An Expedition Towards Innovation Through Engagement Hawassa Industrial Park, Ethiopia

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Abstract

In this turbulent and unprecedented dynamic world of business, organizations must value changes through creativity and innovation to sustain. For every organization, innovation is an everyday combat for excellence demanding commitment. Innovation and the practice of engagement linked intricately, with employee engagement playing a key role as a fundamental precursor in nurturing creativity and innovation within the place of work. The study aims to explore the synergistic effects of job responsibilities, social support, and job features on employee engagement in promoting innovation. With the use of a structured survey, quantitative data about job characteristics, perceived social support, job responsibility, and engagement levels was gathered from a broad sample of employees. The results show how these factors are intricately related to one another, and that positive aspects of the work, such task diversity, autonomy, and feedback, are associated with higher levels of engagement and creative contributions. Strong social support networks that foster cooperation and mentorship are also positively correlated with heightened engagement. The practical consequences of these findings for businesses seeking to foster innovation and creativity via engagement include the need for thoughtful job design, robust support networks, and balanced task distribution.

Keywords: *Innovation, Employee Engagement, Social Support, Job Characteristics, Job Responsibility.*

Introduction

In this turbulent and unprecedented dynamic world of business, organizations must value changes through creativity and innovation to sustain. Currently, Innovation is becoming a matter of survival for firms. To stay competent and sustainable in business innovation is a precursor (Anderson Potocnik, and Zhou, 2014). Over the past two decades, researchers and various stakeholders have made more efforts to study employee aptitude, generate and implement new ideas, and introduce new work processes, procedures, and practices in the workplace. The effort exerted is all to know about the innovative workplace behavior of an employee (De Jong and Den Hartog, 2010). The Innovative and inventive work behavior encompasses not only the generation of new ideas, but also applies those ideas to realize innovation (Wang, Shi, Liu, & Zhou, 2021).

As Ramamoorthy et al. (2005) clarified that, organizations heavily depends on the innovative and creative behavior of their employees in work settings in order to advance and innovate its process, procedures and operations. Van de Ven (1986) marked, the foundation of innovation lies in ideas, the most important element in achievement of innovation is employees, who have conceived, champion,

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responded to and improved ideations. The innovative behavior that employees experience will ultimately help the organization design new work processes that will result in efficiency, new product ideas, organizational performance, **survival**, profitability and improved job satisfaction (Janssen, 2000; Shanker et al., 2017; Mummedy 2008).

Innovation enables firms to penetrate the market and remain competitive in the market and capturing the attention of their customers, eventually enabling them to become competitively advantageous (Noefer et al., 2009; Mummedy 2008). Van de Van (1986) defined innovation as the development and implementation of new ideas by people engaging and interacting with others in an institutional system over time. Innovation is often **considered** a good thing because the new idea must be useful, profitable, constructive, and solve a problem (Kimberly, 1981). Innovation is the creative effort of an employee. Innovation cannot be realized without human resources. People think, nurture and transform ideas (Van de Van, 1986), which ultimately unlocking the groundbreaking and innovative prospects of an organization. Patterson, Kerrin & Gatto (2009) asserted, it is the employees' knowledge, experience and skills that allow an organization to develop creative potential. Organizational climate is an important contextual component that leads to various behavioral outcomes (Yuan and Woodman, 2010). Changes in the workplace diktat innovative behavior by employees. new ideas can be better developed and implemented aiming on situational characteristics and adapting to an improvement in working conditions for employees (Noefer et al., 2009). Organizational support for innovation is a manifest of a pro-innovation culture (Amabile, 1988). Engaging employees built such a culture incrementally (Gong, Huang, & Farh, 2009).

Innovation hinges on the essential preconditions of employee engagement. In the critical business drivers particularly in operating efficiency, engaged staff are exhibit positive results. Kassa & Raju (2015) marked that engaged employee assume the entrepreneurial role of organizations and foster and contribute to innovation. It was claimed by Agarwal et al. (2012) that engagement of employees is the most crucial factor in mounting and instigating innovative working behaviors. Engaged employees play vital roles as intrapreneurs in an organization innovation contests, cooperate with external social entrepreneurs, partake in pro bono global service programs, and serve as accomplices of innovation teams in company-wide innovations (Mirvis and Googins, 2018). For every organization, innovation is an everyday combat for excellence demanding unwavering commitment (Chondrocoukis & Komisopoulos, 2010).

Engagement practices and innovation are inherently interconnected. To captivate the interests and employee engagement in reaping the benefits, the organization need to facilitate and capitalize in engagement practices (Rao, 2016). In the workplace, engagement of employees is a crucial preparatory and foundational element laying creativity and innovation. Engaged employees influence the presence of innovative work behavior, and those who is vigorously engaged are more likely to act innovatively (Vithayaporn & Ashton, 2019).

Innovation is a potential mechanism to integrate sustainability into business (Schaltegger, Lüdeke-Freund, & Hansen, 2012). Innovation takes more than just coming up with ideas and combining technical expertise in a cross-functional team; it also calls for time, immersion, and introspection (Brenton and Levin, 2012), as well as moments of playfulness and engagement (Mainemelis and Ronson, 2006). In addition, voluntarism, vigor, and drive are important components of innovation (O'Connor and McDermott, 2004). Hence, in the current environment, a deeper understanding of how people engage, make sense and collaborate in innovation appears fundamental (Alblooshi et al., 2020; Bellis and Verganti, 2020).

The study aims to answer how job characteristics, social support, and job responsibility interact to influence employee engagement in innovative work behavior. This research question seeks to examine

the intricate relationship between the mentioned variables collective effect on employee engagement within an organizations initiative in endorsing innovative workplace behavior. This study is designed to give a nous into contribution those factors to employee motivation, sense of responsibility and collaboration to scheme the mechanisms that drive innovation through engagement.

This study's findings will add to the existing knowledge base by providing empirical evidence on the intricate relationships between the innovative work **behavior** employee and engagement practices. These findings have the potential to guide and inform in developing organizational strategies to heighten employee engagement and institute a compassionate environment fostering innovation.

Theoretical Underpinnings

According to Social exchange theory, Blau (1964) posits that the voluntary engagements of individuals are driven by the anticipated returns they expect and usually receive from others. The Interactions are shaped by a reciprocal exchange of rewards, in which the Social actors engage in activities as a means of obtaining desired goals. Employees and employers enter reciprocal relationships to maximize the benefits obtained from the workplace. The reciprocity outlines, when an individual received resources from the organization they feel obliged to repay or respond. Saks (2006) contends that involvement is one way that people may give back to their organizations. Stated differently, employees' levels of engagement will vary depending on the resources they are provided by their employer. According to Kahn's (1990) definition of engagement, workers feel obligated to invest more of themselves in their roles in return for the resources their companies provide. On the other hand, people are more prone to retreat and disengage from their duties when the company does not supply these tools, which might ultimately lead to burnout (Schaufeli, 2006). Furthermore, Nawaz, Hassan, Hassan, Shaukat, & Asadullah (2014) strengthen the opinion, when provided with resources employees feel valued; they experience a sense of consideration, stirring them to reciprocate by unveiling engaged behavior. The unveiled behavior i.e. engagement inspires to surpass the beyond the call of duty, promoting creativity and innovation in work settings.

