GLOBALISING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

Myths and reality

A MIDDLE EAST PERSPECTIVE

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0614703

DBA   2013

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the
Robert Gordon University
for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

April 2013

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This piece of work is dedicated to the soul of my father, who was my mentor, guide and support in life. The man who made me a man, and wished to attend my graduation. He will always be there in my heart at all times and wherever I go.

I would like to thank the management team at the pharmaceutical company where I had run my research in, and thank all the employees for the open and sincere conversations we had together during the interview and survey sessions over five years of consecutive research.

I would also like to thank David Macleod the chief editor of the engagement report to the UK Government, as well as all respectful interviewees from various industries for their openness during the interviews, in addition to providing me with relevant documents and research outcomes that have been conducted in their respective organisations.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my family for their ultimate understanding and support during my years of study and period of research. Without their understanding, I would not have been able to achieve this.

Finally, I would like to thank my dedicated research supervisors, Professor Dennis Tourish and Professor Ken Russel for providing continuous guidance and advice; and working with me very closely, rapidly and well through this process. I cannot miss to thank as well Professor AbuBakr Suliman, from the British University in Dubai for reviewing my statistics section and helping me in strengthening the data analysis section.

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DBA Thesis Abstract
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Globalising Employee Engagement:
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The **purpose** of this research was to investigate if selected cultural and national aspects had an effect on employee engagement drivers. Another aim was to find out if applying global engagement tools in different cultures would provide an accurate engagement report. Finally, a new tool was proposed and examined in this study by companies operating in the Middle and Near East regions.

Employee engagement has been of growing **concern** to business leaders as well as occupational psychologists, since it was claimed to relate to organisational productivity and long term success. Despite this growing concern and various consultancy solutions provided, few academic researches tackled cross cultural employee engagement aspects.

In this research, both qualitative and quantitative research **methodologies** were used. The qualitative research data consisted of two in-depth interviews with employees working in the Middle and Near East regions. The quantitative research data was gathered with the aid of two questionnaires. One hundred and eighty nine responses were received out of two hundred and seventeen questionnaires sent. The response rate was eighty seven per cent.

This research produced a number of key **findings**: (a) Cultural, national and organisational factors affect engagement drivers. (b) Engagement drivers change over time, at least in priority. (c) Measuring engagement through a globally designed fixed tool is not likely to produce accurate results that management can use to plan for actions.

The main **conclusion** drawn from this research was that current approaches to measuring employee engagement are taking engagement drivers as common for granted, and this concept should be revised.

The author **recommends** that leaders should investigate and run an analysis of engagement drivers before any engagement survey is undertaken. A new tool has been presented by the research and was tested by a number of organisations. This tool takes into account building engagement questionnaires based on key drivers analysed from specific work cultures.

Key words: Employee Engagement, Culture, Work Environment, Engagement tools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"*The incorrect implication frequently drawn is that if something isn't being done, it must not be as useful or worthwhile as is thought.*"
(Pfeffer, 1998: viii)

The objective of this research is to investigate whether the globalisation of employee engagement makes sense, through exploring what "Employee Engagement" means in the Middle East's context as well as if using global engagement tools make sense across the world. The research aims to provide a solution tool that can measure engagement in a multicultural work environment. The research work constitutes an original contribution in this domain.

This thesis consists of five chapters; The Introduction chapter includes the background to the work, an introduction to the overarching themes and concepts, and goals of the thesis. Chapter 2 of this thesis describes literature background as well as related research work to the thesis subject; Chapter 3 shows how the research approach was conducted, and provides some "best practices" for running similar research types in a diverse culture. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the research results data as well as statistical and descriptive analysis for the results, including highlighting research output threads, the need for a new engagement measurement tool, as well as an introduction to the proposed engagement tool that arises from this research. In the last chapter, 5, the conclusion of the research is drawn, showing a practical trial of the proposed tool in two multinational organisations as well as areas for further research in the engagement field.

For many years, business research and consultancy organisations like the Trade Union Congress (TUC), National Health Service (NHS), Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD), Concours group; and Towers Perrin have been focusing on European, American, and some sporadic emerging markets in their

research. Organisations have been using the results of those researches in their global operations, assuming that the results would be relevant and could apply in other cultures like Africa, Middle East and other nations. Being mainly based in Europe and The United States of America, research organisations focused mainly on their markets, and even those who ran some surveys in different cultures (like Towers Perrin, in the studied organisation in 2007), managed, designed and analysed the results from their headquarters in the West. So what's the main issue with this? Have dynamics changed in the past 3 years?

Yes, and the shift of focus has started when the Asian and Middle Eastern markets started being of core importance to the business sectors, especially when the economic crisis hit the western markets in 2008. At this stage, many multinational organisations (like Merck Serono, Glaxo Smith Kline, Merck Sharpe and Dohme, Bayer; and Roche Pharmaceuticals) have shifted focus towards what they called "Emerging Markets" as those markets were attractive ways to many organisations in order to still generate profit and sustain existence. Sanofi-Aventis Chief Executive Officer Chris Viehbacher, shut or sold plants and canceled some research projects in a bid to trim 2 billion euros ($2.46 billion) in costs, coupled with restructuring efforts and looking to emerging markets for new income (Biojob blog, 2010).

In terms of employees' retention and focus, it has also been noticed by reporters shown below that several organisations have announced downsizing in their forces, either in the United States or Europe while enlarged their teams in the "Emerging Markets". The Roche organisation has announced moving 800 Jobs from their Swiss headquarters to other locations (Sydney Morning Herald, 2010) and the Bayer organisation announced 4,500 positions to be cut, while creating 2,500 new jobs over the same period, particularly in the emerging markets (International Business Times, 2010). The same has been done by Astra Zeneca, which has announced plant closings in Spain, Belgium and Sweden by 2013, while shifting the manufacturing jobs to lower-cost countries in emerging markets (Biojob blog, 2010), and Glaxo Smith Kline – GSK which witnessed thousands of jobs been reduced in the West, although the company is adding staff elsewhere. For example, it recently cut 2,000 sales jobs in America but added 1,500 staff in China (Biojob blog, 2010).

Will this "Shift" in business focus drive another "Shift" in research focus? Will there be a higher number of regionally generated researches, including researchers who can interview, understand, analyse data from an objective position? (Deeply understanding what an answer in an interview might mean, and thinking beyond the translation of words in only a language dimension). Is this important now? Can researches still be "West-focused"?

1.1. Research aim.

Employee Engagement is a critical objective measure of how much employees would psychologically connect with their work and feel committed to the success and growth of their organisation and its goals. There are different ways of measuring and defining engagement and the research aims to define what staff engagement means in a regional operation for one of the major pharmaceutical organisations around the world, and evaluate if there is a difference between the Middle East / Near East regions; and the global view of engagement in terms of definition, key drivers and measurement methods.

The research will also attempt to provide a practical tool to best identify the drivers of engagement in different cultures, and how to measure this effectively regardless of country / national / cultural barriers.

Employee engagement has recently been a topic that is "hot" on the discussion table of Human Resources professionals. The great changes that have occurred in the global economy over the past years have significantly affected the level of motivation, commitment and emotional attachment between employers and employees, which is directly believed to affect levels of anger, anxiety and insecurity (Dixon, 2009), trust levels (Porta, 2011), work load and employee retention (O'Neil, 2010), consequently, affecting the levels of employee engagement at work.

Pfeffer (1998) highlighted that over the past years, numerous studies conducted within specific industries have demonstrated the enormous economic returns

obtained through the implementation of high involvement, high performance or high commitment management practices. This work could validate the argument that the involvement and engagement of staff will have high returns to the company.

The topic of employee engagement in general is now gaining more and more emphasis from business owners, since this means for them a higher return from the same employee head counts, which is more value for their current resources. This has gained greater importance during the economic crisis when organisations wanted to cut down costs and increase revenues at the same time, so this became the ultimate equation for doing so.

But what is employee engagement? How is the term specifically defined? This research will explore various academic literature concerning this definition in the next chapter, and it has also reviewed literature and research provided by several professional bodies like Towers Watson, TUC, CIPD, NHS, Hewitt, Mercer, Gallup, The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), The American Society for Training and Development, as well as interviewed several industry and research experts like David MacLeod, Towers Watson Research heads and organisational CEOs like Merck Serono, Astra Zeneca and NewBridge Pharma, and there was no agreement on what the term specifically means or measures. In fact, David MacLeod (Chief Editor and co-author of the "Macleod Report to the UK government", named "Engaging for Success") mentioned that he has stopped counting when he reached 56 definitions in his research run in the UK. So should employee engagement then be taken in a simple holistic approach? or maybe it requires further deep and complicated analysis? What could the benefit of investigating this aspect of occupational psychology be to organisations? Why should companies get it right?

Research conducted by Fleming, Coffman, and Harter (2005) and Sparrow and Balain (2010) has shown links between the level of employee engagement and the magnitude of positive business outcomes. Glaspie and Nesbitt, (2004) have found that the major consensus of those researches was in favour of the assumption that putting fully engaged employees on the line, will ensure that they feel responsible for

the company's success and growth, and should go beyond what their job requires, putting in extra effort to make the company succeed.

