

EXPLORING DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE EMERGING MARKET

Jemal Redwan Muzeyin^{*}, Hamed Mahmoud Shamsaan Ahmed^{**},
Yaregal Awoke^{*}, Muhaba Nureidin Ferejo^{*}, Temesgen Abebaw^{*},
Temesgen Yirgu Beyene^{*}, Shemila Jemal Amde^{*}

^{*} Management Department, College of Business and Economics, Werabe University, Werabe, Ethiopia

^{**} Corresponding author, Management Department, College of Business and Economics, Werabe University, Werabe, Ethiopia
Contact details: Management Department, College of Business and Economics, Werabe University, P. O. Box 046, Werabe, Ethiopia



Abstract

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Employee engagement refers to the commitment and willingness of employees to go beyond their defined tasks for ensuring the success of their organization. Prioritizing the development of engaged workers reaps substantial rewards for organizations in terms of productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness (Chiwawa, 2022). Employees' job engagement has gained momentum in the past few decades, mainly due to the changing work dynamics, workforce diversity, and globalization (Awan, Aslam, & Mubin, 2019). The aim of this study is to identify the determinants of employee engagement in the emerging market among Silite zone teachers through a cross-sectional descriptive and explanatory research design. The total population of the study is 5,902, using Yamane's formula 375 has been selected as a sample size with a stratified and simple random sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed by using correlation and regression models and a general linear model of univariate analysis of variance through SPSS version 26. The results of the study revealed that reward and recognition, work-life balance, training and development, and job characteristics are significant in determining employee engagement, whereas communication was found to be insignificant. The study recommends that Silite zone schools reconsider and continue the good work in reward and recognition practices, balancing employee work life, its ways of training and development for the teachers, and improving the job character.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Reward and Recognition, Work-Life Balance, Communication, Training and Development, Job Characteristics

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of social work, the word “employee engagement” is a relatively recent concept. It has been known to people in the management field for about two decades (Hobel, 2006). According to Bateman and Crant (2003), intrinsic motivation exists when an activity is conducted for its own sake rather than to obtain money or social rewards. It is when you do something just because it is fascinating or pleasurable without expecting anything in return.

For management to increase employee engagement, some steps may be considered. Leadership and management may increase transparency through regular communication and feedback with employees on matters pertaining to remuneration (Chiwawa & Wissink, 2021).

Kahn (1990) wrote the first research essay on workplace engagement in the *Academy of Management Journal*. Employee engagement is the process by which a company binds its people to their jobs. The organization provides an environment in which people are free and willing to participate physically, emotionally, and cognitively in order to do their tasks. Employee engagement is defined as the degree to which employees in an organization appreciate, believe in, and enjoy their work activities. Furthermore, it denotes a strong bond between a firm and its employees. As a result, it demonstrates the employees’ commitment and desire to go above and beyond their assigned tasks in order to support the organization’s success (Rothbard, 2001). Luong (2012) says that employee engagement is defined as organizational commitment, especially affective commitment, continuous commitment, and behavior outside of the employee’s role.

In today’s competitive and ever-changing environment, employee engagement became a hot topic within organizations (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). As many research results have shown employee engagement has a statistical relationship with productivity, profitability, employee retention, safety, and customer satisfaction which are the playing areas of every organization (Coffman & Gonzalez-Molina, 2002).

Engaged employees will behave more proficiently and adaptively due to their positive effect especially in the team and organization or in a highly dynamic and ambiguous situation (Bindl & Parker, 2011). Engaged employees also exhibit innovative behaviors. They will proactively involve in the creation of new products, services, ideas, procedures, or processes (Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993).

Cook (2008), on the other hand, found that disengaged personnel underperform in their tasks and denigrate the accomplishments of others, negatively affecting everyone’s attitude at work. Employees who are disengaged from their workplace have a negative impact on the organization’s performance through higher absenteeism, higher turnover, poorer productivity, and higher recruitment and training costs. The mentioned problem will be solved by confessing the issue to the appropriate offices and taking corrective action.

Studies also indicate that degree of engagement determines people’s productivity and their willingness to stay with the organization so employee engagement drives effectiveness in

an organization by improving retention, customer loyalty, productivity, safety, and ultimately, profitability (Myilswamy & Gayatri, 2014).

Empirical studies suggest that firms must apply new ways of creating a happy and healthy work environment, as well as boost necessary resources, in order to maintain a pool of engaged employees and develop a sustainable organization (Bhuvanaiah & Raya, 2014).

