

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND OFFICE INNOVATIONS IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES

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ABSTRACT

Engagement and innovation are the common changes faced by the government employees after the pandemic at their respective workplace. Given this case, employee engagement and office innovation as well as the relationship between the two has become prevalent topic of this discussion. This study seeks to identify the level and relationship of employee engagement and office innovation. In pursuit of the objectives, this study employed a purposive sampling technique and a researcher-made instrument was used to conduct a face-to-face data gathering from the employees of government offices in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. This study reveals that the level of employee engagement and office innovation was very high and also shows that office innovations is significantly and positively related to employee engagement. This suggests that office innovation can contribute to employee engagement by improving the work environment and processes, but it is not the only factor that affects employee engagement.

Keywords: employee engagement, government employees, office innovation, purposive sampling technique, researcher-made instrument

INTRODUCTION

Government is the primary reason by which a state's citizens are monitored, regulated, and provided with services and protection. Every country boasts its unique form of government. Though the underlying structure might be similar, the cultural inclinations and preferences of its citizens dictate how a government operates, leading to varied functionalities. Despite the pandemic, Filipino workers continue to exhibit a strong sense of community and are eager to assist others in achieving their shared objectives. Meanwhile, 83% said they felt their work was important to the organization's aims and objectives and were always searching for ways to improve their position and contribution. The pandemic has affected employers as well, though. Participants reported being weary at work in proportion to 67% and not having enough time to do their work (De Borja, 2021).

According to the perspectives of numerous scientists, employee engagement is a person's propensity to engage in a certain labor activity, which has three components: knowledge, interest, and performance (Budriene & Diskiene, 2020). Knowing what the employee does, wanting to keep up with trends and innovation, and doing his job well enough to get the job done all contribute to an employee's engagement.

Furthermore, the working environment is the subject of conversation for the spatial part of all choices concerning the present and future. This area is where the processes that decide the physical characteristics and standards of the present and future worlds take place. Additionally, it is one of the locations where decisions and guidelines for sustainable development in the spheres of economic, social, and political life are made (Yunus & Ernawati, 2018). Innovating the work environment can significantly contribute to employee satisfaction, resulting in a good office performance.

To support this study, employee engagement and office innovations can be based on the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). According to Job Characteristics Theory (JCT), jobs can be designed to increase the core job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, which can lead to increased employee engagement. Thus, job characteristics such as variety, identity, significance, autonomy, and feedback can be considered as predictor variable (Faturachman, 2016). While Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) stated that the adaption of an innovation is influenced by its perceived relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Sahin, 2006). Thus, factors such as perceived benefits, compatibility with the work environment, ease of use, opportunities for experimentation, and visibility can be considered as criterion variables. By using these theoretical frameworks, the study can provide insights into the factors that can improve employee engagement and office innovations in government offices.

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of employee engagement and office innovations in government offices in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, such as job, team, supervisor, organization, interior innovations, process innovation, and records management innovation. Further, to determine how the employees engaged in the office innovations. Now, based on the researcher's initial review of related literature, it was found that no study has been conducted on the topic.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study is descriptive-correlational, it focused on merely describing this research and knowing the relationship between employee engagement and office innovations of government offices. Since the goal of descriptive research is to collect data and analyze it, this study is quantitative.

To analyze the respondents of this study, Tabachnik and Fidell (2007) model was used to calculate the sample size of respondents. If N is the number of participants and k is the number of predictor variables, then the minimum ideal sample size for significant findings is $N \geq 50 + 8k$ or $N \geq 104 + k$, whichever is more significant according to this model. Because there will be nine predictor variables analyzed statistically in the investigation, $k = 9$. As a result, $N \geq 104 + 8k = 50 + 8(9) = 82$ and $N \geq 104 + k = 104 + 9 = 113$ are obtained. Consequently, a minimum sample size of 113 respondents is required for the research.

The researchers established specific criteria for respondents to be included in the study. The inclusion criteria required that participants be office workers with at least three months of experience in their respective positions and hold permanent employment status. Conversely, individuals were excluded if they were temporary or contractual employees or part-time instructors.

Purposive sampling technique was used to organize a group of employees with similar characteristics to save cost and time in data gathering. The researchers determined the level of employee engagement and organizational innovations as well as the relationship between the variables through this method.

The researcher-made instrument was used to gather the needed information. First part is the information based on employee engagement, consisting of 24 items, and the second part is information about the office innovations of office workers employed in government offices in the municipality of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro and comprises 18 items. To measure the reliability of the instrument, pilot testing was conducted in which 50 office workers from other government offices answered the questionnaire.

Upon approval, the survey questionnaires were disseminated to the respondents who were randomly chosen and assured the respondents about the confidentiality of the data gathered. Survey questionnaires are only given to the respondents who volunteered to answer the research instrument. All information was gathered, categorized, and interpreted statistically. The weighted mean and standard deviation are the descriptive statistics that was used to determine the level of employee engagement and office innovation, and Kendall's Tau-b correlation is the inferential statistics that the researchers utilized to find out if there is a relationship between employee engagement and office innovations.

