

The Impact of Employee Engagement on Organizational Performance

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Abstract

This research seeks to explore the relationship between employee engagement and overall business performance. Specifically, it investigates the key factors that influence employee engagement and how these, in turn, correlate with organizational success. The study also examines variations in employee engagement levels across different demographic groups, such as age, gender, job role, and tenure, to identify any patterns or disparities. A qualitative research approach is utilized, employing online questionnaires to gather in-depth insights from employees across diverse industries. This method allows for a nuanced understanding of individual perspectives and experiences related to engagement within the workplace. The central hypothesis of the study posits that leadership practices and the prevailing organizational culture play a crucial role in shaping employee engagement, which subsequently affects business outcomes. The analysis of the collected data supports this hypothesis, revealing that both leadership and organizational culture are significant drivers of employee engagement and, by extension, have a notable impact on business performance. These findings underscore the importance of fostering strong leadership and cultivating a positive organizational environment to enhance workforce engagement and achieve strategic business objectives.

Keyword: Employee, Employee Engagement, Business, Organizational Performance

Introduction

As organizations face an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing business environment, there is a growing recognition of the crucial role that employee engagement plays in driving organizational success. Employee engagement is defined as the emotional commitment, enthusiasm, and dedication that employees exhibit toward their work, their organization, and its overarching goals. A wealth of research and real-world organizational experiences have demonstrated that a highly engaged workforce has a profound impact on various dimensions

of business performance, including productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, and financial outcomes.

This study investigates the relationship between employee engagement and contemporary business performance, with a particular focus on how engaged employees who are motivated, proactive, and committed—tend to deliver higher-quality work and put forth discretionary effort that exceeds basic job expectations. Engaged employees not only exhibit enhanced productivity but also play a pivotal role in improving customer satisfaction and fostering stronger organizational outcomes.

In addition to core performance metrics, the study expands its scope to explore the broader operational effects of employee engagement, including its influence on critical factors such as employee turnover, absenteeism, and workplace safety. A workforce characterized by high levels of engagement is more likely to experience lower turnover rates, fewer instances of absenteeism, and greater compliance with safety protocols, all of which contribute to a more stable, efficient, and cohesive work environment.

The primary objective of this research is to provide actionable insights that can help organizations recognize and leverage the strategic importance of cultivating employee engagement. By exploring the factors that drive engagement and examining its subsequent impact on business outcomes, this study aims to highlight the value of investing in targeted engagement initiatives. Such investments can not only enhance employee performance but also improve overall organizational effectiveness and provide a sustainable competitive advantage.

The findings of this research will be particularly beneficial to organizations that struggle with designing and implementing effective employee engagement strategies. The insights derived from this study will offer guidance on the development of more tailored engagement programs, specifically suited to the needs of diverse workforce demographics and aligned with organizational goals. Moreover, this study contributes to the broader academic and business discourse by identifying the key factors that shape employee engagement and offering empirical evidence of its influence on organizational performance.

Ultimately, this research aims to enrich the existing body of knowledge on employee engagement and its integral role in shaping organizational success. By providing practical insights, it offers valuable contributions to both business practitioners and academic researchers seeking to leverage employee engagement as a tool for improving performance, fostering innovation, and achieving long-term growth.

Research Questions

1. What is the influence of leadership on employee engagement and overall business performance?
2. In what ways does organizational culture affect employee engagement and business performance?

Research Objectives

1. To examine the influence of leadership on employee engagement and its subsequent effect on business performance.
2. To investigate how organizational culture affects employee engagement and contributes to overall business performance.

Literature Review

Underpinning Theory of Employee Engagement

William Kahn, a prominent organizational behavior scholar at Boston University, is widely regarded as the "Father of Employee Engagement" due to his pioneering research in the field. His work established a foundational framework for understanding the link between employee engagement and business performance. In his seminal 1990 article in the *Academy of Management Journal*, Kahn introduced the concept of "employee engagement," emphasizing the importance of employees being able to express their true selves at work. He argued that engagement is not solely about organizational fit or financial incentives, but rather about employees feeling cared for and valued in the workplace.

