

DYNAMICS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, SELF-EFFICACY, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT IN ENHANCING HOSPITAL HEALTHCARE WORKERS' WORK ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

In healthcare organizations, the emotional and psychological dynamics of the workforce are important factors that determine the quality of work engagement. This study aims to analyze the effect of emotional intelligence on work engagement by including self-efficacy and psychological empowerment as mediating variables among hospital employees in Banjarnegara Regency. This study used a quantitative approach with stratified random sampling, involving 342 respondents from three hospitals and analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) 3.0 method. The results showed that emotional intelligence had a positive effect on self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and work engagement. Psychological empowerment was found to act as a mediating variable that has a direct effect on the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement, while self-efficacy did not show a direct effect or mediating effect. These findings confirm that psychological empowerment is a key mechanism that links the emotional abilities of healthcare workers to their work engagement. Practically, these results suggest that hospital management should prioritize strengthening emotional capacity and psychological empowerment conditions to improve employee motivation, dedication, and service quality. Further research is recommended to expand the sector context to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

Keywords : *Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy, Psychological Empowerment, Work Engagement*

1. INTRODUCTION

Dynamics of the healthcare sector workplace indicate increasing pressure on medical personnel due to the complexity of work demands and environmental changes (Bagis et al., 2025; Bagis & Yulianeu, 2024). The World Health Organization (WHO), through its latest policy guidelines, emphasizes that psychosocial risks at work, such as excessive workload, low control over work, and job insecurity, are structural and have a significant impact on mental health, work engagement, and the productivity of healthcare workers (Piso et al., 2024). This condition requires healthcare organizations to strengthen positive psychological factors such as emotional intelligence (EI), self-efficacy (SE), and psychological empowerment (PE) as the main capital for improving the performance and psychological well-being of the workforce (Abualruz et al., 2024).

Similar trends are also seen in various developing countries, where hospitals face challenges in maintaining employee engagement due to high work pressure, limited resources, and uncertain work environments (Cabrera-Aguilar et al., 2023). Post-pandemic conditions in Indonesia show an increasing workload, especially in regional hospitals with limited facilities and a number of medical personnel that is not balanced with the service load (Ma et al., 2023). Health institutions in the Banjarnegara region, for example, face difficulties maintaining employee motivation and engagement due to high administrative burdens and work pressure. This situation demonstrates the importance of understanding psychological factors that can

strengthen work engagement as an effort to create an adaptive, productive, and sustainable work environment (Rawson et al., 2024; W. Schaufeli, 2021).

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) Bandura (1986) explains that individual behavior is formed through reciprocal interactions between personal, environmental, and behavioral factors. In the workplace, an individual's belief in their abilities (self-efficacy) plays a crucial role in determining motivation, persistence, and performance (Bandura, 1977; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Based on this theory, emotional intelligence functions as a personal resource that helps individuals recognize, understand, and effectively regulate their own and others' emotions, enabling them to cope with work pressure while maintaining psychological well-being (Bagis et al., 2025; Gao et al., 2024). Individuals with good EI tend to have strong self-efficacy, which then strengthens psychological empowerment and encourages higher work engagement (Karimi et al., 2021; Muthuswamy & Akilandeswari, 2023). Psychological empowerment itself fosters feelings of meaning, autonomy, and competence in work, which makes employees more enthusiastic and dedicated (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Spreitzer, 1995).

The relationship between these variables indicates that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on self-efficacy because individuals who are able to manage their emotions effectively will be more confident in facing work pressure (Gao et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2023). High self-efficacy encourages stronger perceptions of psychological empowerment because individuals feel they have capacity and control over their work (Muthuswamy & Akilandeswari, 2023). On the other hand, psychological empowerment has a significant influence on work engagement because employees who feel psychologically empowered will be more enthusiastic, dedicated, and diligent (Huang et al., 2025). Several studies also show that EI can influence work engagement both directly and indirectly through SE and PE (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Turjuman & Alilyyani, 2023). Individuals with high EI are able to manage emotions well and contribute to increased work morale and satisfaction (Galanis et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2023), while SE and PE act as psychological mechanisms that strengthen this relationship (Cabrera-Aguilar et al., 2023; Orłowska & Laguna, 2023).

Previous research has mostly been conducted in the education and industrial sectors, not many have examined the context of health services in regional hospitals (Abualruz, Rayan, Al-Ghabeesh, et al., 2024; Uppathampracha & Liu, 2022). The role of psychological empowerment as a variable that strengthens the relationship between EI, SE, and WE has rarely been tested in the health sector (Rawson et al., 2024). Previous studies still show inconsistent findings, where some show a direct influence of EI on WE (Galanis et al., 2024; Gong et al., 2020; Turjuman & Alilyyani, 2023), but the findings of Johari et al. (2022), Sassi (2024), Hameli et al. (2023) showed an insignificant influence between emotional intelligence and work engagement, while others found an insignificant influence through psychological factors (Muthuswamy & Akilandeswari, 2023). In addition, most studies were conducted in developed and metropolitan countries, so their relevance to local contexts such as hospitals in Banjarnegara which have different organizational characteristics and work cultures still needs to be studied further (Cabana-Mamani et al., 2024; Gao et al., 2024).

