

The Mediating Role Of Work Behaviour In The Relationship Between Work Engagement, Self-Efficacy, And Civil Servants' Performance: Evidence From Indonesia

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Abstract

Orientation: Failure to achieve organisational objectives frequently erodes public trust and diminishes institutional legitimacy. Strengthening internal human resource management is therefore essential for ensuring goal attainment and enhancing organisational reputation.

Purpose: This study examines the impact of work engagement (WE) and self-efficacy (SE) on employee performance (EP), with work behaviour (WB) as a mediating construct.

Motivation for the study: Understanding how personal and behavioural factors interact to influence employee performance is crucial for developing evidence-based strategies to strengthen public service delivery in Indonesia.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative design was applied, using survey data from 209 civil servants at the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Indonesia. Analysis was conducted with structural equation modelling (SEM-PLS).

Findings: The structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis indicated that all seven proposed relationships, including both direct and indirect pathways, were statistically significant. Work behaviour acts as a pivotal mediator linking personal factors to employee performance, with higher work engagement and self-efficacy encouraging positive work behaviours that, in turn, improve employee performance.

Practical implications: The findings emphasise the role of work behaviour as a fundamental approach to achieving sustained performance improvements in the public sector.

Originality/Value: This study proposes a contextual model that integrates personal and behavioural factors of Social Cognitive Theory to explain civil servants' performance in developing countries and represents one of the first empirical studies to test this integrated model in the Indonesian public sector

Keywords: Work Engagement; Self-Efficacy; Employee Performance; Work Behaviour; Social Cognitive Theory

INTRODUCTION

Organisations aim to achieve their highest levels of performance, and this ambition is largely contingent upon how effectively employees fulfil their responsibilities (Khaled et al., 2021). In this regard, employees are expected to demonstrate not only efficiency but also effectiveness in their work (Trung et al., 2021). Importantly, employee performance encompasses the behaviours and actions that contribute to accomplishing organisational objectives (Ribeiro et al., 2018) and is closely aligned with the organisation's strategic priorities (Akdere & Egan, 2020; Jakobsen et al., 2023). Furthermore, Pudjono et al. (2025) emphasise that employee performance extends beyond administrative accomplishments, serving as a critical indicator of policy implementation success and the broader transformation of government institutions. As the principal executors of state policies, employees are therefore entrusted with ensuring that public services are delivered in an efficient, timely, and accessible manner, while consistently upholding high standards of quality.

Work engagement is one of the primary drivers of enhanced performance (Bakker, 2022). It is also considered a key personal factor within the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) framework, due to its strong connection with individuals' affective, cognitive, and motivational processes in performing their tasks. This psychological state is reflected in three main indicators: vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Individuals with high work engagement tend to perform better than those with lower engagement levels. Empirical research has consistently demonstrated a significant positive relationship between work engagement and performance (Bakker, 2022), although some studies have reported non-significant findings (Bouckennooghe et al., 2021). These differing findings underscore the need for further in-depth investigation. In this study, work behaviour, which represents the behavioural component within Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), is proposed as a mediating variable. By incorporating work behaviour as a mediator, a more comprehensive understanding can be gained of how psychological states are transformed into tangible performance outcomes.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and self-efficacy are closely intertwined, serving as fundamental personal factors that shape how individuals think, feel, and act in various life contexts (Bandura, 2001). Belief in one's abilities is a key foundation for optimal work performance (Vitapamoorthy et al., 2021). However, Vancouver and Kendall (2006) suggest that sustained high self-efficacy may, over time, reduce motivation and performance, potentially due to overconfidence leading to diminished effort. Accordingly, this study addresses a research gap by examining work behaviour as a mediating factor between self-efficacy and performance.

Although numerous studies have examined employee performance, research that systematically investigates the combined influence of personal factors (work engagement and self-efficacy) and behavioural factors (work behaviour) in the public sector of developing countries remains limited. Most previous studies have examined these constructs separately, thereby overlooking their potential synergy in enhancing employee performance. To address this gap, the present study integrates psychological and behavioural approaches, with work behaviour serving as a partial mediator. The novelty of this research lies in testing a conceptual model based on Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) that links personal and behavioural factors to explain the performance of civil servants in Indonesia.

The psychological approach views employees as personal agents capable of self-regulation, situational evaluation, and autonomous decision-making, whereas the behavioural approach emphasises the influence of situational stimuli in the work environment on employees' actions and responses. By adopting SCT, this study is expected to contribute theoretically by connecting psychological states and behaviour within the public sector, while also offering practical implications for policy formulation and performance management. Accordingly, the research aims to support the development of civil servants who are ethical, productive, and service-oriented, while simultaneously enhancing overall organisational effectiveness.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Underpinning theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), established by Albert Bandura in 1986, provides the theoretical foundation for this study. It highlights that human behaviour is shaped through the reciprocal interaction of personal factors, behavioural patterns, and environmental conditions, a concept known as Triadic Reciprocal Determinism.