RESULTS

Employees generally view their job positively (3.54 ± 0.37). Team dynamics are also rated positively (3.59 ± 0.36), and relationships with supervisors are particularly strong (3.64 ± 0.35). Satisfaction with organizational aspects is somewhat lower (3.55 ± 0.35). Overall, the results indicate a generally positive perception of the work environment, with a grand mean of 3.58 ± 0.32 (Table 1).

Table 1. Level of employee engagement in government offices.

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD
Job		
My work is valued by this organization.	3.62	0.488
I have received the training I need to do my job well.	3.44	0.616
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	3.34	0.598
Before accepting this role, I planned or imagined working in a similar position.	3.31	0.662
I enjoy working here the majority of the days.	3.57	0.497
I am proud to work in this company.	3.75	0.436
I see myself working here for one year, two years, or five years.	3.67	0.530
I find my work meaningful.	3.66	0.477
Overall	3.54	0.368
Team		
The people I work with take accountability and ownership for results.	3.44	0.518
The people I work with treat me with respect.	3.59	0.494
My co-workers and I openly discuss what needs to be done to be more effective.	3.49	0.538
I consider my co-workers as my teammates who should work together cooperatively.	3.66	0.477
I extend assistance to my co-workers whenever they need help and when I am available.	3.65	0.480
Overall	3.59	0.364
Supervisor		
My supervisor helps me understand how my work is important to the organization.	3.63	0.485
My supervisor is approachable and easy to talk to.	3.72	0.470
My supervisor creates a motivating and energizing workplace.	3.61	0.508
My supervisor sets high expectations for our team's performance.	3.63	0.485
I ask my supervisor for guidance whenever tasks need to be clarified for me.	3.64	0.520
My supervisor is fair, supportive, and invested in my growth.	3.64	0.538
Overall	3.64	0.348
Organization		
The vision and goals of this organization are important to me personally.	3.59	0.494
This organization provides attractive opportunities for training and development.	3.44	0.498
There are opportunities for my advancement in this organization.	3.49	0.502
My opinions are sought on issues that affect me and my job.	3.38	0.524
I would recommend this organization as a great place to work.	3.56	0.498
Overall	3.55	0.350
Grand Mean	3.58	0.317

Scale of interpretation: 1.00-1.75 very low; 1.76-2.50 low; 2.51-3.25 high; 3.26-4.00 very high

Interior innovation is rated moderately (3.39±0.41). The implementation of innovative office layouts and the use of eco-friendly materials are somewhat emphasized, though there is less focus on redesigning office spaces or experimenting with collaborative workspaces. Process innovation also shows a moderate level of implementation (3.34±0.42), with new data collection methods and process optimization being prioritized, but overall innovation remains moderate. Records management innovation is somewhat lower (3.27±0.48), with less emphasis

on advanced techniques such as AI and machine learning for record management. Overall, the results indicate a moderate level of innovation in office practices, with a grand mean of 3.33 ± 0.39 (Table 2).

Table 2. Level of office innovations in government offices.

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD
Interior innovation		
I always look for new ways to improve and optimize office space design to meet modern businesses' evolving needs.	3.48	0.555
Our company has introduced more innovative office layout during the past five years.	3.39	0.609
I prioritize using eco-friendly materials and designs that promote a healthy work environment.	3.39	0.544
I will redesign our office space within three to five years.	3.20	0.608
I have not recently moved to new office space and have no plans to do so because our office promotes a good office environment that is hard to find in other offices.	3.32	0.609
I experimented with our company's new collaborative workspace (areas conducive to ad hoc and small group meetings).	3.25	0.628
Overall	3.39	0.413
Process innovation		
I introduce new or significantly improved data collection and data retrieval methods.	3.30	0.600
I implement new ways to streamline and optimize our processes.	3.25	0.613
I implement tracking and monitoring of office supplies that reduce waste and optimize our inventory.	3.30	0.584
I use a system for automating routine tasks, such as scheduling appointments and managing email correspondence.	3.32	0.526
I use a digital platform allowing easy access and retrieval of important files.	3.44	0.584
I regularly review our existing processes and look for ways to make them more efficient and effective.	3.44	0.553
Overall	3.34	0.419
Records management innovation		
I am examining the use of AI and machine learning for automated record management tasks.	3.11	0.674
I am identifying the most promising approaches to record management innovation in the office.	3.26	0.647
All my records-storage boxes have a complete and accurate description of their contents written on the outside.	3.26	0.661
I am assessing the cost savings and benefits of record management innovation.	3.24	0.722
I am studying advanced research and retrieval algorithms to improve data organization.	3.17	0.649
I am exploring mobile access to records for on-the-go productivity.	3.32	0.639
Overall	3.27	0.475
GRAND MEAN	3.33	0.391

