

Empirical Data Study from Higher Education Sector about Improving Productivity of Employees via Job Involvement

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I. Abstract

Productivity of employees is one of the major management issues receiving much study from many scientists and was regarded as the primary mechanism for improving the performance of organisations. To guarantee long-term success, it is important to be aware of the main variables that affect productivity. This research analyses the impact of job involvement on higher education productivity of employees. In order to achieve this goal, a sample of 242 staff from public institutions in Northern Malaysia gathered primary data through an online survey technique utilising a survey tool. SPSS and AMOS Structural Equation modelling were used to evaluate the data obtained. The findings showed that commitment to work has a substantial beneficial impact on the productivity of employees. This research also shows the substantial beneficial impacts on employee productivity of all aspects of the workforce, namely energy, commitment and absorption.

Keywords: Employee Engagement Employee Productivity, Educational Sector

II. INTRODUCTION

One of many companies' key goals was to improve staff productivity. Higher levels of employee productivity provide different benefits to a company and its workers. For example, greater productivity leads to favourable economic development, high profits and improved social advancement (Sharma & Sharma, 2014). Furthermore, more productive workers may get higher pay, better working circumstances and favourable jobs. In addition, increased productivity tends to optimise the organisational competitiveness benefit by reducing costs and improving high output quality (Baily et al., 2005; Hill et al., 2014; Wright, 2004). All of these advantages have paid due attention to staff productivity. Based on its background, the organisational survival and long-term performance of the organisation is thus extremely significant.

The fact that current study in this subject has shown that there is a positive link between the engagement of work and performance results, for example, employee retention and productivity, shown that employing people should consider investing in worker engagement. Some researchers (Richman, 2006; Fleming & Asplund, 2007) said employee employed or interested in their employment are more productive as driven to work beyond personal circumstances. They are also more focused than distracted people. In addition, in most instances workers who are engaged are expected to perform more effectively and to make the success of the company a priority.



While many researchers have stressed the importance of employee involvement in driving performance and good company results, little empirical data supports these assertions (Saks, 2006). The participation should also be seen as a fundamental corporate strategy involving all organisational levels (Frank et al., 2004). Saxena and Srivastava (2015) stated that work involvement is one of the major difficulties and actions needed to achieve the goals of the company. They have also shown that its impact on performance results must be tested.

Indeed, the problem of productivity for employees has lately arisen and has great importance in the literature. For example, prior studies on staff productivity was mostly ignored in service settings (Brown et al., 2009; Filitrault et al., 1996). As such, it was difficult to conceive and quantify the notion of employee productivity. For example, in spite of the related impact that may vary on the type of the company, the conventional definition of productivity emphasises primarily on the proportion between input costs and output value. Overall, the conceptualisation, measurement and testing of employee productivity histories seem to be ambiguous. The objective of this research is thus to evaluate the impact of working commitment in the Malaysian higher education industry on staff productivity in order to address current literary shortages. The next part will provide a literary overview of past studies on the productivity and involvement of employees. The connection between the two variables is also explained.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Employee Productivity

The desire to increase staff productivity is one of the main challenges that most companies today confront. The efficiency of a person or a group of employees is an evaluation of employee production. Productivity is really a component that impacts the company's profitability directly (Gummesson, 1998; Sels et al., 2006). In a certain period, the productivity of an employee may be assessed as regards its production. In general, a particular worker's productivity is evaluated in relation to the typical workforce. The number of units that an employee handles in a certain time period may also be evaluated appropriately (Piana, 2001). As an organisation's success depends mostly on workers' productivity, employee productivity has therefore become an essential aim for companies (Cato & Gordon, 2009; Gummesson, 1998; Sharma & Sharma, 2014).

Various studies have concentrated on one or two methods of measuring productivity and because many methodologies are used, comparing the findings may be difficult (Nollman, 2013). Overall, an efficient and uniform approach to productivity evaluation is lacking. The productivity of employees is dependent on the time a person is present at his/her job, according to Sharma and Sharma (2014), as opposed to the degree to which he/she is "mentally present" or works effectively during his/her presence. In order to guarantee high productivity of employees, companies should address such questions. Ferreira and Du Plessis (2009) said that productivity may be measured by the time an employee has spent actively carrying out the task he or she has been engaged to perform to get the desirable results anticipated from a work description of the employee.

In the previous document the benefits of the productivity of employees that contribute to corporate success have been thoroughly addressed. Increased productivity leads to economic development, greater profitability and social advancement, according to



Sharma and Sharma (2014). Employees can only get higher wages/wages, working conditions and more job prospects through improving productivity. Cato and Gordon additionally (2009) showed that an organisation is a significant contributor to its success in aligning its strategic goal with productivity. This alignment would stimulate and encourage workers to become more innovative, and eventually enhance their performance to achieve corporate objectives and aims (Morales et al., 2001; Obdulio, 2014). In addition, greater productivity increases the competitive advantage by lowering costs and improving production quality.

