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of Hertfordshire Business School Masters of Art, Human Resource Management The Impact of Employee Engagement on Performance: A Case Study in Etisalat Nigeria.

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### Abstract

Studies indicate that involvement of employees in the workplace has been credited with the ability to instil positive attitudes and notions in its employees. Through increased employee engagement, employees have been indicated to encompass skills that are geared towards enhanced performance in the workplace. Employee engagement has been attributed with the ability to decode the workplace processes, as well as adjust to the system within the shortest time possible. Employee engagement is almost impossible for the functioning of any organizations. Analysts argue that for <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

any organization to attain high productivity, incorporation of employee engagement in organizations is the blueprint of operations of all organizations.

Alarming statistics indicate that the negative implications of not engaging employees in the workplace are taking an uphill trend. Other statistics indicate that, most workers record high levels, of unhappiness in a majority of organizations in the United Kingdom. Consequently, this has become an uphill task for managers to handle. In fact, a great percentage of studies have recorded employee disengagement and unhappiness as the major indicators of low productivity in the companies.

Experts in the management sector attest to the fact that, if employees are allowed to explore their potential to the fullest, there is a great likelihood that, employees will treat their workplaces as their own businesses. In essence, employees that are engaged are more of proactive than reactive; they are self driven and innovative towards unremitting improvement of their workplaces. Generally, employee engagement has had massive impacts on building rapport between employees in the workplace through creation of proper communication channels; mandatory for growth of organizations. The sole purpose of this dissertation is to understand the implications of engaging employees and their performance. In order, to have a vivid interpretation of this topic, the case study of Etisalat telecommunication Company will be put under scrutiny. The paper will also shed light on the contributions of the HR manager on employee performance. Findings from the study indicate that, it is almost impossible to cater for the needs of all employees in the work place. Additionally the aspect of gender and teamwork will be highlighted in an attempt, to understand the impacts of <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

employee engagement on employees of both genders and its impact on teamwork in organizations.

In the context of performance management, there is a great likelihood that the employees might be motivated by virtue of the company being new. Some factors may have not been mentioned during the study, for instance, cultural variations and gender inequalities. If employee engagement is not fully understood, there arises a need to study the whole concept as a unit, and not in a shallow manner, like has been the trend. It is also vital to note that engaging employees in the work place may be a bit tasking; employee engagement also varies with states. This is an interpretation that this study must be conducted independently.

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### 1. 0. Chapter One

#### 1. 1 Introduction

Employee engagement on performance is vital for almost all organizations that aim at surviving in the industry. Etisalat Nigeria is not short of the awareness that, employee engagement is mandatory for the survival of the upcoming industry. This company is based in Nigeria, with its head office in Banana Island Lagos.

#### 1. 2 Organisational Background

Etisalat Nigeria, a private multinational telecommunication company has been in operation for the past three years. The major areas of operation of this company include provision of mobile and internet services to its customers. Since its onset, the company has been in operation, enjoying monopoly in the United Arab Emirates, with the years, spreading its business to Asia and Africa. According to Etisalat Nigeria (2011), the vision of the

company remains reaching people despite the boundaries of matter and distance. The company enjoys a large work force of around 4000 employees, from various ethnic grouping in Nigeria.

In the context of this case study, the Outbound Unit shall be the major focus of this dissertation. The Outbound Unit is a call centre, responsible for initiating calls, a major factor that is required to satisfy the clients of the company through provision of information on the services offered in the company. At the time of the research, the Outbound Unit enjoyed an employee base of twenty staff. The major competitors of the company include, MTN and Globacom.

### 1. 3 Setting the Scene

According to Storey (1992) and Guest (1997), Human Resource management cannot be alienated from the success of the business. These analysts continue to argue that the performance of the business is greatly affected by the Human Resource management. A great percentage of organizations have been indicated to be devoid of HR practices, thus minimal employee performance and well being. Human resource has been credited with its ability to motivate employees towards performance. In turn; employees have been seen to contribute positively to the organization's financial viability. Through, HR, the right personalities for the job are selected, who in turn fit in the organizational culture. Nonetheless, analysts like Wall & Wood (2005), indicate that not all measurements, contribute to the growth and development of the organization. In almost all of these organizations, financial measurements are concomitant. This is an interpretation of the fact that, HR does not always cover all analytical processes of the organization. At most times, the data collected seems not to concur with performance of <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

the organization. Beardwell & Claydon (2010) indicate that HRM and its impacts on performance require strong and valid arguments. However, other studies indicate that there has been tangible evidence on the impact of HR on the performance of employees in organizations. In response, CIPD (2010) recommends that for people to be effective, there must be incorporation of novel approaches of organizational performance and productivity.

This research will put much emphasis on employee engagement, a theme that deals with the improvement of employees' skills in the organization. The work of Cook (2008) is among the many that have been written to prove the fact that employee engagement has a lot to do with attaining results in the organization. The dissertation will, therefore, undertake a detailed scrutiny on the works of various authors as well as conduct a study on the employees of Etisalat Nigeria (2011) to come up with a conclusion on the impact of employee engagement on performance.

#### 1.4 Objectives

The major aims of this dissertation are to include;

To find out the scope of employee engagement in Etisalat company

To scrutinize the contribution of employee engagement towards team building and performance in the organization

To conduct an in-depth analysis of the impact of employee engagement.

To scrutinize the factors that hamper engagement of employees in Etisalat company

To highlight the major achievements met by Etisalat company in relation to employee engagement.

#### 1.5 Plan of Study

The essay will follow a chronological approach in the presentation of results

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form the study. The research will embark on presentation of a detailed literature review that develops a framework for data analysis in the work. The work shall also incorporate the methodology chapter, findings and analysis of the study. Finally the concluding chapters shall highlight focus more on conclusion and recommendation of the study, as well as, experiences during the study.