Most of the employee engagement researches have come with nearly common assumptions and solutions to workforce engagement, disregarding the possibility that employees in different cultures could be different, and what drives employee engagement in the United States and Europe could be very much different from what drives engagement in other places across the world. But from where did this assumption come from?

It is then very important to understand the background of employee engagement and where the term comes from and originally generated.

1.2. Background.

Staff Engagement, Employee Engagement, Work Engagement, and Worker Engagement have all been names given to the same aspect measuring the wellbeing of employees at work, and its effect on the overall organisational performance.

Bourke and Lombardi (2010) have linked employee engagement to customer retention and engagement as well, and highlighted that organisations excelling at employee engagement, are assumed to be on top of others in terms of customer retention, as well as in revenue turn-over per employee.

Employee engagement has been linked to initiatives directed towards the "People Focus" aspect and this has shown its importance in corporate success. However, the concept of "People" practices is not a globally identified process, as Burke and Eddy (2006) have touched on the differences between employees in different organisations, and they have discussed that individuals in any organisation have somewhat different values and expectations about their workplace now. Those values and expectations would eventually mean that an action towards "Best People" practice could possibly be perceived differently by different employees, even if working in the same country and in the same organisation. This is in a way setting

the pace for the aim of this research, which is to discover if this is the case, and how employee engagement could be measured then, across various employee groups coming from various cultures if there is no agreement or alignment on the definitions and expectations from employers.

Over time, from 1990 till today, employee engagement has proven to be a complex topic that has been researched from many dimensions which will be detailed further in this research like communication, staff motivation, organisational performance, work-life balance, cultural effects, economic effects, environmental effects, team variations, individual factors; and leadership factors. Those dimensions have all been cited by various researchers as affecting employee engagement and playing a key role in defining the engagement equation for organisations.

1.3. Problem statement.

Employee Engagement is an emerging occupational psychology topic that has started to appear on the academic as well as on the professional map in the early 90s. Despite the several researches and continuous attempts from academics as well as practitioners to define and measure this aspect, there are still no universal "Best Practices" for measuring and enhancing staff engagement. Currently, in practice, organisations try to do very different things and use various different approaches to measure and enhance their employees' engagement levels. The core interest of this research is to focus on the Middle East perspective of Employee Engagement. This interest came from the fact that the Middle East is usually neglected (or represents a minor portion of the global research samples) in different researches, and this could lead to a possible assumption that the globally suggested solutions or recommendations for staff engagement could be un-applicable in the Middle East, or at least, prioritized differently than the rest of the world.

The research challenges the conventional wisdom that employees around the globe are engaged through the same drivers, and questions if it is possible to measure engagement across the world using the same tool.

1.4. Definitions.

Middle and Near East regions comprises of 13 countries which are: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

1.5. Research approach.

The research uses various data mining and analysis techniques in order to effectively define and analyse staff engagement as seen by the eyes of the Middle and Near East area team members.

The following research methods have been selected for assessing the situation:

Qualitative methods:

Defining employee engagement requires gathering some subjective as well as objective information from employees. This requires some structured discussions and analysing the data to identify common threads and patterns. The approach of this method would be achieved through:

- Informal interviews with a random sample of the Middle and Near East teams of the studied organisation. (The target sample comprises 50% of the total team. 110 team members out of a total of 225 team members, which is a significant sample to the studied organisation).

- Use and analysis of secondary data obtained via the corporate staff engagement survey, conducted worldwide by a third party.

*** Quantitative methods: ***

This approach is intended to generate some comparable figures for engagement drivers year after year, as well as compared versus the global drivers. The method should be approached through:

- Locally conducted survey, through an engagement evaluation questionnaire which is conducted in May 2009, and June 2010 for the Middle and Near East teams.
- Data analysis of the Secondary data obtained from the staff engagement survey, which was run by a third party.
- Comparison between the findings of the Local and corporate-run surveys.

1.6. Research questions.

The research intends to answer some key research area questions as well as business questions that were required by the organisation leaders and intend to offer an academic as well as practical advice to the researched organisation. The following are the key questions:

a. What drives engagement in the Middle and Near East regions?
b. How do employees evaluate the current situation versus their engagement drivers?
c. What steps do Middle and Near East management need to take to boost their engagement drivers.
d. What possible strategies / recommendations could be of use to the Middle and Near East managers that could help them create the "High Engaged work-force"

1.7. Hypothesis.

The following are proposed Hypothesis, upon which the thesis is based:

H1 Drivers of engagement are not similar across the world.

H2 Measuring engagement using fixed questions / tool is not accurate across different cultures.

H3 Regional operations could well identify their engagement drivers, and this can then help them to fine tune their actions step by step, to match this with the globally required level of engagement.

H4 In a fast changing world, drivers of engagement could be changed by time and different emerging circumstances.

1.8. Significance of the study.

There have not been any approaches in the Middle East to identify, analyse or research existing work force engagement. Despite that there has been a globally-run staff engagement survey in the studied organisation, the Middle and Near East regions constitute a very small portion of samples when compared to the global sample. Therefore; the effect of the Middle and Near East sample will be minor to the corporate results in terms of analysis of global drivers' analysis.

This study constitutes the first local approach to identify and analyse the existing work force engagement, compare this to the global vision of the new work environment; and finally come up with some practical advice to how Middle and Near East managers can develop the highly engaged staff at the studied organisation as well as raising the concept of possible differences for engagement drivers according to cultural, national, environmental and organisational factors.

The research sample aimed to target 80% of the workforce for the studied organisation in the Middle East and Near East operations. All levels in each country were represented to ensure a consistent feedback.

1.9. Limitations and key assumptions.

An obvious limitation of this study is that the sample is drawn from one multinational pharmaceutical organisation located in sixty countries across the globe and has a strong presence in the Middle East and Near East regions. This sample, though significant to the studied organisation, is limited to a highly educated work force (all of the studied group members have university degrees, no blue collars) working in one common major organisation. However, in reference to the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010), the sample is comparable to the pharmaceutical companies' size (around third). In this study, the pharmaceutical norm seems to be in general of a lower percentage of engaged employees (18%), than the global industry norm (21%). Furthermore; this limitation does not oppose the fact that if the hypotheses of this research are established, it could possibly mean that differences between engagement drivers did exist, and this is the core purpose of this research. It would possibly mean to the research field that measuring engagement without understanding cultural boundaries is less effective.

Another limitation is that the majority of responses gathered are from members of the sales function (74%) and there are other current researches studying the possibility of functional barriers towards drivers of engagement.

This work is based on the assumption that enough information will be collected from team members working in thirteen different countries. The assumption is that employees would be open, sincere and will deliver true and non-cosmetic responses to the research questions to describe what they really feel.

Other limitations are that this study will try to translate some key definitions from English to Arabic, in order to generate a better understanding to the majority of the employees who are "Arabic-Native-Speakers" (some are Farsi native speakers as

well). The study will always be challenged by the regional preference of people, who would prefer avoiding conflicts. For this reason, several approaches will be used, including informal interviews (with the option of keeping identities anonymous).

The information above then, set the pace for the next section of this thesis, which is to look at related work in the field of employee engagement, as well as critically look into various cultural, organisational and environmental factors that can possibly affect the drivers of engagement.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW and RELATED WORK

This chapter explores closely related literature and the placement of this thesis in the areas of staff engagement definition and measurement across the globe. It will do this through detailing the various dimensions of engagement which have been cited by researchers, and different definitions of the term by academic as well as practitioner bodies. The research work will highlight the relationship between employee engagement and various aspects like motivation, work-life balance, organisational performance, economic situation, leadership, communication, relationship building, globalisation and cultural differences, and how those could help in proving / denying the research hypothesis.

There appears to be extremely few academic books with regards to the topic of "Staff Engagement"; however, there are hundreds of journal articles as well as private and governmental researches investigating the subject from different angles. The business consultancy firms have been leading the research in this field due to the big interest that has recently developed from the business leaders in the topic of employee engagement. Despite having several consultancy firms researching the topic, they have not yet reached a common conclusion to either the definition, or the ways of measuring employee engagement. This chapter will try to explore all approaches from all academic as well as practice organisations to define and measure employee engagement, and shall critically analyse each approach.

Employee engagement, also called work engagement or worker engagement, is a business management concept that was conceptualized by Kahn (1990) as the harnessing of organisational members' selves to their work roles. Employee engagement was first described in the academic literature by Schmidt et al. (1992) elaborating on the relationship between wellbeing in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes, using the data obtained from Gallup's Q12 engagement survey (The Gallup's Q12 is a survey designed to measure employee engagement which was considered as a modernized version of job satisfaction. It is

based on the assumption that there are 12 key expectations from employees that when satisfied, would achieve engagement at work) (Table 1). Lombardi (2010) highlighted that "Employee Engagement" is different from "Employee Satisfaction" in that "Engagement" reflects that the employees' own goals and priorities are aligned with the organisational goals and priorities meant to improve performance and deliver the desired results, while "Employee Satisfaction" is all about fulfilling the employees' individual needs regardless of how those affect the organisational success.