Kahn's theories build upon earlier research, notably that of Elton Mayo, who, in the early 20th century, identified the importance of management attention, working conditions, and social connections in enhancing employee morale and productivity. Similarly, the work of Mary Parker Follett and Frederick Herzberg contributed to understanding the psychological dimensions of engagement, emphasizing the significance of morale, leadership, and motivation.

Kahn's framework for employee engagement identifies three critical elements: meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability, each influencing employees' capacity to connect with their work and organization.

Meaningfulness

Employees feel engaged when they understand the significance of their tasks and their contribution to the organization's broader mission. Autonomy in work tasks and clear goals also enhance this sense of purpose. Roles that align with employees' self-perceptions and values are particularly meaningful. Engagement is bolstered when employees can identify with their roles and perceive them as integral to the organization's success.

Psychological Safety

Employees are more likely to engage when they feel free from judgment or negative consequences. A psychologically safe environment is one where employees feel they can express themselves authentically without fear of career repercussions. Trust within teams and a supportive management style are crucial in fostering psychological safety, as they allow employees to take risks and be creative without fear of failure or criticism.

Psychological Availability

This refers to employees' mental and physical capacity to engage in their roles. Factors such as work-life balance, emotional energy, and physical well-being significantly impact this dimension. Employees are more likely to engage when they have the necessary resources—physical, emotional, and mental—to perform their tasks effectively.

Kahn’s framework suggests that organizations should create environments that support these three factors to maximize employee engagement. Engaged employees are more committed, productive, and satisfied, which directly impacts organizational performance, reducing turnover, enhancing client satisfaction, and boosting profitability.

The Role of Leadership and Organizational Culture in Employee Engagement

Leadership and organizational culture play pivotal roles in shaping employee engagement. Effective leadership, characterized by clear communication, support, and a focus on employees' professional growth, fosters higher engagement. Leaders who are seen as honest, competent, and invested in employees' development can inspire greater commitment, leading to improved business outcomes.

Organizational culture is also integral to engagement. A positive culture that promotes inclusivity, collaboration, and a shared sense of purpose enhances employee involvement. When employees feel connected to the organization’s mission and are supported by a respectful, transparent work environment, they are more likely to be engaged. Conversely, a toxic culture can significantly undermine engagement, reducing both job satisfaction and business performance.

Overall, employee engagement is closely linked to leadership, organizational culture, and the work environment. Organizations that prioritize psychological safety, meaningfulness, and availability, while fostering positive leadership and a supportive culture, are likely to see enhanced employee performance and business success.

Research Frameworks

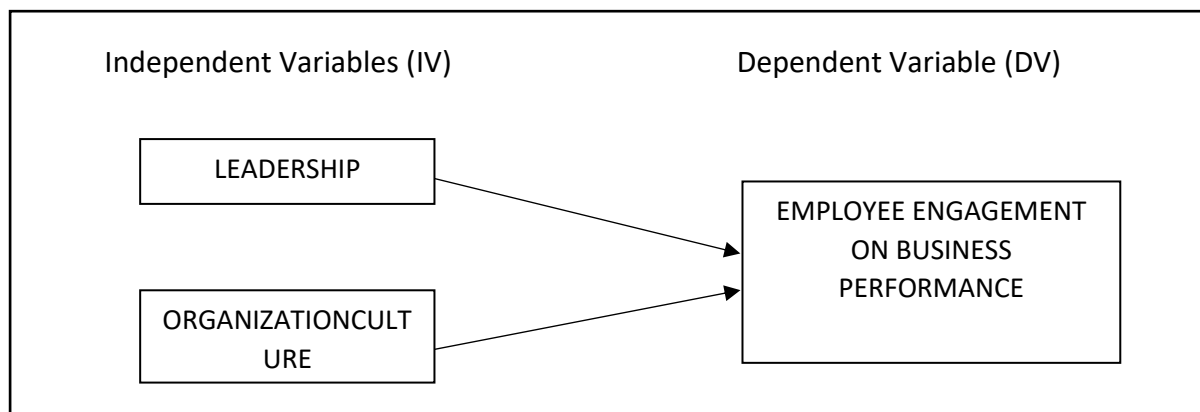


Figure 1: Research framework

The theoretical framework proposed by the researchers as shown above consisted of the independent variable of leadership and organizational culture toward the dependent variable which is employee engagement on business performance. In specific, this research aims to determine whether there is a significant relationship between leadership and organizations toward employee engagement on business performance.