Urgency of this research lies in the effort to understand the psychological mechanisms that can increase the work engagement of regional. By examining the relationship between EI, SE, and PE, this research is expected to provide an empirical basis for hospital managers in strengthening the psychological capacity of human resources to improve motivation and public service performance (Galanis et al., 2024; Karimi et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2023). In contrast to previous research which was mostly conducted in the education and industrial sectors, this study focuses on the health sector of regional hospitals in Banjarnegara, taking into account the unique organizational conditions and local work culture (Cabana-Mamani et al., 2024). In addition, this study can be a reference for further research in developing a work engagement model based on psychological factors, enriching the organizational behavior literature in the health sector.

Purpose of this study is to examine the effect of emotional intelligence on work engagement, with self-efficacy and psychological empowerment as mediating variables in hospital employees in the Banjarnegara region. Theoretically, the research results are expected to enrich the literature on organizational behavior in the health sector, while practically they can be a basis for hospital management in designing strategies for strengthening employee psychology to increase work engagement and the quality of public services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)*

This research is based on Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986), which emphasizes the dynamic interaction between personal, behavioral, and environmental factors in shaping human actions. This theory highlights self-efficacy as a key mechanism that determines how much effort individuals exert, how long they persist in the face of difficulties, and how resilient they are to failure (Bandura, 1998). In the work context, self-efficacy helps individuals adapt to stress, facilitates social learning, and strengthens self-confidence to actively participate in the work environment (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Emotional intelligence (EI) is a personal resource that is relevant to the principles of SCT because it helps individuals recognize, understand, and manage emotions, which in turn shape adaptive behavior in the workplace (Gong et al., 2020).

Individuals with high EI tend to have strong perceptions of competence (self-efficacy), which increases feelings of psychological empowerment (Karimi et al., 2021). Psychological empowerment reflects a sense of meaning, competence, autonomy, and influence in work (Spreitzer, 1995), which ultimately strengthens work engagement, a positive psychological condition in which employees feel enthusiastic, dedicated, and immersed in their (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015). Thus, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and psychological empowerment are three main interacting mechanisms in explaining hospital employee work engagement (Huang et al., 2025; Rawson et al., 2024).

2.2 *Work engagement*

Job engagement is a positive psychological state characterized by high levels of energy, strong dedication, and full involvement in one's work. W. B. Schaufeli et al. (2006) explain that work engagement encompasses three main dimensions: vigor, which describes enthusiasm and resilience in working; dedication, which reflects enthusiasm, inspiration, and pride in the work; and absorption, which is a condition where an individual is so immersed in their work that it is difficult to detach themselves. Overall, job engagement is seen as an optimal state that encourages performance, persistence, and commitment to the task and organization.

2.3 *Emotional intelligence and work engagement*

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays an important role in determining how individuals understand and regulate their emotions at work (Beauvais et al., 2011). Individuals who have high EI are able to respond to stress in a constructive way and maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships (Appelbaum, 1998; Johari et al., 2022). This ability fosters a supportive work environment and increases employees' intrinsic motivation (Bagis & Yulianeu, 2024; George et al., 2022; Shafait et al., 2021). Empirical research shows that work engagement is positively related to emotional intelligence because individuals with high emotional intelligence demonstrate greater emotional resilience and commitment to tasks (Cabana-Mamani et al., 2024; D'Amico et al., 2020; Gong et al., 2020). This is also supported by studies in the health sector which found that medical personnel with high EI have better levels of work enthusiasm and dedication (Galanis et al., 2024; Hameli et al., 2023; Turjuman & Alilyyani, 2023). Thus, the higher a person's emotional intelligence, the more likely they are to demonstrate high work engagement.

H1: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on work engagement.**2.4 Emotional intelligence and self-efficacy**

Within the SCT framework, self-efficacy reflects an individual's belief in their ability to successfully complete a task (Bandura, 2006). Emotional intelligence supports the formation of self-efficacy by helping individuals recognize personal strengths and manage emotional reactions to failure (Bandura et al., 1999). Empirical research shows that emotional intelligence increases a person's self-confidence and competence in facing challenging situations (Agbaria, 2020; Kostić-Bobanović, 2020; G. Sun & Lyu, 2022). Hameli & Ordun (2022), Hameli et al. (2023), George et al. (2022) found that emotional intelligence positively contributes to self-efficacy, while other studies confirm that individuals with high EI are better able to manage work stress and maintain performance (Bagis et al., 2025; Gao et al., 2024; Turjuman & Alilyyani, 2023). Therefore, it can be assumed that the higher a person's EI, the greater their confidence in their ability to complete a job.

