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The Impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic on Employee Engagement and Performance: A Case Study of MTN Nigeria Telecommunications Limited

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Abstract

The covid-19 pandemic has brought an unprecedented impact on employee engagement and performance. The changing workplace environment has triggered psychological pressure and uncertainty and caused negative consequences for employees. In light of this unplanned situation that affect employees and the predictive closed relationship between employee engagement and performance, this study was developed to identify the key drivers of staff engagement and performance and its impact on organizational performance in the current context. The literature review showed different ways that researchers, organizations, and scholars perceive employee engagement. Several models and theories explained the concept of Employee engagement and performance and provided a context that directs the impact of COVID-19 on staff engagement and performance. The primary source of data collection was the online questionnaire. A random sampling of 339 staff was selected from a population of 1,700 employees in the different departments in MTN Nigeria out of which 306 respondents provided their feedback and this constituted the sample size while no response from 33 employees. Five hypotheses were formulated, and a conclusion was drawn from them. The calculation and analysis were obtained using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to get the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient while regression analysis was used to analyse the stated hypotheses. The result summary was analyzed considering the key objectives, it was evident that the majority of the employees felt alienated and disengaged due to the prolonged work-from-home, no informal meetings and socializations even though they still felt engaged while working for the organization.

Keywords: *Corona Virus, Employee Engagement, Employee Performance, Pandemic, Work From Home.*

Introduction

The swift spread of Corona virus (Covid-19) around the globe has created immense challenges for organizations in managing human resources. There are radical changes happening in the workplace and social environment which entails shifting to remote working and application of new policies and procedures to limit physical contact [1]. The pandemic has led to a lot of challenges for employees, such as isolation, psychological risk, difficulty of separating private and work life. Organizations are using defensive measures in fighting the outbreak of the pandemic which involves adjusting the work environment to keep employees safe, remote working, implementing rapid changes to their operations, supporting staff to establish workspaces at home and effectively fostering engagement and performance in the daily lives of the employees.

MTN Nigeria is a part of the MTN group and is the leading telecommunication company in Africa. It started its operation in 2001 and was the first Global System of Mobile (GSM)

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network to make a call in Nigeria. After its launch in August 2001, it has deployed its services across several cities, towns, villages and communities in the country as well as several highways across the country, spanning the 36 states of the Nigeria federation with a land mass of 923,768 km^2. Its core brand values are leadership, integrity, can-do, innovation and relationship. MTN Nigeria has a staff strength of 1700 employees.

Introducing the Topic of Research

In the present COVID-19 pandemic, employee engagement has become the major concern of human resource managers and they are constantly developing innovative and effective means to keep employees constantly engaged during this rough time. Organizations are using several engagement activities to ensure the employees pull through the tough times.

Management of MTN Nigeria perceived the misery that the pandemic is causing among the employees through direct discussion and indirect observation. It is understood that the majority of the staff are going to adjust to several genuine concerns as it affects their safety and well-being while working during the "stay at home" hence positive employee engagement opportunity is a major key in enduring and performing during this period. According to [2], if there is a gap in employee engagement, it can lead to consequences for employees.

Employee engagement is a key important duty that drives employee performance, consistent improvement, and achievement throughout the year [3]. So, it is very good to note that employment engagement is not just a catchphrase but an essential connection that enhances an organization's achievement. The management of MTN Nigeria is aware that there is a need to bend over backwards to improve and rectify the shape of the quality of staff performance with good human resource management [4].

This research aims to examine the main drivers of employee engagement and its impact on employee performance in the Covid-19 pandemic. It will also identify the menace of the Covid-19 pandemic on organizational activities, factors influencing employee engagement and performance and how to strengthen employee engagement to boost the morale of workers of MTN Nigeria.

Rationale & Need for the Study

Most countries all over the world are in lockdown due to the global effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation necessitated the implementation of the work-from-home initiative. The work from home has its challenging moments, so due to the problem, organizations need to engage their employees in the new normal and refined ways through the help of different employee engagement practices. This thesis intends to study and analyze the impact of the work environment on employee engagement and employee performance in MTN Nigeria so that employees can work easily from home and stay committed, motivated and satisfied during the pandemic situation.

The outcome of the research will provide information that will complement scanty literature on this study and show organizations the different methods necessary to have a high-performing and engaged workforce through constant communication, re-enforcing motivation, closing the gaps in employee-management interaction, inspiring employees to put in their best at work, have a future-focused conversation that develops employees and build a culture of growth mindset. It is expected that this study will continually rise to the occasion of unprecedented change with flexibility, generosity and commitment to give employee engagement and performance the weight it deserves.

