

Performance Appraisal Practices and Employee Engagement towards Academic Staff Performance in Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to determine whether performance appraisal practices (PAPs) such as training, job promotion, financial reward, performance feedback, and performance recognition may be used as predictors of employee engagement and performance. A stratified sample approach was employed to collect responses from 203 academic employees of Malaysia Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) while the PLS-SEM was employed as a technique tool for reporting, data analysis, and hypothesis testing. The results show that while performance feedbacks, job promotions, and performance recognition have no significant impact on employee engagement, training and financial rewards have a significant and beneficial impact. However, the findings indicate that, with the exception of financial reward, there is a strong and favourable correlation between all PAPs and the employee performance. Employee performance is also significantly impacted by employee engagement. This finding implies that employee performance and engagement in academic contexts differ. The study reveals the reasons why policymakers and decision-makers in Malaysia's education sector should concentrate more on how to maximize job promotions, performance feedbacks, and performance recognition for academic staff members at tertiary institutions and, on the other hand, financial rewards for efficient employee performance.

Keywords: employee performance; financial reward; job promotion; performance feedback; performance recognition; training.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's environment has undergone significant change due to the establishment and quick growth of higher education institutions (Halid et al., 2024). Indeed, a common anticipation in developing countries generally is the internationalization of the education sector. Additionally, the human capital development is essential for being able to compete worldwide. One way to think of education as a capital good is as a tool for creating human capital for social and economic change. Therefore, to satisfy the current necessities of the political, social, and economic spheres, public universities must be able to swiftly adjust and adapt; thereby assessing the reasons why employees in Malaysia's higher education institutions (HEIs) intended to remain, addressing the issue of employee turnover and retention. The study's novelty is enhanced by its focus on Malaysia's human resources management, a country with a fast-rising economy with a growing emphasis on sustainable practices (Zihan et al., 2024) coupled with distinctive institutional and cultural settings. Thus, this study sets out to assess the roles of PAPs (i.e., promotion, training, recognition, financial reward and feedback) on employee engagement in Malaysia HEIs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relationship between Training and Employee Engagement (EE)

Training an employee is an indispensable factor that enhances EE (Azeem et al. 2013). An employee who is given a sufficient training is likely to be more industrious and productive than a workforce that is not offered training. Training linked to EE is one of the most researched areas across the globe (Manuel, 2014). Yap et al. (2010) show that employees who have optimistic perception of the effectiveness of training are more significantly engaged, committed and contented in their organizations than employees who perceive training as ineffective. Equally, Lam et al. (2009) establish a significant relationship between training and development and employee responsibility. The more committed employees are in an organization, the less would be their desire to leave. Hence, employee with high commitment is found to be highly intentional to stay with the company along with positive attitude about their employment. Therefore, training supports a workforce to completely engage and attain skills and knowledge for building a profession and expert expansion.

Also, investigations show that training of workers enhance high level of obligation to the occupation, thus, increases engagement (Albrecht et al., 2015). Research conducted by Suan and Nasurdin (2014) discovered that work engagement could be enriched via improved training. Besides, Azeem et al. (2013) stressed that a correct kind of training could influence EE in many ways. Additionally, the study demonstrated a strong and favorable correlation between training and employee engagement. Also, according to Arwab et al. (2022), employee task performance in the travel and hospitality sector is significantly correlated with training. At the same time, employee engagement both directly and indirectly mediates the favorable association between employee performance and training. Rachmond (2022) also reported that creating training initiatives in HRM promotes employee engagement in the educational sector. Therefore, the hypothesis below holds:

Hypothesis 1: the relationship between training and employee engagement is significant and positive

