

# **An Investigation of Employees Engagement and Malaysian Female Employees' Performance**

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## **Abstract**

In most of the world, we have known that female employees have significantly contributed to the economic growth of an organisation and nation. In conjunction with female employees' contribution, the current study seeks to examine the relationship between employee engagement and employee job performance among the female workforce in Malaysian. A total of 300 female employees were randomly selected to participate in the survey. Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to those 360 female respondents. The data were analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS-20). Descriptive statistics (frequency and mean) and inferential statistics (regression analysis) were employed in this study. The result shows that employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on female job performance in Malaysia. It is hoped that the findings of this study can assist female employees and employers better to understand the impact of engagement on employee job performance. Besides, the results of the study can help employers and policymakers to formulate measures or strategies to boost their female employees' work performance. The findings are also valuable for researchers to conduct future research to identify other factors that can influence female employees' work performance.

## **Keywords**

Employees' engagement, job performance, the female workforce in Malaysia context

## **1. Introduction**

Engagement of employees is crucial for the success of organisation and female employees are believed can contribute to the country economic development. Female employees who are engaged with their work will perform their task and job efficiently. However, the job performance of female employees has been sometime questionable over the past several years due to their multi responsibilities as a mother, wife and workers (Rahim and Omar et al., 2017). Arham et al. (2019) stated that household responsibilities correlated and affected work-life conflict among working women. The work-life conflict will directly affect female performance if they do not manage that conflict well. Adhikari (2012) stated that working mothers facing the symptoms of anxiety and stress every day. It is because they face the tasks conflict and role conflict as mother, wife, and employee. Due to increasing number of female in labor force, the topic of female job performance has become a crucial topic among researchers.

## 1.1 Objectives

The objective of the present study is to examine the impact of employee engagement and job performance among female employees in Malaysia context

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Job Performance

Job performance has become an important variable and has gained attention for educators, business, government and society (Rotundo, 2002; Arifin et al., 2019). It is because currently, researchers and companies have to agree on common definitions and conceptualisations of individual job performance ratings (Rotundo, 2002; Kamaruddin et al., 2020). Job performance refers to the effort of someone in performing his task or jobs (Berghe, 2011; Arifin et al., 2020). In this study, job performance defines the ability of an individual to perform his or her tasks to meet the organisation's goals or not. Generally, job performance has been applied as the dependent variable by past studies (Jankingthong & Rurkkhum, 2012). Undeniably, female workers have contributed a lot to the development of the Malaysian economy. According to Ahmad (1998), he stated that the contribution of female workers in the socio-economic sector is the result of growing rates of female labour workforce participation. He added the increase in productive activities of women, and their strengthened economic standing, their increasing participation in the education sector and their health status are becoming better. Kamaruddin et al. (2021) found that factors such as motivation, organisational climate, and time management significantly affected female employees' job performance. Also, factor such as personality has been found to influence employees' performance in the organisation (Allahmeh et al., 2012; Askarian, 2013; Halim et al., 2011).

### 2.2 Employee Engagement

Skilled, talented and knowledgeable employees are needed to ensure the success of an organisation. It seems important to pay attention to the female employees' engagement since female employees have also become a significant contributor to the country economic growth. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by three dimensions comprises vigour, dedication, and absorption. Employees' engagement has become a significant work attitude to reach the organisation goal. It also helps in improving the employees' responsibilities, motivating them to complete their task efficiently, which, in the end, improves their performance (Siswanto & Lestari, 2019). Thus, the study of the impact of employee engagement on female job performance is very vital. The study by Othman and Mahmood (2019) found that high potential employee engagement positively and significantly influences on individuals' work performance among manufacturing employee located at Klang Valley, Malaysia. Besides, Dajani (2015) found that employee engagement had a significant impact on employee performance in the public and private sector. It portrays that employee engagement could be related to female employees' job performance in Malaysia. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: There is a positive impact of employee engagement on job performance among female employees in Malaysia.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature, Figure 1 demonstrated the proposed conceptual framework for this study.

