Research Paper

Factors influencing Employee Engagement: A study on a Telecommunication Network provider in Maldives

Fazna Mansoor
School of Accounting and Business Management
FTMS College, Malaysia

Zubair Hassan
School of Accounting and Business Management
FTMS College, Malaysia
Zubai7@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper will strive to examine key factors identified from previous researches that influences employee engagement. A questionnaire was constructed taking into account past literature. The independent variables to measure employee engagement include communication, team work and collaboration, job role, Company management and learning and development. The study took on descriptive and explanatory research design. Also, cross sectional survey methods was applied for this study using an online survey questionnaire, containing 30 items with Likert Scale (Strongly disagree -1 and 5 for strongly agree). Initially, a pilot test was run on a sample of 50 employees to check data normality and questionnaire / scale reliability. Based on the findings of the pilot test, questionnaire format was revised and sample size narrowed down to full time employees to encourage mature and realistic feedback. Total 300 questionnaire was distributed and a sample of 201 full time employees from Ooredoo Maldives, used. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive means and regression via SPSS.20. The study revealed that the five dimensions of employee engagement, which are, communication, team work and collaboration, job role, company management, and learning and development have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. Considering that this study was focused on Ooredoo an international Company which is one of the biggest and fastest growing telecommunication network provider in the country, it is expected that this study will benefit and inspire the leaders and managers of all the working sectors in Maldives to unleash the full potential of their workforce, unlock the hidden talent and maximize business performance in order to gain a competitive advantage.

Key Terms: Employee engagement, Communication, Team work and Collaboration, Job Role, Company Management, Learning and Development.
1. Introduction

The impact of employee engagement on productivity is an important study in the field of organizational management. Employee engagement has become a key business priority for senior leaders. They recognize the possibility that a highly engaged employees can intensify innovation, productivity, and bottom-line performance while minimize costs related to recruitment and retention in highly competitive talent markets (Sibanda, 2014). This research will analyze the factors relating to employee engagement and its impact on productivity in telecom industry Maldives. Studies have indicated that a positive relationship exists between employee engagement and organizational performance results. For example, customer loyalty and safety productivity, employee retention, profitability. Past researchers also found that the more engaged employees are, the more possibility for the organization or employer is to surpass the industry mediocre in its revenue growth. Employee engagement is found to be greater in double-digit growth companies. Research also indicates that customer satisfaction has a positive relation to engagement.

The “engagement” terminology was initially used in relation to work, however, credit has been passed to the Gallup Organization for bringing up the name sometime in the 1990s (Schaufeli, 2013). And has been steadily gaining the attention of leaders, especially in the business sector over the past two decades. The positive results of employee engagement that has been advocated makes senior executives foster a culture of engagement and commitment as a top priority to increase productivity. A significant number of researches have been carried out in the United States, Europe and African countries though comparatively few in the Asian region. Even though much research has been done on the subject of employee engagement, little is known about the impact of employee engagement on the overall performance.

Scanning through the history of past researches, a combination of descriptive and explanatory research seems to have been adopted in most cases (Trussa, et al., 2013). As well, a significant number of research work appears to have applied the quantitative method using questionnaires, designed in a five point Likert scale. As such, this research will apply the quantitative method using on-line questionnaires with primary data. This method will also help to test the hypotheses. More on methodology will be discussed in chapter 3.

The recent years saw a range of employee engagement dimensions reviewed, analyzed and discussed thoroughly. The most common variables include, communication, learning and development, leadership, teamwork, job role, managing performance, people practice, customer focus, brand alignment and career opportunities. (Aon Heweitt, 2015) (Gallup, 2012). For employees, a growing desire for companies with a good brand image, reward and recognition for good results, career path and culture of teamwork was seen as emerging. Moreover, leader’s role on engagement seems to stand out in that they affect engagement considering leadership has the control on all the key drivers, on top of having a direct effect on the engagement of others through their interactions (Trussa, et al., 2013).

