

**Self-efficacy, career development, and work engagement on employee performance:
Evidence from aviation sector organizations**

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ABSTRACT

Purpose — *This research aims to test and analyze the influence of self-efficacy and career development on employee performance, while also examining the mediating role of work engagement.*

Method — *This research employs an associative quantitative research approach. The research sample comprised 147 employees from the UPBU Class I offices in Mopah Merauke, Wamena, and Domine Eduard Osok Sorong. Probability sampling was used as the sampling technique. The analysis method utilized in this study is SEM-PLS, conducted using SmartPLS3 software.*

Result — *We found that self-efficacy and career development have a positive and significant impact on work engagement. Furthermore, self-efficacy, career development, and work involvement positively and significantly affect employee performance. Our research also revealed that work involvement plays a mediating role in the influence of self-efficacy and career development on employee performance.*

Novelty — *This study innovatively utilizes work engagement as a mediating variable to delve into the determinants of work performance specifically within the context of local public organizations, shedding light on previously unexplored aspects of employee productivity in this setting.*

Keywords: *employee performance, self-efficacy, career development, work engagement*

INTRODUCTION

Human resources play a pivotal role in organizational endeavors, a fact underscored by the scholarly works of Gruman & Saks (2011) and Kramar (2014). It is imperative to acknowledge that even in the presence of sophisticated organizational tools (Yu et al., 2019), the actualization of organizational objectives hinges upon the active participation of employees. In essence, the triumph of an organization is intricately entwined with the caliber and performance of its human resources (Boxall, 2012; Marler & Fisher, 2013).

The consequences of high employee performance are far-reaching, extending to the enhancement of work quality, productivity, efficiency, and overall organizational effectiveness (Sparrow & Cooper, 2014). Regrettably, many organizations grapple with suboptimal management of employee performance, a predicament manifested in lackluster employee performance and, ultimately, subpar organizational outcomes.

Within aviation sector entities, employee performance emerges as a pivotal determinant of the seamless execution, security, and safety of aviation activities (Chang et al., 2013). Substantial literature underscores the enduring specter of human error as a formidable threat to aviation safety (Noroozi et al., 2013). Consequently, the meticulous examination of factors influencing employee performance assumes heightened importance, particularly within the aviation sector.

This study, grounded in a comprehensive literature review and insights garnered from prior researchers, aims to scrutinize the impact of three critical factors on employee performance: self-efficacy, career development, and work involvement. Rooted in motivational theory and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2011), self-efficacy emerges as a catalyst for heightening goals,



perseverance, and effort, thereby bolstering performance. Individuals endowed with robust self-efficacy tend to invest heightened effort in task completion and exhibit a proclivity for tenacity, eschewing premature capitulation (Lisbona et al., 2018).

Organizations aspiring to attract, motivate, and retain talent must demonstrate genuine concern for employee career advancement (Ali, Bashir, et al., 2019). When employees perceive organizational commitment to their career needs and receive support for career development, they tend to proactively seek opportunities for contribution through elevated performance (Gupta, 2019). Korankye's research findings in 2020 emphasize the necessity of attending to sustainable career development factors to optimize and perpetuate employee performance for the attainment of corporate objectives.

Furthermore, the extant literature highlights the burgeoning exploration of work engagement as a mediating variable for the study of organizational behavior and human resource management (Na-Nan et al., 2021). Consequently, this investigation endeavors to probe the role of work engagement as a mediating variable in the nexus between self-efficacy and career development vis-à-vis employee performance. Earlier researchers such as Tian et al. (2019) underscore the mediating function of work engagement in the relationship between self-efficacy and performance. Similarly, Song et al.'s work in 2018 corroborates the significant mediating role of work involvement in the connection between self-efficacy and performance.

Despite prior studies addressing the influence of self-efficacy, career development, and work involvement on performance, existing research yields heterogeneous outcomes. While some studies affirm the positive impact of self-efficacy on employee performance (Na-Nan & Sanamthong, 2020; Turay et al., 2019), others have been unable to establish a statistically significant effect (Ambarita et al., 2022). Analogously, the influence of career development and work engagement exhibits variability. Certain researchers ascertain the positive influence of career development (Lee & Lee, 2018; Napitupulu et al., 2017) and work engagement (Awan et al., 2020; Cesário & Chambel, 2017) on employee performance, whereas others fail to discern a meaningful impact (Riyanto et al., 2021; Utarindasari & Kumala, 2023).

