

## **Antecedents of Employees' Performance in Malaysia IT Industries**

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**Abstract:** *This research work explores the IT firms' employees' motivation and employees' engagement towards their performance. The study reflects on their attributes and chalked out strategies that generate their performance in the IT industry in Malaysia. They have highlighted the factors that are associated for a firm to be productive in employee performance. This respondents' behavioral research has acquired a definite direction to the IT sector in Malaysia. Thus, the research certainly enlightens the enrichment of materializing the strategy for their productive performance activities in the IT industry for its success over here. To venture this research work in Malaysia, Selangor state has been chosen where a total of one hundred and ninety-eight respondents from the various IT firms have participated to answer the questionnaires which were self-administered and constructed on a basis of five-point Likert Scale. A convenience sampling tool has been used to find out the level of respondents' thoughts and opinions about employees' motivation and their engagement towards their performance in the firms. From this research results with the aid of Pearson Correlation tests, it is found that all the relationships of employee motivation and engagement are found to be positive and significant with the employee performance as all the p-values obtained significance at the 0.01 level for 2-tailed. The results suggest that the respondents pay much importance on the mentioned variables in their practical work place reflecting their performance for a sustainable growth in the firms. At last the multiple regression analysis suggests that all the variables such as employee motivation and employee engagement with the employee performance are significant under the same working environment. Therefore, the descriptive type of research, the findings, and the most enriched recommendations have depicted a vivid scenario about the feasible and significant performance IT sector in the territory of Malaysia.*

**Keywords:** *Employee motivation, Employee engagement, Employee performance, IT Industry and Malaysia.*

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### **I. Introduction and Background**

Employee involvement and motivation is viewed by many organizations as a way to increase organizational productivity and to gain competitive advantage. Proponents of employee involvement and motivation claim it has strategic advantages related to increased profitability, enhanced quality and innovation, and cost reduction (Lawler, Ledford, and Mohrman, 1989) Sashkin, 1984, 1986). Although much of the empirical research has failed to find a significant relationship between participation and various aspects of performance (Locke and Schweiger, 1979; Schweiger and Leana, 1986), current research has suggested that it is premature to dismiss the potentially positive effects (Steel and Mento, 1987).

In addition, few empirical studies have examined employee involvement from a process or systems perspective. Research has also tended to neglect the effects of participation on achieving the economic goals of organizations (Rosenberg and Rosenstein, 1980).

A system view of employee involvement and motivation is applied in this study at the organizational level. The relationships among employee involvement, the organization systems that support it, and various indicators of organizational performance are the focus of the research. Organizational performance is measured in terms of financial indicators, guest service, and turnover. It is predicted that organizational beliefs, systems, and techniques affect employee perceptions of involvement, which in turn have positive effects on the performance of the organization. With all the top-notch strategy and suitable organizational structure, a firm can only be effective if its member is motivated and passionate about performing at a high level. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is said to be a force of psychology that puts forth the direction of an individual's behavior due to either challenging or exciting work, having autonomy at the workplace, with the scope to hone and grow one's skills, abilities, with opportunities to grow. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation while still being a force of psychology, it represents tangible and intangible benefits including salary, fringe benefits, etc. that results in a change of behavior (Gareth, R Jones and Jennifer M. George, 2003).

Managers have found that involving employees in the everyday working of the business has strategic advantages related to enhanced quality and innovation, cost reduction, and increased productivity. Organizational improvements from employee involvement efforts have been reported in the areas of employee trust, management decision making, and implementation of technology (Lawler, Ledford, and Mchrman, 1989). Other advantages resulting from participative practices include improved customer service, product quality, and employee satisfaction, and reduced absenteeism (Lawler, 1988; Lawler et al., 1989). Consequently, the substantial benefits gained through employee involvement have sustained management interest in these efforts. This is apparent from the number of organizations currently practicing employee involvement.

