

# The Correlation between Psychological Capital and Work Engagement of Health Workers in an Emergency Unit of a General Hospital in Indonesia

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## Abstract

**Background:** The success of an organization in providing healthcare service depends on the staff competencies in completing the given task. Some psychological factors that affect the service include personality, psychological capital, and work engagement. Psychological capital is a kind of attitude and behavior capital that plays an essential role in determining individual success, while work engagement is a constituent that underlies the staff attitude. **Aim:** This study aims to analyze the correlation between psychological capital and work engagement of health workers in the Emergency Unit at South Madiun District General Hospital, East Java, Indonesia. **Methods:** This research employed a descriptive method and an observational approach. Furthermore, the research design applied was cross-sectional, involving 18 health workers in the Emergency Unit consisting of 13 nurses and 5 doctors who were selected using a total sampling technique. The data were obtained through questionnaires distributed to the respondents in the Emergency Unit. **Result:** Results showed that the correlation between psychological capital and work engagement had a positive value of  $r=0.938$  (93.8%). **Conclusion:** It can be concluded that there was a positive correlation between psychological capital and work engagement of health workers in the Emergency Unit at South Madiun District General Hospital, East Java, Indonesia. It is recommended for the hospital management to evaluate every health worker performance trimonthly and to monitor the psychological factors to support the achievement of performance targeted by the hospital director.

**Keywords:** Emergency Unit, health workers, psychological capital, work engagement

## 1. Introduction

The success of a health care organization in achieving a goal can occur when the staffs are capable of completing the given tasks<sup>1</sup>. It means that the staff performances determine the quality of the company. Psychological factors include personality, psychological capital, and work engagement<sup>2</sup>. Work engagement is a constituent to form an attitude. Attitude is complex and can be interpreted as evaluative statements for both pleasure and critics on objects, people, or events. As an attitude, work engagement represents the employee's strong dedication towards a vision, mission, and goal of an organization. The work engagement between employees and customers, which in this case is clinical patients, can be in the form of a commitment to giving treatments. Engaged staffs often work enthusiastically and feel involved in their companies. Thus, it encourages the manifestation of innovation and advancement in the organization<sup>2,3</sup>.

Some researches who discussed the correlation between work engagement and performance found that momentary work involvement is positively related to work performance in the forthcoming weeks. Employees could have a high work engagement if the first commitment is built properly.

According to this statement, the previous results presented the organizational performance<sup>2</sup>. Psychological capital is a kind of attitude and behavior capital that plays an essential role in determining individual success. Psy-Cap can be defined as a positive individual development characterized by the highest level of HERO, such as hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism.

Health worker includes every person who devotes himself in the healthcare field and has knowledge or skills obtained from professional health education which requires an authority to carry out health practices. Health workers responsible for providing health services to individuals, families, and the community (Law No. 36 of 2014 on Health Workforce)<sup>4</sup>. The development of hospitals or health industries demand each health worker in the industry to work optimally. In addition, the health worker should be strong enough to work under pressure considering the hospital competition. The health worker also needs to be optimistic and have self-confidence<sup>5</sup>. Psychological capital and work engagement are the two factors that need to be discussed referring to the management of human resources nowadays, specifically in health service organizations such as hospitals.

The psychological capital of health workers is an important factor to be considered by the hospital management. By recognizing the psychological capital of the employees, the hospital can identify the quality of the work engagement of the health workers, ensure if the employees can survive and whether they can provide good performance or the opposite in the workplace<sup>6</sup>.

In organizational level, Luthans et al. mentioned that psychology capital and the work engagement have a correlation with business outcomes, such as customer satisfactory, profit, productivity, employee, and work accident<sup>7</sup>. Similar idea delivered by Saks stated that work engagement has a positive correlation with several elements related to both individual and organizational performance<sup>8</sup>. The background explained previously motivated this very study to analyze the correlation between psychological capital and work engagement of health workers in the Emergency Unit at District General Hospital.

## **2. Materials and methods**

### **Research design, population, samples, and variables**

This research employed a descriptive method and an observational approach. The research design applied was cross-sectional since the researchers collected the data at once. The data collection was conducted in the Emergency Unit at the South Madiun District General Hospital. The primary and secondary data were collected from 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2018. The population of this study was all health workers involving 18 people in the Emergency Unit who were selected using a total sampling technique. Total sampling is a sampling technique in which the number of samples is equal to the population. The criteria for selecting the respondents in this study were the health workers who were not the head of the room since the questionnaire was to assess the personnel on that

position. The number of samples in this study were 18 people consisting of 13 nurses and five doctors, excluding the head.

### **Instruments**

The measurement used in the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ), was "HERO" (Hope, Self-Efficacy, Resilience, and Optimism) consisting of eight questions for hope aspect, six questions for resilience aspect, and four questions for optimism aspect. Besides, work engagement used the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), that is a tool or instrument which consists of three scales including (1) vigor, (2) dedication, and (3) absorption.

### **Research procedures and analysis**

The independent variable of this study was psychological capital, while the dependent variable was work engagement. The researchers collected the primary data through questionnaire. In addition, the researchers also collected the secondary data, such as monitoring reports, from human resources. The data obtained were then processed and presented in a cross-tabulation. Subsequently, the results of the cross-tabulation were analyzed descriptively to explain the correlation between the independent and dependent variable.