## 2. 0. Chapter two: Literature Review

### 2. 1. Introduction

This chapter shall scrutinize the works of various analysts and researchers in relation to employee engagement, in an attempt to allow readers have an understanding of the meaning of employee engagement. From the literature review, an analysis of the validity and reliability of the works will be understood, depending on the writers' view points. Basically, the literature review will focus on the relationship between engagement of employees and performance of employees.

### 2. 2. Defining Employee Engagement

According to CIPD (2011a), employee engagement may be defined as the act of being present during implementation of work. Employee engagement contributes to positive development of work intellectually by instilling positive emotions and meaningful connection to others. Cook (2008) argues that employee engagement refers to the passionate contribution of the workers to the organization. He continues to argue that engagement not only incorporates willingness of employees to work but also the move by employees to ensure that the organization succeeds. It is this fact that has led to many organizations embracing the fact that it is inescapable to exclude employee engagement from success of a business.

Cook (2008) argues that more and more organizations embrace the fact that if success has to be attained, employee engagement is mandatory for the success of organizations. Success of an organization comes with the fact that, quality work is provided by employees, customers are always satisfied, retention as well as, long term stakeholder value. Additionally, Welch & Welch (2006) in Vance (2006) argue that, in order for organizations to be successful, energizing employees is the way forward. They continue to emphasize that no organization can succeed if they do not energize their employees. Energized employees work towards fulfilling the mission and vision of the organization; through their understanding of the organization's mission.

Vance (2006) sheds more light on Welch & Welch (2006) work by arguing that employees who are motivated show a great ability of the employees to display to compete on a higher scale unlike employees who are less motivated. Rothbard (2001) just like CIPD (2011a) indicates that, employee engagement puts much emphasis on psychological presence of the employees- mostly attention and absorption of employees. Employees spend a great amount of time thinking on certain tasks, an activity referred to as attention. On the other hand, exerting high levels of force and interest in organization's tasks is referred to as absorption.

A closer look at these definitions of employee engagement raises questions on the completeness of the topic. Employee engagement has a great relationship with employee commitment, employee involvement, organizational behaviour and psychological contracts. Other analysts argue that if employee engagement has to be discussed in broad terms and prove its validity on its application on organizational performance, the theme has <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>



to incorporate all aspects of the theme and cross the boundaries of being new wine in old wine skins.

## 2. 3. Other related Constructs

### 2. 3. 1. Distinction between employee engagement and employee satisfaction

Little & Little (2006) critic that, employee engagement does not come out clear on the scope of employee engagement, whether individually or on a group. They also argue that it is not clear whether the theme is just an emotional aspect that satisfies employees or it is geared towards group satisfaction of employees as well as commitment. Kular et al (2008) on the other hand, indicates that employee engagement relates to passion for work, and does not by any measure to employee commitment.

May et al (2009) indicates that, employee satisfaction relates to contentment and satisfaction in one's job, while engagement aims at steering the organization towards success and performance. In Saks (2006) work, employee engagement has a lot to do with the level of attentiveness displayed by employees, unlike the attitude that they display. In reality, May et al (2009) indicates that, employee satisfaction has more to do with engagement of employees in the job in a manner that goes beyond satisfaction and motivation of employees. In short engagement of employees exerts a lot of energy on the employees, who ultimately end up offering the best to their employers.

### 2. 3. 2. Employee engagement, employee involvement and Organisational Citizenship and Behaviour (OCB)

According to CIPD (2010), employee engagement is normally not offered by the employees and cannot as well be part of the employee requirement,

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while seeking for the job. Engagement also differs from Organisational Citizenship and Behaviour (OCB).

While the latter OCB is perceived as being voluntary as well as informal behaviour that could enable work efficiency between employees and organisations, engagement is more of a formal role performance and not voluntary behaviour nor a mere exhibition of extra-role behaviours (Sak, 2006).

Engagement also differs from employee involvement as May et al (2004) differentiates the two. They state that involvement is the product of a psychological judgement usually tied to one's desire to satisfy the abilities of doing the job. Engagement they argue is how individuals conduct themselves while performing the task. It is also associated on how emotion and behaviour together with cognition are actively used. Furthermore, engagement differs from psychological contract; as psychological contract is about employees' perception of what the employer owes them as well as what they owe the employer, however, studies have shown that the fulfilment of this promise on the part of the employer would increase employee commitment as well as engagement (Bunderson, 2001) and (Shapiro and Morrow, 2006).

### 2. 3. 3. Gaps in employee engagement

Based on the debate above, it appears that engagement overlaps with other constructs mentioned above, however, engagement could be differentiated by associating it with terms like cognition, emotion, going the extra mile, discretionary effort, energy and delivering results for the good of the organisation. In this regard, it is therefore important to find out what sort of traits are required in an engaged workforce as well as the kind of managerial

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and organisational behaviour that would stir up these traits.

#### 2. 3. 4. Assessment of the employee engagement (EE) performance link

There has been a high relationship between employee engagement and performance in many organizations (Morgan, 2004). Performance, on the other hand is determined by various factors. Gender, teamwork, cultural background of employees, as well as, occupation types is factors to consider while analysing performance of the employees. These factors may either be positively impacted by employee engagement or even in a negative aspect. Recent research conducted by Stamm (2009) indicates that employee engagement motivates the manner in which individuals will perform in the organization. Employee engagement must emanate from the leadership of the organization. Stamm (2009) continues to argue that the benefits of employee engagement continue to escalate. Among the benefits apart from customer satisfaction include, inclusion and motivation of all genders in the workplace, incorporation of all workers despite their cultural background and the kinds of jobs they have been assigned to do in the organization. This is an interpretation of employee engagement and the impact on employee satisfaction and fitting in the work place. In relation to gender differences, motivation of employees, and the types of job they conduct in the organization, it is evident that employee engagement has a lot do with the success of the employee inclusion into the organization.