Statement of the Hypothesis

This is a tentative statement that shows the expected outcome that will occur under certain circumstances. The hypotheses stated below will be tested to establish the impact of COVID-19 on employee engagement and employee performance in MTN Nigeria.

1. Employee engagement has a positive impact on employee performance
2. Engagement in the Covid-19 era has a positive impact on employee's workload and employee performance
3. Working from home during the pandemic period impacts on employee engagement and performance
4. Employee engagement has a significant impact on an organization's efficiency.
5. Effective communication affects employee's job performance.

Theories of Employee Engagement

Some different theories and models attempt to explain the concept of employee engagement and provide a context that will direct the impact of COVID-19 on employee engagement and the best ways to improve staff performance. This stage of the study, it will show how MTN management can reduce the impact of the pandemic on the overall productivity of the organization.

Two Factor Theory

The existing strong relationship between employee motivation and satisfaction has gained an impact on employee engagement. Most motivational theories have positively influenced employee engagement, but Herzberg's two-factor theory stands out as one of the major theories that influence employee engagement. Ref. [5] theory explains two key characteristics that influence jobs, and these are job satisfaction and the other leads to job dissatisfaction.

Herzberg is famously known as a motivator and hygiene factor. He identified the factors that lead to job satisfaction and the ones that result to job dissatisfaction. He further stated that the two key job characteristics that influence job satisfaction is usually the Motivation factors while the other factors that lead to job dissatisfaction is the Hygiene factors. The motivational factors that lead to high job satisfaction and greater employee engagement while the key hygiene factors include but are not limited to the type of supervision, salary, nature of interpersonal relationship, status, working conditions, personal life, security, types of organization policy and administration.

Self Determination Theory (SDT)

Ref. [6] introduced the work engagement theory which analyzed the employee motivational factors. He stated that there is a natural connection between employee engagement, self-determination and human behaviours theory. The extent to which personal behaviour and goals can be controlled by an employee influences the relative employee engagement. It has been proven that the extent of employee engagement has a strong influence on production rate. Emotional and motivational level affects staff engagement.

In addition, when there is disengagement, employees tend to withdraw their active participation, identity, interest, new idea generation and feelings, this shows their slow and steady movement towards disengagement. In the process, management will need to adopt active SDT to imbibe a positive and growth-oriented attitude.

Existence-Relatedness-Growth (ERG Theory)

This theory was developed by Alderfer in 1969. In this theory, engagement factors are related to availability, meaningfulness and safety. The frustration-regression principle

was introduced in other to explain the behavioural aspect of the employee, for example, consideration of going back to their previous job position when they get dissatisfied with their current position and when the required needs are not met.

ERG theory explained that there will be great fluctuation in the level of motivation as employees progress or regress to achieve their needs and any failure to achieve this will have a great impact on motivation. This theory was used by [6] to explain the absence or presence of the fulfilment of needs which can lead to engagement or disengagement.

Models of Employee Engagement

Katz and Kahn's Model

The model propagated and conceptualized that there are three levels of employee engagement which involve the selection of employees into the company, dependable behaviour that ensures the employee exceeds the performance standard that is set and in the time of innovation, extensive new proactive employee behaviour norm that enables achievement of the goals of the organization. Personal engagement was conceptualized as the harnessing of members of the organization to their work roles [6].

The key challenge in theoretical literature is the lack of a clear general definition of employee. The study is the psychological and physical existence of carrying out the role of the organization [6]. continued by stating that employees express themselves emotionally, physically and cognitively during role performance. The emotional facet entails employees' positive and negative attitudes linked to the organization and the leaders. The physical facet goes with the physical force dedicated to accomplishing an organizational role. The cognitive facet is closely related to the beliefs of employees, leaders and the working environment.

Say-Stay-Strive Model of Engagement (Aon Hewitt)

This model emphasized that six key drivers shape the experiences that organizations get in engagement, and these are the people, total rewards, the work, opportunities, quality of life and company practices. Say, Stay and Strive are the important engagement outcomes. Operational, Talent, Customer and Financial are the three important elements for complete employee engagement in business outcomes.