The measurement of psychological capital was done following the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) with videlicet "HERO" (Hope, Self-Efficacy, Resilience, and Optimism) with the hope aspect consisted of eight questions, the self-efficacy aspect consisted of 6 questions, the resilience aspect consisted of six questions, and the optimism aspect consisted of 4 questions but modified. This PCQ measurement used two answer choices with score in each statement, such as YES (2) and NO (1). Hope aspect started from the low category with a value of less than 8 and maximum value at more than 8. Efficacy aspect was considered low if it was less than 6 and considered high if the value was more than 6. The low value of resilience aspect started from less than 6, while the high value was more than 6. Lastly, optimism aspect was categorized low if it was less than 4 and high if the value is more than 4.

The work engagement variable described the feelings and thoughts of the health workers, such as enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption during working in the clinic. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is a tool or instrument consisting of three scales, including; (1) psychic/vigor (enthusiasm) strength, (2) dedication, and (3) absorption. Vigor indicator was categorized low with a value of less than 6 and high with a value of more than 6. Dedication indicator was considered low if the value was less than 5 and high with a value of more than 5. Meanwhile, the low value of absorption indicator started from less than 5 and the high value was scaled at more than 5. The assessment scores in each statement were (2) for Yes and (1) for No, applied to all indicators.

### 3. Results

**Table 1.** Table of Psychological Capital Frequency of Health Workers in the Emergency Unit at South Madiun district General Hospital, East Java, Indonesia Based on HERO.

No	Indicator	Respondent Categories				Total
		Low		High		
		N	%	N	%	
1	Hope	0	0	18	100	100
2	Self-Efficacy	1	5.6	17	94.4	100
3	Resilience	0	0	18	100	100
4	Optimism	2	11.1	16	88.9	100

The results of psychological capital show that the psychological capital of the health workers has an effect on the improvement of the health worker performances. In Table 1, Hope and Resilience indicators are the highest categories with 100% responses compared to Self-Efficacy indicator at 94.4% and Optimism at 88.9%. This result indicated that, on average, the health workers in the Emergency Unit had high psychological capital which affected their performance. In addition, the highest mean value was 44, while the lowest was 30, indicating the same results.

**Table 2.** Work Engagement Frequency of Health Workers in the Emergency Unit of South Madiun District General Hospital, East Java, Indonesia Based on Three Dimensions.

No	Dimension	Respondent Category				Total
		Low		High		
		n	%	N	%	
1	<i>Vigor</i>	0	0	18	100	100
2	<i>Dedication</i>	1	5.6	17	94.4	100
3	<i>Absorption</i>	4	22.2	14	77.8	100

The result of work engagement presents that vigor dimension has the highest value of 100%, while the lowest is absorption value of 77.8%. Based on the average value of Work Engagement on Healthcare Service Staffs of emergency department, the highest score obtained was 32, while the lowest was 17. Therefore, it can be concluded that there were two healthcare service staffs of emergency department who were not engaged due to various factors, including age, gender, and working period. Meanwhile, the other 16 healthcare service staffs from emergency department of South Madiun District General Regional Hospital, East Java, Indonesia belonged to engaged category as seen in Table 2.

**Table 3.** Cross Tabulation Result between Psychological Capital and Work Engagement Based on Indicators/Dimensions.

		Work Engagement				Total	
		Low		High			
		F (n)	%	F (n)	%		%
Psychological Capital	Low	1	50.0	1	50.0	2	100
	High	1	6.3%	15	93.8%	16	100
		2	11.1%	16	88.9%	18	100

The cross-tabulation result between Psychological Capital and Work Engagement based on dimensions above indicates that those who have the lowest Psychological Capital are also followed by low work engagement. Meanwhile, the highest percentage of 93.8% indicates that Psychological Capital affects the work engagement of the health workers. It means that the high value of Psychological Capital is accompanied by high value of Work Engagement as well as seen in Table3.

#### 4. Discussion

Table 3 displays the percentage of the health workers in the Emergency Unit at South Madiun District General Hospital. According to the dimension, it has the lowest psychological capital and it is also followed with the low work engagement. Moreover, the highest percentage of 93.8% shows that psychological capital affects the work engagement of the health workers in the Emergency Department at the South Madiun District General Hospital. It is reflected as the score of Psychological Capital rises along with the Work Engagement.

The previous research conducted by Hardi stated that 74 respondents (69.2%) showed good work engagement and high work performance, while 12 respondents (11.2%) showed bad work engagement yet the work performance is high<sup>8,9</sup>. It revealed that the work engagement level of the outpatient health workers showed a positive result and got associated with other important variables at the hospital, such as increased customer loyalty, low attendance, and increased hospital profits. Through the work engagement of health workers in high outpatient installations, it is expected that the hospital performance can improve and further increases the hospital profit<sup>10</sup>.

Previous research revealed the positive effect of psychological capital on work engagement of the employees in an information and technology industry in India. The results of the study showed that employees with higher psychological levels (in terms of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism) presented a higher level of work engagement. Thus, it has increased the performance of health workers in Emergency Unit of the South Madiun District General Hospital until recently.

#### 5. Limitation of the study

In this study, the authors faced several limitations that affected the conditions of the research

conducted. First, the time available to complete this research was relatively short while the number of samples required was large. Second, this research was conducted only in one department with a total of 18 respondents. Although the number of respondents has fulfilled the expectation, the topic discussed still needs to be further developed in the future research.

## 6. Conclusion

It is concluded that there was a positive correlation between psychological capital and work engagement of the health workers in the Emergency Unit at South Madiun District General Hospital, East Java, Indonesia. It is recommended for the hospital management to conduct a regular evaluation of the performance of each health workers trimonthly as well as to monitor psychological factor of the health workers. Thus, the target performance set by the hospital director can be achieved.

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