In this study, attention is directed primarily towards two components: personal factors and behaviour. Personal factors, conceptualised as work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2023) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 2012), represent employees' intrinsic motivation and confidence in their abilities, while work behaviour is treated as a mediating construct that links these factors to performance outcomes. This focus allows the study to highlight how psychological and behavioural processes shape employee performance, while still acknowledging the complementary role of environmental conditions.

Employee Performance

An organisation's success is fundamentally shaped by the effectiveness with which its employees carry out assigned duties. For this reason, organisational sustainability and growth are inseparable

from the commitment and quality of human resources that support all operational functions (Tortia et al., 2022). In this context, organisational performance serves as a central indicator of how well employees perform tasks and meet specified objectives (Kundi et al., 2021). Robbins and Judge (2018) further emphasise that performance reflects the process by which employees deploy their skills and capabilities within organisational structures to achieve strategic aims, while elevated levels of performance drive improvements in productivity and broader organisational results (Mathis & Jackson, 2019).

In the public sector, performance is closely linked to human resource measurement and management (de Bruijn, 2007). Professional and transparent human resources practices, including planning, development, and employee empowerment, enhance motivation, dedication, and commitment to organisational objectives. Performance measurement also plays a critical role in optimising work practices, thereby supporting effectiveness and efficiency (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Accordingly, the quality and management of human resources form the foundation for sustaining performance and achieving organisational objectives in public institutions.

Work Engagement

Kahn (2018) defines work engagement as a psychological state in which individuals are fully involved in their job tasks physically, mentally, and emotionally. In this context, work engagement reflects the energy, dedication, and level of involvement an individual invests in their work, thereby maximising their contribution to the organisation. Schaufeli et al. (2006) identify three core components of work engagement: vigour, reflecting enthusiasm and resilience; dedication, denoting commitment and emotional attachment; and absorption, representing full concentration and immersion in work activities. Employees with high work engagement are generally associated with effective and satisfying performance (Sulea et al., 2012).

Self-Efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy emphasises an individual's internal appraisal of their ability to plan and implement the efforts required to achieve specific goals. It reflects an individual's belief in what they can accomplish, rather than merely the objective skills they possess. As a subjective construct, self-efficacy is strongly shaped by how individuals evaluate themselves in confronting particular situations (Bandura, 2012).

Baron and Byrne (2003) argue that self-efficacy embodies an individual's belief in their capacity to fulfil responsibilities, overcome challenges, achieve objectives, and address potential obstacles. Williams and Rhodes (2014) reinforce this perspective, noting that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to demonstrate greater motivation to attain set targets. Even when faced with obstacles or the risk of failure, such individuals persist, remain resilient, and seek solutions to ensure continued progress towards their goals.

Work Behaviour

Work behaviour encompasses not only the actions undertaken to achieve results but also how employees perform their duties by prevailing moral and ethical standards (Williams & Rhodes, 2014). Positive behaviours include being Service-Oriented, Accountable, Competent, Harmonious, Loyal, Adaptive, and Collaborative, as outlined in the Regulation of the Minister of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia No. 3 of 2023. Williams and Rhodes (2014) further note that such behaviours encourage public sector employees to act beyond personal or organisational interests.

Ivancevich et al. (2018) emphasise that effective work behaviour involves productive interactions, innovation, and a thorough understanding of work systems, all grounded in ethical principles. This is particularly crucial in the public sector, where employees frequently encounter dilemmas requiring strong moral judgment to make decisions that benefit society. Practising positive, goal-oriented behaviour enables employees to perform their duties more effectively while adhering to organisational values (Ivancevich et al., 2018).

Work Engagement and Employee Performance

Work engagement is a critical determinant of organisational success, as it directly enhances the achievement of expected outcomes, particularly in terms of employee performance (Yongxing et al., 2017). It is conceptualised as a positive, comprehensive emotional and cognitive investment in work, characterised by perseverance and determination, which ultimately improves performance (Yao et al., 2022). Lam (2017) highlights that work engagement significantly impacts individual effectiveness and performance, aligning with Yongxing et al. (2017), who demonstrate its direct role in realising organisational objectives.

Hypothesis 1: Work engagement has a positive effect on employee performance.

Self-Efficacy and Employee Performance

Judge and Bono (2001) argue that self-efficacy forms a psychological foundation that shapes how individuals set meaningful goals, tackle challenges, and stay committed to achieving their best. According to Bandura (2012), self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining how much an individual believes in their ability to complete tasks and reach performance targets that matter to their professional growth. It reflects a person's awareness of their capabilities, enabling them to achieve optimal outcomes across various work situations and, in turn, enhancing overall performance (Lippke, 2020). Furthermore, Omotunde (2022) highlights that self-efficacy empowers employees to explore and implement new ideas, thereby strengthening their contributions and impact within the workplace.

Hypothesis 2: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on employee performance.