Andrew and Sofian (2012) take a different approach to the notion, claiming that it is inextricably linked to employee burnout. Employee engagement, they claim, is the polar opposite of burnout since burnout implies a loss of engagement. However, saying that retained employees are engaged employees is not a guarantee, because a person might stay in a company for a long time without being involved.

One of the main key gaps (conceptual gap) that motivated the researchers to conduct this study was the misconception about the concepts of employee engagement which has been misunderstood by different scholars. In addition to that, there is no such research work that has been done and publicly announced on employee engagement in Ethiopia especially in the education sector. This is another important gap (location and area gap) that adds initiative force in the minds of the researcher to conduct this study in the educational sector, particularly in Silite zone. Therefore, the aim of the study is to examine the determinants of employee engagement in the emerging market — a case of Silite zone teachers. The researchers and academicians will see it as a valuable addition to the literature in its field. In addition, the contribution of this study is equally important in this drive and their marginalization could open the doors for development (Ahmed, Muzeyin, Ferejo, & Amde, 2022; Ahmed & Ahmed, 2021).

Therefore, this study has been divided into six sections. Section 1 is the introduction which deals with the concepts of the study, research gap objectives, questions, and significance of the study. Section 2 reviews the related literature, develops the hypotheses and explains the conceptual framework. Section 3 presents the methodology used. Section 4 provides the results and Section 5 discusses the results of the research. The conclusion in Section 6 covers the most important findings, limitations, and research further studies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee engagement is a behavioral science topic, so it is tough to come up with a general definition. Academic scholars, consultancies, research institutes, and companies have defined employee engagement in different ways.

Employee engagement was first conceptualized in the academic literature by Kahn (1990) as the harnessing of organization members to their work roles. Engagement encompasses not just the physical energy required to engage in or complete tasks, but also the psychological aspects of people’s perceptions of themselves and their work environments. As a result, the term “employee engagement” encompasses both individuals’ psychology about their work and environment as well as the actions that occur.

Employee engagement is also defined as an employee's level of dedication and interest in the firm and its principles (Sundaray, 2011). Employee engagement can also be defined as a good, rewarding work-related frame of mind marked by vitality, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is defined as the amount of energy a person is willing to put into their work in order to achieve the organization's goals and objectives, whereas dedication is defined as the feeling of pride and enthusiasm for one's work as well as being inspired and challenged by it. Absorption is defined as a feeling of joy and fulfillment in one's work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Conservatively, it is estimated that less than 30% of hotel workers report even partial engagement with their work (Carter, Nesbit, Badham, Parker, & Sung, 2018).

Employee engagement, according to Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004), occurs when employees have a positive attitude toward the firm and its ideals. They define an engaged employee as someone who understands the business goals that their company wants to achieve and works together with their coworkers to achieve them. According to Ferejo et al. (2022), individuals and their relatives are the main source of finance for the majority of medium and small enterprises (MSEs) for two major reasons. Ahmed and Tessma (2020) say that the current job problem is because companies and graduates have not been able to connect well for a long time.

Employee engagement, according to Gatenby, Rees, Soane, and Truss (2008), is defined as "being positively present during the performance of work by willingly giving intellectual effort, and experiencing both positive emotions and meaningful connections to others" (p. 3). Ahmed et al. (2018b) conducted a study to examine the current situation and factors of the study. Contrariwise, employees are more likely to disengage when the organization is perceived as foregoing adequate compensation (Kwon & Kim, 2020). The majority of studies failed to take heed of organizational and business context making the understanding of engagement contextual (Jha & Kumar, 2018).

2.1. Reward and recognition

Reward and remuneration are important components of employee engagement because they motivate employees to achieve more and, as a result, focus more on their job and personal development. It not only encourages workers to do a good job, but it also makes them want to. Once employees are rewarded for their efforts with higher incentives and recognition, it is believed that they will be content and that this workplace will be a good fit for them (Saks, 2006). Administrative support, administrative network, legal and policy support, loan support, bureaucracies, incentives, and tax benefits are also important (Ahmed & Wube, 2019).

When they receive recognition or prizes from their employer, employees are more likely to respond with their highest level of engagement toward their workplace. Burnout can be caused by a lack of acknowledgment or rewards. Maslach et al. (2001) say that because of this, it is important for employees to be recognized or given awards.