Employee engagement according to Macey, Schneider, Young and Barbera (2011) has a high relationship with commitment of all types of employees. He continues to argue that with employee engagement, satisfaction is expressed in the workers who attempt to offer their best in the organization. Studies indicate that, globally, employee engagement has had numerous

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effects on the esteem of clients of both genders, commitment as well as their pride. Macey, Schneider, Young and Barbera (2011) argue that in organizations where employee engagement has been high rated, the organizations have indicated high performance in major areas that steer organizations to attaining its goals and objectives.

Among the areas that have indicated great improvements as a result of employee engagement include reduced absenteeism from work; a factor that contributes high returns on the organization. On another angle, employee engagement has managed to incorporate all persons of all cultures in its organization. In light to this argument, it has been noted that employees have displayed high levels of motivation, consequently motivating the performance of the organization. Additionally, a strong correlation between employee engagement and inculcating change in organizations has continued to record escalating trends.

Employee engagement, to a great extent has a great relationship with building up strong team work within the organization. Macey, Schneider, Young and Barbera (2011) argue that employee engagement allows individuals become accustomed to structures, aims and objectives of the organization; an interpretation of smooth flow of work within the organization. Employees are also trained on how to handle changes in the organization. In addition, employees become an active contribution to the success of the organization through an active amalgamation into the organization.

### 2. 3. 5 Employee Engagement Performance Link

Schaffeli and Bakker (2004) argue that engagement embodies vigour, dedication and absorption amongst the workers. They continue to argue <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

that, vigour is referred to as energy exertion and mental resilience while performing a task, dedication is about enthusiasm and the feeling of pride, inspiration and challenge while absorption is the level of intensity and how wrapped up one is while performing the task.

Schauffeli and Bakker (2004) also found that empirical support and employee engagement are positively related to performance. In their findings they ascertained that, engaged employees apply a lot of effort in the workplace, ultimately creating positive feedback in the employees. Their findings also point to the fact that engaged employees are enthusiastic in their work and exert a high level of energy.

In response, Schaffeli and Bakker (2004) improvised a model; Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) in measuring work engagement. The attributes used to measure performance included vigour, dedication and absorption in the workplace. Using a Dutch workforce, they assessed the correlation between engagement and performance and found work engagement to have a correlation with in role performance ( $r = .37$ ), contextual or extra role performance ( $r = .32$ ) and innovation ( $r = .37$ ). They also found that workers who worked excessively hard (workaholics) performed very well in contextual performance.

This study by Schaufelli and Bakker (2004) is a motivation to the hope of understanding the reasons behind the link between employee engagement and high performance. On the other hand, their work is criticised on the basis that, the work did not give an explanation of the steps or the mechanisms that were used in achieving these results. An understanding of the factors that, led to employee being engaged and how it eventually influenced the performance score would be beneficial to complete the study.

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In the work of Hofstede (1980), he argues that cultural variations have an impact on how and what motivates workers. On a sadder note, the study needs to explain what method of data collection was used and the positions the Dutch workers held in the organisation. How was trait and behaviour measured? How has the study tried in eliminating issues of bias is also of importance.

Conclusively, employee engagement performance link appears to be an assumption, since there is no tangible proof to explain that this link exists. However, it still makes good sense that employees who are committed, exhibit a high level of involvement and discretionary behaviour will in most cases outperform those who are not.

## 2. 4 Identifying and Assessing Employee Engagement

In Kahn's (1990), work on ' Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work' employee engagement refers to the process of harnessing employees interest in work, in all aspects, physically, emotionally and cognitively in an attempt to motivate them towards performance. To emphasise on Kahn's (1990) work, May et al (2009), Cook (2008) and the CIPD (2011b) argue that employees who are totally engaged in the organization tend to display peculiar attributes.

On another note, Maslach et al (2001) are quick to argue that employee disengagement, the opposite of engagement renders employees totally exhausted to an extent some may be reduced to stressful circumstances that may ultimately lead to burn outs in the organization. Cook (2008) argues that disengagement may be thrust aside if the employees are subjected to the following conditions;

i. Are cognitively engaged with their work in such a way that they focus on

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their tasks and are very hard working. They are also hardly distracted with their work and they exhibit single-mindedness and high energy.

ii. Are made emotionally concerned with their work in a manner that shows a huge amount of interest and intensity. Engaged employees are intrinsically lost in their task and as a result are hardly distracted in their tasks. It is also an increased passion employees bring to work their organisation.

iii. If the employees are not only physically engaged but also show a high level of willingness to go the extra-mile in task related activities that may include satisfying their customer. They also take charge in developing themselves in such a way that what they learn eventually helps them put in discretionary effort in work related activities.

iv. If employees are made aware of the fact that they are ambassadors of their organisation. The degree to which employees gladly recommend their organisations to their friends and family while discussing business matters or when there is a job vacancy in their organisation. Another key determinant lies in the manner in which employees advertise or portray their organisations to others especially when they are not in the work environment. Are they proud of being a part of the organisation? Do they relate to the organisation in word like ' we' rather than ' they'?

Concurrently, CIPD (2011b) indicates that, the main determinants for gauging employee engagement in the organizations are to analyse employee perceptions whilst on duty. It is vital to weigh the following attributes in the employees to weigh their responses on their engagement. The employees;

i. Always focus on their jobs and the best methodologies that can make the organization, a better place- Intellectually engagement

ii. Show affective engagement towards their work for the reason that, they

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feel positive about doing a good job

iii. Display actions that demonstrate socially engagement as they use the opportunities they have to consistently and constantly talk about work-related improvement with their colleagues

Though the above attributes seem comprehensive and hold much evidence, it is important to keep in mind the fact that, workers that are engaged need much more comprehensive means of measuring their satisfaction. In the case of where the employees think about their work, it may be extremely difficult to measure the amount of energy that is being subjected by these employees. The aspects of feelings, satisfaction, also pose a lot of difficulty in an attempt to weigh what amount of dedication they apply to the organization.