The research will try to explore various opinions and different literature that has explored the term "Employee Engagement" and will critique methods while finding threads to what could be the correct academic approach for measuring and enhancing engagement.

Some of the first and main studies in this matter are the Gallup, Towers-Perrin (Now Towers Watson), and Concours group studies. There are now lots of evolving new researches in the field of employee engagement, as the term grows more important to academic as well as practical and commercial levels. The concept has also been cited in several journal articles discussing the subject from different dimensions. Some key resources are found in the Harvard Business Review, Human Resources Management Review, CIPD and other papers published at ELSEVIER plus other reputable sources.

2.1. The paradox of engagement components and definition.

The examples given in this section show the different approaches towards identifying engagement components and actually defining the term. The research has explored both; the practitioners' approach as well as the academics' approach.

2.1.1. The practitioners' approach:

Development Dimensions International: Engagement has three dimensions:

(1) Cognitive: Belief in and support for the goals and values of the organisation.

(2) Affective: Sense of belonging, pride and attachment to the organisation.

(3) Behavioural: Willingness to go to the extra mile and intention to stay with the organisation.

They use a consultancy tool called E3®. E3® is the measurement portion of DDI's total approach to increasing employee engagement. This web-based, standardized survey was designed based on the theory that three things—the individual, the leader, and the organisation—drive engagement.

Hewitt: Engaged employees consistently demonstrate three general behaviours. They:

(1) Say: Consistently speak positive about the organisation to co-workers, potential employees, and customers.

(2) Stay: Have an intense desire to be a member of the organisation despite opportunities to work elsewhere.

(3) Strive: Exert extra time, effort, and initiative to contribute to business success.

So the Hewitt model focuses on the behaviour of the employees and what is demonstrated from "Engaged" staff.

Towers Perrin (Now Towers Watson): Employee engagement is considered an affective state that reflects employees' personal satisfaction and a sense of inspiration and affirmation they get from work and being a part of the organisation.

Mercer: Employee Engagement, also called 'commitment' or 'motivation', refers to a psychological state where employees feel a vested interest in the company's success and perform to a high standard that may exceed the stated requirements of the job.

The American Society for Training and Development defines employee engagement as all about creating a culture where people do not feel misused, overused, underused, or abused. Ketter (2008), who has also highlighted that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to creating an engaged workforce. She stressed that

researches show the absence of correlation between size of the workforce or size of the company and the different engagement drivers.

Gallup: They have identified 12 core elements – the Q12 – that are claimed to link powerfully to key business outcomes. These 12 statements emerged as those that best predict employee and workgroup performance. They are shown is the following Table (1) below:

The 12 Elements of Great Managing
Gallup has conducted many interviews to help in identifying different elements of work engagement. The following 12 statements constitute the Gallup's Q 12.
1. I know what is expected of me at work.
2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
3. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
4. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
7. At work, my opinions seem to count.
8. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
9. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
10. I have a best friend at work.
11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
12. In the last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

Table (1)

The Q12: 12 factors that link to engagement according to Gallup organisation

Adapted from Gallup Inc.

The above factors are then analysed, and will divide the employees to three main groups as demonstrated below:

The three types of employees	
1.	**Engaged:** employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organisation forward.
2.	**Not-Engaged:** employees are essentially "checked out". They are sleepwalking through their workday, putting time, but not energy or passion, into their work.
3.	**Actively Disengaged:** employees aren't just unhappy at work; they are busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day these workers undermine what their engaged co-workers accomplish.

Table (2)

The three types of employees according to Gallup

Adapted from Gallup Inc.

The Institute of Employment Studies (IES) has also produced a model for defining employee engagement in 2004. Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) suggested the following five subset statement model that can be used to define and measure engagement:

1. A positive attitude towards, and pride in, the organisation.
2. Solid belief in the organisation's products/services.
3. A perception that the organisation enables the employee to perform well.
4. A willingness to behave altruistically and be a good team player.
5. An understanding of the bigger picture and a willingness to go beyond the requirements of the job.

The ten C's of employee engagement was developed by Seijts and Crim (2006) where they proposed that ten factors, starting with a "C" are linked to engagement. They named them as follows:

1. Connect. This relates to the relationship of employees with their direct managers, and in some other researches this could be linked to leadership as well.

2. Career. This factor relates to the challenging work environment that is provided by the organisation and the chance that is present for employees to stretch on their capabilities and learn new skills.

3. Clarity. Emphasizing on the crucial factor of transparency in communicating the vision and how clear are employees of an organisation to how their role links to the greater picture of the corporate vision.

4. Convey. This reflects one aspect of employee-management relationship, which is "Feedback". It places an emphasis on the importance of feedback to build on the strengths of the employees and also to highlight the areas for development. This is as well referred to in other researches as part of an effective leadership – followership relationship and also part of the performance management process.

5. Congratulate. This factor reflects the need for recognition and praise, which depends to a great extent on the expectations of employees and could greatly vary from one employee to the other.

6. Contribute. Placing an emphasis on the importance of employee involvement in critical decisions and "Having a say" in decisions that can affect their future or work – life balance. It was believed that this is very important in times of applying or implementing new initiatives as employees need to feel comfortable with this and actually contributing to the process rather than following it blindly.

7. Control. Highlighting the importance of empowerment and delegation of a certain span of control to the employees to make decisions and have an active role in directing their work. Employees should have a say in setting their performance management targets and ownership of their deliverables. They

should also have an active role in designing new targets and the way they would work to deliver them at their own creative way.

8. Collaborate. Self – explaining itself as the need for solid team work which has a great effect on the overall departmental and organisational outcomes.

9. Credibility. Walking the talk is one of the very visible features of leadership that all employees would be able to see and judge. It is very important to give trust to employees and keep the integrity value live and alive. "Integrity" is the "Permission to play" value in business and there is no compromise on how important this is in driving employee engagement.

10. Confidence. This is an outcome of leaders being examples of ethical practices and representing the organisational values and key competencies in a lively manner. Employees would then reflect this as leaders are actually doing what they say that they should do.

Seijts and Crim (2006) approach is not explained in their article, and the background of their sources and how consistent those 10 C's are across cultures is also not clarified. The 10 C's appear to be rather a compilation of various literature outcomes than an outcome of a planned research. The strengths of their model is simplifying and summarizing what organisations would require to do as possible tools to enhance engagement; however, the biggest challenge is how much focus should be given to each aspect? How could the outcome be measured? How consistent is this model?

From the examples illustrated above, it is obvious that the definitions have common areas, but still big differences in what an engagement survey should measure. So where does the difference come from? Why do those differences exist? Ketter (2008) challenged this difference in her paper where she indicated that many different employee engagement studies—from Gallup Organisation, Towers Watson, Hewitt, Blessing White, the Corporate Leadership Council, and the Conference Board—have used various definitions of engagement resulting in more than 26 key drivers of engagement that organisations should take into consideration when considering developing their employee engagement levels.

2.1.2. The academics' approach:

The Gallup's practitioners work has been looked at from an academic point of view by Harter and Schmidt (2008) who have seen the Gallup's Q12® model as a measure that comprises ''engagement conditions.'' They see that each of those conditions is a causal contributor to engagement, and the sum of those should be able to measure the level of employee engagement. Macey and Schneider (2008) argue with that concept and highlight that measures asking employees how satisfied they are with conditions at or of work or asks about the presence of particular conditions of or at work are not measures of any of the three facets of employee engagement construct they have elucidated. The challenge in seeing the three opinions (Gallup, Harter and Schmidt (2008), and Macey and Schneider (2008)) remains as none of them identifies which factors actually drive the engagement, in case of Macey and Schneider (2008), are the three dimensions equally powerful? Do they exist in all employees? And in case of Gallup as well as Harter and Schmidt (2008), are 12 questions enough to cover the dimensions of engagement? Any possibility that other drivers would exist? Are we boxing the employee thinking by assuming those 12 questions are enough to diagnose?

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES): This is a self-report questionnaire, consists of 17 items (UWES-17), which measure the three underlying dimensions of work engagement based on the work of Schaufeli (2007): vigour (six items), dedication (five items), and absorption (six items) (Schaufeli 2007b; Schaufeli et al. 2002b). According to this model, work engagement is the assumed opposite of burnout. They built their work based on the assumption that only two schools of thought exist on the relationship between work engagement and burnout. The first approach of Maslach and Leiter (1997) assumes that engagement and burnout constitute the opposite poles of a continuum of work related well-being, with burnout representing the negative pole and engagement the positive pole. The other thought is that engagement is characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy. By definition, these three aspects of engagement constitute the opposites of the three corresponding aspects of burnout. In other words, according to Maslach and Leiter

(1997) the opposite scoring pattern on the three aspects of burnout – as measured with the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996) – implies work engagement. This means that low scores on the exhaustion- and cynicism-scales and a high score on the professional efficacy scale of the MBI is indicative of engagement.