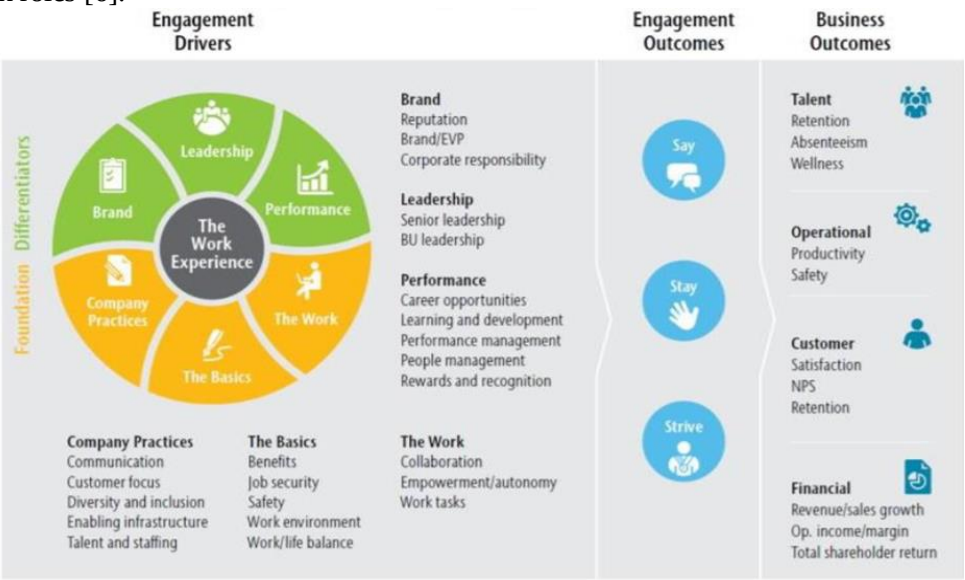

Figure 1. Aon Hewitt

Source: [7]

Employee Engagement

Organizations are changing about the Covid-19 global pandemic. Human resource managers are constantly using innovative, effective and creative methods to engage employees in the best way possible during this difficult time. Organizations are aware that engaged employees will be more productive and generate higher customer satisfaction which leads to an increase in the performance of the organization. It is always important to let the employees know what the organization expects from them, ensure they have the right tools and equipment to carry out their work, give them opportunities to put in their best, give recognition and let them know you care about them and keep encouraging them to embrace more training and development. This is supported by an author when he recommended that managers should be supported by the management staff to provide career support, development and recognition [8] while another author opined that organizations should provide employees with the freedom to create an interesting working environment to have an engaged work life [9].

Employee engagement is one of the key issues that every organization tries to keep up amongst their employees and attempts to guarantee that employees put in their best in carrying out their duties. Employee engagement is the cognitive, emotional and behavioural state of the employee [10].

The greater the employee engagement the more the reduction in accidents, redundancy, staff turnover, and disenchantment which invariably improves employee performance as well as organizational performance. As opined, there is a positive relationship between employee engagement and its direct indicators of the effectiveness of an organization which is reflected in its productivity, performance, quality, profit, customer satisfaction and business development [11].

Employee engagement Factors

Organizational commitment, employee attitude, voluntary and informal behaviours and commitment tend to act as major variables of employee engagement [12]. Employee attachment and detachment influence the extent of engagement [6]. The employee engagement aspect is significantly influenced by several disciplines and their knowledge. Engaged employee integrates motivational theory concepts, self-employment and self-expression while disengaged employee displays half-hearted performance and are not committed to new interventions and ideas. Situations that are comfortable and psychologically more meaningful which gives psychological safety make employees highly engaged. Availability, safety, and meaningfulness have a very good closeness with engagement [13].

Leadership, organization image, career development and empowerment are four worldwide relevant factors described by International Survey Research in 2004. A consistent decrease in work engagement is caused by burnout in work [14]. Employees usually show higher engagement emotional levels where there is a specific affirmation of their career growth, achievement of individual aspirations and security. Studies have shown that engagement is a two-way relationship between employers and employees [15].

Employee Performance

Performance is an oriented purpose that ensures that all organizational processes are put in place to effectively maximize employee productivity, the team's productivity and that of the organization as well. Performance is the behaviour of how a target is achieved [16] while [17] sees performance as the things that are done and undone by the employees.

Employee performance which has a lot to do with work achievement is measured based on the performance of each staff in the organization in completing their duties and responsibilities. Employee performance is a

performance result achieved by staff or teams in the organization both qualitatively and quantitatively [18].

Employee performance can be influenced by personality, behaviour, capacity, environmental conditions and the best put in by the staff. Each employee has different performance towards the duties and responsibilities to be completed. Employee performance factors include motivation, discipline, incentives or compensation, employee engagement and treatment, leadership style, training and development and the work environment and all these can be assessed from quantity and quality, worktime, and involvement in achieving the goals of the organization.