According to the survey of 656 chief executive officers in America, Europe, Japan and other countries, employee engagement is one of the top five most important challenges for management. Likewise, if there are employees who are not engaged, they are likely to be wasting their effort and talent on tasks that may not matter much, may not show full commitment though not dissatisfied enough to make a break. Also, they may not stick around for things to change in their organization have far more misgivings about their organization in terms of performance measures such as customer satisfaction. (Markos, 2010). Surveys conducted on 360,000 employees from 41 companies in the world’s 10 economically strong countries finds that both operating margin and net profit margins reduced over a three year period in companies with low engagement.
Over the last 4 years, Maldivian industries has witnessed open display of multiple accounts of employee discontentment. Minivan news has reported multiple cases about employee strikes across Maldives. These discontentment appears to be mostly from hotel and tourism industry, the country's main income source. The complaints and discontentment ranged from unfair service charge distributions, unsatisfactory accommodations, low salary, neglect, disrespect and impartiality, disputes with management etc..This openly indicates that local organizations has some areas to improve in managing employee expectations. A need to acquire knowledge on employee engagement as well as how to implement a culture of engagement in a long standing and manageable way appears to be very much necessary and important.

**Research Objectives**

- To analyze the effect of learning and development on employee engagement.
- To analyze the effect of empowerment in the job role on employee engagement.
- To analyze the effect of leadership / company management on employee engagement.
- To analyze the effect of team work on employee engagement.
- To analyze the effect of communication on employee engagement.
- To analyze the effect of employee engagement on productivity

2. Literature review

Kahn (1990, p.694) defines employee engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. Later Robinson et al. (2004) defined employee engagement as “a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value. An engaged employee is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization.

It appears that distinctive theories and frameworks for employee engagement is almost non-existent. However, multiple theoretical viewpoints have been suggested highlighting various aspects. Five different approaches are critically reviewed below;

The Needs Satisfying approach was presented earlier in the definition of engagement. According to Kahn (1990) employees become engaged when three psychological conditions or needs are met, namely, meaningfulness, safety and availability. In a nutshell, the feeling of achievement in his or her job role is explained as ‘meaningfulness’, further emphasizing that the role tasks and the role type has a strong influence in making the role meaningful.

The second approach identified is the burnout antithesis view on engagement created by Maslach and Leiter (1997), who suggested that engagement and burnout are very contrasting two ends of a continuum. According to (Schaufeli, et al., 2001) those who feel or experience exhaustion or burn out at work can be a negative influence on their team mates as it may cause conflict at an individual level as well as disrupt the tasks at hand. Therefore, burnout may become “infectious” which in turn may blow out through casual dealings on the job. Whereas burnout is associated with fatigue, cynicism, exhaustion, and a lack of achievement, engagement is related to emotional involvement, vigor, participation and efficacy The Satisfaction-Engagement Approach. (Schaufeli, et al., 2001)

According to the Gallup Organization, “The term employee engagement refers to an individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter, Schmidt and Hayes. 2002). Considering this approach has been widely accepted including the academia as well, and that Gallup’s research has established meaningful links between employee engagement and business
unit outcomes, such as customer satisfaction, profit, productivity, and turnover (Harter et al., 2002). In comparison to the two theories discussed above, this approach appears to be more relevant to this study.

The multidimensional approach developed by Sak's (2006) is the distinction between job and organizational engagement. Saks explains that employee engagement as "a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components that are associated with individual role performance". This approach appears to be quite similar to that of Khan's reviewed above, though it slightly distinguishes from the Needs-satisfying approach in that the "job engagement" means the 'performing the work role' and "organizational engagement" means the performing the role as a member of the organization. Though both are moderately related they seem to have different antecedents and consequences. In general, this approach is not relevant to this study.

Social exchange theory is when affiliations with colleagues change over time to become dependable, trustworthy, with mutual dependency so long as each team member abide by reciprocity or repayment rules. One such example is, the employment package the employee gets such as salary and benefits, as well as the rewards and recognition, and career development, employees may feel indebted to answer in kind and recompense the organization. Following the afore said, Saks (2006) resonates that employees can repay their employer through engagement. Which means, employees can get engaged in work at different levels and varying degrees depending on the package they receive from the employer. Subsequently, burn out may result if the organization fails to provide the resources, it is likely that employees may withdraw and disengage themselves from their work (Schaufeli, 2006). Overall, however, the theory appears weak, which limits the support for the social exchange theory of work engagement.