Similar to Gallup, UWES has defined clear areas that would measure the engagement according to their theory, measuring vigour, dedication and absorption as follows:

<u>Vigour</u> is assessed by the following six items that refer to high levels of energy and resilience, the willingness to invest effort, not being easily fatigued, and persistence in the face of difficulties.

1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work
4. I can continue working for very long periods at a time
5. At my job, I am very resilient, mentally
6. At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well (This item is has been eliminated in the 15-item version of the UWES.)

<u>Dedication</u> is assessed by five items that refer to deriving a sense of significance from one's work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about one's job, and feeling inspired and challenged by it.

1. I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose
2. I am enthusiastic about my job
3. My job inspires me
4. I am proud on the work that I do
5. To me, my job is challenging

<u>Absorption</u> is measured by six items that refer to being totally and happily immersed in one's work and having difficulties detaching oneself from it so that time passes quickly and one forgets everything else that is around.

1. Time flies when I'm working
2. When I am working, I forget everything else around me
3. I feel happy when I am working intensely
4. I am immersed in my work
5. I get carried away when I'm working
6. It is difficult to detach myself from my job (This item has been eliminated in the 15-item version of the UWES.)

The removed factors were eliminated due to non-significant or poor (<0.40) factor loadings, furthermore, the detailed analysis also showed that from one to three of the factor loadings differed between the countries, supporting the assumption that employees coming from different countries may differ in the emphasis placed on engagement drivers.

Some researchers claim that employee engagement is something that is produced as a result of the workplace culture (as suggested by McCashland 1999, Miles 2001 and Harter et al 2002), while others see that it is a product that individuals bring along to the workplace (as suggested by Harter et al 2002 and Goddard 1999). Ferguson (2007) argues that individual differences may not be as trivial as some researchers might think, and those could have significant effects on understanding organisational dynamics.

There is evidence in the work psychology literature to support the assumption that individual differences have a strong impact on work performance. One example could be the work of Kahn (1990), who noted that psychological differences may impact the individuals' ability towards work engagement and would consequently impact their role performance. Robinson (2006) has also supported this approach and stated that individual differences have significant impact in determining an employee's potential level of engagement. Robinson (2006) based this opinion on the levels of emotional

bonds created between an employee and the organisation and described this individual level difference in the differences shown in the levels of absenteeism, productivity levels and employee retention levels. Those aspects, despite supporting the thinking towards individual differences on engagement, still are strongly linked to employee self-satisfaction and parameters like retention and absenteeism can also be linked to other motivation and job satisfaction theories (like Vroom (1964), Porter and lawler (1968) and Mitchell and Mickel (1999)).

All factors could be linked, but adding a score to factors in order to measure the level of engagement is a bit tricky and can give different results to the same organisation if different measuring concepts are applied even to the same group. Add to this factor, that actually very few of the examples above have any sample data from the Middle East countries, which raises another cultural question against the globalisation of a standard method of engagement measure.

Rivenbark (2010) mentioned that "*Employee engagement surveys are only as good as the questions they're built on*" (Rivenbark, 2010: 48). In this paper, and according to John Gibbons (director of employee engagement research and survey services at The Conference Board, a membership and research organisation based in New York.), business leaders sometimes plunge into surveys without first defining engagement. Consultants, vendors selling survey tools and other employers all have definitions that may or may not apply to your organisation, notes John Gibbons. This comment highlights that the concern of globalising engagement drivers and measurement tools is raised and shared from various business leaders, which is the basis of the hypothesis of this research. Rivenbark (2010) further recommends considering doing more than one survey every year, directing each survey to a certain group of employees and adjusting the questions and language of the questions to be understandable and relevant to the target groups (So called in the paper "PULSE" surveys). An example of this practice is 3M, who are doing three kinds of engagement surveys; one, done every other year, is for company leaders. A second survey covers about half the employee population each year. A third set of shorter surveys can be tailored for 3M operations in specific countries or business units.

The same concern was raised by Hutton (2010), who believed that employers should be aware of the pitfalls with consultancy companies designed surveys as they could ask questions on a lot of issues and is simple for respondents, but may not reflect the respondents' true feeling and feedback. Hutton believes the tendency for consultancies to use their own standardized survey questions is also unhelpful, because these do not take into account the business model and culture of the organisation being surveyed. "*To support organizational objectives, the starting point needs to be your business model and the desired knowledge, behaviour and attitudes of staff – something that is definitely not achieved by a standardized survey*" (Hutton, 2010: 6). According to Hutton, who also stressed that employees could always go to the "Automatic Mode" when answering questionnaires, if they feel that the survey is irrelevant to their culture and does not reflect their priority concerns in the specific context of their organisation.

There is a great concern from human resources professionals as well as organisational leaders to the validity of the current tools and if the results are really reflecting the real levels of engagement in an organisation.

2.2. Different views of Engagement Drivers.

Balain and Sparrow (2009) suggested that although all the major consultancies use different items in their measures, they all label those items as engagement, without being precise about the items' weight, existence, or impact on employees. This could question the validity of the questionnaire items and it sets the pace for thinking if globalising engagement measures could be the best option for global organisations and if this could offer accurate information. Lombardi (2009) supported the thinking that engagement is somehow specific to each organisation. He stressed that best in class performance companies must make engagement an organisational priority and asked the organisations to define what engagement meant in the specific context of the organisation, identifying how it should be measured and then modelling it through the senior leadership team of the organisation.

2.2.1. Engagement and Motivation:

Staff engagement is a complex concept, and organisations need to maximise their staff engagement in order to create the productive workforce that is flexible and able to meet future challenges. Employee motivation is very important for organisations and often confused with engagement. Can an employee be motivated but not engaged? Can the opposite occur? It is important to understand what motivation is, then try to analyse how it links to employee engagement.

Deci and Ryan (1985) developed an approach which they called "Self Determination Theory" – SDT. They saw two linked forms of motivation, which they named "Intrinsic motivation" and "Extrinsic Motivation". The first refers to doing an activity for its own sake out of enjoyment and interest, while the "Extrinsic motivation" is all about doing an activity for instrumental reasons. The best case scenario is having the intrinsic as well as the extrinsic motivations similar. The extrinsic motivation is argued to be driven by the work contract and job description; however, according to Deci and Ryan (1985), it can also reflect a desire to gain rewards (outstanding performance) or avoid punishment (Warnings / memos for low performance). Extrinsic motivation can also be driven by the determination around satisfying personal ego (recognition / special rewards) or avoiding the feelings of guilt (Team rejection – "Intojection" due to low performance). A third dimension related to the extrinsic motivation is discussed by Deci and Ryan (1985) to be related to attaining a valued personal goal (identification), or express an employee's personal sense of self (integration). This work has been further extended to research the effect of culture on aspects like need satisfaction, motivation, and well-being. Deci, Ryan, Gagne, Leone, Usunov, and Kornazheva (2001) have studied the model designed by Deci and Ryan (1985) in Bulgarian organisations and found consistency in the constructs of the model across the different cultures, supporting their previous assumption that employees would be motivated based on the satisfaction of their own psychological needs, specifically, the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Blais and Brière's (1992) work on the aspect of autonomy supports the work of Deci et al, by suggesting that employees feel more motivated, better well-being, and show a greater overall

satisfaction with work, when they feel that their managers support an autonomous work culture and give them freedom to work with empowerment. The above work then relates motivation to employee satisfaction at work and feeling of "Well-being".

Vroom (1964), as well as Porter and Lawler (1968), suggested that individuals would choose to act in a certain way in order to satisfy the most of their individual needs and maximise the outcome for themselves. Vroom (1964) presented this in his "Expectancy Theory" where it was built on the concept that people would consciously take certain actions, based upon their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, as a result of their desires to enhance pleasure and avoid pain. Based on Vroom's theory, Porter and Lawler (1968) then developed a theoretical model, adding a dimension that the individual's effort will be determined by the value placed by the individual on the outcome of that in the individual's mind (Pinder, 1984). This is sometimes referred to as VIE theory (Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy) (Mitchell and Mickel, 1999). Accordingly, this adds an individual dimension to motivation relating to an individual's expectation from work, which then affects their level of motivation.

Motivation then could link to engagement on the personal expectancy and satisfaction parameters, but will probably miss the link with the organisation's vision, mission and values.

