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WORK ENGAGEMENT AND SELF-EFFICACY AS KEY PREDICTORS OF TEACHER PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH TEACHERS

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Abstract

This study examines the structural relationship between work engagement, self-efficacy, and teacher performance among Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in Malang City. A quantitative explanatory approach with a survey design was employed involving 191 teachers selected through proportional random sampling. The instruments used were the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, and the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings indicate that work engagement significantly influences both self-efficacy and teacher performance. Self-efficacy also has a significant positive effect on teacher performance and partially mediates the relationship between work engagement and performance. These results highlight the central role of work engagement in enhancing teacher performance both directly and indirectly through self-efficacy. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence of the structural relationship among work engagement, self-efficacy, and teacher performance in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, emphasizing the importance of strengthening teachers' psychological resources to improve professional performance.

Keywords: Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers, performance, self-efficacy, work engagement.

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INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of education remains a central agenda in the development of human resources worldwide, particularly at the level of basic education. Many countries continue to face challenges related to the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes, which are closely linked to teacher performance. Globally, studies have shown that teacher effectiveness is one of the most influential school-related factors affecting students' academic achievement and motivation (Kinsey et al., 2024; Reeve & Cheon, 2021). However, issues such as teacher workload, low professional engagement, and limited psychological support often hinder teachers from performing optimally. These challenges highlight the importance of understanding factors that can strengthen teachers' professional performance.

In Indonesia, improving teacher performance is also a major concern in efforts to enhance the quality of education, particularly at the level of basic education (SD/MI). Despite various policy initiatives aimed at improving teacher professionalism, disparities in teaching quality and learning outcomes remain evident across regions and schools. Teachers at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level play a pivotal role because this stage represents the foundation for students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. As the primary agents in the educational transformation process (Unruh, 2024), MI teachers are expected not only to deliver academic content but also to foster students' character and moral development. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence teacher performance is essential for developing effective strategies to improve educational quality in Indonesia. Consequently, improving teacher performance has become an important focus in educational research (Haryono et al., 2020).

Teacher performance refers to educators' ability to plan and implement effective instruction, facilitate student learning, and create a supportive learning environment (Long et al., 2024). At the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level, teacher performance is particularly crucial because this stage represents the foundation of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. In addition to delivering academic content, MI teachers are also responsible for fostering Islamic values and character development. Therefore, strengthening teacher performance is essential to ensure the holistic achievement of educational goals.

Previous studies have identified several factors that influence teacher performance. Among these, work engagement and self-efficacy are frequently highlighted as important determinants. Work engagement reflects teachers' enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption in their professional tasks (Derakhshan et al., 2023). Highly engaged teachers tend to demonstrate stronger commitment to teaching activities, cope better with work-related stress, and contribute more actively to school development. Empirical studies consistently indicate that higher levels of work engagement are associated with improved teaching effectiveness and teacher performance (Huo & Wang, 2024; Zhang & Fathi, 2024).

Another key factor influencing teacher performance is self-efficacy, which refers to teachers' belief in their ability to organize and execute actions required to achieve desired teaching outcomes (Bandura, 1977). Teachers with strong self-efficacy tend to be more persistent, innovative, and resilient when facing challenges in the learning process. Previous research shows that teacher self-efficacy positively influences instructional effectiveness and overall performance (Brown et al., 2021; Luo & Li, 2024). In addition, self-efficacy plays an important role in shaping teachers' motivation, effort, and persistence in improving teaching quality (Kalinowski et al., 2024).

Although both work engagement and self-efficacy have been widely studied in relation to teacher performance, previous studies often examine these variables separately or focus on different educational contexts. Research that integrates work engagement and self-efficacy within a single structural model to explain teacher performance remains limited, particularly in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Considering the unique characteristics of MI as Islamic basic education institutions, understanding how these psychological factors interact in influencing teacher performance is important for strengthening teacher professional development.