Organizational success is dependent on the human resource quality both skilled and unskilled and it is an intangible part of an organization making it the most critical. All the other assets in an organization such as machinery, plants, and even finances will not function and create income without the human resource. Research shows that in the current competitive business scenario, success is becoming a consequence of efficient human resource management (George Ahindo, Executive MBA, 2008). Thus, it is crucial to possess a motivated workforce that is able to provide high productivity and performance towards reaching the objectives of the organization

In the current rapidly changing international business environment, it is clear that it is not enough to just concentrate on satisfaction and stability to establish a critical association between employee performance and positive business outcomes; the idea must be expanded to involve employee involvement and employee motivation (Sanchez & Maccauley, 2006). Involvement refers to a more complicated alignment and recognition with a firm resulting in a higher achievement using various measures on both the individual and business level. However, in current times, employees constantly move from one company to another due to the lack of motivation. Some of the employers attempt to pay a high salary to motivate the workers to do their best in order to improve productivity. Others provide housing rent and transportation allowances to employees for their employees to offer their best work to improve performance; however, the whole affair is only a fiasco.

*Research Objective:* The general objective of the study is to investigate into the effects of motivation and involvement on employee's performance IT industry in Malaysia

- To determine the Effect of employee involvement on employee performance in the IT firms in Malaysia.
- To determine Effect of employee motivation on employee performance in the IT firms in Malaysia

*Research Questions:* First research question in the IT firms is the fundamental core of a research project, study, or review of literature. It focuses the study, determines the methodology, and guides all stages of inquiry, analysis, and reporting.

1. What is the effect of employee involvement on employee performance in the IT firms in Malaysia?
2. What is the effect of employee motivation on employee performance in the IT firms in Malaysia?

## **II. Literature Reviews**

*Employee Performance:* Scholars concur that in the attempt to conceptualize performance, differentiation must be made between action (i.e., behavioral) and the outcome of performance (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993; Kanfer, 1990; Campbell, 1990; Roe, 1999). The aspect of behavior relates to the acts of an individual in the workplace. It contains behaviours including the assembly of parts in a car engine, selling personal computers, teaching the skills of reading to primary school children, or conducting a heart surgery. Not all the behaviours are contained in the concept of performance; only behaviours that is relevant to the organization's objectives.

Performance refers to the function that the organizations hire somebody to carry out and to do it well (Campbell et al., 1993, p. 40). Therefore, performance is not identified by the action itself but rather by the processes of judgemental and evaluation (Ilgen & Schneider, 1991; Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997). In addition, only actions that can be scaled or measured are regarded as constituting performance (Campbell et al., 1993).

The aspect of outcome relates to the results or consequences of the behavior of an individual. The above defined behaviours could lead to outcomes involving number of assembled engines, reading proficiency of pupils, sales figures, or the number of successful heart surgery. In most cases, the aspects of behavior and outcome are empirically linked, although they do not completely overlap. Performance outcomes rely on factors linked to more than just the behavior of an individual. Practically, it could be hard to define the aspects of actions of performance without referring to the aspect of outcome. Since not any action and only the relevant actions for organizational objectives are included in performance, one requires the criteria to evaluate the level at which each individual's performance addresses the objectives of the organization. It is hard to visualize the conceptualization approach of these types of criteria without taking into account the aspect of performance outcome simultaneously. Therefore, the focus on performance as an action does not help in solving all the related issues

Furthermore, even with the general agreement that aspects of behavior and outcome must be differentiated, scholars do not totally concur if these two aspects should be known as performance.

*Performance as a Multi-Dimensional Concept:* Performance is a concept with multiple dimensions. At the fundamental level, Borman and Motowidlo (1993) differentiated task as well as contextual performance. Task performances describe a person's proficiency in performing activities that related to the technical core functions of the organization. This can be a direct (such as production workers) or indirect (such as managers) contribution. Contextual performance explains the activities that are not contributory to the technical core functions but are supportive of the organization, society, as well as psychological environment where the organization's aims are achieved. Contextual performance involves behaviors like assisting peers or acting as a dependable member of the firm in addition to offering ideas on improving work processes. There are 3 fundamental assumptions linked to the differentiations of task and contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Motowidlo & Schmit, 1999) namely (I) Activities suitable for the performance of tasks differ based on jobs while the activities of contextual performance are comparatively the same across jobs; (ii) task performance is linked to capability, while contextual performance is linked to personality as well as motivation; and (iii) task performance is more defined and includes in-role behavior, while contextual performance is more discretionary in nature and considered extra-role.