2.2.2. Engagement and work-life balance:

The link between personal interests / resources and job demands / resources has been approached by several researchers like Leiter and Bakker (2010), Hobfoll (1989), Lu, Siu, Chen, and Wang (2011), Greenhaus and Powell (2006) . The dual effect that job demands vs. the job resources have on engagement has been demonstrated by Leiter and Bakker (2010) in the following figure (1):
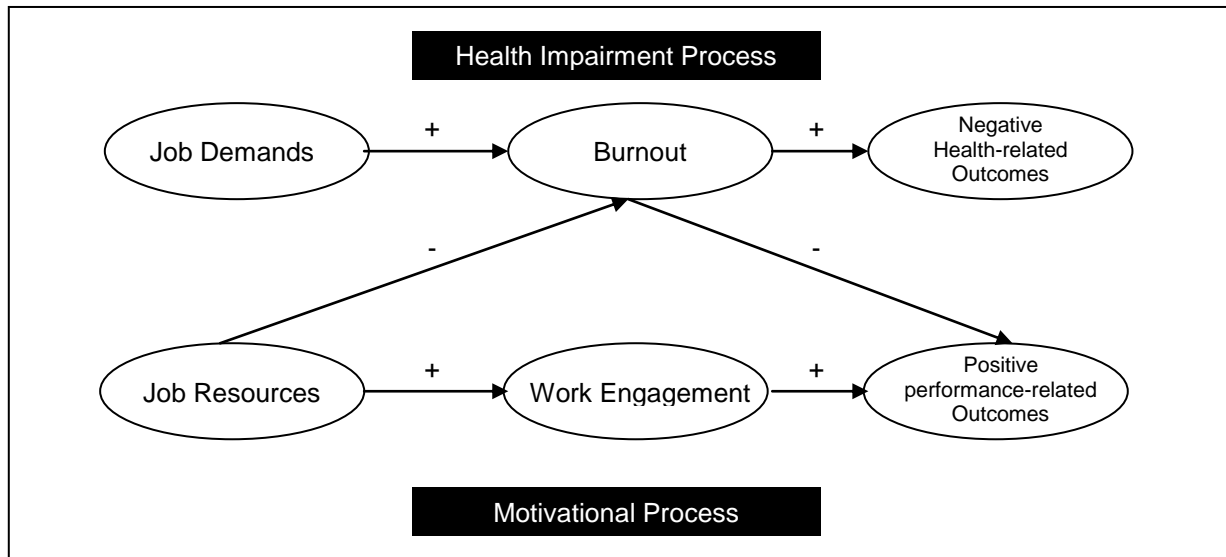
Figure (1)

The complete dual process of the job demands – resources model
(Adapted from Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The researchers have suggested the relationship between job demands and resources, focusing on how the lack of enough resources to do the job would act as a key negative driver to employee engagement, since it will lead to quicker burnout of the employee, trying to do the job with very limited resources, and will have negative consequences on his/her health which will affect negatively the sustainability of performance over a long term. The assumption is actually based on the proposition that employees would still try to do the job with limited resources, while in some cases employees might just simply decide not to do the job in case enough resources are not present. This has been seen as a development of the "Conservation of Resources" theory which has been adapted by Hobfoll (1989) as an alternative approach to stress and adaptation. The resources - demands theory is assuming that employee burnout would eventually occur at situations where resources are lacking, therefore; affecting the quality of life of the employee and disturbing the work – life balance, with major effects on the social and family life standards. The challenge in relating to this model remains the relationship between employee cynicism and demand theory, as some employees would tend to be cynical regarding work resources, even if this is appropriate, so how would "enough resources" be determined?

Touching on work – life balance and family life quality, Lu, Siu, Chen, and Wang (2011) investigated the effect of family mastery on the levels of work engagement in the context of the Chinese environment. They have found that family mastery has a very strong positive effect to the levels of engagement that employees show at work, and this effect is boosted in times of job stress or work environment crisis, due to the required emotional support from the employee's side, which is assumed to be provided from the family side. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) supported this approach and highlighted the importance of Family – to – work enrichment. They have assumed that employees' families provide a very important resource support to business. So when employees have support at home, this is reflected on their performance on the job and levels of engagement. Of course, this family support is of a mutual nature, and in many cases, employees who fail to provide emotional and material support to their families, fail to get this back when needed, consequently, stress levels increase, as they become at work and also at home, affecting their family – work balance, and this would reflect on their engagement levels at the end. This aspect has been agreed upon by Bu and McKeen (2000); Spector, Allen, Poelmans et al. (2007); and Yang (2005). They have all stressed on the importance of the family support in relieving the stress felt by employees in times of job crisis or environmental pressure, which is crucial for employees to return to work fresh and enhances their levels of engagement in hard times.

Armour (2002) has also supported the above, highlighting, in a United States run poll, that about one third of the working adult population is concerned about the degree of work life balance, constituting the top job-related concern. Magnini (2009) has further investigated this and found out that the main conflict aspect in this regards is the time conflict, where employees do not have enough quality time to spend with their family and loved ones, making them feel guilty for not supporting their families. This aspect is now growing more and more in emphasis, especially after the creation of smart devices (like Blackberries) which can be used to track business communication easily outside the work environment, making a quality family dinner a very challenging experience, unless an employee has a strong sense of self control and is able to dedicate quality time to their families. Netemeyer et al. (2005) have agreed

with previous research conclusions regarding the consequences of this work – life balance disturbance, and related this to an organisational destructive aspect, which is the expected decrease in the overall work productivity of this category of employees. Lee, Magnini, and Kim (2011) have researched the effect of work – life balance from another dimension, which was "Employee Retention" and concluded that the work time flexibility is a great predictor of talent retention, due to the demand to have some self – control over their work schedule and the ability to prioritise tasks (professional as well as personal) according to their requirements.

A possible assumption drawn from the above work, is that work-life balance has an effect on employee performance and success at work, which links to engagement; however, the question is always what is a "good" level of work-life balance, and this is a very individualistic question that probably has very different answers.

2.2.3. Engagement and Organisational Performance:

Employee engagement has been always suggested to affect organisational performance in a direct positive relationship. Many researches have claimed that employee engagement is positively linked to employee outcomes, organisational success, and financial performance (e.g. total shareholder return) (Harter et al., 2002; Bates, 2004; Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006). This was one of the main reasons why business has been greatly interested in understanding how to improve their staff engagement levels; however, Sparrow and Balain (2010) questioned if some of the links between employee engagement and organisational performance were misguided. They have highlighted that there are three main streams that link employee engagement to organisational performance, the first stream was "Engagement as an Internal Marketing Tool", emphasizing the role of good employee engagement in shaping a common business brain for the organisation and ensuring that all employees share the same vision and are enthusiastic to go the extra mile in order to achieve this goal. The second stream is "Engagement as a process for improvement", which assumes that engaged employees would always think of ideas to boost their performance in order to take their organisation to a higher dimension of success, since this belongs to them and they strongly care about their organisation's

wellbeing. The third and last stream was "Engagement as a predictive of service and corporate performance", drawing upon ideas concerning 'emotional contagion' and 'service climate' and arguing that there is a direct and causal 'service-profit chain' which is mentioned later in this research. So the above streams highlight the effect of high levels of engagement in creating organisational value, but how then can the organisational practices / performance affect the engagement levels? Is there a backwards relationship?

MacDuffie (1995) has seen a strong link between organisational performance, employee motivation and human resources practices as follows:

"Innovative human resource practices are likely to contribute to improved economic performance only when three conditions are met: when employees possess knowledge and skills that managers lack; when employees are motivated to apply this skill and knowledge through discretionary effort; and when the firm's business or production strategy can only be achieved when employees contribute such discretionary effort." (MacDuffie 1995: 199). Those practices have been called "High Performance Work Systems" by researchers in the human resources field.

Several researches in the field of human resources have also confirmed the importance of investing in high performance work systems "HPWS" and the return on this investment related to economic and performance outcomes (Huselid, 1995; Becker and Huselid, 1998, 2006; Combs, Ketchen, Hall, and Liu, 2006). High Performance Work Systems, sometimes known as high involvement or high commitment organisations, are organisations that use a distinctive managerial approach that enables high performance through people. This is a conceptual approach to the ways in which certain employee management practices impact positively on the 'bottom line'. Researchers (like Barney, 1995) argued that effective human resource policies offer organisations their best avenue for establishing robust competitive advantages. Huselid (1995) suggested that a range of innovative human resource management (HRM) practices when used in certain combinations or bundles, would attain synergistic benefits through an interactive and mutually reinforcing impact and can then boost the organisational performance.

Two key critiques remain as challenges to the values of HPWS. The first is the extent to which management practices work together as systems or bundles, and those systems can indirectly affect each other. The second critique is that argument is that HPWS practices may be taken at face value as "employee-centred" while employees can take advantage of those practices without necessarily returning back loyalty to the organisation.

In brief, HPWS is a conceptual term and not as solid as "Quality Control" practices or Total Quality Management (TQM) but these two approaches can be used along with each other.

"Although the TQM approach stresses employee involvement, the type of involvement it stresses is limited to allowing employees to make suggestions and control certain elements of the production process and the quality-control process. It does not suggest that organisations be restructured and redesigned to emphasize employees having the information, knowledge, power, rewards that will give them a business experience. Instead employees are given information, knowledge, and power to improve certain elements of the organisation's work processes." (Lawler 1992: 326).