Current Researches

In recent years, more studies have begun to look at the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. While, previous research has focused primarily on engagement at an individual level, today, more practitioners and academics tend to agree that the consequences of employee engagement are positive in a business perspective (Gallup, 2013). More organizations seems to agree that there is a connection between employee engagement and organizational performance; a meta-analysis conducted by Harter et al (2002) confirms this connection. They determined that, "...employee satisfaction and engagement are related to meaningful business outcomes at a magnitude that is important to many organizations".

The Engage for Success report on ‘Nailing the Evidence’ provided data to suggest that higher employee engagement is linked to better customer service, higher levels of creativity, lower absence, greater retention, fewer accidents and most importantly increased productivity and return on investments. The study which was solely focused on UK workers noted that only around one third of UK workers say they are engaged – a number which placed the UK ranked ninth for engagement levels amongst the world’s twelve largest economies as ranked by GDP. The report further suggested that the output per hour in the UK was 15 percentage points below the average for the rest of the G7 industrialized nations in 2011; on an output per worker basis, UK productivity was 20 percentage points lower than the rest of the G7 in 2011 suggesting the widest productivity gap since 1995. This also indicates a firm correlation between employee engagement and high organizational productivity and performance across all sectors of the economy and that employee disengagement is therefore clearly contributing to UK's disappointing productivity figures. This report clearly represented the evidence for the effectiveness of employee engagement strategies in improving performance, productivity and, in the private sector, profitability, evidence based on academic research, and from research data compiled by research houses such as Towers Watson,
Kenexa, Hay, Aon Hewitt and Gallup as well as their own experiences of working in organizations that cares about engaging and inspiring their employees – and the effect that has on performance.

The research report on Engagement and job satisfaction conducted and published by Society for Human Resources (2015) represented 600 U.S. employees. Though the survey assessed 43 aspects of employee job satisfaction and 37 aspects of employee engagement all findings appears to be summarily narrowed down to eight areas: career development, employee relationships with management, compensation, benefits, work environment, conditions for engagement, engagement opinions and engagement behaviors. Moreover, the research appeared more focused on factors that influence overall employee satisfaction and engagement in the workplace suggesting employee preferences rather than benefits or outcome for the organization. Though this research is lacking in terms of identifying the long term benefits of employee engagement it does provide some insights into engagement variables as well as key areas for organizations to consider for organizational improvement.

Conceptual Framework

In light of the literature review and findings on selected key Employee Engagement theories and approaches as well as recent research papers by Human Resource consultancy firms this study proposes the conceptual framework illustrated below. As this study will be based on a Maldives Telecom Company, due to the cultural differences and nature of work, the components in the framework may vary.

![Conceptual Framework](image)

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework -Employee engagement and employee productivity

Source: Researcher’s own development

Communication is a key element for organizations if they want their employees to feel good about the business and the direction it’s headed. Employees need to be informed (Mullins, 2010). Informing members of staff about what is happening and allowing people to feel in control and exercise their own discretion reduces uncertainty, minimizes stress and gives a sense of belonging. Team work and collaboration makes an important contribution to the success of business initiatives like quality improvement, product development or customer service. It is the action of an individual to achieve a common goal. Job role makes an important contribution to the success of business initiatives like quality improvement, product development or customer service. It is the action of an individual to achieve the common goal. A leader’s ability to build strong relationships with employees, build strong team interaction and lead in a “person-centered” way creates an engaging environment in which employees can perform at the highest possible level. In today's business environment, Learning & Development (L&D) is a key strategy to enhance work force capabilities, skills and competencies in order to maintain a sustainable, successful
organization. Learning & development increases employee confidence, morale, efficiency builds capability to take additional responsibility boosting career progression resulting financial gain.

3. Research Design and Methodology

Research design

For the purpose of this study, a blend of explanatory and descriptive approach is chosen considering both explanatory and descriptive approach are useful when the researcher has a pre-conditioned hypothesis. The contextual framework within which the research will be conducted is pre-defined and can therefore be the point of kick off for the research. Therefore, the blend of both these approaches is advantageous considering that;

- It enables the researcher to examine the connection between employee engagement and business productivity.
- It will help test the past theories developed on employee engagement and if those theories is applicable or can be implemented in Ooredoo Maldives.
- It will provide a clear picture of the current standing of employee engagement in Ooredoo Maldives.
- It will help identify the scale of importance of the engagement enablers or variables.
- Most importantly, the researcher will be able to shed light on the impact of employee engagement on increased productivity that can be utilized for future management decisions.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of this research quantitative method will be adopted for data collection considering that quantitative research methods attempt to maximize objectivity, reliability and are typically interested in prediction. (Harwell, 2011). It also avoids the use of researcher's experiences, perceptions, and biases is drawing conclusions as opposed to qualitative method. Furthermore, it relies on surveys to collect data, and on probability theory to test statistical hypotheses that correspond to research questions of interest.