According to the Job-Demand Resource Model, job resources such as job autonomy, social support, and growth opportunities, positively influence employee engagement, which, in turn, leads to enhanced innovative work behavior (Bakker, Demerouti, 2007). Amabile et al. (2005) have done a comprehensive study on employee engagement, emphasizing its relationship to workplace creativity and innovation. They accentuate the significance of employee engagement endorsing it relevance in nurturing inspiration, contentment and employee well-being.

Literature Review

Employee engagement

Employee engagement has been the most important concern of researchers in the recent pasts and defined in different ways. However, most of the scholars who dealt with employee engagement is identified as it is how much employee are invested their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral energies into positive organizational outcomes. Engagement refers to involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, absorption, focused effort, enthusiasm, dedication, and energy. Similarly, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines engagement as "emotional involvement or commitment" and as "being in gear" (Schaufeli, 2013). Kahn (1990) describes engagement as organizational members' self-alignment with their role, which is the psychological state they are in while occupying and performing organizational roles. When people are cognitively active, attentive, and focused, they are emotionally connected to their work and show engagement by physically participating in their work and being psychologically present.

Individuals who are engaged bring all facets of themselves—cognitive, emotional, and physical—to the

execution of their professional role (Kahn, 1990). Positive and contented mental condition branded by devotion, absorption and vitality known as work engagement. As reckoned by Bakker et al. (2009) and Schaufeli et al. (2002) the term engagement inscribes a pleasant feeling associated to work that is about one's job characterized by energy, commitment, and cognitive absorption. In the context of workplace, engagement the energy used to explain is mental toughness during tasks. Commitment involves being profoundly engaged in one's own job with sense of tenacity, exhilaration and challenge. Absorption signifies a great deal of concentration and being entirely engrossed and dipped in ones job (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The notion of engagement is made up of a fusion of emotional, behavioral and cognitive constituent mechanisms, encompassing aspects like vitality, spiritual link & emotional connections, profound association, Psychological Presence & optimistic attitude (Rich et al., 2010). Leiter and Bakker (2010) articulates, work engagement partakes noteworthy implications for the excellence of employees' key job culpabilities and contributes to supporting additional, auxiliary role performance.

As Baumruk (2004), Richman (2006) and Shaw (2005) connoted employee engagement is a blend of emotional and intellectual commitment to the institute. Kahn (1990; 1992) articulates engagement is the psychological presence of an individual in his or her organizational role. People exhibit attentiveness, connection, integration and focus on their role when they are psychologically present. Christian, Garza, and Slaughter (2011) described engagement as a broad construct that involves a holistic investment of the entire self in terms of cognitive, emotional, and physical energies. A person's degree of engagement was a function of the experience of three psychological conditions. In order to understand employee engagement, Kahn (1990) introduced the concepts of psychological relevance, safety and availability. Individuals ask themselves questions about these three conditions when they make decisions about to the degree to which individuals are ready to invest and engross themselves in a particular role or responsibility. Therefore, workforces who experience a heightened level of psychological relevance, security and availability will engage themselves to a greater extent in their work role.

According to the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the Job Demands-Resources Model, employees who are engaged are more tending to invest additional energy at work. Creativity can be promoted through this engaged energy. Proactive behaviors which are a prerequisite for innovation—are more common among engaged personnel in addition to being content and dedicated (Bakker and Demerouti's, 2007). This is in line with the JCM's dimensions of autonomy and task significance, which highlight the value of giving workers a sense of purpose and influence over their job, since this can spur creativity and innovation (Grant & Parker, 2009).

Antecedents of Employee Engagement

In the workplace, employees may not be enthusiastic, involved and committed to their work, which ultimately reduces their effort towards productivity. Such a constant lack of passion can be an engagement issue. Engagement creates an emotional connection among employees resulting in individual involvement, a sense of commitment and satisfaction. The meaning, availability, and safety of the task an employee experiences in the organizational climate enhances the employee's physical, cognitive, and affective engagement (Kahn, 1990). The prevalence of organizational resources and the provision of individuals and teams with such resources will axiomatically the degree of employee engagement upsurges. Turning down the resources may cause a vice-versa effect by reducing employee engagement (Kwon & Kim, 2020). It is not enough to have creative and talented employees to achieve the uttermost productivity, organizations need to help them to heighten their innovative behavior. Devoting resources to employee engagement is essential to demonstrate high levels of innovative behavior. In the contrary, the reduced level of engagement found detrimental for innovativeness. Knox and Marin-Cadavid (2022) modelled two practices for nurturing engagement. The first practice is

materialistic and focuses on restructuring the organizational process to free up more resources (structural practice), while the second practice is more conceptual and focuses on creating an atmosphere that fosters innovative engagement culture (embedding) and encourages engagement practices that have an impact on attitudes. Saks (2006) argues that there are psychological conditions that lead an employee to job and organizational engagement and the consequences of the engagement is positive. Accordingly, he identified six notable psychological determinants of employee engagement, which is known as Perceived organizational support, Reward, and recognition, Perceived supervisor support, Procedural Justice, Distributive justice, Job characteristics. Tao, Lee, Sun, Lee, and He (2022) suggested an engagement antecedent called control coping, which describes employees' confidence, energy, and optimism in times of crisis, and helps identify, plan to address the cause of stress and implement positive changes. Their study indicated that control coping contributes to employee work engagement and fusing up employees' emotional energy on the job and at home.

Job characteristics

Employee engagement is a critical aspect of organizational success, influencing productivity, retention, and overall performance. Job characteristics, as proposed by Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model (1976), play a pivotal role in shaping the level of engagement employees experience in their roles. Understanding how employee engagement and job qualities interact is essential to a company's success. As to the JCM, some employment features exert a significant impact on the psychological reactions of employees towards their work. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated a substantial correlation between each component and positive employee outcomes, providing solid empirical support for the notion. Humphrey, Nahrgang, and Morgeson's (2007) study reinforces the notion by emphasizing the beneficial relationship between skill diversity and engagement by stressing the intellectual stimulation that comes from a variety of activities. Similarly, a longitudinal study by Morgeson and Humphrey from 2006 showed that work satisfaction and engagement are substantially and positively correlated with greater task identification. This suggests that doing recognizable activities is connected with a sense of achievement.

There is a deeper link than just the five dimensions between job features and employee engagement. As a result of the greater impact their job has on others, individuals in occupations where they feel high task relevance are shown to exhibit heightened dedication (Grant and Parker, 2009). One significant aspect of work characteristics that has been thoroughly studied and found to positively connect with engagement is autonomy, according to a meta-analysis conducted by Li et al. (2014). Further supporting the importance of feedback is study by Kulikowski, Oldham, and Hackman (1987), which shows how it may increase employee engagement by giving them timely and accurate information about their performance.