H1: Reward and recognition system has a significant effect on the engagement of Silite zone teachers.

2.2. Work-life balance

Employees and organizations must strike a balance between work and personal life. Organizational attempts to reduce work-life conflict for employees are known as "work-life balance practices". Employees are also more efficient and effective at work as a result of this (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010). Work-life balance has been defined in a variety of ways over the years. According to Scholarios and Marks (2004), work-life balance has an essential influence in establishing an employee's attitude toward their organization and their lives.

Work-life balance is characterized by Clark (2000) and Ungerson and Yeandle (2005) as employees' thoughts on work, personal, and family time that are sustained and integrated while reducing conflict. According to Guest (2002), it is possible to detect a work-life balance trend and growth because it affects employees' well-being and job outcomes. On the other hand, Dundas (2008) claimed that work-life balance is about effectively managing and influencing all personal areas of one's life. Ahmed, Kar, and Ahmed (2017) concluded that there are many things that can affect employee engagement.

Companies have become increasingly cognizant in recent years of the need to embrace the concept of work-life balance as a vital tool for facilitating sustainable human resources, which is critical in attracting and retaining talent (Eikhof, Warhurst, & Haunschild, 2007). According to Ahuja (2014), work-life balance affects absenteeism, productivity, and work happiness, all of which influence employee engagement.

H2: Work-life balance has a significant effect on the engagement of Silite zone teachers.

2.3. Communication

Simon (2011) backed up the communication hypothesis and emphasized the need for two-way communication between employees and management as a crucial driver of employee engagement. Employee engagement, according to Robinson et al. (2004), necessitates a two-way interaction between employer and employee that must be continually cultivated in order to maintain levels of engagement. When it comes to employee engagement, giving them a voice is critical (Rees & French, 2010). Attridge (2009) says that this can be done by setting up effective communication channels that allow both upstream and downstream communication. This creates a more open, trusting, and involved workplace.

The information employees received about how the firm was/is operating and how they contributed to the company's attaining its business objectives was found to be an essential determinant in employee engagement. Furthermore, employees who are involved in company choices that affect their job or work are more likely to be engaged (Purcell, Kinnie, Hutchinson, Rayton, & Swart, 2003).

In order to maintain trust, senior management must communicate effectively, explain their actions, and treat employees with dignity and respect during difficult situations like layoffs (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998).

H3: Communication system of Silite zone has a significant effect on the engagement of teachers.

2.4. Training and development

Training and development can be described as the efforts made by employers to improve their employees' skills. As a result, new information and skills can be applied to the performance of their tasks (Andrew & Sofian, 2011). Employee engagement and training and development have a considerable relationship. Teachers now have greater financial needs than ever before (Buba, Das, & Ahmed, 2018).

Tahir, Yousafzai, Jan, and Hashim (2014) investigate the link between training and development and employee performance and productivity, both of which are results of engaged workers. Data was obtained using questionnaires sent to eighty United Banks Limited branches in Pakistan. Pearson correlation and Cronbach alpha were used to test the results. The results show that there is a strong link between training and development as well as the performance and productivity of employees. The result of the study shows that among the four variables, brand perception and perceived quality have a significant positive impact on brand awareness of local leather footwear while advertising and product innovation do not (Muzeyin, Ahmed, Jemal, Murad, & Nuredin, 2022). According to Rashid, Asad, and Ashraf (2011), the study looks into the elements that influence employee engagement as well as the relationship between employee engagement and organizational and personal performance in Pakistan's banking sector. They used questionnaires to collect data from 250 employees at private commercial banks, which they examined using an independent sample t-test and structural equation modeling. The findings showed that employee engagement, training, and career advancement had no meaningful association.

H4: The training and development system of Silite zone has a significant effect on teachers' engagement.

2.5. Job characteristics

Skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback are the five key employment qualities. Indeed, employment qualities, particularly feedback and autonomy, have long been linked to burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). From the point of view of social exchange theory, employees who are given jobs that are more interesting and challenging are expected to get more involved.

H5: The characteristics of the job itself have a significant effect on the engagement of Silite zone teachers.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

According to Kothari (2004), a research design is a conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes a blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. It ensures that the study would be relevant to the problem and that it uses economical procedures. Descriptive research design aims at answering questions of who, what, when, where, and how

(Yin, 2006). Therefore, for this research work, the researchers used a cross-sectional descriptive and explanatory research design because it enables the researcher to explain the cause-and-effect correlation between employee engagement and its determinants by turning raw data into a model of the cause-and-effect relationship.

