

Employee Engagement and Job Performance

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DOI Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i12/27190>

Published Date: 01 December 2025

Abstract

Employee engagement represents a critical driver of job performance, embodying employees' emotional commitment, vigor, dedication, and absorption in their roles and organizational missions. Highly engaged workers exhibit superior task execution, heightened productivity (up to 22% higher), stronger goal alignment, and proactive behaviors that enhance team collaboration and innovation. This engagement yields broader benefits, including reduced turnover (by 18-43%), lower absenteeism, fewer safety incidents, and improved customer loyalty, ultimately boosting profitability and shareholder returns. Theoretical foundations like Social Exchange Theory (SET) posit that reciprocal fair treatment fosters engagement, while Kahn's (1990) model emphasizes psychological meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Gallup's pyramid framework and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale further operationalize engagement across basic needs, teamwork, and growth, linking supportive environments—rich in job resources, recognition, and autonomy—to sustained performance. This cross-sectional quantitative study at Kurdistan Technical Institute surveyed 52 academic staff using questionnaires, yielding moderate engagement ($M=3.68$, $SD=0.94$) and high job performance ($M=3.82$, $SD=0.68$). Pearson correlation revealed a strong positive relationship ($r=0.763$, $p<0.002$), classified as high (0.70-0.89), with demographics showing 57.7% male and majority master's holders. These results align with meta-analyses showing engagement-performance correlations of $r=0.37$, mediated by drivers like rewards ($\beta=0.406$), job characteristics ($\beta=0.248$), and positive affect, which amplify individual and organizational outcomes. In academic settings, engagement mitigates burnout, enhances instructional quality, and supports retention amid high demands. Organizations should prioritize interventions: recognition programs, resource enrichment, leadership training, and engagement audits to elevate moderate levels. Future research warrants larger samples, longitudinal designs, and mixed methods to explore cultural moderators in Kurdish contexts, informing evidence-based strategies for academic excellence and sustained performance.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Job Performance

Introduction

This section emphasizes the relationship between employee engagement and job performance among the academic staff at Kurdistan Technical Institute as a foundation for the study's background. Employee engagement is described as a favorable attitude toward the business and its principles, characterized by clear comprehension of the company's goals and engaged collaboration to improve performance. According to prior studies, businesses with strong employee engagement often outperform their respective industries and see higher revenue growth. Job performance, conversely, refers to the value of an individual's behavior that supports the goals of the organization (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004; Ellis & Sorensen, 2007; Motowidlo, 2003; Norman, 2013).

The problem statement emphasizes how academic staff is impacted by employee engagement. It stresses that engaged workers are more dedicated to their work and the objectives of the organization, thereby enhancing job performance. Additionally, more engaged workers are more willing to go above and beyond the call of duty, take on extra duties, and strive for excellence. Nevertheless, despite the acknowledged advantages of employee engagement, research on the connection between employee engagement and job performance, especially among academic employees, is still limited. This information gap presents a hurdle for organizations looking to boost employee engagement and ultimately increase job performance. The research seeks to close this gap by examining the connection between employee engagement and job performance among the academic staff at Kurdistan Technical Institute. The results of this research will provide light on the elements that influence employee engagement and aid organizations in creating strategies that improve work output (Xu, Wang, Wang, & Liu, 2011). This cross-sectional quantitative research focuses on Employee engagement and job performance as the key variables of interest. The study's importance is emphasized by the fact that it seeks to provide academic staff members with useful knowledge and understanding of how engagement and work success are related. The research is anticipated to motivate academic staff to become more enthusiastic and involved in their profession, which will be advantageous to both the staff members and Kurdistan Technical Institute. The research is also expected to benefit the organization by improving job performance and employee engagement, which would boost productivity and organizational success. Finally, it is anticipated that the research will be helpful to academic staff because it enables them to assess their performance, identify areas for development, and implement programs and initiatives to support employee engagement and job performance (Stephan J. Motowidlo, 2015), which is offered by the personnel and benefits the organization via their "efforts and support, promotion, inspiration, best use of abilities, and support of the organization's mission and values." (Markwich & Robertson-Smith, 2009, p. 15). Employee engagement is really regarded as one of the crucial determinants of an organization's performance as well as one of the main sources of revenue and profit. The focus of the plan should be on the people. said that "the better the corporate performance, the greater the degree of staff dedication. The returns should be considerably higher if employee involvement really goes beyond commitment." (Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday, 2004, p. 11).

