Vol 14, Issue 7, (2024) E-ISSN: 2222-6990

The Impact of Psychological Capital and Mediation Role of Extrinsic Motivation on Employee Productivity on Manufacturing SMES in Malaysia

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To Link this Article: http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i7/22009 DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i7/22009

Published Date: 28 July 2024

Abstract

The research investigates the impact of psychological capital and extrinsic motivation on employee productivity in Malaysia's SME manufacturing industry. Based on a cross-sectional research design, quantitative and descriptive approaches were used. Moreover, a self-administered questionnaire was utilized to collect data from 299 Malaysian managers of manufacturing SMEs. Social Cognitive Theory provides a conceptual framework as well as an explanation of how variables interact. Moreover, to satisfy the assumptions, preliminary investigations were conducted, allowing us to investigate the data using SPSS Version 26 and Smart PLS Version 3. Present research found a significant and favourable association between

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psychological capital and employee productivity has been revealed in recent studies. Furthermore, this study discovered that extrinsic motivation mediate the association between psychological capital and employee productivity.

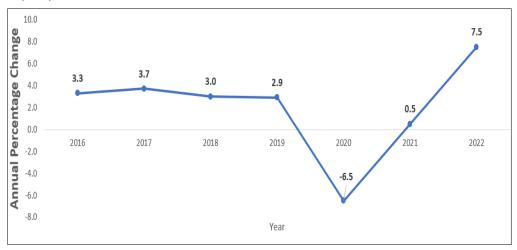
Introduction

SMEs play a vital role in economic growth and job creation in Southeast Asia, including Malaysia (Moin et al., 2023). Malaysia SMEs sector plays an important role in reaching national GDP goals (Lim et al., 2021; Mokhtar et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2020). Moreover, widespread involvement of Malaysia SMEs in revenue generation indicates that SMEs are in a position to create jobs, mobilize local resources, build a prosperous society and play a significant supplementary role to large firms and ultimately reinforcing the nation's overall economic development (Gunasilan et al., 2020). Despite the effort of various government agencies through various programs and grants, SMEs in Malaysia are still underperforming and face several obstacles that limit their potential to perform better (Hussin, 2020; Musa &; Rahim et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2020). Moreover, compared to developed and even nearby countries, the contribution of SMEs to Malaysia's GDP is deemed low (Tehseen et al., 2019).

Problem Statement

Malaysia SMEs GDP growth by economic sector revealed a downward trend in all sectors in year 2020 (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2020). Construction sector experienced a negative decline of (-15.4%), followed by Services (-9.2%), and Mining & Quarrying (-7.1%) (Department of Statistic, Malaysia, 2020). According to Ebere et al (2023) employee productivity is vital to economic conditions since it has a direct impact on organizational efficiency, profitability, and competitiveness. Skilled individuals can do jobs more efficiently, innovate, and contribute to overall output and GDP growth (Awan & Yagoob, 2023). In 2016, employee productivity in the SMEs sector increased from 3.3% to 3.7% by 2017. However, from 2017 to 2020, staff productivity decreased steadily from 3.7% to 3.0% to 2.9% and -6.5%, respectively. Furthermore, the SME manufacturing sector had the highest decline, from 6.2% in 2021 to 2.8 in 2022 (Department of Statistic, Malaysia, 2023). Therefore, it is critical for SMEs to assess their current skills in order to contribute to Malaysia's GDP growth or enhancement (Yusof et al., 2022). Work overload and stress also result in a negative work environment and affect employee attitudes (Ko et al., 2022). Stressful and disturbing condition is associated with higher rates of psychological distress Sangsefidi et al (2023), which makes it hard for employee to build resources in the face of adversity (Plimmer et al., 2023). In this regard, adopting psychological capital is important to increase employee productivity. The primary motivation for developing this framework is to address the gap identified by Wahid et al (2023); Hamzah & Matkhairuddin (2022) who indicated that future research should investigate the impact of psychological capital and extrinsic motivation on employee productivity in Malaysia SMEs. This study will provide valuable insights on doable strategies for improving SME productivity and positively impacting Malaysia's economic development trajectory.