Huselid and Becker (2011) suggested the strong link between organisational strategy, and the design of human resources systems, which in turn, affects the levels of skills, motivation and discretionary efforts of employees, subsequently driving economic growth, profitability and shareholder equity to organisations.

Despite this emphasis on the importance of employee engagement on organisational performance, many organisations are still not taking advantage of a positive engagement with staff to improve productivity and performance. The research done by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development studying UK employers has concluded that skills shortage would lessen when organisations provide learning opportunities that support the needs of both, the organisation and the employee. This has been further emphasized by the EEE survey (Employee Employer Equation),

conducted by the Concours Group (2004), which supported major surveys around the globe in the fact that few employees are actually engaged at work. This is demonstrated in the following graph. (Figure 2).
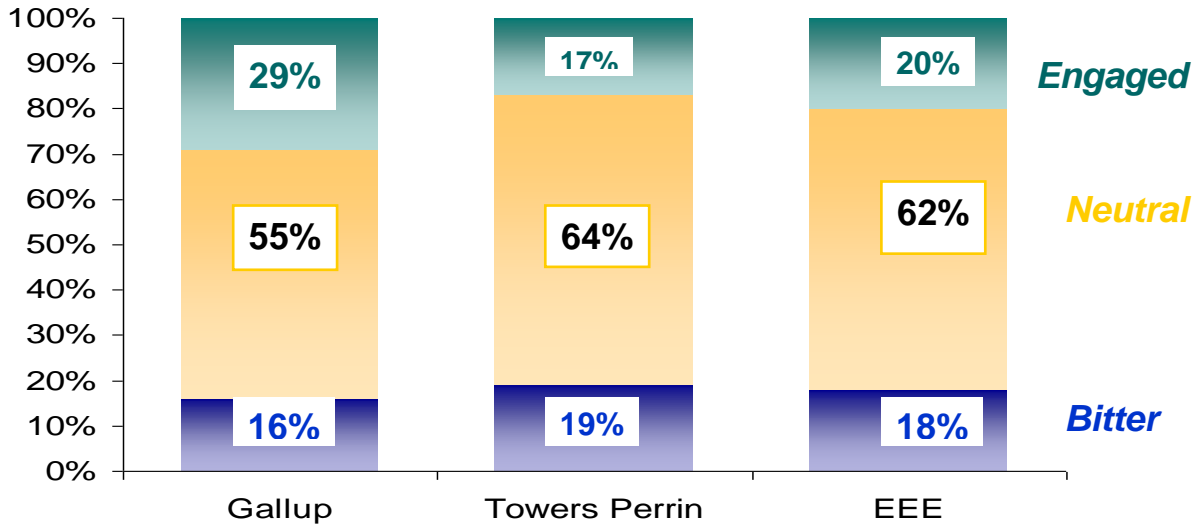
Figure (2)

Sources agree: Few employees Are "Engaged" in work

Random samples of the working population in the U.S. over 18 years of age

Source: The Gallup organisation, Towers Perrin, and *The New Employee/Employer Equation*, The "Concours Group and Age Wave", 2004

So if there is significant data supporting the return on investment on engagement and high performance work systems, are organisations capitalising enough on this? There are several dimensions that could explain the challenges organisations might be facing against capitalising on employee engagement, one of those dimensions is the growth of employee cynicism, as described by Cartwright and Holmes (2006) who have suggested that the changing nature of work in itself as a job, and work organisations as a workplace, has led to a greater emphasis on the break of the psychological contract, which is defined by Rousseau (1989) as an individual's belief regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party. This is believed by Cartwright and Holmes (2006) to be much stronger than the formal written labour contract. This change in the psychological contract is assumed to have caused a big rise in employee cynicism and mistrust (Kramer, 1986; Pate et al., 2000). The term "employee cynicism" has

been described by Andersson, (1996); Dean et al., (1998) as: "*characterized by negative attitudes of frustration, disillusionment, and contempt toward and distrust of business organizations, executives, managers and other objects in the workplace*" (In Cartwright, S. and Holmes, N. 2006: 200).

The second dimension was raised by Becker and Huselid (1998), suggesting that many human resources professionals are either unaware of the "Best fit" strategy for their organisations or are aware but un-empowered to implement their plans. This would lead to an obvious failure in the design of the desired high performance work systems, aiming to increase engagement levels for employees at their organisations.

The CIPD (2006) annual survey report has stated the link between engagement, performance and staff retention in the following figure (3):
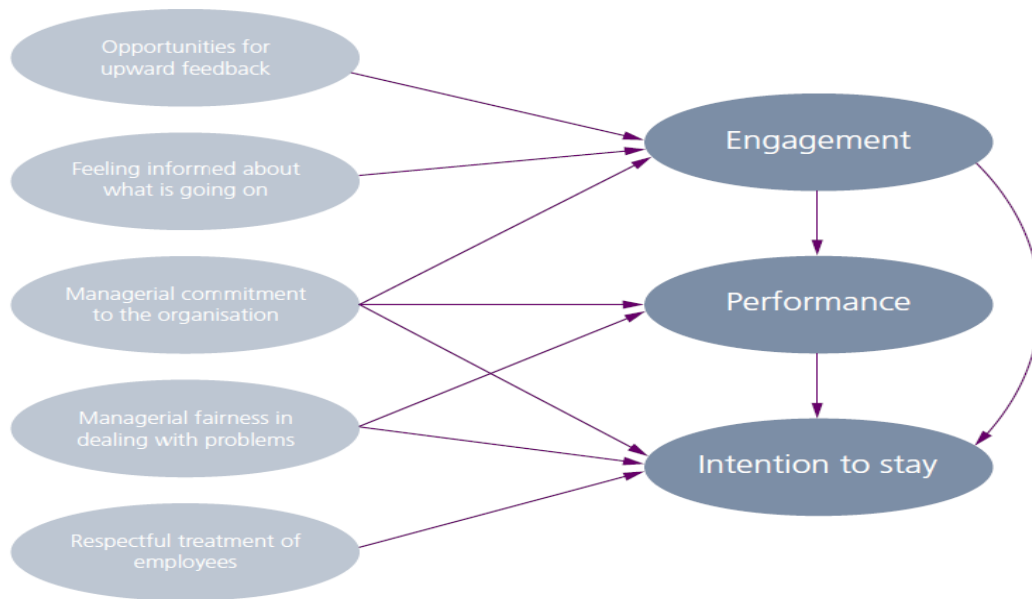
Figure (3)

Engagement, performance and retention

Source: The CIPD annual survey report 2006: "How engaged are British employees".

Linking employee engagement to staff retention makes lots of sense, as it is assumed that talented employees, if not engaged, would prefer to look for a different organisation.

The concept of engagement and retention has been also demonstrated by the group engagement model (Tyler and Blader, 2003), who have assumed that individuals would make two basic status evaluations with regard to the places in which they work; an organisational status evaluation (evaluating if the employer is good to work for from a generic employee perspective) and an evaluation of their own status within the organisation (evaluating their specific individual fit in the organisational culture, vision and job specifications). Thus, the group engagement model extends the thinking towards organisational identification process by not only including intergroup dynamics, but also intra-group dynamics.

2.2.4. Engagement and the Economic Situation:

During the economic crisis, which hit the world in 2008, many organisations have taken decisions to down-size and lay off some employees in order to manage the costs of production and improve profitability to shareholders. Dixon (2009) highlighted that when companies are affected by the economic downturn, and start actually laying off employees, feelings of anger, anxiety, insecurity, and a sense of mistrust for those who are let go as well as for those employees who remain on the job will be automatically transferred and affecting the firm's employees who could be wondering if they are next on the layoff schedule. This can drive organisational talents to jump out of the organisation and start searching for other jobs, and for those who are still working in the organisation to lose focus, thus affecting their overall performance.

Dixon (2009) noted that what motivates employees and engages them during a period of downsizing would be much different than what engages them in calmer times. In times of prosperity, employees basically feel grounded and can focus on their daily tasks. But on days of crisis employees are likely to be distracted and disengaged by the reports of "doom and gloom" bombarding the airwaves and the rumours swirling around the office at work. At those times, more than ever they are looking for positive leadership and reassurance.

Porta (2011) suggested that crisis could be a good situation to build trust between members sharing the same circumstances, since it drives a common interest of self-preservation, by uniting against the perceived "Enemy" and this put aside all other perceived problems or challenges and gathers the group focus on survival. This is an optimistic view of the situation since also crisis can sometimes raise the level of competition between individuals especially if the survival resources are scarce and a perception of lack of enough resources for everyone is prevailing (an example of this is when an organisation announces a certain percentage of job cuts, so employees would then understand that there will be limited jobs, and they all cannot possibly make it, then the possibility of political networking would rise). The possible combination of fear, uncertainty about the future, and the race by others to survive could be destructive to groups in times of crisis and could destroy the group engagement levels. Porta (2011) argues that this is very likely to occur unless trust exists between the group members, and this trust is not created in few days, but it takes a very long time to build trust and to prove that someone is trustworthy. So if we look at newly formed groups, or organisations which have just been formed before a crisis (like the economic crisis in 2008), they are likely to face more disruptions and lower group levels of engagement that others since the trust levels between employees are suggested to be lower than those groups who worked with each other for a longer duration and would have passed several situations to grant them trust to each other.