Relationship between Job Promotion and Employee Engagement

Promotion is one of the essential practices under HRM that encourage workers' loyalty to an organization (Rubel & Kee 2013). Moreover, Brown (2011) advocates that for a workforce to be engaged, employees' desires for career progression are indispensable. Mutunga (2009) posits that organizations require powerful structures and approaches that support and promote engagement. For instance, such systems as recognition, hiring, career development, training, performance management, compensation and promotion collectively offer the organisation a basis upon which to fast-track engagement. Hence, promotion should be genuinely given by organizations to their employees in order to improve engagement in their given tasks. Organizations must offer opportunity for personnel job promotion. In addition, Wen et al. (2022) reported that employee engagement is greatly enhanced by job promotion and pay satisfaction. Also, the associations between job promotion and desire to leave and supervisor satisfaction are somewhat mediated by employee engagement. To this end, the hypothesis below holds:

Hypothesis 2: the relationship between job promotion and employee engagement is significant and positive

Relationship between Performance Feedbacks and Employee Engagement

Several past studies such as Brown et al. (2010) specified performance feedback as a method of allowing employees appreciate their fortes and faintness. The feedback guides workers to carry out their duties effortlessly and to achieve overall institutional stated objectives. Furthermore, there is evidence to support the favorable relationship between performance feedback and employee engagement (Selvarasu & Sastry 2014); thus, it is a suitable tool for augmenting engagement. In the same vein, feedback is affirmed to stimulate engagement as it promotes knowledge which rises occupation proficiency and the possibility of being productive in reaching one's occupational aims. Giving or receiving feedbacks is very necessary for administrative success as lack of feedbacks could lead to 'anxiety, inaccurate self-evaluations, and a diversion of effort' (Taylor et al., 1984).

In addition, valuable performance feedback has the prospects of enhancing EE and occupational fulfilment (Aguinis et al., 2012). Therefore, performance feedback is a vital factor in entire performance management schemes. Further, Ying (2012) says useful performance feedback is appropriate and developmental in nature. The primary aim of performance feedback is to encourage employees, occupational contentment, and group performance (Aguinis, 2009). The study of Giamos et al. (2024) demonstrated that performance, motivation, and employee engagement are all positively impacted by performance feedback, independent of its nature. Based on the forgoing, this hypothesis emerged:

Hypothesis 3: the relationship between performance feedback and employee engagement is significant and positive

Relationship between Performance Recognition and Employee Engagement

Recognition or appreciation for job well done is an integral component of a strategic and efficient reward system. Employee motivation and civic engagement are likely to increase when excellent performance is acknowledged. Praising a workforce for tasks accomplishment or for supporting/impacting the corporate existence of institutions serves as constructive reinforcement for the workforce to be more committed at their duty pools. Scholars (Kaufman et al., 2013) observed that EE levels grow once they are appreciated or recognized for their occupational efforts. If a workforce believes their capabilities and efforts would be acknowledged, they are most probably to be more engaged and produced more value. Once recognition is deemed effective, employees have lesser turnover levels and accomplish greater corporate outcomes (Gostick & Elton 2010). However, the shortage of satisfactory compensation package could discourage a workforce from being seriously engaged in carrying their duties (Maslach et al. 2001). With the support of literature, recognition remains substantial engagement predictors.

According to Presslee et al. (2023), implementing a performance recognition program is expected to boost employee effort and engagement. Thus, it is proposed that non-financial recognition might inspire and engage workers too. Mutunga (2009) revealed that performance recognition to a very large extent has a great impact on EE. It can therefore be hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 4: the relationship between performance recognition and employee engagement is positive and significant

Relationship between Financial Reward and Employee Engagement

According to Pandzic and Hadziahmetovic (2022), incentives make it possible for employees to develop deep, meaningful relationships with the organization where they work - in terms of inspiring employees and fostering engagement, it is crucial. Financial reward is considered a major factor within an organization as it provides tangible reward to employees for their duties (Thwala et al., 2012). Therefore, pay is a necessary attribute to EE that inspires employees to concentrate further on occupational growth and own expansion. The rate of workers' engagement relies on their attractiveness of established payment and welfare packages (Anitha, 2014). When financial reward elicits a positive emotional reaction, employees will be motivated to engage in long-term cultural reforms (Manzoor et al., 2021). Thus, good pay would facilitate engagement from the workforce and make effective efforts towards job performance. To this end, the following hypothesis holds:

Hypothesis 5: the relationship between financial reward and employee engagement is significant and positive

Relationship between PAPs and Employee Performance

PAPs involve job promotion, performance feedback, training, financial reward and performance recognition (Ameen & Ismail, 2021; Mollé et al., 2017). Performance appraisal absolutely connected to employee's performance (Lim & Ahmad, 2021; Wekese & Makhmara, 2020). Training is a key emphasis and an essential component, even essence of the performance appraisal (PA). Training has progressively become crucial to the accomplishment of any present-day organizations (Long et al., 2012). Lee and Lee (2007) maintained that training, financial reward, teamwork, and personnel safety aid in improving organisation performance and employee's efficiency. Equally, Hafeez and Akbar (2015) in their study reveal a positive link between training and EP and concluded that the more workers acquire training, the more proficient their level of performance would be.

The majority of employees want to be promoted, and performance is correlated with how much a person believes that being supported is related to their ability to perform on the job and how much they want to be promoted (Abdullah et al., 2011). Thus, there is perception that, promotion prospect significantly determines employee performance. Peter (2014) and Zago (2019) in their studies revealed that there is considerable correlation between promotion practice and perceived EP. Khan et al. (2012) concluded that job promotion increases performance.

In the same vein, feedback is an action engaged to offer information concerning certain feature(s) of employee's work performance. However, continuous performance feedback as a performance management technique is still not well understood (Budworth & Chummar, 2022; Pulakos et al., 2019). Gomez-Mejia (1990) asserts that feedback is an influential mechanism in performance enrichment and that performance feedback could also be employed to boost satisfaction among supervisors and employees who employ the appraisal system. Akinbowale et al. (2013) reported in their study that PA reviews revealed that when feedback information is properly employed, it subsequently improves EP. In addition to this, Dahling et al. (2015) and Paul et al. (2014) assert that performance feedback enhance EP on the jobs. This would help in determining an employee's skills and shortcomings, which might always present opportunities for the organization they work with and intimidate competitors. Performance feedback and employee performance have been found to positively correlate, according

to Sleiman et al. (2020). However, other studies have found no significant influence or even negative impacts on performance, particularly when performance feedback is viewed as critical and/or overly controlling of employees' behaviors (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996).

Recognition and appreciation are essential mechanism for attractive strategic recompense scheme. Descriptive data according to Chantal et al. (2022) indicated that employee recognition was fair, but inferential analysis revealed that it had a negative but negligible impact on employee performance. In order to provide for the employees, the skills required, they need to carry out their duties and boost their confidence, it was proposed that promotions be included to the list of extrinsic rewards along with monthly salaries, bonuses, allowances, paid yearly leaves, and insurance plans. The opportunity for advancement, professional growth, job autonomy and responsibility, recognition from the bosses and good feeling about the organisation motivate staffs. Mollel et al. (2017) shown in their study that, there is a significant relationship between appraisal recognition and employee competence. They continued by stating that EP depends on recognition and feedback, both of which really increase worker productivity inside the company. Furthermore, Urbancová and Linhartová (2011) found that recognition for upper performers further serves as and provides challenges for low performing employees to motivate them towards the required performance.

According to Kampkotter et al. (2015), salary is a major motivator of employee motivation, selection, and performance as it gives employees a concrete reward, support as well as a source of recognition. A pay is therefore a crucial factor in a company (Thwala et al., 2012). According to Armstrong and Murlis (2007), the importance of salary has a significant impact on how satisfied workers are at work. A study conducted by Shahzad et al. (2008) revealed a positive link between payment practices and EP. A higher remuneration raises EP due to the bigger rate of workers losing their jobs. Thus, this study hypothesized that:

H6: training is significantly related with employee performance.

H7: job promotion is significantly related with employee performance.

H8: performance feedback is significantly related with employee performance.

H9: performance recognition is significantly related with employee performance.