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Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia (2023)

Figure 1 Employee productivity in SMEs in all sectors in year 2016-2022

Literature Review

Employee productivity

Productivity refers to the output to input ratio, which includes human resources (HR), financial and physical resources, strategic processes, and time (Nikmanesh et al., 2023). Productivity refers to the completion or efficacy of a process or activity. In essence, it estimates the number of items or services provided by a corporation or organization (Nikmanesh et al., 2023). According to Pattihahuan and Mukti (2022) employee productivity is seen as a vital factor in obtaining high performance. Employee productivity is determined by an employee's willingness and openness to do their job (Suryadi et al., 2022). Paais and Pattiruhu (2020) argued that working in groups boosts employee productivity and company efficiency. Employees appreciate opportunities for skill improvement, which leads to increased production (Basahal et al., 2021). Increased productivity leads to economic growth, increased profitability, and social improvement (Onyekwelu & Esther, 2021). Moreover, in order to attain high work productivity, firms must improve work quality to keep employees physically fit so that they are enthusiastic about their jobs (Zhenjing et al., 2022). Employees who are in good physical and mental health and have a favourable attitude about their jobs are more likely to perform well and be productive (Roczniewska et al., 2022).

Psychological Capital

Individual with high psychological capital would be self-assured, tenacious, driven, and otherwise positively oriented to taking the required steps to realize their objectives (Anglin et al., 2018). According to Tang (2020), psychological capital encourages employees to work hard, which results in lower absenteeism, better health, and increased productivity. An organization could recruit competent employees and motivate them to act in socially responsible manner through psychological capital (Vuong, 2022). Past literature found a positive relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity (Özsungur, 2019; Phakathi & Wale, 2018). Moreover, employee with high psychological capital can have positive attribution employing optimism to accomplish goal (Jalil et al., 2021). Past research explored different components of psychological capital that influence employee productivity such as self-efficacy Alnoor et al (2019); Li et al (2019), hope, optimism, and resiliency (Cooke et al., 2019; Kour et al., 2019; Tiwari et al., 2020). Hasan et al (2019) stated positive

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psychological capital included significant learning in terms of self-discipline, reflection on mistakes made in the past, and preparation to avoid bad things from occurred.

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation, it is believed, varies significantly in its relative autonomy, and hence can reflect either external control or actual self-regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2020b). Extrinsic motivation is described as doing something to an end. It entails doing something now in order to obtain something later (Locke & Schattke, 2019). Extrinsic motivation refers to acts performed for reasons other than their inherent satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2020a). Extrinsic motivation is driven by external pressure or reinforcement, such as reward or recognition, and is mostly independent of the action itself (Cristina et al., 2021; Diseth et al., 2020). Employee autonomy and competence needs fulfillment can be reduced by extrinsic motivation; but, when extrinsic motivation is internalized, such as through felt personal value, it can support needs satisfaction and behavioral intention (Mitchell et al., 2016). Students that are motivated by extrinsic factors typically receive external support. It could come from your parents, friends, or teachers. Extrinsic motivation is driven by outside influences such as a desire to pass an exam, obtain a high value or cash reward, and so on (Ambarwati & Mandasari, 2021). Nilasari et al (2021), stated that extrinsic motivation drives people to pursue external goals. In other words, the activity itself does not provide satisfaction, but its outcomes do. Extrinsic motivation is thus linked to an individual's judgment of the value of relationship as well as knowledge exchange based on a cost-benefit analysis (Nguyen, 2020). Extrinsic motives are related to various goals because they satisfy individual psychological needs (Ick et al., 2021). Extrinsic motivation refers to engaging in activities for instrumental reasons, such as avoiding punishment or criticism, receiving acceptance and reinforcement, increasing self-esteem, or achieving a personal worth objective (Fidelis et al., 2021).

Psychological Capital and Extrinsic Motivation

Psychological capital is a multifaceted construct that encompasses self-efficacy, hope, and optimism. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their capacity to complete things successfully, which can boost motivation by improving confidence and tenacity (Narsa & Wijayanti, 2021). Psychological capital promotes motivation by increasing self-confidence, setting objectives, seeking ways to become better teachers, and feeling that the future will be better for their organizations (Zewude & Hercz, 2022). People that have hope employ extrinsic motivation resources well, which keeps them engaged as they pursue their goals (Herdem, 2019). Individuals with higher levels of psychological capital, such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, may view extrinsic incentives as meaningful and motivating, resulting in increased extrinsic motivation (Sayyadi, 2023). Hope, is a component of psychological capital, is related to extrinsic drive. Individuals who have hope use intrinsic and extrinsic motivation resources more efficiently, resulting in better motivation and goal achievement (Herdem, 2019). Thus, present research posits that psychological capital associated with extrinsic motivation. Therefore, this research proposed following hypothesis:

H₁: There is positive relationship between psychological capital and extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic Motivation and Employee Productivity

Extrinsic motivation is strongly associated with relationships with coworkers, technical supervision, working circumstances, status, personal life considerations, and job security

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(Tadesse, 2019). Employees who feel valued and rewarded for their work are more inclined to perform to the best of their abilities (Hashiguchi et al., 2021). Extrinsic motivation is the incentive for work from outside the worker as an individual, which needs employees to carry out job with the fulfilment of work infrastructure (Yusuf, 2021). According to Sari and Azmi (2020), extrinsic motivation leads to employee satisfaction, which influences employee behavior and performance. Extrinsic motivation refers to external things that encourage people to do well, such as rewards, recognition, or incentives. Employees who are driven extrinsically are more likely to work harder and achieve better performance (Gunawan & Haryadi, 2022). Past study emphasizes the need of effective management in using extrinsic reward systems to address employee innovation and achieve organizational goals (Chantal et al., 2022). Extrinsic motivation is important in influencing employee performance because it provides real rewards and recognition that encourage individuals to do their best (Manzoor et al., 2021). Based on the literature discussion, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H₂: There is positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and employee productivity

Psychological Capital and Employee Productivity

Huang et al (2021) discovered that psychological inputs help employee to cope with their job responsibilities and improve performance. Psychological capital can assist persistent, enthusiastic people achieve their long-term goals in a more domain-specific manner. However, Digan et al (2019) contended that psychological capital among Indian women is a key predictor of employee productivity via motivation, effort, and self-belief. Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) found that psychological capital leads to increased levels of service quality and, as a result, an increase in staff productivity. According to Tüzün et al (2018), psychological capital significantly predicts positive attitudes and behaviours at work, which could affect employee productivity. Past study found that positive psychological state leads to enhanced dedication, focus, and enthusiasm among employees in carrying out their duties (Witasari & Gustomo, 2020). However, not much research have been conducted on the impact of psychological capital on contextual employee productivity (Alias et al., 2020). Future studies should investigate further the relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity in manufacturing SMEs (Ooh, 2020).

H₃: There is positive relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity

Psychological Capital, Extrinsic Motivation And Employee Productivit

According to (Fidelis et al., 2021) psychological capital is a condition of positive psychological development characterised by confidence, positive attributions, perseverance, and the ability to overcome obstacles. Individual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are shaped by psychological capital, which can affect how they are motivated by external factors (Tran et al., 2021). Chamisa et al (2020) stated psychological resources, such as optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and hope, are referred to as positive psychological capital can enhance people's motivation and general well-being. Extrinsic motivation is the desire to perform an action or behaviour as a result of outside influences such material gains like salary, promotions, and benefits (Manzoor et al., 2021). Extrinsic motivation is crucial since it increases an employee's willingness to share their knowledge and abilities with the company when they feel appreciated and rewarded for their work (Nguyen, 2020). Performance-based rewards and incentives give employee clear goal to aim for, which raises motivation and increases productivity (Gunawan & Haryadi, 2022). Moreover, employee job outcomes can be

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improved by using extrinsic rewards since they are readily measured, rationalised, and integrated into organisational procedures and routines (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). Based on the literature review, there is a positive relationship between psychological capital and extrinsic motivation, at the same time between extrinsic motivation and employee productivity. Thus, there is a high possibility that extrinsic motivation could strengthen the relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity. Hence. The following hypothesis was proposed.