Job performance refers to actions that workers may influence and that are related to the organization's objectives (Ellinger et al., 2008). According to Murphy (1989), job performance is determined by how well a person performs specified activities that fall within

the purview of typical job descriptions. The fundamentals of work performance rely on the requirements of the position, the organization's objectives and missions, as well as its views on the behaviors that are most highly appreciated (Befort & Hatstrup, 2003). According to Sullivan and Decker (2009), performance-related behavior is closely tied to work activities that must be completed in order to satisfy an employee's job goals. In other words, a job's performance is related to the accomplishment of the tasks that it is linked to.

This conception of performance is in line with Borman and Motowidlo's (1993) definition of task performance, which refers to actions that are officially acknowledged as being a part of the job and strengthening the technical foundation of the organization. These concepts suggest that work performance comprises task-related actions that are under the individual's control.

Research Objective

To determine to level of employee engagement.

To evaluate to level of job performance.

To investigate the connection between employee engagement and job performance.

Literature Review

The concept of employee engagement focuses on the emotional commitment and connection of workers to their job and the workplace. The importance of employee engagement to an organization's performance and success has long been acknowledged. According to Peter G. Furst (2018), engaged employees are individuals that support the organization's objectives, work hard to advance them, match their values with those of the company, and show steadfast dedication even in the face of adversity.

According to research, companies with high levels of employee engagement often outperform the market and provide greater shareholder returns, particularly in times of economic uncertainty (Ashish Arora, 2010). Low employee engagement, however, results in reduced shareholder returns for firms. This demonstrates how employee involvement improves all other company results (MacPherson, 2013). To comprehend and evaluate employee engagement, many theoretical models have been put forward. One of the most generally accepted and used ideas in current research on employee engagement is the social exchange theory (SET). It implies that when workers feel they are being treated fairly and equally by their employer, they are more inclined to participate in their job (Maha Ahmed Zaki Dajani, 2015). A systematic method for assessing employee engagement within a business is offered by the Gallup Employee Engagement Model. It employs a pyramid-based model to evaluate worker satisfaction and demands at many levels, including essential, individual, teamwork, and progress.

This methodology aids managers in identifying areas for development and offering assistance and chances for professional growth that increase employee engagement (Gallup, 2018). According to Kahn's Model of Employee Engagement, employee engagement is significantly influenced by meaningfulness, safety, and ability. This paradigm contends that workers are more likely to be engaged if they see their job as important, feel psychologically secure at work, and have the chance to make the most of their talents and abilities (Kahn, 1990).

David Zinger created the Zinger Model, which emphasizes the importance of meeting employee needs including wellbeing and purposeful work in encouraging employee engagement. According to this concept, meeting these requirements is crucial since they serve as the cornerstones for fostering workplace engagement (Zinger, 2009).