By emphasizing the necessity of striking a balance between job demands and resources when assessing involvement, Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) Job Demand-Resources Model (JD-R) builds on the discussion. Furthermore, a key component of work characteristics is autonomy, which Deci and Ryan's Theory of Self-Determination argues that it is important and crucial to satisfy the basic psychological needs of employees. Employment that satisfies these demands promotes more engagement (Gagné and Deci, 2005). Explaining the concept of job characteristics in relation to engagement emanates from the idea of that employee efficiency and job satisfaction can be better by changing the task itself. According to Kahn (1990) the task characteristics is the one that provides psychological meaningfulness. By task characteristics, we mean variety, the room to apply different skills, personal discretion or autonomy, opportunities for various contributions and the challenge that the task provide (Kahn, 1990). In the job characteristics model, Tepper, Shafer, Meredith, & Marsh (1996) described the direct relationship between work characteristics and results, and the direct effect is explained by the influences on important psychological States. Among the antecedents studied, Saks (2006) stated that job characteristics predict employees' work engagement. Empirical evidence consistently supports the critical role of job characteristics in framing employee

engagement. The Joint Coordination Mechanism provides a comprehensive framework, which is complemented by other perspectives like the JDR model and SDT. A nuanced understanding of job design becomes necessary in order to make organizations more engaged.

Based on Hackman and Oldham's JCM, the aspects of autonomy, feedback, task identity, skill variation, and task importance not only enhance engagement but also can influence the environment required for creativity and innovation. Humphrey, Nahrgang, and Morgeson's (2007) study demonstrates how skill variation, a critical element, encourages intellectual engagement and may even enhance cognitive flexibility, the foundation of creative thinking. Additionally, autonomy a crucial aspect of job characteristics has been often linked to employee engagement and is necessary for allowing workers to freely explore novel ideas and solutions (Li et al., 2014). Organizations are driven toward creativity and flexibility by the complex interplay of job attributes, employee engagement, and creative work behavior. Organizations may improve both traditional outcomes and a culture of innovation by creating job designs that encourage involvement through the JCM dimensions. This will ensure sustained competitiveness in the quickly changing business world of today.

Job Characteristics and Its Nexus with Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior Through Employee Wellbeing

Employee well-being, as a holistic concept, includes mental and physical health, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and overall life satisfaction ((Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002). To understand how well-being has an influence on innovation in work, it is important to know positive aspects of the working environment. The role of job characteristics in fostering innovative work behavior is also important, which is integral to the development of employee wellbeing. The Job Characteristics Model by Hackman & Oldham (1976) illustrates that elements such as work variety, autonomy and feedback contribute to the development of innovative ideas and behaviors not only enhance wellbeing but also contribute to innovation. Employee engagement, a crucial outcome of good design jobs, is the catalyst for innovation. Workers who are highly engaged and deeply involved in their work have a better tendency to adopt proactive behavior and contribute to organizational innovation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The direct impact of interventions to improve the wellbeing of employees, in particular by optimizing job characteristics, has a strong influence on innovation behavior. Flexibility of work arrangements, for example, is not only contributing to wellbeing but also creating a favorable environment that encourages creativity and innovation (Černe, Hernaus, Dysvik, & Škerlavaj, 2017; Spiegelaere, Gyes, & Hootegem, 2012).

Hypothesis 1: *There exists direct positive and significant correlation between Job characteristics with employee engagement and innovative work behavior.*

Social support

Social support refers to how people in one's social network—such as family, friends, coworkers, and superiors—perceive or really offer care, empathy, and support. It comprises both practical and emotional support, such as inspiration and compassion as well as listening, counseling, and providing information. Employee engagement, or the level of zeal, dedication, and interest that workers have toward their work and organization, may be greatly impacted by social support at work. In her study, R. Fedor (2021) found that more than three quarters of workers consider it important to be well connected with others at work. Employee engagement may be increased by social assistance, which can help people feel engaged and content in their work, improve work satisfaction and well-being, reduce stress and burnout, and encourage cooperation and teamwork. Previous studies show that among men with higher education, there is a high proportion who report ongoing mental stress (R. Fedor, 2021). Employees are more likely to feel appreciated and respected when they have social support from their managers and

coworkers. This can improve their motivation, output, and loyalty. Furthermore, social support may act as a buffer against the detrimental impacts of workplace demands and stresses, such as conflict, workload, and uncertainty, by giving workers the emotional support and practical tools they need to deal with and overcome obstacles.

In general, social support may help create a productive and good work culture that encourages employee engagement, retention, and productivity. Therefore, organizations can benefit from promoting social support through various means, such as team-building activities, mentoring programs, employee assistance programs, and supportive leadership practices. The amount of resources, feedback, and social support that supervisors offer to their staff is referred to as their level of supervisor support. Support from the supervisor is essential for encouraging employee engagement.

When employees feel supported in their efforts, appreciated and encouraged by their managers, they become more engaged in their jobs. One of the most significant characteristics of supervisor support is providing clear expectations to employees. Establishing such clear expectations supports employees to distinguish and understand the expectations and standards set for their work. In order to increase employee confidence in meeting and exceeding expectations, clear communication of expectations reduces employee confusion and uncertainty about their responsibilities. In addition, clearly displaying the expectations of supervisors allows employees to prioritize their tasks and focus on the most important issues that directly affect their productivity and engagement. Supervisors may communicate goals and objectives, provide detailed instructions on how to execute tasks, and provide frequent updates and comments on their employees' performance to their staff by communicating clear expectations.

Employees who receive regular feedback and praise for their work are more likely to feel appreciated and recognized for their efforts. When supervisors give constructive criticism and acknowledgement, they may inspire their staff to keep doing what they do best. Additionally, it may assist employees realize how their job affects the performance of the company, which will increase their sense of satisfaction and engagement. Supervisors have the authority to conduct routine performance reviews, provide helpful criticism on areas where workers may grow, and acknowledge staff members for their accomplishments and team contributions.

When workers believe they are expanding their knowledge and skill set, they are more inclined to participate in their work. Supervisors may boost their sense of fulfilment and engagement by fostering growth, which helps workers feel like they have advanced in their careers. Supervisors can, in support of development and to help employees improve their skills, give them an opportunity for training or development, assigning challenging tasks and projects as well as offering mentorship and coaching.

The supervisors are to create an environment of happiness in the workplace. It is better for employees to be engaged in their work if they are employed in a favorable working environment. Supervisors creating a friendly working environment, which promotes employees' sense of ownership, belonging and connections with the workplace helps them to be more motivated and productive. Supervisors can encourage teamwork and cooperation, provide flextime working arrangements, recognizing and celebrating achievements as well as promoting a culture of Open Communication and Inclusivity for the purpose of creating a favorable work environment.