H2: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on self-efficacy.**2.5 Emotional intelligence and psychological empowerment**

Emotional intelligence influences perceptions of psychological empowerment through an individual's ability to manage emotions and maintain a positive attitude at work (Carvalho et al., 2018). Individuals with high EI tend to be more confident in making decisions and feel in control of their work (Spreitzer, 1995). Research shows that EI is correlated with perceptions of meaning and autonomy in work, which are key components of psychological empowerment (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Gong et al., 2020; Hameli et al., 2023). Shafait et al. (2021), Bagis et al. (2025), Alreshidi (2022) also found that EI consistently increases feelings of competence and work significance among professionals. Conceptually, EI encourages the formation of affective and cognitive dimensions that foster feelings of empowerment, making individuals more enthusiastic and committed to their work.

H3: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on psychological empowerment.**2.6 Self-efficacy and work engagement**

Self-efficacy helps individuals interpret work challenges as opportunities for growth, not threats (Bandura, 1977). Employees with high self-efficacy have a strong goal orientation and demonstrate persistence in the face of stress (Bandura, 2006). Empirical research proves that self-efficacy contributes to increased work engagement because individuals feel more competent and in control (Chan et al., 2020; G. Sun & Lyu, 2022; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). In demanding work contexts, self-efficacy also fosters positive psychological experiences such as passion and dedication (Hameli et al., 2023; Van Wingerden et al., 2017). Recent empirical evidence also shows that EI increases an individual's emotional competence and self-confidence in dealing with work pressure, thereby increasing the likelihood of high work engagement (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Gao et al., 2024; Hameli & Ordun, 2022). Other findings show that workers with high self-efficacy are more resilient to stress and have greater levels of productivity (Bagis et al., 2025; Ma et al., 2023).

H4: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on work engagement.**2.7 Psychological empowerment and work engagement**

Psychological empowerment describes a psychological state in which individuals perceive their work as meaningful, competent, autonomous, and have influence over work outcomes (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Individuals who feel psychologically empowered tend to exhibit higher energy, dedication, and engagement (Alreshidi, 2022; Monje-Amor et al., 2021; Mu et al., 2024). Research by B. Sun et al. (2022), Hameli et al. (2023), Cabrera-Aguilar et al. (2023) shows that psychological empowerment is positively correlated with work engagement through increased professional self-confidence. In a hospital environment, healthcare workers who feel passionate about serving patients and have control over their work are able to maintain high levels of work engagement despite challenging work conditions (Bagis

et al., 2025; Karimi et al., 2021). This study found that psychological empowerment partially mediates the relationship between empowering leadership and work engagement, emphasizing the importance of the dimensions of autonomy and work meaning in increasing engagement (Hameli & Ordun, 2022; Hashemi et al., 2025; Wen et al., 2023). Therefore, psychological empowerment serves as an intrinsic driver that increases work engagement in a sustainable manner.

H5: Psychological empowerment has a positive effect on work engagement.

2.8 The mediating role of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy not only functions as a predictor of work behavior, but also as a mediating mechanism that bridges the influence of emotional intelligence on work outcomes (Hameli & Ordun, 2022; Mu et al., 2024; Shafait et al., 2021). Individuals with high EI are able to channel positive emotions that strengthen confidence in their own abilities, which in turn increases work engagement (Chan et al., 2020; Grošelj et al., 2020; Yuan et al., 2025). Research by Zhao et al. (2022), Lamuri et al. (2023), Muthuswamy & Akilandeswari (2023) showed that the ability to manage emotions contributes to self-efficacy, and self-efficacy increases work engagement. Liu & Yu (2024) and Hameli et al. (2023) confirm that the effect of EI on work engagement is a mechanism when individuals possess high self-efficacy.

Studies by Ma et al. (2023) and Bagis et al. (2025) also confirm that self-efficacy can increase resilience, motivation, and productivity, especially in high-demand work environments. On the other hand, Cabrera-Aguilar et al. (2023) and Xiong et al. (2025), also demonstrated that self-efficacy is suboptimal when the work environment does not provide sufficient structural support. Thus, self-efficacy plays an important role as a psychological mechanism that explains the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement.

H6: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement.

2.9 The mediating role of psychological empowerment

As a mediating variable, psychological empowerment explains how EI can produce positive work outcomes through increased sense of control and meaning of work (Fan et al., 2016). Individuals with high EI more easily develop feelings of competence and worth, which strengthens intrinsic motivation and work engagement (Hameli et al., 2023; Syihabudhin & Pristiawana, 2020; Zahed Babelan et al., 2016). Research by Hashemi et al. (2025), Bagis et al. (2025), Abualruz et al. (2024) also shows that increased psychological empowerment in nurses contributes to higher levels of work engagement. Based on public service organizations, psychological empowerment functions as a bridge between emotional capabilities and work engagement behavior, by fostering dimensions of autonomy and a sense of meaning towards work. Gong et al. (2020), Stephens et al. (2013), Huang et al. (2025) also show that psychological empowerment is highly correlated with a sense of belonging and work engagement. This confirms that EI's ability to increase empowerment is an important psychological pathway that ultimately encourages healthcare workers to be more immersed in their work, demonstrate dedication, and experience greater meaning in their daily tasks.

