Employee Engagement and Work Performance among Public Workers in Terengganu

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the correlation between employee engagement and work performance among public workers in Terengganu. The objectives of this research are to examine the most influence factor of employee engagement toward work performance and investigate whether there is any relationship between employee engagement and work performance in the organization. Random sampling technique was used in this study and 140 out of 225 public workers in Terengganu were involved. The questionnaire was developed and had been distributed to all target departments for the data collection. SPSS was used to analyze reliability test, descriptive test and correlation. The result showed positive moderate employee engagement and work performance. Besides that, the recommendations were also discussed further for educational purpose and future research.

KEYWORDS: Employee Engagement, Work Performance, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Organizational Commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement can be described as an important organizational issue especially when an organization is trying to rise up again from the problem of the global recession [1]. Based on [2], most of talented people will become the engaged employees. In contrast to engaged employees, disengaged employees will cause lower productivity, higher absenteeism and increase the recruitment and training cost.

According to [3], one of the characteristics of work engagement is through work spirit. It can be referred to as dedicating a lot of energy and encouragement towards working. Another characteristic is that the engaged employees also have high enthusiasm in term of realizing the significance of work to them. On top of that, the absorption in work engagement results in positive feeling ones may have in performing their job.

The more engaged the employees with their organization, the more effort they must put forth and more motivated they will be. However, they must also understand and be aware that all the business goals will be made by their organization, so that they will help in achieving the goals by following the step used to give good contribution to their organization[4]. As the first founder in the study of employee engagement [5], it is mentioned that the meaning of engagement is the psychological presence when the employees do a task in organizational and psychological conditions. This shows that the importance of permitting the individual engagement or disengagement in term of diversity of their work conditions.

Employer can give motivation to their employees in various ways such as contribute rewards, impart praise and also give the employees related information about the company's activities. This will enlighten the employee engagement to the organization for example, to a person who give a huge participation and highly motivated in working to seize business outputs. According to [6], the changes of attitude such as keeping a good interpersonal relationship with others, avoiding absenteeism and rejecting behaviors that will increase hazards at the workplace can be explained to the employee as good roles in maintaining an individual's work performance. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to find out the relationship between employee engagement and work performance, specifically related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviour among public workers in Terengganu.

The main reason of conducting study on employee engagement and work performance is to find out the factors that drive employees to perform at their best to the organization. Furthermore, the employee engagement and work performance are important as the employees compete with each other to get growing and be more skilful. In [7] focused on the reasons of employee's lack of motivation, less committed and lack of soft skills within their organization. Therefore, this study will discover the factors that contribute to work performance.

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In an organization, having skilful employees is advantage especially if they are competitive and highly motivated. However, there are some cases where the employees lack creativity and this has somehow affected their performance. The result found by [8] stated that among junior employees there are very high turnover rate that demand an immediate identification of root cause by the employers and start reasoning for the dissatisfaction of the employees towards them. In South Africa, there are 13.1 million people working in the country and the government has lost over 130,800 valuable workers per year and 10,900 workers in a month [9]. Concisely, this hold the notion of holding the talented workers is becoming important.

Lacking certain elements that required them to be highly engaged with the organization has affected employees' motivation. In addition, the employees also lack training and knowledge to help them in their work. Thus, lacking these skills would be very difficult for the organization to establish and compete with other organizations in industry. Hence, based on these major problems faced by both the employees and organization, this study was attempted to identify the correlation between employee engagement and work performance among public workers at selected government sectors in Terengganu. This information will help the target organization in dealing with employees' problem in the future.

In [10] reported that employee engagement is really beneficial to both employees and organization. The engagement of the employees affects how they work to fulfil their task as individuals. Furthermore, to an organization, employee engagement is directly related to their job performance as well as customer satisfaction. It can be seen through two views which are based on practical implication such as implication to employees, practical implication to organization and practical implication to the researcher and theoretical implications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The work performance is influenced by job demand, missions and goals of the organization and also the attitude and behaviour shown in the organization [11]. Meanwhile, according to [12], the increased of intelligence level of individual will give the effect toward the emotions and a good emotion will reflect to a better performance in term of having a good and positive mental state.

Employee Engagement

According to [13], employee engagement is defined as "the individual's involvement and satisfaction as well as enthusiasm for work". It is also defined as the contribution level of the employee toward a commitment of work and the organization. However, employee engagement has been ignored by employer although it has been mentioned in more than 20 years ago in literature [14]. This is ironic because the employee engagement is much related with the flow and job involvement that already exist in the organization [15].