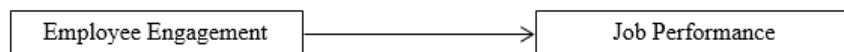


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## 3. Methods

The data for this study were collected randomly from manufacturing, education, health and hospitality sectors in Malaysia. This study uses a quantitative method; specifically, a survey questionnaire was used to collect the required data related to this study.

### 3.1 Research Instruments

In this study, items used have been adapted and developed from prior studies. The questionnaires were adapted to gather information needed from 300 female employees from seven (7) states in Malaysia. Data were gathered using a self-administered survey. The questionnaire was divided into three (3) sections: section A is on demographic profile, section B is on employee engagement, and section C is on job performance. The measurements used in this study

adapted from the previous studies. Measurement for employee engagement has been adapted from Schaufeli et al. (2012) that consist of 10 items. The items measuring employee engagement are divided into three dimensions covering vigour, dedication and absorption. Examples of items are, "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work", "To me, my job is challenging", and "I feel happy when I am working intensely". The measurement for job performance is adapted measurement from Shaffril and Uli (2010). The items measuring job performance are divided into four dimensions, which are work quantity, work quality, punctuality and work system. The data were analysed and presented in figures and tables. The data were collected based on the availability of the respondents during their work time to avoid bias, and permission was obtained from them before they answer the questions.

### 3.2 Sampling Technique and Procedure

A total of 360 questionnaires distributed to the female employees from peninsular Malaysia and 300 was returned and classified as useful data with 83.3% response rate. The respondents' response rate was considered in this study to know the cooperation from the respondents with regards to answering the questionnaires distributed to them. The sample of this study comprises female employees who are employed in four sectors which are education, health, hospitality and manufacturing. The survey applied was the self-administered survey.

## 4. Results and Discussion

As stated previously, this study used the survey design in the form of a questionnaire. Thus, before the questionnaire was spread out to the respondents, it was tested for face validity and reliability. Face validity was conducted by distributing the questionnaires to ten female workers in the education and manufacturing sectors to determine whether they could understand the questions. The questionnaire was also reviewed and validated by experts who are lecturers in the field of management studies. As for the reliability of the questionnaire, it was tested by using Cronbach's alpha, which is a traditional method to ensure that the scales of items (measurement) are unquestionably reliable to use. Questionnaires were distributed to female employees in four (4) sectors in Malaysia to obtain the data about their perception on the impact of employees' engagement on job performance. A total of 300 female employees answered the questionnaires distributed to them. Majority of the respondent's age between 26 to 30 years old (28.3%) followed by 21 to 25 years old (21.7%), 31 to 35 years old (21.7%), above 41 years old (15.3%), 36 to 40 years old (9.0%) and below 21 years old (4.0%). This show that respondents who answer the questionnaires are matured enough to evaluate the question asked to them. In terms of marital status, the majority were married (63.7%), single (33.0%) and divorced (3.3%) (See Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

	Characteristics	Frequency (n=30)	Percent
Age	Below 21 years	12	4
	21-25 years	65	21.7
	26-30 years	85	28.3
	31-35 years	65	21.7
	36-40 years	27	9
	Above 41 years	46	15.3
Marital status	Single	99	33
	Married	191	63.7
	Divorced	10	3.3
Income level	<Rm2000	158	52.7
	RM2001-RM4000	100	33.3
	RM4001-RM6000	28	9.3
	RM6001-RM8000	10	3.3
	RM8001-RM10,000	3	1
	>RM10,000	1	0.3
Education	Primary School	3	1
	High School	112	37.3
	Diploma	97	32.3
	Degree	66	22
	Master	16	5.3
	Doctorate	6	2
Locations	Terengganu	78	26

Johor	75	25
Penang	35	11.7
Selangor	30	10
Pahang	31	10.3
Kelantan	26	8.7
Kuala Lumpur	25	8.3

Table 2 presents the result for instruments reliability. Instruments for variables in this study are reliable to use because the Cronbach's Alpha values are high (0.851 for employee engagement and 0.858 for job performance). According to DeVellis (2003), if the Cronbach's Alpha values are more than 0.70, it is acceptable to use. The data is considered normal since the values are between -1 and +1 (Chua, 2006). Thus, the data of this study are considered a normal category since it passes the suggested value of S-K, which is below than -1 and +1 (See Table 2).

