

**An Investigation into the Drivers of Employee Engagement and
its Impact on Business Outcomes**

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ABSTRACT

An Investigation into the Drivers of Employee Engagement and its Impact on Business Outcomes

By Katrina Kane

This research seeks to investigate what factors drive employee engagement levels in organisations. The paper also seeks to explore what impact employee engagement has on business outcomes. A cross-sectional study was conducted for this research and responses were gathered using non-probability sampling. The survey for researching the drivers and outcomes of employee engagement that was used for this study was sourced from a paper by Alan Saks (2006).

Statistical analysis was carried out on the collected survey data. Multiple linear regression tests were conducted. A number of significant findings were made. In relation to the drivers of employee engagement, job characteristics predicted job engagement. In terms of the outcomes of engagement, a number of important findings were discovered. Organisation engagement was found to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to leave the organisation and organisational citizenship behaviour (directed towards the organisation). This study has also produced a set of recommendations based on the research findings. These could be implemented by organisations in order to increase employee engagement levels.

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INTRODUCTION

The Business Case for Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is an area of great concern to many Human Resource Development professionals. It has been gaining much popularity since the early 1900s (Shuck and Reio, 2011). This interest is fuelled by the assertion that employee engagement levels have an impact on business profitability (Macey and Schneider, 2008; Rana, Ardichvili and Tkachenko, 2014). Therefore, many organisations are leveraging employee engagement to achieve competitive advantage (Guest, 2014a; Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey and Saks, 2015).

To expand, some research has found that high employee engagement levels produce greater employee outcomes, for example, it has been positively linked with attitudinal, behavioural and performance related outcomes (Albrecht et al., 2015; Christian, Garza and Slaughter, 2011). Furthermore, studies indicate that engagement levels have an impact upon organisational level successes, for example, lower intention to quit and lower staff turnover levels (Saks, 2006; Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes, 2002). In addition, some studies have highlighted that higher engagement levels can have an effect on the financial performance of an organisation (McLeod and Clarke, 2009).

Despite the benefits of employee engagement highlighted by these studies, low levels of employee engagement are still observed around the world (Albrecht et al., 2015). On a global level, employee engagement has fallen by two points in 2016 compared to 2015. Merely twenty four percent of all employees can be placed in the “Highly Engaged” category in Aon Hewitt’s (2017) report. Thirty nine percent can be categorized as “Moderately Engaged”, putting the global engagement score at just sixty three percent (Aon Hewitt, 2017).

Engagement Profiles: 2015 vs 2016

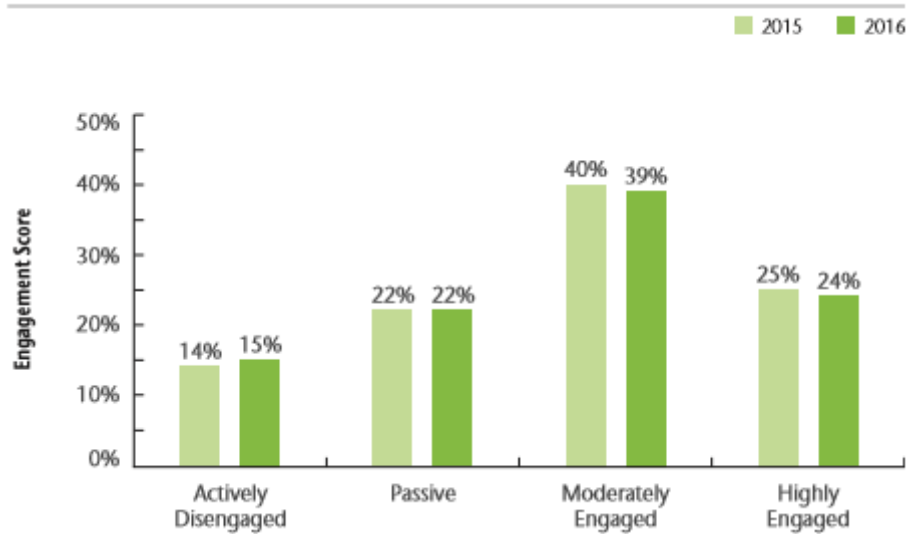


Figure 1 Engagement Profiles: 2015 vs 2016 (Aon Hewitt, 2017, p. 7)

What is Employee Engagement?

Although there is no single definition of employee engagement in the literature, many of the definitions suggest that it entails a combination of three concepts: job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation and extra role behaviour, for example, discretionary effort displayed by an employee to go beyond his or her job description (Schaufeli, 2014). McLeod and Clarke (2009) identified over fifty different definitions of employee engagement. The lack of a universal definition makes the evaluation of the concept problematic (Keenoy, 2014). There is also an abundance of measures for gauging employee engagement levels which can make it hard to compare studies that have used different measures.

Negative Impact of the Recession of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement levels around the world and in Ireland were severely hindered by the global economic recession which began in 2007/2008. The crisis emerged as a result of the collapse of the USA subprime mortgage market. Toxic assets produced massive losses in financial institutions. Moreover, a shortage of credit hampered the banking system in the USA, Europe and in many regions around the world (Gennard, 2009). The Irish crisis which took hold in 2007 was not just a result of these international burdens. Ireland also experienced a domestic banking crisis, a downward trend in wage competitiveness and a tax structure which relied greatly on unsustainable economic expansion (Honohan, 2009). Ireland fell into a severe recession as a result of these factors.

During the financial crisis in Ireland, many HR professionals had to introduce headcount reductions and pay cuts (Roche, Teague, Coughlan and Fahy, 2011). At the same time, organisations were experiencing difficulty keeping employees motivated and committed. In many organisations, employee engagement initiatives had to be put on hold during this period. In many workplaces, communication from management was often one way and top-down in nature. Moreover, people had to work harder and under-performance and disciplinary issues were addressed more thoroughly (Roche et al., 2011). Many programmes such as profit sharing schemes and bonuses had to be scrapped. None of these could have had a positive impact on employee engagement levels (Purcell, 2014).

Global Uncertainty and Brexit

Ireland has experienced very strong economic recovery in recent years (OECD, 2017). However, employers still have a great deal to do to increase employee engagement levels. In

Ireland, employee engagement levels remain low. Figures from Gallup in 2013 showed that the level of employee engagement in Ireland stood at just 16% (Gallup, 2013).

The Aon Hewitt report (2017) makes an important point that the emergence of populist attitudes, political divisions within nations and unexpected election results have created a great deal of uncertainty around the world in recent years. This uncertainty has been felt greatly by businesses. Additionally, employees globally experience feelings of fear and anxiety from such uncertainty. This can reduce their ability to be fully engagement at work (Aon Hewitt, 2017). This point is very relevant for Ireland because the country could be negatively affected by Brexit.

Justification for the Research

It is unknown what impact Brexit may have on the Irish economy. If the Irish economy does experience a slowdown in growth by factors relating to uncertainty, there could be a knock-on, negative impact on employee engagement levels. The OECD is expecting firms in Ireland to develop at a more sustainable rate in 2017 and 2018, in comparison to previous years (OECD, 2017). They attribute this to the uncertainty associated with the final outcomes of the Brexit negotiations, coupled with high labour costs. Recommendations in this study could be considered by organisations in Ireland to prevent employee engagement levels falling.

Research Aims

The researcher embarked on this study to explore what factors create a “positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Baker, 2002, p. 74). The research will also investigate whether or not higher employee engagement levels produce positive outcomes for

organisations. Another aim of the research is to produce a set of recommendations that could be adopted in organisations to boost levels of employee engagement.

Research Objectives:

- 1) To find out what impact the following factors have on levels of job and organisation engagement: job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support.
- 2) To explore what impact job and organisation engagement levels have on job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizenship behaviour.
- 3) To make recommendations that could be adopted by organisations to raise employee engagement levels.

Significance of the Study

The researcher wanted to conduct a study that would add to the academic debate on the drivers and outcomes of employee engagement. The aim is to see if improving the working environment and conditions for employees will lead to greater performance and greater rewards for the organisation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review will present a selection of definitions of employee engagement. The difference between employee engagement and other constructs that it is often confused with is also discussed. A range of approaches to measuring engagement will also be presented. Kahn's three psychological conditions which lead to engagement are explored in great detail. The review will then discuss many of the drivers of employee engagement that are highlighted in the literature. Finally, several of the outcomes of employee engagement that the literature emphasises are examined in detailed.

What is Employee Engagement?

Kahn (1990) was the first to put forward an academic paper on the topic of employee engagement (Guest, 2014b). Kahn looked at the concept from a behavioural perspective. According to Kahn, employee engagement involves the harnessing of oneself to one's work roles. The individual fully immerses into the work "physically, cognitively, and emotionally" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694).

Another definition describes work engagement as a "positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). This study notes that engagement is not momentary. Instead, it is a continuous mental state that is not centred on a single object, event, individual or behaviour. This definition views engagement as an attitudinal state (Guest, 2014b).

Engagement can also be described as a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004). Engaged employees understand the business context. They also work with fellow employees to improve their performance within their role for the benefit of the organisation. There is a two-way relationship at work here which shows similarities to the psychological contract. The relationship is built on trust, but it can easily be broken. The organisation must nurture and grow employee engagement (Robinson et al., 2004).

It is problematic that there is no agreement in the literature on how best to define engagement (Albrecht et al., 2015; Bakker, Leiter and Albrecht, 2010). Hence, there is clearly a lack of consensus on the meaning of employee engagement (Saks and Gruman, 2014). Some academics refer to it as employee engagement, yet other researchers call it job engagement. Others view it as work engagement (Saks and Gruman, 2014). The lack of a universal definition means that the measurement of engagement could be inconsistent across different studies.

Disengagement and Burnout

Kahn (1990) also provided a description of the characteristics of employee disengagement. This involves the disassociation of oneself from one's work roles. Furthermore, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally in the process of carrying out their roles.

Burnout is the antithesis of engagement and encompasses exhaustion, cynicism and ineffectiveness. These characteristics are opposites of engagement which involves energy, involvement and efficacy (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). The authors explain that if the following conditions are not adequate, burnout can occur: workload, control, reward,

community, fairness and values. These concepts are important as the consequences of disengagement and burnout can be detrimental to organisations. For example, it can lead to increased levels of employee turnover.

Is Employee Engagement a Unique Concept?

It is sometimes said that employee engagement is merely old wine in new bottles (Macey and Schneider, 2008). Some define engagement in terms of organisational commitment and affective commitment. In other cases it is referred to as extra role behaviour. Hence, it is often confused with other terms. This section will argue that it is a unique concept and that it explains certain behaviours that organisational commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), job involvement and job satisfaction cannot explain.

Affective organisational commitment refers to the emotional attachment an individual has towards the organisation resulting from shared values and interests (Mowday, 1998). Furthermore, affective commitment refers to the satisfaction employees get from their jobs, their co-workers and the desire to go above and beyond for the good of the organisation (Robinson et al., 2004). However, affective commitment is an affective attachment to the values of the organisation as a whole (Brooke, Russell, and Price, 1988). Contrastingly, engagement relates to perceptions individuals have towards the work itself (Maslach et al., 2001). Engagement is also a more sizeable concept involving the investment of the entire self in terms of cognitive, emotional, and physical energies (Christian et al., 2011). Macey and Schneider (2008) imply that commitment might be a dimension of engagement, but it is not adequate to capture engagement.

OCB refers to employee behaviours that are not paramount to one's role, but facilitate the functioning of the organisation (Lee and Allen, 2002). OCB also shares some similar traits to

engagement including helpfulness, sportsmanship, organisational loyalty and compliance, initiative, self-development and civic virtue (Robinson et al., 2004). However, it focuses on the traits and behaviours of the employee, instead of looking at the two way nature of the employee-employer relationship. Neither commitment nor OCB fully reflect the reciprocal aspect of engagement and the degree to which engaged workers are expected to have business awareness (Robinson et al., 2004).