*Task Performance:* Task performance has many dimensions. For instance, out of the 8 components of performance introduced by Campbell (1990), 5 of the factors are referring to task performance (Campbell, Gasser, & Oswald, 1996; Motowidlo & Schmit, 1999) namely (I) task proficiencies that are job specific, (ii) task proficiencies that are not job specific, (iii) proficiencies related to written as well as oral communications, (iv) supervision based on supervisory or leadership position; and in part (v) administration or management. All these factors represent several sub-factors that may differ between various jobs. For instance, the administration or management determinant includes sub-dimensions including (I) plan and organize, (ii) guide, direct, and motivate staff and provide feedback, (iii) train, coach, and develop staff, (iv) communicate effectively and keep staff informed (Borman & Brush, 1993).

*Contextual Performance:* Scholars have designed several concepts of contextual performance. In general, there is a difference between the two kinds of contextual performance namely behaviors that mainly aim at the smooth running of the organization the way it is at present, and the proactive behaviors that intend to change and improve work. To Organ (1988) the behaviors of stabilizing contextual performance involve behavior on organizational citizenship with its 5 elements namely sportsmanship, civic virtue, altruism, courtesy and conscientiousness. Several feature of spontaneity in the organization (assisting peers, being protective of the firm (George & Brief, 1992) and organization's pro-social behavior (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). More proactive actions involve personal initiatives (Frese, Garst, & Fay, 2000) and being in charge. Therefore, contextual performance is more than just a singular uniformed behaviours; it is a concept with many dimensions (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). According to Aguinis (2009) performance covers more than just the outcomes of the behavior of employees; it only involves the behavior itself. Perceived employee performance includes the overall belief by the employee regarding his behavior and contributions to the organizational success. The performance of the employee is based on the perspective of the 3 factors that allows one to perform better than others, performance factors include "declarative knowledge", "procedural knowledge" as well as "motivation" (McCloy et al., 1994). The practices of HR have a positive effect on individual performance. According to Huselid(1995), the efficacy will shift to the employees' behavior because of the human resources management which proves positive by association. They carried out these HR practices and found a positive and significant link to the perceived employee performance (Teseema and Soeters, 2006).

Motivation is a terminology derived from the word motive from a need or emotions which trigger a man into action. There is some form of stimulus behind the behavior of a man. Stimulus is dependent on people's issue upon the motive of the person concerned. Motive can be understood by learning about an individual's needs and wants. The motivation process aims to study the motives of individuals resulting in various behavior types. Young (2000) described motivation as the force inside a person which accounts for the sense of direction and persistence to do one's best at work. Halepota (2005) described motivation as an individual's active commitment and involvement in achieving the intended outcome. Halepota presented the motivation concept as being abstract because a single strategy cannot guarantee the same result all the time as various strategies will lead various outcomes at various periods. According to Greenberg and Baron Motivation is "a set of processes that arouse, direct, and maintain human behavior towards attaining goals".

Jones (1955) points out that motivation is related to the way in which behaviours are started, energized, sustained, directed, halted, and the type of subjective reaction that is present in the firm while all this is happening. Crabbe claimed that researchers introduced two motivation sources namely internal and external sources or otherwise known as intrinsic motivation as well as motivation that is extrinsic.

Motivation that is intrinsic is derived from the relations of the worker and his/her work and it is normally dependent on the self. Feelings of accomplishment, performing one's work well results in motivation seen through a sense of achievement, competence and being able to overcome challenges; and Extrinsic motivation stems from an external work environment in dealing with one's job and it is normally applied by an individual aside from the individual who is motivated. Salary, fringe benefits, desirable firm policies, and different types of supervision are instances of extrinsic motivation.

*Factors that Affect Motivation at the Workplace:* Incentives act as stimulants towards an individual's working to achieve some aims. It initiates human needs and develops the interest in working. Therefore, an incentive is a method of motivating a person. An increase incentive in organization result in better performance and vice versa.