H10: financial reward is significantly related with employee performance.

Relationship between Employee Engagement and Employee Performance

Anitha (2014) studied 'the determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance' and unveiled that employee performance is significantly affected by EE. In the same vein, Ameen and Yahaya (2022) show that EE has a significant link and influence on occupation and EP. Organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour are all strongly and positively correlated with job engagement. Engagement is related closely to increase performance standards over the time (Barbier et al., 2013). Shuck (2011) additionally posit that employees in the services, manufacturing, professional, and non-profit sectors perform better diligently than their counterparts who are less engaged as they become invested in their jobs and reflect more on it, which enables them to come up with creative solutions.

When workers are engaged at work, they give their best to the task on an intellectual, psychological, and personal level (Selvi & Aiswarya, 2022). An engaged worker is conscious of the workplace culture and works with colleagues to find ways to make improvements that will benefit the company. The idea of employee engagement is comprehensive and includes more than simply personal commitment, enjoyment of one's job, and moral business conduct (Douglas & Roberts, 2020). Andrew and Sofian (2012) come to the conclusion that EE is a crucial element for employees' positive contributions to organizational success and functions as a facilitator to enhance employees' attitudes, performance, and goals to establish ways of performance. Based on the foregoing, this study explores the relationship between EE and EP and evaluates the following hypothesis:

H11: there is positive and significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance

METHODOLOGY

The targeted sample of this study covers the academic staff of Malaysia HEIs. To select the participants, a stratified sampling technique shall be employed. This sampling technique involves population definition; hence, the determination of the strata which are both private and public universities in Malaysia HEIs. Determination of the average population per strata was determined using the number of strata to divide the population size. The concluding phase involved the utilization of systematic sampling to ascertain the order of sample taken from each stratum. This entails approximation of the sampling fractions for every stratum which is assessed by sharing the size of the population for every stratum. Data collection is accomplished by the distribution of questionnaires to the chosen respondents. Notably, informed consent for participation in the study was obtained through the online survey.

The 203 respondents (academic staff) who responded to the survey make up the sample size of the population. The researcher was able to allocate the study sample to each stratum of the study population without biasing any of the subjects by using simple random and stratified sampling techniques (Ilyasu & Etikan, 2021) as previously mentioned, which give every respondent in the population an equal chance of being selected as a sample subject. Based on the premise that the sample size used in an empirical study should be greater than 10 times the maximum number of inner or outer model links pointing at any latent variable in the model (Akanmu et al., 2021; Akanmu et al., 2023), the ‘10-times rule’ method (Kock, 2018) is a commonly used minimum sample size estimation technique in PLS-SEM. According to the study model, employee engagement is a latent variable with the greatest number of arrows, and training, job promotion, performance recognition, performance feedback, and financial reward make up five of these arrows. Thus, the final sample size of 203 responses is appropriate for the data analysis.

A Google Forms questionnaire was utilized as the method for gathering data, and 203 questionnaires were completed and returned, and the study continued with the 203 valid questionnaires. Also, the study employed Smart PLS 4 for the Variance-Based Structural Equation Modelling (VB-SEM) technique as the statistical tool for data analysis. This statistical instrument is adopted due to its robustness in handling research models (Hair et al., 2017). The Smart PLS is a powerful and multivariate technique that entails special case of specified version of number of other analyses approaches (Akanmu, 2021; Hassan et al., 2018).

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The Inner Model Assessment and Hypotheses Testing Procedures

Testing the proposed correlations between the variables came next, after the validity of the outer model had been established. The proposed model was tested by executing the PLS Algorithm using the Smart PLS. As a result, the route coefficients were produced, as shown in Figure 1 below.