Job involvement is also very different from the concept of employee engagement. Job involvement refers to the extent to which a person identifies psychologically with his or her work and the level to which a person's work performance affects his or her self-esteem (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965). Job involvement refers to particular aspects of the job, for example, how much the job can satisfy one's needs (Christian, et al., 2011). It does not capture the discretionary behaviour that employee engagement does. Job involvement could be considered a facet of engagement rather than equating it with engagement (Macey and Schneider, 2008).

Job satisfaction is also different than engagement. Satisfaction as satiation is not the same as engagement. Employee engagement encapsulates an energetic drive, rather than feelings of satiation, which is associated with job satisfaction (Soane, Truss, Alfes, Shantz, Rees and Gatenby, 2012). Job satisfaction does not encapsulate the discretionary behaviour an individual displays to help the organisation (Macey and Schneider, 2008).

Measuring Employee Engagement

The Burnout-Antithesis Approach

It was originally thought that engagement was the antithesis of burnout and could be measured by reverse scoring burnout questionnaire scales (Fletcher and Robinson, 2014). However, Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) note that the assumption that both concepts are perfectly negatively correlated is inappropriate. They also state that the relationship between both constructs cannot be empirically studied when they are measured with the same tool. Researchers that share this view argue that engagement is a distinctive, positive psychological state that should be defined and measured separately (Fletcher and Robinson, 2014). The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) to address this issue. It is in the format of a seventeen item questionnaire and there is a shorter nine item questionnaire too. Responses are provided on a seven-point Likert scale. Feelings of vigour, dedication and absorption are captured through these questions (Fletcher and Robinson, 2014).

The Needs-Satisfying Approach

The ISA engagement scale is an example of a measure of engagement from the needs-satisfying approach (Fletcher and Robinson, 2014). All studies that fit into this category build on Kahn's (1990) work on the psychological conditions of engagement. Respondents complete nine questions on the ISA engagement scale. Response anchors are on a seven-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Some validation studies have found that this scale could be more effective than the UWES in predicting performance, OCB and intention to leave (Fletcher and Robinson, 2014).

The authors of the ISA engagement scale maintain that engagement involves a cognitive dimension which can be labelled intellectual engagement. The role of affect is also important

and they refer to this as affective engagement. They also introduce the notion that engagement has a third dimension. They refer to this as social engagement. Kahn's (1990) research did discuss a social aspect to engagement. He implied that social engagement occurs through interactions with other people whilst carrying out their role. Yet, social engagement has not been conceptualised as a facet of engagement. Hence, Soane et al. (2012) introduce it as such. All three aspects are captured by the ISA engagement scale.

The Satisfaction-Engagement Approach

Fletcher and Robinson (2014) also review a third category of engagement. This approach is quite common in the practitioner field. It tends to concentrate on practices that managers and the organisation can introduce to improve employee engagement. This approach emphasises the employee's connection to the organisational and broader work environment, as opposed to the job or work tasks.

The Gallup Q¹² is one of the most widely used tools for this approach. The survey consists of twelve questions and participants respond on a five-point scale. An example of one of the items is "My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person." This statement reflects the environmental factors that the supervisor or manager can change (Harter et al., 2002). The Gallup Q¹² survey is criticised by some researchers. For example, it has been noted that this measurement of engagement forecasts job satisfaction (Harter et al., 2002), not motivation or performance (Guest, 2014b).

The Multidimensional Approach

Saks (2006) brings a new perspective to the literature with the view that employee engagement can be measured by two similar, yet different constructs (Fletcher and Robinson, 2014), job

engagement and organisation engagement. Job engagement refers to the performance of one's role. Organisation engagement refers to carrying out one's role as part of the firm or organisation. His study found that are different drivers and outcomes for the two types of engagement.

Kahn's Three Psychological Conditions Necessary for Engagement

Kahn (1990) gathered qualitative data in two organisations, a summer camp and an architects firm. His aim was to examine how psychological experiences of work and work circumstances cause employees to present or absent themselves whilst carrying out their roles. He discovered that there are three psychological conditions that lead to engagement or disengagement. These are psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability.

Psychological meaningfulness occurs when a person receives a return on investment of their physical, cognitive or emotional energy at work. Kahn found that three factors had an impact on psychological meaningfulness. The first is task characteristics. He found that people who had challenging, clear, varied, creative work and freedom to exercise a level of autonomy were more likely to experience psychological meaningfulness. The second factor is role characteristics. Roles have identities attached to them that people adopt and the individual may like or dislike these identities. Roles which carry influence and status can contribute to meaningfulness. The third factor is work interactions. Kahn (1990) found that people obtained psychological meaningfulness when their jobs provided opportunities to have rewarding interpersonal interactions with other people.

The second condition is psychological safety. This is the feeling that one can show and employ oneself without being afraid of negative consequences to their self-image, career or status. Firstly, supportive and trusting interpersonal relationships contribute to psychological safety.

Kahn (1990) also found that supportive, resilient and clear management styles influenced psychological safety. These factors allow people to try new things without the fear of negative consequences if they fail.

According to Kahn, group and intergroup dynamics within the organisation can also have a positive or negative effect on psychological safety. This refers to the unconscious roles or characters that people adopt. Individuals in less powerful groups are often put into vulnerable, unattractive roles. Additionally, Kahn found that organisational norms also have an impact on psychological safety. Those individuals in his study who operated within generally accepted ways of working and behaving felt safer than those who didn't (Kahn, 1990).

Finally, psychological availability refers to a person having the physical, emotional or psychological resources to engage in certain situations (Kahn, 1990). A reduction in physical or emotional energy can lead to diminished engagement levels. Insecurity prevents individuals from bringing themselves fully into their work due to energy depletion as a result of anxiety. Individual's psychological availability can be hindered when employees become preoccupied with goings-on in their personal lives.

Kahn (1990) made some suggestions for future research, acknowledging the limitations of his study. One area to explore is how the three psychological conditions (meaningfulness, safety and availability) merge in certain circumstances and result in engagement, or lack thereof. Another area that this study did not look at is individual differences with regards to engagement and disengagement in relation to experiencing the psychological conditions, for example, how different individuals react to situations they view as being unsafe. Finally, Kahn states that research could be directed towards looking at conceptual connections. To expand, even if the conditions of commitment and involvement are present and static, individuals still go through spikes in engagement and plunges into disengagement due to changes in self-in-role.

May, Gibson and Harter (2004) built on Kahn's model and tested the three psychological conditions related to engagement and disengagement which are meaningfulness, safety and availability. The authors conducted a survey in a large insurance company in the USA. Their data showed that psychological meaningfulness and safety are positively linked to employees investing energy into their roles. Additionally, job enrichment and job fit were positively linked with psychological meaningfulness. They also showed that having a supportive supervisor and positive relationships with co-workers produces a greater sense of psychological safety. But, adherence to co-worker norms was negatively related to psychological safety. Psychological availability was also found to be positively linked to resources and negatively affiliated to participation in outside activities.

May et al. (2004) discovered that employees who regularly worried about other people's perceptions of them were less likely to feel psychologically safe. This will inhibit them from trying new methods to get tasks done. They suggest that management can implement strategies to foster a supportive climate. The authors also recommend that managers should construct roles for staff that do not involve excessive levels of cognitive, emotional or physical labour. High levels of stress, emotional exhaustion and injuries could hinder psychological availability (May et al., 2004).

Drivers of Employee Engagement

Job Characteristics

As discussed previously, Kahn (1990) explained how task characteristics have an impact on psychological meaningfulness. Kahn built on Hackman and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristics Model which represents the properties of motivating jobs. This model suggests that there are three characteristics that produce a sense of meaning at work. The first is skill

variety, meaning the level to which a job involves a variety of activities and involves the individual using various skills and talents. The second is task identity, referring to the degree to which the job requires the completion of a whole piece of work from start to finish with a visible outcome. The third characteristic is task significance, the extent to which the job has an impact on other people.

Hackman and Oldham's (1980) model also states that an increased sense of responsibility is developed in employees by allowing the individual to have autonomy in his or her role. This is the extent to which the job gives the individual freedom, independence and discretion to schedule the work and decide on the procedures to use. The final characteristic relates to knowledge of results. This is job feedback, the extent to which executing the work activities provides the individual with direct and clear information about how effective his or her performance is.

Rewards and Recognition

The organisation should have fair reward and recognition practices (Cook, 2008). However, financial rewards act as more of a hygiene factor (McLeod and Clarke, 2009). If the salaries and pay are unfair and inadequate, they will act as a de-motivator. According to Herzberg, pay needs to be at an adequate level to prevent this. He explains that other aspects of a person's job lead to motivation, such as responsibility and autonomy (Herzberg, 1968).

Another theory which is relevant to discuss here is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This theory contends that people will firstly try to satisfy basic needs such as physiological and safety needs (Maslow, 1970, cited in Hitt, Black and Porter, 2014). Individuals will not try to satisfy higher-ranking needs, for example, esteem and self-actualisation needs until basic needs are met (Maslow, 1970, cited in Hitt et al., 2014). It could be argued that if pay and other basic

employment conditions are not adequate to meet people's basic needs, individuals will not try to satisfy higher-ordered needs. Engagement associated behaviours would fall under higher-ordered needs such as esteem and self-actualisation.

There are conflicting results from the literature in terms of how influential pay is on engagement levels. One study showed that financial rewards were negatively linked to engagement, but contentment with fringe benefits was positively linked to engagement levels (Bakker, van Emmerik and Euwema, 2006). Saks (2006) discovered that rewards and recognition (pay, promotions, training and development opportunities, tokens of appreciation) were positively linked to engagement. Crawford, Rich, Buckman and Bergeron (2014) note that it appears that rewards and recognition are positively linked to engagement, but further research is required for examining situations where they are detrimental.

Leadership

A strong presence of leadership that provides a narrative about the purpose of an organisation, its broad vision, and how each individual contributes to that purpose leads to employee engagement (McLeod and Clarke, 2009). Such leaders who also display power and confidence, don't act on self-interest and can instil a sense of pride in their colleagues can inspire followership and create a collective effort (Soane, 2014). Similarly, Macey and Schneider (2008) built on Kahn's (1990) work on psychological safety and asserted that leaders who set clear expectations, are fair and praise good performance will boost employee engagement.

Social Support

Managers and supervisors who foster employee engagement among their staff will facilitate and empower employees, rather than control or restrict workers. Such managers also show

recognition and respect towards his or her staff and develop the skills and capabilities of his or her staff. These managers also reward employees for enhancing their skills and capabilities (McLeod and Clarke, 2009; Robinson et al., 2004). As mentioned previously, such social support increases an individual's psychological safety and allows employees to take risks without worrying about the consequences of possible failure (Kahn, 1990; Crawford et al., 2014). In contrast to this, burnout can occur due to a lack of support from one's manager or supervisor (Maslach et al., 2001). Further to this, Saks (2006) noted in his research that perceived organisational support was a predictor of engagement. Perhaps when employees feel that the organisation cares about them, they are likely to try and help the organisation succeed by becoming more engaged (Saks, 2006).

Justice

Organisational justice refers to the perceived fairness of outcome distributions and allocations, fairness of the procedures used to determine these, fairness regarding how people are treated when the procedures are implemented and fairness with regards to the explanations people receive about why procedures were used to determine those outcomes (Crawford et al., 2014).