Work Engagement and Work Behaviour

Within organisational contexts, work behaviour encompasses the range of actions through which employees meet the expectations of leadership and management (Salas et al., 2015). While research on the direct effect of work engagement on public sector employee performance remains limited, work engagement is widely recognised as a key driver shaping employees' work behaviour (Park et al., 2021). Employees who experience high levels of engagement tend to be more proactive, contributing ideas and providing constructive input that benefits the organisation (Park et al., 2021). Consistent with this, Kong and Li (2018) emphasise that work engagement fosters productive and communicative work behaviour, enabling employees to make meaningful contributions.

Hypothesis 3: Work engagement has a positive effect on work behaviour.

Self-Efficacy and Work Behaviour

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to achieve specific outcomes when performing tasks or work behaviours. It shapes expectations regarding outcomes when engaging in challenging yet potentially beneficial work activities (Chughtai et al., 2012). Research by Tierney and Farmer (2011) indicates that high self-efficacy is closely linked to employee creativity, with such individuals tending to be more innovative in the workplace.

Within the framework of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Bandura (2012) emphasises that belief in one's capabilities is a crucial determinant of innovative behaviour. SCT posits that individuals are active agents, not merely passive recipients of environmental stimuli, capable of self-regulation through self-efficacy, situational evaluation, and autonomous decision-making. Consequently, employees with high self-efficacy are more confident in generating and implementing new ideas in their daily work (Jiang & Gu, 2017).

Conversely, those with lower self-efficacy may perceive obstacles as hindrances rather than opportunities for learning or growth (Richter et al., 2012). Thus, self-efficacy functions as a key mechanism linking personal capacity with work behaviour and employee performance, as articulated by SCT through the reciprocal interaction among personal factors, behaviour, and the work environment.

Hypothesis 4: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on work behaviour.

Work Behaviour and Employee Performance

Kammeyer et al. (2024) emphasise that work attitudes shape a range of workplace behaviours, from task engagement to decisions about remaining with or leaving an organisation. Consistent with prior research, work attitude is defined as an individual's evaluation of how they feel and think about work-related constructs (Judge et al., 2017). Such behaviour also serves as a key indicator of the extent to which public sector employees demonstrate professionalism in delivering high-quality services to the public (Neo et al., 2022).

According to Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), work behaviour is not merely a passive response to environmental stimuli; individuals actively assess situations, regulate their actions, and adapt strategies to achieve goals. Consequently, employee performance can be understood as the outcome of structured work behaviour, where success is influenced by self-belief, internal motivation, and

environmental support. Employees who exhibit positive work behaviour not only meet their task objectives but also actively contribute to organisational professionalism and the quality of public services.

Hypothesis 5: Work behaviour has a positive effect on employee performance.

The Mediating Role of Work Behaviour

Understanding the mediating role of work behaviour is crucial for organisations seeking to maximise employee contributions. While work engagement and self-efficacy have been extensively studied within the framework of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), research examining work behaviour as a mediating mechanism linking these psychological factors to behavioural outcomes, such as employee performance, remains limited.

Empirical evidence suggests that work behaviour significantly mediates the relationship between work engagement and employee performance. Highly engaged employees invest energy, attention, and commitment through constructive actions, such as providing feedback, improving procedures, developing new work methods, and contributing to solutions for workplace challenges (Zhang et al., 2020). Similarly, Agarwal (2014) notes that engaged employees consistently exert effort in behaviours that support organisational goals. Consequently, work behaviour acts as a critical pathway through which engagement translates into tangible performance improvements.

Work attitude, defined as an individual's evaluation of their feelings and thoughts regarding work-related constructs (Judge et al., 2017), encompasses not only technical competence but also collaboration, communication, and contribution to team dynamics (Hussain et al., 2023).

Self-efficacy also plays a key role in influencing work behaviour and performance. An individual's belief in their capabilities directly enhances performance and operates indirectly through work behaviour as a mediating mechanism. Studies confirm that high self-efficacy encourages employees to demonstrate productive, innovative, and proactive behaviours, ultimately resulting in improved performance (Purnama et al., 2021).

Thus, within SCT, work behaviour serves as a key mediating mechanism, explaining how psychological factors such as work engagement and self-efficacy are transformed into employee performance. For organisations, recognising this pathway is vital for developing human resource strategies that strengthen psychological factors while ensuring motivation and confidence are realised through effective work behaviours.

Hypothesis 6: Work behaviour mediates the relationship between work engagement and employee performance.

Hypothesis 7: Work behaviour mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance.

RESEARCH METHOD

Method and Approach

This study adopts a quantitative research design within the positivist paradigm, employing a cross-sectional survey method to test theoretical relationships and predict causal linkages among variables. The survey was conducted between April and May 2025 using an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. A quantitative approach was selected for its structured and scientific capacity to analyse data and evaluate inter-variable relationships (Hair et al., 2019). The survey method was deemed appropriate, given its widespread use in studies where individuals represent the primary unit of analysis and its suitability for both descriptive and explanatory purposes (Babbie & Mouton, 2015).

The research was carried out among employees of the Secretariat-General of the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia, a central ministry unit with complex organisational structures, broad responsibilities, and a strategic role in implementing national labour policies. The selection of this site was based on its institutional significance and the relatively limited scholarly attention to employee performance within central ministries in Indonesia, which underscores the novelty and relevance of this study.