Statement of Hypothesis

1. There is a positive correlation between leadership and employee engagement.
2. There is a positive correlation between organizational culture and employee engagement

Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed to investigate the impact of employee engagement on business performance. It describes the research design, target population, unit of analysis, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, research instruments, and methods of analysis. The aim is to ensure the research process is systematic, reliable, and capable of producing valid and meaningful results.

Research Design

A quantitative survey design was adopted for this study to collect numerical data and statistically examine the relationships among leadership, organizational culture, employee engagement, and business performance. As defined by Kothari (2004), the research design serves as a blueprint for data collection, measurement, and analysis, ensuring consistency and rigor throughout the research process.

Population and Unit of Analysis

The study targets a diverse population of employees from various public and private sector organizations, encompassing multiple industries to gain a comprehensive understanding of how employee engagement affects business performance. The unit of analysis is structured across three levels: individual, focusing on personal engagement and its impact on performance; team or departmental, examining group-level engagement and related outcomes; and organizational, assessing overall engagement and its influence on organizational performance. This multi-level approach offers a nuanced perspective on how engagement functions within different organizational contexts.

Sampling Technique and Procedure

A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representation across subgroups such as department, job level, or tenure. This approach enhances the generalizability of the findings. In some exploratory contexts, convenience sampling was also considered for practical accessibility.

Surveys were used to collect primary data on employee perceptions of leadership, organizational culture, and engagement. Business performance metrics were gathered from organizational records, and data were analyzed using regression analysis to test the hypothesized relationships.

Data Collection Procedure

A structured questionnaire was developed, consisting of 15 items assessing employee engagement and its relationship with business performance. After validation and advisor approval, the questionnaire was distributed to selected participants via email. Respondents were given two days to complete the survey. Collected responses were then coded and analyzed, supplemented by relevant secondary literature to contextualize the findings.

Summary of Measurement Items

The questionnaire measured leadership and organizational culture as independent variables, using items such as “How important is it for leaders to engage with employees?” The dependent variable focused on the impact of employee engagement on business performance, with items like “How does employee engagement influence business outcomes?” These items aimed to assess the relationship between workplace dynamics and organizational effectiveness.

Research Instrument

The instrument comprised two sections: demographic information, which included email, gender, age, education, employment sector, and job position; and survey items, which featured closed-ended questions related to the study variables, measured using a Likert scale. Participants were required to answer all 15 questions before submission, with data collection completed within a two-day period.

Method of Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics summarized demographic and survey data, while inferential statistics were employed to test the research hypotheses and examine correlations between variables.

Findings

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis, a subset of data analysis, is primarily concerned with summarizing and describing survey data (Weiers, 2008). In this section, the analysis aimed to examine the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents, such as gender, age, educational level, industry of employment, and position, to draw broader conclusions from the data.

This study included participants from various employment sectors, including both the government and private sectors. All participants voluntarily took part in the research and provided their feedback through a structured questionnaire. The study maintained an inclusive approach, without discrimination based on gender, culture, age, religion, or political affiliation. A total of 185 respondents completed the questionnaire, resulting in a 100% response rate. Furthermore, no data outliers were identified during the analysis.

Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1

Demographic Information of Respondents

Question	Label	Coding
1	Gender	1 – Male 2 – Female
2	Age	1 – 18 – 30 2 – 31 – 40 3 – 41 and above
3	Educational level	1 – SPM 2 – Foundation/STPM/Diploma 3 – Degree 4 – Master 5 – PhD
4	Working sector	1 – Government 2 – Private
5	Position	1 – Managerial 2 – Non-Managerial

Gender

Table 2

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	82	44.3	44.3	44.3
	Female	103	55.7	55.7	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

The study intended to seek opinion from both males and females' respondents on the assessment of the influence of employee engagement on business performance. There was a total of 185 respondents who participate in the survey questionnaire, of them; male was 82, which was equivalent to 44.3% of total sample and females were 103 which was equivalent to 55.7%. This indicates that the number of females participated in the research was large compared to the male participants.