According to [16], employee engagement can be divided into two categories which are organizational engagement – phase of employee's trust and commitment in the organization and job engagement – phase of employee's contribution and commitment in the job role. In addition, according to [17], work engagement is one of the efforts to do in a job in term of doing an extra timing, gaining energy and brainstorming to realize the goal of the organization. Therefore, in this study, three elements will be studied; job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour towards work performance.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an important aspect of employee work performance. A good and well-managed organization views employees as the main source of productivity. According to [18], job satisfaction can be defined as the measure of the employees' satisfaction or contention with their work. It describes how content and satisfied the employees toward their work in the organization. Achievement level and fulfilling the organization's goals can be done if the organization identifies and develops the factors contributed to the job satisfaction for its employees through policies that facilitate their satisfaction.

Other than that, the application of job satisfaction in the workplace is complex and difficult to understand due to some circumstances. The employees' desires of their job or work are different toward another. The study conducted by [19] stated that there are numerous aspects can be considered to increase employees' work satisfaction in the workplace. For instance, one employee might think that his or her salary is more important and another employee might think autonomy is important than his or her salary.

In addition, the interpersonal and social relation is one of the aspects of the employees' job satisfaction. A study by [20] found that the interpersonal and social relation is the main cause of job satisfaction and employees productivity toward their job. Social relation allows employees to experience good social support not only to improve work satisfaction but also a sense of teamwork among public workers. Teamwork is considered as an important aspect of organizational productivity and success as it pulls the employees' weight and not letting them down.

Organizational Commitment

One of the challenges faced by human resource management to enhance organization competitive is involving the practice by senior manager who uses one particular concept in implementing various tasks. According to [21], organizational commitment consists of three component organization models that affect employees' behaviors and attitudes towards an organization such as work satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior [22]. However, there are some organizations refer this type of employee who exhibits these patterns of the behaviour as a person who is very committed with the work. In [21] mentioned that the relationship between employees and organization is a part of the process. Nevertheless, it identified three components of the organizational commitment which are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. These components show employee-organization relationship [23].

The first category of organizational commitment is affective commitment. This type of commitment intrigues the employee's desire to feel belonged to the organization and to be highly motivated to achieve goals and to value the membership and work without setting any expectation. Furthermore, in [24] highlighted the importance of having affective commitment to develop to use the measure emotional attachment and obligation to stay with organization respectively. Based on previous studies, four distinct groups of antecedents are identified to respect to affective commitment such as structural characteristic, work experience, job characteristics and personal characteristics. These can be used to improve positive behavior between workers by encouraging them to have common organization's goal and value. Through this, the workers are acknowledged the benefits gained from it.

The second category of organizational commitment is continuance commitment. The high score of this dimension to indicate the employee to profit associated with participating in and high costs associated with leaving the organization such as job promotion it used to enhance the employee abilities, skills and energies on the basis of an agreement between employee and employers. However, the amount of alternative job opportunities plays a role since a lack of alternative raises the costs of leaving and consequently continuance commitment.

The third category of organizational commitment is normative commitment which reflects the perceived obligation to stay. This resembles the notion of lifetime commitment to refer when the workers consider morally right to stay in the organization [21]. It is similarly to concern employees' emotional willingness to commit to the organization. So, it is more important for employees to maintain effective performance in workplace. Then, the workers who have high normative commitment level feel loyal with the organization.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Technical psychological term and the compilation of individual behaviors in a group setting is a definition of organizational citizenship behavior. In this study, it may refer to the employees that are very handful in helping all the employees to do the additional work. So for the organizational citizenship behavior, there are several common types. They are functional in measuring the work engagement of employees towards their work performance.

Altruism is a first category of organizational citizenship behavior. It is defined as the willingness to assist other people without expecting any reward for the help. As an example, helping a friend in delivering tentative of the programmer for an annual meeting to each department without expecting a compliment or favor in compensation as a return. In addition, people who volunteer to complete task in certain special projects, volunteer to do extra job and assist other workers to complete their tasks in order to reduce their own workload are considered to have the altruistic behavior.