H7: Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

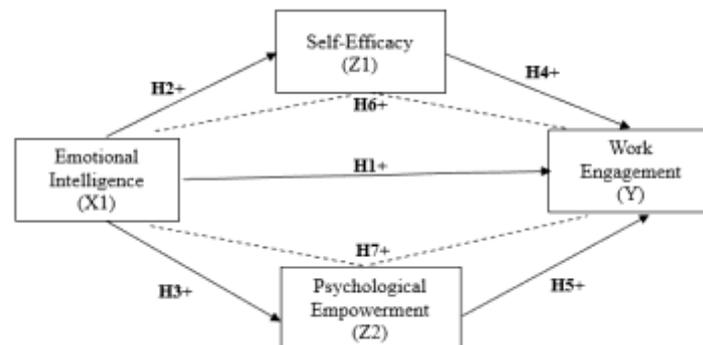


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Author (2025)

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative methodology and replicated previous research (Hameli et al., 2023). This study analyzes emotional intelligence on work engagement and analyzes the mediating role of self-efficacy, psychological empowerment that links emotional intelligence with work engagement. So this study has seven hypotheses to analyze.

The research population was 966 employees at three hospitals in Banjarnegara Regency. The minimum sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula with an error rate (e) of 0.05, resulting in a minimum sample size of 282 respondents. To increase the power of the analysis and anticipate the potential for invalid data, the sample size was then increased to 342 respondents. The sampling technique used in this study was stratified random sampling. This technique was chosen because the study population came from three hospitals with different numbers of employees, so the population needed to be divided into several strata based on the hospital so that each stratum was fairly represented in the study sample. Respondents were then randomly selected from a list of employees who met the research criteria, namely permanent employees with a minimum work period of one year. The questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms to hospital employees in Banjarnegara. Data analysis was carried out using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach using SmartPLS software. Each respondent's answer has its own value which is arranged using stages based on five points on a Likert scale with Likert values, 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree).

The measurement of each variable uses different references, the emotional intelligence variable is adopted from the article by Wong & Law (2002) consisting of 4 indicators, self-efficacy is adopted from the article developed by Chen et al. (2001) consists of 8 items, psychological empowerment is adopted from Spreitzer (1995) article which consists of 4 indicators, and work engagement is adopted from an article developed by W. B. Schaufeli et al. (2006) consists of 3 indicators.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

This study used the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method to find answers to the proposed hypotheses, which are essentially predictive. The purpose of PLS is to minimize the variance of the remaining related variables when estimating model parameters (Hair et al., 2021). All questionnaire data was collected and prepared for analysis, with a 100% response rate.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Identity	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Hospital	RS 1	159	46.5
	RS 2	152	44.4
	RS 3	31	9.1
Gender	Male	130	38.0
	Female	212	62.0
Age	18–25 Year	4	1.2
	>25–30 Year	44	12.9
	>30–35 Year	67	19.6
	>35–40 Year	51	14.9
	>40–50 Year	130	38.0
	>50 Year	46	13.5
Employment Category	Medical	303	88.6
	Non Medical	39	11.4
Education	SMA/Sederajat	15	4.4
	Diploma	185	54.1
	Sarjana	102	29.8
	Magister	28	8.2
Work Period	>1–3 Year	14	4.1
	>3–6 Year	106	31.0
	>6–9 Year	77	22.5
	>9 Year	144	42.1

Source: Data processed, SPSS (2025)

Table 1 shows the demographic results of the majority of respondents. The value obtained from the Hospital, namely Banjarnegara Hospital 1, were 159 respondents (46.5%). In terms of gender, respondents were dominated by women with 212 respondents (62.0%). Judging from age, the majority of respondents were in the 40-50 year range with 130 respondents (38.0%), this indicates that most employees are of stable working age and have had considerable experience. Based on the workforce category, the majority of respondents were medical personnel, amounting to 303 respondents (88.6%), while non-medical personnel amounted to 39 respondents (11.4%). This dominance of medical personnel is reasonable considering that the research was conducted at three hospitals whose core activities focus on clinical services. Last education, most of the respondents came from diploma graduates with 185 respondents (54.1%), and some others came from undergraduate education with a total of 102 respondents (29.8%). In terms of length of service, the majority of respondents were more than 9 years (42.1%), indicating that there are good employee skills and a work commitment to health services.