Employee Engagement and its Impact on Employee Performance

Several studies have discovered that different employee performance was achieved due to frequent employee engagement. The financial performance of an organization, its success and employee performance have been linked to the significant attention given to employee engagement. Employee engagement results in higher employee performance which will eventually lead to enhanced performance of the organization [19]. The impact of the engagement is evident on the efficiency and productivity of the company, the outcome of its customer satisfaction, the external image, employee retention rate, customer loyalty and advocacy and the organization's culture.

The primary aim of a well-planned and effective employee engagement strategy is to ensure that the organization achieve its set objectives. The engagement may lead to intrinsic motivation, mindfulness, ethical behaviour, creativity, increased effort, a more productive and satisfied employee. It is arguable that to reduce the complexity of employee engagement special attention should be given to workload, salary, wards, rewards, equity, control and values. In addition, engagement should be recognized through conversation, ideas, transfer of thoughts, and opinions, and the individual and organizational outcomes associated with employee engagement.

Strategies and Factors that Drive Employee Engagement During Covid-19 Pandemic

Different aspects of the workplace can negatively affect employee engagement such as conflict, excessive workloads, administrative hassles, organizational politics etc., hence several strategies and factors need to be focused on to drive engagement during the pandemic.

1. Express appreciation and encourage effort – In the current pandemic era, recognizing, acknowledging and showing appreciation of employee effort through gestures like giving positive feedback, thank you messages and allowing the employees to know that their effort is greatly appreciated despite the current adversities is one of the easiest and simplest strategies that requires little or no effort.
2. Regular check-in of employees by the leaders – It is very important in this era for leaders to constantly provide direction to the team, find out how the employees are coping with the work, assist them with barriers impeding them from carrying out their work, what support is needed, the available resources, give meaningful feedback and review work goals and tasks, these can be done through relevant communication platforms.
3. Enable collaboration and teamwork – The core driver of employee engagement is teamwork. this increases the employee's sense of

belonging. Most teams working virtually find it difficult in connecting with other colleagues or team members, so technology should be made available to ensure there is no break in communication. Opportunities are provided to talk with colleagues, discuss pressing issues, develop personal relationship, share ideas and resolve issues collectively.

Materials and Methods

Data Collection and Sample

In this study, the primary method of data collection was used. An online questionnaire which consists of five sections with 28 items was developed for completion by employees of MTN Nigeria. The first section mainly contains the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as gender, age, marital status and length of service. The second section assessed the employee's knowledge of staff engagement, the third consisted of questions on staff performance, the fourth on Clarity of direction and communication and finally, the fifth consisted of questions on wellbeing and safety. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions which are used for uniformity and effective comparison of the responses provided by the various respondents in each of the categories. This is necessary as the closed-ended questions are easily coded and analyzed. The items in the questionnaire are measured using the five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agreed = 5" to "Strongly Disagreed = 1".

Sample

An unbiased sampling was utilized to ensure that every staff in the population has an equal chance of being selected, hence a random sampling technique was used to select 339 staff from a population of 1,700 employees in the different departments in MTN Nigeria out of which 306 respondents provided their feedback while 33 employees did not provide their feedback and the 306 employees constituted the sample size for this study.

Sample Size Determination

The Cochran's formular was used to calculate an idea sample size with a 95% confidence level since the population is large.

$$n_0 = Z^2pq/e^2$$

where

e = the desired level of precision which is 5% = 0.05

n = minimum sample size

Z = Standard normal deviation at 95% confidence interval = 1.96

p = estimated proportion of population (P = 70%)

q = 1 – p (1 - 0.70) = 0.30

Test of Reliability

A pre-test method was used to ascertain the reliability of the data to be collected. Twenty questionnaires were randomly distributed to the different departments in MTN Nigeria and the instrument was collected after two days and necessary modifications were made where required to ensure its reliability and validity. The copies of the questionnaires were personally administered to the respondents through links sent via emails and personal calls to enlighten them on how to carry out the filling of the questionnaire. This approach was taken to ensure accuracy, reduce the time taken to fill the questionnaire, and reduce refusal, incomplete responses and non-response.

Method of Data Analysis

In this research, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for each of the 28 questions was carried out to define convergent, discriminant validity concerns and support for dimensionality. The essence is to eliminate any measures that have insignificant loading or cross-loadings. Any factor that loads equal or greater than 0.5 was retained in the study

while those outside this were eliminated from further analysis.

