

## Research Article

# The Influence of Emotional Intelligence and Work Motivation on Employee Performance Mediated by Employee Engagement

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Received: 15 Sep 2023; Accepted: 25 Sep 2023; Online: 05 Oct 2023;

## Abstract

This research was conducted to analyze the influence of emotional Intelligence and work motivation on employee performance mediated by employee engagement. This research is designed as explanatory research. The population of this study were employees of PT—BS, with a total sample of 84 respondents. The data analysis used is the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling Method. The study results show that (1) emotional Intelligence positively and significantly affects employee engagement. (2) work motivation positively and significantly affects employee engagement. (3) employee engagement positively and significantly affects employee performance. (4) emotional intelligence positively and significantly affects employee performance. (5) work motivation positively and significantly affects employee performance. (6) Employer engagement partially mediates the effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance. (7) employee engagement partially mediates the effect of work motivation on employee performance. This research is expected to provide profound implications for future studies on emotional Intelligence, work motivation, and employee performance. This research is also expected to be helpful input for agencies as a consideration in determining policies for the agency's progress, and one day can help solve employee performance problems in both the public and private sectors.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Work Motivation, Employee Engagement, Employee Performance

JEL Classification: M00, M50, M54

How to cite: Sulyantir, Fadhillah, P. R., (2023). The Influence of Emotional Intelligence and Work Motivation on Employee Performance Mediated by Employee Engagement, *Human Capital and Organizations (HCO)* 1(1), 1-11

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## 1. Introduction

Employee performance is the success rate of employees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities (Samsudin, 2018). Performance is what employees do and do not do (Samsudin, 2018). A company's sustainability remains sustainable, and its profitability continues to increase; one of the factors is employee performance, whether or not the performance achieved by employees will influence the company's performance and overall success (Putra et al., 2021). The company highly expects high employee performance. The more employees with high performance, the overall company productivity will increase so that the company can survive in global competition (Pratama & Suhaeni, 2017). If employee performance increases, it will affect the positive results obtained by the company, such as increased profits and increased company and employee productivity. If employee performance decreases, it can negatively influence the company, such as decreased customer satisfaction and company effectiveness (Goni et al., 2021).

Businesses must place high importance on employee engagement as it profoundly impacts numerous aspects of the organization, including productivity, employee retention, customer satisfaction, and overall long-term success. When engaged, employees are more likely to be highly productive, motivated to excel in their work, offer valuable insights for improvements, and actively contribute to attaining company objectives. Therefore, fostering a culture of employee engagement should be a top priority for companies looking to achieve sustained growth and success. A clinical psychologist, Abraham Maslow, introduced the theory of tiered needs, known as Maslow's theory of human needs, which suggests five human needs based on their most essential levels (Bari & Hidayat, 2022). Humans try to fulfill needs from the lowest level, namely physiological needs. They will move up a level after the previous needs have been fulfilled, and so on, until they reach the highest needs, namely self-actualization (Putra et al., 2021). The five levels of human needs are physiological, safety, security, social, ego, and self-actualization.

This employee performance problem has been studied by many researchers, such as research from Pratama and Suhaeni (2017) and Kuswati (2020). This research has identified several factors that influence employee performance, including the individual himself, the work environment, the financial benefits obtained, and the culture of the organization where people work. According to Kuswati (2020), looking at the individual is one of the dominant factors in improving employee performance. The individual factor that Kuswati means is the influence of work motivation on a person's performance. Because if work motivation increases, a person will be more thorough and disciplined in his work, and performance will increase. Apart from work motivation factors, according to Pratama and Suhaeni (2017), emotional intelligence is another factor that can influence employee performance.

According to Putra et al. (2021), high emotional Intelligence and motivation will only sometimes create good performance. When someone has high emotional Intelligence and high motivation but is not involved at work, the performance obtained is not satisfactory. Because with this attachment, employees feel they are cared for. Therefore, employee engagement is needed in a company. However, there needs to be more research studying the role of employee engagement in improving employee performance, especially regarding its relationship with emotional Intelligence and work motivation. In practical terms, understanding the role of employee engagement in improving performance can provide an understanding of the factors that companies can pay attention to in managing human resources.