3.2. Research approach

There are two major research approaches namely, quantitative and qualitative, and no one of them is better than the others, rather depends on how the researcher wants to do a research study (Ghauri & Grønnaug, 2005). This study adopted a mixed approach which is a quantitative and qualitative research method. This is because the quantitative approach will help the researcher to test relationships between variables (Creswell, 2012) and the quantitative approach was used in describing the descriptive part of the research.

3.3. Target population

Population refers to an entire group of objects having common observable characteristics (Creswell, 2012). According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr, and Griffin (2010), the definition of the population was an identifiable total set of elements of interest being investigated by the researchers. Accordingly, the target population for this study is all Silite zone teachers who are in teaching activity in 2018-2019. According to the information the researchers got from the Silite zone education secretary's office, 5,902 teachers in Silite zone are actually in teaching activity in 2018-2019. However, it is quite difficult to address all the respondents in this research since they are large in number. Therefore, to better address this, the researchers used representative samples.

3.4. Sampling technique

Sampling is the art of taking representative elements from the population. To carry out a study, one might bear in mind what size the sample should be, whether the size is statistically justified, and lastly, what method of sampling is to be used (Leedy, 1997).

In this research, the researchers used a stratified sampling technique based on the grade level they are teaching which is elementary, high school, and preparatory. The proportionately respondent was taken from each stratum from the total of 13 woredas (districts). The researchers used simple random sampling through the lottery method with a non-replacement technique to reach out to the representatives. This is done by assigning numbers for teachers from one to the last number respective to their woreda's number, and a piece of paper was folded and put into the bucket and was picked till the determined proportion of the sample was reached.

3.5. Sampling size

The sample size is the total number of items taken as representative samples of the population. The target population of this study is 5,902. It is well-known and finite, so using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination will be

advisable. Hence, this research used the following formula to determine the sample size of the research. For this study, the confidence level is 95% ($e = 0.05$). The sample size of this study can be calculated as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad (1)$$

where, n = sample size, N = total population size, e = significance level.

$$n = \frac{5,902}{1+5,902(0.05)^2} = \frac{5,902}{15.755} = 374.6 \sim 375 \text{ teachers} \quad (2)$$

3.6. Sources of data

Primary data was used by using structured questionnaires which were distributed to target samples of Silite zone teachers to collect data. Secondary data was also gathered from books, journals, magazines, websites, and other relevant sources (Argaw & Ahmed, 2017).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics of variables

Standard deviations of about one and less than one show that most of the responses are gathered about the mean value and indicate agreement about the question or variable. The relative importance of a mean can be assigned based on:

$$\text{Class interval} = \frac{\text{Maximum class} - \text{Minimum class}}{\text{Number of levels}} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Class interval} = \frac{5-1}{3} = 1.33 \quad (4)$$

where, a low degree is from 1-2.33, a medium degree is from 2.33-3.66; a high degree is from 3.67-5.00.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of variables

Variables	Nature of variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative importance
Reward and recognition	IV	2.7658	1.39133	Medium
Work-life balance	IV	2.7405	1.33274	Medium
Communication	IV	3.0858	1.43935	Medium
Training and development	IV	2.8276	1.42445	Medium
Job characteristics	IV	2.5991	1.12622	Medium
Employee engagement	DV	2.7872	1.38336	Medium

Source: Survey results.

The results of Table 1 depict that it is possible to infer all of the variables' mean under the medium category, in this case, their relative importance is medium which is around the agreed side taking into consideration that the measurement instrument used for this study is the 5-point Likert scale. And their standard deviation rounds down to one. Therefore, most of the responses are gathered about the mean value. And from the variables, *communication* has the highest mean score with a value of 3.08, followed by *training and development* (2.82), followed by *reward and recognition* (2.76), followed by *work-life balance* (2.74), and *job*

characteristics was found to have the lowest mean score with a value of (2.59).

4.2. Pearson correlation analysis

Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is used to test if a linear relationship exists between two variables. The correlation coefficient is a statistical measure of the association between two numerical variables (Zikmund et al., 2010). It is the most widely used for summarizing the degree of relationship and direction between two variables.

