

## Mediating Role of Work Engagement Between Positive Emotions and Individual Work Performance in Banking Industry, Peninsular Malaysia

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### Abstract

This study focuses on work engagement (WE) as the mediator that contributes to individual work performance (IWP) in organisations. The two independent variables: positive emotion and work engagement, are discussed in this research. Work engagement also acts as a mediator variable. Altogether, 169 employees from the banking industry in the Klang Valley and Peninsular Malaysia responded to the self-administered questionnaires. We used the Self-Determination Theory to examine the relationships between positive emotions, work engagement, and individual work performance. Based on Structural Equation Modelling- Partial Least Squared (SEM-PLS), findings from this study indicated that positive emotions positively predict work engagement and individual work performance. Another finding is that work engagement partially mediated the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. Overall, the findings of this research suggest that organisations must understand the predictors of work engagement, such as emotions, which can then aid them to improve their employees' individual work performance.

**Keywords:** Work engagement, individual work performance, positive emotions, Self-Determination Theory, social exchange theory, SMART-PLS.



## **1.0 Introduction**

The major challenge that management researchers and professionals face in today's rapidly changing business environment is in gaining an organisational competitive advantage, especially in the area of work performance. To stay competitive, employee engagement is vital as it is related to the involvement of employees' work activities which in turn is related to their work performance. The employees who are empowered tend to find meaning in what they do, feel they are in control of their work, feel they have the required capacity to perform their job, are determined to perform their job roles and believe that they can influence job outcomes. These factors provide psychological empowerment and help employees to become more engaged in their work. An enduring challenge for organisations is enhancing employee task performance to achieve organisational goals. So, in enduring the challenges of an organisation, particularly to enhance employee engagement, there is a growing need to explore the impact of emotions on work engagement.

In recent years, there is a rapidly growing body of evidence on vocal expressions of positive emotions (Kamiloğlu et al., 2020). This study attempts to fill this gap by examining the influence of work engagement on positive emotions and individual work performance. The predictive role of positive emotions on engagement has not received much attention either, with a few exceptions. Overall, the available evidence indicates the presence of a link between employee work engagement and work performance, but further investigation on this link across a variety of work contexts and task environments is necessary to fully understand, explain, and quantify this link. Thus, by investigating the effects of positive emotions on work engagement, this research attempts to offer new empirical and theoretical insights into this significant concept, particularly the relationship between positive emotions, work engagement, and individual work performance.

In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment, organisations in the service industry face constant pressure to produce more output with less input. This is especially true in the banking industry. This situation requires workers to work for a longer period of time every day compared to other industries in order to cater to the banking needs to respond to speedy changes in the market (Falahat et al., 2019). This requires the employees to be more engaged in their work by enhancing their positive emotions. This becomes an important business issue as positive emotions result in improved work



performance among employees which gives the company a competitive advantage in the service industry (Lipscomb et al., 2022). Thus, to increase their competitive advantage, companies need to make the best of each employee's skills and capabilities. Therefore, organisations need a group of employees who are engaged and can show their maximum work performance.

A particularly important consequence of engagement is work performance because of its relevance for organisations. This is because engaged employees are committed, dedicated, and invested in their work roles cognitively, psychologically, and behaviourally. Considering the low levels of engagement among employees in different countries, it is clear that engagement matters, and more research to advance our understanding of the major factors impacting employee engagement is needed. Further research is needed to explore the relationships between engagement and psychological well-being, and in this case, exploration on positive emotions is required. Due to its close association with the notion of flow, which is individual work performance, researchers believe that more studies are required to explain the link between work engagement and work performance (Ghadi et al., 2013). This study looks into the three constructs of individual work performance, namely task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive behaviour.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

In this section, the related theories and previous studies on work engagement, positive emotions, and individual work performance, as well as the developed hypotheses are discussed.

### **2.1 Work Engagement**

Work engagement is an active type of well-being and has become a widely used and popular term. Work engagement is defined as 'the positive and fulfilling work-related state of mind of the individual employee, which is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption'(Lipscomb et al., 2022). Bakker and Demerouti (2008) propose four reasons why engaged employees perform better than unengaged employees. First, engaged employees are found to have positive sentiments towards their job, leading to productivity. Second, engaged employees are seen to be more open to work opportunities, more confident, and more optimistic. Third, the research suggests that



engagement is positively related to employee well-being, leading to better performance (Shimazu et al., 2012). Engaged employees are also found to work more productively because they have the capacity to create their own resources (Al Shehri et al., 2017). In addition, Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) found in their study of highly-skilled Dutch technicians that personal resources, such as optimism, self-efficacy, and organisational-based self-esteem, resulted in higher levels of work engagement.

