Exploring Employee Engagement and Employee Commitment

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Exploring the link between the two concepts through interviewing employees from junior levels to top management

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Acknowledgment and Dedications

Thanks to all my family and friends for their encouragement when I was conducting this project. It was much needed when this project seemed too difficult to be completed.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgment and Dedications ................................................................. 2

Chapter One: Overview ............................................................................. 4
  Introduction .................................................................................................. 4
  The organizational background of the study ............................................ 4
  Statement of the case under research ...................................................... 5
  Aim ............................................................................................................. 6
  Objectives of the research ....................................................................... 7
  Research Methodology ........................................................................... 7

Chapter Two: Literature Review ............................................................... 9

Chapter Three: Methodology ................................................................. 34
  3.1. Research Strategy – Approach and Design .................................. 34
  3.2. Sample ............................................................................................ 36
  3.2. Data Collection ................................................................................ 37
     3.2.1. The Data .................................................................................. 37
     3.2.2. Data Collection Procedure ....................................................... 39
  3.3. Validity, Reliability and Generalizability ....................................... 40
     3.3.1 Validity ..................................................................................... 40
     3.3.2. Reliability .............................................................................. 42
     3.3.3 Generalizability ................................................................. 43
  3.4. Ethical Aspects of Research ......................................................... 44

Chapter Four: Analysis & Findings ......................................................... 46
  4.1. Data analysis .................................................................................... 46
  4.2. Discussion of Findings .................................................................. 60

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Limitations ........................................... 69
  5.1. Implications for Research ............................................................ 69
  5.2. Implications for Practice ............................................................... 71
  5.3. Limitations of the Study ............................................................... 74

Chapter Six: References ........................................................................... 76

Chapter Seven: Appendices ................................................................. 91
  Appendix A ........................................................................................... 91
  Appendix B ........................................................................................... 92
  Appendix C ........................................................................................... 93
Chapter One: Overview

Introduction

One of the most prevalent business concepts today is the idea of “employee engagement.” The conventional wisdom points out that an “engaged” employee is one who is satisfied about his work and because of this enthusiastic view, will be working in a manner that serves the business organization’s interests. Being willing to do more than expected for an employer is a key signal of how engaged and committed an employee is in this era. If they feel valued and have a sense of loyalty to their employer, they are more likely to deliver more than expected when necessary. Hereby, the motivation for employees to do this often comes from their level of commitment and satisfaction, assuming they feel inspired, appreciated, and if they believe they can make a worthwhile contribution.

The organizational background of the study

The research was conducted on an organization located in the UK, which is a multinational electronics and semiconductor manufacturer organisation and is among the world’s largest semiconductor companies, leading in a broad range of segments
such as semiconductors for industrial applications, MEMS, MPEG decoders and smartcard chips, automotive integrated circuits, inkjet print heads, computer peripherals, and chips for wireless and mobile applications. The company also has more than 48,000 branches worldwide. It is also part of a global organisation that advocates and tries to facilitate employee involvement within the wider community. However, it is important to mention that the research was based in one area in a UK city where the branch has more than 150 employees; interviewed workers mainly comprise engineering and IT positions.

**Statement of the case under research**

Organizations measure engagement in different ways that agrees with its nature. Some organizations that have established and carried out efficient employee engagement programs or schemes have enhanced their productivity and performance by more than 20%. In addition, the firms have greatly reduced employee turnover by more than 87%, which shows that employment engagement provides firms with a channel for development and profitability (Böckerman et al., 2012). Therefore, the corporation under study in this research is part of a global company that advocates and tries to facilitate employee involvement within the wider community as it believes doing so will not only enhance their productivity and performance, but will also motive them to engage and commit more to the organization. In this sense, the corporation chose to carry out an engagement program by running a scheme where employees can be seconded to work for a charity for a given period of time, but the uptake of this amongst
employees has been very low over the five years the scheme has been in operation. This organization in particular would like to review the reasons behind this lack of engagement in this charity scheme as this issue may indicate problems within how engagement is driven, or it may refer to the individuals’ commitment levels as the majority of employees who resign from their positions cite lack of motivation or engagement as a leading cause of their disengagement; the organization seeks investigation alongside other initiatives that could be developed with employees to encourage more engagement with such activities as the organization under study also tries to meet its corporate social responsibility (CSR) as part of its values.

Aim

This research mainly aims to explore the level of engagement as well as to briefly explore commitment. Moreover, the research also tries to explore the understanding of the relationship between employee engagement and employee organizational commitment. Hence, the proposed study will examine the levels of employee engagement in this particular organization through the factors that potentially influence the employees’ engagement and commitment levels and how they influence employees to exert or effort or not. The findings will enable the company to not only identify the existing strategies that have failed or succeeded in promoting engagement, but also to formulate new strategies to improve engagement and commitment. Furthermore, the findings of this research will not only benefit the organization but aims to contribute to the current literature on employee engagement and commitment.
Objectives of the research

- To establish to what degree HR strategies/practices are effective in generating employee engagement and commitment, and identify reasons (if any) for failure.

- To briefly investigate the extent to which employee engagement relates to organizational commitment (components: Affective, Normative, Continuous) positively or negatively as it is yet unclear what relationship that the two concepts have in the context of an organization.

- To explore possible reasons for low participation or low commitment to engage and commit extra effort for the benefit of the organization.

- To make recommendations for change and improvement in management in relation to research findings.

Research Methodology

To facilitate this study, the researcher used the qualitative research method. 90 % of social science researchers use interviews in their investigations; it is one of the most used techniques, writes Briggs (1986). Hence, interviews are one of the most important tools to achieve a thorough background regarding the participants’ experience, according to McNamara (1999). Moreover, the questions and the research concepts are
analyzed descriptively. On the other hand, the sample acts as a representative of all the employees in the company who were chosen randomly to represent the experience and time they have given the company; this led to data collection through the interview process. The time ranges from as long as 20 years to as little as 2 and a half years’ experience as it is proof of the diversity and inclusiveness of the research thereby giving the research credibility and reliability (Gallie & White 2003). Interview questions are structured but open-ended, so the employees could express their views in depth regarding the different questions asked by the interviewer in an attempt to enhance the validity and reliability aspects of the research.

Furthermore, to ensure good interviewee participation with regard to the research, ethical considerations, such as anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy, were applied. Additionally, a voluntary approach was followed both during and after this study. This chapter will describe the various ingredients that make up the methodology such as the data collection instruments and procedures, setting, design and sample, and approach. It is important to point out that the study may experience limitations in the context of data reliability. In addition, it only uses one qualitative method due to some burdens within the company, which affected the use of other research methods, which will be later explained. Moreover, by engaging only some employees in the study, the use of interviews also limits the collection of standardized responses and thus risks the analysis of broad, rich content with unreliable information. The response to the questions is subject to bias based on employees’ attitudes, behaviors, and preferences. Finally, the external validity or generalizability of the results is more likely to be limited.
In the next chapter, I will briefly review the literature, mainly on engagement and organizational commitment. Chapter 3 details the research processes, including the research design and sampling, as well as population, instruments, and procedures used for data collection and analysis in the present study. Chapter 4 presents detailed analysis and a discussion of findings leading to Chapter 5, which includes conclusion and research limitation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this Section the following will be addressed:

I. Defining Employee Engagement, Comparison, and Critical assessment of definition.

II. Discussing the importance of EE.

III. Employee Engagement drivers.

IV. Theories behind this concept

V. Defining Commitment, Comparison, and Critical assessment of definition.

VI. Addressing the three-component model of commitment.
VII. The relationship between employee engagement and each commitment component.

Employee engagement has become an active and controversial topic in recent years; in 2010, more than 650,000 hits occurred through the search on scholarly publications (Bakker & Leiter & Leitere search on scholarly publications (Bakkery be perceived as a relatively recent field of study; however, it goes back over 20 years when the concept of employee engagement was first researched and defined by William Kahn’s journal in 1990 (Khan 1990; Kular et al., 2008; CIPD 2009) but there remains a lack of critical academic literature on the concept and a shortage of knowledge about how employee engagement can be influenced by management. Although there is a great amount of interest in engagement, there is also a great amount of confusion on the subject, and it is still viewed as an unclear (Dicke et al. 2007; Shuck & Wollard 2010) as the more deeply one explores in this term, the more they start confusing it with factors such as commitment, satisfaction, and extra role behaviors (Bakker & Loiter & Loit

Moreover, the concept of employee engagement does have an important place in the literature of management, particularly in human resource practices since the 1980s (Buckingham & Coffman 1999; Shuck & Wollard 2010; Bakker & Leiter & Leiterkingham & Coffma by the Gallup organization in the 1990s. However, the notion of this concept is still thought as being not entirely clear as it is now seen in a wider context and more difficult to define individually from concepts such as commitment, job satisfaction, and extra role behaviors (Bakkerand extra role b .
Kahn was the first to attempt to define this concept, considers employee engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances” (Kahn 1990, p. 694). However, at present, there is no one principal in definition with engagement having been implemented and measured in more than one way.

Before we address the definitions, it is important to bring attention to the fact that work engagement differs from employee engagement. The latter refers to the employee’s relationship with the organization while the work engagement is more specific and comprises the individual’s relationship with their work (Bakker & Leiter 2010; Leiter & Taylor, 2014).

More precisely, employee engagement can refer to creating opportunities for the employees in order to connect them with their colleagues and managers in the organization in order to motivate them. This approach will then help the employees to connect with their work and job responsibilities (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich 2009) such an employee has a desire or the motive to work with respect to the business context. Moreover, it is assumed they would work collaboratively with colleagues in order to improve performance at work. In other words, this creates a positive employee attitude regarding the organization and its values. Nevertheless, Truss et al. (2006) prefer to simply define employee engagement as ‘passion for work’ (Armstrong & Taylor 2014, p.
It is also important to note that in this age engagement is viewed as “improvisation” (Bakker & Leiter 2010), being “extraordinary” (Vance 2006), and “the willingness to go beyond the contract” (CIPD 2012, p. 13). Indeed, it is more accurate to say that one size does not fit all. Hence, the meaning of employee engagement has been understood or defined differently by many organizations and academics, which may cause confusion of this notion. The main reason behind the EE concept confusion is not only because of the fact that organizations measure and define engagement in different ways that agree with its nature, but because it is easily confused with other closely-related concepts. Hence, it is fair to say there is no one “right” way to define or trigger engagement in employees.

After all, it is really not surprising that a manager should engage employees and why the practice of EE is highly desirable, now more than ever, by organizations. In this ever-changing business era and with the challenging global competition and harsh economic conditions (CIPD 2012) companies are trying to perform successfully. Thus, through achieving EE that mutually benefits the two parties it is believed that employees will not only outperform but will ‘go the extra mile’ for their organization (CIPD 2008; Soni 2013).

Therefore, HR aims to implement and reap the benefits from this vast construct that affects all aspects of human resources (Marko & Sridevi 2010) simply because that employee engagement is the number one measure of a company’s health as stated by
Jack Welch, former General Electric CEO and business consultant. In other words, this concept can also be referred to as creating a healthy work environment for employees in order to motivate them. An organization will suffer if the employees are not engaged enough. As per the results of the research conducted by Software house Intuit, the employees who are highly engaged in their work perform 1.3 times better than ordinary employees. These employees have a five-times lesser chance of leaving the company (Vance 2006).

Moreover, The popularity of engagement demonstrates that it is clearly a desirable aspect, or as David Guest (2013, p. 231) describes it, ‘a new management mantra’. Hence, the organization is responsible for nurturing engagement (Angle & Perry 1981); this is more likely because of what Soni (2013) suggests in his paper, “A Key to Organizational Success in 21st Century,” in which he simply argues that ‘A highly engaged employee will consistently deliver beyond expectations’ (p. 52). Nevertheless, Macey and Schneider (2008) warn that pushing employees to engage at their highest levels at all times will affect their wellbeing and impedes the operation of EE in the long run. Hence, it is significant for organizations to aptly acknowledge its strategies.