Table 2. Pearson correlation analysis of variables

Predictors		Employee engagement
Reward and recognition	Pearson correlation	0.637**
		Strong relationship
Work-life balance	Pearson correlation	0.625**
		Strong relationship
Communication	Pearson correlation	0.157**
		Low relationship
Training and development	Pearson correlation	0.293**
		Low relationship
Job characteristics	Pearson correlation	0.443**
		Moderate relationship

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey results.

Based on the results of Table 2, it is revealed that *employee engagement* is positively correlated to the predictor variable *reward and recognition* with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.637$, so that, there is a strong positive relationship.

In the same way *employee engagement* is positively correlated to the independent variable of *work-life balance* with a correlation coefficient of

$r = 0.625$. Therefore, there is a strong positive relationship.

Employee engagement is positively correlated to the predictor variable *communication* with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.157$ so that it indicates the existence of a low positive relationship.

Employee engagement is positively correlated to the predictor variable *training and development*

with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.293$, therefore, it is possible to state that employee performance has a low positive relation with training and development. Finally, the results of Table 2 show the correlation between *job characteristics* and *employee engagement* as a positive relationship with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.443$ and it implies that the dependent variable (*employee engagement*) has a moderate correlation with the independent variable (*job characteristics*).

4.3. Summary analysis of a multiple regression model

Multiple regression was conducted in order to investigate the effect of selected determinant factors (*reward and recognition, work-life balance, communication, training and development, and job characteristics*) on the dependent variable (*employee engagement*).

Table 3. The results of multiple regression model summary^b

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R ² change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	0.809 ^a	0.654	0.650	0.81884	0.654	137.834	5	364	0.000

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), *job characteristics, reward and recognition, training and development, communication, work-life balance*.

b. Dependent variable: *Employee engagement*.

Source: Survey results.

As indicated in Table 3, an R of 0.809 represents a situation in which all the identified independent variables are strongly correlated with employee engagement.

The coefficient of determination or correlation coefficient R² tells how much of the variance in employee engagement is accounted for by the regression model from the sample of 370 respondents and which measures the amount of employee engagement predictors (*job characteristics, reward and recognition, training and development, communication, and work-life balance*) that the factors share. The closer the R² value to 1, the better the independent variables can predict the dependent variables.

As indicated in Table 3, the square of the correlation coefficient R² of each factor share is 65.4% of predictors. Therefore, the researchers found that *job characteristics, reward and recognition, training and development, communication, and work-life balance* share 65.4% in determining the factors this means that 34.6% of the determining factors cannot be explained by this study variables. *Job characteristics, reward and recognition, training and development, communication, and work-life balance* are factors alone, therefore, there must be also other variables which did not include in this study that influence employee engagement in the study area.

There could be other factors than these that have been studied (Ahmed et al., 2018a).

The adjusted R² score shows the loss of ability to predict or shrinkage. It tells us how much of the difference in figuring out how engaged employees are would be explained if the model was built from the population from which the sample was taken.

In Table 3, the difference for the final model is very small ($0.654 - 0.650 = 0.004$) about 0.4%. This shrinkage means that if the model were derived from the population rather than a sample it would account for approximately 0.4% less variance in the outcome. Hence, the samples are adequate enough in taking into consideration for this study.

4.4. Analysis of regression variance

The regression sum of squares is the difference between the total sum of squares and the residual sum of squares ($TSS - RSS = 706.145 - 244.061 = 462.085$). Each item on the first column (regression, residual, and total) has a degree of freedom value. The total degree of freedom is computed by deducting 1 from the total size of the sample ($df = 369 + 1 = 370$), the regression degree of freedom in Table 4 is 5, which also refers to the total number of the independent variable.

Table 4. ANOVA^a results of the regression analysis

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	462.085	5	92.417	137.417	0.000 ^b
	Residual	244.061	364	0.670		
	Total	706.145	369			

Note: a. Dependent variable: *Employees engagement*. b. Predictors: (Constant), *job characteristics, reward and recognition, training and development, communication, work-life balance*.

Source: Survey results.

The results of Table 4 show that the residual sum of squares, which is also known as the error of the sum of squares has 364 degrees of freedom ($= 364 - 5$). The regression model has a mean square of 92.417 ($462.085/5$) and the residuals mean square of 0.193 ($= 244.061/364$). F-ratio measures how the model has improved the prediction of the dependent variable, which is computed by dividing mean square regression for mean square residual that resulted in 137.417 ($92.417/0.670$). The total result of the analysis of the variance

(ANOVA) revealed ($F = 137.417$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000^a$) for the regression coefficient. The significance of the p-value of 0.00, which is less than 0.05, indicates that the regression model statistically and significantly predicts the outcome variable, implying that the regression model is a good fit model for the data analysis. This shows that the predictors and employee engagement in Silite zone teachers are strongly linked in a good way.