The supervisors are responsible for allocating resources and providing support. Having the resources and support they need is a factor that increases employee engagement in work. Managers are able to make staff feel competent and empowered when they provide the resources and support, thereby reducing their stress level and making them more engaged. Supervisors shall supply staff with the resources and support necessary for enabling them to carry out their tasks, providing training and supporting new systems or practices as needed, and offering assistance where appropriate.

In general, supervisor support quite helpful in nurturing employee engagement. Supervisors may make workers feel appreciated, empowered, and inspired to perform at their best by setting clear standards, giving feedback and recognition, encouraging personal growth, fostering a great work environment, and offering tools and support. In addition to supervisors, another factor that accelerates employee engagement is support from coworker. The Support of coworker indicates the degree to which workmates provide each other with resources, feedback and social support. Coworkers' backing and engagement in the workplace are positively linked. The mechanism by which encouragement from fellow worker enhances commitment has been elucidated as a professional devoutness.

The Social Exchange Theory proposes that a process that leads to a rise in job engagement is the positive social exchange that occurs when colleagues provide resources, feedback, and support to one another (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). An additional mechanism is the notion of social learning, which maintains that a worker picks up knowledge from his coworkers and models behavior based on how they interact. Therefore, other staff members could be inspired to get more involved in the task if a particular employee is demonstrating notable levels of involvement and dedication to it (Bandura, 1986).

The studies have also shown that for the engagement of employees, there is a need for various types of employee support. For example, a study by Zhang & Zhao (2021) found that emotional support from coworkers (e.g., empathy, care) was positively related to work engagement among Chinese employees, whereas instrumental support (e.g., resources, training) was not significantly related. Likewise, the study of Chen et al. (2009) revealed that there was a positive correlation between information assistance and professional engagement among members of Taiwan's workforce e.g. feedback or advice from colleagues.

The research literature on coworker support and work engagement has important implications for practice. One example is that organizations can promote positive working environments where cooperation and mutual respect are promoted by encouraging their staff to be able to offer useful feedback, sources of resources and help from the community. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model suggests that job resources, such as social support, job autonomy, and opportunities for growth, positively influence employee engagement, which, in turn, leads to enhanced innovative work behavior (Bakker, Demerouti, 2007). Training programs that focus on the development of teamwork and communication skills may also be offered by undertakings, which could contribute to coworkers' support and increase their involvement in the workplace.

The support employee receives from different angle defines their level of engagement. The social support provided to employees is the extent of cooperation by the coworker and the degree to which how supervisors value their employees' contributions and care about their well-being. The social support provided to an employee promotes engagement. The feedback received from the supervisor and support coming colleagues reduce role ambiguity and conflict and increase communication that augments the desire to engage (Menguc, Auh, Fisher, & Haddad, 2013).

Hypothesis2: *There is a positive significant relationship between perceived social support and employee engagement in innovative work behavior.*

Job Responsibility

Theories of Job Responsibility

Responsibility for work is an essential element in the design of a job, which determines the nature of the tasks and duties assigned to employees within an organization. In organizational psychology and human resource management literature, the importance of job responsibility for affecting employee engagement and innovation in work has been highly emphasized. The Hackman and Oldham (1980) model suggests

that one of the job dimensions like occupational responsibility has an observed influence on psychological states, leading to increased motivation and performance. In this circumstance, the key driver of meaningful work is job responsibility, which contributes to an employee's sense of importance for his or her role. Deci & Ryan (1985) Self Determination Theory provides an alternative view through which we can apprehend the role of responsibility for work. Based on this theory, the need for autonomy, competence and relation is a factor that drives individuals. The need for autonomy, intrinsic motivation and engagement is fulfilled by job responsibility, in particular when it involves decision-making and autonomy.

Job Responsibility catalyzing engagement

Job responsibility is the extent to which an employee is held responsible for the aftermaths of their actions. An employee's perceptions of control and accountability for their work tends to be more pronounced when they have high level of responsibility in their work, which can positively influence job performance (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010). Employees who are more responsible for their work often have a greater incentive to do well and reach their objectives. As employees feel invested in their jobs and are more focused on the job, this motivation may lead to a higher level of employee engagement. Job responsibility often comes with greater autonomy and decision-making power (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011). A feeling of control and ownership in the performance of their tasks is more common when employees are given a free hand to decide what they do. It can lead to greater job engagement by employees since they are able to own their jobs and make meaningful contributions (Suto & Takehara, 2022). A wider range of tasks and responsibilities may be carried out by staff with greater responsibility for their work. It is possible that, given the constant need to face and learn new experiences, this sort of diversity keeps staff engaged and excited about their work (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Workers entrusted with greater responsibility for a particular area of work are being increasingly watched and assessed on their performance. This can give rise to more frequent feedback and recognition of their contribution, which will in turn boost motivation and employee engagement (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014). Bestowing employee's greater responsibility can play fundamental role in fostering a sense of self-sufficiency, ownership and accountability for their work. This in turn, enriches engagement, inspiration and commitment to their responsibilities (Leiter & Bakker, 2010). A study has that been carried out by Smith et al. (2022) to examine the relationship between job responsibility and employee engagement over a three year period. Their findings showed a positive and lasting relationship, suggesting that the level of engagement increases and continues to increase as employees take on more responsibilities that are significant.

Hypothesis3: *There is a direct positive significant correlation between job responsibility and employee engagement in innovative work behavior.Top of Form*

Innovation

Now, every operating institution in the world is taking due attention to innovation. In order to facilitate innovative working practices in their premises, most companies invest a great deal in research and development. In this dynamic world, innovation for companies must be inextricably linked to their strategies, it is impossible to survive and compete without thinking new and implementing. Innovation is the process of creating and implementing new ideas, products, or processes that provide value to individuals or organizations. It involves introducing something new or improved to the market or society, which can result in competitive advantages, growth, and better outcomes. Innovation is a novel approach pertaining in adopting and configuring a group, organization, individual, product, process and procedure with a aim of introducing and implementing it for the greater benefit of the individual, organization or society (Farr & West, 1990).

Innovative work behavior (IWB) refers to the intentional and proactive behavior of individuals in generating, promoting, and applying new and creative ideas in their work context. It involves identifying problems, searching for novel solutions, and implementing them in a way that improves work outcomes. IWB includes behaviors such as idea generation, experimentation, taking calculated risks, and collaboration (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Janssen, 2000; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Crossan and Apaydin (2010) define innovation as the production or adoption, integration and exploitation of value-added novelty in the economic and social spheres; renewal and enlargement products, services and markets, developing new methods of production and establishing of new management systems. Scott & Bruce (1994) delineate innovative behavior as the production or adoption of useful ideas and idea implementation and commences with problem acknowledgement and the development of ideas or resolutions.