It has been reported in 2012 that out of 32,000 workers surveyed worldwide, only 33% were engaged, with two-thirds feeling unsupported, detached, or disengaged (CIPD 2012) Thus, some companies develop good engagement strategies for using the potential of their people, but end up failing. According to Cuccureddu (2013), most companies fail to succeed because they fail to implement a strategy effectively, and in
some cases fail to put the strategy into implementable actions. Agress (2011) adds that a valid engagement strategy should be explicitly-defined and should have a diagnosis of the employment engagement issues, a guiding principle that would help evaluate possible solutions, and of course, a coherent action plan that will resolve the identified issues. Hereby, for companies to succeed in developing and deploying their employee engagement programs, the following components should be present: Firstly there should be coordination throughout the organization. Most business organizations are excellent at planning but do not focus on the delivery of the plan. This is manifested through lack of coordination among an organization’s individuals and can be resolved so long as the critical members of the organization are aware of the strategic objectives, plans of action, and performance-tracking mechanisms that should have been designed as part of the strategic formulation process. Secondly, a good engagement strategy must be fully committed to by management. Managers have to be the first to commit to the strategy and lead their subordinates by example. To do so, managers must also be equipped with the right skills for planning, communicating, delegating, and resolving work issues that validate the employee engagement strategy (Thomas 2009).

Surely, it is plausible for the employee engagement strategy to fail due to the fact that there will be members of the organization who may not be able to follow the plan. For this reason, tracking performance and instilling a backup plan to the engagement strategy must be developed early on. This backup plan should be included in the engagement plan’s budget. As reported by Phelps (2013), not many CFOs understand or invest in human resource development. If these companies are to gain or prevail
through the sharpening of their human resource base, adequate funds must be invested in the engagement strategy. The funds must include remuneration, either in terms of money or in terms of time. Engaged employees must feel the sense of satisfaction and must be recognized and appreciated. Recognition, undoubtedly, requires remuneration, and a good employee engagement strategy must develop this necessary feature as well.

Most employee engagement strategies also do not succeed because the expectations are not framed correctly. Most managers believe that employee engagement is a short-term program that outputs long-term results. However, new strategic plans take time to work and are found to be very rarely successful immediately. Thus, managing the expectations of the organization by realizing the time element of the engagement strategy is critical. Additionally, it may be best to sense that the employment engagement strategy will not instantly make the business organization overly profitable. Stakeholders may become demoralized if the strategy fails to deliver overly impressive results, and therefore, a careful analysis and projection of expected outcomes is also necessary.

It is possible, however, that those employees who are happy, satisfied, and even committed to their jobs are not fully engaged. The psychological basis outlined in the preceding section explains the theories behind employee satisfaction and employee engagement, thus explaining that it is possible for cases such as this to be evident. It is also quite possible that these employees are motivated, and as explained earlier, their motivation can either be autonomous or regulated. If an employee is motivated to work
for his own personal gains, such as money, recognition, authority, etc., he may be working at a high level, but he may not be engaged in the whole vision of the organization. An organization needs its people to buy into its vision and thereby become emotionally invested in the company. When it does so, it contributes at pace and quality levels that even the most motivated employee alone cannot do. The employee commits all his capabilities for the rehabilitation of his organization, this rehabilitation being an integral part of his personal satisfaction. While employee engagement sounds like a very difficult process, it actually can be achieved through perfectly practical ways. Lauby (2012) wrote that the best way to reach this goal is to let the employees own their jobs. This means that managers are more facilitators of the direction that employees want to make of their jobs, instead being those who direct employees towards a certain path. In summary, employee engagement thus becomes more of a relationship directive, with managers and leaders becoming more personally involved with people rather than in just these people’s tasks.

From the discussion above, it can be said for an organization to drive its success, it must help to drive its individual employees’ success by engaging them genuinely and motivating them intrinsically or extrinsically to ensure a modified form of employment engagement. This could be achieved through assuring employee engagement enablers, which will be mentioned below in points, although drivers of engagement may differ in emphasis. However, most agreed on the below employee engagement drivers (Robinson et al 2004; MacLeod & Clarke 2009; ACAS 2010; CIPD 2014) are:
I. Leadership: First, it is believed that effective leadership is the heart of employee engagement. In other words, leadership establishes the way for EE. “We found that employees were more engaged when their leaders provided clear guidelines for job performance, which gave the employees a greater feeling of clarity and control over what they were supposed to do” (Britt 2009).

II. Line managers, who motivate, empower, and support their employees are also viewed as critical EE drivers. This means that it is important for line managers to manage their teams in ways that both enhance employee engagement and support wellbeing/prevent stress (CIPD 2012, p. 15). Through line managers, employees will gain more clarity in what is expected from them and will act upon them, which allows line managers to provide convenient training, development, and much more (ACAS 2010).

III. Employee voice: ‘an effective and empowered employee voice – employees’ views are sought out; they are listened to and see that their opinions count and make a difference. They speak out and challenge when appropriate. A strong sense of listening and responsiveness permeates the organization, enabled by effective communication’ (p. 75) ‘Employee voice must carry throughout the organization, to challenge and involve employees in decision-making, according to the MacLeod Report (ACAS 2010).

IV. IV. Organizational integrity reflects how an organization values and protects its employees, which demonstrates the attitudes and trust between the two
parties. ‘If an employee sees the stated values of the organization being lived by
the leadership and colleagues, a sense of trust in the organization is more likely
to be developed, and this constitutes a powerful enabler of engagement’
(MacLeod & Clarke 2009, p. 104)

These drivers support each other and cannot be looked at one without the other. In
other words, for instance, line managers can never be effective without communication,
strategic leadership, and integrity (Thomas 2009; MacLeod & Clarke 2009). Moreover,
what drives employees’ engagement was also researched and introduced differently.
Pena (2007), for example, has introduced the “Hierarchy of engagement” which evokes
Maslow’s well-known needs hierarchy model. In the bottom line, the hierarchy
illustrates that once an employee is satisfied with their pay and benefits needs, then the
employee looks to development opportunities, the possibility for promotion, and then
leadership style will be introduced to the mix of the model. Finally, when all the above
cited lower-level aspirations have been satisfied, the employee looks to an alignment of
value-meaning, which is displayed by a true sense of connection, a common purpose,
and a shared sense of meaning at work.

In this sense, several studies were carried out in Great Britain to find and evaluate the
most important drivers. The Institute of Employment Studies conducted a study that
surveyed 10,000 NHS employees. The findings, as Robinson states (2004), were that the
key drivers of EE were the employees’ ability to be involved in decision making and
voicing their ideas, in other words, a sense of feeling involved and valued by their
organization. Moreover, the job development opportunities were found to be an EE driver as they present the employer concerns for the growth of their employees.

Similarly, CIPD (2006) conducted a survey of 2000 employees across the UK, which indicates that communication is the major priority that drives employees toward engagement. In addition, Clifton (2008) believes that employees who have close coworkers or friendships at work are thought to be more engaged workers. Thus, relationships and how an individual communicates within the workplace may be considered as significant key drivers for EE; this actually complies with Bakker & Leiter’s (2010) definition for EE.

We cannot deny the fact that most individuals often seek a place that provides better career prospects, enabling them to experience personal and career growth (Shwu-Ru 2008). They often choose jobs that are rewarding, challenging, enjoyable, and flexible. For an organization to attract highly qualified and talented employees, it must have opportunities, motivation techniques, and satisfy the career and social needs of the employees. Any organization can achieve the desired level of engagement with less cost as it can be seen from the previous that most of the drivers are non-financial in their nature and do not revolve around, for example, pay. The reason why pay is not seen as a driver here is due to the fact that that a company’s pay should at least be around the market average in the first place to attract a workforce, and raising it will surely get the company ‘into the game,’ but cannot assure that it wins (Markos & Sridevi 2010).

Having discussed the drivers of employee engagement in a more practical manner, I
shall now briefly address its theoretical side to explore what theories are suggested to stand behind such psychological notion. Balain and Sparrow (2009) point out the significance of understanding the theory behind engagement, which they believe will lead us to comprehend what causes engagement and what it causes in turn. One of the suggested theories as a perspective that properly stands behind employee engagement is the Self Determination Theory, which was presented by Mayer & Gagne (2008). According to them, there are two aspects of motivation, an intrinsic motivation where the activity that the individual does is enjoyed as ‘intrinsic’ (natural) interest of theirs. There is also an extrinsic type of motivation wherein the activity that the person does is “instrumental” for that person to reach a goal or objective. This type of motivation is seen in the workplace and may appear in different forms.

Furthermore, The Self Determination Theory claims that the external motivation (extrinsic) is seen in the workplace as a reaction to a person wanting to gain rewards, avoid any type of punishment or ill will, improve self-esteem, identify with the organization, or integrate the person to the business organization. The motivations are varied in their application as well, with the employee identifying and merging with the business organization, which is considered to be a very high level of autonomous (self-directed) type of regulation or motivation. The other types of motivation are presented externally and are controls that are normally imposed to regulate social behavior. Thus, it could be said that autonomous self-regulation happens when the basic psychological needs of a person are achieved. These psychological needs include the validation of competency, autonomy, and relatedness. In other words, it is the proposed unifying
theory connecting the various psychological frameworks explaining employee engagement. The similarities and differences presented in the Self Determination Theory identify the value in explaining employee engagement. For example, motivation and employee engagement are clearly two different concepts. Motivation is viewed as the intensity to perform work. Employee engagement adds to this concept and defines work based on how well a form it has taken (quality of work). An employee may be motivated to go to the office every day but may not be motivated to stay after hours for additional work. The employee who buys into extended work hours is more committed to the organization and is characterized as “engaged” (Meyer & Gagne 2008). However, Balain and Sparrow (2009) point out that social exchange theory, which is introduced by Blau (1964), is the most suitable theory that actually stands behind the concept of engagement. This theory reflects the discretionary effort, commitment, and the sense of loyalty as forms of social interchange or mutual outcomes of employees, regarding their organization.

‘Without going too deeply into individual theories, the take away message’ as Albrecht (2010) disputes, is that ‘ongoing research and practice on employee engagement needs to be firmly grounded in well-established theories, frameworks and models. By doing so we shall not only be able to describe the relationships and effects we find, but also be able to explain the psychological processes which underpin the relationships and effects we find’ (p. 7).

All in all, after this overview of employee engagement, employee commitment will be
later discussed later as these two concepts are closely related, and together they act in the best interest of the organization and give it an advantage over competitors. Therefore, many companies are not merely keen to engage their staff but instead conduct surveys and implement programs to measure and enhance the commitment of their employees. It is also important to highlight in this sense that employee engagement consists of emotional commitment and rational commitment (Freifeld 2012; Hay Group 2001). In addition, many definitions of EE mentioned previously in the beginning of this chapter illustrate that these two are related. In fact, most organizations and employees consider employee engagement and employee commitment as being the same concept. Usually, people do not find any major difference between these two factors, but researchers such as Vance (2006) have identified the significant difference between employee engagement and employee commitment by illustrating both individually. One of the important facts about these concepts is that both are used as means of measuring satisfaction, performance, and the employees’ willingness to exert efforts in organizations, etc. (Khan 1990; MacLeod 2009; Macey & Schneider 2008; Bakker & Leiter 2010; Albrecht 2010; CIPD 2012).

In light of this notion, addressing commitment separately will highlight that difference. Moreover, the link between the two will later be explored. Likewise, similar to employee engagement, OC is a psychological construct and could be contrasted or matched with other job-related attitudes (Porter et al. 1974, 1976; Koch & Steers 1978; Mowday et al. 1982; Angle & Perry 1981; Armstrong & Taylor 2014). Examples of these attitudes are as follows: employee’s satisfaction, creativity, and innovation, which mostly depend on
organizational commitment (Naqvi et al. 2011).

Moreover, role stress, empowerment, job insecurity and leadership have shown to be linked to a worker's sense of organizational commitment. In the field of human resource, it is also important to predict work variables such as turnover, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior (Batemen & Strasser 1984; Meyer & Allen 2007).

So what is commitment as a notion? Commitment can be defined as the willingness to persevere in a course of reluctance and action to change plans, driving employees to devote their energy and time to fulfill their job responsibility as well as their personal, community, family, and spiritual obligations (Story, Wright & Ulrich 2009). In other words, it is a course of action that binds the employee to achieve a particular target. On the other hand, “organizational commitment” is specifically deemed as the backbone of the modern HRM philosophy. McCon and Travaglione (2007) illustrate organizational commitment (OC) as “the employee’s emotional attachment to identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 119). In general, it is well established that if an organization treats its employees well, they will be motivated to give back as much or more both physically and emotionally, which is referred to as psychological attachment or loyalty (Mowday et al. 1982; Armstrong & Taylor 2014). Hence, it is significant for organizations not to neglect the importance of seeking commitment as it is believed that employees, who are highly committed to their organizations, will not only provide effective results and competitive advantages to their organizations (Armstrong & Taylor
2014), but will also exert effort on behalf of the organization, which means the more committed persons are to the organization, the more they will be motivated and more willing to work ‘above and beyond contract' (Mowday et al. 1982; Bateman & Strasser 1984).