Based on this gap, the present study aims to examine the structural relationship between work engagement, self-efficacy, and teacher performance among Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in Malang City. By integrating these variables into a single analytical model, this study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on how teachers' psychological resources influence their professional performance within the context of Islamic basic education.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using an explanatory survey design to examine the structural relationships among work engagement, self-efficacy, and teacher performance. Explanatory research aims to explain causal relationships between variables and to test theoretical models through empirical data (Creswell, 2015). In this study, work engagement was treated as the independent variable (X), self-efficacy as the mediating variable (Z), and teacher performance as the dependent variable (Y). The conceptual relationship among these variables is illustrated in Figure 1.

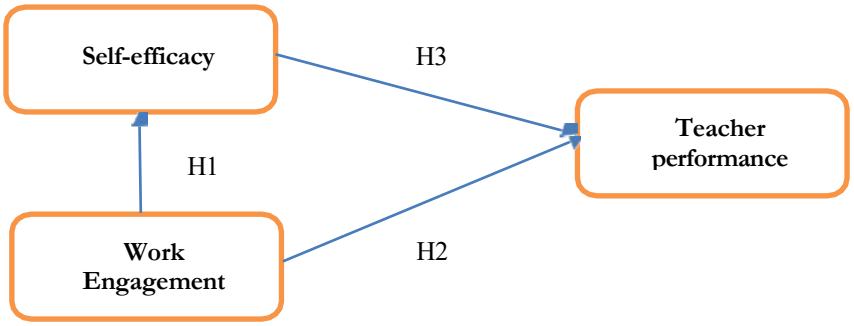

Figure 1. Research Design

The population of this study consisted of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) teachers in Malang City. Administratively, Malang City comprises five districts; however, this study focused on teachers from three districts: Klojen, Lowokwaru, and Blimbing. These districts were selected because they are considered sufficiently representative of the characteristics of MI teachers in Malang City, while also allowing greater efficiency in terms of time, resources, and accessibility. In addition, limiting the research area enabled more focused data collection and analysis.

Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Malang City (2024), the total population consisted of 365 MI teachers from 20 madrasahs across the three districts.

Table 1. Data on MI Teachers in Malang City

No	District	Number of Madrasahs	Number of Teachers
1	Klojen	6	169
2	Lowokwaru	6	93
3	Blimbing	8	103
	TOTAL	20	365

Source: BPS and Ministry of Religious Affairs of Malang City (2024)

The sample was determined using proportional random sampling, in which samples are selected randomly in proportion to the size of each group. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula (Slovin, 1960) with a precision level of 5% and a confidence level of 95%, resulting in a total sample of 191 teachers, representing 52.32% of the total population. The sampling procedure began by identifying the total number of teachers in each MI school. Subsequently, the number of samples from each school was determined proportionally based on its teacher population. Finally, respondents from each school were selected randomly to ensure equal opportunities for participation and to maintain the representativeness of teachers

across MI schools in Malang City.

Data were collected using questionnaires adapted from established measurement instruments. Work engagement was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006), which includes three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Teacher self-efficacy was measured using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale by Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001), which covers efficacy in teaching strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Teacher performance was measured using indicators from the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model (Marzano, 2017), which covers four domains: planning and preparation, standards-based instruction, learning conditions, and professional responsibility. Indicators for each variable in this study are shown in the following table.

Table 2. Research Instrument Grid

No	Variabel	Indicator	Item Number
1	Work Engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2006)	Vigor	1,2,3,4,5,6
		Dedication	7,8,9,10,11
		Absorption	12,13,14,15,16,17
2	Self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001)	Efficacy for instructional strategies	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8
		Efficacy for classroom management	9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16
		Efficacy for student engagement	17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24
3	Teacher performance (Marzano, 2017)	Standards-based Planning (SBP),	1,2,3
		Standards-based Instruction (SBI)	4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13
		Conditions of Learning (COL)	14,15,16,17,18,19,20
		Professional Responsibilities (PR)	21,22,23

The instruments were adapted to the context of MI teachers. The adaptation process

involved translation into Indonesian, review by education experts, and minor contextual adjustments to ensure clarity and relevance to the research setting. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was tested to examine its validity and reliability. Construct validity was assessed using factor analysis, while reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency of the measurement items.