An analysis of works prepared by various authors indicates little or no research on attributes like thoughts and feelings by employees. Managers, on the other hand, are also left at the mercies of estimation of what their employees might feel or contribute intellectually to the organization. No means of measurements of such attributes make it extremely tasking for measurement of employees' needs. As it may remain difficult to assess these attributes, the general consensus fills in the gaps by indicating that if more efforts will lead to higher productivity with less effort dedicated to perform tasks in the organization. However, less efforts has been linked to low productivity, thus creating a need for engaging employees in order to ensure that employees use a substantial amount of energy in the organization.

2. 5. Engaging employees- creation of a emotionally healthy place of work

Engaging employees is a major factor that created a psychologically fit work

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place. However, the main question is employees can be engaged in the workplace so as to ensure that workers provide their best in the workplace. In the context of engaging employees, leaders cannot be alienated from the practice. Leadership, according to Goleman and Cherniss (2001), are the major ingredients towards development of a psychologically fit work place. Leaders of all organizations may be advised to conduct a myriad of activities in the process of ensuring that employees fit well in the workplace; Gather as much feedback as possible from the employees on their strengths and failures. In this case a feedback instrument is recommended Leaders may also carry out research on the contribution of leaders in engaging employees in the work place

Constantly and consistently carry out employee engagement analysis to survey the contributions of managers in engaging employees in the work place.

Leaders must conduct surveys on employee engagement to have an understanding on the changes that can be applied to attain successful employee engagement

Team build on employees to increase their participation in making decisions in the organization, plan on the way forward as well as solve existing problems

Conduct regular interviews on employees to be at par with the niches the organization may be facing

Increase employee engagement through linking their work life and social life. This may be enhanced by incorporating them in health care programs, child care amongst others

According to Ram &Prabhakar (2011) measurement of employee

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engagement has been credited to the employees' level, but in reality, employee engagement is a responsibility of the organization as a whole. Upon compilation of scores, it is evident that the entire organization has to be actively involved as part and parcel of the organization. Additionally, research conducted by CIPD (2011b), indicates that, in order to ensure that employees are engaged in the workplace, the leadership of the organization, managers, must be at par with what is going on in the organization, the policies and contributions of the employees.

However, this study is faced with a challenge of not having sufficient evidence on the practicability aspect of the role of managers in the engaging employees. All in all, managers need to be aware of the roles of all members of the organizations. It is this context that researchers like CIPD (2011a) and Robinson et al (2004) have come up with models of improving how employees need to be handled in organizations. This is an interpretation of the fact that, what employees go through in their work place determines the extent in which they are engaged or disengaged in their workplace. In relation to this fact, an analysis of Khan's (1990) work, that includes psychological safety, meaningfulness and availability and its developments over the years. Khan's (1990) work, however still hold much evidence on the possibility of employees being engaged in the workplace.

Such researchers who still believe in the practicality of Khan (1990) work include Ram &Prabhakar (2011). They argue that Kahn's Model of psychological meaningfulness is concerned with task activities that are challenging for employees and have been linked not only to motivate employees but as well engage them. From their arguments it is evident that jobs should be designed in such a way that attributes like skill variety, task

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identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback are incorporated in the workplace. Such skills according to Ram &Prabhakar (2011) cited in (Kahn, 1990) argue that this model allows the use of skills, personal discretion as well as enable employees to contribute positively to the organization. Khan's model borrows a lot from Locke's goal setting theory which states that if individuals are allowed to set personal goals, they are likely to produce high productivity. However this model may be disqualified by virtue that the approach appears to lack external validity. This is from the fact that, the model does not state how job autonomy can be managed especially in production and routine jobs. It is even more hectic in instances where surveillance is used as a means of control required to meet the business objectives.

On another angle, engaging employees according to Seijts & Crim (2009) should incorporate recognition and reward, as a major driver in engaging employees. These analysts advocate for use of praise, a factor that encourages and increases the continuity of desirable behaviours by the employees in the workplace. On the other hand, May et al (2009) argues that recognition and reward cannot be alienated form motivation of employees. They argue that recognition and rewards not only motivate employees but also make them feel delightful. Praise has been credited for its ability to allow for recognition in the employees, as well as enable employees be conversant with their efforts and contribution, that may be beneficial in increasing organizational performance (Lockewood, 2007).

In the study of employee engagement, it is mandatory to note that, praise is not the only method of showing appreciation to individuals. To prove on this point, Kahn (1990) argues that people differ in the reward they receive and <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

how it matches their role. Ram &Prabhakar (2011) believe that pay may go a long way towards motivating employee as well increasing their engagement unlike use of praise. It is almost certain that, if rewards in terms of monetary value are higher, employees are likely to be more engaged in their work places. According to Maslach et al (2001), lack of reward and recognition may contribute to higher levels of burnout in individuals. For emphasis purposes, they argue that the higher the level of recognition and rewards, the higher the level of employee engagement in organizations. Additionally, CIPD (2010) argues that, bonus payments go a long way in increasing the levels of employee engagement in the work place. In this context, the link between payment and employee engagement in organizations can be clearly understood. Employees tend to be more motivated if additional payments are included in their normal pay. However, the debates about pay and rewards and recognition have proven to be contentious issues in terms of employee engagement. If future research has to be undertaken, it must include all the details that pertain to employee engagement in the work place, especially ones that relate to cost implications.