Farr & Ford (1990) inscribed Innovative work behavior as an individual's actions intended at starting and consciously introducing novel and beneficial ideas, processes, products, or procedures contained by a work role, group, or organization. Innovative work behavior pertains to actions employees' directed towards the generation and implementation of inventive and original ideas, which is marked as novel in the workplace (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Janssen (2000) outlines employee innovative work behavior as the behavior demonstrated by an employee in recognizing problem, generating ideas, mobilizing support and recognizing these ideas related to the preliminary problem. In order to achieve organizational excellence and success, the innovativeness of employees is essential (Scott & Bruce, 1994). The development of ideas and the preparedness to go the additional miles to implant those ideas illustrate innovativeness. The inspiration of employees to generate and bring forth ideas is intricately connected with innovative work behavior.

To remain competitive it is crucial for organization to instill and sustain innovation and innovativeness, adapt to changing environments, and achieve sustainable growth. Organizations that encourage and support innovation and IWB among their employees can achieve a range of benefits, including increased productivity, profitability, and customer satisfaction. In this dynamic fast-paced global system, innovativeness to organizational performance and sustainability are the focus and the concept of employees' innovative work behavior is widely acknowledged. Employee innovative work behavior is demarcated as actions taken by employees with the purpose of generating and implementing new ideas in the workplace (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Janssen, 2000; Scott & Bruce, 1994).

Employee Work Engagement and propensity for Innovative Behavior

Employee engagement has more potential to determine business results. Many studies confirm how employee engagement has brought significant and meaningful changes to organizational outcomes, which is beneficial to many businesses. In surfacing creativity and workplace innovativeness engaging employees plays vital role (Gichohi, 2014). In their discourse on engagement, Shufeli and Bakker (2004) state that employees are more creative because they are characterized by vigor that is having of energy, a passion and absorption in their work.

Robinson et al (2004) outline employee engagement as a positive attitude of employees towards their organization and its values, wherein employees have awareness of the business context and work to improve job and organizational effectiveness. The definition marked engagement as one step ahead of commitment. Therefore, innovative sources are employees who develop, carry, respond to, and improve ideas that enable employees to build, promote, and breathe life into an innovative organizational culture (Van de Ven, 1986; Rao, 2016). Scholars in various fields have outlined the importance of individual engagement in business settings (Sacks, 2006; Salanova, Agut, & Piero, 2005). Engaging an employee at work is an essential prerequisite for innovation (Gomes, Curral, & Caetano, 2015). Engagement is a pledge for organizational effectiveness. If organization wants, an employee to engage it has to build trust which help an employee

develop psychological safety. The sense of safety allows investing the full energy (Agarwal, 2014).

An organization that enacts employee engagement and embeds engagement in its strategy workforces demonstrates a higher level of learning and heightened innovative behavior, conversely, organizations that are unable to engage its employee and failed to inculcate engagement in their strategy employees exhibit a reduced level of learning and innovative behavior (Knox & Marin-Cadavid, 2022). Having a conducive environment for engagement allows the company not only to leverage the potential of its current workforce but also to attract more talented and creative individuals. The importance of engagement in increasing productivity is applauded by various researchers in the area claiming that engagement helps to retain key employees and leads to employee loyalty, which ultimately leads to cooperation and commitment to change and creation of overall stakeholder value (Andrew & Sofian, 2012). The freedom and conducive environment provided to employees give them space and allow them to participate in creative work life. If continuous improvement and engagement programs are implemented, it will have a greater impact on employee performance as well as organizational performance as it is difficult to disengage employees from the organization (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014). Findings from various studies confirm that engagement is positively related to job outcomes and is believed to influence job performance and lead to extra-role behavior. In addition, engagement allows an employee to establish high-quality relationships with leaders, supervisors, and co-workers, which ultimately leads to positive attitudes, intentions, and behaviors (Saks, 2006). The prevalence of such behavior is a precursor to the generation and catalyzing of ideas and innovation and permeates the creative environment. Employee engagement is a state of completeness that enables one to bring something distinctive into the job (Kwon & Kim, 2020). Several factors can trigger an employee's innovative work behavior, with employee engagement being one of the key antecedents (Agarwal et al., 2012).

Different research indicated that the counter support relationship between employee engagement and innovative behavior. Employee engagement contributes to innovative behavior in different ways. The study made by Gichohi (2014) postulates that that employees' sense of ownership over their work and organization is fostered by the prevalence of an engaging environment. Moreover, employees in such environs are more motivated to take initiative, develop new ideas, and willing to take risks to execute and implement them. Collaboration is promoted by ensuring engagement in the organization (Crossan & Apaydin, 2010). There is a greater likelihood that employees who are engaged are more prone to collaborate and share their ideas with colleagues. Such collaboration has the prospective to nurture the generation of novel and innovative ideas that might not have been realizable if employees were working in isolation. Employees who are engaged are more likely to experiment with new ideas and take calculated risks. They prove a lack of fear of failure and a willingness to learn from their mistakes, possibly leading to the generation of innovative solutions (Amabile, 1998). It is more important for employees to be actively involved and have a high level of motivation in their work. This drive may lead to the creation of new solutions that would improve organizational performance (Agarwal, Datta, Blake-Beard, & Bhargava, 2012). Participation of employees in problem solving activities is encouraged by the momentum of engagement within the organization. They are more likely to think creatively and come up with innovative solutions to complex problems (West, 2000).

The catalyst for innovation is employee engagement, a key outcome of good design jobs. Employees who are actively engaged in their work are more likely to engage in proactive behavior and contribute to organizational innovation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The engagement of employees is considered an antecedent and an outcome of employee wellbeing. Engaged workers have a profound connection with their work, which, in turn, contributes to their overall wellbeing (Saks, 2006). This reciprocal relationship emphasizes the importance of considering well-being as a holistic measure encompassing both job-related and personal dimensions that lays the ground safe environment for employee experience innovativeness and creativity.

Hypothesis4: *There is a positive significant correlation between employee engagement and in innovative work behavior*

Conceptual Framework

Fig 1: Framework
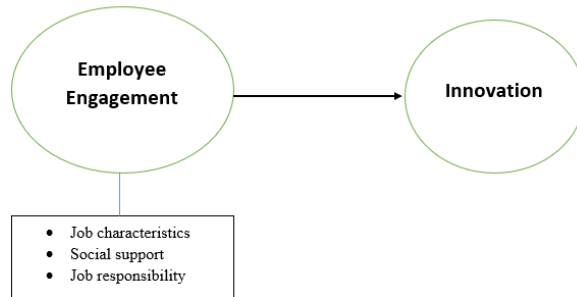
Source: own compilation

Research Methodology

In order to conduct a comprehensively explore the relationship between job characteristics, Social Support, Job Responsibilities, and Employee engagement in innovative Work Behavior, comprehensive statistical methods have been used. Quantitative data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire administered to a diverse sample of employees across employees of Hawassa Industrial Park. survey questionnaire is used to collect primary data that was adopted from multiple studies addressing all the variables under study. The survey comprised validated scales to measure job characteristics (e.g., task variety, autonomy, feedback), perceived social support, job responsibility, and levels of engagement in innovative work behavior. A random sampling technique was employed. The technique ensured the representation of participants from a diverse pool without bias, allowing for a representative investigation into the interplay between job characteristics, social support, job responsibility, and engagement. One hundred fifty eight (158) employees of the Industrial Park participated in the survey. Descriptive statistics were used as a standard measure of distribution of the data clarifying the relative position of respondents' level of agreement and the characteristics of the sample. Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were employed to examine the proposed relationship between constructs of employee engagement and innovative work behavior. The research is conducted in adherence to the ethical guidelines, ensuring the confidentiality of participants, informed consent, and the right to withdraw without consequences.