4.5. Test of significance

The results of Table 5 show summarized regression analysis coefficients which show the variable is an individually significant predictor of the dependent variable and it is measured considering

sig. value, β -value, and t-statistics. Therefore, if the t-test associated with a β -value is significant (if the value in the column labeled sig. is less than 0.05) then the predictor is making a significant contribution to the model.

Table 5. Regression analysis of the coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-0.762	0.169		-4.500	0.000
Reward and recognition	0.373	0.037	0.375	10.170	0.000
Work-life balance	0.395	0.037	0.381	10.796	0.000
Communication	0.056	0.032	0.058	1.774	0.077
Training and development	0.075	0.032	0.077	2.373	0.018
Job characteristics	0.405	0.040	0.329	10.141	0.000

Source: Survey results.

The β -value tells us the constant term and the coefficient of independent variables affect the dependent variable (*employee engagement*).

The p-value is less than 0.05 for all the variables except communication hence, it indicates that four independent variables are significant to predict employee engagement (dependent variable) and communication is not significant to predict it.

Therefore, the β is different from 0 and the researchers found that the predictor variables make a significant contribution to predicting *employee engagement*, *reward and recognition* ($\beta_1 = 0.373$), *work-life balance* ($\beta_2 = 0.395$), *training and development* ($\beta_4 = 0.75$), *job characteristics* ($\beta_5 = 0.405$), statistically significant variables can predict *employee engagement* with Silite zone teachers. Whereas *communication* ($\beta_3 = 0.056$) does not have a statistically significant relationship with *employee engagement* of Silite zone teachers.

To know the effect and relationship of independent variables on the dependent variable (*employee engagement* of Silite zone teachers), the regression function is in the form of:

$$EE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 RR + \beta_2 WLB + \beta_3 COM + \beta_4 TD + \beta_5 JC + \mu \quad (5)$$

where, $\beta_0 = -0.762$ which is constant.

$$EE = -0.762 + 0.373RR + 0.395WLB + 0.75TD + 0.405 + \pi \quad (6)$$

The linear equation above indicates that there is a positive relationship between the above predictors and employee engagement of Silite zone teachers.

EE (employee engagement) has a negative value based on the beta value of the unstandardized coefficient, which shows it is highly dependent on the identified independent variables without them it will be hard to bring employee engagement.

This can be explained that for every increase in 1, reward and recognition, work-life balance, training and development, job characteristics, and employee engagement will increase by 0.373%, 0.395%, 0.75%, and 0.405%, respectively. Communication has no significant relation to employee engagement, which is it fails to predict employee engagement and will not affect employee engagement.

Based on Table 5 by analyzing the t-value it can be seen that work-life balance has the highest effect on determining employee engagement ($t = 10.796$),

followed by reward recognition ($t = 10.170$), followed by job characteristics ($t = 10.141$), followed by training and development ($t = 2.373$).

5. DISCUSSION

In this research, reward and recognition is found to be significantly affecting employee engagement. The finding of Tesema (2014) also supports this research finding. Doran's (2013) finding also supports this one. Similarly, a study conducted by Gujral and Jain (2013) taking job role, organizational support, rewards and recognition, training and development, and organization's leadership as independent variables found that job role, rewards and recognition and leadership are strong determinants of employee engagement. Moreover, Maslach et al. (2001) state that a lack of reward and recognition can lead to burnout. Therefore, proper reward and recognition is very important to engage the employee. This indicates that reward and recognition show consistency in this study and other empirical research.

In this study, work-life balance is an independent variable that is found to be significant in determining teachers' engagement in Silite zone. A study conducted by Robinson et al. (2004) on the drivers of employee engagement found work-life balance as a significant variable. Ahuja (2014) also reveals that work-life balance affects absenteeism, productivity, and work satisfaction thus influencing employee engagement. Similarly, Gamage (2017) conducted a study on factors influencing employee engagement. The statistical results indicate that career growth, supervisor behavior, work content, and work-life balance have a positive relationship with employee engagement. The above findings support the finding of this study.