Age

Table 3

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	18 – 30	58	31.4	31.4	31.4
	31 -40	100	54.1	54.1	85.4
	41 and above	27	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Level of Education

Table 4

Level of Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	SPM	21	11.4	11.4	11.4
	Foundation/STPM/Diploma	29	15.7	15.7	27.0
	Degree	82	44.3	44.3	71.4
	Master	43	23.2	23.2	94.6
	PhD	10	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

The data indicated that the majority of participants (44.3%) held a bachelor's degree, followed by 23.3% with a master's degree, 15.7% with a foundation, STPM, or diploma qualification, 11.4% with an SPM (secondary education) certificate, and 5.4% with a PhD. These findings suggest that respondents have made significant efforts in pursuing their education. Consequently, individuals with higher academic qualifications, namely bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, were more represented in responses compared to those with lower-level qualifications. The high proportion of respondents with advanced educational backgrounds supports the reliability of their responses, particularly in addressing the study's focus on the relationship between employee engagement and business performance.

Working Sector

Table 5

Working Sector

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Government sector	69	37.3	37.3	37.3
	Private sector	116	62.7	62.7	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

The table above indicates that most participants were from the private sector, totaling 116 individuals (62.7%), while the government sector accounted for 69 participants (37.3%). This distribution suggests that employee engagement and its impact on business performance is more prominently experienced or reported within the private sector compared to the government sector.

Position Level

Table 6

Position Level

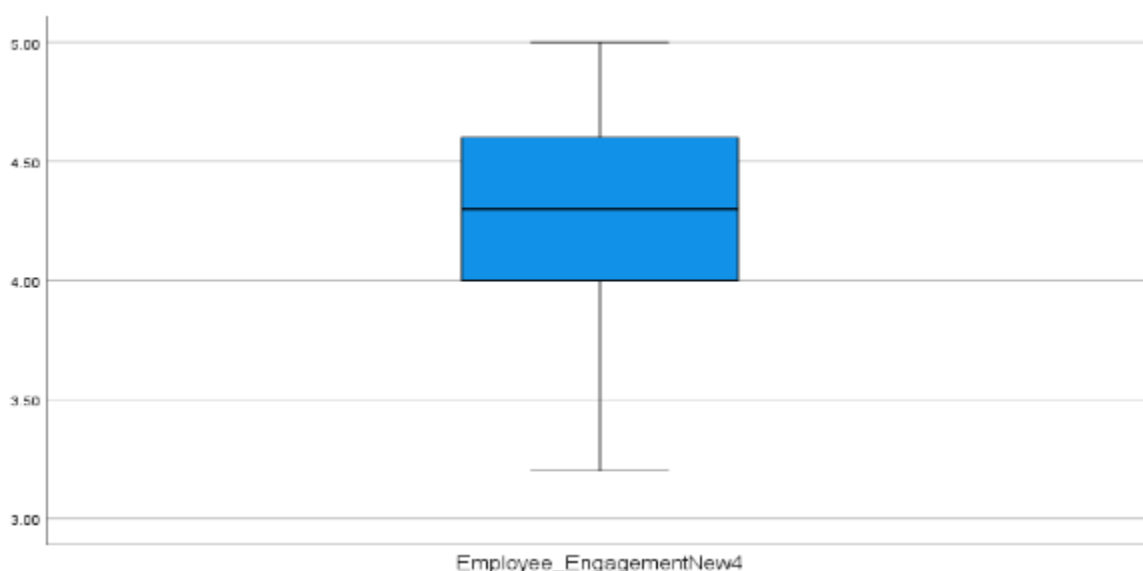
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Managerial Level	69	37.3	37.3	37.3
	Non-Managerial Level	116	62.7	62.7	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Approximately 116 participants, representing 62.7% of the total sample, were from non-managerial positions, while 69 participants, accounting for 37.3%, held managerial roles.