Like any psychological concept, OC faced some lack of agreement on its definition (Meyer & Allen 1991). Meyer and Allen (1997) state that there is no definition more 'correct' or universally accepted than the others, but they agree that it refers to a psychological state. Furthermore, as a notion it is easily confused, and to grasp a deep understanding of it will not be a problem-free process due to its wide multidimensional nature and how it can be deemed or evaluated in practice.

Most importantly, we cannot come across commitment without addressing the well-known researchers, Natalie Allen and John Meyer, and their three-component model. Particularly, we cannot neglect the fact that that commitment is a multidimensional construct and that the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of commitment differs across dimensions (Meyer, et al. 2002). Allen and Meyer were eager to explore this field of commitment, and in 1991 they published an article title, “A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment” in the Human Resource Management Review. In their article, they developed a model that explains the commitment to a given organization and work is a psychological state is measured or comprised of three distinct components affecting how different employees feel about their places of work. These three components, which will be explained separately in the
coming paragraphs, are as follows: Affective Commitment (AC), Normative Commitment (NC), and Continuous Commitment (CC) (Allen & Meyer 1991).

First, The Affective Commitment (AC) is a type of commitment that refers to emotional affection and attachment, such as when people feel like they have strong emotional attachment to their organizations as well as to the work they do, and in most cases, they identify themselves with the values and goals of the organization. Thus, an employee who seeks to fulfill their values and goals through fulfilling the goals of their organization is said to have affection towards their job in which the general idea is called an affective commitment (Allen & Meyer 1996) In addition, they have a genuine feeling of ‘wanting to be there.’ In turn, the increase in job satisfaction adds to the feeling of having Affective commitment. In other words, an individual who wants to and enjoys working for an organization will have the urge to commit themselves and continue working. Therefore, AC is an important employee retention tool and will help an organization to achieve success (Mannelly 2009).

The second component is Normative Commitment (NC), which normally occurs when an individual has the feeling of “being obligated” to their work and indicates a supposed duty to be part of their organization (Allen &Meyer 1996). This feeling of obligation to an organization may stem from different factors. One may feel that the organization has played a great role in training them and building their career or has provided some form of advance such as educating them through paying their fees or other financial burdens.
In some other cases, the obligation may arise from one’s upbringing. Regardless, NC guides an organization to provide their committed employees effective rewards as these investments’ recognition causes the employees to feel satisfied with their job (George & Jones 2012).

The Third component is Continuous Commitment (CC), which reflects the fear of loss of one’s job and indicates the supposed cost related to exiting the organization, or in other words, when one does not commit to the organization because they want to but because they feel ‘they have to or need to.’ It is believed that friendship ties with coworkers enhances the organizational membership aspect, which in turn is believed to make an individual “need” to stay because they do not want to lose that organizational membership. In other words, it is fundamental for employees to foster relationships outside of the work environment because it enables them to form stronger work-related ties (Saeed et al. 2012) Friendships outside the workplace also break the monotony of work relationships which will result in strengthening the organizational membership (Wilkinson et al. 2004). However, Meyer and Allen (1991) argue that age and position may play a big role in this case as it is possible that age, family commitments, and place of residence make it difficult for employees to extend their friendship associations outside the workplace.

Having briefly illustrated each component individually, it is important to point out that through applying this model, one may assist their team in developing a greater and
positive commitment and by doing so, the people working in the same organization may feel an increase in their commitment to the organization and will likely remain positive and feel more motivated in conducting their work, which will surely help such people experience job satisfaction. Hence, the three-component model of commitment by Allen and Meyer in 1990 is the most commonly used tool that exhibits the concept of organizational commitment within business and academics as one may use these models in increasing engagement and commitment to their team. It may as well be used in helping employees experience a greater sense of wellbeing as well as job satisfaction (Allen & Meyer 1996).

Thus, the three-commitment profiles are perceived as an excellent tool for grasping the dynamics among AC, CC, and NC in relation to work outcomes (Bergman 2006; Gellatly et al. 2006; Somers 2009). Despite this significance, while searching through the literature, certain integral aspects can be noticed: what drives commitment, what defines the behavior of committed employees, and what role culture plays in the former. These aspects have not as of yet been studied thoroughly. In fact, Mindy Bergman (2006) points out that little research was carried out in regards to the correlation between commitment components, for example, in regards to (NC) and (AC). Until now, there have been few available studies in this field to indicate the combined impact of AC, CC, and NC on work results. The few that have been conducted show there is a positive relationship, however, between NC and AC.

For instance, findings such as that of Somers’ (2008) highlight that most positive work
outcomes are related to the affective–normative dominant profile, which basically cites that when AC and NC are simultaneously high, they will lead to lower turnover intentions and lower levels of psychological stress while the continuance–normative dominant group shows the lowest levels of absenteeism. However, we must not forget that there are always opposing opinions. For example, Chang, Chi, and Miao (2007) found that normative organizational commitment is negatively linked to organizational turnover intention, and affective occupational commitment negatively correlates with occupational turnover intention most strongly. Once again, it can be observed from the studies conducted in this field that, as Mindy Bergman (2006) believed, little research was carried out regarding the link between commitment domains.

Throughout what has been discussed and addressed earlier, it is clear that a positive correlation generally binds the two concepts; however, as commitment has separate components which may be linked differently to employee engagement in numerous studies, investigating the link between employee engagement and a single commitment component could lead to an accurate understanding of these concepts and their relationships to employee retention, etc. Therefore, in this section, we shall address and discuss each correlation separately:

- **Employee Engagement and Affective commitment:**

  Many studies suggest in their findings that EE can actually predict AC (Albour & Altarawneh 2014; Hakanen et al. 2006; Llorens et al. 2006; Saks 2006). In Hannah and Iverson’s (2004) research, for instance, they illustrated how close the bond is between
AC and EE because affective commitment is the emotional bond between the employee and the organization (ACAS 2010).

The studies mentioned above therefore conclude that engaged employees will have higher AC and will be highly attached to the organization, and therefore will not only engage but do so in a positive manner. What then is the explanation behind this? Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) claim an individual will most likely report positive attitudes towards a job when they have higher AC due to the fact that they had a positive and fulfilling work-related state of mind in the first place, or in other words, a ‘wanting to be there attitude.’ Moreover, Saks (2006) justifies this: ‘Engagement is an individual-level construct and any positive business results would have to impact individual-level outcomes first’ (Albour and Altarawneh 2014, p. 207). Hence, it may be rational to propose the relationship as follows:

~There is a positive relationship between employment engagement and affective commitment.

Employee Engagement and Normative Commitment:

Albrecht (2010) sheds light on the fact that ‘fully engaged workers are more likely to have high level of normative commitment which is illustrated by the duty to remain and contribution to the success of the organization’ (page 68). In general, it is said that a positive relationship links EE and NC (Lau et al. 2011). As mentioned previously, NC
normally occurs when an individual has the feeling of being obligated to their work and indicates a supposed duty to be part of organization (Allen & Meyer, 1996). This feeling of obligation to an organization may be a result of various factors, such as provided training programs, rewards, and friendship ties. For example, Allen and Meyer (1990) indicate that socialization enhances employees’ loyalty, and when workers engage socially with other members or colleagues in their organization, they develop a sense of obligation toward their organization; hence, they attempt to support their organization from what they think most others in the group will actually do (Van Vogt & Hart 2004). Khan (1990) explains that this may go back to the fact that engaged employees spend some time in and out of their formal working hours with others, which will build a meaningful and empathic identification towards others. In summary, the interaction and socialization with co-workers is believed to increase or decrease NC, and when NC is increased, then loyalty will increase. When employees are loyal, they will then feel obliged to engage and contribute to the organization’s success. Therefore, it may be rational to propose the relationship as follows:

~There is a positive association between employee engagement and normative commitment.

o Employee Engagement and Continuous Commitment:

A study conducted by Bakker and Demerouti (2008) found that when employees’ job engagement raises, their continued commitment drops and visa-versa. One potential explanation for this finding is that workers who energetically and psychologically engage
are more likely to report lower levels of continuous commitment as they may consume energy or feel pressured after a while. However, it is still suggested that organizational engagement does not explain the continuance commitment as described in Albour and Altarawneh (2014). Hence, it may be rational to propose the relationship as:

~ There is a negative or no relationship between employee engagement and continuance commitment.

Contrarily, it may be logical to say EE and CC may be positively correlated since there is not yet enough literature that covers the study of the link between those two. It is logical to say that there may be, though. Lua et al. (2011) suggest that there may be a small effect of CC on engagement. They argue in their research that engaged employees may consider leaving the organization as a sacrifice; nevertheless, this effect may not be strong enough to increase significantly their CC to the organization. Hence, it may be rational to propose the relationship as follows:

~ There is a positive association between employee engagement and continuance commitment.

Results from previous studies demonstrate the effect of employee engagement on different types of commitment to provide a comprehensive knowledge in setting effective performance standards in the organization (Ortiz et al. 2013).

The association between employee engagement and affective commitment is
investigated thoroughly in the literature (e.g., Hannah & Iverson 2004; Saks 2006), while
the effect of engagement on CC and NC has not yet been adequately explored. However, some studies (Ortiz et al. 2013; Lua et al. 2011) argue that the effect of EE on CC has a non-significant positive association, which begs the question at to whether or not CC represents a psychological state or the extent to which the worker is joined to the organization. In several banks in Gaza, a study was conducted to measure the employees’ commitment to these banks, specifically to investigate the effect of perceived job satisfaction, perceived job characteristics, perceived organizational characteristics, and role perception on three dimensions of organizational commitment: AC, NC, and CC. Findings show that perceived job satisfaction was found to be positively and significantly associated with AC. In addition, the results also show that only perceived job satisfaction was found to be significantly and positively correlated with CC. However, it was not found to be significantly associated with NC (Madi, Abu-Jarad, Alqahtani 2012).

o foster and leverage AC and NC, since they are highly related and desired to achieve fully-engaged workers, companies will need to provide an equal and fair reward system. Moreover, job design and management practices also have a great impact on satisfying employees’ needs. In addition, giving employees performance feedback to develop affective and normative commitment provides a supportive organizational culture and transformational leadership. Fair manager’s treatment is required, as Albrecht (2010) argues.
Apart from the existing literature and case studies discussed previously in this chapter, most recent studies reveal that organizational commitment can be used as a significant means of predicting employee engagement in an organization. Therefore, commitment is most likely to be considered as a positive behaviour that shows a willingness to put forth energy to attain success in the organization (Farrell & Finkelstein 2007).

Furthermore, as Johnson (2004) argues, it is evident that employee engagement and employee commitment are essential in trying to get the best from employees and meet a company’s target as these in general are means of measuring performance in organizations. This aspect makes it necessary for any organization to identify the close association between the two in order to know how to manage their human resources efficiently. These factors must undergo investigation by companies in order to know the engagement and commitment of their employees in their workplace. Employee loyalty is created by employee satisfaction and in the end cultivates employee engagement. The following chapter discusses the research processes, including the research design, sampling and population, instruments, and procedures used for data collection and analysis in the present study.
Chapter Three: Methodology

This section of any dissertation is of the utmost importance as it explains some issues dealt with during the project’s progress, including the sample size chosen by the researcher, the reason for the research, the type of data collected, and even the techniques that are used in collecting the data. This section serves as tangible proof that the research was actually conducted. In this case, this chapter comprises the analysis of the techniques that were used in this research. This methodology represents the role in performing this research study. Hence, the details of the methodology are well illustrated throughout this chapter. Note that this research is more interested in the depth of the data rather than breadth and requires the researcher to play an active role in the data collection. This chapter will also carry out this methodology in the attempt to fulfill the objective of this study, which is establishing the degree to which HR strategies are effective in generating employee engagement and commitment while also identifying the reasons for failure. In addition, it seeks to explore the degree to which employee engagement relates to organizational commitment and also to explore reasons that may have caused low participation in company projects.