Then, the existence of knowledge regarding the role of employee engagement also expands the theory of human resource management through performance. Emotional Intelligence, work motivation, and employee engagement cover the majority of the hierarchy of Maslow's theory, where emotional Intelligence and work motivation are included in the hierarchy of ego needs. In contrast, employee engagement variables include social needs (Bari & Hidayat, 2022). This research aims to see whether if these ego needs and social needs are fulfilled, it will affect the employee's performance.

Commitment to the company is important for success and productivity in the work environment.

Strong commitment from employees can help create a positive work environment, increase productivity, and achieve company goals more effectively. As an employee, committing means being willing to be fully dedicated, work well, and prioritize the company to create increased performance.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypothesis

### Organizational Behavior

According to Wijaya (2017), Organizational Behavior studies human interaction in organizations, including systematic studies of behavior, structure, and processes within organizations. Humans create organizations to achieve a goal, and at the same time, humans also need organizations to develop themselves.

### Employee Performance

Employee performance results from work in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties following his responsibilities (Ansory & Indrasari, 2018). The term "employee performance" signifies an individual's work accomplishments after exerting the necessary effort on the job that is associated with obtaining meaningful work, an engaged profile, and affectionate co-workers or superiors (Karakas, 2010). An effective employee performance management system is needed to fully utilize human resources (HR) and increase organizational success, which is very important for business organizations (Jena & Pradhan, 2017).

### Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence has its roots in the concept of "social intelligence," first identified by Thorndike in 1920. Thorndike defined social Intelligence as the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, to act wisely in human relationships. Emotional Intelligence is a set of interrelated skills regarding the ability to understand, assess, and express emotions accurately; the ability to access and evoke feelings while facilitating thought; the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Contreras-Pacheco et al., 2019).

### Work Motivation

Motivation is an urge or reason that underlies enthusiasm for doing something (Ansory & Indrasari, 2018). Work motivation is an urge that grows within a person, both from within and outside him, to carry out work with high enthusiasm and use all the abilities and skills he has to achieve satisfaction in what he wants (Samsudin, 2018). By providing this motivation, it is hoped that every individual or employee can work hard and enthusiastically to achieve high work performance (Ansory & Indrasari, 2018). High work motivation is a strong internal drive that encourages a person to work with high enthusiasm and involvement. The positive effects of high work motivation are better performance, increased productivity, high job satisfaction, and creativity and innovation.

### Employee Engagement

According to Cook (2012), employee engagement is an employee's positive attitude about the organization, feelings for the organization, and proactiveness in achieving organizational goals for customers, colleagues, and other stakeholders. Individuals who increasingly contribute to their role, the individual's work will be better and more enjoyable. Employee Engagement can be described in a pyramid that has three levels. The first level of employees Increases the overall level of engagement by first feeling satisfied with their job and organization/company. The second level is committed to the job, the main supervisor (supervisor), and the company. Moreover, at the final level, they reach the highest level of engagement: they are enthusiastic and ready to advocate on behalf of their work unit organization or company.

### Hypothesis

#### Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Employee Engagement

*Emotional Intelligence* is a vital attribute that enables individuals to identify, comprehend, regulate, and manage emotions in themselves and others. People who exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence

often excel in social interactions. They can empathize with their colleagues' emotions, which helps establish positive and supportive working relationships. In turn, it enhances team dynamics and collaboration in the workplace, both of which are pivotal factors for employee engagement. Moreover, possessing high emotional Intelligence enables individuals to handle stress better. Employees who can cope with the emotional demands of their jobs tend to experience lower stress levels, which contributes to their overall well-being and increases their engagement and productivity at work. Employees who have high emotional Intelligence tend to be better at interacting with colleagues and superiors. People with high emotional Intelligence will try to create a conducive relationship within the company. They do this to increase the interest of all employees, to feel satisfied with their respective jobs and the work in the organization where they work, so it can be concluded that emotional Intelligence can affect employee engagement in a company (Contreras-Pacheco et al. 2019). Research by Shafa et al. (2022) and Wulandari & Ratnaningsih (2017) shows that emotional Intelligence positively affects employee engagement.