Job performance is a significant dependent variable that is directly connected to employee engagement. Employees who are more engaged tend to do better on the job, while disengaged people are more likely to underperform. Task-related behaviors, communication abilities, initiative, tenacity, and effort all contribute to job effectiveness (Campbell, 2012). Employees that are motivated and engaged are more likely to do jobs well and take on more duties than are required (Asian Social Science, 2013). Loyalty to the company, feeling of importance, passion, inspiration, and challenge are influencing elements that have an impact on the link between employee engagement and job performance. Employee engagement improves both individual performance as well as team performance. This improved performance is due to their pleasant emotions, improved health, use of resources from both their personal and professional lives, and capacity to inspire their coworkers (Bakker, 2009). In the final analysis, employee involvement significantly affects both job and organizational performance. Employees that are engaged are more likely to make good contributions to the company, perform at greater levels on the job, and remain dedicated to their work. Organizations may establish a supportive work environment, improve employee performance, and improve business results by understanding and fostering employee engagement using a variety of theoretical models. The "job performance" of employees is enhanced by a good employee engagement plan, which also promotes a feeling of belonging and dedication among staff members. Employees that are emotionally connected to their workplace experience pleasant and productive engagement, which in turn influences how they interact with coworkers and customers. As a result, there is an improvement in both performance and customer service (Sahoo & Mishra, 2019). Additionally, companies with high levels of employee engagement often have reduced rates of staff turnover, absenteeism, theft, and defects. As a result, quality is enhanced, safety is raised, and profitability increases (Sense, 2022). Businesses with strong employee engagement levels consistently outperform their competitors.

Loyalty to the organization is one of several elements that affects how well a task is done and how engaged the workforce is. Employees are more likely to be involved in their job when they have a strong feeling of loyalty. Dedication, which encompasses emotions of importance, passion, inspiration, pride, and challenge, characterizes this connection. It indicates that workers are dedicated to their job and find it purposeful and rewarding.

Absorption is a crucial component of involvement. This is the condition in which workers are totally absorbed in their job, completely present in it, and unable to step away from it. Employees are more likely to perform better and provide better outcomes when they are fully engaged in their job.

According to Bakker (2009), there are four factors for why workers who are engaged perform better than those who are not. First of all, motivated employees feel excitement and passion, which not only improve their wellbeing overall but also increase their productivity.

Employees are more likely to perform better and be more productive at work when they are in a pleasant emotional state.

Second, driven employees often have access to additional resources. These resources could be of a psychological, social, or physical character. Having extra resources enables individuals to handle job demands more skillfully and complete tasks more quickly. Additionally, it may improve their general health and wellbeing, which will help them maintain high levels of performance.

Thirdly, proactive resource development and use are characteristics of engaged workers. They take the initiative, look for possibilities for learning and development, and efficiently use their talents and skills to provide their best work. Engaged employees may perform better on the job and flourish in their positions by actively managing their resources.

Finally, motivated professionals may influence their colleagues with their passion and optimistic outlook. Their involvement and drive may spread to others, encouraging them to work harder too. Improvements in team performance and overall organizational success may result from this favorable impact on team members.

The aforementioned study's main goal is to research and provide insights into the function of engagement in the link between employee engagement and job success (performance). Organizations may create strategies and interventions to promote a more engaged workforce, improving individual and organizational results, by recognizing how engagement impacts job performance.

Methodology

This study's research design is intended to gather information to answer the research questions and goals concerning the connection between employee engagement and job performance among academic staff members. A cross-sectional quantitative research design will be used to evaluate this association. The questionnaire will include three categories: employee engagement, job performance, and demographics. The academic staff members from Kurdistan Technical Institutes (KTI) in Sulaymaniyah will provide responses on a 5-point Likert scale. The population for the research is the academic staff of KTI in Sulaymaniyah, totaling 60 individuals. A sample size of 52 will be chosen from this population using the convenience sampling method, which is a non-probability sampling technique. Convenience sampling entails selecting participants based on their ease of availability or accessibility to the researcher. According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005), this approach is often employed in early or exploratory investigations, pilot studies, or circumstances when time, money, or resources are constrained. Data collection is a crucial step in the research process, involving the acquisition of quantifiable information to address the research objectives. The questionnaire, which was specifically created to gather information pertaining to the research Objectives (employee engagement and job performance), will serve as the major method of data collection. This approach enables the acquisition of primary data, which are unique data obtained for the particular aim of this research (Khadija Sitter, 2020). Research instruments, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), are devices or pieces of equipment created to gather data required to support or respond to research questions. Questionnaires are employed as the research instrument in this study to collect the necessary data, as they aid

researchers in formulating methods for data collection and answering their research questions. The research topics for this study are broken down into three categories: demographics, employee engagement, and job performance.

