

## **WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT'S IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: SOCIAL COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate the impact of the work environment on employee engagement, which in turn influences performance from a social-cognitive perspective. Several studies have demonstrated that positive environments can enhance employees' engagement with the organization and ultimately lead to improved performance. The social-cognitive perspective asserts that interaction between personal factors, environment, and behavior shapes individual behavior patterns. The method used is systematic literature review, which involves analyzing pertinent empirical research studies and comprehensively reviewing previous relevant international literature. The study examines workplace environments and factors that influence work engagement, which are linked to performance, using social theory to understand their significance. This study shows that a positive workplace environment through social-cognitive theory has been shown to increase self-efficacy, engagement, and ultimately performance. Therefore, organizations need to pay attention to aspects of the workplace environment.

Keywords: *Performance, workplace environment, social cognitive, employee engagement*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Employees indeed learn from their workplace environment, which significantly influences their engagement and development. Research indicates that informal learning constitutes a substantial portion of workplace learning, with estimates suggesting that up to 70% of learning occurs informally through interactions and experiences (Kittel et al., 2021). The findings in several companies imply that a supportive work environment can enhance motivation and subsequently improve engagement performance, aligning with social cognitive theories that emphasize the importance of environmental factors in shaping behavior and performance outcomes (Parulian & Ahmad Hidayat Sutawijaya, 2020).

Social interaction plays a vital role in human learning, as we form memories and acquire knowledge about the world from and with other people. People learn by observing the behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of other people's behavior. Key processes in this learning include observation, imitation, and modeling, which involve attention, memory, and motivation (De Felice et al., 2023). Social-cognitive theory describes how knowledge, inspiration, and direction from mass media drive change by influencing human thought, emotion, and behavior directly as well as via social media. There are three main factors between social cognitive theory determinants: environmental, cognitive and personal, and behavioral (Graham & Bonner, 2022).

A supportive environment allows individuals to experience success and receive constructive feedback, which reinforces their belief in their capabilities. Workplace environment culture plays a crucial role in influencing employees' performance. Positive workplace environments can enhance employees' ability to work more effectively and efficiently, thereby leading to higher performance (He et al., 2021). Organizations need a supportive workplace environment to enhance employee engagement, which in turn positively impacts performance.

According to research, workers are more satisfied with their jobs and productive when they feel that their workplace is welcoming and encouraging (Gemina et al., 2024) (Zhenjing et al., 2022). For instance, a study in one of the companies in Indonesia highlights that a conducive workplace environment leads to increased employee performance by fostering contentment and efficient use of

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working hours (Gemina et al., 2024). Similarly, Zhenjing et al. affirm that a positive workplace environment significantly shapes employee performance, suggesting that environmental factors play a critical role in job effectiveness (Zhenjing et al., 2022). This aligns with findings from Kurniawan, which illustrate that a toxic workplace environment can mediate work stress, negatively impacting employee performance (Kurniawan et al., 2023).

**Research Problem:** Unsupportive workplace environment can negatively impact employee engagement and reduce performance due to limitations in knowledge and resources. **Research Objectives:** Workplace environment enhances organization through social cognitive perspective. The research question is: How does the work environment impact engagement and lead to performance from a social cognitive perspective? **Research Implications:** A positive workplace environment improves performance by increasing work engagement and performance.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The focus of this literature review is on theories, key concepts, and empirical research that relate to workplace environments impacting employee engagement and performance. This literature review is organized around three thematic components: The study focuses on the workplace environment, employee engagement, performance, and social cognitive theory. The way humans react to these encounters or events usually plays a stronger role than the event itself (Wang et al., 2019). Employee performance and behavior are influenced by the organizational, social, and physical characteristics of the workplace. Research indicates that a work atmosphere that is both encouraging and stimulating can result in increased job satisfaction, staff engagement, and overall productivity (Rabwana & Yanuar, 2023).

Social cognitive theory provides useful information and a valuable framework for understanding how workplace environment factors can influence employees' cognitive processes, behaviors, and ultimately, performance. Social cognitive theory explains how people interact with each other through three types of reciprocal causation: environmental events, behavioral traits, and psychological and cognitive traits. These traits affect each other in both directions. This dynamic interaction suggests that altering personal factors can significantly improve organizational functioning (Chan et al., 2017).

### **Workplace Environment**

Workplace environment refers to all aspects of an employee's life at work, including social, organizational, and physical environments that have an impact on their general well-being and output. It includes factors such as office layout, the availability of resources like sit-stand desks, and the presence of spaces for relaxation and communication. A positive workplace environment improves employee performance by increasing employee dedication and drive for success, which ultimately enhances performance (Zhenjing et al., 2022).