Table 2. Results reliability, number of items, standard deviation and normality testing

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Employees engagement	0.851	10	0.507	-0.227	0.824
Job performance	0.858	8	0.486	-0.162	0.528

Table 3. Results in descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) for variables and items

Variables	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees' Engagement	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	3.60	0.877
	At work, I feel bursting with energy	3.73	0.762
	At my job, I am resilient, mentally	3.78	0.708
	At my job I feel strong and energetic	3.75	0.735
	To me my job is challenging	3.95	0.744
	My job inspires me	3.92	0.73
	I am enthusiastic about my job	3.87	0.778
	When I am working, I forget everything else around me	3.34	0.964
	I get carried away when I am working	3.70	0.762
	I feel happy when I am working intensely	4.08	0.652
Job Performance	I always achieve my personal work objectives	3.80	0.748
	I always achieve the organisational goals	3.80	0.64
	I strive for work excellence	4.06	0.622
	I always work systematically	3.91	0.673
	I am always consistent in meeting my work targets	3.94	0.643
	I am always consistent in completing my work	3.93	0.686
	I always do my work on time	3.88	0.72
	The work system fulfils my personal work goals	3.75	0.742

Table 3 shows that the variable of employee engagement and job performance are categorized as high. It can be seen from the mean value is more than 3.67. Table 4 shows R2 indicated that employee engagement explained 38.02% of variation on job performance. Also, it shows that the overall regression model statistically significant. Employee

engagement predicts female job performance with a significant value of  $p < 0.000$ . The ANOVA specifies the significance level of the model (Pallant, 2011).

Table 4. Results determination coefficient and simultaneous test (model fit test)

Model	Regression	Residual	Total
Sum of Squares	26.845	43.773	70.618
df	1	298	299
Mean Square	26.845	0.147	
F		182.758	
Sig.		0.000 <sup>b</sup>	
R		0.617 <sup>a</sup>	
R Square		0.380	
Adjusted R Square		0.378	
Std. Error of the Estimate		0.383	

Table 5 displays the result of hypothesis testing. The result indicates that employee engagement has a positive and significant influence on female job performance in Malaysia (see Beta – Unstandardised Coefficient = 0.617, t statistics 13.519 and p-value < 0.01). Thus, hypothesis 1 in this study is confirmed. The findings of this study are similar to several previous studies that job performance is affected by employee engagement (Othman & Mahmood, 2019; Dajani, 2015). Markos and Sridevi (2010) explained that employee engagement could generate positive organisational performance outcomes, like productivity, profit, customer loyalty, and employee retention. Further, employee engagement was found to be directly and positively influencing the female workers' job performance (see regression slope = 0.591). Regression slope reveals that when the employee engagement increases then the job performance would also increase. If employee engagement changes as much as 1%, it will give effect to female workers' job performance by 61.7%. Also, a study by Motyka (2018) confirms that based on the results of the secondary data review, it indicates that, there is a statistically significant relationship between employee engagement and performance. Therefore, it can be concluded that female employees in Malaysia will perform better if their job itself inspire them, and they have enough energy to carry out the duty and performs their task. Therefore, employers need to provide a proper schedule for their employees, and in fact, it is good practices if the employer can provide and create good planning to sure their employees feel good at the workplace.

Table 5. Results hypotheses testing

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.655	0.166		9.946	0.000
Employees engagement	0.591	0.044	0.617	13.519	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Performance

## 5. Conclusion

This study has successfully investigated the impact of employee engagement on female job performance in Malaysia. As expected, employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on female workers' performance in Malaysia. The findings of this study would enrich the peoples, employees' and employers' understanding of the role of employee engagement in boosting job performance among female employees. Understanding the impact of employee engagement on job performance among the female employees will assist employers and employees themselves to make any possible effort to ensure their working place and surrounding are supportive and good for female workers to be engaged of work.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Universiti Malaysia Terengganu and staff for moral support during the fieldwork. We would also like to thank the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, for financial support through FRGS59301.

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