Understanding Game Industry: How to Maintain Creative Performance?

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Abstract

Creative performance is essential for creative companies in the game industry, especially when the competition is getting higher. This study aims to see how a high-performance work system, organizational creative climate, and creative process engagement can improve creative performance in game companies. This study used a survey to collect data. A total of 123 respondents participated, and the data was analyzed using SmartPLS 3. Results show that both organizational creative climate and creative process engagement significantly affect creative performance. Furthermore, both also act as mediating factors between a high-performance work system and creative performance. A high-performance work system surprisingly does not have any direct effect on creative performance. Still, it has a significant indirect effect on creative performance when creative process engagement and organizational creative climate are used as the mediator. Thus, this study provides the theoretical and empirical basis for factors affecting game companies' creative performance.

Keywords

High-performance Work System, Organizational Creative Climate, Creative Process Engagement, Creative Performance, Game Industry

1. Introduction

High-performance work systems (HPWS) are a relatively recent management breakthrough that has substantially influenced individual and organizational performance (Zungbey et al., 2020). HPWS is a collection of work practices that an organization implements to create growth (Bashir et al., 2012). Employees who are satisfied, motivated,

committed, and identified with the company are more likely to participate in in-role and extra-role behavior and are less likely to leave (Harvey et al., 2018). HPWS refers to a collection of human resource strategies that promote employee engagement, motivation, and skill development, resulting in corporate success (Jyoti & Rani, 2017; Özçelik et al., 2016). Despite a link between HPWS and its effects, the mechanisms are yet unknown (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021).

One of the priorities of the Indonesian government's Sustainable Growth Goals (SDGs) implementation until 2030 is the development of the creative economy sector (Anjaningrum & Rudamaga, 2019). The major source of fostering innovation, increasing competitiveness, and gaining a competitive edge in the business world is creative performance (Gong et al., 2018). Given that long-term organizational effectiveness is dependent on organizational innovation and a highly competent and engaged staff, this is a significant study need.

Various mediating factors such as work well-being, employee engagement, and perceived organizational support have been used in previous research to investigate the association between HPWS and creative performance (Al-Ajlouni, 2021; Tang et al., 2017). Researchers have overlooked the mediating roles of creative process engagement (CPE) and organizational creative climate (OCC) in the relationship between HPWS and creative performance, despite the fact that these mediating mechanisms play a significant role in the relationship between HPWS and creative performance. Employee involvement in creative-related processes/activities, such as issue discovery and creation, information production and encoding, and generation of alternative solutions to address the problem creatively, is referred to as creative process engagement (Uddin et al., 2020).

The environment in which we must be creative is both external and internal, because the most effective utilization of our creative potential necessitates a climate that encourages creative thought and leads to the capacity to solve problems creatively (VanGundy, 1987). Climate, as described by (Ekvall, 1996), is the observed and repeated patterns of behavior, attitudes, and sentiments that characterize life in the organization. The reason for this study to employ organizational creative climate and creative process engagement as mediating variables is further strengthened by the outcomes of prior investigations. For example, (Ekvall, 1996)noted that creative climate in organization supported radical innovation and allows only incremental improvements. Meanwhile, creative process engagement keep employees tuned and engaged for fostering a stimulative mindset toward the innovation journey (Mahmood et al., 2019).

1.1 Objectives

Based on the discussion, it seems that mediating mechanism that explains the impact of HPWS on creative performance appears to be creative process engagement and organizational creative climate. Hence, the goal of this study is two folds: first, testing the influence of organizational creative climate on the relationship between HPWS and creative performance. Second, to investigate the effect of creative process engagement on the HPWS-creative performance link.

2. Literature Review

2.1 High-Performance Work System

High-performance work system (HPWS) is the condition where the companies develop and improve their employees' ability and behaviour to perform better in the company (Collins & Clark, 2003; De Saá-Pérez & García-Falcón, 2002). It is a practice of human capital where the employees have better engagement and higher commitment to the company (Chang et al., 2014; Chiang et al., 2015). The foundation theory underlining HPWS is resource-based theory (Barney, 1991) that focused on improving the company performance by using the internal resource of the company.

The creative-oriented HPWS describes a human capital-based system arranged to improve the competency, motivation, and opportunity of the employee performance (Martinaityte et al., 2019). Thus, it is important for creative companies, such as game companies, to focus on HPWS.

2.2 Organizational Creative Climate

Organizational climate is the psychological condition that reflected by the behaviour, attitude, and common feelings in the organization. It can affect the organizational process, such as problem solving, decision making, planning, communication, coordination, control, psychological learning process, identification, motivation, etc. (Ekvall &

Ryhammar, 1999). In the game industry, it is important to have a creative climate to ensure the employees perform well. Therefore, this study analyses the importance of organizational creative climate in game companies.