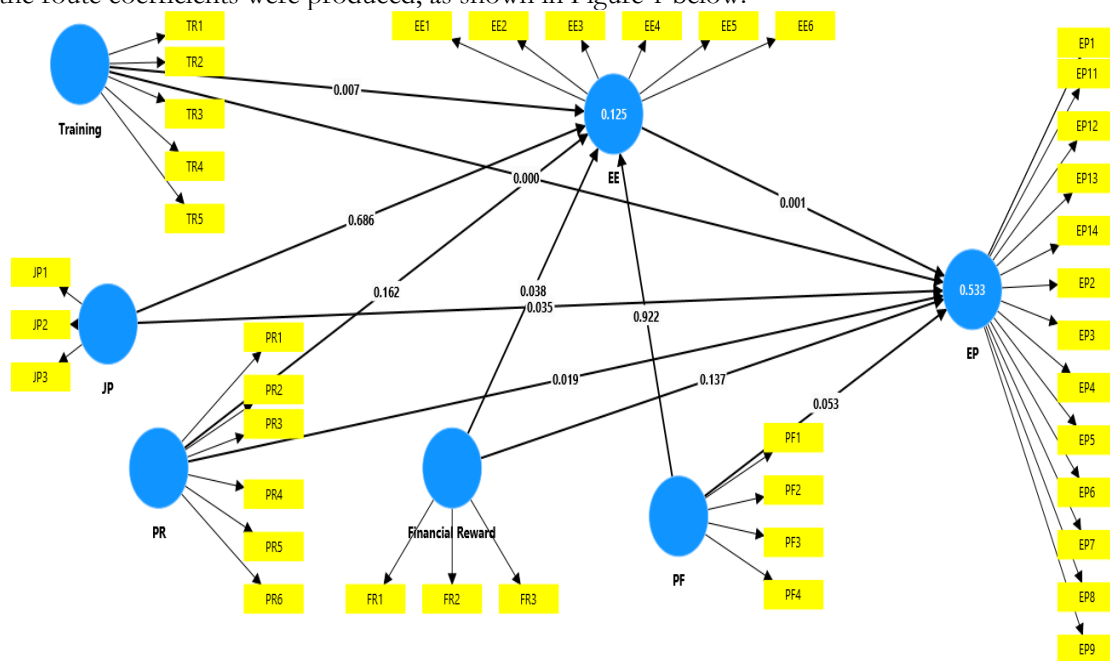


Figure 1. Structural modelling

Table 1. The Results of the Inner Structural Model

Hypotheses	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Decision
H1: TR -> EE	0.291***	0.109	2.679	0.007	Supported
H2: JP -> EE	0.040	0.094	0.405	0.686	Not supported
H3: PF -> EE	0.026	0.120	0.098	0.922	Not supported
H4: PR -> EE	0.182	0.118	1.400	0.162	Not supported
H5: FR -> EE	-0.191**	0.103	2.071	0.038	Supported
H6: TR -> EP	0.225***	0.063	3.620	0.000	Supported
H7: JP -> EP	0.140**	0.067	2.105	0.035	Supported
H8: PF -> EP	0.145	0.074	1.937	0.053	Supported
H9: PR -> EP	0.190**	0.077	2.347	0.019	Supported

In this investigation, bootstrapping approaches were used with Smart PLS 4.0 to determine whether or not the route coefficients are statistically significant. As shown in Table 1, bootstrapping was used to calculate the T-Values for each path coefficient, and P-Values were then produced. Employee engagement is significantly impacted by training from the hypothesis H1 ($\beta = 0.291$, $t = 2.679$, $p < 0.01$). Conversely, H2 ($\beta = 0.040$, $t = 0.405$, $p > 0.1$) shows no discernible impact of job promotion on employee engagement. Both hypothesis H4 ($\beta = 0.182$, $t = 1.400$, $p > 0.1$) and H3 ($\beta = 0.026$, $t = 0.096$, $p > 0.1$) are not supported because performance feedback and performance recognition, respectively, do not positively and significantly affect employee engagement. The findings ($\beta = -0.191$, $t = 2.071$, $p < 0.05$) indicate that employee engagement is significantly impacted by financial reward, supporting hypothesis H5.

