of RSUD AWS and RSUD Kanujoso (respondents excluded because they are not employees of RSUD AWS and RSUD Kanujoso)	(67)
3	Respondent Employees of AWS Hospital and Kanujoso Hospital	503
4	Respondents who are not functional nurses	(113)
5	Nurse Functional Employee Respondents	390
6	Not long enough to be a respondent (excluded from the sample)	(74)
7	Enough experience as a respondent	316
8	Incomplete questionnaire (Omitted)	(79)
9	Completed questionnaires collected (Used)	237
	Questionnaires that can be used	237

2.2. Model Formers

In connection with the general SEM model and procedures stated above, the formation of this research model and its measurements is in accordance with the Model Development built. Based on the framework that has been built in the SEM Model (Figure 1), the development of this research model is a model of the relationship between Employee Engagement and Performance mediated by Creativity, moderated by Psychological Capital, by testing two samples simultaneously, namely Nursing staff in Government Hospitals, has the following equation:

a. Creativity (Y1).

$$KF (Y1) = \beta_1 EE (X) + Z1.$$

Where:

EE = Employee Engagement (X).

β_1 = Regression Weight.

Z1 = Disturbance term.

b. Employee Performance (EP) (Y2).

$$KP(Y2) = \beta_2 EE (X) + \beta_3 KF (Y1) + \beta_4 PsyCap (Z) + \beta_5 EE (X) * PsyCap (Z) + Z2$$

Where:

KP = Employee Performance (Y2).

KF = Creativity (Y1).

EE = Employee Engagement (X).

PsyCap = Psychological Capital.

Bi = Regression Weight.

Z2 = Disturbance term.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. The Influence of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance

Statistical analysis shows that Employee Engagement (EE) has a significant positive influence on employee performance. A higher level of employee engagement is directly associated with improved organizational performance. The p-value is well below the significance threshold ($p < 0.005$), emphasizing the importance of

engagement in enhancing work efficiency. Employees with higher engagement levels demonstrate greater motivation and commitment, which positively impacts their performance outcomes.

Employee Engagement (EE) has been proven to have a significant positive effect on employee performance in two regional hospitals in East Kalimantan Province. This finding indicates that high employee engagement, such as a sense of belonging, motivation, and commitment to the organization, directly contributes to improving individual and organizational performance. These results align with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow and Lewis, 1987), which states that fulfilling basic needs such as security, recognition, and a sense of belonging encourages employees to achieve self-actualization in their work. Furthermore, Social Exchange Theory (SET) affirms that employee engagement creates a positive cycle where employees make significant contributions to the organization and, in return, receive recognition, rewards, and growth opportunities, ultimately enhancing their performance (Kim and Vandenberghe, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2017).

The implications suggest that hospital management should focus on strategies that foster employee engagement, such as creating a safe work environment, providing skill development training, and building an inclusive work culture. Investments in recognizing employee contributions and promoting open communication are also critical steps to maintaining high engagement levels. By taking these steps, organizations can enhance efficiency and productivity while creating a motivating work environment. These findings provide a solid foundation for hospital management to develop programs that strengthen Employee Engagement as a core strategy for improving overall organizational performance. (Albrecht, 2010; Rich et al., 2010).

From the influence between the variables above, the conceptual model between employees and employee performance can be described as follows:

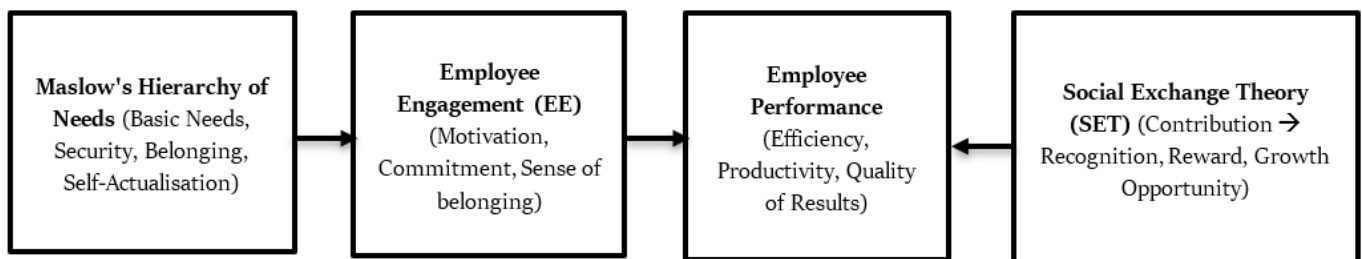


Figure 2: Conceptual Model of the Relationship between Employee engagement and Employee Performance.

With this model, organisations (e.g. hospitals) can understand that improving EE through the right strategies (safe working environment, recognition, open communication) will have a direct impact on employee performance, which in turn benefits overall organisational performance.