Data processing used the SEM-PLS approach. The results of the SEM-PLS model analysis were used to obtain the relationships between variables in this study. PLS testing can also generate new information that can be conveyed through simple analysis (Hair et al., 2021). The following are the results of the analysis from this study:

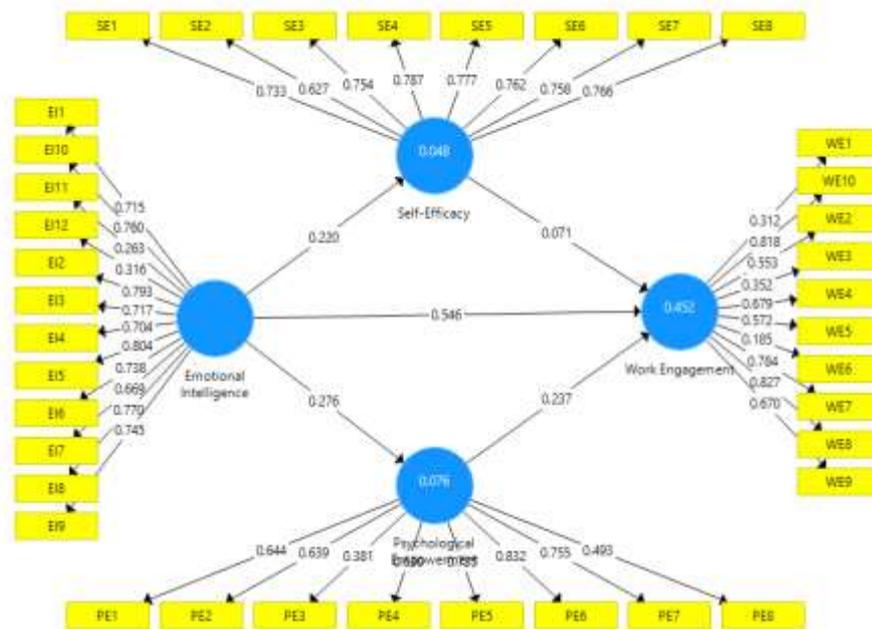


Figure 2. SEM-PLS Model Analysis Results

Source: Data processed, SEM-PLS (2025)

Figure 2 shows the outer loading results for each studied variable. This data analysis was conducted in two rounds, eliminating indicators EI 11, EI 12, PE 3, PE 8, WE 1, WE 3, and WE 6 because they had outer loading values below 0.5. Meanwhile, outer loading values above 0.50 were retained (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 2. Outer Loading

	Statement Items	Outer Loading	Result
EI1	I understand well my own emotions.	0.715	Accepted
EI2	I really understand how I feel.	0.793	Accepted
EI3	I am always aware of the feeling of happiness that I feel.	0.717	Accepted
EI4	I can always tell my friends' emotions from their behavior.	0.704	Accepted
EI5	I am a good observer of other people's emotions.	0.804	Accepted
EI6	I understand the emotions of the people around me well.	0.738	Accepted
EI7	I always tell my self that I am a competent person.	0.669	Accepted
EI8	I am a self-motivated person.	0.770	Accepted
EI9	I always push my self to do my best.	0.745	Accepted
EI10	I can control my emotions so that I can face difficulties rationally.	0.760	Accepted
EI11	I am quite able to control my own emotions.	0.263	Rejected
EI12	I have good control over my emotions.	0.316	Rejected
SE1	I am confident that I can achieve most of the goals I have set for myself.	0.733	Accepted
SE2	When faced with difficult tasks I am confident that I will complete them.	0.627	Accepted
SE3	In general, I was able to achieve results that were important to me.	0.754	Accepted
SE4	I believe I can succeed in almost any endeavor I set my mind to.	0.787	Accepted

	Statement Items	Outer Loading	Result
SE5	I will be able to overcome various challenges successfully.	0.777	Accepted
SE6	I am confident that I can work effectively in a variety of tasks.	0.762	Accepted
SE7	Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.	0.758	Accepted
SE8	Despite the difficult circumstances, I was able to perform quite well.	0.766	Accepted
PE1	My job is very important to me.	0.644	Accepted
PE2	My work activities are personally meaningful to me.	0.639	Accepted
PE3	I am confident in my ability to do my job.	0.381	Rejected
PE4	I have mastered the skills required for my job.	0.630	Accepted
PE5	I can decide for myself how to do my job.	0.735	Accepted
PE6	I have a fair amount of opportunity for freedom and independence in how I do my work.	0.832	Accepted
PE7	I have a big influence on what happens in my workplace.	0.755	Accepted
PE8	I have a lot of control over what happens at my workplace.	0.493	Rejected
WE1	I feel full of energy when I work.	0.312	Rejected
WE2	I remain enthusiastic about working even though I face pressure.	0.553	Accepted
WE3	I am able to work for long periods with high focus.	0.352	Rejected
WE4	I am proud of my work at this hospital.	0.679	Accepted
WE5	My work gives me meaning and purpose.	0.572	Accepted
WE6	I am enthusiastic to provide the best service to patients.	0.185	Rejected
WE7	Time seems to fly when I'm working.	0.784	Accepted
WE8	I am completely immersed in my work.	0.827	Accepted
WE9	I find it hard to tear myself away from work because I enjoy it so much.	0.670	Accepted
WE10	I have skills in completing work.	0.818	Accepted