Furthermore, the accepted data was inputted, coded and analyzed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Categorical values were expressed in percentages and descriptive results in frequencies while means and standard deviation were for continuous variables. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) which tests significance difference was carried out for factors that have at least three categories and the t-test for independent samples with only two categories.

The distribution of the variables was normalized using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. Multicollinearity was tested by applying the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the correlation analysis procedure. The variance explanation by the model was tested using the adjusted goodness of fit (R2).

The regression analysis is the statistical method used to test the impact of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variable for each of the stated 5 hypotheses. The path analysis was used to show the estimates of the regression model with the standardized and unstandardized coefficients. A decision rule was made to show if the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis with the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the variables. Likewise, we cannot conclude that a significant difference exists if the p-value is larger than 0.05. This means at a 5% significant level we will accept the null hypothesis when the calculated value is less than the table value, otherwise, we will reject the hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than the table value.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical approval was obtained from MTN Nigeria. The survey participation was voluntary, a written consent form was provided, and confidentiality of the information collected was done based on a professional code of conduct.

Data Presentation and Discussion of Result

Presentation of Results

The presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings were obtained using the questionnaire with 28 items divided into five major factors. Several tests were provided to justify the hypothesized model and to show the strong correlation among the factors and introduced these factors as the main indications of employee engagement by providing some empirical justifications. The presentation starts with the demographic information, the quantitative results, the test of hypothesis and the discussion of the findings.

Demographic Information

The socio-demographic data was used to obtain the characteristics of the three hundred and six (306) staff of MTN Nigeria that participated in the survey, a significant response rate of 90.3 per cent was fully completed and is appropriate to analyze because the usable response rate exceeds the recommended threshold of model estimation.

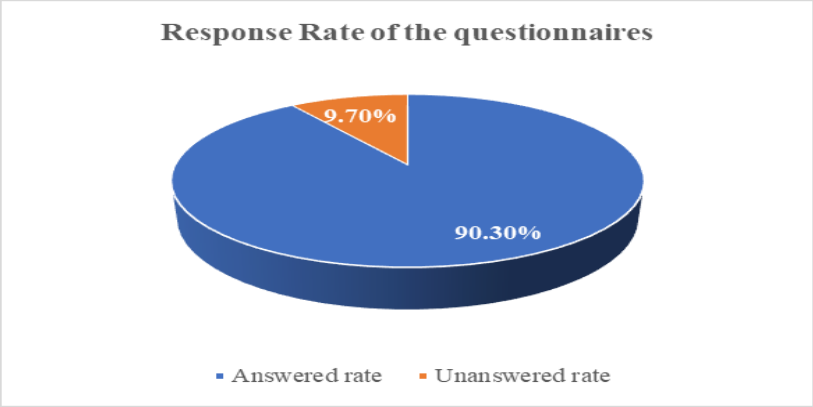

Figure 2. Response Rate of the Distributed Questionnaires

Section A: Socio-Demographic Data

The sample size comprised of males and Females from different age groups, marital status and length of service. This section is aimed at getting the total number of questionnaires that were completed by both sexes and their distribution.

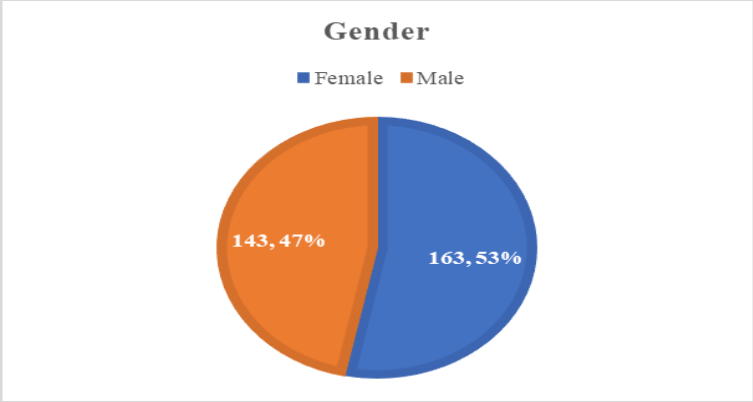

Figure 3. Gender of the Respondents

In the sample of 306 respondents, 143 are male and 163 are female with the male constituting 46.7% of the respondents and the female 53.3% as shown in Figure 3. This shows there are more female than the male they took part in the survey of this study.