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is the emotional connection workers have to their company and its goals; it may be characterized as the emotional attachment that workers have to their company and its objectives. Highly immersed in their work, emotionally invested in the company, and ecstatic about their colleagues' achievements are characteristics of engaged workers (Kaur, 2023). Employee engagement is defined as the cognitive state of employees who are emotionally involved in their work, demonstrating positive behaviors such as enthusiasm and a deep commitment to achieving organizational goals. It encompasses three dimensions: enthusiasm, characterized by high energy and resilience; dedication, reflecting meaningfulness and pride in work; and absorption, marked by full

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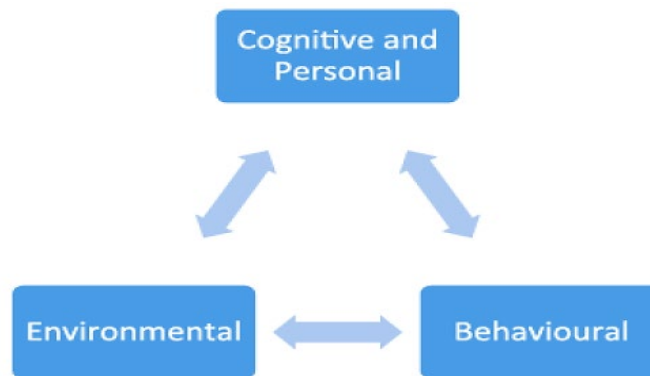
concentration and interest in tasks. This engagement is influenced by many factors, such as personal characteristics, personal values, organizational factors, and leadership style (Chen & Lin, 2024).

## **Performance**

Performance refers to the achievement of organizational goals, which can lead to increased long-term profitability, growth, job satisfaction, employee productivity, and improved quality of services and products. It is crucial for organizational success and is impacted by professional competency. In a constantly changing environment, employees must go beyond formal job requirements to meet new expectations, as individual performance significantly impacts the overall productivity and effectiveness of the organization (Zhenjing et al., 2022). Performance is positively influenced by inclusive work environments, which address feelings of belonging and ensure that employees' voices are heard (Radziwill & Benton, 2024).

## **Social Cognitive Theory**

Social Cognitive Theory highlights chance encounters and unexpected events, even though these encounters and events do not immediately change the course of human life. The social-cognitive theory highlights how observers' task and work performance can benefit from observing higher performers due to observational learning increasing self-efficacy. Social comparison theory highlights the poor self-evaluations that result from believing in superior performers. There are the three main factors between Social Cognitive Theory determinants (Graham & Bonner, 2022):



**Figure 1. Main Factor – Social Cognitive Theory**

### **1. Personal Factors**

- Self-efficacy is a subjective evaluation of capacity to overcome obstacles and realize their goals. Similarly, self-efficacy plays a significant role in career development, influencing occupational interests and career objectives (Zola et al., 2022).
- **Cognitive Aspects:** Cognitive factors such as knowledge, attitudes, and expectations are integral to social cognitive theory. These aspects shape how individuals perceive and react to their environment. In the context of breakfast eating behavior in workplace settings, cognitive influences were found to have minimal impact, suggesting that other factors might be more significant (Harris et al., 2022).

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## 2. Behavioral Factors

- **Behavioral Patterns:** Based on SCT, behavior arises from a complex interplay of personal characteristics, environmental cues, and past experiences (Fischbach & Yaune, 2023).
- **Outcome Expectations:** These are beliefs about the consequences of actions, which can motivate behavior. In the context of betel nut chewing among students, outcome expectations were part of the Social Cognitive Theory constructs used to predict behavior, although they showed limited predictive power (Waqatakirewa et al., 2022).

## 3. Environmental Factors

- **Social and Physical Environment:** The environment provides the context in which behavior occurs and can facilitate or hinder actions. Environmental factors include social norms, policies, and physical settings (Fischbach & Yaune, 2023).
- **Reciprocal Determinism:** This concept highlights the dynamic interaction between behavioral, environmental, and personal. Social Cognitive Theory has been used to understand how these factors interact to influence behaviors and outcomes (Manjarres-Posada et al., 2020).

Bandura outlines four prerequisites that must be met for the modeling process to proceed. An existence can successfully create an activity model by taking into consideration how (Manik et al., 2022):