CIPD (2011) and Ram & Prabhakar (2011) argue that organizational and supervisor supports are the major elements towards employee engagement. Within the working environment, employees tend to develop specific feature that lead to their perception on the contributions they should offer in the work place. Just like Khan (1990) argues, it is important that psychological safety is vital if employee engagement has to be attained. In this case, employees feel secure in the work place that encourage supervisory and organisational support builds a culture where employees feel at ease to try out new plans, devoid of the fact that they may fail. Khan's model has a <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

great link to good supervision relation (May et al, 2009). According to Maslach et al (2001) support from colleagues has a greater influence in engagement and the lack of support can lead to burnout. Similarly, Sak (2006) adds wisdom to the argument to the fact that organisations that support and care about their employees will in return develop employees who have a strong need to help the organisation meet its objective.

On the contrary, the CIPD (2006) rated effectual communication as being the strongest driver of engagement. Effective communication is only attainable with the right atmosphere of openness and transparency- an important requirement for sensible communication, achieving a sustained engagement might not be possible. Additionally, Robinson et al (2004) conclusion on a study, indicate that an empirical survey must involve employees in decision-making and the degree to which their managers value their contributions and ideas is a key engagement driver.

According to Murphy and DeNisi (2008), training is an imperative aspect of performance management. Training allows employees have a motivation towards performing the best in their organization. It has been noted that organisations that provide training opportunity and career enhancement for their employees, not only make them confident in doing their work, but also increases the self esteem of these employees (Murphy and DeNisi 2008). On another angle, they put forward that training and development in organisations has a high relationship with an employee's intention to retain their jobs for a longer period of time.

Correspondingly, training according to Axtell & Parker (2003) increases employee competency and allows them to do better in their work place.

Training programs are related to the ability to create opportunities for

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employees to muddle through their job despite the drawbacks. Kahn (1990) indicates that individuals are more engaged when they are equipped with the skills to handle tough situations in their work place. If employees feel appreciated through career development and skill enhancement, their engagement level increases. This interprets to the fact that, always keeping employees engaged at all times by enrolling them in employees' development plan. Leaders have an essential role in promoting the engagement of their subordinates. Transformational leaders may increase engagement level for the reason that, they emphasise and increase the knowledge of social support.

These analysts believe that, that transformational leaders are instrumental in helping employees boost their confidence. Leaders that ensure their subordinates are provided with resources promote psychological availability (Schauffeli and Salanova, 2007). According to Gruman and Sak (2010) leaders can enhance engagement by posing difficult tasks to their employees so as to promote psychological meaningfulness, which strengthens employee engagement. In addition, the CIPD (2011) argued that if engagement has to be enhanced, leaders must ensure that the organization's mission and vision are clearly explained to the employees. In this context, employees are able to work towards a comprehensible line of sight that ensures a flexible, open and transparent culture. On the other hand, provision of job autonomy and empowerment, opportunities, simplified expectations, respect and treating of employees. Coaching, feedback, and training would also go a long way towards ensuring that tasks are designed efficiently and effectively.

It is important to mention that, engagement of employees does not include <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

the aspect of balanced work and social life of employees (Robison, Hooker & Hayday, 2007). Job meaningfulness, perceived supervisor and organisational support, effective communication, training and development and good leadership may not have meanings if the employees do not have a satisfactory lifestyle.

## 2. 6. Key benefits of employee engagement

Employee engagement has indeed had massive positive impacts on the organization. Basing facts from the research conducted by Macleod (2010) employee engagement has enabled employees get involved in the organizations through incorporation of the ideas they possess in improving the business. Leaders, on the other hand, thanks to employee engagement, are able to include all employees in the work places. Studies indicate that leaders to listen to their employees predicaments and make certain that all employees are devoted and work towards goal-oriented objectives. Macleod (2010) argues that the execution of engagement should be the priority of contemporary employers. Organizations must work in the direction of hibernating from the old style of command and control to sustain competitive advantage. Today's world of business requires innovative ideas, involvement and creativity.

Another positive impact of employee engagement includes, according to Gabauer et al (2008) increasing performance in the organization. They explained that engagement of employees creates a situation whereby they feel engaged in their work, work more effectively and selflessly.

Organisational performance, productivity, retention and financial performance are credited to employee engagement (Bates, 2004).

Organizations would not be in a position to protract sensible behavioural

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practices, with employee engagement out of the picture. According to Macey et al (2009) conclusion on research conducted on 65 firms from different sectors, 25 percent of the organisations that advocated for employee engagement recorded sensible return on their invested assets while organisations that did not have any form of engagement recorded a reduction in the company's asset.

Conclusively, it is justified to argue that, employee engagement has been beneficial to many organizations as it improves performance by increasing the profits that the organization acquires from the effort of motivated employees (Luthans & Peterson, 2001). All in all, employee engagement has also had flaws especially in the aspects of burnout literature.

## 2. 7. Barriers of engagement

Attaining successful employee engagement has proven to be an uphill task to many leaders of various organizations. Among the major reasons towards difficulty in attaining successful engagement are inclusive of burnout.

Burnout- a component of disengagement- has recorded the most negatives in an attempt to attain employee engagement (Maslach et al, 2001).

A lot of research indicates that, disengagement has been linked to excess workload and too many demands (Schauffeli and Bakker, 2004). According to Rehman et al (2010), burnout may be described as physical, emotional and mental exhaustion as a result, of unremitting involvement in circumstances that are extremely demanding in terms of emotions. Employees who are hackneyed tend to make many errors in the workplace as compared to workers who are motivated with less work load. In the long run, most employees end up subjects to stress and physical health problems; others end up tackling clinical depression. Lockwood (2006), on the other hand, <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>



explains that stress in the workplace has recorded rising statistics due to pressure of competition with other organizations.