Second category is courtesy. This can be defined as a praise and consideration towards other people. To reduce the potential stress of employees, courtesy will encourage positive social interaction between them and automatically will improve their work environment that will enrich their daily life. Sportsmanship is the next category of organizational citizenship behavior. This can be categorized as anything that plan does not go as a plan that may lead to the frustration, difficulty and any other negative things. For example, the situation happens when an employee keeps complaining of his work and report submission to the manager and may expect it to be well accepted and received by top management but somehow it is rejected. Another good explanation when employees show good sportsmanship by not reporting about other employees to the manager but other potential employees may report their behavior to the manager.

Conscientiousness is also a category of organizational citizenship behavior and can be defined as reasonable discipline and self-control level of an employee who exceeds the minimum requirements expected in the organization. Last category is civic virtue which can be defined as how well employees' behavior to represent their organization and the way of employees support their organization outside of an official capacity. As an example, civic virtue is related to employees' job satisfaction and job performance. Employees who do not share a community sense are not productive than employees who have a strong relationship with workplace environment.

Work Performance

Work performance is the identified type of the employee behavior that is necessary for the effective productivity in the workplace.it is the key to the success in the organization to become a major factor in the achievement of the goal of these organizations. The work exhibited in organization represents the employees' work performance. That means training, empowerment and reward improve the job performance. As an example, the employee work-home spill over linkage between workplace flexibility and work-related outcomes including job satisfaction.

These concepts were first introduced by [25] and further developed by Vigor to encompass "a positive, fulfilling work-related state mind that characterized dedication and absorption". As an example of the work performance by spirit is mental resilience and high energy levels in completing tasks, put effort in teamwork to complete other workers' work, and perceive difficulties as challenge in working culture. Work performance can be viewed as the employees who have a sense of significance from others' work, feeling proud and enthusiastic about their works, and feeling challenged and inspired by it. It also can be viewed when employees feel happy and attach with their works and view difficulties as challenge at work. Highly engaged employees have high energy level and enthusiasm about their works. The employees are often involved an empirically linked basis in their work so that time fliers [26].
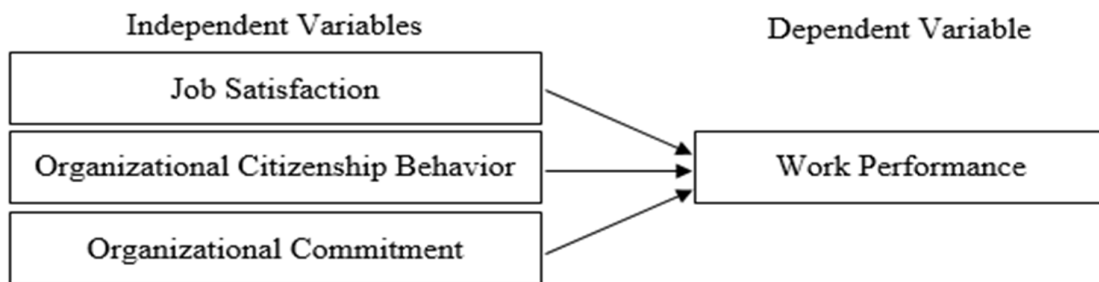

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a correlational method design. This method is used to examine the relation between variables because previous research found a relationship between employee engagements and work performance. Correlation research is a method that provides some indication on how two or more things relate to one another or in effect, what they share or have in common or how well a specific outcome might be predicted by one or more information. Correlation coefficient is used to measure the strength of the relationship.

These are the hypotheses that have been derived:

H_1: There is a correlation between job satisfaction and work performance.

H_2: There is a correlation between organizational commitment and work performance.

H_3: There is a correlation between organizational citizenship behavior and work performance.

Sampling Technique

The study used the probability sampling technique which is a stratified random sampling technique. This technique ensures a high degree of respondent of all strata or layer in the population. The researchers randomly selected name from the name list and questionnaires were distributed. Population for this study was the public workers at selected government sectors in Terengganu. The respondents were from different settings who shared same characteristics. There are 225 employees in this selected government sectors. Sample size is subset of that population and essential in this research. A total number of 140 employees were randomly selected and140 questionnaires had been distributed to respondents at selected government sectors in Terengganu.

Data Analysis Instrument

Questionnaire was used as the main data instrument for the data collection and it consisted of bilingual languages which were English and Malay. There were three sections, which were section A contains demographic information of the respondent such as age, gender, educational level, marital status, income level and working experience. The respondents' personal details is required because it helped researchers to determine the sample used in the study. Respondents were asked to indicate their answer by ticking the check box. This section was aimed to gather the employees' information.