This study employs three items of work engagement which are vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working and the willingness to invest effort in one's work and persevering even when faced with difficulties (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p.74). Dedication is characterised by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p.74) while absorption is characterised by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties detaching oneself from work (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p.74). In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in work engagement as it is a relatively new construct that has been conceptualised by many in numerous other ways (Zhang et al., 2014). Previous research has been using work engagement as an independent variable (Reijseger et al., 2017), dependent variable (Al Shehri et al., 2017), and mediator (Detnakin & Rurkkhum, 2016). In this study, the researcher allocated work engagement as mediating variable in order to examine the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance among banking employees. The argument will use a Self-Determination Theory as the supporting theory.

## 2.2 Work Engagement in The Banking Industry in Malaysia

Work engagement in Malaysia is still considered the lowest in the world (Towers Watson, 2014). According to the Labor Force Survey 2014 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2015), the number of employed employees in 2014 is 13.9 million people in Malaysia. Based on that population of employees, only 11% are engaged employees in their workplace (Adkins, 2015). In Malaysia, banks are supervised by the central bank known as Bank Negara Malaysia. Bankers manage some risk factors every day which prohibits them from practising flexibility in their daily operations. These have somehow hindered employees in this case bankers to become engaged in employment



with banks. According to the National Union of Bank Employees Malaysia (2016), the lack of engagement among banking employees is also contributed by the policy change of the Malaysian government to strengthen the banking industry such as layoffs and mergers. Employees need to grapple with challenges associated with a slower economy and other issues. This is to ensure that banks can withstand economic challenges. So, banks are in urgent need to make sure their employees stay engaged and that the main purpose of the change is the engagement of employees to achieve and find better ways of working and go beyond the expected outcome of the roles.

By looking into this trend, it indicates that the banking service industry in Malaysia currently faces a problem in maintaining work engagement among employees, especially in the banking industry as stipulated in the Tenth Malaysia Plan. One of the ways mentioned in transforming the economy is to increase work engagement among employees and retain the employees in employment and at the same time, the banking industry in Malaysia can withstand challenges and pressure arising from globalisation and the global competitive environment. Overall, this study extended a broad range of knowledge on work engagement, focusing on the banking industry as a unit of analysis, by introducing a new set of variables.

### 2.3 Individual Work Performance

Broadly defined, performance can be viewed as 'the valued productive output of a system in the form of goods or services' (Swanson & Holton, 2009, p.98). Performance refers to keeping up with plans made at work while aiming for results. Employees' performance determines the success of the organisation (Jayasinghe & Mendis, 2017). Although performance evaluation is the heart of performance management, the performance of an individual or an organisation depends heavily on all organisational policies, practices, and design features of an organisation. According to the theory of job performance, job performance comprises multi-dimensional constructs which consist of task dimension and contextual dimension. There are two types of performance which are 'in-role performance' and 'extra-role performance'. The 'in-role performance' (e.g., job performance) refers to a behaviour that is recognised by formal reward systems. Whereas 'extra-role performance' (e.g., organisational citizenship behaviour) represents discretionary behaviour that is not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward systems.



Individual Work Performance (IWP) was defined by Campbell (1990, p. 704) as 'behaviours or actions that are relevant to the goals of the organisation' (Acheampong et al., 2016). Thus, IWP is focused on behaviours or actions of employees, rather than the results of these actions. The IWP domain consists of task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) (Koopmans et al., 2014). Task performance can be defined as the proficiency (i.e. competency) when one performs central job tasks. Other labels sometimes used for task performance are job-specific task proficiency, technical proficiency, or in-role performance. It includes, for example, work quantity, work quality, and job knowledge (Koopmans, 2014). Contextual performance can be defined as 'behaviours that support the organisational, social, and psychological environment in which the technical core must function' (Ramdani et al., 2019). Behaviours used to describe contextual performance include, for example, demonstrating effort, facilitating peer and team performance, cooperating, and communicating (Rotundo and Sackett, 2002). counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) can be defined as 'behaviour that harms the well-being of the organisation' (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002, p. 69). It is also defined as behaviour that harms the well-being of the organisation and includes behaviours such as absenteeism, being late for work, engaging in off-task behaviour, theft, and substance abuse (Koopmans, 2014). In this study, individual work performance serves as the dependent variable because it was found to be the important factor for the organisation to survive among competitors in the same industry. This study aims to examine the factors that contribute to individual work performance.