2.3 Creative Process Engagement

Creative process engagement can be defined as how engaged someone in the creative process (Zhao & Gao, 2014). The involvement in creative process engagement can be divided into three parts: involvement in problem identification; involvement in information searching; and involvement in idea and alternative generation (Zhang & Bartol, 2010b). In the game industry, creative process engagement's role is even more important since this industry relies heavily on the employees' creativity.

2.4 Creative Performance

To compete with other companies and survive in business, a company needs innovate more than its competitors (Wang et al., 1999), especially in a fast-changing business environment, such as art and technology industry (Brem & Utikal, 2019). Thus, creativity is an important aspect for organizations (Gaspar & Mabic, 2015; Janger et al., 2017).
In this study, we focused on the creative performance of the company. The dimensions used for creative performance was based on (Torrance, 1966)'s dimensions, which are fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Since the main objective of the game companies is also to survive the competition, then timeliness dimension from (Mathis & Jackson, 2010) is also added for this research.

2.5 Organizational Creative Climate and Creative Performance

Based on previous studies, organizational creative climate can enhance innovative behavior (Mafabi et al., 2018; Munir & Beh, 2019). It can also affect employees' creative behavior (Algethami & Dhawi, 2016). Since game industry focused a lot on creativity and innovation, therefore this study argues that organizational creative climate positively affects the game companies' creative performance. Thus, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Organizational Creative Climate has a positive effect on Creative Performance

2.6 Creative Process Engagement and Creative Performance

Creative process engagement was argued to have positive effects on employees' creative performance (Cheung et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2019). Furthermore, (Du et al., 2016) argues that the effect of creative process engagement towards performance are also related with the reciprocal relationship between supervisors and employees. The relationship between creative process engagement and creative performance specifically has also been analyzed by previous study (Zhang & Bartol, 2010b), where the engagement in creative process elements leads to greater creative performance, and having trainings can enhance creative process engagement, which in the end affects creative performance. In the game industry where creativity is highly vital, this study will explore how creative process engagement can affect creative performance. Therefore, we propose this hypothesis:

H2: Creative Process Engagement has a positive effect on Creative Performance

2.7 High-Performance Work System and Creative Performance

High-performance work system has been argued as an important factor affecting organizational performance (Li-Yun et al., 2007). Through high-performance work system, individual creativity also grows on highly cohesive team and complex team assignment (Chang et al., 2014). In terms of creative performance, previous studies also argued high-performance work system positively affects creative performance (He et al., 2018; Ma et al., 2017; Martinaityte et al., 2019). This study tried to confirm this relationship by proposing the following hypothesis:

H3: High-Performance Work System has a positive effect on Creative Performance

2.8 High-Performance Work System and Organizational Creative Climate

HPWS has been studied as a variable that can create a strong organizational climate (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Evans & Davis, 2005). Within this strong organizational climate, employees have a shared perception about organization, where they know what is important and what behavior are expected and rewarded in this organization (Evans & Davis, 2005). This study goes further by researching more specifically in terms of organizational creative climate in the game industry to see how HPWS can be effective for this specific climate.

Previous study showed that creative climate is a mediating factor between human resource practice towards organizational performance (Iqbal, 2019). It can also escalate the innovative behavior (Munir & Beh, 2019). This study tries to incorporate more understanding on how the high-performance work system are related with organizational creative climate and how organizational creative climate can mediate the relationship between high-performance work system and creative performance. Thus, this study proposes these hypotheses:

H4: High-Performance Work System has a positive effect on Organizational Creative Climate

H4a: Organizational Creative Climate mediates the relationship between High-Performance Work System and Creative Performance

2.9 High-Performance Work System and Creative Process Engagement

High-performance work system is argued to affect creative process engagement. When a company has high-performance work system, the employees are not only developing their technical and creativity skills, but they are also motivated to engage in the processes to offer service to fulfill the customers' needs (Chang et al., 2014). The role of creative process engagement as the mediating variable towards creative performance has been discussed in the previous studies (Richard et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2019). Nevertheless, there was also an inconsistency result that argued how creative process engagement does not mediate the relationship between high-performance work system and creative performance (Martinaityte et al., 2019).
To solve the previous inconsistency, we propose these hypotheses:

H5: High-Performance Work System has a positive effect on Creative Process Engagement

H5a: Creative Process Engagement mediates the relationship between High-Performance Work System and Creative Performance (Figure 1)