H1: Emotional Intelligence has a positive effect on Employee Engagement

### **Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Engagement**

Intrinsically motivated employees tend to have higher initiative and actively participate in their work and team (Zulfikri & Trisninawati, 2022). They have a drive to contribute more, share ideas, and take an active role in achieving team and organizational goals. So that people who have high motivation will embrace their colleagues so they can work according to the target, creating an attachment between the employees in the company to complete the work with the target. It can be seen that work motivation can influence employee engagement (Widyaputra & Dewi, 2018). According to research by Zulfikri and Trisninawati (2022) and Rachmatullah (2015), motivation has a positive effect on employee engagement.

H2: Motivation has a positive effect on Employee Engagement

### **The Effect of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance**

Employees who have high employee engagement usually show higher work quality. They tend to focus more on details, pay attention to the needs of customers or co-workers, and try to achieve high standards in their work so that the work will be completed on time, and the results will be optimal, so the performance produced will increase. Sucahyowati and Hendrawan's research (2020) and Muliawan et al. (2017) show that employee engagement has a positive effect on employee performance.

H3: Employee Engagement has a positive effect on employee performance

### **The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Employee Performance**

Employees who have high emotional Intelligence tend to have better abilities in managing stress. They can recognize the negative emotions that arise in stressful situations, healthily deal with stress, and remain productive in the face of challenges. Employees who can manage stress well tend to perform better in demanding situations (Setyaningrum et al., 2016). According to research by Pratama et al. (2017), Setyaningrum et al. (2016), and Risma (2012) shows that emotional Intelligence has a positive influence on employee performance.

H4: Emotional Intelligence has a positive effect on employee performance

### **The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance**

High work motivation encourages employees to work with focus and give their best. Intrinsically or extrinsically motivated employees have a strong drive to achieve goals and produce good results. It increases employee productivity and enhances performance (Larasati & Gilang, 2014). According to the research results of Kuswati (2020), Larasati & Gilang (2014), and Murti & Srimulyani (2013) it shows that motivation has a positive effect on employee performance.

H5: Work motivation has a positive effect on employee performance

### **The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Employee Performance is Mediated by Employee Engagement.**

High emotional Intelligence allows individuals to manage their emotions well, build strong relationships, and have effective communication skills. Good emotional Intelligence also helps

employees deal with stress, manage conflict, and adapt to changes in the work environment (Contreras-Pacheco et al., 2019). Individuals with high emotional Intelligence tend to be more emotionally involved with work. They also have a high level of commitment to the company. Employees with high emotional engagement tend to show better performance because, with high employee engagement, employees can motivate each other to work or resolve conflicts together. That way, the work will be easily completed, and the results obtained will be better to increase performance. According to the research results of Shafa et al. (2022), employee engagement mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance and has a positive and significant effect.

H6: employee engagement mediates the influence between emotional Intelligence and employee performance

### The Effect of Work Motivation on Employee Performance Mediated by Employee Engagement

High work motivation is associated with higher levels of employee engagement. Employees who feel motivated have a strong drive to achieve goals, contribute, and feel emotionally attached to work and the company (Larasati & Gilang, 2014). Strong work motivation can encourage employees to participate effectively, pay attention to their tasks, and be involved in work. Individuals with high work motivation tend to be more emotionally involved with work. They have a high level of commitment to the company. Employees with high emotional employee engagement tend to show better performance because, with high employee engagement, employees can motivate each other to work or resolve conflicts together. That way, the work will be easily completed, and the results obtained will be better to increase performance. Research by Lestari et al. (2022) and Hania and Bernardus (2019) shows that employee engagement mediates the relationship between work motivation and employee performance and has a positive effect.

H7: Employee engagement mediates the influence between work motivation and employee performance

### 3. Data and Method

The type of research used is explanatory, namely, research that explains causation between variables. The type of data used in this study uses primary data obtained from instruments in the form of questionnaires. Data was collected using a survey method using a questionnaire given online using the Google-form. A Likert scale determines each answer to the statement item on the questionnaire. The population and sample in this research were 84 employees of PT. Bhakti Sejahtera. The method used in this research was carried out using the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) method. The conceptual framework in this research can be explained in the following picture:

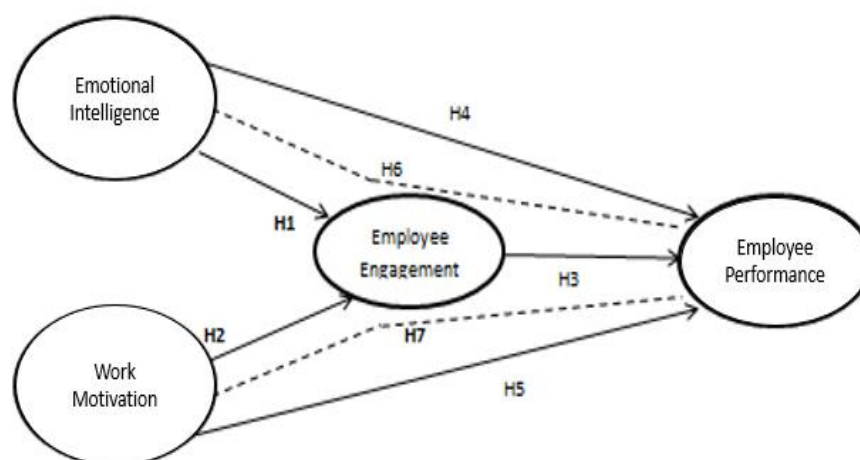


Figure 1. Concept Framework



## 4. Results

### Evaluation of Measurement Models

The Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) method was used in this research. The model evaluation carried out using the SEM-PLS method has two stages. The first stage uses measurement model evaluation (outer model), and the second stage uses structural model evaluation (inner model). The measurement results for each variable for all items are valid and reliable because they have a value of  $> 0,70$ .

**Table 2 Measurement Model Evaluation Results**

Variables	P-Value	Interpretation	Composite reliability	Interpretation
Employee performance	$< 0,001$	Valid	0,982	Reliable
Emotional Intelligence	$< 0,001$	Valid	0,980	Reliable
Work motivation	$< 0,001$	Valid	0,971	Reliable
Employee Engagement	$< 0,001$	Valid	0,981	Reliable

Source: Data processed from research results (2023)

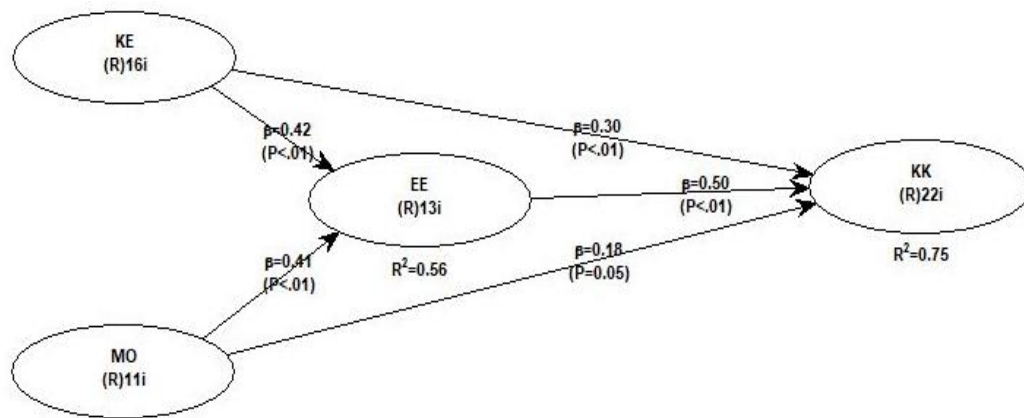
**Table 3. Structural Model Evaluation Results**

Evaluation Size	Criterion Rules	Model Test Results
R-Square	$\leq 0.25$ weak, 0.26-0.45 moderate, 0.46-0.70 strong, $\geq 70$ is very strong	$R^2 1 = 0,558$
$Q^2$ Predictive relevance	$Q^2 > 0$ = the model has predictive relevance, $Q^2 < 0$ = the model has less predictive relevance	$R^2 2 = 0,746$ $Q^2 1 = 0,567$
Tenenhause Goodness of Fit (GoF)	$Q^2 > 0$ = the model has predictive relevance, $Q^2 < 0$ = the model has less predictive relevance	$Q^2 2 = 0,743$ GoF = 0,702

Source: Data processed from research results (2023)