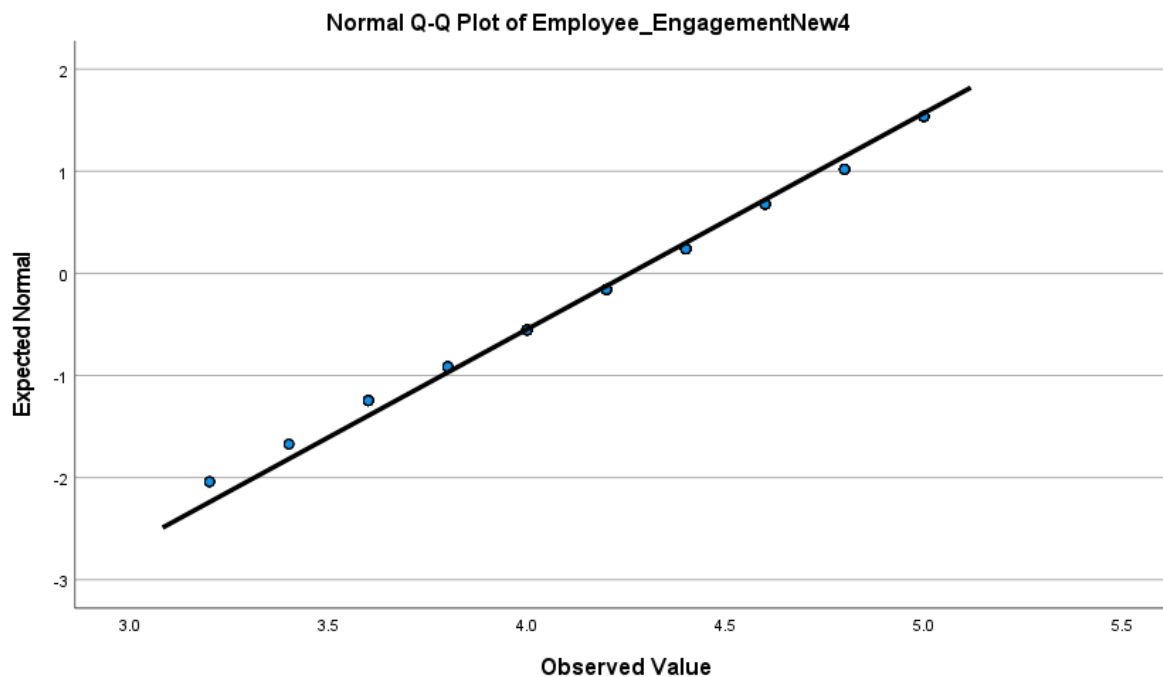
Normality Analysis

For many statistical analyses, assessing the normality of the data is a critical prerequisite, as parametric tests typically assume that the data are normally distributed. Two primary methods are employed to evaluate normality: statistical tests and visual inspection. Statistical tests offer an objective means of assessment; however, they can lack sensitivity in small samples and may be overly sensitive in large samples. Consequently, some statisticians prefer to complement or substitute statistical tests with graphical methods. While graphical analysis lacks the objectivity of formal tests, it can provide a more reliable evaluation of normality in situations where statistical tests may yield misleading results due to sample size constraints.

Comprehensive guidelines for assessing normality using SPSS Statistics are available in our updated content. These resources include step-by-step instructions for conducting normality tests and offer strategies for addressing violations of the normality assumption. The Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) tests are the two primary statistical tests for normality in SPSS. Additional methods include examining skewness and kurtosis values, as well as visual tools such as histograms and Q-Q plots—all of which can be performed within a single SPSS analysis. Verifying normality is essential, particularly for ensuring the validity of parametric hypothesis tests that rely on this assumption.



The boxplot above suggests that the data are approximately normally distributed. However, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov ($p = .001$) and Shapiro-Wilk ($p = .001$) tests indicate a statistically significant deviation from normality. Despite this, visual inspection implies that the distribution of the *employee engagement on business performance* variable is reasonably normal, which may justify the use of parametric tests, particularly given the sensitivity of normality tests to large sample sizes.



The Q-Q plot above indicates that the data are approximately normally distributed, as the data points closely follow the reference line. In Q-Q plots, normality is suggested when points are clustered along the diagonal line, indicating a good fit with the theoretical normal distribution. Additionally, for further confirmation of normality, the values of skewness and kurtosis should be within acceptable ranges—typically, their standardized values should not significantly deviate from zero. A common guideline is that their significance values (p-values) should exceed .001; values below this threshold may suggest a departure from normality.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis employs a range of techniques and statistical metrics to assess the consistency and stability of measurement instruments. It is a key method used to evaluate how reliably a scale or questionnaire measures a particular construct over time or across different conditions. This form of analysis is widely applied in disciplines such as psychology, education, market research, and the social sciences to ensure the validity of research findings.