H₄: Extrinsic motivation mediates the relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity

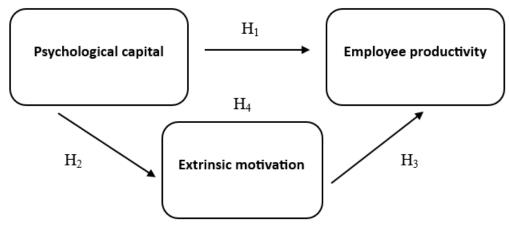


Figure 2 Theoretical framework

Underpinning Theory

Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura (1999) defined social cognitive theory as beliefs in one's competence to organise and carry out the behaviours necessary to achieve specific goals. Social cognitive theory is commonly known as individual behaviour Carillo (2010) and this theory explores the causes of people acting in particular ways (Bandura, 1986). According to social cognition theory, self-regulation thinking influences individual motivation and behaviour (Cooper & Lu, 2019). Self-efficacy has been explored in relationships with a range of workplace challenges, such as employee productivity (Bandura, 1988; Nygaard, 2017; Shu et al., 2011; Valle et al., 2019). Social cognitive theory states that positive individual and social conduct can be fostered by well-considered and appraised quality attributes, which has a significant positive effect on human well-being (Dace et al., 2020). The application of social cognitive theory to the analysis of psychological capital was suggested by (Peterson et al., 2011). The capacity to succeed by utilising one's own resources, such as optimism, efficacy, hope, and resilience, is known as psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007). Furthermore, social cognitive theory is considered to be the most appropriate for supporting the theoretical model of assessing psychological capital among individuals (Aryani et al., 2021; Bak et al., 2022; Ye et al., 2020). To understand why a person may engage in specific activities, it is vital to understand the social cognitive aspects determining self-efficacy. (Nwosu et al., 2022). In addition, social cognitive theory provides a complete framework for studying motivation, highlighting the involvement of human characteristics, behaviour, and the environment in determining motivational processes (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). According to social cognitive theory,

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self-efficacy is the most crucial internal component that can boost an individual's belief in their ability to complete a task.

Methodology

Present research sample was drawn from SME workers in Malaysian manufacturing companies and used inductive, quantitative approach based on the positivist paradigm. The Federal Manufacturers of Malaysia (FMM) directory, 52nd Edition, with a population of 2021, was used to select the sampling responder. The manager is the sole respondent. According to Ogunyomi & Ojikutu (2014) owner/managers of SMEs possess significant information about staff productivity and assess employee performance. The application of items with an equal chance of being independently and randomly picked is made possible by probability sampling (Schreuder et al., 2001). In addition, three hundred (300) responded were selected using probability sampling. An online questionnaire and the cross-sectional survey method were used to collect data online in order to validate the research hypotheses. Three hypotheses regarding the questionnaire's creation are examined in this study using a 7-point Likert scale. That's why a 7-point Likert scale was used to build the scale. The Likert scale was then adopted, with seven points. The relationship between the latent constructs and their observable indicators, or the measurement model, was analysed using PLS-SEM. PLS-SEM works well for research that is prediction-oriented. In the current study, the validity and reliability of the latent variables and associated indicators/items were assessed. Standard metrics used to evaluate the reliability of constructs and indicators are Factor Loadings (FLs), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach Alpha (CA).

Results Discussion

Measurement Model

The measuring model was subjected to thorough analysis using Smart-PLS, which included construct validity, reliability, and discriminant validity examinations. The outer loading score should be 0.70 above, outer loading below 0.7 is satisfactory only when AVE score is more than 0.5 (Ramayah et al., 2018). Based on Figure 1 and Table 2, all structures demonstrated robustness, item loading greater than 0.6. Thus, all items met the criteria and were retained for further analysis except for (PC1), which scored below the threshold 0.6 has been removed. These constructs displayed excellent internal characteristics. Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha value exceeded 0.7. Furthermore, the score indicates excellent reliability and strong discriminant validity, as the composite reliability value exceeds 0.8 and the average variance extracted value exceeds 0.5.

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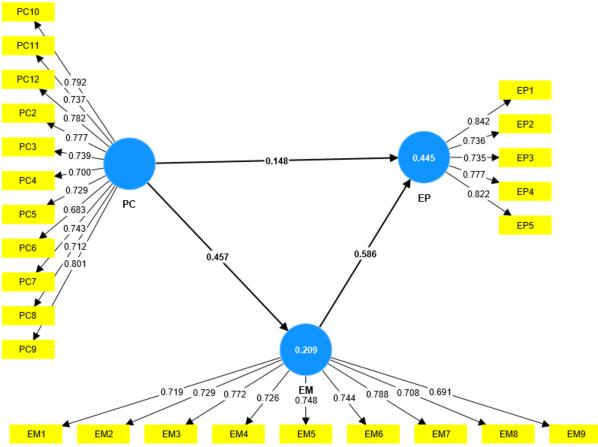