As the administrative and governance hub, the Secretariat-General functions as the pivotal body ensuring the smooth execution of ministerial policies. With its substantial workforce and diverse employee composition, it provides an appropriate and representative research setting. This not only

reflects the internal dynamics of civil service performance at the ministerial level but also offers valuable insights into the functioning of central government organisations in Indonesia.

Measurement Instrument

The survey utilised in this study consisted of demographic questions and five well-established measurement scales designed to capture the key variables under investigation. The instruments employed are presented as follows:

Work Engagement: The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9), developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006), was employed to operationalise work engagement. This scale consists of three indicators: vigour, dedication, and absorption as validated by Schaufeli et al. (2006) and Khusanova et al. (2021).

Self-Efficacy: Following Bandura (2012), self-efficacy was assessed using three indicators: magnitude, strength, and generality..

Work Behaviour (WB): Employee work behaviour was measured using seven indicators derived from the *BerAKHLAK* framework, namely service-oriented, accountable, competent, harmonious, loyal, adaptive, and collaborative (Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

Employee Performance: Employee performance was measured using three indicators: Quality, Quantity, and Timeliness (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, 2022).

Statistical Analysis

The assessment of the measurement model focused on reliability and validity. Reliability reflects the consistency of a measurement instrument and its ability to generate error-free results. In this study, it was examined through factor loadings and composite reliability (CR), with 0.70 generally regarded as the recommended cut-off (Hair et al., 2019). Even so, indicators with loading values ranging from 0.60 to 0.70 can still be retained, especially in exploratory research or when other indicators in the construct exhibit stronger loadings. Convergent validity was evaluated using the average variance extracted (AVE), where values greater than 0.50 are considered satisfactory.

In behavioural research with an exploratory focus, PLS is often recommended due to its capacity to generate meaningful theoretical insights (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). For the present study, the model was evaluated using SmartPLS software (version 3) (Ringle et al., 2015). PLS path modelling is well-suited for predictive research and is widely used for testing and validating exploratory theoretical models. In this study, all seven hypotheses were tested using SmartPLS.

RESULT

Demographic characteristics

The study aimed to obtain baseline data and identify trends across the five constructs under investigation. Grounded in Social Cognitive Theory, the research was most appropriately applied to individuals working independently, relying on self-efficacy and work engagement to enhance their performance. Accordingly, the study focused on functional employees across various strata, with a total sample of 209 participants.

Slovin's formula was used to determine the overall sample size, combined with Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling to allocate participants proportionally across each job stratum. This approach minimises potential bias from unequal group sizes and ensures the representativeness, validity, and reliability of the findings.

Demographically, 55.0% of respondents were male, with the majority aged 31–40 years (53.6%). Most held a bachelor's degree (80.9%), and the largest proportion occupied the Functional Position of First Expert (36.8%).

TABLE 1. Respondent description.

Description	Quantity	%
Gender		
Male	115	55.02
Female	94	44.98
Total	209	100.0
Education		
Bachelor's degree	169	80.86
Postgraduate degree	40	19.14
Total	209	100.00

Age (years)		
≤ 30	7	3.35
31-40	112	53.59
41-50	60	28.71
> 50	30	14.35
Total	209	100.0
Length of employment (years)		
≤ 3	20	9.57
4 - 8	110	52.63
9 - 12	35	16.75
13 - 15	21	10.05
> 15	23	11.00
Total	209	100.0
Functional Position		
Middle Expert	14	6.7
Young Expert	43	20.57
First Expert	77	36.84
Implementer	75	35.89
Total	209	100.00

Measurement model

The reliability estimates for each variable are presented in Table 2. Table 2 shows that all variables exhibit acceptable levels of reliability, ranging from 0.832 (work engagement) to 0.962 (work behaviour).

TABLE 2: Reliability Estimates for Work Engagement, Self-Efficacy, Work Behaviour, and Employee Performance (N = 209)

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha
WE	0.832
SF	0.884
WB	0.962
EP	0.932

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance2

Table 3 presents the composite reliability values for the four variables, along with the convergent validity assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 3, all indicators demonstrate acceptable composite reliability and satisfactory convergent validity, with both composite reliability and AVE values exceeding the threshold of 0.5.

TABLE 3: Quality criteria (outer model)

Variable	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
WE	0,910	0.566
SF	0,945	0.606
WB	0,921	0.623
EP	0,966	0,773

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance

Table 4 reports the results of the discriminant validity assessment using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which evaluates the extent to which each construct in the model can be empirically distinguished from the others.

As shown in Table 4, the discriminant validity requirement is satisfied, as evidenced by the square root of the AVE values on the diagonal being greater than the inter-construct correlations in the off-diagonal elements.

TABLE 4: Discriminant Validity - Fornell-Larcker Test

Variable	SF	EP	WE	WB
SF	0.778			
EP	0.477	0.843		
WE	0.651	0.528	0.752	
WB	0.694	0.568	0.670	0.790

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance

Table 5 presents the outer loadings for each indicator of the latent variables. The results demonstrate that all indicators load significantly on their respective constructs, thereby fulfilling the required reliability and validity criteria.