Cook (2008) states that from recruitment and selection to performance management, fairness should always be adopted. Perceptions regarding justice influence levels of psychological safety by increasing fairness and reducing fears regarding the distribution of power, authority and resources (Kahn, 1990; Crawford et al., 2014).

Employee Involvement and Employee Voice

Involvement is essential for employee engagement. This should be a two-way process and the organisation should seek to engage with employees. Organisations that involve their staff are

four and a half times more likely to report high employee engagement scores than organisations that communicate less effectively (Cook, 2008). Similarly, in organisations that place an emphasis on employee voice, employees feel that they can speak up and challenge in appropriate circumstances (McLeod and Clarke, 2009). Employee voice is important in the context of employee engagement because it contributes to psychological safety. When people feel psychologically safe, they can express themselves without the fear of negative consequences (Kahn, 1990).

Commitment to Employee Well-Being

HR policies which provide employees with a good level of work-life balance are likely to produce higher levels of engagement. Such policies include flexible working arrangements and family-friendly policies. Excellent equality and diversity policies also have an impact (Cook, 2008). According to Cook (2008), job design and structure also fall under the category of well-being. She explains that if a job is boring or repetitive, and doesn't offer challenges, or if an employee does not have the required resources to carry out their role adequately, they are not likely to be engaged. Additionally, unmanageable workloads can lead to burnout (Maslach et al., 2001).

Personal Development

Employees should have opportunities to engage in training for their current role and to engage in development opportunities. Training and development opportunities make work meaningful because they facilitate employee growth and fulfilment, get employees ready for more challenges and give exposure to other roles that could potentially be a better fit for the individual (Crawford et al., 2014). When employers invest in the personal and professional

growth of employees, it shows that the organisation is committed to the employee and that they are valued by the organisation (Lee and Bruvold, 2003). The employee becomes engaged as he or she feels supported, invested in and part of the organisation's future (Shuck and Rocco, 2014). Management training is also important because the manager becomes more engaged in relation to their development. Secondly, they foster and grow the engagement of the people they manage through their attitudes and actions (Shuck and Rocco, 2014).

Employee Engagement and Positive Business Outcomes

Various studies show that significant benefits can be generated from high levels of employee engagement. For example, Harter et al. (2002) conducted a study looking at thirty-six businesses. Their results showed that overall satisfaction and employee engagement could be generalised across companies with regards to their correlation with customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, profitability, productivity, staff turnover and safety outcomes. The strongest effects were found in relation to employee turnover, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and safety. Positive correlations were also found, but at a lower level for productivity and profitability. This section will look at a sample of these outcomes in details.

Individual Performance

May et al. (2004) have shown that engaged employees tend to outperform their disengaged peers. They have also reinforced the idea that psychological meaningfulness is linked to attitudinal outcomes (for example satisfaction, motivation and turnover). In addition, it is also linked to behavioural outcomes like performance and absenteeism. Similarly, Saks (2006) also found that engaged employees are more committed to the organisation, satisfied with their job, display OCB and are less likely to quit.

A review of literature on the relationship between work engagement and performance concluded that work engagement has a positive effect (directly or indirectly) on the performance of employees (Kim, Kolb and Kim, 2012). They also found that work engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between antecedents (for example the job) and the outcome (performance). A limitation of their review is the fact that they only reviewed twenty studies. The authors also acknowledge that there is a lack of academic research on this topic.

Similarly, Bakker and Bal (2010) examined the link between weekly work engagement and performance. They wished to study the intra-individual relationship between work engagement, job resources and performance. The sample consisted of fifty four Dutch teachers. Weekly questionnaires were completed over five weeks. The study showed that weekly work engagement was positively linked to weekly performance in the job. Additionally, work engagement acted as a mediator in the relationship between weekly levels of job resources (e.g. autonomy) and development opportunities and weekly performance.

Another report states that engagement produces a positive cycle of perceptions of work, satisfaction with work, and involvement and engagement with work. These factors, in addition to the psychological processes that lie behind them lead to greater performance. Engaged workers perform better than less engaged staff because they are more involved in their work and give it more thought. Consequentially, this helps them to produce better solutions. They are also more socially connected to their work. This research found that high performance was linked to high ratings of the following variables: job skills, social skills and willingness to take on more work (Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees and Gatenby, 2010).

However, there are critics of this view. Sparrow (2014) asserts that being part of a high-performance unit may be what makes employees highly engaged, not the other way around. He notes that it is likely to be a bi-directional pathway. He also contends that studies tend to

over-extend the performance outcomes of high engagement. Sparrow also contends that engagement may only work at the collective level, i.e., when employees as a team display certain characteristics and behaviours and understand how to correct the team's performance. One unhappy individual among happy workers can have a negative impact on the team's performance (Sparrow, 2014).

Intention to Quit and Turnover

Some researchers have found that employee engagement levels have an impact on an individual's decision to stay with the organisation or leave. Intention to stay is important for organisations for ensuring it maintains its human capital, there is good morale and recruitment costs are brought down. Intention to leave also gives good insight into how employees feel about their work and the environment they work in (Alfes et al., 2012). This study by Alfes et al. (2012) shows that employees who are engaged have a higher chance of staying with the organisation in contrast to less engaged staff. They also point out that the majority of individuals have the potential to be engaged. However, the work environment must be appropriate for engagement to be created and maintained. Similarly, Saks (2006) found that both job engagement and organisation engagement were negatively related to intention to resign.

Additionally, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) found that work engagement acted as a mediator in the relationship between job resources and intention to leave. The participants were made up of employees from four different Dutch service organisations. Each company varies in terms of business type and culture. They found that the more job resources available, the higher engagement levels will be. Additionally, intention to quit levels will be lower. For the authors, job resources are the physical, psychological, social or organisational features of the job that

either: 1) reduce the demands of the job and the physiological and psychological costs that are associated with it; 2) are functional in reaching work goals; and 3) encourage personal growth and learning and development.

Maslach et al. (2001) looked at how burnout, the negative enthuases of engagement has an impact on turnover. They note that burnout is significant as it is linked to various types of job withdrawal such as absenteeism, intention to leave the job and turnover. Burnout can occur when there is a mismatch between people and their work conditions with regards to some or all of the following: workload, control over resources, reward, community, fairness and values.

Over-Engagement and Burnout

It has been suggested giving an individual a higher workload, more responsibility and increased expectations will produce greater levels of employee engagement. However, such efforts to boost motivation and involvement must be exercised with caution. Guest (2014a) raises the point that too much engagement could lead to burnout. Additionally, Bakker et al. (2010) explain that an individual may become so engaged that they start to take home work with them. Some studies also suggest that too much engagement may prevent an individual performing their family roles fully (Crawford et al., 2014). Maslach et al. (2001) have shown that excessive workloads will deplete an employee's energy. It is therefore important for managers to monitor the workloads of their staff in order to spot signs of burnout.

Conclusion

The chapter highlighted the importance of Kahn's three psychological conditions that are necessary for engagement. These emerged from the first academic paper on the topic. Since then, various other definitions of engagement have been put forward. One valid criticism of

engagement is that the lack of a single definition is problematic. Many definitions look at different elements of engagement. This is an issue because different definitions of engagement lead to different measurement methods. It is then difficult to compare results.

Distinctions have been made in the literature review between employee engagement and other terms such as OCB. This addressed the criticism that engagement is not a new concept. One criticism that was identified and must be given attention is the possibility of over-engagement leading to burnout and interference with family life.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This section of the paper will look at the research methodology adopted for conducting this study on employee engagement. The research philosophy, approach, strategy and methods are described. In addition, the ethical considerations are outlined. The survey design is also discussed and the sample selection is explored. Both the strengths and limitations of the research methodology will also be examined.

It was noted from the literature review that it has been claimed that the following contribute to engagement: job characteristics, rewards and recognition, social support and organisational justice. Some themes which emerged regarding outcomes of engagement include: lower levels of intention to quit, better employee performance, greater job satisfaction, higher organisational commitment and increased OCB. These themes will be investigated in this study. The methodology will lay out the plan for the study.

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. Additionally, the choice of research philosophy is greatly influenced by the question that the researcher is trying to answer (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). The two types of research philosophy that will be explored here are ontology and epistemology.

Ontology looks at the nature of social entities. It refers to the beliefs that a researcher holds about the way the world functions and the commitment he or she holds to certain views. One strand of ontology is objectivism. This view asserts that social phenomena confront us as

external facts that are out of our reach and influence (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The second strand is subjectivism. This view contends that social phenomena are fabricated from the perceptions and consequent actions of those social actors concerned with their existence (Saunders et al., 2009). The ontological view held by the researcher for this study is objectivism.

Epistemology is concerned with what constitutes acceptable knowledge within an area of study. The main epistemological approaches considered by the researcher for this study were positivism, interpretivism and a combination of the two.

Research which is underpinned by positivism generally takes the approach of the natural scientist (Saunders et al., 2009). The positivist approach is often applied to the social sciences to study social reality. Social reality relates to social entities, social phenomena and social actors (Stewart and Rigg, 2011). However, one question that arises is the extent to which we can carry out non-laboratory-based experiments in social settings and then make generalisations about a population (Steward and Rigg, 2011).

With positivism, there is usually an emphasis on quantifying observations that can be analysed statistically. Research strategies usually look at existing theory to construct hypotheses. These hypotheses are tested and confirmed, in whole, partially, or refuted, leading to the further creation of theory which can be tested in further studies (Saunders et al., 2009). This is referred to as a deductive research approach. The epistemological approach that will be adopted for this research study is positivism.

The interpretivist stance asserts that it is vital for the researcher to understand differences between human beings as social actors. Researchers take on an empathetic and understanding approach when conducting this type of research. They aim to delve into the social world of those being studied and understand the world from the subject's viewpoint. Interpretivism

argues that the study of social sciences (people and their institutions) is completely different than studying the natural sciences. Such researchers are critical of the application of the scientific model to the study of social science (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Many researchers advocate the use of the interpretivist perspective for business and management research. This is because business situations are very complex and unique (Saunders et al., 2009). Inductive research approaches and qualitative research methods are usually associated with interpretivism. Qualitative data is all non-numerical data, or data that have not been quantified. Such data can be generated by conducting interviews (Saunders et al., 2009).

Research Approach

Two research approaches were considered for this study: induction and deduction. Induction is often referred to as bottom-up reasoning (Horn, 2009). It requires observation and queries the relationship between the meaning and actions of humans. Data collection is executed without previous assumptions about categorisation and measurement. The context of the situation is integrated into the analysis procedure so the researcher can interpret the logic and purpose of human actions. The induction process aims to generate a theory from the research. There is less focus on making generalisations about findings. However, further areas of research are often highlighted (Stewart and Rigg, 2011).

Deduction is a form of theory testing which works from the general to the specific. This is referred to as top-down reasoning (Horn, 2009). It involves the creation of hypotheses as a starting point (Bryman and Bell, 2011). These are then researched so that the variables can be identified and measured. This measurement should be easily replicated in a different situation.

The data gathered is used to test if the hypotheses are true or false. The theory from which the hypotheses were derived can then be confirmed or refuted (Stewart and Rigg, 2011).

A deductive approach was chosen by the researcher because it is generally associated with positivism and objectivism, both of which are the philosophical positions held by the researcher.

Research Methods

The researcher collected primary and secondary data during the research process. The literature review was the method used to collect secondary data. The purpose of the literature review was to gain deeper knowledge on the topic of employee engagement. It also helped in choosing which research methods would be suitable.