3.2. Employee Engagement (EE) and Creativity

Employee Engagement (EE) plays a crucial role in fostering creativity in the workplace. High employee engagement often reflects strong motivation, commitment, and emotional connection to their work [9]. However, the analysis in this study indicates that the relationship between EE and creativity is positive but not statistically significant. While employee engagement can provide a foundation for generating new ideas, it is not sufficient on its own to consistently influence creativity (Zhou and George, 2001). This finding suggests that additional factors, such as organizational policies, flexible work structures, or sufficient time for exploring innovative ideas, are needed to effectively support creativity. In this context, employee creativity is more effectively enhanced through a holistic approach that includes a supportive work environment. An environment that encourages innovation, freedom of expression, and recognition of creative contributions can provide a stronger stimulus for employees to develop their creative potential. By fostering a workplace atmosphere that facilitates collaboration and courage to experiment with new ideas, organizations can enhance the effectiveness of Employee Engagement in influencing creativity (Anitha, 2014). Therefore, organizations should integrate employee engagement with other strategies that support key elements of creativity. The relationship between Employee Engagement (EE) and creativity shows a positive but statistically insignificant correlation. This indicates that while employee engagement may support creativity, other factors might play a more dominant role in influencing this aspect. Employee creativity is better enhanced through a systemic approach that considers various organizational elements. Engagement alone is insufficient; creativity often requires a comprehensive framework that extends beyond individual motivation or commitment. Creativity in employees thrives when supported by conducive workplace factors such as an innovative environment, procedural flexibility, and allocated time for idea exploration. Organizations must provide not only the resources but also the freedom and encouragement needed to foster creative thinking (Tsui et al., 1997; Bakker and Bal, 2010). This underscores the importance of combining engagement with structural and cultural enablers to unlock the full potential of creativity within the workforce. The relationship between the influence of the variables mentioned above can be modelled as follows:

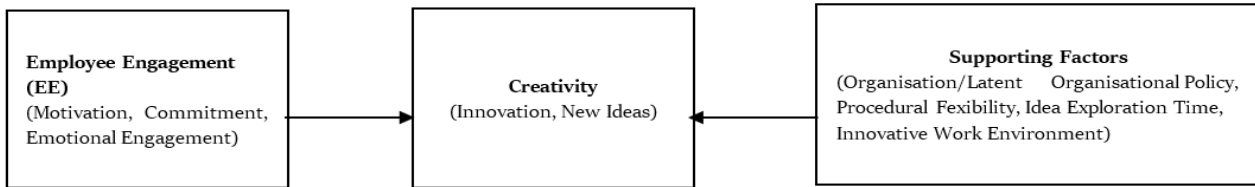


Figure 3: Conceptual Model of the Relationship between Employee engagement, Creativity and Supporting Factors

In the SEM model to be tested, latent measures (e.g. indicators for EE, indicators for organisational support environment variables, and indicators for creativity) can be included. Furthermore, SEM statistical testing (e.g. using AMOS, LISREL, or SmartPLS software) will determine whether the EE→ Creativity path remains insignificant, as well as how much positive influence organisational support factors have on creativity.

Furthermore, to determine whether the parameter estimation results in the structural equation models are significant or not, it is done by using the t test. Given that the model estimation is done with PLS, the criteria for acceptance or rejection of statistical hypotheses are $H_0 : \beta_{ij}, \gamma_{ij}, > 0$, or $H_1: \beta_{ij}, \gamma_{ij}, < 0$.

1. Reject H_0 if the t-statistic value of the parameter between the tested variables is greater than 1.640.

2. Accept H_0 if the t-statistic value of the parameters between the tested variables is smaller than 1.640.

The use of 1.640 as a significance level is based on the opinion of Hair et al. (2006) which states that the path or inner model coefficient score indicated by the T-statistic must be above 1.960 for a two-tailed hypothesis and or be above 1.640 for a one-tailed hypothesis at 5% alpha.

3.3. Creativity and Performance

Creativity shows a positive but statistically insignificant influence on employee performance. This finding highlights the need to integrate innovative initiatives into the organizational framework to ensure that creativity has a tangible impact on work outcomes. Factors such as rigid standard operating procedures (SOPs), conservative workplace culture, and lack of recognition for innovation limit the contribution of creativity to performance (Christian et al., 2011). The study results indicate that while there is a positive relationship between Employee Engagement (EE) and creativity, it is not statistically significant. This suggests that employee engagement, though essential, is not sufficient to significantly influence creativity in regional hospitals in East Kalimantan. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory (Maslow and Lewis, 1987), creativity is more closely related to self-actualization needs, which are at the top of the hierarchy, whereas EE often fulfills basic needs such as safety and belonging. From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (SET), this lack of significance may stem from insufficient rewards to support creativity (Albrecht, 2010). These findings differ from previous studies that showed a significant relationship between EE and creativity, suggesting that contextual or industry-specific factors may affect the results. The factors hindering this relationship include excessive workload leading to stress, rigid and hierarchical workplace culture, overly rigid SOPs, professional limitations, lack of support for innovation, and a primary focus on operational efficiency (Qureshi et al., 2013). High workloads and pressure to adhere to SOPs often restrict room for creative thinking, while a hierarchical work culture discourages nurses from expressing new ideas. Furthermore, the lack of facilities, managerial support, and recognition for creativity makes innovation less appealing to employees (Mansour and Tremblay, 2016). Therefore, although EE contributes to performance, to foster creativity, organizations need to create a supportive work environment, provide incentives, and allow for greater flexibility and expression for employees.