3.1. Research Strategy – Approach and Design

In conducting the proposed study, which is aimed at grasping the concept of employee
engagement, drivers of engagement, and how EE is related to commitment, a
constructivist approach will be followed. This approach is often associated with
qualitative research with an understanding that a social phenomenon is jointly
constructed by individuals within a specific context. As pointed out by Bryman and Bell
(2003), qualitative research depends on words rather than quantification in the data
analysis and collection: ‘It is also inductivity, constructionist and Interpretivist in nature’
(p. 279).

A qualitative approach whereby different issues related to the engagement and
commitment of the employees in an organization will enable the various causes and
issues to be analysed. Furthermore, one may easily grasp their correlations, allowing the
participants to explain and state their opinions (Bryman & Bell 2003). The kind of
approach used is descriptive whereby various questions were asked, and the employees
would share their views and ideas on various aspects. This is a descriptive survey as the
various kinds of issues, which are analyzed, are more concrete and accurate as per the
real situation concerning the engagement and commitment of the employees (Appendix
B). This means that this study concerns the opinions, attitudes, values, norms, and
actions of the interviewees. In descriptive surveys or survey research, specific behaviors
can be investigated. This generally means that the researcher will have to question
individuals by using an oral interview or much more commonly, the written
questionnaire (Veldt et al. 2004, p. 77).

Mixed methods of questionnaires and interviews were the targeted methodology in
approaching this research as to give it both statistical and descriptive conclusions, which will enhance the strength of the study; however, the questionnaire was dropped (Appendix E) because the branch was going under the pressure of changes and closure. The reason for using mixed methods was to gain a better idea or explanation of social phenomena through diverse data sources. Nevertheless, according to Barbour (1998, p. 353), ‘mixing methods qualitative research, is problematic since each method within the qualitative paradigm has its own assumption in “terms of theoretical frameworks we bring to bear on our research ’ cited from (Golafshani 2003, p. 603). Under the organization’s circumstances, interviewing was the only method adopted due to its suitability in terms of timing, costs, interviewees’ availability, and so on. In depth interviews were also chosen as they allow for freely discussing issues from a personal point of view (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Focus groups were not used due to the availability of the candidates in different dates and timings. In addition, as Oliver (2003) notes, participants may not wish to share their views and may feel urged to respond in a different way in front of others, which may negatively affect the validity and reliability of the data.

3.2. Sample

Although purposive non-probability sampling technique may allow the researcher to choose the best candidates when the type of sampling is small as it may achieve the purpose of the research (Saunders et al. 2007). Despite this fact, depending on random sampling was the only choice possible. However, it suits the chosen research as in the case, the percentage of candidates not undertaking the voluntary scheme represents
most employees. The sample acts as a representative of all the employees in a private non-profit company. Nine employees were interviewed or recorded. My aim was to interview more, but due to the branch closure, many employees could not find time to participate. In general, the number will not be large as I am using structured descriptive interviews. Interviewees were both males and females. However, males make up a higher percentage than females as most of the electricians and engineers were men at that branch.

These employees were chosen randomly to represent the experience and time that they have served in the company. The time ranges from as long as 20 years to as little as 2 and a half years’ experience. This sample was selected in order to represent the views of the employees who have worked for so long in the company to those who have not served nearly as long. As it can be observed, the employees chosen suited the criteria and acted as representatives of the rest; thus, a fairly accurate conclusion can be made from the research.

3.2. Data Collection

3.2.1. The Data

Raw basic data was collected in an uncontrolled environment. The data was collected in terms of open-ended questions, which mainly aimed at analyzing the factors that influenced the employees’ engagement and commitment inside the company.
MacGowan (2003), Buckingham and Coffman (2000) as well as Armstrong (2011) illustrate some of the factors include the employees’ reasons for being in their job, the length of time they have served,

the changing of the managers or supervisors and their reactions towards this, decision-making, the recognition they receive during their work and the appraisal, their relationship with the managers, the departments that in their view seem to have a weakness, and the changes to be considered. Some external factors analyzed include their relationship with people outside the organization and their views on if they were offered to work in another organization. This question also recognized their advantage to measure their commitment as in this research is not only measuring these factors, but also actually tries to demonstrate the correlation between the two basic concepts. Johnson (2004) discusses that these factors need to be investigated by companies in order to know the engagement and commitment of their employees in their workplace. In other words, the researcher here attempts to measure employee perception on the factors that drive engagement and commitment. Hence, Harman’s single-factor test was employed to examine the amount of variance accounted for in the variables. These variables were distributed in the form of thirteen questions asked to establish the applicability of the theories and how different members fit into different categories, and in the process attain the objective of the study. The questions were systematically structured to ensure that a conclusive analysis can be drawn from the data collected.
3.2.2. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher carried out one-on-one interviews with the selected employees, and as they were few, the period of time to organize these interviews took a maximum of about a week. The employees were asked questions with regard to the factors given above. The questions were quite simple in context and language, and the employees communicated on their views and ideas regarding the various questions asked as clearly as they could. Some answers were brief while others were more elaborate regarding their views on the aspects of interest to the researcher. The views here account for the personal and general outlook of their job in the company. Some of the advantages of face-to-face interviews include accurate and first-hand information and easy communication of the interviewee’s honest feelings. Another reason for this was to gain as much information as they could provide in response to the questions to be handled by the employees. This information is accurate and delivered as required as the different views of the employees with regard to their commitment and engagement toward their jobs in the company was communicated, as required, and their feelings as well.

In addition, the use of a voice recorder was also an option for the employees interviewed and was left upon their discretion to accept this method or not. Notes were taken afterwards from the voice recorders due to the fact that it is considered distracting to take them at the same time of interviewing an individual despite the fact that this method is time consuming (Wisker 2007).
3.3. Validity, Reliability and Generalizability

Validity and reliability have been much discussed by advocates of quantities research; however, these two concepts are still important to achieve in qualitative research.

3.3.1 Validity

In qualitative research, the level of validity is determined by the degree to which the results are judged to have explained or expounded adequately. While any researcher must obtain validity, claim Easterby-Smith et al. (2002), a study must have access to the participants’ experience clearly and thoroughly in the study setting.

Although some qualitative researchers have argued that the concept of validity is not usable to qualitative research as the results of one study is more likely to differ from the other, and no repeated or similar findings are reached (Bryman & Bell 2003), many researchers therefore have created their own concepts of validity and have often adopted what they believe to be more appropriate terms such as, quality, rigor, and trustworthiness (Golafshani 2003). In addition, Saunders (2003) argues that because qualitative research results may not be the same or repeated in other conducted studies, they shall not affect the validity of the research on the same subject. Therefore, it can be stated that this study contributes to a better grasping of how different “situational” factors (rather than attempting to test and validate existing theories on factors) relate to employee engagement.

This puts into consideration the important aspects being looked into and how well they relate to the questions that were asked. The questions that were asked consider the
factors that were important, particularly in knowing how they influenced the employees’ engagement and commitment towards their work. Employees answered questions, and it was ensured that all participants understood the questions correctly as they all availed themselves and gave their views and ideas as expected.

The participants were to start when ready and take their time depending on their issues and views about the various aspects presented by the interviewee. Interviews were held in a separate room far from any distractions and were located inside the organization where interviewees’ worked, which is considered to support the concentration and reduce the distraction that all interviewees may experience (Gill et al. 2008). The questions were straightforward and were asked and answered face-to-face, and the interviewer could easily get the first-hand information. Moreover, the issue of being recorded was upon the interviewees’ discretion to ensure that the information given or collected was not invalid or stressed. The participation of the employees was good as they were informed about the interview and the research to be carried out. Therefore, they had some time to prepare for the interview.

Furthermore, open-ended questions were used to enhance the validity instead of the closed questions, which may not advocate what is being researched, according to Gina Wisker (2007). This method enables the individual to think deeply or inspect their real values or feelings. In addition, it shows the diverse views that interviewees have, which they could easily relate in their own way. Theoretical validity is established in this research through depending on theory in designing and analyzing the findings as the
interview process attempts to formulate relationships between the addressed concepts.

Last but not least, a factor that may be considered to have some effect on validity is that the research was held in an organisation which was shutting down. Hence, it could be argued that employees’ opinions, answers, and feelings, therefore, may be considered credible.

3.3.2. Reliability

Joppe (2000) defines reliability as, “The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable” (p. 1).

The environment was conducive as the employees expressed their opinions and were able to share their feelings with the interviewer. Interviewees fully acknowledged the topic under study beforehand, which is believed to lead to increased credibility. Questions were asked exactly as prepared and structured to keep the interview focused, and in the same configuration as it is believed that this approach will insure the reliability of the data being collected (Silverman 1993). In addition, the instruments and method used for data collection were consistent and transparent as the answers were given fairly and in detail. Issues, such as personal bias, were taken into consideration as the employees were asked similar questions and given enough time to answer their questions and express their views even about the areas in the company that, according to their testimonies, seem to be lacking some important
aspects.

Some issues, like the privacy of the employees, were satisfied as they only used the voice recorder upon consent. The questions asked also mainly focused on their views about the various aspects that would lead to the success of the research and the aims of its exploration. Although the participant’s answers and the researcher’s intake of this information may be affected by their personal objectivity and self-reflexivity, this is an important strategy and fits to serve the purpose of the research succinctly as it is qualitative research (Wisker 2007). These strategies were implemented to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness.

3.3.3 Generalizability

This study was conducted in the UK, and generalising the results will be restricted as there may be countless other factors affecting the findings. In other words, it is difficult and time consuming to conduct this research to see whether the factors that have been addressed in previous research can be generalized to the context of the proposed study. Moreover, the study may discover factors that may be unique to the context of the proposed research. Hence, this item contributes to a better grasp on different “situational” factors rather than attempting to test and validate existing theories on factors related to employee engagement.
In addition, as the sample was selected randomly, there may be a possibility that it does not comprehensively represent all of the population. Moreover, the sample size was in fact very small due to time and organizational restrictions. Therefore, the external validity of the results is more likely to be limited.

3.4. Ethical Aspects of Research

Assuring that there is no harm to participants by conducting this research was considered and applied by using Diener and Crandall's (1978) framework, which was illustrated in Bryman and Bell (2003).

Firstly, Participants were notified verbally regarding the reasons behind conducting this study as well as given an instruction sheet (Appendix A) and a consent sheet (Appendix B) which they signed to show their full convenience to participate in the research. Note that participants acknowledged that they have full privacy and that it will not be invaded by the research. This policy was applied by protecting all data, which only existed on my computer and secured by a pin number only known by the researcher in addition to demolishing the data at the end of the research period; these procedures are necessary and not optional due to the requirement to align with the data protection act (Saunders et al. 2003) as well as Diner and Crandall's (1978) framework. The participants will not be deceived about any area of the research as previous aspects were clarified between the two parties.

Moreover, to maintain the employees’ anonymity and confidentiality, the organization’s name, contributors’ names, ages, and genders were removed. Note that the level of
confidentiality I can provide is discussed and agreed upon at the very start of the study (Saunders et al. 2003; Grinyer, 2002). The avoidance of embarrassment, stress, discomfort, and harm was taken into consideration and achieved through adopting the voluntary approach, as in the participants had the full choice to withdraw or to refuse to answer at any time (Saunders et al. 2003; Collis & Hussy 2003; Bryman & Bell 2003).

An issue of justice is also looked into sufficiently; I say this mainly because the employees were selected at random, at different years of service in the organization, and represented the entirety of the employees in the company. These are the ethical issues considered which seem to have led to the fair completion the research’s aim as expected. They are important for any research as they actually dictate the participation of the subject with regard to the issues being observed.
Chapter Four: Analysis & Findings

4.1. Data analysis

Data analysis is important in dissertation since it gives an analytical review and in-depth look at the data collected to form and facilitate discussion and understanding of data collected. Data analysis involves presentation of findings that highlights the data collected from the field and arranges it in an understandable manner for the reader. In addition, there is a discussion of the data to ensure consistency and that it is meaningful and related to the subject matter or objectives of the study. This part also analyzes the data in relation to the discussed theories and compares the information collected to analyze whether it is in line with the discussed theories.