Lockwood (2006) argues that while employee engagement contributes positively to organizations, stress and exhaustion to the employees has not been an excuse. Poor concentration of employees in their jobs is another great barrier to employee engagement. To curb this issue, reducing output by employees is necessary. Many customer care attendants constantly complain of less concentration in their jobs that require them sober in order to offer continuous emotional support. While it may be difficult to assess jobs of this nature, it may be difficult to detect the level of output by employees. Managers must also be quick to focus on the issues of emotional exhaustion in the workplace (Freeney and Tiernan, 2009).

According to Vance (2006) he argues that workplaces that do not consider incorporating employees in control of their work do not give employees a chance to establish themselves. The organization is also at a risk of undergoing massive failures in the course of their operations. Employees have always wanted to be part and parcel of decision making process. Inclusion of employees in such crucial processes allows employees be in a position to handle situations in the workplace. However, it is also important to limit the amount of work being loaded on the employees. Employees tend to be extremely distressed if they are faced with too many responsibilities that they may not handle effectively.

Another factor that has been recorded on the list of barriers to employee engagement, according to Maslach et al (2001) is inappropriate and insufficient reward and recognition schemes. Poor rewards and recognition increases the level of burnout and does not include financial reward alone.

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Worse still, it gets to extreme points if there is no form of social reward among colleagues or supervisor to subordinates. Effective feedback increases the level of engagement; thus, preventing burnout among employees. In turn, employees are able to trace their progress and discern the dos and don'ts in the organization.

Lack of positive connection among the employees is another barrier to employee engagement. Freeney and Tiernan (2009) indicate that, in order to increase employee engagement positive connection among workers must be inculcated in individuals. If caution is applied, there may be high risk of increased burnout. Engagement can only flourish in cases where high sense of social support is made available to employees. Freeney and Tiernan (2009) emphasise on this fact by arguing that happy employees tend to share communal friendship as well as perform better in the organizations. In as, much team work contributes to work stressors and poor employee engagement, Thompson and Mchugh (2009) argue that team work allows employees make personal decisions. Team work increases contentment in jobs, intrinsic motivation, organisational obligation, employee interests, also improving performance.

Employee engagement is barred by less emphasis on employee self esteem. Robinson et al (2004) and the CIPD (2009) believe in the notion that making employees feel valued is very significant in engaging employees. Lack of even-handedness in the workplace creates a situation whereby employees feel insecure in the workplace. In order to build trust in the organization, transparency is also very important as it builds trust between employees and employers. Studies indicate that lack of transparencies may lead to burnout in organizations (Maslach, 2001).

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On another angle employee, engagement may be barred by the organization's failure to work on its engaged workforce (Vance, 2006). The cost implications that come alongside with engagement of employees include provision of rewards, benefits, health and safety, training in the work place. Some of the small organisations cannot handle sting policies on engagement of employees and follow them to the letter. It is important that, managers go back to the starting point and focus on the way forward towards engaging employees in their workplace successfully.

## 2. 8. Devising strategic engagement strategies

In order for employee engagement to be successful, various aspects are inescapable. Cook (2008) argues that for employee engagement to be successful, strategic planning must be considered. Strategic, in this context relates to the fact that, every business plan should be aligned with an engagement strategy, an instance, of the Sales department; performance indicators are incorporated in the department so as to scrutinize the volume of sales and the employee benefit package. Most managers hold the view that, whatever is measurable is what is accomplished. However, May et al (2009) and Cook (2008) argue that behaviour and attitude are key performance indicators that should be calculated because they are not only beneficial towards gauging the amount of work done but also vital to the organizational well being.

In line to this argument, it is understandable to argue that measurement of human attributes like behaviour; attitude and trait have been in recent years has been extremely difficult. Application of high performer must score high in both tasks, and contextual related (extra-role behaviour) performance may be beneficial in this context. It is imperative, as a result, to understand <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

these aspects of performance and how employee engagement contributes towards employee engagement.

## 2. 9. Performance in the workplace

Job performance has had varying meanings according to various scholars.

The scope of the study on job performance in order to have a comprehensive definition has been a task that analysts have undertaken bravely. Diverse writers argue that performance is a process approach whilst others refer to it as an outcomes approach.

The process approach confines itself on the actions and the steps people take to execute a certain task, or what activities employees engage in their work environment. The outcome approach focuses on the products and services that the organisation produces whether they are up to standard with what the organization produces (Bakker and Leiter, 2010). It is important to mention job performance in the context of employee engagement in that, both have a certain element of correlation. Both rely on each other for fulfilment in the workplace setting.

Armstrong (2009) defines job performance as a methodical way of enhancing organisational performance by building on the performance of its employees.

Job performance is all about managing people with the aim of getting better results by understanding and managing performance in a sensible manner.

There is the need to have agreed structures on intended objectives, standards and required competency that employees have to meet. Job performance heartens employees towards giving their all in the workplace. Setting clear goals in the workplace is the way forward towards attaining job performance.

On the part of Rao (2004), he argues that performance is that which is

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expected by members of an organisation to deliver within a period of time. However, Gruman and Sak (2010) argue, that less than one third of employees think that their organisation's performance management strategy helps them in enhancing their performance, and that performance management has constantly been ranked the lowest topic in satisfaction surveys filled by employees. In concurrence, Marchington and Wilkinson (2005) are major critics on performance measurement. They argue that, job performance is too subjective and measurements will be mere preconceived notions. Employees need to be included in the setting job performance so that an agreement is obtained on the goals to be achieved. CIPD (2009) recommends that an open communication that advocates for free flow of communication between employees and their line managers should be adopted by all organizations. The over dated style of command and control approach has entirely no place in novel organizations.