TABLE 5: Outer loadings.

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Cut-off
WE	X1.1.1	0.720	0,6
	X1.1.2	0.781	0,6
	X1.1.3	0.750	0,6
	X1.2.1	0.815	0,6
	X1.2.2	0.728	0,6
	X1.2.3	0.683	0,6
	X1.3.1	0.796	0,6
	X1.3.2	0.787	0,6
	X1.3.3	0.697	0,6
SF	X2.1.1	0.637	0,6
	X2.1.2	0.746	0,6
	X2.2.1	0.851	0,6
	X2.2.2	0.860	0,6
	X2.3.1	0.784	0,6
	X2.3.2	0.772	0,6
WB	Z.1.1	0.741	0,6
	Z.1.2	0.762	0,6
	Z.2.1	0.761	0,6
	Z.2.2	0.797	0,6
	Z.3.1	0.839	0,6
	Z.3.2	0.808	0,6
	Z.4.1	0.780	0,6
	Z.4.2	0.784	0,6
	Z.5.1	0.771	0,6
	Z.5.2	0.717	0,6
	Z.5.3	0.686	0,6
	Z.6.1	0.795	0,6
	Z.6.2	0.846	0,6
	Z.6.3	0.849	0,6
	Z.7.1	0.843	0,6
	Z.7.2	0.832	0,6
	Z.7.3	0.791	0,6
EP	Y.1.1	0.771	0,6
	Y.1.2	0.886	0,6
	Y.2.1	0.894	0,6
	Y.2.2	0.805	0,6
	Y.3.1	0.872	0,6
	Y.3.2	0.842	0,6
	Y.3.3	0.824	0,6

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance

Goodness of Fit Model (GoF)

To evaluate model fit, the Goodness of Fit (GoF) in PLS-SEM is employed to determine how accurately the structural model represents the empirical data (see Figure 1). Following Hair et al. (2019), the assessment relies on three key indicators: R^2 , which quantifies the variance explained in the dependent variable; Q^2 , which measures the model's predictive relevance; and SRMR (Standardised Root Mean Square Residual), which captures the average standardised difference between observed and predicted correlation matrices. The integrated analysis of these metrics provides robust evidence that the structural model demonstrates an adequate and reliable fit with the data.

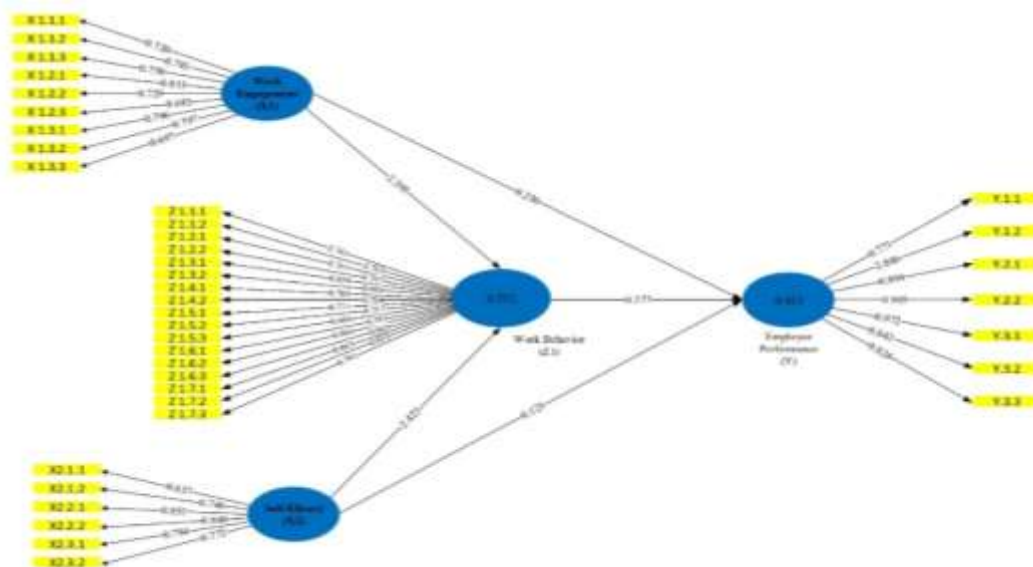


FIGURE 1: PLS-structural equation modelling results.