The data collected for this paper is qualitative and comprises interviews posed to nine of the employees at the company. The nine members were randomly selected, but are representative of all the employees because they have different characteristics and are from different departments to ensure that all the members were represented. The questions were systematically structured to ensure that a conclusive analysis could be drawn from the data collected. The nine employees have had different experiences in the company with there being employees with less than 5 years at the company and another that has more than 20 years. All of this information is represented in the data as this diversity and inclusiveness is believed to give the research credibility and reliability (Gallie & White 2003). Moreover, it is important to first highlight the data and the
quotations from the data collected in the field in order to make an informed analysis of the data. Therefore, each variable will be analyzed in a detailed manner.

First, employee retention is the ability of an organization to hold on to its employees for a relatively long period of time. This is demonstrated by employees who stay in an organization for years and is a strong indication of the commitment of employees to the organization. Cultivating employee loyalty is a continuous process and requires employee satisfaction (Shwu-Ru 2008). For employees to stay with a company for a period of more than 10 years implies that the satisfaction level of the employee in an organization is high. Most of the interviewed employees have stayed with the organization for a period of more than 5 years. The longest period an employee has been with this organization is 26 years whereas the least is two and a half years (Appendix C).
Demographics of all employees in the company

From previous analysis and the diagram above, the organization exhibits a high employee retention rate, which signifies that most of its employees are committed and satisfied with the organization. The diagram also shows an increasing rate in the figure of who were below fifteen years in the company, which acts as an indicator of a shift in the opinion of the employees towards the company after serving for fifteen years. From the information provided by the company it is evident that the labour turnover of the employees that have served for more than 15 years is high, although the majority of employees are (and were) interested in working at the company in their early years. The
change in their preference may be due to their desire to find other opportunities in other companies in order to advance their careers. Otherwise, this aspect may be attributed to poor employee engagement methods employed by the company.

Having briefly diagnosed the demographics, it is significant to point out that the other questions in the interview aim to iron out the problems and examine the pertinent issue that leads to investigating the main objective of this study. The graph and the first question, therefore, act as a guide and an assurance of the results and viability of the answers drawn from the research and thereby the results and findings of the research (Campbell & Tawadey 2007).

The rest of the questions were categorically formulated to achieve the objectives of the study and analyse clearly all the aims that have been set throughout the paper.

The second question in the interview concerns the review of the reasons as to why each employee comes to work every day. These reasons drive employee engagement and allow them to be committed to an organization. Most individuals are often sought for a place that provides better career prospects that would enable them to experience personal and career growth (Shwu-Ru 2008). Most of the employees often choose jobs that are rewarding, challenging, enjoyable, and flexible. For an organization to attract highly qualified and talented employees, it must have opportunities, motivation techniques, and satisfy the career and social needs of the employees. The interviewed employees in the company under the study provide various arguments as to why they chose to work for the organization. Interviewee nine asserts that the organization’s
staff, job security, career travel opportunities, and challenges attracted him whereas interviewee five argues that commitment, knowledge, and personal satisfaction are the reasons she has stayed with the organization for five years.

From the responses of the respondents (see appendix C for full interviews), it is evident that the organization provides a conducive working environment in terms of the work and the people. Most of the employees were attracted to the semiconductor microelectronics company as it provided them with an opportunity to do what they enjoy while also learning new things. Better employee rewards in terms of remuneration, opportunities, environment, and job security encourage employees to commit to their work (Sultan 2012, p. 18). The responses of three interviewed employees (four, seven, and nine) demonstrate that the organization pays its employees well enough to keep them.

In addition, as a multinational company, the organization provides vast opportunities for its employees. The employees enjoy the flexibility the work provides, as it implies that they do not have to stick to boring routines. The employees’ management has successfully devised ways of employee engagement, ensuring employees find their work to be comfortable, rewarding, and enjoyable. The second question is in fact important in testing the theories and especially the three-part theory by Natalie Allen and John Mayer (2008). The relationship and attitudes towards each employee’s job reveals a lot about the relationship that exists between the employee and their job. Hence, the question is significant in making an analysis of the theory. However, establishing
individual aspects and attitudes of each employee towards their job requires further research for conclusiveness, and this requires further analysis through analysing the other questions.

In an attempt to measure the level of relationships that employees have and how they influence their work engagement and commitment (Meyer and Allen 2008; Clifton 2008), the interview’s third question focused on the friendship ties that the employees have with their co-workers outside work. The first employee seemed detached and asserted that no relationship exists with the co-workers, a factor that the worker blamed on the age difference. Citing that many of her friends had families that meant after work they had to attend to their family duties, which left no time for extra activities outside the workplace. In addition, there was a laxity to make new friends since the employee further reiterates that her friends have all left the company, and there have been no new ties created. The second and third employees’ reckon that although they have friends at work the same does not apply outside work. However, the fourth employee claims to have friendships within and outside the workplace, adding that he actually met his wife at the company. The fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth employees, however, said that they all have relationships outside work, which are marginal and not very pronounced.

The relationship of employees outside their workplace is clearly non-existent as the employees have other engagements and restrictions that make it difficult for them to meet in this environment. In this regard, the theory of employee commitment to the job
due to the friendship ties with their co-workers does not apply (Meyer & Allen 2008). They may be motivated to work due to the relationships they have forged with each other at the workplace; however, the same cannot be said of outside the workplace, and therefore, the ties are not strong enough for the employees to feel obliged to stay. Apart from one employee who says that the outside relationships and the job were the reasons she met her wife, the rest have a cagey response to the question and do not seem to be involved in any form of relationship outside the workplace.

However, it is important to note that the question offers an insight into the pertinent and research question: reasons why the employees do not engage in the activities set by the company. This can be derived from the answers that the employees accord to this question, although it is not entirely the exact reason they are interrelated since if the employees cannot find time to engage with their friends it is thus a challenge for them to find the time to engage in company-organized activities (Thomas 2009). To exemplify and analyse this assertion further, a complete analysis is required, and all of the information that has been gathered must be analysed.

The fourth question regards the effect of a change of manager or supervisor and co-workers as the transition can negatively affect employee performance, depending on how it is conducted (Saeed et al. 2012). In organizations where employee commitment and retention is high, one will find that some employees have worked with the same colleagues and under one manager or supervisor for a very long time; hence, it becomes difficult for them to adapt to a change of supervisor or co-workers. Amongst the
employees interviewed, only employees seven, six and eight would easily adapt to change of co-workers or supervisors. The rest admit that it would take an effort to adapt to change. The reasons for difficulty in adapting to change include differences in value perception and personalities between those outgoing and the incoming individuals. It can be argued that these employees are just afraid of change because most of them have not experienced it during their time in the organization. Employee one supports this argument by saying, ‘I didn’t change managers for the past 10 years. However, when I first did it was an easy transition because of the way he works and treats people.’ The most experienced employee (number nine) believes that there can be a problem and cites the possibility of having a foreign manager as one of the main problems. Since the employee is experienced, he cites a scenario where he has seen the change affect the working hours and job demands for his position in the past (Thomas 2009). This information is helpful in testing the level of communication with the managers and also the commitment of the employees to the managers. Examining the rating of each employee of their managers and how difficult the transition to a new leader may be helps in examining the level of loyalty and commitment to the specific manager, all of which are indicators of employee engagement (Thomas 2009; MacLeod & Clarke 2009).

In addition to ease of transition to a new manager, ease of communication with the existing manager is a critical aspect of the study to examine communication as a factor for employee engagement. Effective communication is another significant aspect of an organization, especially between managers and employees (Bockerman 2012).
The first employee is consistent with the earlier answers, and as expected, says that there is ease in communication with the manager with there being 100% access whenever she needs the manager. The second employee says that communication is easy although it is through the phone because the manager prefers this method. The third and fourth employees reiterate that it is easy to contact their fellow employees, always. The fourth employee is rather skeptical and says that the area of communication with the manager needs much improvement although blames, to some degree, the profession (Campbell & Tawadey 2007). Employees six, seven, eight, and nine say that communication between them and their employer is good, and they discuss all the matters regularly. Although the means of communication differ, they all manage to communicate with their managers efficiently. From this information it is clear that communication is not a problem since out of nine employees, only one complains of communication breakdown a factor, which he blames on the profession (Gallie & White 2003). The question is useful in analysing communication as a tool for employee engagement and how effective it has been applied by the company in ensuring that they engage all of their employees. Moreover, communication breakdown and failure can cost an organization; therefore, it is crucial that appropriate communication channels and messages are used to disseminate the required information (Bockerman 2012).

The seventh question, regarding the involvement of the employees in decision-making processes, is one in which all the nine employees have a similar view. The employees claim to be involved in these processes by the company that is accompanied by
strategizing for their working units. Employee involvement and engagement in making of core decisions regarding the working units is essential in improving the level of employee engagement, a factor that the company has strongly focused on according to the reviews by the employees at the company (Truss 2009). From the responses, it is evident that all the respondents participate in goal setting in one-way or another. In addition, most of the respondents affirm that there is always a discussion with the manager concerning the goals set either by the customer or manager. According to employee nine, setting goals is essential as it allows the employees to work towards the mission of the organization. Collective responsibility enables a department or organization to achieve the objectives set. In certain cases, the manager and the subordinates can disagree with the goals set or ways of attaining them. As mentioned in the literature review, a strong sense of listening and responsiveness permeates the organization, enabled by effective communication (p. 75), and ‘Employee voice throughout the organization, to challenge and involve employees in decision-making is a significant driver of engagement (ACAS 2010).

The eighth question generally concerns the same concept, although there is level of analysing the attributes that make a worker take up the job and how they perceive high recommendations and recognition for their work. This question helps the research in examining the hierarchy of engagement theory by Pena (2007) and also the communication process in the company. As evidenced by the responses, all the respondents have received recognition recently from their managers. Some managers are fairly good at giving positive feedback and using words like ‘thank you’ and ‘you did
a good job.’ Employee one asserts that he decided not to leave the organization when he was promoted because the organization changed their strategy and software to what he was interested in. Most of the respondents claim they feel valued in the organization, and this motivates them to put in more effort and be fulfilled. Employee five is critical of the reward system, however, and feels that the company does not do enough to motivate its employees although they work hard. The seventh and eighth employees also have had recognition recently, but there have been no promotions or rewards for this in the past. There were mixed reactions in terms of the rewards and recognition that have been accorded to the employees in the company with some deeming it as satisfactory while others view it as very inefficient and poorly managed.

One of the challenges that have been brought up in the interviews is how employees have to deal with work-related stress in the work environment. It always arises when there is pressure building up, both internally and externally, in order to complete a task. It is normal to become stressed at work, and it usually varies from one person to another depending on the personality of the employee. The level of stress is also not uniform, but from the information given by the employees, there is a level of stress but not too much to cause any sort of problem for the company. For example, the second employee says that stress comes and goes, but it happens only when things are not going right at the company. There are employees who easily get stressed with minor
issues whereas others can remain stress-free for a relatively long time. The ways of managing stressful situations vary among the individuals. From the responses, however, most of the employees did not become stressed often except for when they had a project. The pressure associated with projects occurs mostly towards the end, when the employees are required to meet a certain deadline. Work-related stress negatively affects the work-life balance, especially when an employee has to work for longer hours, such as 12-13 hours a day in order to complete a project. Employee four, a verification manager, explains that when a project is required to be completed with a short deadline and the team is not allowed to recruit or bring in contractors, then the team is bound to become stressed. According to employee eight, who works in IT, stress arises because the company is understaffed. Flex time in the organization allows the employees to manage their stressful situations. Employee nine, who has worked for more than 20 years with organization, explains that with age, individuals learns how to deal with stress effectively because they understand what is important and that they cannot do everything. Stress should not occur continuously for a long period as Macey and Schneider (2008) warn that it will affect employees’ wellbeing and impedes EE in the long run.

Question nine is the most important question in the study since it looks at the pertinent issue/research question of this paper. The questions asked were as follows: “Did you know about the charity scheme that the company provides, where employees can take a day off and work for a charity? Did you ever take part in it? Why or why not?” The main aim of this part of the research is to assess the main reason why the employees
are not taking part in the charity scheme and thereafter come up with ways to make the employees more engaged in the project through making necessary recommendations. All the interviewed employees are aware of the company’s charity scheme and are interested in ensuring that the company’s participation contributes to the general progress of the different ventures the company is engaged in. From their responses, the employees show that they do not understand how employee engagement can be useful to enhancing their work performance. They consider engaging in the actual business to be more important than anything else. Most employees noted that a charitable scheme is not part of the company’s core business and thus does not add value to the general flow of operations.