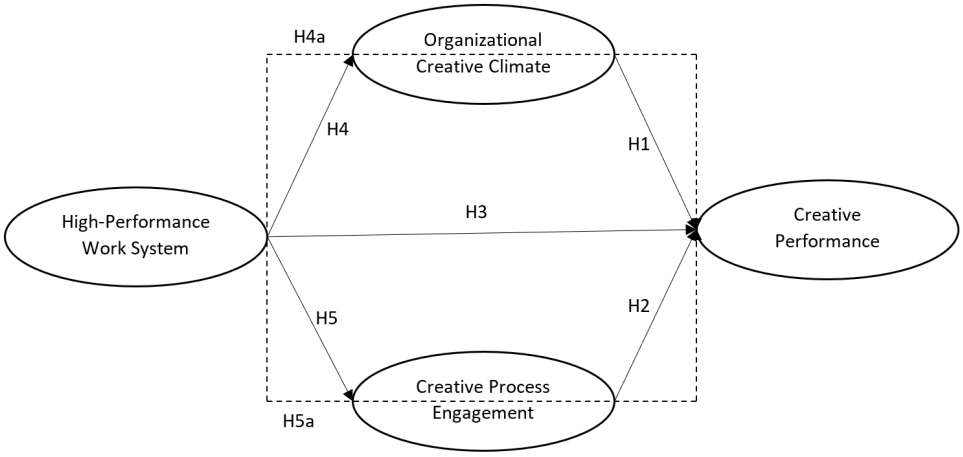

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

3. Methods

This study comprehended the game industry employees in Indonesia, specifically those who work as programmers in the game-developing company. The data was gathered using a survey and a total of 123 respondents participated in the questionnaires.

4. Data Collection

The respondent demographics can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Demographics	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	95	77%
	Female	28	23%
	TOTAL	123	100%
Age	<20 years old	3	2%
	20-25 years old	28	23%
	26-29 years old	42	34%
	30-35 years old	42	34%
	36-39 years old	6	5%
	>39 years old	2	2%
	TOTAL	123	100%
Education Level	High School	7	6%
	Diploma	22	18%
	Bachelor's degree	92	74%
	Master's/PhD	2	2%
	TOTAL	123	100%

This study's questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale for the items, ranging from "1" for strongly disagree to "5" for strongly agree. High-performance work system was measured using three dimensions: people flow, appraisal and reward, and employment relations (He et al., 2018); Organizational creative climate used ten dimensions to measure: challenge, freedom, idea support, trust/openness, liveliness/dynamism, playfulness/humor, debates, conflicts, risk-taking, and idea time (Ekvall, 1996); Creative process engagement was measured using three dimensions: involvement in problem identification, involvement in information searching, and involvement in idea generation (Zhang & Bartol, 2010a); while creative performance was measured using five dimensions, which are fluency, originality, elaboration, flexibility, and timeliness (Mathis & Jackson, 2010; Torrance, 1966). The measurement instruments can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Sources of Measurement Instruments

Variable	Dimension	Source
High-Performance Work System	People Flow	(He et al., 2018)
	Appraisal and Reward	
	Employment Relations	
Organizational Creative Climate	Challenge	(Ekvall, 1996)
	Freedom	
	Idea Support	
	Trust / Openness	
	Liveliness / Dynamism	
	Playfulness / Humor	
	Debates	
	Conflicts	
	Risk Taking	
	Idea Time	
Creative Process Engagement	Involvement in Problem Identification	(Zhang & Bartol, 2010a)
	Involvement in Information Searching	
	Involvement in Idea Generation	
Creative Performance	Fluency	(Mathis & Jackson, 2010; Torrance, 1966)
	Originality	
	Elaboration	
	Flexibility	
	Timeliness	

Before the data analysis was conducted, the questionnaire items were tested using validity and reliability test. The validity test kept items with outer loadings > 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.50 (Hair Jr et al., 2017). Furthermore, variables need to have Cronbach's Alpha between 0.60-0.90 and composite reliability (CR) 0.60-0.90 to be reliable. Validity and reliability test results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variables	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
High-Performance Work System	HPWS1	0.844	0.852	0.894	0.628
	HPWS2	0.835			
	HPWS3	0.775			
	HPWS4	0.770			
	HPWS5	0.732			
Organizational Creative Climate	OCC1	0.794	0.931	0.942	0.618
	OCC2	0.726			
	OCC3	0.748			
	OCC4	0.781			
	OCC5	0.806			
	OCC6	0.871			
	OCC7	0.738			
	OCC8	0.788			
	OCC9	0.809			
	OCC10	0.791			
Creative Process Engagement	CPE1	0.826	0.873	0.904	0.613
	CPE2	0.804			
	CPE3	0.820			
	CPE4	0.746			
	CPE5	0.679			
	CPE6	0.812			
Creative Performance	CP1	0.746	0.883	0.915	0.683
	CP2	0.847			
	CP3	0.845			
	CP4	0.829			
	CP5	0.860			

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Results

The hypotheses model was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) with Smart PLS 3. To measure the significancy of the data, this study used a 95% confidence level, thus setting the p-value to < 0.05. The results measured the direct relationship and the indirect relationship with the use of mediating variables.