Conversely, the association between training and employee performance is favorably significant, with values of ($\beta = 0.225$, $t = 3.620$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that hypothesis H6 is validated. Additionally, the association between job promotion and employee performance was shown to be considerable. At the significance level of 0.05, the hypothesis H7 ($\beta = 0.140$, $t = 2.105$, $p < 0.05$) is therefore supported. H8 ($\beta = 0.145$, $t = 1.937$, $p < 0.1$) is in favor of the association between performance feedback and employee performance. Employee performance is significantly impacted by performance recognition, as seen by the results ($\beta = 0.190$, $t = 2.347$, $p < 0.05$). As a result, hypothesis H9 is validated. As a consequence, the result does not support the study's hypothesis (H10). The association between financial reward and employee performance is not significant with the result ($\beta = 0.116$, $t = 1.489$, $p > 0.1$). Upon final analysis, a noteworthy correlation between employee engagement and performance was discovered. At the significance level of 0.01, the hypothesis H11 ($\beta = 0.227$, $t = 3.278$, $p < 0.01$) is therefore supported.

Therefore, these outcomes show that the respondents both agreed and disagree with the current perspectives of employees regarding their performance in Malaysia HEIs which is a reflection of the research gap to fill. Additionally, the low standard deviation values show that the majority of academic staff members at Malaysian HEIs essentially share this opinion.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Training and Employee Engagement (EE)

Based on the result of this research, hypothesis one (H1) says training has significant relationship with employee (academic staff) engagement. Utilizing 'Variance-Based SEM' (PLS-SEM), the hypothesis is validated. The study's findings suggest that there is correlation between employee (academic staff) engagement and training. This finding is in line with a few recent research, including those by Manuel (2014) and Rashid, Asad and Ashraf (2011). This demonstrates that in the Malaysia HEIs, training is a predictor of employee engagement. These findings do support the suggestions in the existing theory (i.e., SET) and empirical findings that indicates that training played a key role in shaping engagement. This could be possibly attributed to the contextual factors such as self-development (e.g., self-aggrandizement). Specifically, selection of academic staff for training is open and free most of the time. Moreover, it has been observed that, training requirements are recognised through the process of performance appraisal.

Job Promotion and Employee Engagement

However, hypothesis two (H2) is not supported as the outcome specifies a non-significant relationship between job promotion and EE. The outcome implies that job promotion is not a strong and influential predictor of EE. This outcome does not corroborate with the number of existing studies such as Aktar and Pangil (2018) and Ameen and Baharom (2019a). Although, the promotion of employees would change the mind-set of the employees to engage positively more at work. This result implies that whether those employees are properly inspired in terms of promotion or not, they still have higher and the same level of engagement with those who are given promotion. Nevertheless, promotion in the workplace helps workers to focus more on their professional and personal growth in addition to motivating them to work hard. On the other hand, the academic staff of Malaysian HEIs has been found to be engaged and diligent in university tasks even in the face of delays or lack of promotion, despite the assertion made by Ahmed and Islam (2018) that opportunities for promotion within an institution determine how focused the staff is on their work and how successful any profession is.

Performance Feedback and Employee Engagement

In the same vein, the hypothesis three (H3) is not supported as the result obtained from data analysis indicates non-significant relationship between performance feedback and EE. This implies that performance feedback does

not significantly relate with EE. This result is not corroborating with the studies such as Selvarasu and Sastry (2014) and Ugwu (2017). Therefore, the outcome of the current research is not consistent with the proposition/assumption in the SET and empirical study that performance feedback could enhance employee engagement. The reason for this could be that the academic staff engagement at work is not efficiently monitored by the university and the matter of feedback is poorly handled by supervisors. Furthermore, it is found that the feedback mechanism has not been used properly. This is due to the overbearing interrelationship pressure on the services; this is impacting negatively on the services. As a result, the feedback mechanism does not always yield good result. However, when conducted correctly and regularly, performance feedbacks give workers an opportunity to discuss expectations, offer suggestions for areas of strength and growth, and set goals for the future (Albrecht & Bakker, 2021).