This study endeavors to bridge extant research lacunae, thereby reaffirming the connection between self-efficacy, career development, and work engagement on performance. Additionally, it is noteworthy that international literature examining self-efficacy in the public sector remains limited, with predominant usage of student samples in non-work contexts within self-efficacy research (Carter et al., 2018). This study, thus, introduces novelty by exploring the influence of self-efficacy, career development, and work engagement within a distinct organizational milieu: a public organization operating in the realm of air transportation in Papua Province.

The research in focus scrutinizes the influence of self-efficacy, career development, and work involvement on employee performance within the precincts of UPBU Class I Papua offices. It is imperative to acknowledge that employee performance in the domain of airport management organizations in Papua Province remains underexplored. Consequently, the outcomes of this study carry the potential to furnish valuable insights and practical recommendations, catering to the enhancement of employee performance within public sector entities, particularly those encompassing airport management offices.

METHOD

This research is a quantitative study with an associative approach. The population under study comprised all civil servants at Class I UPBU offices in Papua, specifically UPBU offices in Merauke, Wamena, and Sorong, totaling 231 employees. The research sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, resulting in a sample of 147 employees.

The variable measurements in this research were adopted from previous studies and existing literature. The number and sources of indicators or variable measurements are detailed in Table 1. Research data were collected by distributing questionnaires to all selected participants. The research instrument employed was a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale for responses.

The data collected through the distribution of questionnaires were then analyzed using the SEM-PLS technique. In SEM-PLS analysis, the data are first assessed through an outer model test, which includes assessing convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability. If the results from the outer model are satisfactory, the inner model is then evaluated, considering the coefficient of determination, the extent of influence, and predictive relevance. At this stage, the results of hypothesis testing are also examined.

Table 1. Name of variable, number of indicators, and research adopted

No.	Variable	Number of indicators	Source
1	Self Efficacy	15	Bandura (2005), Sherer et al. (1982)
2	Career Development	11	Siagian (2011)
3	Work Engagement	17	Schaufeli et al. (2002)
4	Employee Performance	14	Mathis et al. (2017)

Source: Developed by the authors (2023)

Hypotheses development

Self-efficacy and employee performance

Self-efficacy refers to employees' belief in their ability to complete tasks and achieve set goals. Employees with high self-efficacy tend to exhibit greater motivation and persist in the face of challenging work. Their strong belief in their own abilities makes them more inclined to set ambitious goals, persevere through setbacks, and demonstrate a higher level of commitment to completing tasks. Consequently, their performance tends to improve (Na-Nan & Sanamthong, 2020; Turay et al., 2019). Therefore, the first hypothesis proposed in this research is as follows:

H1: Self-efficacy has a positive impact on employee performance

Self-efficacy and work engagement

Confidence in one's own competence is a crucial factor that empowers employees and motivates them to excel in their work. Employees who possess strong belief in their abilities are more likely to approach their tasks with enthusiasm, invest effort, and persevere when confronted with challenges. As an individual's self-efficacy increases, their level of engagement in their work tends to rise (Alessandri et al., 2015; Tian et al., 2019). Therefore, the second hypothesis of this research is formulated as follows:

H2: Self-efficacy has a positive impact on employee work engagement

Career development and employee performance

Career development within an organization is a multifaceted process that holds significant importance for both employees and the organization's overall growth and success. As employees acquire new skills and knowledge through career development programs, they become better equipped to handle their job responsibilities effectively and adapt to evolving workplace demands (Ali, Mahmood, et al., 2019; Sugiarti, 2023). Therefore, the third research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H3: Career development has a positive impact on employee performance

Career development and work engagement

Employees who have the opportunity to advance their careers through training, skills development, and a clear career path tend to be more motivated, engaged, and committed to their work. Career development initiatives convey organizational support to employees, leading them to reciprocate with positive behaviors, such as heightened work involvement (Awan et al., 2020; Cesário & Chambel, 2017). Therefore, the fourth research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H4: Career development has a positive impact on employee work engagement

Work engagement and employee performance

Employees who are highly engaged in their work tend to be more willing to invest their time and energy into their tasks. They also demonstrate a higher level of dedication to their work. With increased seriousness and engagement, employees typically achieve higher levels of performance (Alessandri et al., 2015; Carter et al., 2018; Song et al., 2018). Therefore, the fifth research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H5: Work engagement has a positive impact on employee performance