Based on the data validation, it can be seen that the value for each instrument item (Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05) indicates that the items are valid. Meanwhile, the Cronbach's alpha value is 0.962 > 0.60. This indicates that the questionnaire items are reliable indicators that each indicator generates several questions. The criteria of the likert scale consist of: strongly agree (SS) = score of 5; agree (S) = score of 4; hesitation (R) = score of 3; disagree (TS) = score of 2; strongly disagree (STS) = score of 1. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis techniques in order to provide an in-depth and interesting presentation. In this study, descriptive statistical analysis was carried out using SPSS 24. Furthermore, the second research data analysis used the Structural Equation Model (SEM) using SPSS and AMOS data analysis software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Work Engagement, Self-Efficacy, and Performance of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers in Malang City

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers play a strategic role in shaping the academic foundation and character of students at the basic education level. The quality of learning produced is not only determined by the mastery of the material and teaching methods, but also by the psychological and affective factors of the teacher in carrying out his role. In this context, work engagement, self-efficacy, and teacher performance are three important interrelated constructs. Work engagement reflects the level of involvement, dedication, and enthusiasm of the teacher in carrying out his or her professional duties, while self-efficacy shows the teacher's confidence in his or her ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning effectively. These two aspects contribute significantly to teacher performance, which is reflected in the quality of classroom management, learning implementation, and achievement of educational goals. The descriptive data presented will provide a comprehensive overview of work engagement, self-efficacy, and performance of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in Malang City.

Table 3. Description of work engagement, self-efficacy, and MI teacher

Variable	Indicator	Mean
Work engagement	Vision	4.03
	Development	3.98
	Action	3.99
Mean Total		**4.02**
Self-efficacy	Efficacy for instructional strategies	4.02
	Efficacy for classroom management	4.13
	Efficacy for student engagement	4.44
Mean Total		**4.12**
Teacher performance	Standards- based Planning	4.26
	Standards-based Instruction	4.21
	Conditions for Learning	4.28
	Professional Responsibilities	4.36
Mean Total		**4.26**

Based on table 3 above, the results of descriptive statistical analysis show that the average value (mean) on all variables are in the high category. For the work engagement variable, the overall mean score is 4.02, indicating that teachers' level of work engagement is categorized as high. Among the indicators, vision has the highest mean score (4.03), followed by action (3.99) and development (3.98). These results indicate that teachers possess a clear understanding of the direction and goals of their work and demonstrate a relatively high level of involvement in carrying out their duties and professional development activities.. This shows that teachers are not only physically present at school, but also emotionally, cognitively, and affectively involved in carrying out their professional duties. Work engagement is essential in the context of learning because it directly impacts teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and overall effectiveness in improving language learning and students' academic success (Dai & Wang, 2023). Teacher engagement serves as an important indicator to assess teachers' performance and ultimately influences their career path (Derakhshan et al., 2023). According to Schaufeli & Bakker (2004), work involvement is a positive mental state related to work, characterized by three main aspects, namely vigor (enthusiasm and energy), dedication (dedication and pride in work), and absorption (preoccupation and solubility in work). These three dimensions interact with each other and form a holistic picture of how a person expresses his or her commitment and

involvement in daily work.

Regarding the self-efficacy variable, the overall mean score is 4.12, which indicates a high level of teachers' self-efficacy. The indicator efficacy for student engagement shows the highest mean score (4.44), followed by efficacy for classroom management (4.13) and efficacy for instructional strategies (4.02). This finding suggests that teachers have strong confidence in their ability to engage students in the learning process, as well as adequate confidence in managing classrooms and implementing effective instructional strategies. Self-efficacy is a concept developed by Bandura (1977), which defines it as an individual's belief in his or her ability to organize and execute the actions necessary to achieve the desired outcome. Ma (2023) Define self-efficacy as the main aspect of psychological capital that reflects an individual's confidence in facing challenges adaptively. The dimensions of self-efficacy include: 1) self-efficacy for teaching strategies, 2) self-efficacy for classroom management, and 3) self-efficacy for student engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In summary, to be reliable, a teacher's self-efficacy indicator must reflect a strong understanding of what it means to be an effective teacher. These indicators reinforce that self-efficacy is not an ability, but a teacher's confidence in his ability to choose, analyze, apply, and involve instructional strategies, classroom management, and student enggagement in learning (Henson, 2014).