In the last session the idea of employee productivity was thoroughly addressed. It shows that the productivity of employees is important to the profitability and success of the organisation. This section presents a commitment to work as the primary human resources practise and its impact on employee productivity.

B. Work Engagement

Work with employees is one of the corporate management's key business objectives. McEwen (2011) says the involvement of workers is dependent on their views and assessments of their work experiences, including their company, corporate leaders, the job and workplace. Echols (2005) said that managers need to focus on the skills, knowledge and abilities of their employees in order to increase employee involvement. The writer said that, when workers are aware of their abilities and skills, their commitment will increase, leading to improved performance in the end. Rothmann and Storm (2003) have shown that commitment to the job may be expressed in energy, behavioural satisfaction, effectiveness and participation. Swaminathan and Rajasekaran (2010) found that commitment comes from satisfaction and motivation of their employees.

In the literature there are many definitions of employee involvement. Fleming & Asplund (2007, p. 2) defines the involvement of the workers as "the capacity to grab your employees' minds and heart and spirits to foster a drive for excellence and enthusiasm." Some academics also regarded the involvement of employees as a structure made up of cognitive, emotional and behavioural components linked to employee performance (Shuck et al., 2011). It shows an employee's dedication and commitment to its job targeted at improving organisational performance (Sundaray, 2011). In addition, Bakker and Demerouti (2008) defined commitment as 'a positive and satisfying mindset that is marked by vigour, commitment and absorption.'

Vigor may be defined in terms of an employee's energy levels and mental resilience while carrying out his job, according to Bakker and Demerouti (2008). Shirom (2003) said Vigor refers to an employee's mental and physical wellness. Having strongly engaged with the job, on the other hand, Harpaz and Snir (2014) showed commitment and mirrored emotions of excitement, challenge and meaning. The second facet of employment known as absorption was defined earlier by being completely concentrated and gladly connected to his job, such that the employee thinks that time goes rapidly and has trouble separating from work (Truss et al., 2013).

Employee involvement in the present situation of a difficult company environment should rigorously be taken into account via organisational administration (Saxena & Srivastava, 2015). This is because highly committed and motivated staff represent the fundamental principles of the company, thus strengthening brand equity (Ramanujam, 2014). The literature study shows that committed workers provide good results. Business executives understand that highly engaged workers may improve



productivity and firm success in constantly changing markets (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). In other words, committed employer workers feel passionate, joyful and enthusiastic about their job every day (Ramanujam, 2014). Furthermore, workers working in their companies consider it extremely essential to retain competitive advantages; to cope with changes and to ensure that innovations are made in the workplace.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The research used a quantitative method for data collection from interviewees. In specifically, 870 faculty at public institutions in northern Malaysia have been provided with an online survey. In earlier research, the measuring scales were taken and adjusted to make it readily comprehensible and adaptable for the study respondents. As mentioned in the literature review above, work involvement consists of three dimensions: vigour, commitment and absorption. All the above characteristics were assessed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003); Vigor (three objects), devotion (5 things) and absorption (four items). In the study of Chen and Tjosvold(2008); Lee and Brand were also evaluated using five items; (2010). The five-point scale of the Likert range ranged from "1=farly unanimous" to "5= very unanimous."

The data obtained were analysed using AMOS 18 to model the structural equations (SEM). Various tests have been performed to get the results of this research, including alpha reliability, convergent validity, face validity, factors analysis, and regression. A confirmatory factor analysis is then performed in the measuring model that incorporates the resultant re-specified scales. The structural model was then evaluated for model fit, and the hypotheses were tested. Due to its merits it produces precise and trustworthy findings, structural equation modelling is utilised. Chin (1998) states that SEM is flexible in the design of predictor-criterion connections. SEM is also the ideal technique to investigate causal connections between two or more variables, so that research hypotheses may be articulated easily (Gunzler et al., 2013).

V. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Table 1 shows the findings of the profile of responders. As is seen in the table, 65 of the participants (26.9%) are male, while 177 (73.1%) are female. On age profile, most participants (50%) are aged between 26 and 35, followed by between 36 and 45 years of age, representing 21%. Those between the ages of 18 and 25 years represented 2,9%, while just 16 (6,6%) were above 46 years. With regards to educational requirements, this research contains 36 (14.9%) graduates, 79 (32.6%) graduate students, 125 (51.7%) postgraduate student graduates and 2 (0.8%) postgraduate student graduate students. Most of the interviewees (69%) were experienced more than 5 years.