Source: Data processed, SEM-PLS (2025)

Table 2. Based on the outer loading values in the first round, there are 7 values below 0.5. So in the second round, low outer loading values were rejected with the aim of increasing the consistency of the variable construct. With these results, the variables emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and work engagement have an outer loading value of more than 0.5. High outer loading values indicate that the applied indicators can be explained by the measured construct, the general standard that applies to a value of 0.5 or higher to achieve the ideal value. Therefore, it can be said that the outer loading values of all indicators have sufficient values to meet the requirements of convergence validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 3. Construct Reliability dan Validity

	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Emotional Intelligence	0.926	0.556
Psychological Empowerment	0.863	0.516
Self-Efficacy	0.910	0.558
Work Engagement	0.874	0.504

Source: Research result, 2025 (Data processed)

Table 3. Shows the reliability and construct validity values of the variables work engagement, self-efficacy, psychological empowerment on work engagement of more than 0.7.

The results of the validity and reliability tests are said to be valid if the Composite Reliability (CR) is at least 0.70 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value shows that the overall construct value is more than 0.5. Therefore, all variables in this study can be declared reliable.

Table 4. Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.066	0.067
d_ ULS	2.188	2.196
d_ G	0.828	0.828
Chi-Square	1492.581	1492.555
NFI	0.741	0.741

Source: Research result, 2025 (Data processed)

Based on Table 4. The results of the model suitability test show that the SRMR value is 0.067. This result is below the 0.08 threshold recommended by (Hair et al., 2021). Therefore, it can be concluded that the model's compatibility is good. Therefore, it can be concluded that this research model generally has a level of suitability that the model used is appropriate and can be continued to the next analysis stage.

The R Square value for the psychological empowerment variable is 66% and self-efficacy is 49%, so both are included in the moderate to strong category. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for work engagement was only 46.8%, which means that the variables in the model contributed almost nothing to changes in work engagement. Overall, these results indicate that the model has good predictive ability for the two main variables, but is not strong enough to explain variation in work engagement.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity

	Emotional Intelligence	Psychological Empowerment	Self-Efficacy	Work Engagement
Emotional Intelligence	0.746			
Psychological Empowerment	0.258	0.718		
Self-Efficacy	0.220	0.088	0.747	
Work Engagement	0.643	0.383	0.207	0.710

Source: Research result, 2025 (Data processed)

Discriminant validity testing was conducted using the Fornell-Larcker criteria, which measures the extent to which a construct is truly different and distinguishable from other constructs in the research model (Hair et al., 2021). A construct is said to have good discriminant validity if the square root value of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the construct is higher than the correlation value of the construct with all other constructs in the model. The results of the analysis in Table 5 show that all constructs in this study meet the discriminant validity criteria. This can be seen from the square root value of AVE for each variable which is consistently greater than the correlation value between variables. These findings confirm that each construct in the study, namely emotional intelligence (EI), self-efficacy (SE), psychological

empowerment (PE), and work engagement (WE), has adequate conceptual uniqueness and does not experience measurement overlap with other constructs.

Table 6. Path Coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistic (O/STDEV V)	P Values	Result
EI → WE	0.570	0.571	0.041	13.834	0.000	Accepted
EI → SE	0.220	0.229	0.050	4.419	0.000	Accepted
EI → PE	0.258	0.265	0.061	4.194	0.000	Accepted
SE → WE	0.061	0.066	0.039	1.586	0.113	Rejected
PE → WE	0.231	0.230	0.039	5.893	0.000	Accepted
SE → EI → WE	0.013	0.015	0.009	1.442	0.150	Rejected
PE → EI → WE	0.060	0.061	0.017	3.469	0.001	Accepted

Source: Research result, 2025 (Data processed)

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing, the determination of whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected refers to the p -value < 0.05 , so the results of the study show that Emotional Intelligence based on the original sample has a positive influence on Work Engagement, thus the first hypothesis is accepted. In addition, Emotional Intelligence also has a positive influence on Self-Efficacy and Psychological Empowerment, so the second and third hypotheses are accepted. However, the influence of Self-Efficacy on Work Engagement has a positive but not significant effect because it has a p -value of 0.113 which is greater than 0.05, so the fourth hypothesis is rejected. Conversely, Psychological Empowerment is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement with a p -value of 0.000 smaller than 0.05, so the fifth hypothesis is accepted. Mediation analysis shows that the indirect path of Self-Efficacy through Emotional Intelligence towards Work Engagement does not mediate, this is indicated by the p -value of 0.150 which is greater than 0.05, so the sixth hypothesis is rejected. Meanwhile, the mediation effect of Psychological Empowerment through Emotional Intelligence on Work Engagement fully mediates with a p -value of 0.001, so the seventh hypothesis is accepted. Overall, these results indicate that Emotional Intelligence is the main factor that directly increases work engagement, and plays an important role as a mediator in the relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Work Engagement, while the mediation role involving Self-Efficacy was not proven to be significant.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Work Engagement