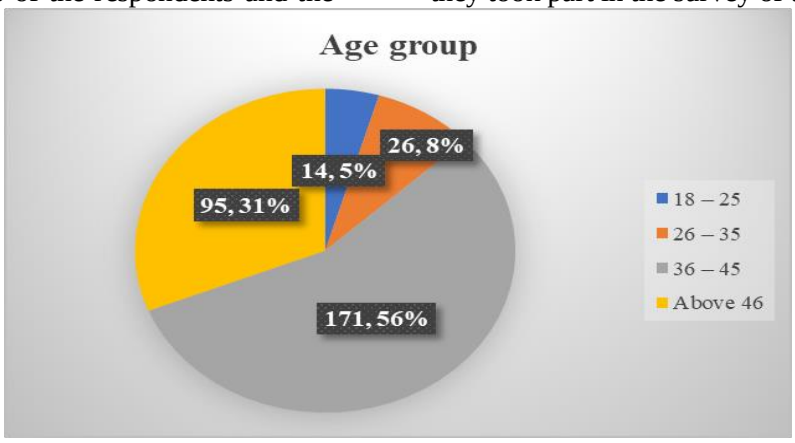

Figure 4. Age Group of the Respondents

14 respondents are between the ages of 18 – 25 which is 4.6%, 26 are between the ages 26 – 35 which is 8.5%, 171 respondents are between the ages 36 – 45 which is 55.9% and 95 respondents are the ages 46 and above which is 31% of the total sample size. It is

observed that more employees are in the age bracket of 36 – 45 years of age.

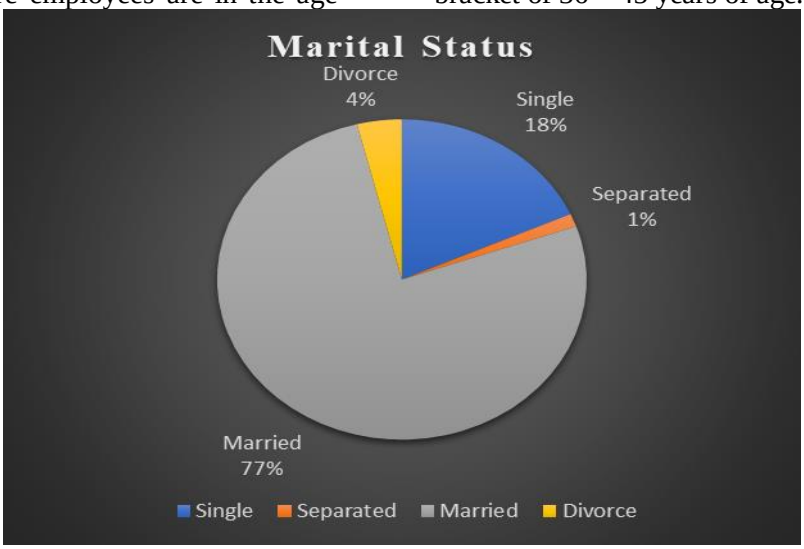

Figure 5. Marital Status of the Respondents

In the above, 12 of the respondents are Divorced which is 3.9%, 234 are Married which is 76.5%, 4 are Separated which is 1.3% and 56 of the respondents are Single which makes up18.3% of the total sample size. Figure 5 showed that there the organization has more married employees when compared to other marital status.

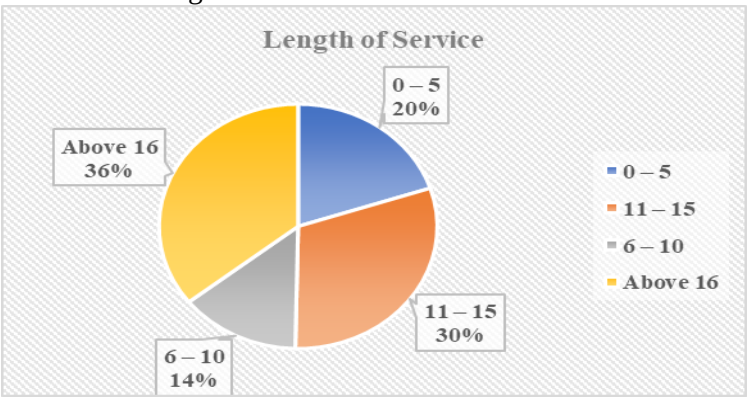

Figure 6. Length of Service of the Respondents

61 respondents have worked with the organization between 0 – 5 years which represents 19.9%, 43 respondents between 6 – 10 years which is 14.1%, 93 respondents between 11 – 15 years which is 30.4% and 109 respondents 16 years and above which is 35.6% of the total sample size. Most staff in the organization have stayed 16 years and above in the organization, so will be more experienced in giving objective feedback.

Mean Score Analysis

The table below shows the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of each section.