From the responses, most of the employees are interested in participating in the schemes but are limited by time. They argue that they are often busy at work, making it difficult to spare time to participate in the scheme activities. However, there are a few employees who do not participate in the charity scheme because it does not interest them, or they do not particularly understand how they can contribute, or where the scheme’s efforts would be located. Notably, most of these employees have not taken part in the charity scheme despite being aware of it. The responses show that the employees do not understand how engaging in such schemes can enhance their work performance. Most employees believe that a charitable scheme is not part of the core business of a company; hence, it does not add value to the general flow of operation.

The tenth question asked the employees of an aspect in the company that they would
like to improve. In most cases, these are aspects that hinder effective employee commitment and engagement. These aspects include the senior/strategic foreigner management, process and technique planning, recruitment, training, and development. It is evident that a majority of the employees think the organization is understaffed; therefore, there is pressure on few employees to deliver, claim employees two, four, and eight. In addition, the employees highlight failure of the management to invest in training and development.

The eleventh question regards the continuous commitment to the company where the employees were asked if they would continue working at the company in two years as it is possible to determine the level of employee commitment by finding out if the employees would stay with the organization for a long time (Salleh et al. 2013). Most employees would consider moving to another organization if it was to their advantage (Schneider 2003). Employee six says, ‘I would feel sad because of the social aspect’ whereas employee eight says, ‘I would be a bit concerned about the team I’d leave behind, and want to make sure they can find sufficient support, but yeah, it would be interesting.’ It is evident that most employees have a strong attachment to the organization, and most of them would feel sad, given that they have formed strong ties with colleagues in the organization. Most of employees were concerned about the team that they would be leaving behind which indicates that for most of the employees, it would be a difficult decision to move on. This demonstrates the level of employee engagement in the organization and to one another (Saeed et al. 2012), which reflects strong organizational membership that indicates high continuous commitment.
(Wilkinson et al. 2004). From the responses, most of the employees are satisfied with the work environment, and this reaffirms positive employee engagement. The company seems to retain most of its employees in the long-run, and they are satisfied in the company; therefore, they feel engaged enough to continue working at the company.

The employees are split on this aspect with some saying that they would be glad while others cite social concerns, although they would still move. Only one employee is adamant that if the opportunity arose he would decline it due to the ties that he has with the employees at the company. This is a measure of the commitment that the employees have at the company, and only one out of nine workers is ‘highly’ committed, representing 11% of the total employees at the company. This is cause for concern since the majority of the employees do not find the company attractive enough to stay (Gallie & White 2003). However, based on the framing of the question, this issue may still be due to the fact that they do not find it feasible to leave because of the chance that it is deemed to make them better.

The final question asked was whether they would recommend the company to a family member, and they all replied yes. This implies that in their opinion it is a good environment to work in, and it also shows that the level of employee satisfaction is high in the organization (Karrasch 2003).

4.2. Discussion of Findings

The research paper aims to establish the degree of HR strategies that are effective in generating employee engagement and commitment, and also identify the reasons for
the failure. In addition, the paper is to establish the degree to which employee engagement relates to organizational commitment and also to explore reasons that may have caused low participation in the company projects. Moreover, the study is to recommend any changes and improvements to the managements through the findings.

One of the aspects that were clear from the findings is that the employees knew about the charity project concerning where they could go and spend their time off. However, they preferred not to volunteer their time with most of them giving different reasons for not attending. Some of the reasons are the location, the busy schedules, and people wanting to spend more time with their families. This scheme was one of the ways that the organisation hoped to engage all the employees and enhance their commitment, relationships, and work ethic, but the employees did not take it with the same level of excitement. From the findings it is evident that although the organisation needs to improve some aspects of its employee engagement and commitment strategies, these are not the main problems that have resulted from the employees not attending the project (Gallie & White 2003). There are problems with the timing and structures, and there is the need for the organisation to involve the members in the project more and come up with other methods to ensure participation, so it could be said that employees are attached but lack the time or the platform to interact outside the work environment due to internal and external factors.

The organisation displays a good level of employee engagement, a factor that is evident in the answers given by the employees, and it is not a problem of engagement that is
causing the fragmentation. The level of commitment in the project is however questionable in this instance. From the findings drawn from the earlier section it is clear that majority of the employees are not passionate about this discretionary effort project, which may indicate a lack of commitment, AC in particular, towards the organisation’s values (Meyer & Allen 1991). The arguments that the employees gave as the main cause of not attending stand, whether they have a time off or not. They however prefer to busy themselves with other work-related chores and disregard the project in its entirety (appendix C).

Furthermore, it could be said that the majority of the employees are there due to CC, but there are few employees, however, who showed evidence of AC. Almost all employees said that they were there due to the people or the manager, and they showed CC to the company as they do not want to leave due to the fear of losing friends and contacts (Meyer & Allen 1991; Wilkinson et al. 2004). CC was also evident when the employees were asked if they would still work in the organisation in the next two years. Most replied positively; when the employees were asked about moving to another organisation they cited the break of social relationships as one of the factors that would hinder their move (Campbell & Tawadey 2007). This may agree with what has been mentioned in the literature review, which stated that organizational engagement does not aptly explain the CC (Albour & Altarawneh 2014). In other words, although employees demonstrated high levels of CC, this did not cause them to engage more or further. Hence, it could be said that CC has a non-significant relationship with EE, which aligns with Ortiz et al. (2013) and Lua et al. (2011).
However, from the results, the majority of the employees in the organisation are not working as a result of NC or because they want and see the vision of their organisation, which reflects AC (Meyer & Natalie 1991; Cook 2008). Nevertheless, the interviewees may be considered as committed to the company and are willing to do their jobs for the remuneration; however, the AC is lacking from the employees at the company. The employees are not focused and willing to strive and achieve the aggregate target of the company, and therefore, they are only working either because of the relationship of the manager or because they do not have any other better position to work at the given moment. This actually aligns well with Albour and Altarawneh (2014), Hakanen et al. (2006), Llorens et al. (2006), and Saks (2006), all of which reflect a positive relationship between AC and EE, which means that the lack of AC has possibly impacted the employees’ lack of engagement in the scheme.

Previously, in the literature review, foster and leverage AC and NC since they are highly related and desired to achieve fully engaged workers; companies will need to provide an equal and fair reward system. Moreover, job design and management practices also have a great impact on satisfying employee needs. Hence, this shall be taken into consideration when trying to improve EE in the organisation under research.

It is also significant to point out that although employees were engaged in their core daily tasks, it could be said that from the interviews a possible reason that may have affected their engagement in the scheme was a lack of NC as the organization offers development and training programs; however, it is evident that there is a need to
improve on these programs not only due to most employees have no time to attend them, given that they are busy but also some have commented on the need of more training opportunities (appendix C). Most employees in the organisation under study would welcome both external and internal training programs to enhance their skills and increase their career opportunities, this will increase NC in the feeling of being “obliged to” in return (Allen & Meyer 1996). In other words, it is the desire of all employees to grow in career terms; therefore, most of them would highly welcome programs that would provide them with such opportunities (Sysinger & Crispo 2012, p. 3). Thus, employees want to feel like the organization is investing in them and their growing ability, which will mean that the organization values them – an important driver of EE as well (Robinson et al. 2004; MacLeod & Clarke 2009; ACAS 2010; CIPD 2014). It is significant that the organization formulates a means of encouraging employee development like encouraging them to pursue higher studies. It should therefore invest in more employees by recruiting them permanently, investing in their training and development. This would ensure employees reduce work-related stress, allowing employees ample time to engage in other company activities like charity schemes, increasing service delivery, and potentially a better impact on their extra mile engagement.

Interestingly, if the correlation between AC and NC was to be investigated, then it can be observed that it aligns well with Mindy Bergman’s (2006) research findings. She found that there is a positive relationship between NC and AC. Thus, these two were found correlated positively as both were lower than CC, and both were evident but not
strong enough.

The human resource management needs to discuss the employee engagement procedures with the workforce, making it possible for the employees to come up with the appropriate participation attributes (Bockerman 2012, p. 247). Once an organisation’s management considers it a priority to explain the need for employee engagement, it is possible to consider the process a part of the management’s professional duties to facilitate, drive, and enhance employee engagement (Thomas 2009; Robinson et al. 2004; MacLeod & Clarke 2009; ACAS 2010; CIPD 2014). Some of the employees claim that they were too busy to engage in the charity scheme, and therefore, they need to be educated on the role that their efforts will play in ensuring that the business’ efforts to move forward. The employees should be educated on the role that employee engagement will have in increasing their enthusiasm at work (Schneider 2003). The organisation should also grasp the benefits that it is to gain from the employee engagement, given that the retention of talents, customer care, personalized performance, group performance, productivity, and financial performance are maximized (Vance 2006; Soni 2013) It is also more significant to point out here that employees must understand the role that employee engagement plays in ensuring the success of the different dimensions of the business (Bockerman 2012). In general, the workforce needs to be informed of the need to participate in the different and wider community activities that are part of the organisation’s long-term plans. Every related issue can be used to determine the manner by which the usual processes for charitable work are done. This can prove very useful for making the employees understand that
they have a very big role to play in bringing forward the various interests of the organisation. It is important that the organisation’s human resource department demonstrates the right framework to make the employees understand the need for their continued support of the business’ external activities (Bockerman 2012). Employee engagement needs to be introduced to the workforce right from the very first day one starts work so that they can duly participate when necessary.

All in all, the analysis reveals mixed results on majority of the questions; however, there are questions that have a unanimous decision or conclusion. The company is a good entity for one to work for, which is evident from the responses to the last question; however, there are many factors that need to be critically evaluated and sorted for one to serve the organization relentlessly. The following sections examine implications of this study to human resource theory building, research, and practice.

**Implications for Theory**

Substantial evidence supports and extends Kahn’s (1990) employee engagement model by providing empirical evidence that the conditions of employee engagement (Kahn 1990, p. 43) have an important relation with the antecedent and outcome variables examined in this study. Research from this study has demonstrated the relation between the conditions for engagement (Kahn 1990; May et al. 2004, p. 33), antecedents, and outcomes, and provided empirical evidence regarding the predictive relation of employee engagement (Khan 1990, p.73) in intention to turnover.
If HRD professionals are concerned with reducing voluntary turnover in organizations, they could, for example, carefully design interventions that teach managers and supervisors how to help employees be involved in meaningful work that fits their abilities and interests, feel safe at work cognitively, emotionally, and physically, and have the available resources, both tangible and intangible, to complete their work. Moreover, for the first time in known research, this study identifies how Kahn’s (1990) conditions of engagement operate in relation to the antecedent variables of job fit, affective commitment, and psychological climate.

Moreover, the findings helped identify meaningful relational qualities between commitment, employee engagement, and the intention to turnover. Thus, this research extends and draws conceptual connections to both Brown and Leigh (1996) and Humphrey (1993) as well as earlier conceptual models which served as theoretical underpinnings to the emotional labor and psychological climate frameworks such as social identity (Ashforth & Mael 1989), job stress (Thoits 1991), job design (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), and emotion in the workplace (Hochschild 1979, p. 34). For example, an HRD professional looking to increase discretionary effort could design positive socialization programs to help set the guidelines of an organization’s culture (Reio & Ghosh 2009, p.76) and use of proactive social identity models (Ashforth & Mael 1989) to help employees understand their contribution to the workplace, and check to see if employees are working within appropriate levels of challenge (Hackman & Oldham 1980; Kahn 1990; Thoits 1990). Researchers could then systematically examine interventions to test their relation and predictive qualities under a variety of diverse
circumstances. Of particular interest to theory building is the lack of predictive relation between discretionary effort and employee engagement as strongly suggested by several contemporary models (CLC 2004; Kular et al. 2008; Maslach et al. 2001; Towers Perrin 2003, 2007).

The present study demonstrates evidence of a relation at the zero-order correlational level for discretionary effort, but this (Goffman 1961; Kahn 1990; Slater 1966; Smith & Berg 1987) may benefit from further refinement. The research could benefit from being revisited more in the context of present-day working conditions. Notwithstanding, prior to this research, little was known empirically about what variables were related to and/or influenced the development of employee engagement (Saks 2006). While more research is needed, findings from this study suggest strong strategic leverage points for HRD professionals between each of the antecedent variables, employee engagement, discretionary effort, and intention to turnover.
Chapter 5: Conclusion and Limitations

In conclusion, companies should ensure that they have implemented the best engagement and commitment strategies to get the potential best from their employees. The three components of commitment help a company in evaluating its employees and coming up with the best methods to ensure that majority of the employees have good levels of commitment. Communication at the workplace is also important if the company is to develop as the employees need to feel valued through assessing their ideas and allowing them an opportunity to voice all the ideas that they may have and evaluating their validity accordingly. The company has implemented some of the commitment and employee engagement strategies; however, more still needs to be done if the company is to have the employees following the same vision and dream as the company itself.