Man has a lot of wants; there are constantly something that one wants. He is never satisfied; when one need is met, another pops up. Thus, to motivate the staff, management should attempt to meet their needs. For this reason, financial and non-financial incentives could be utilized to motivate the employees by the management. Financial incentives are related to money such as salaries and wages, bonus, good retirement plans, stocks, and others. Incentives that are non-financial are not related to money such as intangible incentives including satisfaction, responsibility, and self-actualization<sup>1,2</sup>.

*Employee Involvement:* Employee involvement has traditionally been regarded as an organizational effort that benefits both employees and the organization. An increase in the number of successful employee involvement efforts has made organizations even more aware of the competitive advantage that can be gained by using the knowledge and skills of employees to improve productivity, quality, and service. For most organizations, the three most important reasons for involving employees are to improve profits, reduce costs, and retain or regain a competitive advantage (Sashkin, 1988).

The potential benefits of employee involvement have been widely documented (Hinckley, 1985; Kanter; 1982; Starr, 1988). Overall, employee involvement is believed to increase the capability of employees to perform their current jobs well, enhance the value of employees to the organization, and give employees more resources for planning and managing their careers (Hinckley, 1985). Kanter (1982) claims the benefits of employee involvement are "not merely gains in immediate productivity and quality, or reductions in friction. These short-term benefits may occur, but they are usually difficult to attribute directly to any one event; too much goes on at any one time in a dynamic organization. The more important benefits are longer-term..." (p. 200).

Hinckley (1985) suggests some of the long-term benefits include the more effective utilization of knowledge and experience, enhanced participant skills, increased capability to do one's current job well, and greater access to resources for planning and managing careers.

In summary, a properly designed and implemented employee involvement process is likely to result in:

1. Increased productivity and quality;
2. More effectively utilized knowledge and experience;
3. Improved decision quality and implementation;
4. More effective communication, shared information;
5. More resources for planning and managing, more empowered employees;
6. Improved working relationships and work environment;
7. More challenging work, increased morale, greater sense of autonomy;
8. Enhanced employee skills and talents, and increased capability to perform the job well

Although many practitioners and researchers claim substantial benefits from employee involvement, these advantages have not been widely replicated in the empirical literature (Locke and Schweiger, 1979). Inconsistencies in the outcomes of employee involvement have been attributed to a variety of factors. Cotton et al. (1988) suggest different forms of employee involvement are associated with different outcomes. For example, formal, direct, long-term participation in work decisions was found to have significantly positive effects on productivity and performance measures. However, more informal participation, defined as casual superior-subordinate exchanges, was more closely associated with higher levels of satisfaction. Guzzo, Jette, and Katzell (1985) believe the strength of the effects of involvement depends on the type of intervention, the criterion of performance, contextual factors in organizations, and features of the research design. Dachler and Wilpert (1978) suggest that outcomes are a function of values, assumptions and goals, properties of participation, and contextual boundaries.

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss the outcomes of employee involvement and the issues surrounding this research. The first section describes the various outcomes predicted by the theoretical orientations discussed in the last chapter and considers different contingency variables. Outcomes related to satisfaction, productivity, and other organizational measures are discussed in the next section. The role of management in the implementation and practice of employee involvement is also considered as a variable that

has a large impact on participation (Sashkin, 1984). Finally, managerial attitudes, which influence these practices, are introduced as influential variables that should be considered when determining the effects of employee involvement.

Most of the studies have been done in other countries from different parts of the world and not in the IT industry in Malaysia. In most of the studies, the impact of motivation and employee engagement was done separately and the results were not focused on a special industry with these two factors. This study will examine the impact of employee motivation and employee engagement together on the IT industry in Malaysia. Based on the gap in the literature, this study aims to examine the impact of employee motivation and involvement on the performance of employees in the IT industry in Malaysia.