Table 1. Mean Score

	N	**Min**	**Max**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Performance Management	306	1.00	3.29	1.7979	.54397

Employee Engagement	306	1.00	3.14	1.7418	.42690
Clarity of Direction and Communication	306	1.00	3.75	1.7606	.56692
Safety and Wellbeing	306	1.00	3.00	1.7092	.51729

Test of Data Reliability and Validity

Table 2. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.797	4

Table 3. Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean (if Item Deleted)	Scale Variance (if Item Deleted)	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha (if Item Deleted)
Performance Management	5.2116	1.546	.601	.752
Employee Engagement	5.2676	1.847	.538	.781
Clarity of Direction and Communicatio n	5.2488	1.499	.600	.754
Safety and Wellbeing	5.3003	1.483	.717	.691

Significant Differences Tests

The one-way ANOVA is used to test the significant effects of the control variable (Employee Engagement) on the factors of this study (Performance Management, Clarity of Direction and Communication, and Safety and Well-being). The control variable is measured to show how the respondent's background affect their response.

Table 4. ANOVA

Model		**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	15.354	3	5.118	38.328	<.001[b]
	Residual	40.327	302	.134		
	Total	55.681	305			

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

a. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors (Constant): Performance Management, Clarity of Direction and Communication and Safety and Well-being.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation shows the degree and the direction of a linear relationship between two independent variables. A direct relationship implies a positive correlation while an indirect relationship shows a negative correlation. An association is expected to have a correlation coefficient that is higher than 0.5.

This section determines the relationship between the factors of study (Employee Engagement, Performance Management, Clarity of Direction and Communication, and Safety and Wellbeing). The relation to be measured are dependent and independent variables. The study will measure the impact of the independent variables (Performance Management, Clarity of Direction and Communication, and Safety and Wellbeing) on the dependent variable (Employee Engagement)

Table 5. Correlation

		Employee Engagement	Performance Management	Clarity of Direction and Communication	Safety and Wellbeing
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.434**	.410**	.468**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	306	306	306	306
Performance Management	Pearson Correlation	.434**	1	.421**	.602**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	306	306	306	306
Clarity of Direction and Communication	Pearson Correlation	.410**	.421**	1	.607**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	306	306	306	306
Safety and Wellbeing	Pearson Correlation	.468**	.602**	.607**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	306	306	306	306

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis

This is used to test the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable of each of the 5 hypotheses in this study. The path analysis was used and it showed the estimates of the regression model with the unstandardized and standardized co-efficient.

Table 6. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.525a	.276	.269	.36542	.850

a. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Management, Clarity of Direction and Communication and Safety and Well-being

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

Table 7. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Test (T)	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.870	.084		10.336	<.001
	Performance Management	.173	.048	.223	3.620	<.001
	Clarity of Direction and Communication	.136	.047	.180	2.903	.004
	Safety and Wellbeing	.186	.058	.225	3.204	.002

a. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

Table 8. Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	**Results**
Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Employee engagement has a positive impact on employee performance (H1)	Supported
Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Engagement in the Covid-19 era has a positive impact on employee's workload and performance (H_2)	Supported
Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Working from home during the pandemic has a significant impact on employee engagement and performance (H_3)	Supported
Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Frequency in Employee engagement will lead to higher organization efficiency (H_4)	Supported

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Effective communication leads to increase to employee's job performance (H_5)	Supported

Result and Discussion

From our findings, the result in Table 1 shows the standard deviation of the respondents was low (lower than one) which means the respondents have similar ideas concerning the questionnaire instrument. In addition, the degree of the mean is higher than 1.70 which is approximately 2 in all 4 sections, this shows the respondents are almost in agreement with the questionnaire.

The Cronbach's Alpha in Table 2 was appropriate for the measure of internal consistency and the covariance of the factors because it has a value of 0.797 which is greater than 0.7. Any factor that loads equal or greater than 0.7 will be retained in the study while those outside this will be eliminated from further analysis.

The result of the ANOVA analysis in Table 4 showed that the p-value is 0.01 is less than 0.05, hence there is a significant relationship between the independent variables (Performance Management, Clarity of Direction and Communication and Safety and Well-being) and the dependent variable (Employee Engagement).

In table 5 which showed the result of the correlation analysis stated that there is a positive relationship between Employee Engagement, and Safety and Wellbeing. The correlation value is 0.468 which is significant, this means staff safety and wellbeing has a positive correlation with Employee engagement. Changes in one variable will have a positive change in another variable as well.