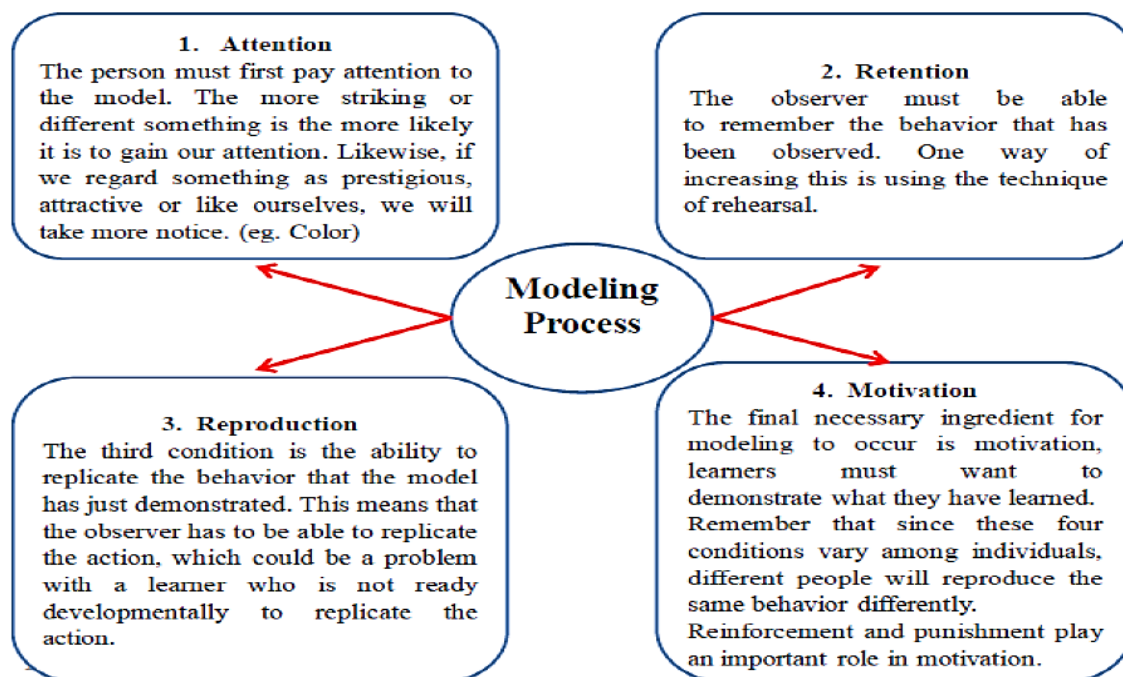


Figure 2. Modeling process – Social Cognitive Theory

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## **METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology for this study employs a thorough assessment of systematic literature to investigate the influence of workplace environments and employee engagement on performance through social cognitive theory. The approach aims to identify challenges practitioners face in fostering a positive workplace environment and to uncover effective strategies for enhancing performance. The research begins with an in-depth exploration of existing literature, encompassing key concepts, theories, and empirical findings related to social cognitive theory. We searched reliable academic databases such as Google Scholar, Books, Web of Science, and Scopus, using keywords such as "workplace environment," "performance," and "social cognitive theory." The research was critically analyzed and synthesized to produce this literature review.

## **RESULTS**

The existing research literature underscores that employee engagement is influenced by the workplace environment, and positive employee engagement enhances performance. Understanding the perspective of social cognitive theory can support exploration of further understanding of its various main factors. Factors such as the physical workplace environment, social and organizational support, and the overall organizational culture can all contribute to an individual's cognitive and emotional states, ultimately affecting their work outcomes.

By adopting a social cognitive perspective, organizations can better understand the mechanisms through which the workplace environment influences performance and take steps to create a more conducive and supportive workplace environment for their employees. The workplace environment significantly influences work engagement and performance. Social Cognitive Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how these environmental factors interact with personal and behavioral factors to shape employee performance.

## **DISCUSSION**

The result showed that a positive work environment through Social Cognitive Perspective positively influences work engagement will impact performance. It is essential to consider individual differences in how employees perceive and react to their environment. Not all employees respond similarly to the same conditions, and personal factors such as resilience and adaptability can influence outcomes. Additionally, while improving the workplace environment can enhance performance, it is not a panacea. Other factors, such as job design and leadership style, also play significant roles in shaping employee performance. Therefore, a holistic approach that considers multiple dimensions of the workplace environment and individual differences is necessary for optimizing performance.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, the existing research literature underscores that employee engagement is influenced by the workplace environment and positive employee engagement enhances performance, understanding the perspective of social cognitive theory can support exploration of further understanding of its various main factors. Factors such as the physical workplace environment, social and organizational support, and the overall organizational culture can all contribute to an individual's cognitive and emotional states, ultimately affecting their work outcomes.

By adopting a social cognitive perspective, organizations can better understand the mechanisms through which the workplace environment influences performance and take steps to create a more conducive and supportive workplace environment for their employees. The workplace environment significantly influences work engagement and performance. Social Cognitive Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how these environmental factors interact with personal and behavioral factors to shape employee performance.

## LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The review focused specifically on the impact of the workplace environment on performance, without considering other potential outcomes or factors that may influence the workplace environment. The review relied heavily on a social cognitive perspective, which might not capture the full complexity of the relationship between the workplace environment and employee performance. To fully understand the complex nature of the work environment and its wider implications for worker satisfaction, organizational effectiveness, and other pertinent outcomes, more research is required.

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