Data Collection

For the purpose of this research primary data will be used. This is because data can be collected using different types of approaches, such as interview, observation, paper based or online questionnaires. While each has its merits and drawbacks, each technique has a different purpose. (Curtis, 2008). Primary data engages the respondents directly which provides internal validity (Hox, 2005).

Target population, sample size and techniques.

For this research, the data was collected using random sample methodology within Ooredoo Maldives employees by using a structured questionnaire. With the assistance from IT department of Ooredoo Maldives, researcher was able to send a link to all employees requesting to fill in an online questionnaire. The advantages of this kind of survey are: low cost, ability to cover all participants and participants’ privacy and confidentiality is protected. The disadvantage connected with the potential limited access on the internet was eliminated, as all participants have convenient access to the internet. Another possible disadvantage of this method is a possible low rate of responses,
however this factor was addressed by sending a bulk reminder text message to respondent mobile phones numbers. Data was collected to a central server, and with the help from IT department, the data was extracted in MS Excel format which was then used in the analysis. Total of 201 questionnaires were received.

The research was conducted among the employees of Ooredoo Maldives, to find out the factors contributing to employee engagement. Hence all full time employees were being used to collect information. As of 1st February 2016 there were total of 323 employees working full time at Ooredoo Maldives.

For the purpose of the research, a statistical significant (confidence level) of 95% and standard deviation (margin of error) of 5% was projected (Gallup, 2012).

**Ethical issues and management**

It is important for researchers to apply various research rules and maintain the proper procedures (Resnik, 2015) such as confidentiality, anonymity and obtaining consents. For this research, questionnaire was inclusive of the consent statement and devoid of identification to encourage accurate and right information as well as encourage maximum participation.

**Data analysis plan**

From the many software packages for statistical analysis, SPSS is preferred considering SPSS offers a wide range of methods, graphs and charts. SPSS also comes with more techniques of screening or cleaning the information in preparation for further analysis. Furthermore it has more control on data management and output. (Aon Heweitt, 2015). The first step of the analysis, was to test data normality based on skewness and the kurtosis indicators, after which reliability, validity, sample adequacy, correlation, and regression was conducted for analyzing the research. The study will shed light if the dimensions in the hypothesis contributes to employee engagement and specifically which of these factors needs to be improved in order to increase engagement and finally, how employee engagement has impacted on performance.

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4. **Analysis and Results**

**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics are usually used to analyze means, ranges, and numbers of valid cases for a given variable. Mean is the average that reflects the central tendency, while standard deviation is average degree to which scores deviate from the mean. Mean and standard deviation will be applied to analyze the data (Boeree, 2009).

**Table 1-Descriptive Statistics**

Page 56
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.950</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JR</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>.826</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.873</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>.794</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>201</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean statistics for all variables ranged between 3.51 to 3.58 indicating all variables are almost equally practiced to enhance employee engagement. Communication (CO) and Company Management (CM) appears to be the least practiced with a mean statistic of 3.51. Team work and collaboration has the highest mean value of 3.58 which is an indication that employees believe this is an area of importance where team work and collaboration is enforced within the Company. With the skewness and kurtosis values for the data set within the defined range, the data distribution appears to be normal and valid.

**Correlation Analysis**

Correlation is an analysis that measures the strengths of association between two variables. The value of the correlation coefficient varies between +1 and -1. When the value of the correlation coefficient lies around ± 1, then it is said to be a perfect degree of association between the two variables. The more the correlation coefficient value goes towards 0, the relationship between the two variables becomes weaker (Cohen & West, 2003)

**Table 2: Correlations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>TC</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>JR</th>
<th>CM</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>EE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.459**</td>
<td>.519**</td>
<td>.173*</td>
<td>.643**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.260**</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>.322**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JR</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td>.736</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>201</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.144*</td>
<td>.194**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>.556</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 demonstrates the correlation analysis generated for all the variables to define Pearson's correlation coefficients with a two tailed significance test. The identified independent variables contributing to employee engagement are Communication (CO), Team Work and Collaboration (TC), Job Role (JR), Company Management (CM), and Learning and development (LD). The dependent variable here is Employee Engagement (EE).