Table 5 presents the Goodness of Fit (GoF) results for the structural model. The model explains a moderate proportion of variance in Employee Performance ($R^2 = 0.423$) and Work Behaviour ($R^2 = 0.556$). Predictive relevance is moderate for Employee Performance ($Q^2 = 0.317$) and substantial for Work Behaviour ($Q^2 = 0.365$). The SRMR value of 0.073 confirms that the model achieves an adequate fit with the empirical data. Overall, these results indicate that the proposed model reliably represents the relationships among the variables and supports subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 5. Goodness of Fit Model Results

Indicator	Endogenous Variable	Value	Criteria
R Square	Employee Performance (EP)	0.423	Moderate
R Square	Work Behaviour (WB)	0.556	Moderate
Q Square	Employee Performance (EP)	0.317	Medium
Q Square	Work Behaviour (WB)	0.365	Large
SRMR	—	0.073	Model Fit

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance

Hypothesis testing results

Based on Table 6, the path analysis results indicate that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Specifically, Work Engagement (WE) has a positive effect on Employee Performance (EP), with a path coefficient of 0.250 ($t = 2.681$; $p = 0.004$), thereby supporting H1. Self-Efficacy (SE) also exerts a positive influence on Employee Performance, with a coefficient of 0.123 ($t = 1.808$; $p = 0.036$), supporting H2. Moreover, Work Engagement positively affects Work Behaviour (WB) with a coefficient of 0.395 ($t = 6.200$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H3, whereas Self-Efficacy shows a positive effect on Work Behaviour with a coefficient of 0.423 ($t = 6.753$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H4. Finally,

Work Behaviour positively influences Employee Performance with a coefficient of 0.277 ($t = 3.286$; $p = 0.001$), thus confirming H5.

TABLE 6: Path coefficients (inner model).

	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Result
H1	WE-> EP	0.250	2.681	0.004	H1 supported
H2	SF-> EP	0.123	1.808	0.036	H2 supported
H3	WE-> WB	0.395	6.200	0.000	H3 supported
H4	SF-> WB	0.423	6.753	0.000	H4 supported
H5	WB-> EP	0.277	3.286	0.001	H5 supported

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance

To evaluate whether Work Behaviour (WB) mediates the relationship between Work Engagement (WE) and Employee Performance (EP), as well as between Self-Efficacy (SE) and EP, the specific indirect effects reported in Table 7 were examined.

The results show that the indirect effect of WE on EP via WB is positive ($IE = 0.110$) and statistically significant ($p = 0.001$), indicating that WB serves as a partial mediating mechanism in the WE-EP relationship. Similarly, the indirect effect of SE on EP through WB is positive ($IE = 0.117$) and statistically significant ($p = 0.003$), confirming the partial mediation role of WB in the SE-EP relationship.

Collectively, these findings provide partial support for Hypotheses 6 and 7, emphasising the central role of WB as an intervening mechanism in enhancing employee performance.

TABLE 7: Specific indirect effects.

	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Result
H6	WE-> WB-> EP	0.110	3,074	0.001	H6 supported
H7	SF-> WB-> EP	0.117	2,735	0.003	H7 supported

WE, Work Engagement; SF, Self-Efficacy; SL, Work Behaviour; EP, Employee Performance

DISCUSSION

This study confirms a positive relationship between work engagement (WE) and employee performance (EP), thereby supporting Hypothesis 1. The findings are consistent with prior research highlighting the critical role of WE in enhancing EP, particularly within public sector and governmental contexts (Isah and Hoole, 2024), directly demonstrating that WE significantly contributes to improved bureaucratic performance.

Such alignment further reinforces the robustness of the results, as the study is situated within state institutions operating in a bureaucratic environment. Moreover, the evidence accords with the psychological perspective and the framework of Social Cognitive Theory proposed by Bandura (2012), which underscores that WE involves the cognitive, emotional, and physical investment of individuals in their work, ultimately shaping both EP and organisational outcomes.

Accordingly, strengthening employee WE should not be viewed solely as a managerial imperative but as a strategic pathway to enhancing EP, cultivating a professional, ethical, and socially responsive workforce.

The findings provide support for **Hypothesis 2**, confirming a significant relationship between self-efficacy (SE) and employee performance (EP). This outcome aligns with previous research, particularly Donkor (2022), which highlights the critical role of SE in optimising performance within the public sector and demonstrates its importance in strengthening employee outcomes in governmental and public service institutions.

These results are also consistent with Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which emphasises that an individual's belief in their capabilities is shaped through reciprocal interactions between personal factors (such as SE), behavioural responses, and the surrounding social environment. Accordingly, efforts to enhance SE should extend beyond the development of technical skills and competencies, encompassing the establishment of a supportive organisational climate that fosters confidence, resilience, and adaptive behaviour.

The findings of this study confirm a significant effect of work engagement (WE) on work behaviour (WB), thereby supporting **Hypothesis 3**. This result is consistent with the work of Gürbüz et al. (2023), who emphasise that WE nurtures productive, responsible, and adaptive behavioural patterns within organisations. Such consistency highlights the robustness of this relationship across diverse institutional settings.

Within the present study, this relationship acquires particular significance, as employees in government institutions are expected to exemplify the behavioural values encapsulated in the Indonesian acronym *BerAKHLAK*—Service-Oriented, Accountable, Competent, Harmonious, Loyal, Adaptive, and Collaborative. Accordingly, WE does not merely reflect individual enthusiasm for work but constitutes a strategic antecedent in cultivating ethical, professional, and citizen-centred behaviours.