The researcher opted to collect primary data by using quantitative research methods. Again, this type of data collection method is associated with positivism and objectivism. The benefits of using measurement in quantitative research according to Bryman (2004) are: it allows the researcher to discover fine differences between individuals in relation to the characteristics being studied, and it provides a consistent device for making distinctions and gauging differences. Measurement generates more accurate estimates of the level of relationship between concepts. Another benefit of using the quantitative method is it allows researchers to explain not just how things are, but also why they are a certain way (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This is referred to as causality and often involves looking at the relationship between dependent and independent variables. It is usually the case that quantitative researchers would like to say that his or her findings can be generalised beyond the boundaries of the context in which the research was conducted. To have a degree of trust in generalisation, the sample should be as representative of the population as possible.

Research Strategy

The research strategy was chosen based on the research aims and objectives, the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other resources available for the research and the researcher's philosophical underpinnings (Saunders et al., 2009). The researcher believed that a survey was the best fit for the carrying out the quantitative research. One reason this method was chosen was due to the fact that the researcher adopted objectivism and positivism as the research philosophies.

Another reason a survey was opted for is due to the prominent use of this strategy in other studies of employee engagement. Some examples include the Gallup Q¹² Employee Engagement Survey, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) and the ISA Engagement Scale. Another benefit is that the data can be analysed using statistical software and the researcher can then attempt to explain the relationship between different variables (Saunders et al., 2009).

Reliability

The reliability of the data gathered through the survey was tested using Cronbach's alpha. This tested the internal reliability of all scales by calculating the average of all possible split-half reliability coefficients (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The alpha coefficient can range between 1 (perfect internal reliability) and 0 (no internal reliability). It is generally the case that a score of 0.80 is an acceptable level of internal reliability (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, some argue that lower scores of 0.70 are acceptable. The reliability results for this study are included in the appendix. All scales in this study produced a result of above 0.70. Therefore, all of the scales have good internal reliability.

However, the results of the study should not be fully discredited. Saks (2006) used a similar sampling method. In his research, the survey was given to twenty four students in a research methods course in a university in Canada. Each student was tasked with distributing the survey to five individuals who were employed. But, Saks did achieve a higher sample size of 102 responses.

Limitations

Non-probability sampling (convenience sampling) was used in the collection of data. This was due to a lack of accessibility to carry out probability sampling in a specific organisation. Consequentially, there are issues regarding the validity of the results. It is not possible to generalise the findings because the researcher does not know of what population this sample represents (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It is also not possible to calculate the margin of error reliably (Fisher, 2007). Convenience sampling can be useful for pilot studies (Bryman and Bell, 2011), therefore the results from this paper would need further investigation in a specific population with the use of a reliable sampling method. The validity of results may be affected by the sampling method used.

The ideal type of probability sampling that the researcher wished to use for this study was simple random sampling in a specific organisation or industry. This type of sampling provides a good representation of a population (Horn, 2009). Each member of the population has an equal chance of being included. This would limit the chances of bias in selecting participants (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As noted previously,

It is also important to be aware of the potential downsides to using quantitative methods. Bryman (2004) highlights some problems that can be associated with this method. These are listed below.

- Researchers who use this method fail to make a distinction between people and social institutions from the world of nature. Critics argue that it ignores the fact that humans interpret the world they live in. This is something that cannot be done by objects in the natural sciences.
- It may lead to an artificial or false sense of precision and accuracy.
- A reliance on procedures and instruments hinders the association between research and everyday life. Survey respondents may not have the required knowledge to answer a question.
- Analysing relationships between variables produces a static view of social life that is independent of people's social lives.

A mixed method approach, entailing quantitative and qualitative research methods may have addressed point one and four above. This may have allowed the researcher to obtain richer data (for example, from participants in interviews) that cannot be gathered through quantitative methods.

Sample Size and Demographic Information

The total number of responses received for the survey was one 118. However, only 74 of these could be used for analysis. Incomplete responses and responses from unemployed participants were not included in the analysis. Of the seventy four respondents, 28% were male and 72% female.

- 5% of respondents belong to the 18-24 age group
- 45% of respondents belong to the 25-34 age group

- 34% of respondents belong to the 35-44 age group
 - 9% of respondents belong to the 45-54 age group
 - 7% of respondents belong to the 55-64 age group
-
- 8% hold entry level positions
 - 43% hold intermediate roles
 - 27% middle management
 - 14% hold senior management
 - 4% are classified as owner/executive/C-level
 - 4% belong to job level category “other”

Survey Design

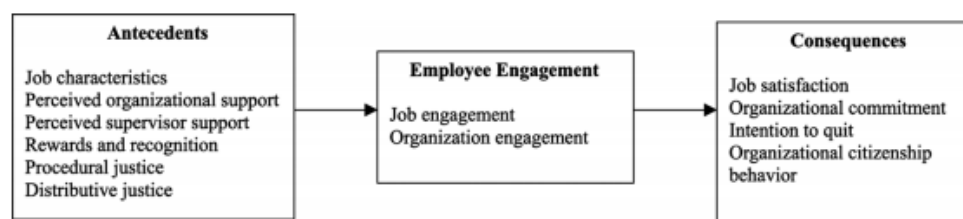


Figure 2 A Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Employee Engagement (Saks, 2006)

The survey chosen for the employee engagement study was from a journal by Alan Saks (2006). All of the scale items from his published article were used after permission was granted from Saks. In addition to the questions by Saks, the researcher added in a selection of demographic questions at the end of the survey. The survey was distributed online using SurveyMonkey Inc. and completed by sample of employees in the researcher’s personal network.

This survey was chosen as it captures many of the themes identified in the literature review in terms of the drivers and outcomes of employee engagement. Secondly, the survey is from an academic source meaning it has already been rigorously validated.

Participants rated a range of statements and questions on Likert scales. The topics that the questions relate to are provided in the grid below. Some questions were reverse coded for negatively worded statements and these are highlighted in the appendix.

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Likert Scale</i>	<i>No. of Questions</i>
Job Engagement	1 to 5	5
Organisation Engagement	1 to 5	5
Job Characteristics	1 to 7	6
Rewards and Recognition	1 to 5	10
Distributive Justice	1 to 5	4
Procedural Justice	1 to 5	7
Perceived Organisational Support	1 to 5	8
Perceived Supervisor Support	1 to 5	4
Job Satisfaction	1 to 5	3
Organisational Commitment	1 to 5	6
Intent to Quit	1 to 5	3
OCBI	1 to 5	4
OCBO	1 to 5	4
Demographic & Other Questions	n/a	5

Figure 3 Survey Details

The first part of the survey was composed of two scales which asked questions about the two types of engagement. There were five statements relating to job engagement for example “this

job is all consuming, I am totally into it”. The organisation engagement scale included six items. An example is “being a member of this organisation is exhilarating for me”. Respondents provided answers between (1) strongly disagree and (5) strongly agree. These two scales were constructed by Alan Saks (2006).

In relation to job Characteristics, the six items in this scale were sourced from Hackman and Oldham’s (1980) job characteristics model. For example, autonomy is assessed by the following statement: “how much autonomy is there in your job? That is, to what extent does your job permit you to decide on your own how to go about doing the work?” Respondents rated all items from on a seven-point Likert scale with options such as (1) very little to (7) very much.

Rewards and Recognition was measured using a ten item scale measuring the extent to which employee received certain outcomes for good performance. An example of one of the outcomes is “training and development opportunities”. The responses ranged from (1) to a small extent to (5) a large extent.

Saks adapted the scales for (POS) perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support (PSS) from Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001). POS was measured with an eight item scale. An example of one of the items is: “help is available from my organisation when I have a problem”. Perceived supervisor support PSS was calculated with a four item scale and an example is “my supervisor shows very little concern form me”. This is an example of a reverse coded item. The response options were on a Likert scale of (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

Procedural justice was measured using a seven-item scale. Distributive justice was measured using a four-item scale. Response anchors were from (1) to a small extent to (5) to a large extent. These scales were sourced by Saks from research by Colquitt (2001). An example of

a statement on the procedural justice scale is: “have those procedures been free of bias?” An example from the distributive justice scale is: “Are your outcomes justified given your performance?”

The scale for job satisfaction used by Saks was sourced from research by Cammann, Fitchman, Jenkins and Klesh (1983). It is a three item scale and response options ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) (strongly agree). An example from it is “in general, I like working here”.

The scale for organisational commitment used by Saks was sourced from research by Rhodes et al. (2001). Containing six items, responses options ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. A sample from the scale is: “I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation.”

Intention to quit was researched using a three item scale, originally constructed by Colarelli (1984). An example from the scale is: “I frequently think of quitting my job”. Again the response anchors ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

Saks sourced the scales for OCBO (organisational citizenship behaviour directed towards the organisation) and OCBI (organisational citizenship behaviour directed towards the individual) from work by Lee and Alan (2002). Both scales contain four items and response anchors were between (1) strongly disagree and (4) strongly agree. An example from the OCBO scale is: “how often do you offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organisation?” One question from the OCBI scale is: “how often do you assist others with their duties?”

Ethics

Research ethics refers to how the researcher creates and formulates a topic of research, the research design, access to participants, data collection and the processing and storage of such data. It also refers to how results and findings are written up (Sanders et al., 2009).

For business and management research, there are two main philosophical viewpoints. The first is the deontological view which contends that the outputs of the research can never provide justification for conducting unethical research. The second viewpoint is the teleological view. This approach states that the outputs and findings of the research provides justification for the means. It weighs the benefits of the research with the costs of conducting research in an unethical manner (Saunders et al., 2009). The researcher chose to hold the deontological viewpoint for conducting the research.

Consideration was given to research ethics from the outset of the study. It began with referring to the National College of Ireland's Ethical Guidelines and Procedures for Research involving Human Participants.

The issue of consent was given strong consideration. Consent was sought at the start of the survey by the inclusion of an information sheet and a tick the box option allowing individuals to agree or disagree to participate in the research. A copy of the information sheet used in the survey is in the appendix section of this paper.

Assurance was provided in the information sheet about the anonymous nature of the study and participant confidentiality. It was clearly stated that no personally identifiable information would be collected such as names, email addresses or IP addresses. It also clearly stated the purpose of the research. The researchers email address was also provided in case participants required further information about the study. Participants were free to exit the survey if they did not wish to complete it. These safeguards were put in place to ensure no harm would be inflicted on participants. The researcher also sought permission from the author of survey via email before proceeding with distributing the survey.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter will firstly look at the normality of the distributions for each of the thirteen scales. This was achieved by creating histograms and calculating the skewness and kurtosis for each scale. This section of the paper will then discuss the various results and findings which the regression analysis produced regarding the drivers and outcomes of engagement. The aim of the various statistical tests was to address each of the research objectives (these are also listed again in this chapter). Additional result tables and calculations can be found in the appendix section.

Histograms

The below histograms represent the overall distribution for each of the thirteen scales in the survey. The X axis in each histogram represents the name of the scale in question. The Y axis represents the number of respondents. These are useful in determining whether or not the data is normally distributed.