In addition, Performance management has a strong, positive and significant relation with safety and wellbeing. The result shows a high value of 0.602 which means safety and wellbeing is highly related to performance management. More so, performance management and Clarity of Direction and Communication obtained the lowest correlation (0.421). The change in one variable will have a positive change in another variable.

Clarity of Direction and Communication, and safety and well-being obtained the highest correlation. Table 5 shows clarity of direction and communication has a very strong and positive relationship with safety and well-being and vice versa. The value of correlation (0.607) is highly significant even when flipped the other way round while Safety and wellbeing has the lowest level of correlation (0.468) with employee engagement. Changes in one variable will lead to positive changes in another variable as well.

In the model summary as indicated in Table 6, the R square value is 0.276 which is 27.6%, which means there is a probability of almost 27.6% that changes in the independent variables are caused by changes in the dependent variable.

Furthermore, table 7 shows the coefficient results. As indicated the beta value for Performance Management was 0.223 which means that the change in the independent variable by one unit will bring about a change in the dependent variable by 0.223 units.

In addition, the beta value for Clarity of Direction and Communication was 0.180, the change by one unit in the independent variable will bring a change of 0.180 units in the independent variable.

More so, the beta value of Safety and Wellbeing was 0.225 which means a change by one unit in the independent variable will change the dependent variable by 0.225 units. The beta values are positive which indicates the positive and statistically significant

relationship between the dependent and the independent variables supports our model.

Based on the statistical analysis summarized in Table 8, it can be concluded that employee engagement has a positive impact on employee performance and the efficiency of the organization. This is shown with the T – Statistics value as 3.620 which is higher than 1.96 and p value as <.001which is less than 0.05. The result is evidence of positive relations hence we accept or support the alternative hypotheses H1, H2 and H4 and conclude that there is a positive relationship between employee engagement and employee's workload and performance as well as the organization's efficiency and performance.

Working from home during the pandemic impacts employee engagement and performance (H3). This is shown with the T – Statistics value as 3.204 which is higher than 1.96 and the p value as 0.002 which is less than 0.05. This showed that the third alternative hypothesis is supported and accepted and that working from home during the pandemic impacts employee engagement and performance hence the safety and well-being of the staff during the COVID era has an influence on the performance of the organization.

The fifth hypothesis (H5), effective communication influences employees' job performance. It can be seen from Table 8 that the T – Statistics value is 2.903 which is higher than 1.96 and the p-value is 0.004 which is less than 0.05. This showed that the fifth alternative hypothesis is supported and accepted and that when there is effective communication during the pandemic then employee performance will improve. We accept the alternative hypothesis reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is the positive relationship existing.

Conclusion

An in-depth study was conducted on how the Coronavirus pandemic was affecting the management of employee engagement. An analysis was carried out based on the main factors which need to be addressed to reinforce employee engagement, commitment and job satisfaction to tackle the global crisis caused by the pandemic. Several actions were taken and recommended so that management is aware of the major factors of employee engagement which favour the employees and the organizational health and well-being in the pandemic era.

This study analyzed employee engagement about their performance in the Covid-19 pandemic era. Employees are valuable resources to an organization and must be allowed to build an atmosphere that encourages their work and makes them committed to their professional lives. The organization and the employees depend on each other to achieve their goals and objectives, so employee engagement must be a part of the corporate culture and must be a continuous cycle of awareness, change and intervention. Employee engagement influences the survival and profitability of the organization; therefore, management must continuously design plans and strategies that will meet the desires of the employees.

Recommendation

Employees are valuable resources: Employees are a major asset in any Organization, so management should allow employees to build an atmosphere that encourage their work and makes them committed to their professional life.

Corporate Culture: Employee engagement must be a part of the corporate culture. There must be room for continuous awareness and intervention.

Plans and Strategies: Employee engagement and performance influence the survival and profitability of the organization; therefore,

management must continuously design plans, strategies and clear objectives that will make employees achieve their set targets.

Effective Communication: Engaged employees are the key to the success of the organization hence, employees must be kept informed, satisfied and motivated through effective communication because the free flow of information and ideas brings about positive feedback.

Improvement of Skills and Knowledge: The organization should organize frequent online trainings, webinars, seminars and workshops that can improve employee's skills and knowledge to be able to perform optimally and not feel neglected.

Feedback Mechanism: There should be frequent feedback and updates in the new way of work because working outside the formal organization means that the employees are less likely to receive performance reviews and career feedback on a constant and predictable basis, so frequent updates will ensure the employees remain focused, energized and have a sense of purpose.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

I declare that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

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