Performance Recognition and Employee Engagement

Additionally, hypothesis four (H4) is not supported as the outcome specifies non-significant relationship of performance recognition with EE. This denotes that the university management does not recognise job well done of its employee; thereby not inspiring the employees to be more engaged and committed. The results also do not provide empirical support to the SET which articulates that exchange rules are based generally on repayment and reciprocity principle, where the action of one party leads to the action or response of another party. The results are not in consistency with the findings of Kaufman et al. (2013) and Mutunga (2009). Based on empirical and theoretical evidence, it could be summed up that performance recognition is not an important inspiration and reward approach to enhance EE in Malaysia HEIs. This could be because institutions now provide financial incentives and leadership development, which has taken the place of academic staff appreciation. Supportive and empowered leadership styles that place a strong priority on training, development, and growth have been linked to greater levels of employee engagement (Joo & Park, 2016). However, it is believed that one of the central drives of evaluating employee engagement sometimes is to form a basis for honours or recognition for outstanding engagement to the attainment of organizational objectives (Atakpa et al., 2013).

Financial Reward and Employee Engagement

Furthermore, hypothesis five (H5) is supported as the outcome specifies that financial reward has significant relationship with EE. This implies that university management that implement acceptable standards of salary for their employees can achieve a high level of employee engagement. Good wages would encourage employees to work hard and deem them capable of handling the demands of their jobs. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with the previous studies in the literature of financial reward (pay) and engagement such as Ameen and Baharon (2019b) and Anitha (2014). Thus, financial reward entails considering payment as one of the key factors considered by workforces. Numerous organisational theories on social exchange and expectancy have stated categorically that when workforces acquire good pay, acknowledgement and praise, they seem to exercise more strength into their job. Organisation with good financial reward enhances employee engagement at work.

Training and Employee Performance

The hypothesis was tested with the aid of a variance-based SEM software (i.e. PLS-SEM). Hypothesis six (H6) is supported as the outcome specifies considerable effect of training on academic staff performance. This research outcomes corroborate with the previous studies such as Ameen and Baharom (2019a), Hafeez and Akbar (2015), and Sudhakar and Basariya (2017). Persistent training take workforce to an acceptable performance level and preserving them occupied, in reality has a significant link to employment contentment, self-esteem and hopefulness, hence enhanced performance (Sudhakar & Basariya, 2017). Appraisal system is a method for instituting training and development requirements of workforce. Giving enough training to staff based on PA program would go a long way in boosting EP. Therefore, employees that are appropriately stimulated with the fundamental and right training requirements would improve innovation/creativity rapidly on the occupation and this would result to competitive positioning.

Job Promotion and Employee Performance

In furtherance, the seventh hypothesis (H7) was also supported. Existing studies have argued that job promotion has significant link with employee performance (Mustapha & Zakaria, 2013; Peter, 2014; Zago, 2019). In the theory and empirical evidence, promotional prospect is a target most employees desire because in most cases employees' performance is linked to the extent to which they trust that their efforts might be rewarded

through promotion. Thus, the outcome of the current research collaborates with findings of the above-mentioned studies. The significant outcome of job promotion on academic staff performance might be due to the insinuation that promotion is seen in the academic staff of the university as a step to improve financial capability and overall aspect of academic staff career that is frequently anticipated for with hard work and dedication.

For instance, an academic staff member that focus on his or her duties for several months at the end of three or four years would be promoted. Thus, this adduces the reason why job promotion could have significant effect on performance. Moreover, at times academic staff do not get promoted as at when due but when promoted, it takes a relative long time to affect the implementation arrears of which are not paid. Even the so-called promotion attracts little monetary reward such that there is insignificant difference between the old take-home package and the new package. This is in consonance with the findings of Peter (2014) that employees who were promoted had waited for one to two years before they could get their promotion implemented. Truly, this is a setback that requires to be tackled so that the job promotion practice could exert more significant effect on academic staff performance.