The findings of this study provide support for **Hypothesis 4**, demonstrating that self-efficacy (SE) plays a dominant role in influencing employee work behaviour (WB). Employees at the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia exhibit a strong belief in their capabilities to address challenges, enhance work processes, and generate innovative solutions to problems encountered within the bureaucratic context.

These findings are consistent with studies conducted by Choeni et al. (2023) and Chanie et al. (2023), which similarly examined public sector employees and underscored the centrality of SE in shaping constructive, adaptive, and performance-oriented behaviours.

Furthermore, the results align with Bandura's (2001) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which posits that individuals' perceptions of their capabilities directly influence their cognition, behaviour, and perseverance in the face of challenges. As further emphasised by Hao (2024), SE serves as a cognitive mechanism that governs how individuals think, act, and sustain effort when performing tasks. In line with this, Hameli et al. (2025) highlight that employees with high SE tend to be more proactive in seizing developmental opportunities, resilient in overcoming obstacles, and persistent despite difficulties, enabling them to initiate improvements and adapt to organisational demands.

Taken together, these findings suggest that strengthening SE should form an integral component of employee development strategies. Building SE not only enhances employees' ability to perform tasks effectively but also equips them to act as change agents within their organisational units—driving continuous improvement, promoting efficiency, and ensuring adaptability to dynamic transformations in the public sector.

Hypothesis 5 proposed in this study is supported by findings demonstrating that work behaviour exerts the most direct and dominant influence on enhancing employee performance. The results highlight that consistency in displaying positive work behaviours significantly contributes to improvements in employee performance, particularly in terms of quality, quantity, and timeliness of task completion (Lam et al., 2024).

These findings are also consistent with *Social Cognitive Theory* (Bandura, 2001), which posits that positive work behaviours can influence performance through processes of social learning. Employees tend to internalise work behaviours by observing the actions of colleagues and supervisors. Such behaviours lead to higher quality outcomes, as employees' decisions and actions are grounded in values and principles aligned with their responsibilities.

By adopting work behaviour as the foundation for task execution, employees not only perform their duties optimally but also actively contribute to building a productive work environment. This, in turn, fosters sustainable results and strengthens an organisational culture that is both adaptive and competitive.

Hypothesis 6 is corroborated by the findings, which reveal that work behaviour partially mediates the relationship between work engagement and employee performance.

While work behaviour enhances performance, the direct effect of engagement remains more pronounced than its indirect effect via this mediating mechanism. This suggests that work behaviour is not the exclusive pathway, but it is nevertheless a pivotal factor that amplifies the overall impact of work engagement on performance.

Theoretically, this finding reinforces Bandura's *Social Cognitive Theory* (2001; 2012), which posits reciprocal interactions among personal factors, behaviour, and the environment in shaping work outcomes. The evidence confirms that the influence of work engagement on performance is

channelled not solely through direct pathways but also through behavioural enactments. This aligns with Xanthopoulou et al. (2009), who demonstrate that engagement fosters positive behaviours that ultimately strengthen performance outcomes.

Work behaviour, reflected in loyalty, regulatory compliance, and commitment to organisational reputation, emerges as the behavioural manifestation of engagement. The exemplary conduct of supervisors and peers provides reinforcement that accelerates the internalisation of productive work standards and deepens employees' psychological attachment to their roles. In this respect, work behaviour acts as the conduit through which the energy and dedication of engaged employees are converted into measurable and sustainable performance improvements.

Supporting Hypothesis 7, this study found that work behaviour partially mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance. In simpler terms, although work behaviour contributes to improving performance, the direct effect of self-efficacy remains stronger than its indirect influence via work behaviour. This suggests that while work behaviour is important, it is not the only pathway through which self-efficacy shapes employee performance, yet it remains a crucial factor in reinforcing overall outcomes.

Conceptually, these findings support Social Cognitive Theory, which highlights the importance of cognitive processes in guiding and shaping employee actions. The theory provides a lens through which we can understand how work behaviour develops, adapts, and evolves as individuals interact with their environment. Employees with high self-efficacy are more likely to engage in constructive work behaviours, such as following organisational regulations diligently, tackling challenges responsibly, and maintaining integrity in all aspects of their tasks. They focus not only on achieving results but also on ensuring that the processes leading to those results are of high quality. As a result, self-confident employees who adhere to proper procedures are better equipped to respond effectively to obstacles, maintain ethical standards, and demonstrate consistency in their work performance.

Furthermore, the study shows that strong work engagement can enhance performance when mediated by positive work behaviour. Employees who are emotionally committed to their work are naturally motivated to demonstrate behaviours that support organisational goals, including loyalty in complying with rules, adaptability and proactivity in completing tasks, and collaboration with colleagues. Collectively, these behaviours contribute to higher individual performance and facilitate the achievement of broader organisational objectives.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study confirm that self-efficacy represents the most dominant personal factor in shaping positive work behaviour. Employees with high levels of self-efficacy are more capable of confronting challenges, devising adaptive solutions, and managing tasks effectively, thereby exerting a stronger impact on work behaviour than other variables in the research model. These results are consistent with the framework of *Social Cognitive Theory* (SCT), which identifies self-efficacy as a key determinant of behaviour through mechanisms of self-reflection and self-regulation (Bandura, 2001; 2012).