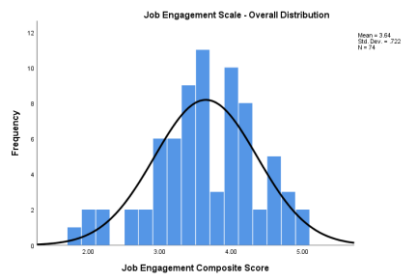


Figure 4 Job Engagement Histogram

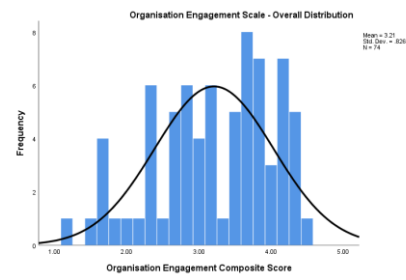


Figure 5 Organisation Engagement Histogram

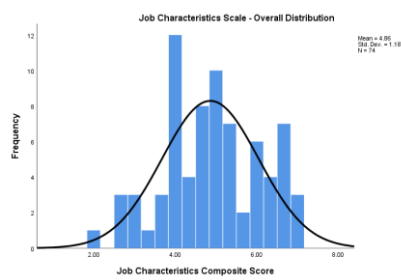


Figure 6 Job Characteristics Histogram

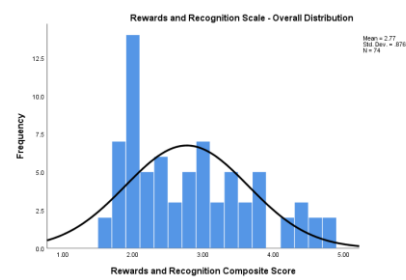


Figure 7 Rewards and Recognition Histogram

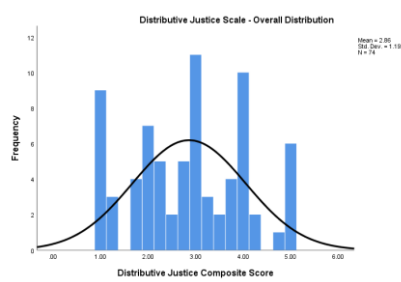


Figure 8 Distributive Justice Histogram

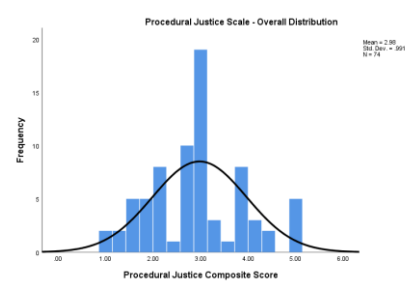


Figure 9 Procedural Justice Histogram

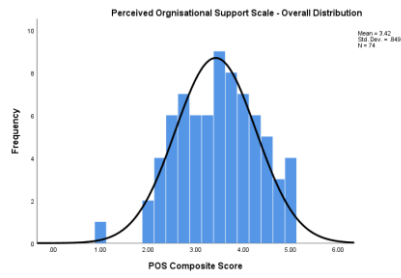


Figure 10 Perceived Organisational Support Histogram

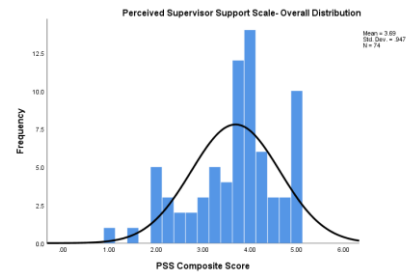


Figure 11 Perceived Supervisor Support Histogram

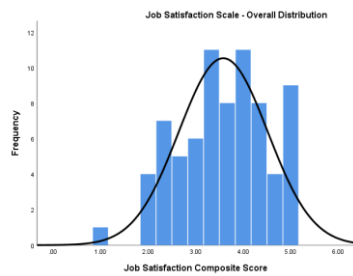


Figure 12 Job Satisfaction Histogram



Figure 13 Organisational Commitment Histogram

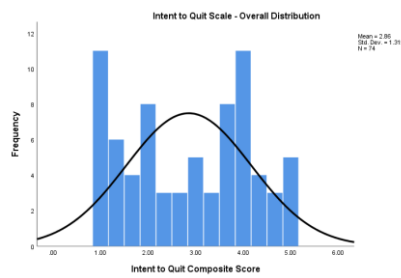


Figure 14 Intention to Quit Histogram

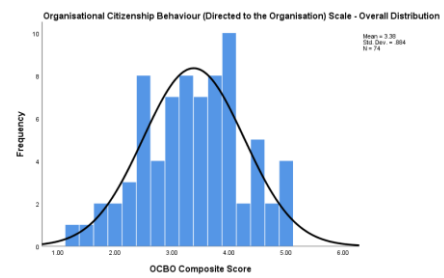


Figure 15 OCBO Histogram

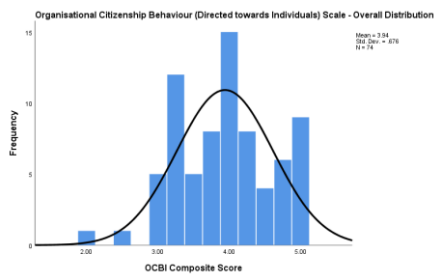


Figure 16 OCBI Histogram

Descriptive Statistics

Histograms provide a visual guide to the normality of data. However, to check the normality of the distributions with more accuracy, the skewness and kurtosis was calculated manually. This was achieved by dividing the measure of the skewness by the standard error of the skewness. For calculating the kurtosis, the measure of the kurtosis was divided by the standard error of kurtosis. Once the result falls between -1.96 and +1.96, it can be considered to be a normal distribution (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov, n.d.). Three distributions were found to be non-normal. The perceived organisational support scale (skewness -2.43), rewards and recognition (2.19) and the Intention to quit scale (kurtosis -2.47). All other scales fell within the normal result range. Further studies could look at using a larger sample size to try to achieve greater normality.

Research Objectives Reiterated:

- 1) To find out what impact the following factors have on levels of job and organisation engagement: job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support.

- 2) To explore what impact job and organisation engagement levels have on job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Regression Analysis for Job Engagement

The first result that will be discussed is the impact of the independent variables (job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support) on the dependent variable (job engagement). This test was carried out to explore the first research objective.

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict job engagement based on job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support, and perceived supervisor support. A significant regression equation was found ($F(6, 67) = 4.824, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .302. Participants' predicted job engagement is equal to $2.109 + .345$ (job characteristics) $- .106$ (rewards and recognition) $- .036$ (distributive justice) $+ .158$ (procedural justice) $- .057$ (perceived organisational support) $- .006$ (perceived supervisor support). Job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support were measured as scales. The only independent variable that made a highly significant contribution to predicted job engagement was job characteristics ($p < .001$).

The finding that job characteristics predicts job engagement links well with the literature on employee engagement. Saks (2006) also found that job characteristics predicted job engagement. This finding also supports work by Kahn who claimed that task characteristics contribute to psychological safety. Psychological meaningfulness is one of the psychological conditions which produces engagement (Kahn, 1990). He showed that people who had

challenging, clear, varied, creative work and freedom to exercise a level of autonomy were more likely to experience psychological meaningfulness.

In this study, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support had no significant impact on job engagement. This finding contradicts much of the literature on engagement. This will be explored in detail in the discussion section.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.109	.371		5.691
	Job Characteristics Composite Score	.345	.081	.568	4.257
	Rewards and Recognition Composite Score	-.106	.120	-.128	-.882
	Distributive Justice Composite Score	-.036	.100	-.060	-.363
	Procedural Justice Composite Score	.158	.111	.217	1.426
	POS Composite Score	-.057	.153	-.068	-.376
	PSS Composite Score	-.006	.116	-.008	-.051

a. Dependent Variable: Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 1 Regression Results for Job Engagement

Regression Analysis for Organisation Engagement

The next result that will be discussed is the impact of the independent variables (job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support) on the dependent variable (organisation engagement). This test was also carried out to explore the first research objective.

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict organisation engagement based on job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived

organisational support, and perceived supervisor support. A significant regression equation was found ($F(6, 67) = 9.305, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .455. Participants' predicted organisation engagement is equal to $.951 + .164$ (job characteristics) $+ .110$ (rewards and recognition) $+ .133$ (distributive justice) $+ .200$ (procedural justice) $- .005$ (perceived organisational support) $+ .053$ (perceived supervisor support). Job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support were measured as scales. None of the independent variables made a significant contribution to predicted organisation engagement. This will be explored further in the discussion section.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.951	.375		2.537	.014
Job Characteristics Composite Score	.164	.082	.236	1.999	.050
Rewards and Recognition Composite Score	.110	.121	.117	.910	.366
Distributive Justice Composite Score	.133	.101	.192	1.310	.195
Procedural Justice Composite Score	.200	.112	.241	1.785	.079
POS Composite Score	-.005	.154	-.005	-.029	.977
PSS Composite Score	.053	.118	.060	.447	.656

a. Dependent Variable: Organisation Engagement Composite Score

Table 2 Regression Results for Organisation Engagement

In the next part of this chapter, the outcomes of employee engagement are explored. Therefore, job engagement and organisation engagement will be analysed now as independent variables.

Job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intent to quit, OCBO and OCBI will be considered as dependent variables in each of the regression tests.

Regression Analysis for Job Satisfaction

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict job satisfaction based on job engagement and organisation engagement. This test was carried out to explore the second research objective. A significant regression equation was found ($F(2, 71) = 12.560$, $p < .001$), with an R^2 of .261. Participants' predicted job satisfaction is equal to $1.442 + .155$ (job engagement) $+ .490$ (organisation engagement). Job engagement and organisation engagement were measured as scales. Organisation engagement made a significant contribution to predicted job satisfaction ($p < .05$). The same cannot be said for job engagement.

This result partially supports Sak's finding in relation to predicting job satisfaction. His study showed both job and organisation engagement to be predictors of job satisfaction, but organisation engagement emerged as a stronger predictor. This result is discussed in relation to the literature in further detail in the discussion section.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.442	.504		2.862	.006
	Job Engagement Composite Score	.155	.161	.120	.963	.339
	Organisation Engagement Composite Score	.490	.141	.433	3.475	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction Composite Score

Table 3 Regression Results for Job Satisfaction

Regression Analysis for Organisational Commitment

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict organisational commitment based on job engagement and organisation engagement. This test was carried out to explore the second research objective. A significant regression equation was found ($F(2, 71) = 25.112, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .414. Participants' predicted organisational commitment is equal to $.361 + .213$ (job engagement) + $.631$ (organisation engagement). Job and organisation engagement were measured as scales. Organisation engagement (an independent variable) made a highly significant contribution to predicting organisational commitment ($p < .001$).

Linking this with the literature, it partially supports the findings by Saks. Sak's results showed that both job and organisation engagement predicts organisational commitment, but organisation engagement had a stronger effect.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.361	.464		.778	.439
	Job Engagement Composite Score	.213	.149	.159	1.432	.156
	Organisation Engagement Composite Score	.631	.130	.539	4.863	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Commitment Composite Score

Table 4 Regression Results for Organisational Commitment

Regression Analysis for Intention to Quit

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict intention to quit based on job engagement and organisation engagement. This test was carried out to explore the second research

objective. A significant regression equation was found ($F(2, 71) = 11.604, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .246. Participants' predicted intention to quit is equal to $5.571 - .092$ (job engagement) - $.742$ (organisation engagement). Job and organisation engagement are measured as scales. Organisation engagement (an independent variable) made a highly significant contribution to intention to quit ($p < .001$). This means that higher levels of organisation engagement will lead to less intention to leave the organisation.