Work engagement mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance

Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory (1986) underscores the connection between self-efficacy, work involvement, and employee performance. Employees with high self-confidence are more likely to be deeply engaged in their work, resulting in enhanced performance. Those with a strong sense of self-efficacy tend to approach their work with enthusiasm, viewing challenges as growth opportunities rather than obstacles. This heightened engagement, in turn, leads to improved performance, as individuals who believe strongly in their abilities invest greater effort and adopt a proactive approach to tasks (Chung et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

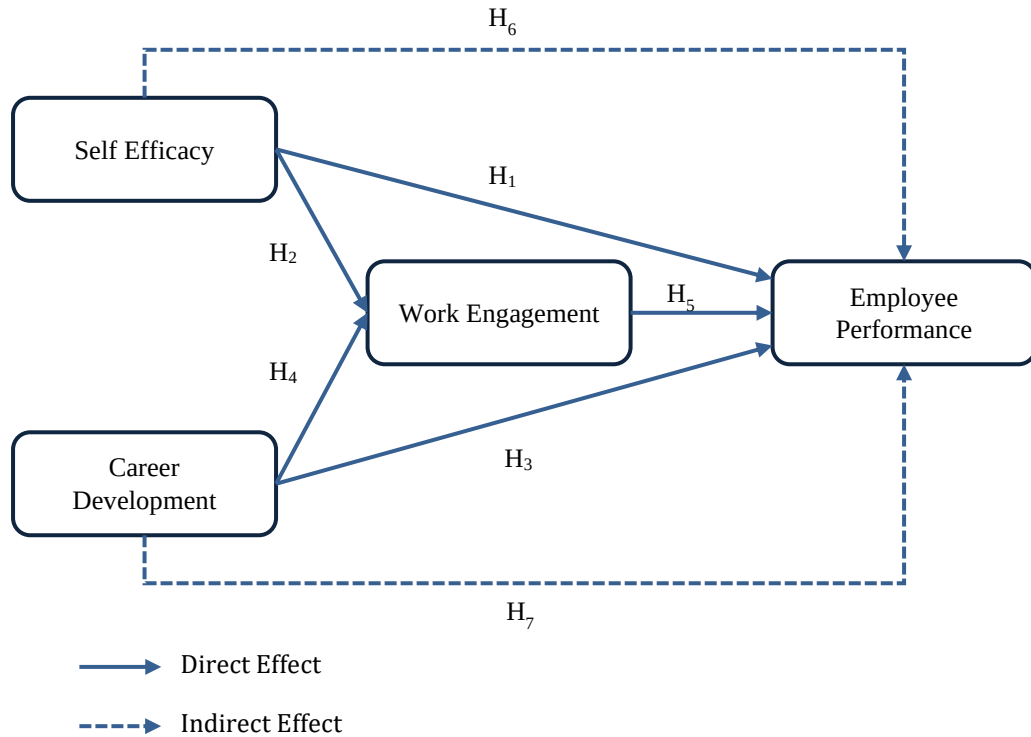
H6: Work engagement mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance

Work engagement mediates the relationship between career development and employee performance

According to the Job-Demand Resources (JD-R) theory, when employees perceive support from the organization, they tend to reciprocate with positive behaviors, such as heightened work involvement and improved performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Career development initiatives, including training, mentorship programs, and opportunities for advancement, play a pivotal role in driving employee engagement. When individuals perceive a clear path for growth and development within the organization, they are more likely to become engaged, invested, and motivated in their roles. Engaged employees, in turn, significantly contribute to enhanced performance by demonstrating increased commitment, creativity, and a willingness to go above and beyond their responsibilities (Ali, Bashir, et al., 2019; Korankye, 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H7: Work engagement mediates the relationship between career development and employee performance

Figure 1. Research model



Source: Developed by the authors (2023)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

A total of 148 questionnaires were distributed to the research sample. All distributed questionnaires were returned to the researcher and are available for further research analysis. There were no missing questionnaires or incomplete responses. Thus, the questionnaire response rate stands at 100%.

Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the characteristics of the respondents, which reflect the demographic profile of UPBU Class I Papua employees. The results of the analysis, as shown in Table 2, reveal that the majority of employees are male, possess a high school education level, fall within the age range of 41-50 years, and have worked at UPBU Class I Papua for 10-15 years.