O'Neil (2010) also saw the effect of economic situation on the levels of engagement of employees from the dimension of work load and talent retention. Focusing on the United States, he highlights that employees saw more than eight million jobs disappear in one year, with a consequence of increasing the work load on existing employees in the same time of reducing expenses and budget cuts. O'Neil sees that this has made many talented employees worried, with less pay, more work load and uncertainty about the future, which made it extremely challenging for the employers to keep the levels of engagement up. The solution, according to O'Neil should come from human resources and top leadership. They can help in stopping this cycle of "tumbling dominoes", and the challenge falls to not only Human Resources professionals, but also to CEOs and other company leaders. He debates that

employees would feel most engaged when they can make headway; when the challenge is neither too easy nor too hard; when they receive the support they need to overcome obstacles; and when they feel they are making a lasting difference. Those messages need to start at the top. Macleod and Clarke (2009) supported the emphasis on engagement in times of crisis, and regarded this as crucial since employee engagement approaches can help companies and organisations deal with the challenges of recession as by establishing trust, they can unlock more of the knowledge and commitment of individual employees, for example in developing ways of performing tasks more effectively and efficiently.

2.2.5. Engagement and Leadership:

Another dimension that has been linked to staff engagement was effective leadership and followership relationships. It is noted that the emphasis on leadership is still very high and by far larger than that on followership. Ancona, Malone, Orlikowski, and Senge, (2007) see that in today's world, the leaders' job is no longer to "command and control" but to cultivate and coordinate the actions of others at all levels of the organisation. It was argued that "command and control" style of leadership can only ensure the achievement of targets some times, but can never encourage exceeding it.

Sutton (2009) emphasized the crucial role of leadership, especially in time of crisis (referring to the 2008 economic downturn across the globe, and connecting the role of leadership to employee engagement during economic crisis). Sutton (2009) warned of the "Cone of silence" as employees will expect that some really bad decisions are being taken from behind closed doors. The key is to be deeply sensitive to people's interpretations, following long closed-door meetings with longer open-door periods.

Leadership is also connected indirectly to engagement via its effect on organisational performance. The dimension of leadership and its effect on corporate performance was also researched by Fleming, Coffman and Harter (2005) as they viewed the local manager as "*nonetheless the single most important factor in local group*

performance, and the company may need to look at how it selects employees, promotes people into management, does performance appraisals, approaches succession planning, and recognizes performance" (Fleming, Coffman and Harter, 2005: 114). Wallace and Trinka (2009) focused on the first line management and stated that the leadership of the immediate manager is more important than any other organisational variable.

So where does engagement start? From leaders who play role models to followers? Or from followers who constitute the major percentage of workers? The effect of leadership and its relationship with followership was debated from a different angle by Kelly (2001), as he argued that bosses are not necessarily good leaders, subordinates are not necessarily effective followers, and many bosses could not lead a horse to water. Kelly (2001) viewed the situation that most of us are more often followers than leaders, and even when we have subordinates, we will still have bosses. Schaufeli and Salanova (2007b) emphasized the importance of leaders being role models for engagement, and suggested that in order for followers to be engaged, they should see their leaders modelling those positive affective – motivational states. It is thought that if leaders lack energy in leading followers, it is likely that followers will copy the leaders' low energy approach; however, this suggestion neglects the role proactive followers could actually play to bring their leaders as well as their organisation up on the engagement scale. From this view, it can be deducted that engagement is indeed a great responsibility of bosses, but also an effective follower should be enthusiastic, intelligent, and self-reliant. Those approaches and suggestions establish the link between leaders and followers in relationship to engagement, and emphasises on the importance of the dimension of the "Good Leadership – Good Followership".

Further emphasis has been then placed on the role of leadership in engaging employees by Pfeffer (1998) who has highlighted that mismanaging people can really create a downward spiral in performance, and if leaders can resist the temptation to see their people solely as costs, the organisation can overall be successful. This is similar to the two concepts of "Human Resources" developed by Storey (1989) who has emphasized that two models exist; the "hard" model (also referred as the

Michigan Model) which places an emphasis on the "Resources" side; and the "soft" model (also referred as the Harvard Model) which places an emphasis on the "Human" side. Both models are still practical and existing today, since many organisations try to balance both sides but would have a preference of interest to either the value out of the human capital (resources) or the investment in this capital coming from the solid belief that the human capital is the single greatest organisational asset that can differentiate a successful organisation and ensure its competitiveness over competitors. Pfeffer (1998) sees this struggle of schools of thought existing and suggested that of the half of the firms that will make comprehensive changes to enhance how they manage their people, probably only about one-half of those will persist with their practices long enough to actually derive economic benefits. This was basically a highlight of how managers could sometimes be short-time thinkers and focus on the short term deliverables rather than the long term benefits.

Lombardi (2010) saw a change in the role of leadership today, and suggested that a modern leader who wants to be successful in today's world, should not only focus on understanding the business and driving sales figures within the market place they operate, but also should focus on understanding the employees they work with, and be a master in how to engage them towards better performance. This will make sure that they have the right skills and drive their efforts forward to the same direction the organisation is willing to move, which will make the full energy of the corporate aligned, after all, organisational goals are only achieved through people, and getting them on board, fully passionate and enthusiastic about their role is a crucial role of leadership.

Since this leadership-followership relationship involves a great deal of communication, it is also very important to explore how communication plays a role in this relationship, as well as review how communication can affect employee engagement directly and indirectly.

2.2.6. Engagement and Communication:

Tourish (2005) views the link between leadership and followership from the dimension of effective communication, and sees most of the people as more vulnerable to the seductive power of flattery than they like to think. This is called "Seat Sickness" in practical management practice, as it is assumed in practice that leaders would inevitably pass through a stage where they receive some flattery to either their work or style in leadership, and this stage is extremely critical, since some leaders would be inclined to believe that they are naturally "gifted" and bit by bit they could fall in the trap of not listening, learning and asking for employees feedback, ending up with being very vulnerable and resistant to change. On the strategic thinking level, Tourish (2005) also sees the possibility that top managers would be anxious to move rapidly into implementation and could often be impatient with debate. This assumed low level of tolerance with feedback from and communication with their subordinates, who are most important in implementing strategies, could also affect their level of engagement. To solve this, and to avoid "Seat Sickness", Tourish (2005) sees that some of the key solution actions could come from impacts and benefits of upward communication (from subordinates to management) as those could enhance organisational learning, better decision making; and improve participation of employees. Looking then at communication as an important factor affecting leadership, and linking this to the previous section (2.2.5) and how leadership links to engagement, makes communication another factor that indirectly affects engagement through its effect on the leadership-followership relationship.

The work of Tourish (2005), was further supported by the Watson Wyatt 2005 / 2006 communication ROI (return on investment) study which has concluded that: "*firms that communicate effectively are 4.5 times more likely to report high levels of employee engagement versus firms that communicate less effectively*" (Tourish 2005: 1). They have also found that: "*companies with high levels of communication effectiveness are 20 per cent more likely to report lower turnover rates than their competitors*" (Tourish 2005: 1). This is an added benefit to companies that are able to use communication to help retain employees and conserve the resources needed for recruitment and training. The Watson Wyatt 2005 Human Capital Index ® study found

that the total cost of turnover for the typical position is between 48 and 61 per cent of the wage for that position. The have displayed a summary of their findings in the following figure (4):

Source: Adapted from Watson Wyatt's *WorkUSA® 2004/2005: Effective Employees Drive Financial Results*
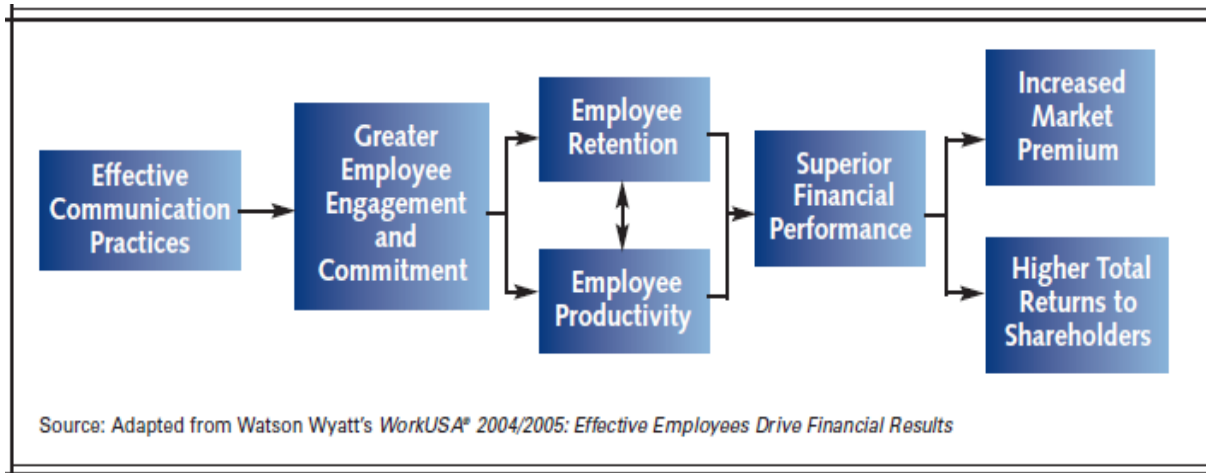
Figure (4)

Communication effectiveness drives superior financial performance
Adapted from: Watson Wyatt 2005/2006 communication ROI study

The Watson Wyatt model has viewed communication as crucial, as companies play an important role in informing, educating and engaging employees in the business. However, less than one-third of high-effectiveness companies give employees the opportunity to provide meaningful input into decisions, and only 25 per cent solicit their input on how the business is run. The effect of communication on engagement could be further increased during the time of economic crisis or corporate downturn, as Dixon (2009) thought that pretending things are OK or keeping silent about the state of the company are big mistakes, instead, the paper recommends that whatever leaders choose to do, they have to make sure their staff know about it.