Again, this finding partially supports Sak's results. He found that both job and organisation engagement predict intention to leave the organisation, but organisation engagement had a stronger effect.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	5.571	.716		7.780
	Job Engagement Composite Score	-.092	.229	-.050	-.401
	Organisation Engagement Composite Score	-.742	.200	-.466	-3.702

a. Dependent Variable: Intent to Quit Composite Score

Table 5 Regression Results for Intention to Quit

Regression Analysis for OCBO

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict OCBO based on job engagement and organisation engagement. This test was carried out to explore the second research objective. A significant regression equation was found ($F(2, 71) = 12.617, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .262. Participants' predicted OCBO is equal to $1.208 + .249$ (job engagement) + $.393$ (organisation

engagement). Job and organisation engagement are measured as scales. Organisational engagement is a significant predictor of OCBO ($P < .05$). The conclusion here is that higher levels of organisation engagement will lead to higher levels of OCBO. This result partially supports Sak's results. Sak's research shows that both job engagement and organisation engagement predict OCBO levels.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	1.208	.476		2.538
	Job Engagement Composite Score	.249	.152	.203	1.634
	Organisation Engagement Composite Score	.393	.133	.368	2.953

a. Dependent Variable: OCBO Composite Score

Table 6 Regression Results for OCBO

Regression Analysis for OCBI

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict OCBI based on job engagement and organisation engagement. This test was carried out to explore the second research objective. The results indicate that the model is not a good fit for the data. The p value in the ANOVA test emerged as .151. This means that it is not a statistically significant result. Additionally, the R^2 result was .052. This figure is a poor predictor of the variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable (statistics.laerd.com, n.d.). It explains less than 1% of this variance. Therefore, it is not possible to make any inference from this result. Further

research would need to be carried out to test the relationship between the two types of engagement and OCBI.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	3.184	.413		7.712
	Job Engagement Composite Score	.100	.132	.107	.756
	Organisation Engagement Composite Score	.122	.115	.149	1.056
					.294

a. Dependent Variable: OCBI Composite Score

Table 7 Regression Results for OCBI

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has presented the results and findings of various statistical tests that were conducted in order to investigate the research objectives. The first research objective aimed to investigate the impact of job characteristics, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support on job and organisation engagement. The only significant finding that emerged in terms of the drivers of employee engagement is that job characteristics significantly predicted job engagement.

The second research objective was to investigate the impact of job and organisation engagement levels on job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizenship behaviour. Organisation engagement significantly predicted job satisfaction, organisation commitment, intent and OCBO. Job engagement was not found to be a predictor of any of the outcomes. Furthermore, statistical difficulties were encountered

for OCBI, therefore, it is not possible to draw a conclusion about the impact of job and organisation engagement on OCBI. Further research would be needed to be conducted in order to reach a conclusion.

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will link the findings of this research with the academic literature on the topic of employee engagement. It will link the key findings of the drivers of both job engagement and organisation engagement in this study with other academic research. The chapter then connects the key findings of the outcomes of both job and organisation engagement in this research with the literature on the topic. The limitations of this study will also be discussed, for example, sampling issues. The final part of this section will put forward a set of recommendations based on the primary and secondary research that was conducted.

Job Characteristics

In this study, job characteristics significantly predicted job engagement. This is a significant finding as it supports Sak's finding that job characteristics predicts job engagement. The finding is also consistent with many other studies which examine the links between job characteristics and engagement. The literature review looked at the work of Kahn who argued that task characteristics can create psychological meaningfulness (1990). Psychological meaningfulness is one of the conditions which can produce engagement. This work by Kahn built on similar findings by Hackman and Oldham (1980) who maintained that the following produce a psychological state of meaningfulness at work: skill variety, task identity and task significance. In addition, they claim that increased autonomy allows individuals to experience greater responsibility. Finally, they also maintain that job feedback provides the employee with knowledge of results. Hackman and Oldham maintained that these five job characteristics would lead to greater motivation, satisfaction and greater performance. These are outcomes

commonly associated with employee engagement. This point is further reinforced by May et al. (2004) who suggest that managers should foster meaningfulness through job enrichment by designing jobs in line with Hackman and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristic Model.

It was surprising that the results of this research showed no significance for the ability of job characteristics to predict organisation engagement as it contradicts Sak's finding. It may be the case that the differences in the sample of participants in both studies account for varying results.

Rewards and Recognition

The results of this study did not find a strong relationship between rewards and recognition and job engagement, or between rewards and recognition and organisation engagement. This is a surprising result because the rewards and recognition scale used in this research did not look solely at financial rewards. In some studies such as Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti and Xanthopoulou (2007) financial rewards were shown to be negatively related to engagement levels. Other, non-financial employee benefits have been shown to increase engagement levels (Bakker et al., 2007). Hence, the result is surprising because this scale probed at more than just financial rewards, looking at a combination of rewards such as pay, opportunities for promotion, praise from one's supervisor, public recognition and training and development opportunities.

Much of the literature indicates rewards and recognition drive levels of employee engagement. Crawford et al. (2014) explain that in most cases, rewards and recognition are linked to greater engagement levels. Similarly, Cook (2008) asserts that fair pay reward and recognition are key drivers of employee engagement. They should be fair in terms of comparisons within the organisation and with other organisations (Robinson et al., 2004). Armstrong and Taylor

(2017) also agree with this as rewards and recognition represent direct and indirect returns on the investment of an employee's time in their role.

Organisational Justice

Distributive justice occurs when outcomes are consistent with norms for allocation, such as equality. Procedural justice relates to the justice of the processes that lead to decision outcomes (Colquitt, 2001).

The results in this study did not find any strong association between distributive justice and job engagement, between distributive justice and organisation engagement, between procedural justice and job engagement, or between procedural justice and organisation engagement.

This finding goes against some of the literature on the topic of organisational justice (which encapsulates both procedural justice and distributive justice). For example, Saks found that procedural justice approached significance for predicting organisation engagement. Additionally, perceptions about justice in an organisation influence levels of psychological safety by increasing fairness and reducing fears regarding the distribution of power, authority and resources (Kahn, 1990; Crawford et al., 2014). Psychological safety is one of the conditions which can bring about engagement. Crawford et al. (2014) make the point that there are very few studies which examine the effect of justice perceptions on engagement. However, the ones that are available do support the claim that organisational justice contributes to engagement. In one study, procedural justice and interactional justice were significantly and negatively associated with psychological distress. At the same time, they were significantly and positively associated with work engagement (Inoue, Kawakami, Ishizaki, Shimazu, Tsuchiya, Tabata, Akiyama, Kitazume and Kuroda, 2010). There is clearly a need for further studies to examine this driver of employee engagement.

Social Support, Employee Voice and Wellbeing

This part of the discussion will address the findings for the scales which examined perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support. No significance was found between perceived organisational support and job engagement, perceived organisational support and organisation engagement, perceived supervisor support and job engagement, or between perceived supervisor support and organisation engagement. This finding contradicts Saks, as he discovered that perceived organisational support predicts job and organisation engagement.

The scale used in this research to examine perceived organisational support probed at the level of employee voice in the organisation, for example, one item was “my organisation cares about my opinions”. McLeod and Clark (2009) identified employee voice as one of the four pillars required to encourage employee engagement. Yet, it has not been widely studied since that report was published (Purcell, 2014). Other studies such as Cook (2008) found that organisations that involve their staff have higher levels of employee engagement. Additionally, the 2011 Workplace Relations Study conducted a study which found that “87% of those satisfied with their involvement in decision-making felt proud to work for their organisation, compared to 38% who were dissatisfied” (van Wanrooy, Bewley, Bryson, Forth, Freeth, Stokes and Wood, 2014). Therefore, it was surprising not to have found that perceived organisational support predicts employee engagement, as the literature emphasises the importance of employee voice for engagement.

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The scale used to measure perceived organisational support also looked at perceptions about how much the organisation cares about an employee’s wellbeing. Employee wellbeing is identified as a necessity for employee engagement. For example, Towers Watson (2014) found

that a top driver of engagement is working in an organisation that supports physical, emotional and interpersonal well-being. Again, it was surprising not to have found that perceived organisational support predicts employee engagement, as the literature emphasises the importance of employee well-being for engagement.

With regards to perceived supervisor support, the literature suggests that this is an important contributor to engagement levels. Having a managers or supervisor who provides social support is likely to boost the psychological safety of employees. This type of social support allows employees to take risks without worrying about the consequences of possible failure (Kahn, 1990; Crawford et al., 2014). Psychological safety is according to Kahn, a necessary condition for engagement to occur. It was unexpected not to find that perceived supervisor support drives employee engagement.

Job Satisfaction

In this research, organisation engagement predicted job satisfaction. This partially supports Sak's finding that both forms of engagement predict job satisfaction. He also found that organisation engagement was a stronger predictor of job satisfaction. There is a lack of studies which look at job satisfaction as an outcome of employee engagement, but the ones that are available do indicate that employee engagement is positively related to job satisfaction. A study by Schaufeli, Taris and van Rhenen (2007) looked at a sample of five hundred and seventy eight telecom managers and found that work engagement was positively related to the job satisfaction as an outcome. They also made an interesting addition to this debate by finding that burnout is negatively rated to job satisfaction.

Again, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) indicate there is a link between employee engagement and the outcome of job satisfaction. They state that job resources can influence engagement levels

when they satisfy basic needs, for example, the need for autonomy. The motivational potential of jobs is dependent on certain job characteristics that are encapsulated by Hackman and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristics Model. These job characteristics are linked with positive outcomes such as job satisfaction (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Organisational Commitment

This research found that organisation engagement significantly predicted organisational commitment. No ability for job engagement to predict organisational commitment was found. Organisational commitment refers to an individual's positive attitudes and attachment towards the organisation (Ariani, 2013). Sak's multiple regression analysis found that both job and organisation engagement predict organisational commitment, but organisation engagement was a stronger predictor.

Other studies have found engagement to be a predictor of organisational commitment, for example, research by Schaufeli et al. (2007) found this to be true. Furthermore, they discovered that burnout was negatively related to organisational commitment. A longitudinal study was carried out by Hakanen, Schaufeli and Ahola (2008) which found that job resources have an impact upon work engagement and work engagement predicted organisational commitment. This backs up similar conclusions by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) who discovered that job resources boost work engagement which, in turn, is linked with various positive outcomes such as organisational commitment.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

This study looked at OCBO (organisational citizenship behaviour directed towards the organisation) and OCBI (organisational citizenship behaviour directed at individuals).

No strong prediction was found between job engagement and OCBO. However, a significant finding was made whereby organisation engagement predicted OCBO. This partially supports results obtained by Saks who found both job engagement and organisation engagement can predict OCBO.

Abnormal results were obtained in the regression analysis looking at how well job engagement and organisation engagement can predict OCBI. It is not possible to compare this with Sak's finding that only organisation engagement predicts OCBI. It is also not possible to draw a conclusion from the regression analysis on OCBI. Further research would be necessary to investigate this further.

The literature also proves a link between engagement and OCB. This means that higher engagement levels should lead to employees displaying extra discretionary behaviour that goes beyond formal job descriptions. It is important because it contributes to positive organisational functioning (Organ, 1988). The authors of the ISA engagement scale found OCB to be a significant outcome of engagement (Soane et al., 2012). Soane et al. (2012) also link this finding with the work of Kahn in explaining that OCBs are a potential output of engagement because the engaged state encompasses positive affect and motivates beneficial behaviours. Moreover, research by Ariani (2013) concluded that employees who showed greater levels of engagement were found to contribute to their organisations with higher levels of individual OCB and lower levels of counterproductive work behaviour (CWB).

Another study by Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010), which looked at a sample of 245 full-time firefighters and their supervisors, found that employees who exhibited higher levels of job engagement were found to contribute to their organisations with higher levels of individual

task performance and OCB. These studies link well with the finding of this research that organisation engagement predicts OCBO.

Intention to Quit

An important finding that was uncovered by this research is that organisation engagement predicts the outcome of intention to leave an organisation. In direct comparison to Saks, he found that both job and organisation engagement predict intention to leave the organisation, but organisation engagement had a stronger effect. Intention to quit is extremely important to organisations because it is linked to turnover.

Looking through the literature, there is a clear link between high engagement levels and lower intention to quit. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) have shown that work engagement facilitates the retention of employees.

Employee engagement clearly has implications for employee turnover levels. A study based by Harter et al. (2002) examines the turnover data of twenty one companies. The turnover measure was the yearly turnover rate for each business unit (including both voluntary and involuntary resignations). They found a correlation between employee engagement and turnover.