Further analysis reveals that work behaviour exerts the strongest influence on employee performance, thereby validating its mediating role as both theoretically grounded and empirically supported. Path analysis indicates that work behaviour partially mediates the relationships between self-efficacy and work engagement with employee performance. This implies that while self-efficacy and work engagement may directly enhance performance, their effects are maximised when transmitted through positive work behaviour (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009).

Accordingly, work behaviour operates as a bridging mechanism, linking personal factors (work engagement, self-efficacy) to behavioural outcomes (employee performance). This underscores the argument that human resource development should not only emphasise the strengthening of individual capacities (personal factors) but also the cultivation and internalisation of productive work behaviours (behavioural factors) aligned with organisational objectives.

Practical Implications

The results of this research generate critical insights for human resource management practices, with relevance to both the public sector and organisational contexts more broadly.

Firstly, the results affirm the urgency of developing interventions that address not only personal but also behavioural dimensions, such as self-efficacy training, work engagement programmes, and the provision of constructive supervisory feedback as a tangible manifestation of organisational support. Such interventions have the potential to strengthen employees' self-confidence, enhance intrinsic motivation, and foster the emergence of more proactive work behaviour.

Secondly, this study underscores the need to adopt a more comprehensive perspective in performance evaluation systems. Performance assessments should not be limited to output achievements alone but should also integrate psychological and behavioural indicators, including levels of engagement, initiative, and self-regulatory capacity. This holistic approach enables organisations to build a more balanced performance management system that not only facilitates individual development but also ensures the sustainable attainment of strategic objectives.

Thirdly, public organisations, particularly governmental institutions, may utilise these findings as a foundation for formulating personnel management policies that balance performance demands with the strengthening of employees' psychological resources. Such an orientation aligns with contemporary management practices that position psychological well-being as the principal foundation for sustainable performance improvement.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study examined the interrelated roles of work engagement (WE), self-efficacy (SE), work behaviour (WB), and employee performance (EP) within the context of public sector organisations. Despite its contributions, several limitations warrant attention. First, the limited empirical evidence on WE, SE, and WB in the public sectors of developing countries constrains direct comparison with prior studies. Nevertheless, the consistency of the findings with the small body of existing literature enhances confidence in their validity.

Second, the exclusive focus on public sector employees restricts the generalisability of the results to other organisational settings. Future research is encouraged to extend the investigation to diverse occupational groups and institutional contexts to assess the robustness and boundary conditions of these relationships.

Third, the study primarily emphasised personal and behavioural factors within the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) framework while neglecting environmental dimensions that also shape work behaviour. Consequently, the proposed model only partially represents the reciprocal interactions between personal, behavioural, and environmental determinants. Incorporating environmental variables such as perceived organisational support, workplace culture, and physical working conditions would enable a more comprehensive understanding of employee performance.

Fourth, although validated instruments were employed, reliance on questionnaires raises the risk of common method variance due to subjective interpretation by respondents. However, given the alignment of the observed associations with prior research, this bias is unlikely to substantially compromise the integrity of the findings.

Finally, the cross-sectional research design precludes causal inference and limits the ability to capture the long-term effects of WE, SE, and WB on EP. Future studies adopting longitudinal or experimental designs would provide stronger evidence regarding the sustained influence of these psychological and behavioural constructs on employee performance.

CONCLUSION

This study offers significant insights into the role of work behaviour (WB) within public sector organisations, as well as its interaction with work engagement (WE) and self-efficacy (SE) in influencing employee performance (EP). The findings demonstrate that WB, defined by the BerAKHLAK framework as Service-Oriented, Accountable, Competent, Harmonious, Loyal, Adaptive, and Collaborative, partially mediates the effects of WE and SE on EP.

For practical application, public institutions are encouraged to adopt integrated strategies that enhance WE, SE, and WB simultaneously. In situations where employee WE and SE are relatively low, organisations should prioritise strengthening existing WB, as empirical evidence suggests it can effectively mediate part of the influence of WE and SE on EP. Ultimately, fostering both positive work behaviour and psychological resources can enhance employee engagement and contribute to sustained improvements in organisational performance.

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Contribution Statements

All authors contributed to the study's conception and design, performed material preparation, data collection, and analysis, and commented on previous versions of the manuscript. N.S. wrote the first draft of the manuscript, and all authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Author Contributions: Conceptualisation: N.L.S. and N.N.; Methodology: N.L.S., N.N., and M.S.; Formal analysis and investigation: N.L.S. and R.V.H.; Writing - original draft preparation: N.L.S.; Writing - review and editing: N.L.S., N.N., M.S., and R.V.H.; Resources: N.L.S.; Supervision: N.N., M.S., and R.V.H. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Declarations

Funding: The authors did not receive support from any organisation for the submitted work.

Declaration: All authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organisation or entity with any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data availability

Data sharing does not apply to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.