Measurement

Top of Form

Existing validated scales measuring employee engagement and innovation have been identified and used and the scales have been adapted to fit the research context. The study develops a social support model from Cook et al., (2013) social exchange theory. employee work engagement is operationalized from William Kahn's (1990) "psychological engagement" emphasizing the importance of employees' emotional and cognitive connection to their work. Innovative work behavior (IWB). The respondents' innovative behavior was assessed using De Jong & Den Hartog (2010) and Hughes et al., (2018) scales. The respondents are asked to rate how frequently they engage in innovative activities, and solutions when faced with a problem that addresses the issue (idea generation) and when they promote and implement innovative solutions at work (Idea implementation).

The study employed a Likert scale to gauge respondents' perceptions and attitudes. The scale ranges from 1 to 5 to measure two key constructs: employee engagement and innovative work behavior. For the construct of employee engagement, a score of 1 represented strong disagreement with the presented questions or ideas, while a score of 5 indicated strong agreement. The scale allowed us to capture the

varying degrees of engagement among respondents. Similarly, in measuring innovative work behavior among employees, the researcher provided respondents with a range of options to express the regularity of their agreement with the ideas presented. A score of 1 corresponded to 'very rarely,' indicating infrequent agreement, while a score of 5 represented 'always,' denoting a high level of agreement. This allow assessing the extent to which employees exhibited innovative work behavior in their day-to-day activities.

Data Analysis

In order to examine and interpret the data collected with a view to fulfilling research objectives and hypotheses, the Data Analysis and Presentation Section of the Research Study plays an essential role. This shall include the application of appropriate statistical procedures, summary of results and their clear and meaningful presentation. The opportunity to produce important results, make conclusions and reaffirm or reject research hypotheses is given in this section.

Descriptive Statistics

The following table analyses participant response scores and variability for each variable in order to get a better idea of what is happening.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics.

	N	Std. Deviation	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Job Chx	158	3.8071	.72161
S.Support	158	3.6071	.78785
J. Responsibility	158	3.5571	.86710
Engagement	158	3.7381	.67636
Innovative work behavior	158	3.4214	.97679
Valid N (listwise)	158		

Source: own composition

The mean value of job characteristics indicates 3.8071 with a standard deviation of 0.7216. Social support a mean value of 3.6071 standard deviations of 0.7878. Job responsibility mean value of 3.5571 standard deviations of 0.8671. Engagement mean value of 3.7381 standard deviations 0.6763. Innovative work behavior mean value of 3.9214 with a standard deviation. The overall mean value of the variables indicated above suggested that on average the participants rated all the variables in their responses as good and their standard deviation represents the variability or spread of responses around the mean. Comparing the relative closeness of variables' standard deviation suggests less variability and is almost identical.

Inferential Statistics

Table 2: Model Summaryb.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.819a	.671	.664	2.08892	.671	143.859	3	154	.000	.938
a. Predictors: (Constant), J. Responsibility, Job Chx, S.Support										
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement										

Source: own composition

The regression model shows a strong relationship between the predictors (Job characteristics, social support and job responsibility) and the outcome variable (employee engagement). The R-squared value of 0.977 indicates that approximately 97.7% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictors. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.971 indicates that the model represents the influence of the predictors considering the sample size and the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate

(2.08892) represents the mean deviation from the values predicted by the regression model.

Table 3: ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	5.812	3	1.937	143.859	.000b
1	Residual	.135	154	.013		
	Total	5.947	157			
		a. Dependent Variable: Engagement				
		b. Predictors: (Constant), J. Responsibility, Job Chx, S.Support				

Source: own composition

The ANOVA table confirms that the regression model is statistically significant. The regression model (predictions: Job characteristics, Social Support, Job Responsibility) captures a large amount of the total variance in the dependent variable (employee engagement) as indicated by the F-value of 143.859 and a significant p-value. (p < 0.001). ANOVA table suggests, the input variables jointly have a significant relationship with the target variable.

Table 4: Coefficientsa.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.171	.181		.944	.367	-.233	.576					
Job Chx	.325	.060	.347	5.387	.000	.191	.459	.816	.862	.256	.547	1.830
1 S.Support	.330	.065	.384	5.092	.000	.185	.474	.896	.850	.242	.398	2.512
J. Responsibility	.320	.051	.411	6.268	.000	.207	.434	.852	.893	.298	.527	1.897
			a. Dependent Variable: Engagement									

Source: own composition

The unstandardized coefficients (B) indicate the change in the dependent variable associated with a one-unit change in the predictor while remaining constant for the other predictors. Given their standard deviations, the standardized coefficients reflect the relative relevance of each predictor in explaining the dependent variable. All three predictors (Job characteristics, Social Support, and Job Responsibility) exhibit positive coefficients, indicating that greater levels of Employee Engagement are connected with higher levels of these predictor variables. All predictors have statistically significant p-values (p 0.001), indicating that they have a statistically significant association with Employee Engagement.

Table 5: Residuals Statisticsa.

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	44.0426	90.8544	67.2857	12.03591	158
Std. Predicted Value	-1.931	1.958	.000	1.000	158
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.632	1.596	1.075	.313	158
Adjusted Predicted Value	44.0743	91.3491	67.6694	12.02707	158
Residual	-2.36626	4.50913	.00000	1.83210	158
Std. Residual	-1.133	2.159	.000	.877	158
Stud. Residual	-1.547	2.392	-.072	1.057	158
Deleted Residual	-4.68296	5.53861	-.38367	2.73883	158
Stud. Deleted Residual	-1.682	3.471	-.013	1.286	158
Mahal. Distance	.262	6.655	2.786	2.080	158
Cook's Distance	.000	.733	.147	.229	158
Centered Leverage Value	.020	.512	.214	.160	158
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement					

Source: own composition

The residuals statistics table contains information on the regression model's residuals (differences between observed and projected values). The mean of the residuals is close to zero, suggesting that the model is unbiased in predicting the target variable.