The findings of this study indicate that emotional intelligence has a positive influence on work engagement. This study indicates that the higher the ability of health workers to understand, manage, and express emotions appropriately, the greater their tendency to show strong engagement in work. Theoretically, these results are in line with Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) which emphasizes that individuals with good emotional regulation skills will be better able to face work demands, maintain a stable psychological condition, and maintain intrinsic motivation in carrying out tasks. In the hospital environment, healthcare workers face high emotional stress due to intense contact with patients, their families, and critical situations. Therefore, the ability to manage emotions is an important factor that encourages the emergence of energy, dedication, and work absorption. Empirical research shows that EI is positively related to work engagement because individuals with high EI show greater emotional resilience and commitment to tasks (D'Amico et al., 2020; Gong et al., 2020). These findings align with research (Galani et al., 2024), which shows that healthcare workers with high EI have better engagement in facing service demands. Similarly, (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Turjuman & Alilyyani,

2023) found that emotion regulation is one of the strongest predictors of work engagement in nursing staff. Research by Hameli et al. (2023) confirms that individuals with high emotional intelligence are able to manage negative emotions and utilize positive emotions as a source of psychological energy.

4.2.2 The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Self-Efficacy

This study shows that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on self-efficacy. This suggests that healthcare workers who are able to manage their own emotions and understand the emotions of others will have stronger confidence in their ability to complete work tasks. From a Social Cognitive Theory perspective, cognitive-affective abilities such as emotion regulation help individuals interpret experiences, reduce stress reactions, and increase perceptions of self-control, all of which contribute to the development of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986).

Based on health services, medical personnel often face anxiety, time pressure, and high clinical risks. The ability to calm themselves, read patients' emotional situations, and manage stress makes them more confident in facing complex tasks. This finding is in line with (Hameli & Ordun, 2022) which shows that EI contributes positively to self-efficacy. These results are consistent with research (Agbaria, 2020; Kostić-Bobanović, 2020) which shows that EI strengthens the self-competence of health workers and is a strong factor in forming self-efficacy in challenging jobs. This research is strengthened by (Hameli et al., 2023) who found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in the health sector. Thus, emotional intelligence can be viewed as a personal resource that strengthens an individual's perception of competence across work contexts.

4.2.3 The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Psychological Empowerment

Research findings indicate that emotional intelligence has a positive effect on psychological empowerment. This means that healthcare workers with good emotional intelligence tend to feel more competent, more autonomous, and have a stronger sense of meaning in their work. Within the framework of Social Cognitive Theory, the ability to manage emotions helps individuals interpret the work environment more positively, thus giving rise to the perception that they are able to control their work and make meaningful contributions.

In a hospital environment, psychological empowerment is very important because health workers are required to make decisions quickly and responsibly. Emotional intelligence makes them more confident in dealing with emotional stress, understanding patient needs, and maintaining meaning in their work (Spreitzer, 1995). This research is in line with (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Gong et al., 2020) that EI is directly correlated in increasing psychological empowerment, especially in jobs that are full of social interactions such as health workers. Increasing the sense of competence and independence in making decisions. This finding is reinforced by findings (Hameli et al., 2023), which found that emotional intelligence is a strong predictor of psychological empowerment. In a regional hospital setting, psychological empowerment becomes a more crucial mechanism to help healthcare workers maintain a sense of control and meaning in their work.

4.2.4 The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Work Engagement

This study also shows that self-efficacy does not affect work engagement. This finding differs from theoretical predictions, where self-efficacy should increase motivation, persistence, and work dedication as described in Social Cognitive Theory. This insignificance may be explained by the hospital work context, where healthcare workers face high workloads, intense emotional stress, and unpredictable situations. Even though individuals have a sense of being able to face difficult tasks and overcome various work challenges, this belief does not automatically convert into higher work engagement. High work demands, emotional stress, and limited resources can limit the role of self-efficacy in driving work engagement, as healthcare workers require broader psychological and structural support to remain optimally engaged.

Previous research also showed similar results. (Anam & Anggarani, 2023) showed that self-efficacy has no effect on work engagement. This means that employees who lack confidence in their ability to perform a task will find it difficult to engage and feel unenthusiastic about their work. This study is similar to (Hameli et al., 2023) who found that self-efficacy has no effect on work engagement in medical personnel when work demands are very high. This similarity in results strengthens the argument that the role of self-efficacy in increasing work engagement is contextual and not always dominant.