Figure 3 Measurement model item loadings, path coefficient, and R² values

Table 1
Construct validity and reliability

Construct	Item Code	Item Loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
	EM1	0.719	0.894	0.914	0.542
	EM2	0.729			
	EM3	0.772			
	EM4	0.726			
EM	EM5	0.748			
	EM6	0.744			
	EM7	0.788			
	EM8	0.708			
	EM9	0.691			
	EP1	0.842	0.843	0.888	0.614
	EP2	0.736			
EP	EP3	0.735			
	EP4	0.777			
	EP5	0.822			
	PC10	0.792	0.921	0.932	0.556
	PC11	0.737			
PC	PC12	0.782			
	PC2	0.777			
	PC3	0.739			
	PC4	0.700			

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PC5	0.729
PC6	0.683
PC7	0.743
PC8	0.712
PC9	0.801

As demonstrated in Table 3, all construct item loadings exceeded the cross-loading thresholds, showing that no cross-loading issues. Furthermore, as seen in Table 4, the square root of each construct's AVE was bigger than its the connection with other constructs. The Fornell-Larcker condition has been met. Table 5 showed that the Heterotrait-monotrait correlation ratio was less than 0.90 for all constructs, showing that discriminant validity between two reflective ideas had been established.

Table 2
Cross Loading

	EM	EP	PC
EM1	0.719	0.486	0.301
EM2	0.729	0.495	0.347
EM3	0.772	0.437	0.379
EM4	0.726	0.529	0.361
EM5	0.748	0.526	0.316
EM6	0.744	0.477	0.304
EM7	0.788	0.431	0.372
EM8	0.708	0.531	0.344
EM9	0.691	0.393	0.297
EP1	0.593	0.842	0.31
EP2	0.388	0.736	0.341
EP3	0.512	0.735	0.348
EP4	0.467	0.777	0.389
EP5	0.568	0.822	0.258
PC10	0.47	0.414	0.792
PC11	0.331	0.253	0.737
PC12	0.319	0.294	0.782
PC2	0.402	0.327	0.777
PC3	0.329	0.319	0.739
PC4	0.278	0.286	0.700
PC5	0.308	0.292	0.729
PC6	0.285	0.300	0.683
PC7	0.227	0.247	0.743
PC8	0.281	0.308	0.712
PC9	0.418	0.317	0.801

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Table 3 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	EM	EP	PC
EM	0.737		
EP	0.654	0.783	
PC	0.457	0.416	0.746

Based on the results in Table 4 attained for present research, discriminant validity was established through Fornell and Lockers criterion, and the value of the square root of average extracted (AVE) for each construct was greater than the correlation values with other constructs.

Table 4
Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio of Correlations

	EM	EP	PC
EM			
EP	0.738		
PC	0.488	0.469	

Hair et al (2019) stated that threshold value of 0.90 is appropriate for HTMT, whereas a value greater than 0.90 indicates a lack of discriminant validity. Therefore, the result of HTMT for present research indicate all the values obtained for all constructs were below threshold 0.90. As a result, the measurement model has discriminant validity.

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Structural Model

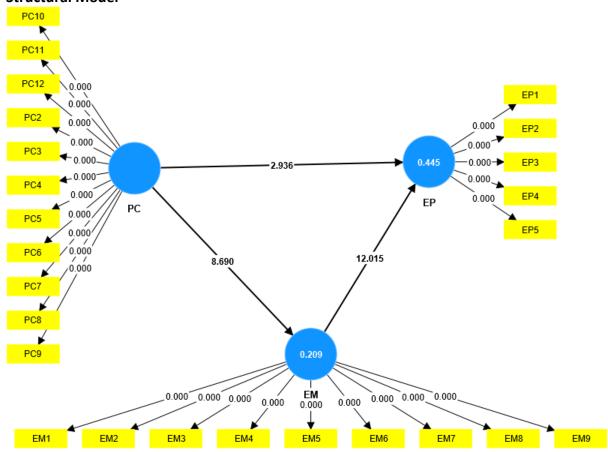


Figure 4 Bootstrapping results of the structural model (t-value)