Meanwhile, for the teacher performance variable, the overall mean score is 4.26, indicating that teacher performance is at a very high level. Among the indicators, professional responsibilities have the highest mean score (4.36), followed by conditions for learning (4.28), standards-based planning (4.26), and standards-based instruction (4.21). These results demonstrate that teachers show a high level of professionalism in fulfilling their responsibilities and are able to create conducive learning conditions while planning and implementing instruction in accordance with established standards. Teacher performance refers to the impact that teachers have on student learning outcomes (Amtu et al., 2020; Wahono et al., 2020). Teacher performance is one of the key factors in achieving optimal quality of education. Teachers who have good performance will be able to create a conducive learning environment, provide effective learning, and build positive interactions with students.

Teachers are required to be skilled and fluent in blending their competencies to navigate complex situations and make wise decisions (Layek & Koodamara, 2024). These findings indicate that high work involvement and self-efficacy of teachers are in line with the achievement of optimal teacher performance. These findings suggest that teachers are actively involved in their professional responsibilities, possess strong confidence in their teaching abilities, and perform their instructional duties effectively. Such conditions are important because engaged and confident teachers tend to create more effective learning environments and contribute positively to student outcomes.

Structural Model of the Performance of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers in Malang City

This article discusses the structural model of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher performance in Malang City based on self-efficacy and work engagement. A full model analysis of the Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used to evaluate the model's suitability. The analysis was conducted through two stages of testing: testing the significance of causal relationships by examining the regression coefficients, and testing the overall suitability of the model.

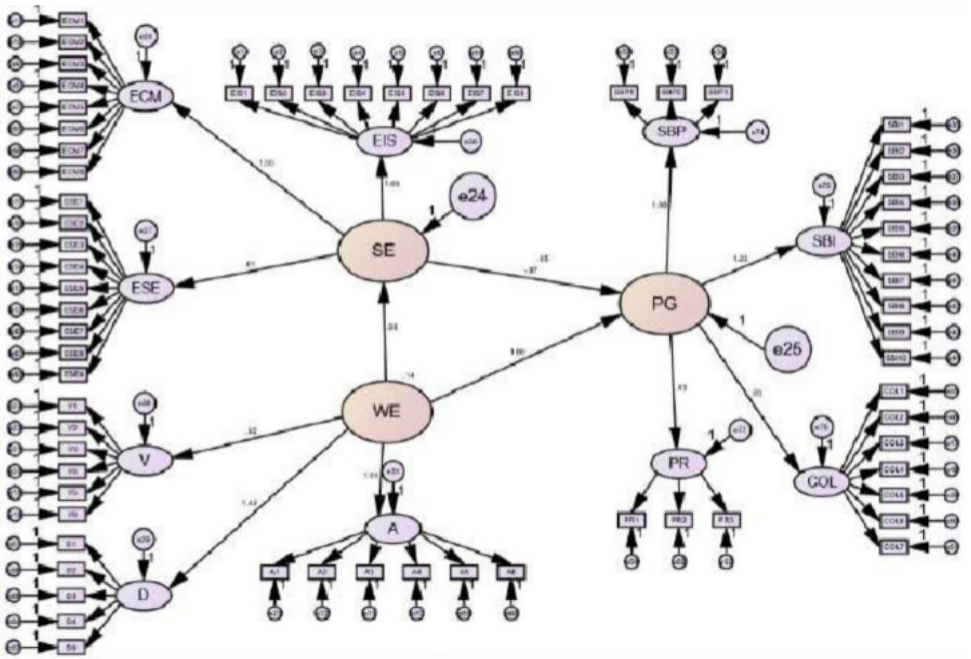

Figure 2. Teachers performance path model in SEM

Tabel 4. Result of examination of fitness of structural model

Criteria	Cut of value	Results
X2 Chi-square	Expected small	86.679
Probability	≥ 0.05	0.61
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.00	1.964
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.043
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.98
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.95
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.97
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.99