Performance Feedback and Employee Performance

Also, hypothesis eight (H8) is supported. This finding supports the previous empirical results such as Akinbowale et al. (2013), Dahling et al. (2015), and Farooq and Khan (2011). This significant relationship of performance feedback on employee performance could be that supervisors do properly and frequently give performance feedback to the subordinates. Poor conveying in terms of feedback leaves personnel feeling disengaged from the staff; therefore, depressingly affects the job performance and satisfaction level. And this is harmful to the welfare of the staff because when workforce feels ignored, they would be likely to perform at a lower level that in turn affects the excellence services offered to the university and students.

Getting effective feedback and performance in an establishment hinges generally on the attitude and role of superiors (directors) in the evaluation procedure (Ohemeng et al., 2015). The supervising staff plays a fundamental position in the effective performance of an employee in an establishment, therefore most of these supervisors seem not to neglect communication with their subordinates regarding their performance. In addition, monitoring of performance and feedback is very efficient and outcomes from the assessments are prudently utilized. Therefore, both superiors and the subordinates need to continuously build a certain harmonious bond that would boosts productive feedback and the recognition of evaluation outcomes.

Performance Recognition and Employee Performance

Similarly, hypothesis nine (H9) as well is supported. In the same view, the extant study has argued that performance recognition has significant link with employee performance (Ameen & Baharom, 2019b; Mollel et al., 2017). This significant relationship of performance recognition on employee performance could be as a result of management policy on the academic services where hardworking employees are recognized. The selection of awards to academic staff in recognition of performance is seemed to be effective and this has promoted the willingness of academic staff members to take up responsibility and put more effort. That is in most cases it is not whom academic staff member knows but it is what he does. Thus, performance recognition is based on merit in reference to the key performance index.

Also, it has been revealed that many supervisors do usually commend their subordinates for a job well done and rectify any complaint about wrong doings. Actions like offering recognition to outstanding performance fairly than being critical of poor performance and acknowledging subordinates' ideas were entirely related to important outcome measures. The appreciation of the subordinates' work execution by the superior boosts job contentment and performance levels.

Financial Reward and Employee Performance

In contrast, hypothesis ten (H10) is not supported. However, according to empirical data, financial compensation is an important factor in employee motivation, recruitment, and output (Kampkotter, 2015; Lazear, 2000). Financial compensation offers workers a source of employment and appreciation for their efforts in addition to a concrete reward; it is consequently of utmost importance to an institution (Thwala et al., 2012). The theory of expectancy asserts that giving higher salary could occasionally inspire and increase works' efficiency.

Thus, the present study was not consistent with studies of Erbası, Arat and Buyukipekci (2012), Mathur and Gupta (2012), and Shahzad et al. (2008). Although, pay scheme has important influence on the workers' level of performance, the academic staff are reported performing well regardless of any financial compensation. In general, the remunerations that employees are receiving from their institutes have no influence on their effort, creativity, skill, and output that they are ready to offer in return. The rise in pay and increasing of incentive has led to many

consequences such as inspiration of academic staff at all levels, increased production, service delivery, increased commitment to public service, increased work efforts, rising levels in performance, good fiscal management, and drastic fall in deviant behavior including time theft and corruption.

Employee Engagement and Employee Performance

Finally, hypothesis eleven (H11) is supported as the outcome specifies significant relationship of EE on EP. The result implies that EE plays an indispensable part in enhancing EP as well as boosting efficiency in an organisation. These outcomes corroborate with the previous researches on the correlation between employee engagement and employee performance which include Ahmed (2015) and Anitha (2014). According to several academics, employee engagement plays critical roles in their capability to positively contribute to the success of their organizations. It also serves as a catalyst for bettering their performance and developing their goals for performance (Andrew & Sofian, 2012). In general, when employees are diligently involved in their duties, they put their hands, hearts, minds, and emotions into completing organizational tasks. Therefore, a crucial tactic for improving employee performance in Malaysian HEIs is to emphasize employee engagement.

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