Measurement of human behaviour in relation to job performance has intense flaws that need to be filled. Rao (2004) explains that people differ in organisations in terms of their qualifications. It is in this line that it becomes strenuous to measure all individuals separately; in this case performance objectivity within organisation may not be achieved. However, Buchner (2007) suggests that present-day issues that organisations face has led to many organisations embrace the need that organizations need to refocus their attention on their performance system, in an attempt to ascertain better ways of improving employee performance.

Generally, the overall aim of performance, in Armstrong's (2010) view, is to enforce a high performance culture in which members of the organisation take responsibility for unremitting upgrading of the business objectives, their

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own skill and the agenda provided by their leaders. Marchington and Wilkinson (2005) add on to explain that performance management is mainly about aligning individual objectives to organisational objective.

Consequently, this continues to ensure that the individual maintains and upholds the corporate core values to the letter. Upon attaining these goals in the organization, it is warranted to argue that employees have undergone assessment.

## 2. 10. Assessing employee performance

Assessing employee performance is critical in the workplace. Armstrong's (2009) work pointed out that it is the sole responsibility of the line managers to devise tangible methodologies of gauging employee performance. He argues that in view of the fact that, most of the HR functions are being implemented and ratified by the front line manager; this means that assessing employee performance should also be one of the roles of the line manager. However, problems radiate because there are fears that most line managers are not conversant with what is expected of them in terms of assessing employee performance.

Consequently, problems tend to arise as employees take advantage of the fact that, their managers do not have the available skills required to assess them (Armstrong, 2009). As Rao (2004) explains, employees get concerned by the day, because performance ratings that go into their personal records could have a negative impact on their jobs especially in terms of promotion. On the other hand, Marchington & Wilkinson (2005) pointed out that most managers dread the job of assessing job performance of their employees, arguing by virtue of the task being extremely time consuming, tedious, strenuous and complicated. In order to find solutions to this predicament, <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

managers ought to be trained to understand the implication of erroneous assessment as well as the need to be more systematic or objective in what they assess.

## 2. 11. Assessment attributes

Various attributes play a major role in the assessment of employees in the work place. Armstrong (2009) argues that upholding the organisational values cannot be alienated from job performance. Job performance in line to this argument may entail every bit of what employees do while at work. Lesgold (1997) cites an example by arguing that there are two constituents of performance- the task performance and the contextual performance. The task performance requires formal routine that is usually prescribed and may require physical activities to execute the tasks. Contextual performance or discretionary behaviour, on the other hand, is the performance of activities that is not specific to a job but contribute to organisational, social and psychological environment in which task performance occurs. From Lesgold's (1997) definition, employee engagement goes an extra mile through employee involvement and commitment. This aspect appears to be one of the criteria for high performance rating since employees are judged not only for their primary tasks but on the manner in which the primary activity is carried out.

He continues to define the two components based on the hypothesis that contextual performance is influenced by personal qualities-engagement- while task performance is influenced by general physical abilities. From Lesgold argument, it is justified to argue that, there has been a growing substantiation for the increasing strategic importance of contextual performance for its implications on indirect long term consequences. In <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

response, Purcell (2009) explains that discretionary actions may be regarded as performance indicators that could be used in measuring front line service workers either by telephone or on a one on one basis. Among the attributes that may need to be assessed include, emotional labour like smiling while speaking on the phone, using intelligence to handle issue sin the organization, and coming up with immediate responses.

Measurement of behaviour, as part of job performance indicator has proven to be an uphill task. All in all, Rao (2004) argues that to some extent, this perception can be altered if expected behaviour is identified and ratings, given on the basis of evaluation. He further explains that ratings could be categorised under headings like excellent or outstanding, good, above average or fairly good. Upon categorisation, they also need to be through the use of particular points in each category. For instance, excellent = 7, very good = 6, above average = 5, average = 4 below average = 3, poor performance = 2 (Rao, 2004).

All line managers must work towards ensuring that employees' performance must be of quality at all times. Nevertheless, in order to ensure that employees perform very well, line managers have to consistently seek out, for ways of making employees utilize their abilities. Other writers like Robinson et al (2004), Rucci et al (2000) May et al (2009) and the CIPD (2006) indicate that there is a correlation between employee engagement and job performance. If engagement is well utilised, positive outcomes for organisations are bound to be attained. These writers also believe in the fact that, engagement reduces absenteeism and increases retention. Melcrum Publishing (2005) adds on to argue that it takes minimal theoretical influence to get business leaders to believe that committed hard working and smart

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employees, will outperform those who just turn up to work merely for the reason that, they are obliged to do so.

In relation to this issue, these writers are aim at bringing out the fact that, there is a great link between employee engagement and performance. This is an interpretation of the fact that line managers who want elevated performance, must be on toes to seek for ways to engage their employees. Conversely, it is necessary to evaluate the validity of the link between elevated performance and employee engagement.

## 2. 12. Brief summary of literature review

Summing up, several debates, in this context on employee engagement can be summarised by an analysis of Kahn, the CIPD and Schaffeli and Bakker works. The common perception in all works is that employee engagement is about enthusiasm, vigour, emotion, passion and intellectually thinking and acting in ways that would make their organisation successful. Schaffeli and Bakker's (2004) study puts to test the link between employee engagement and performance. However their research has like many others, recorded a series of flaws that are hindered by lack of measurement on how engagement links with performance. Dedication, vigour and passion, as cited examples are immeasurable; as a result, may be difficult to assess.

It is in this light that further research is recommended in order to search for ways of improving performance measurement. Additionally, literature on performance may need additional more details on how line managers may in some ways reduce the issue of preconceived notion while conducting performance rating. Consistency in measuring a quality customer service or discretionary effort- as a performance rating- may be hard to attain. In future, research might be fashioned to involve customers in the overall

performance ratings. In addition, performance discernment may be hindered by external factors like sickness, system failures; a factor, that undermines any form of employee engagement. Just like the CIPD and other writers have given employee engagement a broad view, that may make it difficult to use in all context, they also need to find a way of coming up with clear-cut explanations on how cultural factors may affect people's level of engagement and disengagement and performance. On the other hand, studies should be further narrowed down to include different organisations, a move that this research has surpassed.