**Team Work and Collaboration** – Good team work makes an important contribution to the success of business initiatives like quality improvement, product development or customer service. It is the action of an individual to achieve a common goal. Likewise, according to table 12 the correlation coefficient value $R = .643$, indicates a positive relationship with Employee Engagement.

**Communication** – enables employees to feel good about the business and the direction it’s headed. It helps employees be informed (Mullins, 2010). Informing members of staff about what is happening and allowing people to feel in control and exercise their own discretion reduces uncertainty, minimizes stress and gives a sense of belonging. Likewise, according to table 12 the correlation coefficient value $R = .322$, indicates a positive relationship with Employee Engagement.

**Job Role** – Encourages employees to make a commitment and wanting to give more than is required or expected through empowerment, flexibility innovation and clear goals. According to table 12 the correlation coefficient value $R = 194$, indicates a positive relationship with Employee Engagement.

**Company Management** – A leader’s ability to build strong relationships with employees, build strong team interaction and lead in a “person-centered” way creates an engaging environment in which employees can perform at the highest possible level. According to table 12 the correlation coefficient value $R = 298$, indicates a positive relationship with Employee Engagement.

**Learning and Development** – In today’s business environment, Learning & Development (L&D) is a key strategy to enhance work force capabilities, skills and competencies in order to maintain a sustainable, successful organization. Learning & development increases employee confidence, morale, efficiency builds capability to take additional responsibility boosting career progression resulting financial gain. According to table 12 the correlation coefficient value $R = 181$, indicates a positive relationship with Employee Engagement.

Thus, all the previously discussed factors correlate suitably, representing positive relationship with Employee Engagement with Pearson Correlation coefficients.
Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical tool for the investigation of associations between variables (Faraway, 2002). A regression analysis is also performed for this data set to understand the relationship between the employee engagement independent variable and its dependent variable.

Table 3: Model summary-Determinants of Employee Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>F Change</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
<th>Durbin-Watson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.834</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td>.16712</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>89.445</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that R is 0.834, R square is 0.696 and adjusted R square is 0.689 and this implies that 68.9% of the variance in EE can be predicted by the independent variables. Since a good regression model should predict a minimum of 60% of variation of the dependent variable (Faraway, 2002), this model can be considered as a good fit. Additionally the F value of this analysis is 89.444 (sig < 0.05) indicating the regression model is significant.

Table 4: Regression Beta Coefficient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tolerance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>VIF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.3503</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-1.54</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>-.232</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.351</td>
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<td>.000</td>
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<td>-.014</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.429</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.539</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of table 4 were based on the below assumptions
Dependent factor: EE (Employee Engagement)
Y = EE (Employee Engagement)

X1 = CO (Communication)
X2 = JR (Job Role)
X3 = CM (Company Management)
X4 = LD (Learning and Development)
X5 = TC (Team work and Collaboration)
C = Constant

The regression model is
Y = β1X1 + β2X2 + β3X3 + β4X4 + β5X5 + C

The results show that three variables are positive and significant in influencing employee engagement. These practices are Job Role - JR (0.403, p = 0.000), Company Management - CM (0.351, p = 0.001) and Team work and Collaboration - TC (0.539, p = 0.000). However learning and development also has a significant but negative influence on organizational commitment(affective commitment of employees). This might be that when employee receive sufficient knowledge, and training, they find better opportunities else where and move from organization. Therefore it is
important to carry further research to examine whether most employees in the workplace are opportunists, and their personality, or the career opportunities offered in the organization is matched with other industries or whether employees are pursuing their learning and development just to move out from the organization. Hence the empirical model is

\[
Y = 0.403X_2 + 0.351X_3 - 0.02 X_4 + 0.539X_5
\]