Results

The sample consisted primarily of male respondents (57.7%), with females representing (42.3%). In terms of age, the largest group was between 25-35 years (51.9%), followed by 35-45 years (34.6%), 45-55 years (11.5%), and 55-65 years (2.0%). Regarding educational attainment, the majority of respondents (59.6%) hold a master's degree, followed by those with a bachelor's degree (23.1%), and a doctorate (17.3%). Descriptive statistics revealed that the academic staff's level of Employee Engagement was found to be moderate ($M=3.68$, $SD=0.94$), while Job Performance was high ($M=3.82$, $SD=0.68$).

Table 1

Level of Employee Engagement and Job Performance

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Employee Engagement	3.6762	0.940	Moderate
Job Performance	3.8221	0.677	High
Mean value (low = .00 - 2.33; Moderate = 2.34 - 3.67; High = 3.68 - 5.00)			

The findings from table 2 indicates a substantial positive link between employee engagement and job performance ($r=0.763$, $p.002$). Furthermore, classifies the association between employee engagement and job performance as high relationship (0.70-0.89).

		Employee Engagement	Job Performance
IV	Pearson Correlation	1	0.763
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.002
	N	52	52
DV	Pearson Correlation	0.763	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.002	
	N	52	52
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Discussion and Recommendation

The data analysis discussion in this study is separated into three basic topics. The first goal determining the level of employee engagement, the second goal evaluating the level of job performance. The third goal is to look at the connection between work performance and employee engagement among academic staff members. A total of 52 academic staff members at KTI received questionnaires in order to collect the essential data. According to the study's findings, job performance and employee engagement are positively and significantly correlated among KTI's academic staff members. This implies that people tend to do better in their occupations when they are more invested in them. Future study is advised to improve our knowledge of employee engagement and work performance in the context of academic personnel at KTI. To broaden the body of knowledge in this field, several recommendations for future research are made.

Firstly, expanding the sample size would improve the findings' generalizability. The 52 academic staff members at KTI were given questionnaires as part of the present investigation.

The results may be more representative of the overall academic staff population by increasing the sample size and include a larger spectrum of people.

Second, future study may use a mixed-methods strategy. In this method, quantitative and qualitative research methods are combined. In addition to quantitative surveys, researchers may better understand the factors that affect employee engagement and work performance by employing qualitative methodologies like focus groups and interviews. This all-encompassing strategy may provide deeper insights into the underlying causes and processes at work. Additionally, longitudinal research may be carried out to look at changes in worker engagement and productivity over time. Researchers might track the development of involvement and performance in this kind of study and see if there are any long-term effects.

Additionally, it may aid in pinpointing the elements or practices that lead to consistently high levels of performance and engagement. It is also advised to look at organizational traits and assess the results of actions meant to boost engagement and performance. This may include looking at the support structures, leadership philosophies, and organizational cultures within the academic setting. Evidence-based techniques for improvement may be provided by assessing the efficacy of certain treatments or practices intended to increase engagement and performance. Another excellent proposal for future study is to take context-specific practices and benchmarks into account. This entails taking into consideration outside variables, such as the distinctive features of KTI and its academic setting. By investigating variances in involvement and performance across various settings, comparative research across other KTI institutions or departments may also provide insightful information. Future studies may use these suggestions to create evidence-based techniques and strategies to raise academic staff members' overall job performance and increase employee engagement. This will aid in the creation of efficient strategies and procedures that will improve the academic staff's work satisfaction and productivity.

Conclusion

In a conclusion the purpose of this research is to assess employee engagement. Additionally, this research makes an effort to evaluate job performance. The findings of this research demonstrate a significant relationship between work effectiveness and employee engagement among academic personnel. It is important to make an observation given the assumption that there is a relationship between employee engagement and work performance. Despite the fact that there is evidence to support this link, it is critical to review and implement employee engagement-promoting initiatives if you want to sustain these positive benefits over the long term. The academic staff at KTI in Sulaymaniyah demonstrate a statistically significant positive link between the two factors.

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