Based on the results of the Goodness of Fit test, all model criteria meet the eligibility requirements. The Chi-square value of 86,679 indicates a relatively small number and in line with expectations. The Probability value of 0.61 is greater than 0.05, so the model is statistically acceptable. The CMIN/DF index of 1.964 is below the maximum limit of 2.00, which indicates the model has a good level of suitability. Furthermore, the RMSEA value of 0.043 is well below the limit of 0.08, which indicates the model has a low error of approximation. Other conformity indices also showed excellent results, among them GFI = 0.98, AGFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.97, and CFI = 0.99, all of which were above the minimum criteria of 0.90 or 0.95. Thus, overall this model can be categorized as fit or in accordance with the data, so that the measurement and structural models tested are feasible to be used to explain the relationships between variables in the study.

Furthermore, the Probability (P) value < 0.05 compared to test the hypothesis test. The hypothesis can be said to be acceptable if the results of data analysis meet these criteria. The findings from the hypothesis analysis are as follows.

Table 5. Results of the research hypothesis test

			P
SE	<---	WE	.022
PG	<---	SE	.049
PG	<---	WE	.018

Note.

WE = Work Engagement; SE = Self-Efficacy; PG = Teacher Performance. β = Standardized path coefficient (effect size).

p < .05 indicates that the relationship between variables is statistically significant.

Table 6. Indirect Effect (Mediation Test)

Path	Indirect Effect (β)	Interpretation
WE → SE → PG	0.084	Partial mediation

The results of hypothesis testing presented in Table 7 indicate that all proposed hypotheses are supported. The analysis shows that work engagement has a significant positive effect on self-efficacy (β = 0.31, p = .022). This result suggests that teachers who demonstrate higher levels of engagement in their work tend to develop stronger confidence in their teaching abilities. Work engagement encourages teachers to be more dedicated, enthusiastic, and involved in their professional responsibilities, which in turn strengthens their belief in their capacity to perform teaching tasks effectively. Research Granziera & Parera (2019); Heng & Chu (2023); Johnson (2022); Tesi et al. (2025) stated that there is a strong relationship between

self-efficacy and teacher work involvement. The greater the work involvement, the more opportunities for teachers to experience small and large successes in learning, thus strengthening their confidence in their professional abilities. As presented by the Anning (2024), that teachers with high self-efficacy show increased persistence and dedication in overcoming challenges to achieve their teaching goals. This persistence is essential to encourage work engagement. High self-efficacy encourages teachers to take initiative, dare to try new teaching strategies, and persevere in the face of obstacles (Zainal & Matore, 2021). In contrast, teachers who feel less confident typically show low work engagement because they avoid situations that are perceived as challenging. As the results of the study (Merida-Lopez et al., 2020; Tesi et al., 2025), it was found that teachers with low self-efficacy reported the lowest work engagement scores. Thus, work engagement can strengthen self-efficacy, but self-efficacy can also be the foundation that fosters sustainable work engagement.

In the context of primary education, these findings have important implications. Engaged teachers are usually willing to try new strategies, are more open to learning innovation, and are able to maintain the quality of teaching despite facing administrative pressure. Thus, increasing teacher engagement not only has an impact on the emotional aspect, but also strengthens their psychological capacity to appear effective. Furthermore, the results show that self-efficacy has a significant positive effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.27$, $p = .049$). This finding indicates that teachers who possess stronger beliefs in their instructional capabilities are more likely to perform their professional duties effectively. Teachers with high self-efficacy tend to implement more effective instructional strategies, manage classroom activities efficiently, and actively engage students in the learning process. These findings are supported by research by Zee & Koomen (2016) which states that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are better able to implement adaptive instructional strategies, facilitate a constructive learning environment, and show positive emotional interactions with students. In addition, the study of Han & Wang (2021) confirms that self-efficacy plays a major role in improving teacher performance, especially in learning contexts that demand creativity, flexibility, and problem-solving capacity.