Table 2. Demographics of respondents

Items	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	88	59,86%
	Female	59	40,14%
Education	Senior High School	64	43,54%
	Diploma D2/D3	32	21,77%
	Bachelor Degree (S1)	51	34,69%
	Master Degree (S2)	0	0,00%
Age	20-30 years old	4	2,72%
	31-40 years old	76	51,70%

	41-50 years old	59	40,14%
	>51 years old	8	5,44%
Period of services	1-5 years	2	1,36%
	6-10 years	7	4,76%
	10-15 years	91	61,90%
	16-20 years	24	16,33%
	>20 years	23	15,65%

Source: Processed data (2023)

Preliminary analysis

Outer model

In reflective constructs, convergent validity is assessed through the factor loading values of each indicator and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). In the initial iteration stage, both the self-efficacy and performance variables exhibited AVE values below 0.5. As a result, five indicators (specifically, ED9, ED7, ED11, KP10, and KP9) were selected for removal from the model. Subsequently, the SEM-PLS algorithm underwent another round of testing. The results from the second iteration of the SEM-PLS algorithm indicated that all variables now possessed AVE values exceeding 0.5, and all indicators exhibited factor loading values above 0.5. Therefore, it can be concluded that the measurement model satisfies the criteria for convergent validity.

Factor loading and reliability coefficients serve as indicators of the validity and reliability of variable observation constructs. Among the self-efficacy variable constructs, three were found to be invalid, with factor loading values below 0.5 (namely, 'doing unpleasant things until they are finished,' 'handling unexpected problems well,' and 'failing to motivate'). In contrast, all career development variable constructs displayed factor loading values exceeding 0.5, confirming their validity.

Similarly, within the employee performance variable constructs, two were found to be invalid, with factor loading values below 0.5 ('try to provide good service' and 'try to meet targets'). However, the work engagement construct exhibited valid and reliable factor loading values exceeding 0.5. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values. All variables demonstrated strong internal consistency reliability, as both CA and CR values exceeded 0.7.

Tabel 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Self Efficacy	Work Engagement	Employee Performance	Career Development
Self Efficacy				
Work Engagement	0,537			
Employee Performance	0,633	0,680		
Career Development	0,392	0,553	0,607	

Source: Processed data (2023)

Subsequently, discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait-monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT). For good discriminant validity, HTMT values should be below 0.9. Upon calculating the HTMT values as shown in Table 3, it is evident that all HTMT values are below 0.9, indicating that the measurement model satisfies the criterion for good discriminant validity. Each variable's HTMT values consistently demonstrate values below 0.9, reinforcing the model's strong discriminant validity.

Inner model

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to assess the proportion of variability in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. As shown in Table 4, the R^2 value for the work involvement variable is 0.396, indicating that self-efficacy and career development can collectively account for 39.6% of the variance in work involvement. Additionally, the R^2 value for the employee performance variable is 0.565, signifying that self-efficacy, career development, and work involvement together can elucidate 56.5% of the variance in employee performance.

Table 4. Coefficient of determination value and predictive relevance

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted	Q-Square
Work Engagement	0,396	0,388	0,192
Employee Performance	0,565	0,556	0,274

Source: Processed data (2023)

According to Hair et al. (2017), higher Q^2 values of 0, 0.25, and 0.50 correspond to small, medium, and large predictive relevance of the PLS path model, respectively. As indicated in Table 4, the Q^2 value for work engagement is 0.192, suggesting relatively low predictive relevance. Conversely, the Q^2 value for employee performance stands at 0.274, indicating a moderate level of predictive relevance.

Table 5. F-Square

	Work Engagement	Employee Performance
Self Efficacy	0,193	0,166
Career Development	0,225	0,131
Work Engagement		0,155

Source: Processed data (2023)

Guidelines for assessing the effect sizes (f^2) suggest that values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively (Hair et al., 2017). As presented in Table 5, the influence of self-efficacy on work engagement is of moderate magnitude, with effect sizes of 0.193 and 0.166 on employee performance. Career development similarly exerts a moderate impact on work engagement, with an effect size of 0.225, but it has a smaller influence on employee performance. Finally, work engagement demonstrates a moderate effect on employee performance, with an effect size of 0.155.