One of the most commonly used indicators in reliability analysis is Cronbach's alpha, which measures the internal consistency of items within a scale. The alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater reliability. Generally, a higher Cronbach's alpha suggests that the items within the instrument are measuring the same underlying construct.

Various researchers have interpreted Cronbach's alpha values using qualitative descriptors to provide a more intuitive understanding of reliability levels. Reported classifications include: *excellent* (0.93–0.94), *strong* (0.91–0.93), *reliable* (0.84–0.90), *robust* (0.81), *fairly high* (0.76–0.95), *high* (0.73–0.95), *good* (0.71–0.91), *relatively high* (0.70–0.77), *slightly low* (0.68), *reasonable* (0.67–0.87), *adequate* (0.64–0.85), *moderate* (0.61–0.65), *satisfactory* (0.58–0.97), *acceptable* (0.45–0.98), and *sufficient* (0.45–0.xx; final value incomplete in source). These classifications help contextualize alpha coefficients within different levels of interpretive confidence.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
0.585	5

A study was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scale for each variable. For the *employee engagement* variable, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was reported as 0.585, which is within the acceptable range. According to Keith Taber (2018), although this value is relatively low, it may still be regarded as satisfactory and acceptable in certain research contexts, particularly in exploratory studies. Taber also notes that there is considerable variation in the terminology used by scholars to describe different ranges of Cronbach's alpha values. This inconsistency reflects a lack of consensus on the most appropriate descriptors and highlights the somewhat arbitrary nature of labels such as "adequate," "satisfactory," or "acceptable," with no universally agreed-upon hierarchy among them.

Leadership

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
0.700	5

Organizational Culture

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
0.698	5

A commonly accepted rule of thumb for interpreting Cronbach's alpha is that a value of 0.70 or higher indicates good reliability, while values between 0.60 and 0.70 are considered acceptable, particularly in exploratory research. In this study, the reliability analysis of the independent variables showed that the *Participation in Leadership* scale achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.700, indicating good internal consistency. The *Organizational Culture* scale recorded Cronbach's alpha of 0.698, which falls just below the 0.70 threshold but is still considered acceptable. The dependent variable, *Employee Engagement*, also demonstrated acceptable reliability, although Cronbach's alpha value was slightly lower. Overall, the results suggest that the measurement instruments used in the study possess an acceptable level of internal consistency.

Correlation Analysis

Recorded an acceptable reliability with Cronbach 's Alpha of 0.720.

Table 7

Correlation Analysis

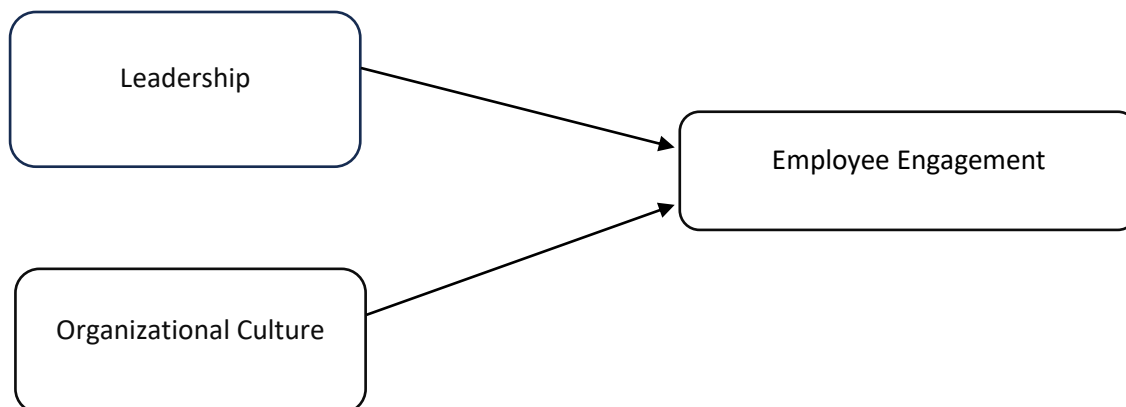
		Employee Engagement	Leadership	Organizational Culture
Employee Engagement	Pearson	1	0.379	0.473
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		< 0.001	< 0.001
Leadership	N	168	168	168
	Pearson	0.379	1	0.527
	Correlation			
Organizational Culture	Sig. (2-tailed)	< 0.001		< 0.001
	N	168	168	168
	Pearson	0.473	0.527	1
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	< 0.001	< 0.001	
	N	168	168	168