Table 1: Respondents' Profile

	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	65	26.9
	Female	177	73.1
	Total	242	100
Age	18 – 25 years	7	2.9
	26 – 35 years	121	50
	36 – 45 years	98	40.5
	46 years and above	16	6.6
Qualification	Diploma	36	14.9
	Undergraduate	79	32.6
	Master	74	30.6
	Doctorate	51	21.1
	Others	2	0.8
Work experience	1 year – 2 years	23	9.5
	Between 2 years and 5 years	40	16.5
	More than 5 years	167	69

In addition, all variables with the alpha of Cronbach were analysed for reliability. The results show that the alpha values of the Cronbach range between 0.755 and 0.882 are satisfying. In particular, Cronbach's alpha value of 0.882 was reached through employee engagement. The aspects of the workforce involvement were also shown at Cronbach's alpha; Vigor (0.812), the commitment to absorption (0.867). (0.758). Similarly, the Cronbach alpha value was reported by employee productivity at 0.755. It may thus be argued that the Cronbach alpha values are appropriate for all variables and meet the minimal criterion as proposed by Pallant (2007).

All variables were also analysed to make sure that each set of items measures what they are intended to measure. It was also carried out to verify the authenticity of convergence and content. As all measurements have been adjusted from prior research, the CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) is carried out instead of the EFA. The method used to carry out the analysis was AMOS 18, which includes all the elements in a single model. The findings show that the load factor varied from 0.48 to 0.86 for all items (see Appendix A). On the basis of these findings, all products reached the required value as Hair et al advised (2010). Factor analyses are thus acceptable for all buildings.

After all objects with the measuring model had been assured of appropriate factor loadings, the structural model was drawn. The primary aim of the structural model is to guarantee that the model fits a number of criteria. In particular, the Chi-square value is equal to 282.875. The chi-square has also been supported by additional fit criteria (df=129, GFI=0.888, AGFI=0.851, TLI=0.899, CFI=914 and RMSEA=0.070), ensuring



that the assumptions of model fit are satisfied. It may be inferred from these findings that the model fits the data adequately.

The regression table from the structural model was utilised to test the hypotheses of this research. All assumptions are supported as shown in Table 2. In particular, H1, where Vigor is beneficial for employee productivity ($\beta=0.192$, $t\text{-value} = 2.219$, $p<0.05$), is verified. Furthermore, the results show that a commitment to the productivity of employees has a positive and statistical impact on the connection between them ($\beta=0.653$, $t\text{-value}=2.806$, $p<0.05$), such that H2 is accepted. In addition, the beneficial impact of the absorption on the productive nature of the workforce is substantiated ($\beta = 0.051$, $t\text{-value} = 3.025$, $p < 0.05$). Finally, there was evidence that the overall commitment to work had substantial beneficial impact on employee productivity, which is why H4 is supported ($\beta = 0.354$, $t\text{-value} = 4.565$, $p < 0.05$). The research shows that 33% of the total change in employee productivity is explained by employee engagement.

Table 2: Research Findings

	Hypothesized Effect	Std. Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P	Support
H1:	Vigor has positive effect on employee productivity.	0.192	0.062	2.219	0.001	Yes
H2:	Dedication has positive effect on employee productivity.	0.653	0.140	2.806	0.005	Yes
H3:	Absorption has positive effect on employee productivity.	0.051	0.104	3.025	***	Yes
H4:	Overall work engagement has positive effect on employee productivity.	0.354	0.078	4.565	***	Yes

VI. CONCLUSION

The objective for the research was to investigate the impact and characteristics of employment in public universities in northern Malaysia on employee productivity. The results showed a substantial beneficial impact on staff productivity. Work involvement It was also shown to have significant beneficial impacts on staff productivity in all areas of employee involvement (vigour, commitment and absorption). Previous research that have shown that commitment to work plays a key role in increasing productivity among employees corroborated the findings. Markos and Sridevi (2010) have shown that workers who do not work are prone to spend their time on activities of less importance and do not exhibit complete dedication to their job. In addition, a lot of studies have shown that dedicated workers show emotional connection to jobs and increased productivity (Abraham, 2012; Shuck et al., 2011).

In all, this research shows empirically that employment has a substantial beneficial impact on productivity of employees. Employers should thus focus enough on their commitment to work and assess their workers' development regularly to guarantee their companies' wellbeing. In addition, it is recommended that employers from public educational establishments undertake regular surveys from time to time to understand the degree of employee involvement and work environment satisfaction. This would allow them to create appropriate methods to solve any problem. Talent acquisition, for example, is an excellent method for ensuring efficient hiring. In addition, adequate means are required for strengthening staff productivity, including financial, physical



and materials. It is also recommended that companies should implement a bidirectional communication approach between employees and the employee in order to enable their employees to share thoughts about their employment and any problems which may have consequences for their productivity.

VII. References

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