Limitations

It is important to highlight the limitations of this research and recommend areas that could be investigated further in future research. Firstly, convenience sampling was used for carrying out this research. There are issues regarding the validity of the results. It is not possible for the researcher to generalise the findings from the study because the researcher does not know

of what population this sample represents (Bryman and Bell, 2011). It is also not possible to calculate the margin of error reliably (Fisher, 2007).

Some of the results that emerged from this research contradict much of the literature on employee engagement. For example rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support did not show any ability to predict either job or organisation engagement. Further research would need to be conducted with a reliable sampling method to see if these findings are repeatable, or if the sampling method in this study produced unreliable results. A larger sample size would yield more reliable results also.

The survey used in this research also defined engagement in a multidimensional way. It looked at both job and organisation engagement. It was problematic comparing the findings with other studies that had defined engagement in different ways (for example, referring to work engagement). It cannot be said with pure confidence that the results from this research link perfectly with studies which define engagement in different ways.

The research would have been much richer if a mixed methods approach had been adopted. This would have involved collecting qualitative data in addition to quantitative data. This would have allowed the researcher to gain deeper insights into participants' opinions.

Conclusions

This chapter linked the findings of this research with the academic literature on the topic of employee engagement. The finding that job characteristics significantly predicted job engagement fits with similar findings from other research such as Kahn (1990). Organisation engagement significantly predicted job satisfaction, organisation commitment, intent to quit and OCBO. Again these findings are consistent with other studies, for example Saks (2006).

The research did contradict some of the literature on employee engagement. For example, rewards and recognition, distributive justice, procedural justice, perceived organisational support and perceived supervisor support did not show any strength for predicting either job or organisation engagement. Further studies would need to be conducted to see if the sampling method led to these results which deviate from the literature on the topic.

Recommendations

These recommendations are aimed at increasing employee engagement levels in organisations. Each recommendation may not be applicable for every organisation. Organisations could choose which recommendations would be a best-fit for their unique work environment. The first action that organisations should take is to measure employee engagement levels. Feedback gathered can then be used to assess which of the below points are applicable to the organisation in question and would be worth implementing.

Many of the recommendations display similarities to the results yielded by high-performance work systems (HPWS). It is sometimes claimed that there such work practices in an organisation can leads to superior performance (Boxall and Mackay, 2009). The main features of engagement and its outcomes overlap with this approach to HRM (Guest, 2014a).

1. Redesign jobs to increase autonomy, challenge, variety and skill utilisation (Guest, 2014a). This links in with Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (1980). They discussed how characteristics of jobs can boost motivation. These include autonomy, skill variety, task identity, task significance and job feedback. Depending on the role, there may or may not be a financial cost involved for job redesign. An example of work redesign could involve a team lead or manager arranging for the team

to participate in cross-training. This would involve a time cost. It could potentially also involve a financial cost, for example, if team members need to complete a course to learn new skills. All team members would learn how to do various tasks that the individual team members do. It enhances the skills of employees and can help to keep them motivated. This recommendation is suggested because the job characteristics scale was found to predict job engagement.

2. Select staff with a disposition for engagement. Guest (2014a) makes the point that some individuals are more likely to be engaged. It has been argued that personality traits such as conscientiousness, proactivity and optimism can have a positive impact on engagement levels (Guest, 2014a; Macey and Schneider, 2008). Selecting and recruiting individuals with these traits could be achieved through the implementation of a new psychometric testing requirement as part of the selection process. There would be time costs involved as the HR department would need to research the variety of tests available on the market. In terms of pricing, some psychometric tests cost €35.60 per individual use (<http://www.etcconsult.com>, n.d.).
3. Encourage the personal development of all employees. With an effective performance management process, individual learning and development needs can be identified. Talent development needs could be addressed through the use of coaching. It is usually a one-to-one process that helps individuals develop their skills, knowledge and performer better (Armstrong and Taylor, 2017). The process aims to help the individual being coached to be better able to set goals, take action, make better decisions and make full use of their natural abilities (Carter, 2001). The number of coaching sessions required depends on the employee's needs. External coaches can be brought in on an ad hoc basis. Organisations can also consider the use of internal coaching specialists. Organisations could train in-house specialists by funding formal training in this area.

For example, there is a Diploma in Life and Business Coaching available in Ireland, the cost of which is €3,240 (<http://marycurran.ie/>, n.d.). This recommendation fits with the finding that job characteristics influence job engagement. Employees are likely to need to engage in learning and development to acquire new skills so they can take on more responsibility.

4. Invest in human capital. This can be achieved through training which enhances the skills of employees. It can also elevate the desire for employees to reciprocate and give back to the organisation (Guest, 2014a). Formal education programmes could be considered for skills enhancement. For example, for an organisation to develop high calibre managers and leaders, MBA programmes could be considered. Prices for two year, part-time MBA programmes vary in Ireland. For example, it costs a total of €30,000 to complete one at Trinity College Dublin. Dublin Business School offer the two year programme at a total cost of €10,400. This recommendation also aligns with the finding that job characteristics influence job engagement. Employees are likely to need to engage in learning and development to acquire new skills so they can take on more responsibility.
5. Promote employee wellbeing. This could be achieved by ensuring employees have a good standard of work-life balance. This can be achieved by team leads and managers monitoring the workload of employees. An unmanageable workload is a factor which can lead to burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). If workloads are becoming overwhelming for an employee, the distribution of work on the team could be examined and redistributed fairly if possible. Organisations could also consider hiring additional staff in such cases. This may not be possible for some organisation depending on budget constraints. The cost and timeline for recruiting additional staff would vary in

accordance with the type of role and job level. This recommendation was put forward because some academics warn that over-engagement can bring about burnout.

CONCLUSIONS

Many organisations are using employee engagement as a means to generate business success. This interest has emerged due to claims that employee engagement levels have an impact on business profitability (Macey and Schneider, 2008). Many studies show that high engagement levels have an impact upon organisational level successes, for example, leading to lower intention to quit and lower staff turnover levels (Saks, 2006; Harter et al., 2002).

Engagement levels were negatively affected by the global financial crisis. Roche et al. (2011) explained that during this period people had to work harder (Roche et al., 2011). Many organisations were implementing pay cuts and reducing turnover also. Such practices would have impeded engagement levels.

Despite economic recovery since the crisis, employee engagement levels remain low globally (Aon Hewitt, 2017). The authors note that uncertainty and political changes could reduce employee engagement levels due to feelings of fear and anxiety about the effect of these factors on businesses.

The researcher wanted to find out how companies can boost the engagement levels of staff and if doing so will lead to positive outcomes for organisations. A cross-sectional study was used to achieve this. Statistical tests were conducted on the collected data. In relation to the drivers of employee engagement, job characteristics predicted job engagement. For the outcomes of engagement, a number of important findings were also discovered. Organisation engagement was found to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intent to leave the organisation and organisational citizenship behaviour (directed towards the organisation).

This research has shown that employee engagement can have positive outcomes for organisations. Therefore, a set of recommendations were included that could be utilised by organisations. These include measures such as job redesign, monitoring workloads to prevent burnout and investing in training and development.

It is important to note that the sample size was relatively small with just 74 responses that could be used. Additionally, the non-probability sampling method used is not as reliable as using probability sampling. Further research should be considered with a larger sample and a more reliable sampling method.

PERSONAL LEARNING STATEMENT

I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of completing this dissertation for the MA in Human resource Management. Carrying out the research and completing the dissertation was a self-directed learning process. Therefore, I had the freedom to choose a topic I had a keen interest in and decide how to go about the learning process.

One of my goals at the outset of undertaking the master's degree was to improve my chances of changing careers and moving into the area of human resources. I feel that the broad academic knowledge I have gained in the area of HR will help me to achieve this. I also chose the topic of employee engagement as I believe that it is of great importance to organisations for improving the performance of employees, the financial performance of the organisation and to reduce turnover. I discovered that this is a reciprocal relationship and the employer must provide the right working conditions for engagement to develop and flourish. I felt that choosing this topic would help my career prospects, as I would have a great deal of knowledge on this important topic that I could bring to an organisation.

I struggled to secure access to an organisation for conducting the survey. I acknowledge that I could improve on my networking and negotiating skills, as these skills would have been beneficial for securing access to a sample population in a specific organisation or industry. I also learned that the results from my survey are limited in terms of validity due to the fact that convenience sampling was used.

I also found working with SPSS quite challenging. Looking back, I would have started getting to grips with using it sooner, had I known how challenging it would be learning it for the first time. In the future, I would like to improve my skills in terms of working with statistics, as it is an important business skill to have.

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APPENDIX

Survey Contents

Job Engagement

1. I really “throw” myself into my job.
2. Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.
3. This job is all consuming, I am totally into it.
4. My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job (reverse coded).
5. I am highly engaged in this job.

Organisation Engagement

1. Being a member of this organisation is very captivating.
2. One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organisation.
3. I am really not into the “goings-on” in this organisation (reverse coded).
4. Being a member of this organisation makes me come “alive.”
5. Being a member of this organisation is exhilarating for me.
6. I am highly engaged in this organisation.

Job Characteristics

1. How much autonomy is there in your job? That is, to what extent does your job permit you to decide on your own how to go about doing the work?
2. To what extent does your job involve doing a “whole” and identifiable piece of work? That is, is the job a complete piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end? Or

is it only a small part of the overall piece of work, which is finished by other people or by automatic machines?

3. How much variety is there in your job? That is, to what extent does the job require you to do many different things at work, using a variety of your skills and talents?
4. In general, how significant or important is your job? That is, are the results of your work likely to significantly affect the lives or well-being of other people?
5. To what extent do managers or co-workers let you know how well you are doing on your job?
6. To what extent does doing the job itself provide you with information about your work performance? That is, does the actual work itself provide clues about how well you are doing aside from any “feedback” co-workers or supervisors may provide?

Rewards and Recognition

Please indicate the extent to which you receive the following outcomes for performing your job well:

1. A pay raise.
2. Job security.
3. A promotion.
4. More freedom and opportunities.
5. Respect from the people you work with.
6. Praise from your supervisor.
7. Training and development opportunities.
8. More challenging work assignments.
9. Some form of public recognition (e.g. employee of the month).

10. A reward or token of appreciation (e.g. lunch).

Distributive Justice

1. Do the outcomes you receive reflect the effort you have put into your work?
2. Are the outcomes you receive appropriate for the work you have completed?
3. Do your outcomes reflect what you have contributed to the organisation?
4. Are your outcomes justified given your performance?

Procedural Justice

1. Have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?
2. Have you had influence over the outcomes arrived at by those procedures?
3. Have those procedures been applied consistently?
4. Have those procedures been free of bias?
5. Have those procedures been based on accurate information?
6. Have you been able to appeal the outcomes arrived at by those procedures?
7. Have those procedures upheld ethical and moral standards?

Perceived Organisational Support

1. My organisation really cares about my well-being.
2. My organisation strongly considers my goals and values.
3. My organisation shows little concern for me (reverse coded).
4. My organisation cares about my opinions.
5. My organisation is willing to help me if I need a special favour.

6. Help is available from my organisation when I have a problem.
7. My organisation would forgive an honest mistake on my part.
8. If given the opportunity, my organisation would take advantage of me (reverse coded).

Perceived Supervisor Support

1. My supervisor cares about my opinions.
2. My work supervisor really cares about my well-being.
3. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values.
4. My supervisor shows very little concern form me (reverse coded).

Job Satisfaction

1. All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
2. In general, I do not like my job (reverse coded).
3. In general, I like working here.

Organisational Commitment

1. I would be happy to work at my organisation until I retire.
2. Working at my organisation has a great deal of personal meaning to me.
3. I really feel that problems faced by my organisation are also my problems.
4. I feel personally attached to my work organisation.
5. I am proud to tell others I work at my organisation.
6. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation.