### Structural Model Evaluation

Evaluation of the model uses a certain size with the rule of thumb recommended. The results from Table 3 indicate that the model demonstrates a high level of suitability with a Tenenhaus Goodness of Fit (GoF) evaluation measure of 0.702, surpassing the threshold of 0.36. The  $R^2 1$  value, representing the impact of emotional Intelligence and work motivation on employee engagement, is 0.558, signifying that these factors collectively influence employee performance by 55.8%, leaving 44.2% influenced by unexamined variables. This places the model in the 'strong' category within the range of 0.46-0.70. Moving on to  $R^2 2$ , which considers emotional Intelligence, work motivation, and employee engagement on employee performance, the value of 0.746 suggests that these variables account for a substantial 74.6% of employee performance, with the remaining 25.4% influenced by unexplored factors. This classifies the model as 'very strong' with a value exceeding the threshold of  $\geq 70$ . Furthermore, the  $Q^2$  test results affirm the model's predictive relevance, with values of 0.567 and 0.743 in Table 4.10, indicating its ability to predict the relationships between variables accurately. The analysis was conducted using WarpPLS software, which facilitated the identification of intricate relationship patterns between the variables.



**Figure 2. Path Diagram between variables**

Based on the results of the structural model test, we can see the direct influence between the variables of emotional Intelligence and work motivation on employee performance, and we can also see the direct influence between the variables of emotional Intelligence and work motivation on employee engagement. The employee engagement variable is a mediating variable of emotional intelligence and work motivation on employee performance.

## 5. Discussion

### Emotional Intelligence and Employee Engagement

Coefficient analysis for the direct path of emotional Intelligence to employee engagement obtains significant results with a p-value <0.05. Thus, hypothesis 1 can be accepted. The influence of emotional Intelligence on employee engagement is based on a coefficient value of 1.206, meaning there is a positive influence and illustrates a unidirectional influence. This means that the higher the application of emotional Intelligence, the higher the employee engagement applied to PT. Bhakti Sejahtera employees. Employees with high emotional intelligence tend to better interact with colleagues and superiors (Contreras-Pacheco et al., 2019). People with high emotional Intelligence will try to create conducive relationships within the company. They do this to increase the interest of all employees, to feel satisfied with their respective jobs and the work in the organization where they work, so it can be concluded that emotional Intelligence can influence employee engagement in a company. This study's results follow research conducted by Susanti and Frendika (2021).

### Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance

Analysis of the coefficients for the direct path of emotional Intelligence to employee performance obtained significant results with a p-value <0.05. Then, hypothesis 2 is accepted. The influence of emotional intelligence on employee performance is based on a coefficient value of 0.298, meaning there is a positive influence and describes a unidirectional influence. This means that the higher the application of emotional Intelligence, the higher the performance applied to employees of PT. Bhakti Sejahtera. Employees who have high emotional Intelligence tend to have a better ability to manage stress. They can recognize negative emotions that arise in stressful situations, deal with stress healthily, and remain productive in the face of challenges. Employees who manage stress well perform better in demanding situations (Setyaningrum et al., 2019). The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Dusak & Sudiksa (2016).

Having high emotional Intelligence provides employees with the ability to communicate effectively. They can express their thoughts and emotions clearly, vital in work situations such as presentations, negotiations, or customer interactions. Additionally, empathetic listening is a crucial aspect of effective communication. Employees with vital emotional Intelligence are also adept at managing their emotions. They can handle stress, frustration, or uncertainty better than those with low emotional Intelligence. This allows them to remain focused and productive in challenging situations while minimizing the adverse effects of stress on their performance.

**Work Motivation and Employee Engagement**

Coefficient analysis for the direct path of work motivation towards employee engagement obtains significant results with a p-value  $<0.05$ . Thus, hypothesis 3 is accepted. The influence of work motivation on employee engagement is based on a coefficient value of 0.414, meaning there is a positive influence and depicts a unidirectional influence. This means that the higher the application of work motivation, the higher the employee engagement that is applied to employees of PT. Bhakti Sejahtera. Intrinsically motivated employees tend to have higher initiative and actively participate in their work and team (Zulfikri & Trisninawati, 2022). They have a drive to contribute more, share ideas, and take an active role in achieving team and organizational goals. So that people who have high motivation will embrace their colleagues so they can work according to the target, creating an attachment between the employees in the company to complete the work with the target. It can be seen that work motivation can influence employee engagement (Ketut & Dewi, 2018). The results of this research are under research conducted.