5.1. Implications for Research

HRD researchers need to further test this model of employee engagement and the antecedent and outcome variables examined in this study. In addition to replication, research on employee engagement should be examined using casual comparative (Hinkle et al. 2006) methods with diverse organizational settings and with diverse populations (e.g., knowledge workers and skill workers) using a number of organizationally pertinent variables (e.g., profit, growth, and culture). Longitudinal
employee engagement research would also be of benefit as a way to better understand how engagement levels change over periods of time. Researchers could focus on a specific group of employees in a variety of organizational settings over a week, month, year, or even a 5-year period.

It would be interesting, for example, to follow new employees for a specific length of time to examine how employee engagement changes over the course of an employee’s work cycle. Research could also focus on a single collection site, for instance, using a single case study design (Yin 2003, p. 76) to provide in depth understanding of the variables of interest. For example, where possible, researchers could conduct structured interviews (Patton 1990, p. 67) with employees voluntarily leaving an organization and interpret findings through an employee engagement perspective. Such studies may provide more direct insights into the use of employee engagement as an organizational performance variable. If researchers were to test the utility of an intervention in the development of employee engagement through a series of workshops using organizational performance data or customer feedback, pre- and post-intervention data could be examined for significant differences. Moreover, examining effect sizes of the intervention could produce additional information about the utility of the intervention and information on steps an organization may consider next. Moreover, the development of new employee engagement measures that are grounded in literature are conceptually clearer and psychometrically more rigorous, which would be of great benefit to researchers.
Many for-profit consulting companies boast highly reliable tools, though most are too expensive to obtain or not available for academic research. Even fewer report reliability and validity of estimated data. New, more psychometrically rigorous measurement tools would allow researchers to respond more emphatically to Macey and Schneider (2008) and Saks’s (2006) challenge for more scholarly research on the topic of employee engagement. Using this research as a foundation, disaggregate analysis of the survey battery could examine challenges with identify single-scale items that show evidence of a strong relation with outcomes variables. Identifying individual questions that indicate such a strong relation with antecedent and outcome variables could provide statistical leverage points for researchers developing emerging, and perhaps more accurate, measures of employee engagement.

Cross-validation of the measures used in this study could also provide insight into the stability of the predictive relations indicated in the results of this study. Finally, newer models may examine distal antecedents and outcomes, such as perceived co-worker support and personality variables as well as demographic and culture variables, that may influence the development of employee engagement.

5.2. Implications for Practice

Organizations looking to increase performance could focus on developing employee engagement as an organizational strategic leverage point. This study provides support for using each of the variables examined in this study in the development of specific and objective work-oriented interventions around employee engagement. Human resource
practitioners can take an important role in designing and implementing interventions in ways that increase employee engagement and impact organizational outcome variables. For example, in this study, affective commitment and psychological climate were identified as leverage points for practitioners looking to enhance employee engagement. Considering which leverage point to start with would depend on the unique needs of each organization; suggesting a “one size fits all” approach would be inappropriate and out of context for this study. Evidence, however, suggests that creating opportunities for employees to work in roles in which their knowledge, skills, and abilities fit with their job responsibilities, creating and then supporting a positive psychological climate, and providing opportunities for employees to effectively bond with their organization, are conditions that support a relation with employee engagement (Kahn 1990; Macey et al. 2009). Thus, these variables should be considered as starting points for conversation and intervention. HRD practitioners could capitalize on this new knowledge by creating carefully constructed and integrated interventions that focus clearly on incorporating current management practices, organizational structure, job-design, and culture building (Joo 2010, p. 56).

Further, HRD practitioners should encourage the development of employee engagement by training leaders, managers, and supervisors about the conditions that have a relationship with employee engagement. As highlighted by this study and supported by other research (Arakawa & Greenberg 2007; Harter et al. 2002; Kroth & Keeler 2009; Lloyd 2008), an employee’s manager strongly influences levels of employee engagement and discretionary effort. Interventions for leaders, managers, and
supervisors could take the form of formal development and coaching programs that focus on proven talent management practices (Lockwood 2007, p. 87). Research suggests that interventions designed to influence employee engagement should provide opportunities for self-awareness, self-reflection, and real-time feedback (Hamel 2007; Maccoby 2007).

Moreover, an HRD professional looking to increase discretionary effort could design positive socialization programs to help set the guidelines of an organization’s culture (Reio & Ghosh 2009, p. 76) and use proactive social identity models (Ashforth & Mael 1989) to help employees understand their contribution to the workplace and check to see if employees are working within appropriate levels of challenge (Hackman & Oldham 1980; Kahn 1990; Thoits 1990). Researchers could then systematically examine interventions to test their relation and predictive qualities under a variety of diverse circumstances. Of particular interest to theory building is the lack of predictive relation between discretionary effort and employee engagement as strongly suggested by several contemporary models (CLC 2004; Kular et al. 2008; Maslach et al. 2001; Towers & Perrin 2003, 2007).

Finally, it is imperative that organizations looking to increase engagement focus on how work gets accomplished, not just how much. For an organization to retain, it has to find ways of motivating employees. For example, innovative practices could include taking an entire work group to serve in a community-wide service project for a day, encouraging managers to have weekly meetings with new team members during the
first 4 weeks of a new job, or encouraging an entire human resource department to redesign their recruitment and selection processes to maximize and maintain the talents of their team. The conditions of employee engagement (i.e., meaningfulness, safety, and availability: Kahn 1990) must be interwoven and present as a foundation to each employee’s experience of work, every day. As evidenced by the findings of this study, employee engagement has powerful implications for organizations; consequently, those who lead these organizations must work to create the conditions for employee engagement to develop. Developing high levels of employee engagement in any organization is a work in progress; however, thinking differently about work and how each employee experiences work may be the first steps in an innovative direction.

5.3. Limitations of the Study
As is common with research, this project encounters some problems. The first limitation of this study is the use of a convenient sample as only nine individuals were available due to time and circumstance restrictions as the organization was closing down. Therefore, small sample sizes are known to lead to statistical results that are less widely generalizable to other groups; thus, readers should take caution (Rosenthal & Rosnow 1991). Then there was refusal of a survey that was quantitative as the aim was to use both qualitative and quantitative evidence to enhance the data and findings. Another limitation is the use of self-report measures. To solve this, a clear procedural approach, such as having the survey reviewed by knowledgeable experts and conducting a pilot study, reduces the likelihood of coverage, sampling, measurement, and nonresponse error in the collection of data (Dillman et al. 2009, p. 45). The third limitation was that
Harman’s single-factor test was employed to examine the amount of variance accounted for in the variables. This procedure involved conducting an exploratory factor analysis of all the research variables (un-rotated). Thirdly, this study did not control for nonresponse bias while collecting data in three waves (Rogelberg & Luong 1998, p. 65). Some of the demographic characteristics of non-respondents may have unknowingly introduced bias into the study’s data analysis.

Lastly, the approach taken in this study involved measurement of individual respondents. This method asked individuals to report their own thoughts, perceptions, and feelings about their place of work. Social desirability bias could influence responses as participants were asked to report their own frequency of involvement in engaging behaviors (Pearson & Porath 2004, p. 79). Clearly, reporting potentially sensitive information about one’s manager or the support and resources available to complete a task could have led to socially undesirable responses. Thus, these limitations may affect the collection of primary data in accordance with research aims, objectives, and research questions.

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Chapter Seven: Appendices

Appendix A
CONSENT FORM

Employee Engagement and commitment Survey for an ex-microelectronics company


Please Initial Box

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1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

Name of Participant Date Signature

Name of Researcher Date Signature
Appendix B
Interview Questions

How long have you been working in this company?. Could you give me five words that best describe why do you come everyday to this company?. Do you have friendship ties with coworkers outside work?.

- Would changing supervisors require you an effort to adapt to the new one? What about your coworkers?.
- Do you easily communicate with your manager when you desire?.
- How often would you feel stressed in a typical week?.
- How do you participate in the goal setting process?.
- When was the last time you received recognition or praise for doing good work?.
- Did you know about the charity scheme that the company provides, where employees can take a day off and work for a charity?. Did you ever take part of it? Why or why not?.
- What aspect would you like to improved in this company?.
- Would you still be working here two years from now?.
- If it was for your advantage to move to another organization? How would you feel?.
• Would you recommend this company to family and friends?

Appendix C

Interviews in detail

How long have you been working in this company?

Employee 1: 13 years.

Employee 2: 9 years.

Employee 3: 9 years.

Employee 4: 26 years.

Employee 5: 5 years in this branch and 13 years with the company.

Employee 6: 2 and half years. Employee 7: 12 years.

Employee 8: 24 years.

Employee 9: more then 20 years.

Could you give me five words that best describe why do you come everyday to this company?

Employee 1: Technical interest work being done. Sense of community with the particular group of people I’ve been working with for the past 10 years first when I moved here in this organization there were small group of people who were very good
at what they do, very good at bouncing ideas off, they interaction, and the group dynamics are good place to be and if it wasn’t for those people, I would be working anywhere. I think to finish off the manager which is very interesting to work for quite unusual and there was something I was happy to do and commit to them cause he wanted to do the where if other people in this building would be my manager I would have walked away.

Employee 2: Job rewarding/ comfortable /enjoyable / self determent and control.

Employee 3: nice team of people I work with both inside and outside the UK also there is interaction with people in France, Sometimes America and India. I got very good friends here. Work I do is interesting, it’s varied, not sitting behind the computer each day, I get to talk to people from different parts in the building. Flexi work because that means I can come to work late or early.

Employee 4: I love it, I enjoy it, and it’s a reward. My work to solve a mental problem, wanting to solve problems to be useful for someone, it’s a need.

Employee 5: Learning/knowledge. Career. People. Personal satisfaction. Commitment. The flexi work is also a great reason why I stayed for 5 years in this branch, you can work more effectively.

Employee 6: social side, I think of it as a hobby, remuneration, productive, motivation, and flexi time which makes it easy for you to commit to your job.

Employee 7: money/ interest / colleagues/challenge/working for
multinational. Employee 8: technical stuff interest me/ opportunity to learn /variety/
surroundings and environment / inactive / social / habit. Employee 9: people,
challenges, rewards (the salary), travel opportunities in terms of career, job security.

**Do you have friendship ties with coworkers outside work?**

Employee 1: I don’t have strong friendship ties in the workplace I have friendship ties
with those who left in the past and more with those I first join at the beginning and over
time they have left. Part of the reasons why I don’t have friendship ties with people
working currently we all tend to be older and most with families we all go home and we
have something else so there really isn’t that sort of thing when younger. And it’s
different when your young and you have time to socialize outside work (because of the
age in my opinion).

Employee 2: no, colleagues are friends within the company but not outside.

Employee 3: I do have friends inside work but not outside because I live outside the city
25 miles away. However coworkers are nice people to work with.

Employee 4: yes, I actually met my wife here I have also relationships with them
extended outside work.

Employee 5: slightly, not so much but not out of the company.

Employee 6: yes, I have quite a few.

Employee 7: I do have friendship ties inside work but limited outside work. Employee 8:
yes one of the guys, where he lives near me. It’s extended but just with one. I’m in a social club but they are not regular friends. Employee 9: not as much as I did previously, because I live away from this city (outside) I have people I would call friends but in a level where I don’t saclike with them outside work.

Would changing supervisor/manager require you an effort to adapt to the new one?

What about your coworkers?

Employee 1: I didn’t change managers for the past 10 years. However, when I first did it was an easy transition because of the way he works and treats people. I think that you always adapt to people coming in, and we have general been good when we brought people and find those who fit with other employees so of course it’s slightly different when you move if you were the one who actually move then you cant see who you work with.

Employee 2: I have been with the same manager, however it would be different as I worked 9 years with the same person. Changing coworkers might be difficult to start with.

Employee 3: yes, I will need an effort; a lot of it has to do with the fact that you build a relationship with your manager. It was difficult when they changed because he has different values perceptions that come down to prove to him what he wanted.