Hypotheses testing*Direct effect*

The results indicate that Self-Efficacy has a positive and significant impact on Employee Performance, with a path coefficient of 0.316. This significance is confirmed by a t-statistic value of 5.110, which surpasses the critical t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000, well below 0.05, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 1 (H1).

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that Self-Efficacy also positively and significantly influences Work Engagement, with a path coefficient of 0.367. This is supported by a t-statistic value of 5.139, exceeding the critical t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance and the acceptance of Hypothesis 2 (H2).

In addition, Career Development exhibits a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance, with a path coefficient of 0.283. This finding is corroborated by a t-statistic value of 4.759, which exceeds the critical t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 3 (H3).

Moreover, the analysis demonstrates that Career Development has a positive and significant impact on Work Engagement, with a path coefficient of 0.396. This is supported by a t-statistic value of 6.075, well above the critical t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance and the acceptance of Hypothesis 4 (H4).

Finally, the direct effect of Work Engagement positively and significantly influences Employee Performance, with a path coefficient of 0.335. This substantial result is evidenced by a t-statistic value of 4.974, which exceeds the critical t-table value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance and the acceptance of Hypothesis 5 (H5).

The process of hypothesis testing aims to evaluate the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable, taking into account the path coefficient and t-statistic values. As shown in Table 6, all direct influence hypotheses exhibit a positive path coefficient, t-statistic values greater than 1.66, and significance levels below 0.05. Therefore, all direct influence hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5) are supported.

Table 6. Direct effect testing result

	Hypothesis	Path Coeff.	T-statistic	P-values	Results
H1	Self-Efficacy → Employee Performance	0,316	5,110	0,000	Supported
H2	Self-Efficacy → Work Engagement	0,367	5,139	0,000	Supported
H3	Career Development → Employee Performance	0,283	4,759	0,000	Supported
H4	Career Development → Work Engagement	0,396	6,075	0,000	Supported
H5	Work Engagement → Employee Performance	0,335	4,974	0,000	Supported

Source: Processed data (2023)

Indirect effect

Based on the results of the mediation hypothesis test presented in Table 7, it can be concluded that work involvement partially mediates the influence of self-efficacy and career development on employee performance. The analysis confirms that Work Engagement positively and significantly mediates the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Employee Performance, with a path coefficient of 0.316 and a p-value of 0.000, which is below 0.05. This finding leads to the acceptance of Hypothesis 6 (H6).

Furthermore, the analysis also establishes that Work Engagement positively and significantly mediates the relationship between Career Development and Employee Performance, with a path coefficient of 0.283 and a p-value of 0.000, also below 0.05. Consequently, Hypothesis 7 (H7) is accepted.

In summary, these results provide strong support for both the sixth hypothesis (H6) and the seventh hypothesis (H7), indicating that Work Engagement serves as a significant mediator in the relationships between Self-Efficacy and Employee Performance as well as between Career Development and Employee Performance.

Table 7. Indirect effect testing result

Hypothesis		Path Coeff.	P-Values Direct Effect	P-Values Indirect Effect	Information
H6	Self efficacy → Work Engagement	0,367	0,000	0,000	a, b, and c are significant = partial mediation
	Work Engagement → Employee Performance	0,335	0,000		
	Self Efficacy → Employee Performance	0,316	0,000		
H7	Career Development → Work Engagement	0,396	0,000	0,000	a, b, and c are significant = partial mediation
	Work Engagement → Employee Performance	0,335	0,000		
	Career Development → Employee Performance	0,283	0,000		

Source: Processed data (2023)

Discussion

Self-efficacy and employee performance

Self-efficacy positively affects employee performance, supporting the first (H1) hypothesis. Employees at UPBU Class I offices in Merauke, Wamena, and Sorong demonstrate confidence in their abilities and competence in performing their work. This confidence fosters a sense of employee involvement and consequently improves work performance. Employees with high self-efficacy tend to exhibit greater motivation and persistence in their tasks, enhancing overall work performance. These findings align with previous research, which also identified a positive influence of self-efficacy on employee performance (Carter et al., 2018; Na-Nan & Sanamthong, 2020) and work engagement (Alessandri et al., 2015; Tian et al., 2019).