Section B is concerned about factors that influence the employee engagement in term of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. The section was divided into three parts

which are job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. The 7-Likert scale was used for the respondents to answer every question. The last section was section C which concerned about work performance towards the public workers in Terengganu. This section was regarding the effect of employee engagement toward work performance which allowed the researcher to identify factors that influenced the employee engagement toward work performance. Similarly, the 7-Likert scale was used to answer every question.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research objectives were to examine the factors that influence employee engagement and work performance and to identify the correlation between employee engagement and work performance at selected government sectors in Terengganu in terms of job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment.

Research objective 1: Are there any relationships between job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational commitment towards work performance among public workers at selected government sectors in Terengganu?

Table 1: Pearson correlation of employee engagement and work performance

Employee Engagement	Work Performance	
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.717
	Sig.	0.00
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Pearson Correlation	0.715
	Sig.	0.00
Organizational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	0.682
	Sig.	0.00

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 1shows the correlation between employee engagement and work performance. The result shows there was a significant and strong relationship between job satisfaction and work performance ($r = 0.717$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, $H_1$is accepted with $p < 0.05$.It is also shown that the correlation between organizational citizenship behavior and work performance has a significant and strong relationship ($r = 0.715$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, H_2accepted.The analysis also shows the correlation between organizational commitment and work performance. The result found that there was a significant and strong correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p < 0.05$).As has been noted by the results, all three H_1, H_2 and H_3 are accepted.

The result found for three factors such as job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior and organization commitment was significant and has strong positive correlation with work performance. This shows that all of independent variables have relationship with the dependent variables. Job satisfaction has the highest score of correlation with ($r = 0.717$). Then followed by organizational citizenship behavior with ($r = 0.715$) and organization commitment with ($r = 0.682$). To deduce, all the hypotheses submitted are accepted.

Research objective 2: What is the most influential factor of employee engagement towards work performance among public workers at selected government sectors in Terengganu?

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for variables of employee engagement and work performance

Dependent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work Performance	5.32	1.10
Independent Variable	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Job Satisfaction	5.99	1.21
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	5.50	1.12
Organizational Commitment	5.39	1.16

Table 2 shows the mean score for variables of employee engagement and work performance. The mean score indicates the degree of influential factor of the variable. Job satisfaction has the highest mean score (M= 5.99, SD = 1.21), followed by organizational citizenship behaviour (M = 5.50, SD =1.12) and lastly is organizational commitment (M = 5.39, SD = 1.16). It was found that job satisfaction has the most influential factor with the mean 5.99. To be noted, employees were very handful in helping their co-workers to do extra work and this implied the employee effectiveness, work productivity and other factors which can give impact for job performance in the future.

RECOMMENDATION

A few recommendations for future action are addressed in order to improve the employee engagement and work performance at selected government sectors in Terengganu. Based on the findings, the lowest mean score is organization commitment. The organization plays a vital role in developing the organizational commitment and organizational culture. Therefore, it is indeed important for the development of organizational culture in enhancing the organizational commitment especially among the employees. In addition, it is also needed to increase the level of affective commitment and decrease the levels of normative and continuance commitments. This supported the most desirable form of commitment in an organization due to its positive implication on work behavior and performance. However, the organization must take an action to build affective commitment through fair procedures and policies which would guide the managers to make fair decision-making that helps in reshaping employee's affective commitment to the organization. Furthermore, the organization needs to develop and implement policies and procedures through leadership and the organization must strive to ensure that rewards and resources are distributed fairly to the employees of the organization. Organization could provide work experience that is congruent with their goal and the employee to be rewarded to influence their full commitment.

Recommendation for Future Research

Apart from using quantitative method, questionnaire, the use of qualitative method; interview, field observation or by getting the data from public workers at selected government sectors in Terengganu would give various findings. This might help the organization identify strategies that could improve the organization achievement and help the employee for promotion purpose as well. A larger sampling should also be considered as to eliminate bias as well as error and this will bear more conclusive findings. The findings will be more generalized and practical. Future researchers are recommended to use other population to compare the correlation results of employee engagement and work performance in government and non-government organization. The findings can be used to explain more and deeper about employee engagement to enhance employees' work performance.

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