Thus, it can be concluded that the results of the relationship between variables and factors affecting these results can be tabulated as follows:

Table 2: Relationships between variables and the factors that influence those results.

Relationship between variables/factors	Statistical Test Results	Interpretation	Barrier/Moderator Factors	Reference Source
EE → Employee Performance	Significant Positive ($p < 0.005$)	Employee Engagement directly improves employee performance	-	Christian et al. (2011)
EE → Creativity	Positive but Not Significant	EE is positively related to creativity, but not statistically strong enough	Lack of reward support, non-conducive environment	Maslow & Lewis (1987), Albrecht (2010)
Creativity → Employee Performance (EP)	Positive but Not Significant	Creativity has a positive effect on performance, but it is not statistically significant	Rigid SOPs, conservative culture, lack of innovation recognition	Christian et al. (2011)
Faktor Organisasi terhadap Kreativitas	Important Effect (Qualitative Indication)	A conducive work environment, flexibility, and support for innovation are essential in enhancing creativity	Excessive workload, hierarchical culture, limited facilities	Qureshi et al. (2013), Mansour & Tremblay (2016)

Thus, $p < 0.005$ indicates that the likelihood of the results occurring by chance is very small. On the other

hand, “Positive but Not Significant” means there is a tendency toward a favorable relationship, but the strength of the statistical evidence is not sufficient to confirm that the relationship did not occur by chance. In the context of employee creativity, supportive organizational factors such as innovative policies, flexibility, time for idea exploration, and managerial support play a crucial role in optimizing this potential. Conversely, inhibiting factors such as excessive workload, a conservative or hierarchical work culture, overly rigid operational procedures, and a lack of recognition and appreciation for new ideas can hinder the growth of creativity within the organization.

3.4. The Role of Psychological Capital as a Moderating Variable

Psychological Capital successfully moderates the relationship between Employee Engagement (EE) and employee performance with high significance ($p < 0.005$). Psychological resources such as self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience play a significant role in enhancing the positive impact of engagement on performance. Factors such as hope, optimism, resilience, and self-confidence strengthen the positive effect of EE on performance. The research findings indicate that Psychological Capital effectively moderates the relationship between Employee Engagement (EE) and employee performance, amplifying the positive influence of EE on performance. These findings align with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow and Lewis, 1987), where psychological capital such as confidence, optimism, and resilience are associated with self-actualization, thereby reinforcing the impact of employee engagement on performance. Additionally, the findings support Social Exchange Theory (SET), demonstrating that individual psychological resources enrich the social exchange process at the workplace, thus enhancing employee contributions and organizational performance. In the context of regional hospitals in East Kalimantan, the development of Psychological Capital through training, management support, and the creation of a supportive work environment can serve as an effective strategy to improve employee engagement and overall organizational performance (Luthans et al., 2007; Aminuddin et al., 2021). These findings are consistent with the data presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Bootstrapping test results.

Relationships between variables	T-statistic	P-value	Conclusion
EE → Performance	5.966	0.000	Significant
EE → Performance	1.433	0.152	No Significant
Creativity → Kinerja	1.420	0.156	No Significant
Psychological capital (Moderating) → Performance	2.484	0.000	Significant

The Bootstrapping test results indicate that the Employee Engagement (EE) variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, as evidenced by a positive path coefficient, a t-statistic value greater than 1.96, and a p-value less than 0.05. Furthermore, the confidence interval does not include zero, reinforcing the conclusion that the relationship is significant at the 95% confidence level. This implies that higher levels of employee engagement are associated with improved employee performance. With non-parametric resampling, these results can be considered stable and not dependent on a single sample, providing high reliability to the estimation of the relationships between variables. Additionally, measurements indicate that the validity test confirms all indicators have a loading factor value > 0.60 , ensuring convergent validity. The Composite Reliability values for all constructs are also above 0.70, indicating high internal consistency.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study confirm that Employee Engagement (EE) has a significant influence on organizational performance, with Psychological Capital acting as a moderator that strengthens this relationship. Factors such as employee self-confidence, optimism, and resilience play important roles in enhancing engagement and employee performance. However, the relationship between creativity and employee performance in the hospital context is not significant, indicating constraints such as excessive workload, an unsupportive work environment, and rigid organizational culture. Therefore, developing a work environment that encourages engagement, creativity, and employees' mental capacity becomes a strategic priority. Efforts that need to be undertaken include arranging a proportional workload, enhancing skills and professional literacy, and creating an inclusive organizational culture to promote innovation and adaptation. In addition, a holistic approach that considers individual psychological factors, dynamics of social exchange, and evidence-based strategies is necessary to ensure improved performance and quality of services in hospitals. This study also provides a foundation for further exploration of the relationships among engagement, creativity, and psychological capabilities within organizations.

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APPENDIX

Types of Citations within the Text

One author

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Few sources

- (Greenleaf & Greenfield, 2006; Redbull & Blackwell, 2008)
 (Greenleaf & Greenfield, 2006: 66; Redbull & Blackwell, 2008: 101)