### 3. 0 Methodology

#### 3. 1. Introduction

This chapter provides information on how the study was conducted for purpose of obtaining data used in the study. The study aimed at exploring the impact of employee engagement on performance. The findings will be based on the ontological perception that social entities can and should be viewed as objective entities that have reality external to social actors. The research will also ensure that it abides to all ethical obligations not only to ensure that it meets the requirements of the study, but also to ensure that all respondents' identities are kept anonymous.

According to (Mertens 2005) research could be seen as an organized way of searching for information in such a way that the data is gathered, examined and then interpreted in order not only to understand the subject but also to describe, predict and to take control of an educational or psychological occurrence. This section thus describes the procedures and strategies used in the study under the following sub headings in an effort to answer the research questions; description of the research design, sample and sampling

procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures

### 3. 2 Research design

Research design is a well developed structure within which research is conducted; it entails an outline for collection, measurement and analysis of data (Gall and Borg, 2010). It is the organization of events for collection and analysis of data using a given procedure (Sarantankos, 2006). The researcher used a case study design to conduct an in-depth analysis of employee engagement on performance. The design enabled the researcher to determine factors and their relationships that have resulted in the behavior under this study thus the researcher conducted a detailed examination of the existing phenomena.

The researcher used the mixed method to obtain and analyze data using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The mixed method approach is essential because it enables the researcher to creatively use different techniques to carry out the research that would not have been possible if a single method was solely used. The method also ensures that any form of bias coming from a single approach is not replicated in an alternative approach. This method provides the researcher with the opportunity to balance the weakness of one method with the strength of the other (O'Leary 2004; Burns 2004; Brannen 1992).

### 3. 3 Target population

The targeted population for this study was employees in Etisalat Nigeria. The study participants were all employees in the Etisalat. The reasons of selecting these participants are that they are the custodian of the organization and can easily elaborate of employee engagement on

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performance.

### 3. 4 Data collection instruments

Questionnaires and interview guides were used in the study. Questionnaires were distributed to the participants and some of the respondents were also interviewed. One of the methods used in distributing the research questions was by email. This method had some limitations; like ensuring that the data were correctly filled and understanding how body language may have influenced the results, however, the use of email enabled the researcher to have a one to one response to his respondents.

Three managers were interviewed. This is because the researcher wanted to solicit information about employee engagement on performance. Interviews were also used so as to obtain first hand information. Lastly managers were interviewed to ensure uniformity in the means of data collection. The research was designed so that all employees filled their responses through questionnaires while managers' responses were through interviews.

The questionnaires were carefully designed in a structured way which still allowed participants to express their views on the subject. The questions asked were selected on the basis of how other authors like the CIPD have conducted a similar research that measures the link between employee engagement and performance. The researcher also interviewed two Managers and one training Manager in Etisalat for the purpose of the research.

### 3. 5. Reliability

Reliability refers to the measure or degree to which a researcher instruments yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Nachiamis & Nachiamis, 2006). They define reliability using its synonyms such as <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

dependability, stability, consistence, predictability and accuracy The researcher used the split half technique which required only one testing session to determine the reliability of the instruments. The questions in the questionnaires and interview guides were separated into two sets using odd numbered questions for one set and even numbered question for the other set (Nachiamis & Nachiamis, 2006).

Each of the two sets of questions in the questionnaires and the interview guides were treated separately and scored accordingly. The two sets were then correlated to establish the correlation coefficient. The purpose of this correlation coefficient was to show the extent to which the instruments are free of errors variance that is usually caused by extraneous factors such as ambiguous questions, language and mood of the respondents or even the researcher's manner or ordering items in the instruments.

### 3. 6. Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure and consequently permits appropriate interpretations of the scores (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). In order to increase content validity the instruments, the data was methodically triangulated so that combinations of interview guides and the questionnaires tested the same questions to different participants. The researcher consulted experts in the research department from the department of research in his institution who gave their feedback which was used to validate the instruments.

The researcher also got expert opinion on the usability of the instruments and advises on how to adapt them to this study. Their views on content and structure were incorporated in the final draft of the study. The questionnaires were pilot tested to a number of participants in a different area other than <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

the area of study to find out the extent to which the instruments measured what they were designed to measure.

### 3. 8. Data collection procedures

In this case, study data was collected from the field using questionnaires and interview guides. A research permit was obtained from the local authorities. The researcher then presented it to all relevant offices during the field exercise. The researcher was then given an introductory letter to give to the participants while collecting data. The study participants were then stratified according to the categories depending with the level of employment from different departments.

The researcher personally administered the instruments to all the participants within the area of study. The researcher carried out telephone interviews with the study participants within the area. This was conducted with a lot of kindness to ensure that the researcher did not miss out on the information that sometimes is envisioned through the participants' body language and voice modulation. It was an effort to give the study the seriousness that it deserves by the respondents seeing the researcher participates directly thus is fully cooperative. The researcher distributed and administered the questionnaires in the evening when the workers were out of duty and collected them as per agreement with the participants.

### 3. 9. Data analysis procedures

The data was obtained from the field in systematically and organized way, so as to carry out data analysis. Quantitatively the researcher analyzed the data and gave summaries of statistics of the variables being studied in tables and figures. The outcome of the quantitative data from the questionnaires was tabulated, tallied and summarized so as to obtain the <https://assignbuster.com/interest-rate-parity-exchange-rates/>

descriptive statistics. Secondly the organized qualitative data was categorized into themes narratives and patterns.

Lastly the researcher wrote