Communication is found to be insignificant in this study. However, a study by Robinson et al. (2004) found to be significant stating communication significance in determining engagement which did not support this research finding. Al Maktoum (2015) conducted an exploratory study on the drivers of employee engagement in the United Arab Emirates and found the relationship between senior management and employee, employee empowerment, accountability, teamwork and cooperation, communication, employee development, employee support, organization image and rewards and recognition as important drivers of employee engagement. A study on the elements that influence employee engagement carried out by Mansoor and Hassan

(2016) found that the five dimensions of employee engagement have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in a Maldives telecommunication network provider. Also, O'Carroll (2015) conducted a study on the main factors that affect employee engagement in a failing outsourcing company in Dublin and found that leadership, communication, organizational support, learning and development, and the environment all play a big role.

Training and development, which is one of the independent variables considered in this research is found to be significant. This finding is supported by Robinson et al. (2004) had conducted a casual study in British on the drivers of employee engagement using regression analysis. They selected training and development, communication, health and safety measures, job satisfaction, pay and benefit, and feeling valued and involved as their independent variables. Their finding indicates that training and development, communication, health and safety measures, and job satisfaction as significant factors whereas pay and benefit and feeling valued and involved are insignificant factors in driving employee engagement. Therefore, training and development indicate consistency between this research and the study under question. However, the finding of Doran (2013) is inconsistent with this research finding.

Job characteristics are another independent variable considered in this study. The result was found to be significant and consistent with Tessema's (2014) finding. He took job characteristics, organizational support, rewards and recognition, organizational justice, and demographic factors as independent variables. The findings of the study show that there is no difference in engagement scores for males and females, for education level, or years of service in the bank. The results of the study also indicate that the work life factors have a significant effect on employee engagement. Moreover, perceived organizational support is the most significant factor in determining employee engagement. Similarly, rewards and recognition, job characteristics are significant factors in this study.

6. CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to examine the determinants factors affecting employee engagement: a study of Silite zone teachers. This was done by investigating the relationship between each determinant factor and employee engagement using regression analysis and ANOVA to determine the extent of change in employee engagement due to the selected factors. The findings are based on the analysis made and conclusions are drawn in line with the study objectives and in an attempt to answer the study's main research hypotheses. The descriptive statistics shows the highest mean value among the five variables is communication with a mean value of

3.0858, the second highest aggregated mean value is of training and development (2.8276) followed by reward and recognition (2.7658), whereas work-life balance has scored the fourth mean (2.7405), and finally the last with lowest aggregated mean value is of job characteristics (2.5991). This indicates all the variables have a medium mean degree based on a 5-point Likert scale.

Based on the Pearson correlation coefficient reward and recognition and work-life balance have a strong correlation with employee engagement with ($r = 0.637$) and ($r = 0.625$), respectively. Job characteristics ($r = 0.443$) has a moderate correlation with employee engagement and training and development ($r = 0.293$) and communication ($r = 0.157$) have a low correlation with employee engagement. They are statistically significantly correlated with employee engagement at a 95% confidence level.

The regression analysis showed that variables (reward and recognition, work-life balance, training and development, and job characteristics) have a significant effect on the dependent variable (employee engagement) except the variables objective of the training course and selection of trainer). The correlation between these independent and dependent variables is strong ($R = 0.809$). The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.654% which is the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that is explained by the five independent variables. So, 65.4% of the variations in employee engagement are explained by five independent variables in this model. Thirty-four point six (34.6) percent of the unexplained variance is the scope for further research. The predictor communication is insignificant, hence the hypothesis is rejected, however, the others four variables are significant. Therefore, their hypotheses are accepted.

Based on the results of the study, the policymakers need to come up with and initiate the formulation of policy guidelines that will lead to effective employee engagement practices that can cultivate trust, mutual agreement, engagement, motivation, and participation of employees, thus if the practice is effectively implemented the engagement of teachers will be improved and quality education will be maintained.

The study focused on the determinants of employee engagement. It is recommended that a similar study can be replicated in other parts of Ethiopia as well as in other study areas like manufacturing, agriculture, and service sectors. Furthermore, since this study considered five employee engagement variables there could be many other variables like job role, organizational support, organizational leadership and planning, income level as (categorical variable), etc. so in order to improve on this, it is suggested future research including these extraneous variables to bring better findings. Hence, by adding the excluded variable further research can be conducted.

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