### III. Research Design and Methodology

Research framework is done after a literature survey and after defining the problem statement. It defines the kind of variables that the researcher will concentrate on when analyzing the results. It is crucial to identify variables to develop a solid framework (Chong, 2006). The theoretical framework consists of the independent and dependent variables. The theoretical framework is developed to explain the relationships between the dependent variable and the independent variable that have been identified to be significant in this study. As far as the employees' performance is concerned, we know that organizational productivity and its performance from its employees includes employee motivation and employee engagement and thus it might have a significant relationship with the improvement of the employees' performance in the organizations. Due to this, a theoretical framework is developed to identify how these variables relate to each other. We might need to identify the relationship between employee motivation and employee performance. More private relationships may create employee's engagement with an emotional form of trust, despite the fact that a more calculative approach to employee engagement is better suited to more official, standing-apart relationships. Williams (2001) claims that trust differs by the degree of awareness among the parties. Here, we need to identify whether motivation achieved by the employees in the organization may reflect the growth of the firms in Malaysia. Strong affective commitment implies that the organization managed to retain their employees because they wish to stay rather than searching for another job with a different organization. Thus, from the past research a theoretical framework is proposed below:

A comprehensive questionnaire will be used to gather information about this study. The questionnaire that is used will be designed specifically for the targeted respondents. The survey will be conducted on employees in various firms in Malaysia. A total of 198 questionnaire papers were distributed. The aim of the questionnaire is to investigate the objectives and aims of the study and establish any relationship with previous studies.

A hypothesis can be defined as a formulation of a logical pre-conclusion for the study. Here, we will develop an assumption of the problem and the statement of these hypotheses will be tested to reveal the truth. It is basically a logical relationship among the variables in the form of a testable statement. Thus, by testing the hypothesis scientifically and confirming the relationship of the variables that exists, we can expect that solutions may be found to correct the problem in this study. The researcher will test the hypothesis that has already been developed for the study once the data is ready for analysis. A discussion takes place to

determine which statistical tests are most appropriate for the various hypotheses and data obtained in different scales. The study investigates the effect of employee motivation and employee involvement on company performance. The hypotheses are based on two parts: first, hypotheses regarding the employee involvement; second, hypotheses regarding employee motivation. Base on research objective and research questions and also theoretical framework this study develops the research hypothesis as bellow to show the effect of independent variables on dependent variable by using the methods which are in chapter three. The hypotheses have been proved

H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between employee motivation and employee Performance

H2: There is a positive and significant relationship between employee engagement and employee Performance

### IV. Data Analysis and Findings

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
performance	20.42	2.929	198
engagement	64.14	7.527	198
Motivation	15.45	2.001	198

Table 4.2: Correlations

		performance	engagement	motivation
Pearson	<b>performance</b>	1.000	.515	.270
Correlation	<b>engagement</b>	.515	1.000	.284

	<b>motivation</b>	.270	.284	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	<b>performance</b>		.000	.000
	<b>engagement</b>	.000		.000
	<b>motivation</b>	.000	.000	
N	<b>performance</b>	198	198	198
	<b>engagement</b>	198	198	198
	<b>motivation</b>	198	198	198

Table 4.1 denotes the descriptive statistics of the three variables in this study.

The highest correlation has been found in the relationship between performance and engagement, which shows a significant value at .01 level ( $r = .515, p = .000$ ). However, in spite of the significance of this correlation, the coefficient is rather small and therefore, it appears as if the predictors are measuring various elements (no collinearity is observed). It is also observed that out of the entire predictors, engagement correlates the most with the results, thus it possible that this variable is the best variable in predicting employee engagement

Table 4.4: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the estimate	Durbin-watson
Model	.282	-.275	2.49	0.972

a. Dependent Variable: performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), motivation, engagement

Since the significance value is less than 0.05 there is a significance difference somewhere amongst the means on our dependent variables in the above groups. This indicates that we have statistically significant result somewhere in the groups. The significance value from the one-way anova results are less than the default value of 0.05, hence violated the assumptions and further need to consult via robust test of quality of means. The total sum of squares is 1690.207As per the above output which shows the model statistics. We see that by entering output values we can explain 28.2% of the variance in the change in performance and motivation scores (the R2 value  $\times$  100%). In other words, 28% of the variance in the change in motivation can be explained by the issues occurred in the organization.