## 2.4 Positive emotions

Emotion is an important element within work organisations (Karthikeyan & Lalwani, 2017) because people experience emotion at work every day. Emotions are affective states characterised by episodes of intense feelings associated with a specific referent (Gezhi & Xiang, 2022). Scherer (2005) describes emotion as a multifaceted psychological construct that may be generated almost automatically such as instant joy at finding lost money. According to the affective events theory, emotions are reactions to important events that comprise several components, including subjective experiences, cognitive appraisals, behaviour, and physiology (Dunn, 2017). In the study of emotion, positive emotions fall under discrete emotions



together with fear, guilt, anger, sadness, disgust, envy, happiness/joy, pride, relief, hope, and compassion.

Positive emotions can have long-lasting benefits on an individual's pleasure. Positive achievement emotions, such as joy and satisfaction, 'occur in situations when people have a sense of accomplishment' (p. 40) and experience comfort and fulfilment (Stratton, 2010). Positive emotions help employees buffer against stress so that employees can move forward and be more productive (Armenta et al., 2017).

Positive emotions are correlated with performance-enhancing variables such as creativity, less negative stress, better health, holistic thinking, and emotional resilience (Fredrickson, 2001). Managers can influence, encourage, and develop positive emotions among team members to achieve successful results. Employees who have positive emotions have more energy and vigour. They are also more committed and perform better at work than others. This strengthens the assumption of correlations between positive emotions and efficiency. Positive emotions can thus be a powerful resource for individuals. Positive emotions not only make people feel good at a particular point in time, but these emotions may also predict future wellbeing (Wall et al., 2017).

This study uses the ten representatives of positive emotions by Fredrickson (2013) as these ten are experienced relatively frequently in people's daily life. The ten emotions are joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe, and love. Joy is conceptualised as a high arousal response to obtaining a reward (Lazarus, 1991). Joy is a more intense form of happiness and is associated with the unexpected attainment of a personal goal. Gratitude is conceptualised as a response to being benefited by another's intentional action (Armenta et al., 2017). It emerges when people acknowledge another person as the source of their unexpected good fortune (Fredrickson, 2013). Serenity is also called contentment. Contentment is conceptualised as a response derived from the satisfaction of basic physical needs such as food, warmth, or companionship (Fredrickson, 1998). Serenity appears when people cherish their current circumstances and are satisfied with them. Serene people are comfortable, at ease in or one with their situation. Interest is conceptualised as a response to novel information that fits existing schema, motivating learning, and exploration (Silvia, 2005). Interest appears when people feel mysterious or challenging, yet not



overwhelming (Fredrickson, 2013). Hope is defined as ‘a positive cognitive state that is based on the sense of successful goal-directed determination and planning to meet these goals’ (Ouweneel et al., 2012, p.1131). People feel hope, for instance, in grim situations in which they can envision at least a chance that the situations might change for the better. Pride is conceptualised as a response to personal or collective accomplishments and is linked to an increase in social status. Pride creates the urge to fantasise even bigger accomplishments in similar areas (Fredrickson, 2013). Amusement is conceptualised as a response associated with a play that facilitates cognitive and behavioural skills (Pellegrini & Smith, 2005). It occurs when people appraise their current circumstances as involving non-serious social incongruity. Amusement can erupt, for instance, in the wake of a harmless speech error or physical blunder. ‘Amusement creates urges to share a laugh and find creative ways to continue the joviality. As people follow these urges, they build and solidify enduring social bonds’ (Gervais & Wilson, 2005). Inspiration arises when people witness human excellence in some manner. People feel inspired; for instance, when they see someone else doing a good deed or performing at an unparalleled level. Inspiration will create the need to excel and they will try to be the best in whatever they do. Inspiration will build the motivation for personal growth (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). Awe is conceptualised as a response elicited by novel, complex stimuli that require cognitive accommodation (Shiota et al., 2007). It emerges when people encounter goodness on a grand scale. People feel awe, for instance, when overwhelmed by something (or someone) beautiful or powerful that seems larger than life. The experience of awe compels people to absorb and accommodate this new magnitude they have encountered (Fredrickson, 2013). Love is conceptualised as a response that promotes commitment to relationships essential to survival and reproduction (Gonzaga et al., 2001). Love broadens thought-action repertoires by creating momentary perceptions of social connection and self-expansion.