The analysis presented in the table indicates that both leadership and organizational culture significantly and positively influence employee engagement in business performance, with a p -value of 0.001, which is less than the 0.05 threshold for statistical significance. Additionally, the results demonstrate that employee engagement and organizational culture also have a positive and significant impact on business performance, with a p -value of 0.001. These findings suggest that employee engagement and organizational culture positively contribute to business performance. Overall, the data highlights a strong and significant relationship among these three variables, with higher levels of leadership and organizational culture enhancing the impact of employee engagement on business performance.

Discussion

The findings of this research provide valuable insights into the relationship between employee engagement and business performance. The data reveals that employee engagement has a more pronounced impact on business performance in the private sector compared to the government sector. Additionally, the research indicates that both leadership and organizational culture positively influence business performance. While the study offers substantial information regarding the role of employee engagement, its conclusions must be interpreted with caution due to certain limitations inherent in the research. Despite the robust data and insights presented, the study is not without its constraints and contributions. This chapter will explore the study's limitations, discuss its contributions, and conclude with recommendations for future research.

Hypothesis testing, as outlined in previous chapter, is a statistical method used to make inferences about a population based on sample data. This process involves testing competing hypotheses—the null hypothesis (H_0) and the alternative hypothesis (H_1)—to assess whether there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis.



Hypothesis	p-value	Decision
H ₀ : There is no relationship between Leadership and Employee Engagement	< 0.001	Reject H ₀
H ₁ : There is a relationship between Leadership and Employee Engagement		
H ₂ : There is no relationship between Leadership and Employee Engagement	< 0.001	Reject H ₀

The study highlights the significant role of employee engagement in driving business performance. Engaged employees are more dedicated to their work, contributing higher levels of productivity, motivation, and enthusiasm, which enhances individual and collective performance. They also demonstrate stronger customer orientation, leading to improved customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat business. Furthermore, engaged employees are less likely to absenteeism and turnover, resulting in reduced recruitment and training costs. Their contributions to innovation, creativity, and continuous improvement give organizations a competitive advantage. Employee engagement also positively impacts well-being, reducing stress and healthcare costs while increasing workplace resilience, which collectively enhances business outcomes. Additionally, the financial performance of organizations with highly engaged employees is generally stronger, marked by increased profitability, revenue growth, and improved brand reputation.

The study suggests that future research should further explore the role of employee communication in fostering engagement. While the research has adequately examined the influence of leadership and organizational culture, communication among employees remains a critical factor that impacts business performance. Effective communication enables employees to better understand their roles and the business’s goals, ultimately enhancing organizational alignment. Expanding the research to include this aspect could provide deeper insights into the ways employee engagement affects business success, helping organizations better leverage engagement strategies to improve their performance and long-term success.

This research contributes both theoretically and contextually to the existing body of knowledge on employee engagement and business performance. Theoretically, it reinforces and extends established models that link employee engagement with organizational outcomes by integrating the dimensions of leadership and organizational culture as critical mediators. It empirically supports the notion that leadership behavior and cultural alignment are not merely contextual factors but fundamental drivers of engagement, particularly in performance-sensitive environments. Contextually, the study offers a valuable comparative perspective between the private and public sectors—an area often underrepresented in engagement research. By highlighting the stronger impact of engagement on business performance in the private sector, it underscores how organizational context shapes the effectiveness of engagement strategies. This insight is particularly relevant for policymakers, HR professionals, and leaders seeking to tailor engagement initiatives to their specific organizational settings. Thus, the research not only enhances theoretical frameworks but also provides actionable guidance for applying these insights in diverse operational contexts.

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