Scale of interpretation: 1.00-1.75 very low; 1.76-2.50 low; 2.51-3.25 high; 3.26-4.00 very high

Results show that office is significantly and positively related to employee engagement [0.386; $p < 0.01$]. Specifically, interior innovation is significantly and positively related to job [0.390; $p < 0.01$], team [0.389; $p < 0.01$], supervisor [0.390; $p < 0.01$], and organization [0.546; $p < 0.01$]. Process innovation also shows a significant and positive relation to job [0.306; $p < 0.01$], team [0.286; $p < 0.01$], supervisor [0.287; $p < 0.01$], and organization [0.423; $p < 0.01$]. Meanwhile, records management innovation is also significantly and positively related to job [0.231; $p < 0.01$], team [0.227; $p < 0.01$], supervisor [0.228; $p < 0.01$], and organization [0.304; $p < 0.01$] [Table 3].

Table 3. Relationship between employee engagement and office innovations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Job	-							
2. Team	.728**	-						
3. Supervisor	.548**	.629**	-					
4. Organization	.536**	.522**	.712**	-				
5. Interior innovation	.390**	.389**	.390**	.546**	-			
6. Process innovation	.306**	.286**	.287**	.423**	.652**	-		
7. Records management innovation	.231**	.227**	.228**	.304**	.425**	.594**	-	
8. Employee engagement	.758**	.770**	.761**	.718**	.449**	.348**	.272**	-
9. Office innovations	.327**	.324**	.331**	.462**	.709**	.805**	.706**	.386**

Legend: ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that employees generally express higher satisfaction with their supervisors compared to other factors. This suggests that effective supervision plays a critical role in overall employee satisfaction. However, there is notable variability in supervisor satisfaction, indicating that individual experiences may differ significantly.

In contrast, satisfaction with team dynamics is slightly higher, which could reflect the positive impact of strong team cohesion and support on employee morale. Despite this, there remains some variability, highlighting differing experiences within team interactions. Satisfaction with the organization overall is somewhat lower, suggesting that employees might be less content with organizational aspects beyond direct supervision and team interactions. The reduced variability in these scores indicates a more consistent perception of the organization among employees, but also points to areas where organizational improvements might be necessary.

Job satisfaction, which is slightly below the overall mean, implies that employees may have concerns about their current roles. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that job satisfaction is a key predictor of employee engagement (Lee & Kim, 2019). The greater variability in job satisfaction scores points to diverse employee experiences and suggests that targeted improvements in job roles could enhance engagement.

Regarding innovation, the findings suggest that interior innovations are more prevalent in the office environment compared to other types of innovations, such as process or records

management innovations. This could imply a focus on improving the physical workspace to foster a more engaging environment. The relatively higher variability in records management innovation suggests that this area may receive less attention or exhibit diverse approaches among employees.

Overall, the results emphasize the importance of both the physical office environment and workplace innovations in enhancing employee engagement. The positive relationship between office innovation and engagement highlights how physical and design elements contribute to a more engaging work environment. Innovative work behaviors, which involve generating new ideas and fostering enthusiasm, are crucial for driving organizational effectiveness, particularly in the current Industry 4.0 era (Duradoni & Fabio, 2019).

This study's descriptive-correlational design is limited in several ways. First, while it provides valuable insights into the relationship between employee engagement and office innovations, it does not establish causation due to its correlational nature. Additionally, the use of purposive sampling to select office workers with specific characteristics may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations, as it may not fully represent the diversity of employee experiences and organizational contexts. The reliance on a researcher-made instrument, despite undergoing pilot testing, may introduce measurement biases, and the data collection method—voluntary survey participation—could lead to self-selection bias, potentially skewing the results. Furthermore, the study's focus on government offices in a specific municipality may restrict the applicability of the findings to different sectors or geographical locations. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the results and their implications for enhancing employee engagement and innovation in office settings.

CONCLUSION

The contextual interpretation of these findings emphasizes the need for targeted efforts to enhance job satisfaction, leadership, and team dynamics in government offices to foster greater employee engagement and ultimately improve organizational outcomes. Effective leadership can create a positive work environment, provide guidance and support to employees, and foster a culture of collaboration and communication. Also, innovation continues to be an important factor for organizational success in the current business environment but it must be approached strategically and balanced with risk management and employee development efforts. Thus, these findings provide an analysis that shows a relationship between employee engagement and office innovation. Engagement is a central asset in advancing innovative working and a tool to promote working innovatively. Innovation and employee engagement work together to strengthen one another because an innovative firm is more likely to inspire and foster creativity in the company's workers.

Based on the findings from the analysis, recommendations are organizations should focus on providing opportunities for employee development, promoting work-life balance, recognizing and rewarding employee contributions, encourage creativity and experimentation to enhance employee engagement and foster innovation in the workplace. By prioritizing employee well-being and creating a positive work environment, organizations can foster a culture of engagement and innovation and improve organizational outcomes.

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