In this study, positive emotions are allocated as an independent variable because it is found to be an important factor influencing individual work performance and work engagement. The goal of this study is to examine the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. It is also to examine the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance if mediated by work engagement. The ten dimensions of positive





emotions used for this study are joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe, and love.

## 2.5 Positive Emotions and Individual Work Performance

To exist and compete in today's difficult economic environment, organisations need employees to be proactive by showing initiatives while engaging with their office colleagues and staying dedicated to perform at high standards (Bondarenko, 2017). The nature of emotions experienced by organisational participants will determine the success or failure of an organisation. According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), there is a correlation between positive emotions such as humor and joy on individual work performance which results in employees being more creative, productive, and healthier and thus fewer sickness absences. Positive emotions can lead to positive relations and behaviour. These positive experiences and emotions are likely to result in positive work outcomes (Wall et al., 2017).

Positive emotions lead to individual work performance for several reasons. Firstly, positive emotions broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources. Emotional reactions cause employees to evaluate their work and, in turn, the employees' expectations regarding their working day are influenced. In this way, the experience of positive emotions may enhance employees' expectations relating to the attainment of work-related goals. So, the experience of positive emotions is likely to influence the level of performance in a positive way. Secondly, positive emotions have also been linked with better steering performance for participants in a driving simulator, which is consistent with the theory that broadened visual awareness contributes to steering performance and is associated with better task-switching information.

Previous studies also have demonstrated that positive emotions are related to improved task performance. Presumably, this is because employees in positive emotional states are able to broaden their scope of attention, cognition, and action; to establish better social support networks and obtain personal resources. For example, when individuals experience positive emotions, they are likely to perceive information favourably to be motivated and increase their levels of effort (Bondarenko, 2017), as well as setting challenging goals. Thirdly, as mentioned earlier, positive emotions broaden people's thought-action repertoires, implying that they build a variety of personal resources



which can be used to cope with the job demands and to perform well. Thus, a variety of resources can be created from conducive positive emotion to perform at a higher level.

Positive emotions also build proactivity and productivity, which are considered performance. Therefore, in this study, Koopmans et al. (2014), measured two variables during the data collection namely, positive emotions (first independent variable), and individual work performance (dependent variable). In supporting the relationship, the Self Determination Theory was used to examine the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. The theory explains that when an organisation commits to satisfying workers with positive emotions, employees will perform better, and this may increase their individual work performance. Based on the evidence reviewed, therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H1 There is a direct positive relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance.

## 2.6 Mediation Roles of Work Engagement

How do positive emotions predict individual work performance? The Self Determination Theory may provide a useful framework to understand the mediating mechanism underlying the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. Emotions may be a better predictor of future work engagement. Positive emotions are immediate responses to a work environment and work engagement and are relatively more enduring in nature (Schaufeli et al., 2002). It has been studied before as a predictor of engagement (Costantini & Sartori, 2018; Salanova et al., 2010). Positive emotions are likely to have an effect on work engagement because they facilitate approach behaviour, which prompts individuals to set goals and to be engaged in attaining the goals and work-related activities (Løvoll et al., 2017). Employees experiencing positive emotions and engaging in concomitant exploratory behaviours will experience a more enduring positive state of well-being such as work engagement.

Similarly, when positive feelings or emotions are evoked by work, enthusiasm and cheerfulness can eventually lead to engagement (Schaufeli & Van Rhenen, 2006). Therefore, it is plausible to assume that positive emotions precede work engagement (Ouweneel et al., 2012; Schaufeli & Van Rhenen, 2006). According to Fredrickson



(2007), positive emotions broaden one's thoughts and actions, and in consequence, build important personal resources. The recurrent experiences of positive emotions can increase one's personal resources, including coping resources because they help to build psychological resources that are essential to effectively cope with traumatic circumstances as emotions induced efforts at work will send signals about how one feels and behaves. Positive emotional experiences facilitate employees to attain higher levels of positive affective displays.