**Work Motivation and Employee Performance**

Coefficient analysis for the direct path of work motivation on employee performance obtained significant results with a p-value  $<0.05$ . Thus, hypothesis 4 is accepted. The influence of work motivation on employee performance is based on a coefficient value of 0, 0.177, meaning there is a positive influence and describes a unidirectional influence. This means that the higher the application of work motivation, the higher the performance applied to PT. Bhakti Sejahtera employees. High work motivation encourages employees to work with focus and give the best in their work (Larasati & Gilang, 2014). Intrinsically or extrinsically motivated employees have a strong drive to achieve goals and produce good results. This increases employee productivity and contributes to higher performance. The results of this research are by research conducted by Pratama (2016).

**Employee Engagement and Employee Performance**

Coefficient analysis for the direct path of employee engagement to employee performance obtained significant results with a p-value  $<0.05$ . Thus, hypothesis 5 is accepted. The influence of employee engagement on employee performance is based on a coefficient value of 0.495, which means there is a positive influence and describes a unidirectional influence. This means that the higher the implementation of employee engagement, the higher the performance applied to PT. Bhakti Sejahtera employees. Employees who have high employee engagement usually show higher work quality. They tend to focus more on details, pay attention to the needs of customers or co-workers, and try to achieve high standards in their work so that the work will be completed on time, and the results will be optimal, so the performance produced will increase. The results of this research are under research conducted by Arini (2017).

**Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, and Employee Performance**

Path analysis for the indirect effect of the employee engagement variable as a mediator variable between the effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance obtains significant results of 0.003. Then, hypothesis 6 is accepted. The results of hypothesis testing show that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence's influence on employee performance. This means that employee engagement is an intermediary factor that helps explain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Employee engagement can act as a liaison between other factors that can improve employee performance. These results are shown in the coefficient value of 0.208 with a positive direction and illustrate a unidirectional effect. Emotional intelligence can contribute to developing employee engagement in employee performance at PT. Bhakti Sejahtera. This research results from a study conducted.

**Work Motivation, Employee Engagement, and Employee Performance**

Path analysis for the indirect effect of the employee engagement variable as a mediator variable between the effect of work motivation on employee performance obtains a significant result of 0.003. Then, hypothesis 7 is accepted. The results of hypothesis testing show that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence's influence on employee performance. This means that employee engagement is an intermediary factor that



helps explain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Employee engagement can act as a liaison between other factors that can improve employee performance. The results of hypothesis testing are shown at a coefficient value of 0.205 with a positive direction and illustrate a unidirectional effect. Work motivation can contribute to developing employee engagement in employee performance at PT. Bhakti Sejahtera. This research's results align with the study conducted by Hania dan Bernadus (2019).

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion results, this study concludes that Emotional Intelligence affects employee engagement; the higher the application of emotional Intelligence, the higher the employee engagement. Work motivation influences employer engagement; the higher the application of work motivation, the higher the employee engagement. Employer engagement influences employee performance; the higher the implementation of employee engagement, the higher the performance. Emotional Intelligence influences employee performance; the higher the application of emotional Intelligence, the higher the performance. Work motivation affects employee performance; the higher the application of work motivation, the higher the performance. Employee Engagement mediates the effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance. Employee Engagement mediates the influence of work motivation on employee performance. This research is expected to provide deep implications for future studies related to emotional Intelligence, work motivation, and employee performance. This research is also expected to be useful input for agencies as a consideration in determining policies for the agency's progress, and one day can help solve employee performance problems in both the public and private sectors.

According to the present study, companies must emphasize enhancing employee engagement. The benefits of having engaged employees are manifold. They enjoy a better work-life balance, and their active participation directly impacts the organization's overall success and sustainability. Consequently, many companies focus on implementing various initiatives to bolster employee engagement, including providing training opportunities for career advancement, fostering open communication, and creating a supportive work culture. By prioritizing employee engagement, companies can create a positive work environment that promotes productivity, creativity, and employee satisfaction.

The advice given for this research is for companies to regularly organize emotional intelligence training for employees so that this value remains consistent; provide rewards and recognition for employee performance, such as providing incentives or bonuses for employees; create a mutually supportive work atmosphere and open communication so that the work environment is comfortable, this can be achieved by regularly holding gatherings so that collaboration and bonding between employees becomes closer.

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**Ethics declarations****Funding**

The author(s) received no financial support for this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

**Availability of data and materials**

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

**Competing interests**

No potential competing interest was reported by the authors.