Self-efficacy and work engagement

Self-efficacy positively influences work engagement, supporting the second hypothesis (H2). Employees with high self-efficacy are likely to demonstrate enhanced performance and greater involvement in their work. This is because high self-efficacy leads to increased persistence, especially when immediate success is not achieved; individuals with this trait are confident in their competence and less likely to give up quickly (Lisbona et al., 2018). This research corroborates the social cognitive theory proposed by Bandura (2005), which posits that self-efficacy enhances a person's goal-setting, persistence, and effort, thereby improving performance. Furthermore, the self-efficacy theory underpins individual motivation; individuals who believe they can achieve desired outcomes are more incentivized to act (Pajares, 2002).

Career development and employee performance

Career development has a positive impact on employee performance, affirming the third hypothesis (H3). This aligns with prior studies, which have similarly observed a positive relationship between career development and employee performance (Ali, Mahmood, et al.,

2019; Sugiarti, 2023). Employees at the UPBU Class I Office in Papua perceive the career development opportunities there as favorable. The office provides equitable access and opportunities for career advancement to every employee. This finding lends support to Blau's social exchange theory.

Career development and work engagement

Career development positively influences work engagement, corroborating the fourth hypothesis (H4). This is consistent with earlier studies that have also identified a positive correlation between career development and work engagement (Ali, Bashir, et al., 2019; Gupta, 2019; Korankye, 2020). Under the lens of social exchange theory, which posits that human relationships are shaped by a subjective cost-benefit analysis, this finding becomes more salient. When employees perceive that their organization supports their career development, they feel valued and cared for. This perception leads to reciprocal behavior beneficial to the organization, such as enhanced performance and increased work engagement. Essentially, employees are more likely to exhibit positive behaviors towards an organization that acknowledges and supports their needs, including career development.

Work engagement and employee performance

Work engagement has been shown to positively impact employee performance, reinforcing findings from previous studies such as those by Alessandri et al. (2015), Carter et al. (2018), and Song et al. (2018). Specifically, employees at Class I UPBU offices in Merauke, Wamena, and Sorong in Papua demonstrate notably good work engagement. They find their work inspiring and approach it with enthusiasm. Additionally, these employees perceive their work as meaningful and purposeful. Such levels of engagement are influential in enhancing employee performance.

Work engagement mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance

Work engagement acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance. This is because self-efficacy has a significant direct effect on employee performance. Employees with high self-efficacy are more deeply engaged in their work, which in turn enhances their performance. This study's findings are in agreement with the research of other scholars, such as Chung et al. (2023) and Tian et al. (2019), who have also demonstrated that work engagement can mediate the impact of self-efficacy on employee performance.

Work engagement mediates the relationship between career development and employee performance

The research demonstrates that work engagement mediates the relationship between career development and employee performance at Class I UPBU offices in Papua. This aligns with the findings of previous studies, such as those by Bashir et al. (2019) and Korankye (2020), which also identified work engagement as a mediating factor in the connection between career development and employee performance. Specifically, when employees perceive the career development programs within their organization as supportive and effective, they become more engaged in their work. This increased engagement, in turn, positively influences their performance levels.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to explore the effects of self-efficacy, career development, and work engagement on employee performance in local public organizations. The findings reveal that self-efficacy significantly enhances employee performance and work engagement. Similarly, career

development positively impacts both employee performance and work engagement. Notably, work engagement emerges as a crucial factor in boosting employee performance and serves as a mediator, specifically mediating the effects of self-efficacy and career development on employee performance.

The results of this study offer several important implications for leaders in local public organizations and for future research. Firstly, for organizational leaders, fostering a positive psychological environment that bolsters employee self-efficacy is vital. This can be achieved through supportive leadership and tailored training programs aimed at enhancing employee confidence and skills. Secondly, ensuring equitable access to career development opportunities is imperative. Bridging any gaps in employee satisfaction with career development programs is essential, and leaders should proactively support employees in their career progression, providing access to pertinent career information.

Moreover, prioritizing and facilitating employee work engagement is crucial. Work engagement not only directly improves employee performance but also plays a key role in mediating the influence of self-efficacy and career development on performance. Implementing inspiring and challenging work assignments can be instrumental in this regard.

Finally, for future research, incorporating additional variables such as job satisfaction and investigating the moderating effects of demographic characteristics would yield a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of employee performance in this context. Continuously refining and expanding the research model will enable researchers to offer deeper insights into optimizing employee performance and engagement in airport management and other similar organizational settings.

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