The concept of work engagement has come to prominence because it has been linked to various indicators of performance. It has also been considered a relatively stable motivation as engaged workers are primarily motivated because they work for the fun of it and are emotionally connected to the endeavor. Previous research has demonstrated that work engagement is positively associated with in-role job performance (Gorgievski et al., 2014), organisational citizenship behaviour (Schaufeli, Taris, et al., 2006), task performance (Rich et al., 2010), and better role performance (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Xanthopoulou et al., 2008). Bakker and Demerouti (2008) explain that engaged employees perform better than those who are not because they are emotionally more positive (happy, joyful, and enthusiastic). The engaged employees have personal and job resources to motivate them to perform. When they are engaged in their work, they are able to contribute more to the organisation. This is because engaged employees have personal and job resources to motivate them to perform, and at the same time feel a sense of attachment towards their organisation, they would invest not only in their role but in the organisation as a whole.

Empirical evidence shows that engaged employees and self-employed people perform better than their less-engaged counterparts (Gorgievski et al., 2014). It will influence performance outcomes and employees who experience pleasant emotions tend to set higher goals and engage in constructive activities and generative ways to deliver superior service quality. At the same time, they are able and willing to go the extra mile by enhancing work engagement that is linked to greater individual performance outcomes. When employees have physical, emotional, and psychological resources connected to their work, they are more likely to engage in proactive voice behaviour. Positive emotions represent individual characteristics that are expected to encourage employees to be engaged in their work. They also



facilitate approach behaviour, which prompts individuals to set goals and to be engaged in attaining these goals. Demerouti and Cropanzano (2010) stress that the number of studies showing a positive relationship between employee engagement and job performance is increasing as engaged employees perform better than those who are not because they are emotionally more positive (happy, joyful and enthusiastic) and personal resources or positive emotions. Therefore, in this study, the researcher measured three variables during the data collection namely, positive emotions (independent variable), work engagement (mediating variable) and individual work performance (dependent variable).

In supporting the relationship, the Self Determination Theory is used to examine the relationship between positive emotions and work engagement, and the relationship between work engagement and individual work performance. The theory explains that positive emotions enable an employee to direct energy in pursuing a goal (i.e., in being engaged).

Based on the evidence reviewed, this study hypothesises that work engagement mediates the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance.

H2a positive emotions are positively related to work engagement

H2b work engagement is positively related to individual work performance.

Based on the above-reviewed studies and hypotheses developed, the proposed research model of the study is illustrated in Figure 1.

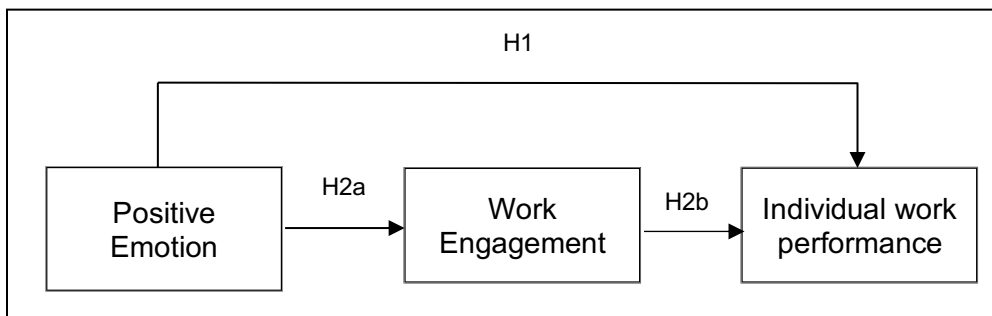


Figure 1 : Theoretical Framework

### **3.0 Methodology**

This study uses quantitative method to examine positive emotions, work engagement, and individual work performance. The population was employees in commercial banks in Peninsular Malaysia. Using a self-administered technique, data from 169 respondents were used for data analysis. Cohen Power analysis (Cohen, 1992) was used in determining the sample size for this study. Referring to the sample size recommended by Cohen for PLS structural equation modeling, the minimum sample size required to detect values of at least 5 per cent probability error and statistical power of 80 per cent for the conceptual framework designed for this study, which equates to 59 respondents. Thus, the sample size is sufficient to test the research model of the study. On top of that, all variables were measured by adopting or adapting previous validated measurement scales. The constructs used in this study are well-known in organisational behaviour. The reliability and validity of measurements are also available. Three primary measures used are scored on a seven-point Likert scale anchored from never (1) to always (7). Scales scores were created by averaging the composite items for each scale which are work engagement (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003), positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2013) and individual work performance (Koopmans et al., 2014).

### **4.0 Analysis and findings**

The data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 20) for descriptive and SmartPLS 3 (Hair et al., 2014) statistical software applications to test the study hypotheses.