Employee 4: I have changed my manager many times. I do find it difficult to adept, because every time you change there is a different personality. Each manager has
different priorities which at many times it’s not clear what are they, so what is important for one manager is not for another one. Coworkers, as well would be difficult especially in the engineering field where personalities are different.

Employee 5: well, there is always a method required with change. It quite depends on the manager as well, in the last year I have gone through several managers, I don’t think it was a big issue. And I think the way that you work is based on who is your manager. Coworkers would also need an effort as in every team there is sort of a relationship, when you start again you need to start that again.

Employee 6: I think I cope with it, my manager changes as well, I would say I am shy but I start always with people. It can be difficult. Employee 7: no not really. Also the coworkers not difficult. Employee 8: I think I cope with it, my manager changes as well, I would say I am shy but I start always with people. It can be difficult.

Employee 9: yes. Because you could have a manager who is local or from another country. I personally had several managers and not only the different characteristics of nationality but also their location. I once had a manager who was really hard to please some carry authority with them and I would find myself working longer hours to satisfy his demands, but then I also had managers who leaves you work by yourself

Do you easily communicate with your manager when you desire?

Employee 1: Yes. It’s easy I usually just walk out of this room and find them. There is no closed-door policy here you don’t have to make appointment to meet managers or
anybody. I’m lucky my manager is here!

Employee 2: my manager is in France, I can phone him up, it doesn’t matter if he were here or there.

Employee 4: very easy.

Employee 5: it needs lots of improvement for example I talk to my manager or send emails and one of the biggest problems is with communication actually not quite a lot of engineer communicate well. They are very knowledgeable but not good at sharing it with other people.

Employee 6: we have lots of tools for communication, I personally prefer face to face. My manager sits next to me so we can chat all the time. When my manager was in France I see them less, communicate with them less although we do have instant chat, or by email, formal meetings, we have all those tools but face-to-face is better.

Employee 7: very easy, it varies in quality depending on the person. The degree of support depends on your manager. Employee 8: communication here is pretty good; I get sent projects from another countries where this company has branches.

Employee 9: we would have regular meetings, formal meetings; a lot of the communication is done in the “tea room” which is not planned and informal. A big part of my work is about communication.

**How often would you feel stressed in a typical week?**
Employee 1: the pace is fairly stressful work was done according to timescale so there was no external pressure to get something's done by a particular day I haven’t had any kind of stress.

Employee 2: overall it comes and goes things are not necessarily going right. Pressure comes.

Employee 3: depends on the project. Depends on where we are on the project usually most stress at the end of the project focusing on meeting deadline.

Employee 4: I had times I was stressed 18 month ago when I needed my team to complete a project (meet a deadline) but we weren’t allowed to recruit, I wasn’t allowed to bring contractors and the team were working 12-13 hours a day and work life balance program wasn’t going well.

Employee 5: I don’t feel stressed.

Employee 6: not very much, I guess I don’t have a character that gets stressed very easily but when we come to our release cycle then it comes more stressful.

Employee 7: I just do what I have to do and go home. It’s usually to do with projects. Flexi time here is a big deal and a big factor why I still work here, makes lots of difference in the atmosphere.

Employee 8: these days not bad because of the improvements. Not very often probably every couple of weeks something will come up and need to be done quickly. The stress
tends to come because SD in my opinion is understaffed.

Employee 9: as I get older I found that I don’t get stressed as I used to and I think that because you understand about what’s important and that you can’t do everything. The flexi time also helps managing stress.

**How do you participate in the goal setting process?**

Employee 1: basically very high level for what myself and colleagues do, my manager need to address a problem and tell me how we need to achieve it, so basically the level, a lot of us who work here don’t have to do like because targets are determined by customers and we basically find the best way to do that, come up with your own plan to do it.

Employee 2: yes I do, for people who work who work for me so I set their goals, I direct them, however if they wanted to change or add, discuss a specific goal that is possible, I drive the appraisal process we set goals and when individuals say things makes sense then I need to think about it to see the compliable.

Employee 3: I have to set my own objectives each year but I have to agree them with my manager, some of them would be set from above but I get lots of autonomy.

Employee 4: I do, I have a team who I set objectives for as a team manager. I get objective given to me and I direct the team how to achieve them I appraise them and when the employee achieve the goal they get bonus which is a % of the salary. I am not involved in these objectives I don’t set them, I provide a function to achieve it.
Employee 5: within a certain extent yes, but it depends on the manager. Some managers tend to be transparent. And it’s difficult when managers are not transparent. Also, from a technical perspective you can propose something but it just in a very low level but not with a strategic level or customers.

Employee 6: I do participate, it’s not that the managers tell us what to do but they discuss it with us.

Employee 7: I do participate. Goal setting is not personal so then you need to meet business interest. I have weekly meeting with my manager and team for discussing these goals. Kind of involve discussion, we might change some. Employee 8: we have a formal one, but then I have my weekly goals where I can suggest my boss sometimes he disagrees.

Employee 9: I do participate, I get involved in the strategy, and I set goals for my team according to my position. Goals are like cascade so we work towards the mission, the customers partly sets the goals and then we decide how these objectives achieved.

When was the last time you received recognition or praise for doing good work?

Employee 1: couple of days ago, I was discussing something with my manager and I received a “thank you” and “you did good job”. My manager is fairly good at giving a positive feedback. However, I can’t generalize our other managers. My last promotion was 2-3 years ago. It was a forced promotion because I threatened to leave. But I decided to stay for a number of reasons although I wasn’t planning to stay permanently
in SD but they changed their strategy and suddenly decided to use something I was interested with. So I had incentives, if they had the strategy and the software I wanted before, I probably wouldn’t “think” about leaving or asking for promotion. It’s the work what matters! The promotion I was happy to take the money but actually if they didn’t change their software and therefore my involvement, that wouldn’t be a long-term stay.

Employee 2: a month or two, it is occasionally “your doing well in that particular area”. But you expect that every 2-3 years. For example, I’ve solved a problem so the senior manager said thank you very much and acknowledged from my boss. I do feel valued.

Employee 3: In 4 months ago, it was a good 6 years of effort to get promoted; it’s hard within the organization it’s pretty hard to get and lots of effort to get promotion. I sometimes feel valued but I want to give more.

Employee 4: a month ago. I had to a positive feedback like a “thank you” it builds respect. I feel valued here, and fulfilled by giving what I can.

Employee 5: I got a promotion almost in October 2011. I work a lot but there is no actual reward.

Employee 6: probably not long time ago, with my current manager we have a weekly meeting, we say what we’ve done and the achievement of the team I guess the recognition is when you want the achievement for the team. And also I have done things where my manager praise it and promote it to other people.

Employee 7: fairly recently. Weeks ago, just a formal meeting and a statement that I did
well. But I was given a kindle before a year ago.

Employee 8: probably few weeks ago which I had informal thank you.

Did you know about the charity scheme that the company provides, where employees can take a day off and work for a charity? Did you ever take part of it? Why or why not?.

Employee 1: I am aware of events like that. But I didn’t take part of it probably I wasn’t interested I knew that the events were coming up I haven’t find something that I wanted to contribute in, I don’t think time is an issue!

Employee 2: yes. I didn’t take part of it because I was too busy. Even if I had the chance it is not necessarily I, not my character. Not interested, I am more interested in getting the business running, business come first.

Employee 3: yes. Yes! I have been involved in that for several times. Because I get to meet other employees who I don’t always see, as there are more than 150 people. However perhaps the main reason for the low undertaking in this scheme goes back to the fact that people find it hard to take a day off to go to do something or perhaps this goes to the reason that we are understaffed in areas. Perhaps there is no one to cover his work.

Employee 4: yes. I didn’t take part of it because of the team members took and there was no one covering. So if there were other opportunities I would like to.
Employee 5: yes. But no never done it, I have a family and I’m busy at work. Every time they offered it I had work to do so I couldn’t. It was a good scheme, and it was interesting.

Employee 6: yes. I have done it! That was great it was useful stuff, again it’s more about the social side, it gave me an opportunity to work with people from the same office I’ve never spoke to before.

Employee 7: yes. No didn’t take part, I am just busy. I am more focused on what I’m doing. I am not interested to organize one, I am interested to go in one but I am busy.

Employee 8: yes. But I haven’t. Because if I stop my work then I will stress my team out. Yes I love the idea and it is something I would do if I find someone could cover my work.

Employee 9: I do. Never took part of. Because I live outside the city and the charity done is usually done in this city, it wouldn’t be difficult for me to organize an event in my city. Also I’m already involved in other volunteering activities outside work separate from the company. It’s good that the scheme makes people omen with different ideas so it’s not just one side, we wouldn’t be spending our time with non-business related activates.

**What aspect would you like to improve in this company?**

Employee 1: The senior/the strategic French management! Because the dynamics would be different, it would be more focused on business and more drive if it was for example US approach.

Employee 2: process and technique planning. There are lots relying on engineers doing
good job not on the knowledge the non-technical managers. Some project managers don’t have a grasp of technical planning and process before they do it; it is very difficult for them to understand. Things usually stumble rather than improve.

Employee 3: At many times it’s an issue of understaffed, they haven’t recruit people for a long time lots of work for a team of 3-4 people trying to work a project. More permanent staff would be better. I’d also like to improve the training and development. We have some development and training programs but hard to get the time to get those, because we are very project focused and a lot of work and especially we have small team, occasionally when there is personal or spare time we use it to think about developing the methods of work and not ourselves because we are all busy trying to achieve that project.

Employee 4: the ability to recruit people. However, there are inside and outside opportunities. I was nominated to take a program supported by the company for my career growth and development. It allowed me to move roles from a technical role to a manager role.

Employee 5: remove the middle management level because it’s too big. Lot’s of layers makes things really hard for engineers to work properly it’s though it’s like “a big thick rubber wall”. Also it’s important when you’re committed that the organization is committed to you as well. I had this feeling at times but I didn’t at other times as well. Training and development is something that has it improve in this company, I’d once wanted to take a master degree but there were no support I took it but wasn’t
recognized or supported! It would be nice if you feel that the company is investing in you and growing your abilities. I also have always found HR system “awful”; they are focused on the interest of the company and not on the employee as an individual.

Employee 8: to recruit more IT staff to optimize the service. Enhance the communication and interaction with the managers. It would be nice to have formal training. It’s internal training but not external.

**Would you still are working here two years from now?**

Employee 1: probably 70% likely that I would be here 2 years from now but not 100%.

Employee 2: maybe!

Employee 3: yes, I think so. It’s a comfortable environment.

Employee 5: No, because from a career point of view there is not much of career for me here. I’m looking for another kind of career. The way of career structured it’s managerial. I tried but wasn’t possible.

Employee 6: probably yes, because I have been looking quite for another job quite sometime, my personal goal is to work in an open sourced so there is a particular field that I’m interested in which is not in cater here.

Employee 7: No, varies reasons. The way I’m associated with these projects. It’s about the career.
Employee 8: yes, it’s habit, I am happy enough here.

Employee 9: possibly, I enjoy the environment, I have been here for a long time, and if I were to leave it is to do something different.

If it was for your advantage to move to another organization? How would you feel?

Employee 1: If it was for my advantage I’m seriously considerate, you have got to balance from life, if there were opportunities makes life aspects better such as (better finance, location etc).

Employee 2: I will feel positive, however difficult decision to take as you are used to the work you do and comfortable with, however not looking forward to move.

Employee 3: I would miss the employees and my friends a lot, I wouldn’t move unless I have the same conditions. I have to insure that I have the same flexible environment same level of autonomy. Employee 5: I would be happy; it would be interesting and challenging.

Employee 6: I would feel sad, because of the social aspect. Employee 7: I will feel proud for what I contributed, I would be moving because of career courses.

Employee 8: I would be a bit concerned about the team I’d leave behind, and want to make sure they can find sufficient support but yeah it would be interesting.

Employee 9: If I had an opportunity I would feel good.
Would you recommend this company to family and friends?

Employee 1: Yes, but only part of it but there are other parts I’d wary people about.


Employee 4: I would, yes.

Employee 5: I am not sure; I did have some good times. Maybe yes.

Employee 6: yeah, I quite enjoyed the last two years.

Employee 7: yes, I would. Employee 8: yes.

Employee 9: I would, it’s a good place and environment.

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