The formula here is: Employee performance = 0+ 1 (Employee engagement) + 2 (Motivation)

The table shows a basic Coefficients table for the questionnaire, which is the more interesting part of the output. The regression equations for engagement are B1= 0.186 and for motivation is B2=0.196. Whereas the estimated constant regression value is B=5.476.

Regression Equation= B+B1(Engagement output) +B2(Motivation output)

The think Margin error which is the standard error is 1.814.

T score is defined as  $t = [B / \text{std error}]$  which is  $t = 5.476/1.814 t=3.019$ .

As you see the t score for engagement is higher (7.542) than that of motivation which is 2.116.

The significance which is the P value should be less than  $< 0.05$  else this is rejected. As seen above both the P values which the significant values are less than 0.05 and the results are rejected.

The VIF values are below the threshold level 3 which also says that there is no multi collinear issues observed. The collinearity statistics reveal a serious problem with the issue of multicollinearity. Some of the eigenvalues are in close proximity to 0, demonstrating that the predictors are intercorrelated highly and even small changes in the values of the data could cause a huge change in the coefficient estimation.variable (y) and the predicted value ( $\hat{y}$ ) are known as the residual (e). Every data point has one residual whereby the residuals 'sum and mean are equivalent to zero. A residual plot is represented by a graph which identifies the residuals on the vertical axis while the horizontal axis shows the independent variable. If the residual plot's points are dispersed randomly surrounding the horizontal axis, it is noted that a linear regression model is most suitable for the data; if not, the more suitable model would be the non-linear model. The chart above demonstrates that the dependent variable i.e., performance contains the highest residual with a value of -0.5 at the frequency of 60

## V. Conclusion

The outcome of the study largely depends on how reliable the information is collected. The results of the reliability test for the study showed that the analysis of the results indicated that both the independent and dependent variables are reliable with a Cronbach value greater than 0.5. According to Sekaran (2003), the purpose of conducting this test is to determine whether the independent and dependent variables in this research are reliable. It is noted that when the variable stacking of measuring inquiries in an examination are all higher than 0.5, this is a sign that the general questionnaire is of good quality and has a superior build legitimacy.

To assess the correlation of the independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV), two tests were carried out: Multiple linear regressions and Pearson's correlation factor. Overall, a positive relationship exists between the dependent variable of employee performance, employee motivation and employee engagement. Considerably, academic research has been carried out to understand the causes and implications of employee performance in the organizations. Overall, studies have shown that unique employee engagement and employee motivation have significant impacts on employee performance. The study further may open the gate to explore whether employees committed and their location of residence have a significant relationship when it comes to performance. This is left for future in depth research.

In a nutshell, this research study has addressed the gap in employee motivation and their engagement towards their performance in the firms. This study is done by examining, formulating, and establishing a research model that relates to the multidimensional relationship between employee performances orientations by the IT personals. The hypotheses of the research were tested in a cross sectional

survey of these employees who are working in the IT industry in Malaysia. The findings of this research indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between employee motivation and employee engagement with the employee performance. This study also showed that these relationships could be improved if some other variables (Future study) included as an important factor towards gaining the employee performance.

The results of this study will continue to add a wealth of information towards further understanding the impact or significance of various factors on employee performance. The results of the study have shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between employee motivation and employee engagement towards their performance. In addition to the above, this study has helped to add value to the knowledge that employee performance should be a basic subject that all organizations have to take to enhance their skills and to prepare them for a better future for sake of the sustainable growth inside the organizations

The findings of this study also contain implications for policy-makers. Empirical evidence from this study demonstrates that employees' organizational skills and in particular, the dimension of innovativeness has a positive impact on their performance in the IT industry in Malaysia. This skill development and intention to grow in the company are realized this sector as the heart of development of organisations (Golestanizadeh & Zavaripour, 2014). Thus, it is important that policy-makers realize the significance of developing this type of supportive programs that encourage the employees demand and choices to motivate them in the companies. The attitude level towards performance better is at an increasing level among the IT industry firms in Malaysia.

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