#### **4.1 Demographic profile**

In order to get better insights into the sample and to obtain the descriptive statistics of the study variables, the researcher analysed the data using SPSS (version 20). Only data from 169 respondents was usable for the data analysis after excluding the cases of missing values and suspicious patterns. The majority of the respondents were females (50.9 %), ages between 21 and 29 (45 %), married (51.5 %), length of service was less than 5 years (46.5 %), full-time workers (91.7 %) and hold at least a bachelor's degree (40.8 %). The demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1.



Table 1 : Summary of Respondents Demographic Data

Classification	Percentage	
Sex	Female	(50.9%)
	Male	(48.5%)
Age	21-29	(45%)
	30-39	(33.1%)
	40-49	(16.6%)
	50 years and above	(3.6%)
Marital status	Married	(51.5%)
	Single	(47.9%)
	Others	(0.6%)
Length of service	Less than 5 years	(48%)
	6- 10 years	(18.9%)
	11-15 years	(10.7%)
	16-20 years	(15.4%)
Type of service	20 years and more	(7.1%)
	Full time	(91.7%)
	Part-time	(5.3%)
Education level	Temporary	(0.6%)
	SPM/ SPMV and below	(29.6%)
	SPTM/ Diploma	(20.1%)
	Bachelor's degree	(40.8%)
	Master's degree	(7.7%)
	Professional	(0.6%)
	Others	(1.2%)

#### 4.2 Reflective Measurement Model

We examined the measurement model to assess indicator reliability, construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The internal consistency reliability of the measurement model was high, as shown in Table 2. The composite reliability values for positive emotions, work engagement, and individual work performance were 0.934, 0.957, and 0.938, respectively. Table 2 also shows the results of the convergent validity as assessed by the average variance extracted (AVE) values. The AVE values for the three variables were above 0.50 thresholds, indicating that more than half of the respective indicators' variance was explained by its latent variable.



Table 2 : Result Summary for the Reflective Measurement Model

Latent Variable	Indicator	Loading	Indicator Reliability	Composite Reliability	AVE	Discriminant Analysis
IWP	IWPCP2	0.823	0.677	0.938	0.655	Yes
	IWPCP3	0.849	0.721			
	IWPCP4	0.865	0.748			
	IWPCP5	0.855	0.731			
	IWPCP6	0.797	0.635			
	IWPCP7	0.831	0.691			
	IWPCP8	0.734	0.539			
	IWPCPB4	0.707	0.500			
PE	PE1	0.734	0.539	0.934	0.614	Yes
	PE10	0.764	0.584			
	PE2	0.709	0.503			
	PE3	0.760	0.578			
	PE4	0.790	0.624			
	PE6	0.787	0.619			
	PE7	0.805	0.648			
	PE8	0.861	0.741			
	PE9	0.830	0.689			
WE	WE1	0.859	0.738	0.957	0.761	Yes
	WE2	0.911	0.830			
	WE3	0.905	0.819			
	WE4	0.910	0.828			
	WE5	0.853	0.728			
	WE6	0.867	0.752			
	WE7	0.796	0.634			

The Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) were used to assess the discriminant validity at the construct level. Table 3 reveals that the AVE value of each of the latent variables was greater than the latent variable's highest squared correlation over the other latent variables. These results suggest that each latent variable is above other latent variables in terms of construct variance. This provides evidence of the discriminant validity at the construct level.



Table 3 : Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Individual Work Performance	Positive Emotions	Work Engagement
Individual Work Performance	0.809		
Positive Emotions	0.532	0.783	
Work Engagement	0.568	0.722	0.872

Table 4 : Cross Loading

Cross Loadings	Individual Work Performance	Positive Emotions	Work Engagement
IWPCP2	<b>0.823</b>	0.439	0.515
IWPCP3	<b>0.849</b>	0.402	0.462
IWPCP4	<b>0.865</b>	0.401	0.489
IWPCP5	<b>0.855</b>	0.457	0.475
IWPCP6	<b>0.797</b>	0.402	0.425
IWPCP7	<b>0.831</b>	0.475	0.497
IWPCP8	<b>0.734</b>	0.436	0.420
IWPCPB4	<b>0.707</b>	0.430	0.377
PE1	0.278	<b>0.734</b>	0.501
PE10	0.368	<b>0.764</b>	0.619
PE2	0.296	<b>0.709</b>	0.487
PE3	0.461	<b>0.760</b>	0.501
PE4	0.494	<b>0.790</b>	0.538
PE6	0.416	<b>0.787</b>	0.591
PE7	0.349	<b>0.805</b>	0.585
PE8	0.523	<b>0.861</b>	0.651
PE9	0.504	<b>0.830</b>	0.592
WE1	0.395	0.558	<b>0.859</b>
WE2	0.495	0.644	<b>0.911</b>
WE3	0.511	0.644	<b>0.905</b>
WE4	0.500	0.666	<b>0.910</b>
WE5	0.423	0.589	<b>0.853</b>
WE6	0.568	0.663	<b>0.867</b>
WE7	0.548	0.626	<b>0.796</b>