Inferential Analysis (Engagement in Innovative Work Behavior)

Table 6: Model Summaryb.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.746a	.557	.552	5.41802	.557	30.254	1	156	.000	1.709

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Engagement

b. Dependent Variable: Innovative work behavior

Source: own composition

The correlation coefficient (R) denotes the degree and direction of the linear relationship that exists between the predictor variable (employee engagement) and the outcome variable (innovative work behavior). The value of R in this situation is 0.846, demonstrating a strong positive relationship between employee engagement and creative work behavior. Adjusted R Square statistic accounts for the number of predictors and sample size. Given the number of variables and sample size, the adjusted R Square is 0.692, indicating that employee engagement can explain approximately 69.2% of the variance in creative work behavior. It estimates the fraction of variation explained more conservatively. When the predictor variable is included, the F Change value shows the overall significance of the regression model. The F Change value in this model is 30.254, and the related p-value (Sig. F Change) is 0.000 (significant at p 0.05). The regression model is statistically significant, implying that employee engagement is a significant predictor of innovative work behavior. The Durbin-Watson value of 2.709 indicates that there is no substantial autocorrelation in the regression model residuals, validating the assumption of error independence. This is a desired outcome since it suggests that the assumption of residual independence is satisfied, and the model's errors do not follow a systematic pattern or have a link with one another residuals.

Table 7: ANOVAa.

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	888.098	1	888.098	30.254	.000b
1	Residual	352.259	156	29.355		
	Total	1240.357	157			

a. Dependent Variable: Innovative work behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Engagement

Source: own composition

The regression model is statistically significant, as indicated by the F-statistic (30.254) and associated p-value (Sig.). Both the regression model summary and the ANOVA tables show that employee involvement is a major predictor of innovative work behavior. The regression model accounts for a significant percentage of the variation in innovative work behavior.

Table 8: Coefficientsa.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**			**Lower Bound**	**Upper Bound**	**Zero-order**	**Partial**	**Part**	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
1 (Constant)	-11.466	8.430		-1.360	.199	-29.834	6.902					
Employee Engagement	.679	.123	.846	5.500	.000	.410	.948	.846	.846	.846	1.000	1.670

a. Dependent Variable: Innovative work behavior

Source: own composition

The coefficient for Employee Engagement stands at 0.679, signifying that with each one-unit increase in the predictor variable (Employee Engagement), the dependent variable (Innovative work behavior) is expected to rise by 0.679 units. This statistically significant coefficient (p.001) underlines a positive and remarkable correlation among Employee Engagement and Innovative work behavior. The predicting variable momentous positive effect on the dependent variable, as indicated by its standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.846. This implies that employee engagement have a momentous prediction on innovative work behavior, and that there is a direct association between mounting employee engagement and rising innovative work behavior. Tolerance and VIF values of 1.000 suggest that there is no multicollinearity between the predictor variable and the constant term in terms of collinearity.

Discussion of Finding

The analysis's findings provide insight into the intricate relationships that exist between employee engagement, job responsibilities, social support, job characteristics, and innovative work behavior (IWB). The hypothesis developed to investigate these connections has given important new light on the nuanced interactions between these constructs.

Job characteristics have been identified as important factors that influence directly engagement and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB). Innovative behaviors are more common among employees who view their work as intellectually exciting, challenging and well suited to their interests and skill set. This research highlights the need to design jobs that allow employees to efficiently leverage their skills and create an atmosphere that is supportive of creativity and innovation.

The propensity of employees to engage in innovative work behavior is higher among organizations that promote job characteristics, which stimulate creativity, independence and problem solving. Amabile (1988) and Anderson & West (1998) highlighted the importance of job characteristics in promoting an appropriate environment for innovative contributions. The finding that work attributes had a significant positive impact on Innovative Work Behavior aligns with the findings of Hackman and Oldham's (1976) study. They put out the Job Characteristics Model, with a focus on the relevance of tasks, employee autonomy, and skill variation as means of improving motivation and output. According to this research, employees are more inclined to take part in creative activities when they believe their jobs are challenging and match their skill set. Amabile et al. (1996) also stressed the importance of skill variation and challenging jobs in promoting creativity. The study reinforces these insights, emphasizing the persistent influence of job characteristics on promoting Innovative Work Behavior. The results are consistent with recent empirical studies, such as a study by Scott and Reynolds (2019) and Lee, Yun, Lee, & Lee (2019) that showed a positive significant correlation between job characteristics including task diversity and

autonomy and workers' engagement in innovative activities. Comparably, Zhang and Zhao's research from (2021) offers new proof of the beneficial influence of job characteristics on innovative work behavior. These studies support the study's assertion that giving workers employment with engaging and challenging tasks can foster innovation and creativity on the part of the workforce. The collective impact of employee wellbeing, job characteristics, and engagement turn out to be apparent in their collective influence on innovative work behavior. A higher tendency for employees to engage in creativity and innovative activities is observed by organizations that give priority to people's wellbeing with a good job design and encourage them to become engaged (Jain, Dediu, Zwetsloot, & Leka, 2017).

The study affirms the relationship amongst perceived Social Support and employees' engagement has been positively and statistically significant. This suggests that the employee's engagement is likely to improve because of increased perceptions of social support. A strong correlation of perceived social support and employee engagement has been established in several qualitative studies. A comprehensive meta-analysis conducted by Wang et al. (2020) synthesized findings from over 50 studies and affirmed a robust positive association between social support and various dimensions of employee engagement. One of the most interesting longitudinal studies conducted by Johnson, A., & Thompson, L. (2019) which used a mixed-method approach, was a study-tracking employee over a three-year period. Their findings showed that over time, employees who perceived a higher level of social support in the working environment continued to increase their engagement levels. The qualitative component of the study also revealed how supportive working relationships contributed to an employee's emotional connection with his or her tasks. A cross-cultural exploration conducted by Chen et al. (2020) provided insights into the universality of the social support-engagement relationship. Their study, which involved a multi-country survey with diverse cultural contexts, confirmed that employees who felt supported by colleagues and supervisors reported higher levels of engagement regardless of cultural differences. As regards the workplace, employees are more likely to respond through greater engagement when they sense support from their peers and supervisors (Adams et al., 2017). Employees who feel supported are more likely to take risks, share ideas and actively participate in decision-making processes contributing to a higher level of involvement. In promoting innovation in the workplace, this insight is of particular importance (Edmondson, 1999). Eisenberger et al. (1990) articulate the role of social support in fostering positive results for staff members highlighted in their work. This is consistent with other studies' findings as well. Per the study by Lu and Lin (2020) in China's workforce, there is a relationship between job engagement and coworker support. In a similar line, Kim et al.'s (2019) study showed that employee support for colleagues had a favorable influence on the workplace engagement of Korean workers. According to a study by Liu et al (2016) Employees are more inclined to act creatively when they feel significant social support at work. The support help an employee to stay attached to work and remain engaged, suggesting that fostering a supportive social environment contributes to an innovative workplace culture.