The result shows that four of the direct relationships are significant, two of the indirect relationships are significant, and one of the direct relationships is insignificant. Organizational creative climate and creative process engagement both positively and significantly affect creative performance. Thus, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 are accepted. Meanwhile, HPWS in this study has proven to have no significant direct effect on creative performance, which indicates that hypothesis 3 is not supported. This study shows a different result when relating HPWS to OCC and CPE. HPWS is positively and strongly affecting OCC and CPE. Hence, hypothesis 4 and hypothesis 5 are supported. Interestingly, HPWS has a positive and significant effect on company performance when it is mediated, whether it is by OCC or CPE. Therefore, hypothesis 4a and hypothesis 5a are both accepted. Table 4 summarizes the structural model results.

Table 4. Structural Model Results

Relationship	Original Value	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-value	P-value
H1: OCC → CP	0.608	0.602	0.104	5.857	0.000***
H2: CPE → CP	0.344	0.349	0.097	3.528	0.000***
H3: HPWS → CP	-0.090	-0.085	0.110	0.811	0.418
H4: HPWS → OCC	0.806	0.807	0.042	19.236	0.000***
H5: HPWS → CPE	0.760	0.759	0.047	16.194	0.000***
H6: HPWS → OCC → CP	0.491	0.485	0.085	5.772	0.000***
H7: HPWS → CPE → CP	0.261	0.265	0.076	3.422	0.001**
***p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001*					

Moreover, this study also measures the R-square of the variables. Based on the results, the R-square of creative performance, creative process engagement, and organizational creative climate are 0.664, 0.577, and 0.650, respectively. The three latent variables (organizational creative climate, creative process engagement, and high-performance work system) explained 66.4 percent of the variance of creative performance. It also shows that the high-performance work system alone explained 57.7 and 65.0 percent of the variances of creative process engagement and organizational creative climate, respectively.

5.2 Discussion

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between high-performance work system, organizational creative climate, creative process engagement, and creative performance. This study's organizational creative climate has a positive and significant effect on creative performance (H1). This result confirms previous studies that suggested organizational creative climate as an important factor in enhancing creative performance (Algethami & Dhawi, 2016; Mafabi et al., 2018; Munir & Beh, 2019). Thus, game companies should create a conducive organizational creative climate to improve their creative performance.

Creative process engagement also positively and significantly affects creative performance (H2). The importance of creative process engagement in this study validates the results from previous studies (Cheung et al., 2020; Zhang & Bartol, 2010b). Therefore, employees in the game industry should work and engage in their company's creative process engagement to help the company performs better.

Hypothesis 3 argues that high-performance work system was believed to be an important factor in improving creative performance (Li-Yun et al., 2007; Martinaityte et al., 2019). Interestingly, this study's result shows that HPWS has no significant direct effect on creative performance. This result indicates that HPWS alone is not strong enough to improve creative performance. Therefore, game companies should not focus only on their HPWS, but also consider other factors.

HPWS is argued to affect organizational creative climate (H4), and OCC mediates the relationship between HPWS and creative performance (H4a). This study shows that OCC is an essential factor that should be contemplated for the game industry and that it is the key to making the HPWS effective in improving creative performance.

Lastly, there is a positive and significant relationship between HPWS and creative process engagement (H5). CPE is also proved as the mediating factor related to HPWS and creative performance (H5a). This result confirms the previous studies that show how these variables are related and how CPE acted as a mediator (Chang et al., 2014; Richard et al., 2019). At the same time, this study also shows a different result from the previous study that argues the insignificant effect of CPE as a mediating factor (Martinaityte et al., 2019). Thus, game companies should improve their CPE to raise their creative performance.

6. Conclusion

Creative performance is an essential factor in measuring the success of game companies. This study gives empirical results on how high-performance work system, organizational creative climate, and creative process engagement are related to creative performance. In addition, this study also discussed the importance of organizational creative climate

and creative process engagement as vital mediating factors in the relationship between high-performance work system and creative performance. All three factors are essential to increase the game companies' creative performance.

There are several limitations to this study. First, this study only analyzed data from the game industry's employees. Future research in other creative industries is strongly recommended. Next, this study was done during the COVID-19 pandemic situation. It will be interesting for future studies to do the research after the pandemic and compare the results. Finally, since this study focused on human capital, testing the creative performance from other aspects such as financial, entrepreneurship, or marketing will enrich this study.

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