Table 4 also shows that the loading of each indicator on its assigned latent variable was greater (number in bold) than all its cross-loadings. Hence, the discriminant validity at the indicator level was established. Another new method used to test the discriminant validity was the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Table 5 shows that all the





ratios were less than 0.9 threshold value, suggesting that the ratios are discriminant.

Table 5 : Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	<b>Individual Work Performance</b>	<b>Positive Emotions</b>	<b>Work Engagement</b>
Individual Work Performance			
Positive Emotions	0.568		
Work Engagement	0.601	0.767	

#### 4.3 Structural Model

Following a reliable and valid measurement model, the structural model was assessed. Figure 2 shows the results of the structural model of the present study. The R2 value for individual work performance were 0.354 and 0.610, respectively. Therefore, the model explained the endogenous latent variables moderately well (Henseler et al., 2009). The changes in R2 values were calculated to identify the effect size ( $f^2$ ) of the predictors. The results show that the effect sizes ( $f^2$ ) ranged from 0.048 to 0.305, indicating the presence of small to medium effects (Henseler et al., 2009). Specifically, positive emotions had a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.048$ ) on individual work performance, and work engagement has a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.109$ ) on individual work performance.

As shown in Figure 2, the research model explains the 61 per cent variation in the work engagement construct. positive sign in the research model was in the same direction as specified in the theory. This means that the theoretical arguments of the current study were fully supported. To test the significance of the path coefficient, the bootstrapping procedure was used (cases = 169, resample = 5000). The bootstrapping result in Table 6 shows that all structural paths were statistically significant.



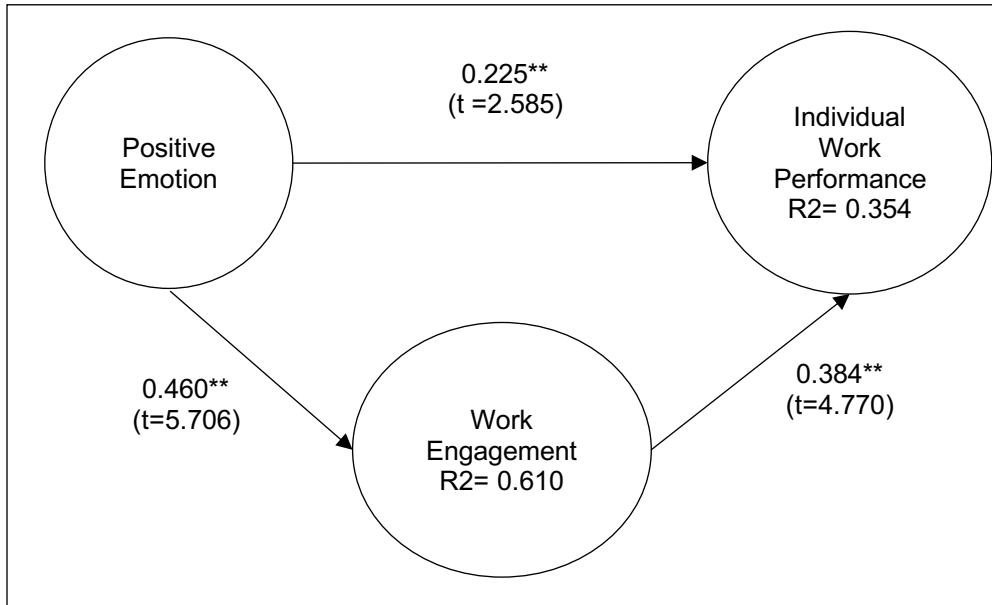


Figure 2 : Results of the Structural Model

Table 6 : Significant Testing Results of the Structural Model

Path coefficients	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	Significance level	P Values
PE ->IWP	2.585	**	0.010
PE -> WE	5.706	**	0.000
WE -> IWP	4.770	**	0.000