4.2.5 The Influence of Psychological Empowerment on Work Engagement

This study found that psychological empowerment has a positive influence on work engagement. These findings suggest that when healthcare workers feel their work is meaningful, feel competent, and have autonomy in decision making, they are more motivated to give their best effort in their work. Theoretically, psychological empowerment functions as a psychological condition that increases intrinsic motivation as explained in the empowerment model (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). From the perspective of social cognitive theory, these effects can be explained through the mechanisms of motivational processes that are influenced by the interaction between personal, behavioral, and environmental factors.

In the hospital aspect, psychological empowerment is very important to maintain the engagement of health workers who face high work demands and significant emotional intensity. This study is in line with (B. Sun et al., 2022) which shows that health workers with high levels of psychological empowerment have better work engagement. In addition, (Monje-Amor et al., 2021) found that empowerment encourages positive work behavior even under conditions of high professional pressure. This finding is consistent with (Hameli et al., 2023) which shows that psychological empowerment is the main predictor of work engagement. In both educational and healthcare contexts, a sense of meaning and control over work has been shown to be an intrinsic source that drives work engagement. In the context of regional hospitals, psychological empowerment is an important factor in maintaining work engagement amidst limited resources and high service burdens.

4.2.6 The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy

The study found that self-efficacy had no effect on the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement. This shows that increasing the emotional abilities of health workers does not necessarily increase work engagement through self-confidence. This insignificance may be due to high emotional stress and workload, making self-efficacy insufficient as an explanatory mechanism between EI and engagement. Theoretically, social cognitive theory asserts that self-efficacy will be effective in predicting behavior when the environment provides stability and controllable levels of demands.

This finding shows that mediation has no effect that self-efficacy is not able to bridge the relationship between EI and work engagement. This can occur when work pressures and emotional demands are more dominant than an individual's self-confidence. In this condition, health workers, even though they are confident, are still unable to maintain high engagement because their psychological energy is absorbed by operational demands. The study is in line with (Hameli et al., 2023) that self-efficacy does not mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement. Both studies indicate that self-efficacy is insufficient to foster work engagement without supportive working conditions.

4.2.7 The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

Research shows that psychological empowerment significantly mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement. These findings suggest that EI enhances healthcare workers' ability to experience meaning, competence, and control, and these conditions foster work engagement. This mechanism aligns with social cognitive theory, where cognitive

and emotional processes shape motivation and the quality of work behavior. This finding is similar to (Hashemi et al., 2025) which confirms that psychological empowerment can bridge the influence of EI on positive work behavior. In addition, (Fan et al., 2016) found positive work results that empowerment is an important mechanism that links emotional capacity with work engagement behavior in health workers.

These findings confirm that psychological empowerment is the most powerful psychological mechanism linking EI and work engagement. When health workers feel they have high levels of autonomy, competence, and meaning in their work, they are more motivated to actively engage in their work. EI strengthens empowerment by creating positive perceptions of work, thereby increasing engagement. Studies (Gong et al., 2020) and Stephens et al. (2013) also showed that empowerment increases the sense of belonging and involvement in work. This research is consistent with (Hameli et al., 2023) which emphasizes that psychological empowerment is the main mechanism that bridges the influence of emotional intelligence on work engagement. Thus, this study strengthens the evidence that psychological empowerment is a key pathway in transforming emotional capabilities into work engagement, particularly in the healthcare sector.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that Emotional Intelligence has a positive and significant influence on self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and work engagement, while psychological empowerment is proven to be a significant mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement, while self-efficacy does not provide a direct or mediating influence on work engagement. These findings confirm that emotional intelligence and psychological empowerment of employees are key factors in driving the emergence of competence and control in high-load work contexts such as healthcare workers. Based on these results, hospitals are advised to not only focus on increasing employee commitment and enthusiasm in providing healthcare services, but also strengthen the development of emotional intelligence and create a psychologically empowering work environment. This effort can be done by providing space for participation in decision-making, recognizing employee contributions, and strengthening open and supportive communication. Thus, employee commitment, enthusiasm, and engagement in providing quality healthcare services can be maintained sustainably.

Further Research

This study has limitations, namely that it was only conducted in three hospitals in Banjarnegara Regency, so it cannot be generalized to other areas. This study provides references related to factors that influence work engagement in the health sector, this is supported by the objects used by Hospitals in Banjarnegara Regency. However, this study is not without limitations, so further research addressing the issue of work engagement is needed. Further research can be applied to the education, banking, or public service sectors which have different working conditions. Further research can also be conducted using a longitudinal method, namely observations conducted over a certain period, so that changes in employee work engagement can be identified over time. By expanding the research context and methods, future studies are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of emotional dynamics and employee empowerment in the healthcare sector. In addition, further research needs to examine in more depth the reasons why self-efficacy does not have a direct effect on work engagement and does not function as a mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement. Therefore, the addition of other relevant intermediary variables, both psychological and organizational contextual, is important to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

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