Based on the result obtained in Table 6, (θ -value = 0.047, t-value = 8.690, p-value 0.000). P-value is less than 0.05, therefore there is positive relationship between psychological capital and extrinsic motivation. This result is similar to a previous study who found similar result (Zewude & Hercz, 2022). Next, (θ -value = 0.586, t-value = 12.015, p-value 0.000). P-value is less than 0.05, therefore there is a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and employee productivity. This result is same with a previous study found similar result (Gunawan & Haryadi, 2022). In addition, (θ -value = 0.416, t-value = 8.687, p-value 0.000). P-value is greater than 0.05, therefore there is a positive relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity. This result is same with a previous study found similar result (Novitasari et al., 2020). Last, (θ -value = 0.0268, t-value = 6.656, p-value 0.000). P-value is less than 0.05, therefore extrinsic motivation meditates the relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity. This result is same with a previous study found similar result (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021; Nguyen & Ngo, 2020)

Table 5
Direct effect and mediating effect

Hypothesis	Relationship	<i>β</i> -value	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
H ₁	PC -> EM	0.047	8.690	0.000	Supported
H ₂	EM -> EP	0.586	12.015	0.000	Supported
H ₃	PC -> EP	0.416	8.687	0.000	Supported
H ₄	PC -> EM->EP	0.268	6.656	0.000	Supported

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According to Chin (1998) R^2 values of 0.67 above,0.33-0.66 or 0.19-0.32 be defined as considerable substantial, moderate, or weak. However, as shown in Figure 2 the R^2 value of employee productivity for present paper model was (0.445) which is moderate, and the R^2 value of extrinsic motivation in the present model was 0.209 which is considerate weak. Thus, the R^2 value shows that the independent variables explain 44% of the variability of the dependent variable. Hence, the present research R^2 considered moderate.

Research Implication

This research focused on Manufacturing SMEs and the Malaysian government with a platform to provide employees a renewed emphasis on productivity elements and determinants. Based on the discussion of previous research, the present conceptual study may argue that extrinsic motivation is crucial in enhancing employee productivity. No empirical testing of the conceptual framework has been done. It is possible that future studies considered other influential aspects such as cultural and social intelligence. Additional independent variables, like social intelligence, and mediating variables, such sustainable HRM practices, may be considered and experimentally evaluated in future research. Future studies on the psychological capital of manufacturing SMEs' employees in connection to environmental issues like environmental performance are conceivable. Additional independent, mediating, or moderating elements that could broaden the current publication's theoretical framework might be the subject of future research.

Contribution

This research explores the impact of psychological capital on employee productivity and how extrinsic motivation can strengthen the relationship. This present paper contributed to the body of knowledge in the field of psychological capital and extrinsic motivation. This research highlights issue the decrease of employee productivity of Malaysian manufacturing SMEs. This paper expands on Timothy (2022) paradigm by examining new variables like psychological capital and extrinsic motivation's impact on employee productivity. This conceptual paper aims to raise awareness among Malaysian manufacturing SMEs on psychological capital nourishment, which can enhance employee productivity. As a result, the study adds to the corpus of existing knowledge in theoretical and practical domains. Furthermore, prior research indicates that psychological capital and employee productivity have a clear impact on employee productivity; hence, increasing investment in these areas will enhance employee productivity. Additionally, the current paper offers an unproven paradigm in the context of manufacturing enterprises in Malaysia and around the world, providing future scholars with a chance to empirically investigate it. The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) is also validated by the current conceptual framework.

Conclusion

This present research has shed light on the complex interplay between psychological capital, expertly managed by extrinsic motivation, and its substantial impact on increasing employee productivity within organisations. Moreover, a strong emphasis on extrinsic motivation investment in Malaysian SMEs will also encourage other businesses to use the company's resources efficiently. Present research also described how psychological capital with intervention of extrinsic motivation could be employed to achieve higher performance. Firms should efficiently use their resources to achieve employee exceptional performance. Furthermore, psychological capital appears to influence extrinsic drive. Extrinsic motivation

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influences the relationship between psychological capital and employee productivity. This paper will provide an encouragement for Manufacturing SMEs owner/managers and the Malaysian government to increase focus to the factors of employee productivity and its influencers.

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