Note: NS= not significant. \*\*p <.05

To further examine the model's capability, a blindfolding procedure with an omission distance of six was run. The blindfolding procedure generated a cross-validated communality index that measures the quality of the measurement model of each block of indicators and a cross-validated redundancy index that measures the quality of each structural equation. These two indices are the different forms of Stone-Geisser's Q2. For the purpose of assessing the predictive relevance of the structural model, the cross-validated redundancy index was used (Chin, 2010). Table 7 provides the results of the blindfolding procedure. The cross-validated redundancy for individual work performance (Q2 = 0.208) and work engagement (Q2 = 0.414) indicates that the structural model has predictive relevance because the values were larger than zero. The collinearity assessment

found that the inner and outer variance inflation factor (VIF) values were less than 5. Therefore, no collinearity existed.

Table 7 : Cross-validated Communality and Cross-Validated Redundancy

Construct	Cross-validated communality	Cross-validated redundancy
Individual Work Performance	0.516	0.208
Positive Emotions	0.477	-
Work engagement	0.603	0.414

#### 4.4 Hypothesis testing

Overall, the results of the hypothesis testing show that all two paths were statistically significant at the 0.05 level as shown in Table 8. The path coefficients were statistically significant for the relationship between positive emotions (PE) and individual work performance (IWP) ( $\beta = 0.255$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 which states that there is a positive relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance is significant.

Hypothesis 2 states that work engagement mediates the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. Further, it was hypothesised that (a) positive emotions are positively related to work engagement and (b) work engagement is positively related to individual work performance. The mediating hypothesis was tested using the PLS algorithm and bootstrapping procedures on the full model to estimate the structural path coefficients and the statistical significance of these path coefficients. The path for the structural relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance, between positive emotions and work engagement, and between work engagement and individual work performance were found to be statistically significant. There is empirical evidence of mediation. The statistical significance of the indirect effect was tested using bootstrapping procedures with 5000 resamples using Smart PLS 3. The results show that the confidence interval for the indirect effect were 0.303 and 0.545 at 95 per cent confidence for the lower and upper limits, respectively, which means that the indirect effect is statistically significant. Hence, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

The VAF value was calculated to determine the size of the indirect effect. The ratio of indirect effect to total effect was calculated using the result from Smart PLS 3. The VAF value for the indirect effect



was 63.54 per cent, which means 64 per cent of the total effect of positive emotions on individual work performance is explained by work engagement.

Table 8 : Significant Testing Results of the Structural Model

Hypotheses	Path Coefficients	t value	Significance level	p-value	95% Confidence Intervals
H1	PE -> IWP	2.609	**	0.009	(0.269, 0.588)
H2a	PE -> WE	5.713	**	0.000	(0.303, 0.622)
H2b	WE -> IWP	4.783	**	0.000	(0.228, 0.545)

#### 4.5 Discussion

The finding of the study suggests the importance of examining the emotions of employees. Emotions can also be related to well-being and positive experiences and emotions are likely to result in positive work outcomes. The predictive role of positive emotions on engagement has not received much attention, with a few exceptions, with the available evidence indicates the presence of a link between employee work engagement and performance. Further investigation of this link across a variety of work contexts and task environments is necessary to understand, explain, and quantify this link fully. The study also reveals that positive emotions influence work engagement and individual work performance. Positive emotions are personal resources that are positively associated with work engagement as an intrinsic motivational role because they foster employees' growth, learning and development. Interestingly, in line with the theory of self-determination, employees who experience happiness are more sensitive to opportunities at work, outgoing and helpful to others, and confident and optimistic. In this study, work engagement is found to be the underlying mechanism in the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. When positive emotions are high, employees' work engagement is high and when work engagement is high, individual work performance is similarly high. Conversely, when positive emotions are low, work engagement is low, and when work engagement is low, individual work performance will be low.

#### 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between positive emotions, work engagement, and individual work



performance. This study further examines the mediator role of work engagement in the relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance. As expected, hypotheses regarding the direct effects of the relationship between studied variables, and the mediating effect of work engagement between positive emotions and individual work performance are supported. This study finds a significant direct positive relationship between positive emotions and individual work performance, which is consistent with the Self-Determination Theory that states that intrinsic motivation boosts work engagement. This study is beneficial for union employees, particularly the National Union Bank Employees (NUBE) in Malaysia, especially during collective bargaining exercises.

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