Intent to Quit

1. I frequently think of quitting my job.
2. I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months.
3. If I have my own way, I will be working for this organisation one year from now (reverse coded).

OCBI

1. How often do you?
2. Willingly give your time to help others who have work-related problems.
3. Adjust your work schedule to accommodate other employees' requests for time off.
4. Give up time to help others who have work or non-work problems.
5. Assist others with their duties.

OCBO

1. How often do you?
2. Attend functions that are not required but that help the organisational image.
3. Offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organisation.
4. Take action to protect the organisation from potential problems.
5. Defend the organisation when other employees criticize it.

Additional Questions

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your age?

3. Are you employed at present?
4. Which of the following best describes your current job level?
5. Which of the following best describes your current occupation?

Contents of Information Sheet for Survey

“I invite you to participate in the following survey. I am currently writing my dissertation and the purpose of the survey is to examine the drivers and consequences of employee engagement. This research is part of my master's degree that I am completing at National College of Ireland.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this research survey, you may withdraw at any time.

The procedure involves completing an online survey that will take approximately 15 minutes. Your responses will be confidential and no identifying information such as your name, email address or IP address will be collected.

All data is stored in a password protected electronic format. To help protect your confidentiality, the surveys will not contain information that will personally identify you. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact katrina.kane@student.ncirl.ie. The research has been designed in accordance with National College of Ireland's Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants.

The SurveyMonkey privacy policy can be accessed here:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/policy/privacy-policy/>

Questions 2 - 19 were taken from the following article with permission from the author: A.M. Saks (2006) 'Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement', Journal of Managerial Psychology, 21(7): pp. 600-619.

Thank you very much.


ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- **you have read the above information**
- **you voluntarily agree to participate**
- **you are at least 18 years of age”**

Permission to use Survey

Alan Saks <saks@utsc.utoronto.ca>

to me 

Yes, you can use my measures of engagement for your research. I believe that all of the items used in that study are in the public domain and you should be able to use them as well.

Alan Saks, PhD
Professor, HRM
University of Toronto

Figure 17 Permission from Author to use Survey

Survey Anchors

Alan Saks <saks@utsc.utoronto.ca>

to me

Most are strongly disagree, disagree, neither, agree, strongly agree; job characteristics only have end points and middle point which is usually moderately or moderate; to a small extent, relatively small extent, moderate extent, relatively large extent, to a large extent; never, rarely, sometimes, often, always;

Figure 18 Survey Anchors from Author

Internal Reliability of Survey Scales

Table 8 Job Engagement Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 9 Job Engagement Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.819	5

Table 10 Organisation Engagement Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 11 Organisation Engagement Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.847	6

Table 12 Job Characteristics Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 13 Job Characteristics Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.809	6

Table 14 Rewards and Recognition Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 15 Rewards and Recognition Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.887	10

Table 16 Distributive Justice Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 17 Distributive Justice Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.960	4

Table 18 Procedural Justice Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 19 Procedural Justice Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.923	7

Table 20 Perceived Organisational Support Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 21 Perceived Organisational Support Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.913	8

Table 22 Perceived Supervisor Support Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 23 Perceived Supervisor Support Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.905	4

Table 24 Job Satisfaction Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 25 Job Satisfaction Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.793	3

Table 26 Organisational Commitment Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 27 Organisational Commitment Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.905	6

Table 28 Intention to Quit Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 29 Intention to Quit Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.917	3

Table 30 OCBI Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 31 OCBI Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.854	4

Table 32 OCBO Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	74	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	74	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 33 OCBO Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.853	4

Discussion of Internal Reliability Scores

1. For the job engagement scale, the researcher obtained a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.819. This is very similar to the reliability result obtained by Saks of 0.82.
2. For the organisation engagement scale, the researcher acquired a score of 0.847. Saks got a higher result of 0.90.
3. In terms of the job characteristics scale, this research yielded a result of 0.809. This is actually higher than the reliability score of 0.79 that Saks obtained.
4. For the rewards and recognition scale, the researcher received a score of 0.887. This is also higher than Sak's score of 0.80.
5. For the distributive justice scale, the research yielded a score of 0.960. This is also greater than Sak's reliability score of 0.92.
6. With regards to the procedural justice scale, the researcher got a result of 0.923. This too is higher than the score of 0.89 that Saks obtained.
7. For the POS scale, the researcher obtained a score of 0.913. This is also greater than the score of 0.89 received by Saks.
8. The PSS scale generated a score of 0.905. The result Saks got was 0.89.
9. The researcher calculated a score of 0.793 for the job satisfaction scale. The score calculated by Saks was higher at 0.84.
10. The organisational commitment scale produced a score of 0.905. This is similar to the score achieved by Saks of 0.90.
11. For the intent to quit scale, this research produced a result of 0.917. This is higher than Sak's score of 0.82.
12. In terms of the OCBI scale, a result of 0.854 was obtained by the researcher. This is greater than the result of 0.75 received by Saks.

13. For the OCBO scale, the research generated a score of 0.853. This too is greater than the score in Sak's research of 0.73.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
JobEngagementCompositeScore	74	1.80	5.00	3.6432	.72170	-.380	.279	.020	.552
OrganisationEngagementCompositeScore	74	1.17	4.50	3.2095	.82579	-.495	.279	-.597	.552
JobCharacteristicsCompositeScore	74	2.00	7.00	4.8604	1.18656	-.095	.279	-.558	.552
RewardsandRecognitionCompositeScore	74	1.60	4.70	2.7676	.87556	.610	.279	-.690	.552
DistributiveJusticeCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	2.8615	1.19226	.060	.279	-.887	.552
ProceduralJusticeCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	2.9768	.99088	.214	.279	-.231	.552
POSCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	3.4223	.84923	-.183	.279	-.299	.552
PSSCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	3.6926	.94683	-.679	.279	.040	.552
JobSatisfactionCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	3.5811	.93480	-.288	.279	-.488	.552
OrganisationalCommitmentCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	3.1622	.96671	.046	.279	-.495	.552
IntenttoQuitCompositeScore	74	1.00	5.00	2.8559	1.31504	-.016	.279	-1.363	.552
OCBICompositeScore	74	2.00	5.00	3.9392	.67592	-.179	.279	-.300	.552
OCBOCompositeScore	74	1.25	5.00	3.3784	.88388	-.160	.279	-.444	.552
Valid N (listwise)	74								

Table 34 Descriptive Statistics for all Scales

Calculation of Skewness and Kurtosis for Histograms

Results of skewness and kurtosis calculations falling between -1.96 and +1.96 can be considered to be normal distributions. Three distributions were found to be non-normal. The perceived organisational support scale (skewness -2.43), rewards and recognition (skewness

2.19) and the Intention to quit scale (kurtosis -2.47). All other scales fell within the normal result range. The following tables provide a breakdown of the calculations.

Scale	Skewness Statistic	Std. Error	Calculated Skewness
Job Engagement	-0.380	0.279	-1.36
Organisation Engagement	-0.495	0.279	-1.77
Job Characteristics	-0.095	0.279	-0.34
Rewards and Recognition	0.610	0.279	2.19
Distributive Justice	0.060	0.279	0.22
Procedural Justice	0.214	0.279	0.77
Perceive Organisational Support	-0.183	0.279	-0.66
Perceived Supervisor Support	-0.679	0.279	-2.43
Job Satisfaction	-0.288	0.279	-1.03
Organisational Commitment	0.046	0.279	0.16
Intention to Quit	-0.016	0.279	-0.06
OCBI	-0.179	0.279	-0.64
OCBO	-0.160	0.279	-0.57

Table 35 Calculation of Skewness

Scale	Kurtosis Statistic	Std. Error	Calculated Kurtosis
Job Engagement	0.020	0.552	0.04
Organisation Engagement	-0.597	0.552	-1.08
Job Characteristics	-0.558	0.552	-1.01
Rewards and Recognition	-0.690	0.552	-1.25
Distributive Justice	-0.887	0.552	-1.61
Procedural Justice	-0.231	0.552	-0.42
Perceive Organisational Support	-0.299	0.552	-0.54
Perceived Supervisor Support	0.040	0.552	0.07
Job Satisfaction	-0.488	0.552	-0.88
Organisational Commitment	-0.495	0.552	-0.90
Intention to Quit	-1.363	0.552	-2.47
OCBI	-0.300	0.552	-0.54
OCBO	-0.444	0.552	-0.80

Table 36 Calculation of Kurtosis

Additional Tables for Regression Analysis

Additional Regression Tables for Job Engagement

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.549 ^a	.302	.239	.62951

a. Predictors: (Constant), PSS Composite Score, Rewards and Recognition Composite Score, Procedural Justice Composite Score, Job Characteristics Composite Score, Distributive Justice Composite Score, POS Composite Score

b. Dependent Variable: Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 37 Job Engagement Regression Model Summary

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.471	6	1.912	4.824	.000 ^b
	Residual	26.551	67	.396		
	Total	38.022	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Engagement Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), PSS Composite Score, Rewards and Recognition Composite Score, Procedural Justice Composite Score, Job Characteristics Composite Score, Distributive Justice Composite Score, POS Composite Score

Table 38 Job Engagement ANOVA

Additional Regression Tables for Organisation Engagement

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.674 ^a	.455	.406	.63662

a. Predictors: (Constant), PSS Composite Score, Rewards and Recognition Composite Score, Procedural Justice Composite Score, Job Characteristics Composite Score, Distributive Justice Composite Score, POS Composite Score

Table 39 Organisation Engagement Regression Model Summary

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22.627	6	3.771	9.305	.000 ^b
	Residual	27.154	67	.405		
	Total	49.781	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisation Engagement Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), PSS Composite Score, Rewards and Recognition Composite Score, Procedural Justice Composite Score, Job Characteristics Composite Score, Distributive Justice Composite Score, POS Composite Score

Table 40 Organisation Engagement ANOVA

Additional Regression Tables for Job Satisfaction

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.511 ^a	.261	.241	.81465

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

b. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction Composite Score

Table 41 Job Satisfaction Regression Model Summary

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.671	2	8.336	12.560	.000 ^b
	Residual	47.120	71	.664		
	Total	63.791	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 42 Job Satisfaction ANOVA

Additional Regression Tables for Organisational Commitment

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.644 ^a	.414	.398	.75018

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Commitment Composite Score

*Table 43 Organisational Commitment Regression Model Summary***ANOVA^a**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.264	2	14.132	25.112	.000 ^b
	Residual	39.956	71	.563		
	Total	68.221	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Commitment Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 44 Organisational Commitment ANOVA

Additional Regression Tables for Intention to Quit

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.496 ^a	.246	.225	1.15759

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

b. Dependent Variable: Intent to Quit Composite Score

Table 45 Intention to Quit Regression Model Summary

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.099	2	15.550	11.604	.000 ^b
	Residual	95.141	71	1.340		
	Total	126.240	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Intent to Quit Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 46 Intention to Quit ANOVA

Additional Regression Tables for OCBO

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.512 ^a	.262	.241	.76982

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

b. Dependent Variable: OCBO Composite Score

Table 47 OCBO Regression Model Summary

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.955	2	7.477	12.617	.000 ^b
	Residual	42.076	71	.593		
	Total	57.030	73			

a. Dependent Variable: OCBO Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 48 OCBO ANOVA

Additional Regression Tables for OCBI

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.228 ^a	.052	.025	.66737

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

*Table 49 OCBI Regression Model Summary***ANOVA^a**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.729	2	.865	1.941	.151 ^b
	Residual	31.622	71	.445		
	Total	33.351	73			

a. Dependent Variable: OCBI Composite Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Engagement Composite Score, Job Engagement Composite Score

Table 50 OCBI ANOVA