This model indicates that changing one of X2, X3 and X5 while others remains unchanged, Y will change by 1.273 units as 0.02 units will decrease.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Beta coefficient</th>
<th>Significant (P&lt;0.05)</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>H1</strong>: Effective, relevant and timely Communications as getting employee feedback are all critical elements to keep employees engaged and boost innovation and productivity.</td>
<td>-0.2318</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H2</strong>: When employees see a clear linkage of their Job Role with the organization's goals, in addition to flexibility and authority within the job scope they start caring about their work, leading to being engaged and wanting to give more than is required or expected.</td>
<td>0.40319</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H3</strong>: Consistent and on-going Learning and Development opportunities builds capability, confidence and job satisfaction, therefore contributes towards employee engagement and thus, increases business profitability</td>
<td>-0.0196</td>
<td>0.630</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H4</strong>: Company Management or strong leadership contributes in inspiring the team and 'model' the way forward in creating an engaging environment in which employees can perform at the highest possible level.</td>
<td>0.35095</td>
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5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Communication has no significant influence on employee engagement. Notably, there is no evidence of any publication of an internal communication role practiced in a Maldivian organization. However, when linked to Company Management or leadership commitment through establishing clear mission, vision and values, it carries value. Furthermore, employees need to know how the organization is doing, how they fit into the big picture and how their efforts influence the overall outcome of business results. When employees see a clear linkage of their role with the organization's goals, with endless encouragement for innovation, in addition to flexibility and authority within the job scope they start caring about their work. More importantly, when the linkage is extended to a clear cut career path leads to commitment and wanting to give more than is required or expected. It is important to note that Company Management or leadership team is a key influence to employee engagement. While Managers take a significant portion of operational work, in dealing with down the line subordinates, the top management or leadership role on employee engagement cannot be undervalued. When top management communicate frequently and openly on Company goals and what is required of them, employee engagement increase. And when leaders actively drives engagement, the effect multiplies.

Therefore, this research concludes that learning and development practiced within an all encompassed culture of learning linked to job role and its career path has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. Finally, employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on productivity. Engaged employees increase innovation, quality of work, productivity, and bottom-line performance while reducing, absenteeism, safety incidents, costs related to hiring and retention in highly competitive talent markets. Enhanced productivity leads to significant increases in the key business performance measures such as revenue, market share, earnings per share, and net promoter score (NPS).

Recommendations:

It is recommended to foster a culture of learning and development that extends development opportunities from instructor led sessions to mentoring, coaching, job transfers, self-learning on the job, e-learning and innovation which can simultaneously challenge, support and enable employees to harness their potential for own career progression. Which means a shift in the mind set of employees from managers being responsible for their career progression to defining own career progression through self-learning. Though creativity and courage may be required to engage and motivate employees emotionally to operate at their limits, this bold step can help employees develop their learning agility and proactively create the solutions needed for the future.
which can result in positive and significant impact on employee engagement. Managers and leaders can take pride in knowing that they have helped others develop and grow. Similarly, it is recommended to strengthen communications by creating an internal communication function within Human Resources Department. This is to ensure clear and consistent information is communicated to employees across the Company through a common channel that encourage employee engagement by keeping the workforce energized, focused and productive which is critical to long-term organizational success. Additionally, strategic and continuous communication lends credibility to the organization’s leadership. For example, when a new product is brought to the market, product related information can be sent to all employees via the internal communication so that all employees are aware of the latest updates. HR can formulate a communication strategy, that provides focus on organizational goals and determine methods of communication and information points. For example, it can be through a town hall meeting, bulk text messages or internal email etc. Establishing strong communication channels will have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. This study concludes that by practicing the five variables given in the hypothesis organizations can achieve employee engagement and thereby achieve individual performance KPIs. It is clear that these aspects significantly contributes to organizational success. Therefore this study recommends all Companies and Organizations in the public and private sector in Maldives to plan and implement the above-discussed employee engagement drivers as well as the given additional suggestions.

**Further Research Direction:** This study was focused on just one Company in Maldives albeit samples included employees based in all corners of Maldives. Therefore, further studies is recommended with focus on other industries and additionally explore on holding managers accountable for demonstrating organizational values, development of team members and results.

**REFERENCE**


Resnik, D. B., 2015. What is Ethics in Research & Why is it Important?. NIH.