Teachers who have high self-efficacy tend to be more persistent when facing challenges in learning, more planned in managing classes, and more effective in providing feedback to students. This shows that interventions to improve self-efficacy, for example through pedagogic training or professional coaching, can have a direct impact on improving teacher performance. In addition, the analysis reveals that work engagement also has a significant direct effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.29$, $p = .018$). This result implies that teachers who are highly engaged in their work demonstrate better performance in planning, implementing instruction, creating supportive learning environments, and fulfilling professional responsibilities. The results of this study reinforce previous research that has been conducted

by Dai & Wang (2023; Karanika-Murray et al. (2015) that teacher work involvement is very important and has been proven to have a positive correlation with teacher performance and job satisfaction.

Teacher work engagement is also an important factor in the educational landscape, which affects teacher performance and student learning outcomes (Wang & Shakibaei, 2025). This directly affects the quality of the learning process in the classroom, especially in elementary school. Fully engaged teachers tend to set high standards for themselves, are more diligent in planning learning, and are more responsive to students' learning needs (Siddique et al., 2022). This makes them able to produce a more lively, adaptive, and meaningful learning process for students.

The mediation test results presented in Table 8 indicate that self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between work engagement and teacher performance, with an indirect effect of 0.084. This means that work engagement influences teacher performance not only directly but also indirectly through the enhancement of teachers' self-efficacy. In other words, teachers who are highly engaged in their work are more likely to develop stronger beliefs in their abilities, which subsequently contributes to improved teaching performance. However, since the direct effect of work engagement on teacher performance remains significant, self-efficacy functions as a partial mediator in this relationship.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating the interconnected roles of work engagement and self-efficacy in explaining teacher performance within a single structural model. While previous studies have often examined these variables separately, the present study integrates them to show how motivational and cognitive psychological factors interact in shaping teachers' professional performance. The findings support the perspective of social cognitive theory, which highlights the importance of efficacy beliefs in influencing individuals' behavior, persistence, and performance. In addition, the study provides empirical evidence from the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, which remains relatively underexplored in international research on teacher performance.

The findings also offer important practical implications for educational institutions and policymakers. Improving teacher performance should not rely solely on developing technical pedagogical competencies but should also involve strengthening teachers' psychological resources. Schools can enhance teacher engagement by fostering supportive leadership, creating a positive organizational climate, and encouraging collaborative professional communities. In addition, professional development programs should be designed to strengthen teachers' self-efficacy through mentoring, peer learning, and reflective teaching practices. Such efforts may help teachers develop stronger confidence in their instructional abilities while maintaining high levels of professional commitment.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the important role of work engagement and self-efficacy in shaping the performance of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in Malang City. The findings demonstrate that teachers' psychological resources significantly contribute to their professional performance, with work engagement influencing performance both directly and indirectly through self-efficacy. These results underline the importance of considering motivational and cognitive factors in efforts to improve teacher effectiveness. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by integrating work engagement and self-efficacy within a single structural model to explain teacher performance, particularly in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. This integrated perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers' psychological engagement and efficacy beliefs interact in influencing professional performance.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that improving teacher performance should involve not only strengthening pedagogical competencies but also enhancing teachers' psychological resources. Educational institutions and policymakers may consider strategies such as supportive leadership, professional development programs, and collaborative learning environments to foster teacher engagement and strengthen self-efficacy. Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study focused on Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in Malang City, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. In addition, the model examined only two predictor variables and may not fully capture the broader range of factors influencing teacher performance. Future research is therefore encouraged to explore additional variables, such as organizational support, leadership, or teacher well-being, as mediators or moderators, and to examine similar models in different educational settings and regions to strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

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