The research findings indicate a corresponding increase in employees' engagement as they begin to feel more responsible for their jobs. This is consistent with the idea that when people are entrusted with significant responsibilities, they often find meaning and motivation in their work. The importance of defined job responsibilities in promoting Innovative Work Behavior is reaffirmed by this study. Workers are more inclined to take part in creative activities if they have defined job responsibilities. This highlights the part that clearly defined job roles play in creating an atmosphere inside a company that fosters innovation. Empirical research demonstrates that well-defined job responsibilities positively influence Innovative Work Behavior. The positive relationship seen is consistent with theories suggesting that certain characteristics of the job, such as responsibility and autonomy, contribute to an increased level of employee engagement. It follows basic principles of job design theory, which emphasize the importance of task significance and autonomy in fostering employee motivation and engagement (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). A valuable insight into the enduring nature of the positive relationship between job responsibility and engagement is provided by Smith et al. (2022) study on the impact of job design on employee engagement. Their findings show that, in the context of large

responsibilities over a period, employees are always shown to be more engaged. It is consistent with the concept that meaningful work roles contribute to the sustained motivation of employees. The study by Anderson and West (2019) delves into the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between task significance (akin to job responsibility) and innovative work behavior. Their findings suggest that increased employee engagement is partly able to catalyze the positive impact of task significance on innovative work behavior. Their finding sheds light on the psychological processes through which job responsibility stimuluses creative contributions in the workplace. The holistic literature synthesis made by Wang et al. (2020) highlights that consistent positive association between job responsibility and innovative work behavior across diverse studies.

By examining the impact of Job responsibility on employee motivation and innovative work behaviour, Garcia and Martinez's (2021) research takes a holistic approach. Their study provides evidence of the fact that employee responsibility is not just an incentive to engage, but also a motivation factor for workers to take action in innovative ways. This dual impact positions job responsibility as a key driver of proactive and creative work behavior. Additionally, the Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) study showed that staff engagement and performance are positively impacted when personnel have defined responsibilities. The findings corroborate these observations, highlighting the need for a supportive work environment and well-defined responsibilities for creativity. Additionally, the findings of Tett and Burnett's (2003) study indicate a positive correlation between creativity (innovation) on task performance and clearly defined responsibilities. Furthermore, Chen et al. (2009) stressed the importance of well-defined job responsibilities in encouraging employee innovation and creativity.

The findings of the study result authenticate that engagement augments the innovative work behavior of employees. In strengthening, the finding empirical studies make points on the role of employee engagement contribution. An engaged employee is believed to bring his full potential to work, which helps him develop a smart way out of a problem or develop a creative solution, interact positively with people, and engage in innovative work behavior (Hakanen, Perhoniemi, & Toppinen-Tanner, 2008). Engagement warrants individuals to foster high levels of energy, enthusiasm, focus, inspiration, intensity, mental resilience, and persistence (Aryee, Walumbwa, Zhou & Hartnell, 2012; Schaufeli, 2013; Costa, Passos & Bakker, 2014; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010). Having these characteristics mentioned above help and facilitate them to be innovative in their work. Engaged employees act innovatively to solve customers' problems (Vithayaporn, & Ashton, 2019). Engagement makes the employee feel emotionally connected, socially fused, and spiritually linked to the organizational mission and purpose that ultimately leads to the success of the organization (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014). The employee innovates a way to solve the problem from the usual pattern, because an engaged employee is more innovative than a disengaged employee (Gichohi, 2014). Employees' extraordinary intelligence and engagement are key drivers of innovation and organizational growth (Good and Michel, 2013). When employees engage in their work, they serve as a source of creativity in the organization. Employee engagement is key to creativity among employees (Nawaz, Hassan, Hassan, Shaukat & Asadullah, 2014). Hakanen, Perhoniemi, & Toppinen-Tanner (2008) point out a positive relationship between work engagement and personal initiative, which positively influences workplace innovativeness. A study by Kasa and Raju (2015) found that engaged employees show greater dedication, vigor (high level of energy & resilience) and absorption, which is essential for organizations to achieve high performance, growth and competitiveness. Indorsing the role of engagement Rabiul, Promsivapallop, Al Karim, Islam, & Patwary (2022) postulated that engaged employees are empowered to generate ideas for quality customer service, accordingly, the human resource department improves the most valuable resources to ensure employee engagement and resilience using motivational languages.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a fascinating interplay between job characteristics, Social Support and Responsibility has been shown to be the key factor influencing employee engagement in pursuit of innovation as part of research carried out under the heading 'An expedition for Innovation by Engagement'. Investigating those factors has shown that an organization's ability to foster innovation and create a culture of continuous improvement is likely to be impacted by a nuanced connection.

The primary factors that contribute to employee engagement are the job characteristics, which include aspects like task diversity, autonomy, and feedback. In addition to fostering a stronger feeling of ownership, a work environment that gives workers meaningful tasks, decision-making authority, and frequent performance evaluation encourages them to take an active role in innovative and creative pursuits. An inherent connection between enhancing job characteristics and raising engagement that emphasizes how to design jobs that are in line with each person's passions and strengths can foster an environment that is conducive to creative problem-solving and innovative thinking.

The crucial component that molds workers' engagement on their route to innovation is stakeholder social support. A strong support system made up of coworkers, managers, and mentors fosters an atmosphere that is favorable to candid communication, idea sharing, and teamwork. The study emphasizes how employees who feel connected, valued, respected, and supported by their colleagues and superiors are more likely to share ideas, try out new strategies, and advance innovation as a group.

Furthermore, the primary factor influencing engagement is Job responsibility, which has the dual effect of strengthening or weakening a worker's dedication to innovation and creativity. The well-balanced distribution of duties allows employees to have autonomy without placing undue pressure on them. This fosters a feeling of accountability, allows people to take ownership of their work, and directs their energy into innovative problem solving. Nevertheless, an overwhelming workload or a lack of assistance in handling tasks can lead to burnout and compromise the very engagement required to foster innovation.

This study makes it abundantly evident that the pursuit of innovation via engagement has not been the only route; rather, it has been a convoluted one, influenced by a combination of job characteristics, social support, and job responsibility. Organizations that are well aware of the significance of these factors and proactively endorse a climate in which employees value their strengths, inspire cooperation, and support a healthy balance of responsibility will be able to maximize the full potential of their workforces in driving innovation. This research is intended to serve as a roadmap for the organizations wishing to pursue this expedition, emphasizing the necessity of harmonizing these factors in order to develop dynamic, engaged, and innovative workforces that enable sustainable growth and success in today's constantly evolving landscape.

Limitation

The research has gone far finding the association between engagement and Innovation. The finding may represent only the individual level of innovation hence it may not represent the group level or organizational level of innovativeness. Using a distinction between creativity and innovation implementation it becomes clear that creativity is more a characteristic of individuals, while innovation implementation tends to be accomplished by groups, organizations, or societies. Furthermore, the study sample may not fully represent the diversity of the workforce. It is limited to the aforementioned Specific industry. It is therefore necessary to proceed with caution generalizing the findings to broader populations. The data used in this study are cross-sectional. The ability to determine causal relationships between variables is constrained by this limitation in the design. More robust evidence of causality could be obtained over time by means of Longitudinal or experimental research designs.

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