Gill (2009) has looked into the importance of communication tools, particularly focusing on one of the modern tools that are frequently used today; IT. Focusing particularly on the Australian culture, Gill (2009) has found that Information and communication technology (ICT) is the most accessible and available medium for communicating with external and internal stakeholders of large organisations (based on the work of Eunson, 2005; Harrison, 2007). ICT incorporates computer and social

media technology that enables effective management of information across large organisations (Eunson, 2005; Harrison, 2007); however, till today, many employees working in production sites, especially in developing countries, still do not have access to internet, intranet or other computer generated communication tools. Gill (2009) sees ICT capability as crucial and has debated that the effective use of information and communication technology tools in the organisation can help in building up the organisational branding message, through proper internal communication, which will have an effect in protecting the organisation's reputation internally and externally as well as will lead to better employee attraction (through creating organisational ambassadors) and retention.

Brockett (2009) supports Gill's hypothesis, highlighting that communication could play a key role, especially in times of crisis. He actually challenges the negative effect of economic downturn on engagement in presence of an effective communication strategy and tools, and has referred this through his interview with Rachel Campbell, head of people at KPMG, who noted that "*Recession does not necessarily have to mean reduced engagement – in fact, it can mean that engagement rises if your people see that it is tough outside and that all of us inside the company are standing together*" (In Brocket, 2009: 1), placing a great emphasis on the importance of internal communication during times of crisis. Brocket (2009) highlighted the great effect of Employer Branding on the engagement of employees inside a company, which is an additional factor to add to factors affecting engagement. It is perceived that "*Employee engagement is integral to employer brand in that it's a measure of how proud people are to work there, as per Rachel Campbell*" (In Brockett, 2009: 1). This drives the sense that what an organisation advertises could possibly matter a lot to employees, depending on their levels of engagement with this sort of communication or internal advertisements. Greenwald and Leavitt (1984) have emphasised that the involvement and motivation of the receivers of an advertisement could be determining factors to whether they get engaged with the message or not. Burnkrant and Sawyer (1983) have supported this and added that the ones who are advertising should take in consideration the perceived need of using this information before sharing or advertising it.

2.2.7. Engagement and the building of relationships:

The research of Sparrow and Balain (2010) argues that the relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance is simply linear, but they emphasize as well that the relationship is far more complicated than this, as organisational success could be a factor in actually driving employee engagement and also vice versa. This complication is based on the assumption that individuals would like to belong to a winning team, and this creates a snow ball effect on engagement, that grows by time as long as the organisation is successful. They also argue that one of the factors related to the performance of the organisation could be linked to the effect of collective group behaviour in addition to working group demographics (like age, years in the organisation, previous experience, gender) and other factors that could add more dimensions to the term, increasing its complexity and challenging the concept of globalising its measurement across various organisations.

Newman (2011) supported this thinking and saw demographic factors as a solid contributor to employee engagement definition and drivers. She assumes that older adults would seek meaning in their lives and draw conclusions from the experience they had over their lives. This resembles a sort of "Maturity" model among employees, assuming that differences in needs would exist between different generations, which consequently could lead to differences in engagement drivers. This concept would then affect the definition of work engagement in a mixed age employee group (which is usually the case) as demands for engagement would vary significantly and could be very different from one organisation (even one department in the same organisation) to the other.

So giving space for employees to have some socialization at work could be important for driving engagement. In practice, some organisations are focusing only on the amount of hours spent by employees at work, while the number of hours spent at work might be a wrong indicator for employees engagement. Burke and Koksal (2002) have investigated the effect of "workaholism" on social relationships at work and in general and found out that it has a direct negative effect, and those employees

who are characterized by being "workaholics" will tend to have poorer relationships that those who are not. This aspect adds to the dimension of relationships at work since it depends on the nature of individual employees and the effect on the group in total.

"Trust" is assumed to be a very important factor in relationship building. Robinson (1996) has defined trust as "*one's expectations, assumptions or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, or at least not detrimental to one's interests*" (In Cartwright, S. and Holmes, N. 2006: 205). This definition in itself is implying that trust is an individual personal feeling, which could mean that the same act could be seen by two different individuals in a different way with regards to trust. It also supports the suggestion that different individuals coming from different cultures could define an act in a different way, consequently, employee engagement, since trust is one of its key suggested components. The perception of trust and how actions are perceived in a certain group is greatly linked to the pace, and model a leader would create. If the leader encourages the group to be united as a team, and leaves no space for "Character assassination" attempts, the group is suggested then to be more likely to gain confidence in the process and trust in leadership as well as the environment.

Researches like the Towers Watson (2010) study came with global / universe conclusions to staff engagement tools, neglecting the possibility that staff coming from different cultures could behave differently, and what drives employee engagement in one country, could be very different from what drives it in another country. The Towers Watson (2010) research into high performance cultures even highlighted that employee engagement strategies greatly depend on the culture that an organisation wishes to create, if it is efficiency, quality, innovation, customer service or company image cultures, or possibly a mix of the above.

2.2.8. Engagement and cultural differences:

This dimension of cultural differences has been further explored by Chiang and Birtch (2010) who have investigated the effect of various cultural aspects on the major purposes and practices of performance appraisal using a sample drawn from seven countries across Europe, Asia, and North America. Performance appraisals are key components in the relationship between the employee and the employer, and one of the constant practices that interfere with this relationship, therefore, this process in practice (as shown in appendix C, dimension 9: 283) constitutes a major element in the working relationship between an employee and their organisation and all employee engagement surveys have included the performance evaluation process in their surveys. It is very important then to explore if cultural differences have an effect on this process.

Chiang and Birtch (2010) found that key cultural differences existed in how assertiveness, uncertainty avoidance, in-group collectivism, and power distance were practiced and felt during performance appraisal sessions and this would have a strong effect on how performance appraisals are conducted and run. This is in line with Milliman et al. (1998) finding, that the process of the appraisal is conducted in many different manners and in varying degrees of formality across various cultures, and that it reflects the personal view to motivation, as well as relationships with colleagues and subordinates. Easterby-Smith et al. (1995); and Walker and Dimmock (2000) have all supported the same concept as they discussed that employee participation and providing feedback are believed to be of importance to both motivational and cognitive aspects in the United States, while honest, direct and open discussion about performance is not a common natural preference in China and is often associated with losing / saving face in Asian countries. Gilbert and Tsao (2000) have supported the previous approach and claimed that it directly affects communicating with and understanding Chinese employees, while Hu (2004) has dug more into this aspect in the Chinese context, and suggested a model for the "Face Concern" among Chinese individuals. In this model, he has broken down this aspect into two main dimensions; the Mianzi (external social image) and the Lian (internal morals). Bao, Zhou, and Su (2003) have suggested that according to the

levels of "Face Consciousness" the social relationship would be built, as they have explained that this aspect controls the extent where individuals would work to enhance face, maintain the image or avoid losing face in front of significant others in a certain social context. Ho (1976) has looked into this dimension in western culture and has suggested that in the west, the "Face consciousness" is more interactive and involves more the others' perception of an individual's image (face), giving more emphasis on "prestige" and individual's status in a certain society. Ting-Toomey (2005) has supported the concept of "Face Concern" and suggested that it applies to all cultures but in a different way of expression. This difference in cultural emphasis on self-image, especially in performance appraisals, is assumed to link as well to employee engagement, since a great deal of the work relationship with employees depends on work performance and evaluation. Having the right message content-wise while delivering it in the wrong context could possibly send the wrong message to employees. This could imply that in two organisations, the process could be correct, but the way of delivering the process (the context, depending on the individuals who will deliver this) could differ, and that could change the way the process is perceived, affecting how employees view this important factor in their working relationship with their organisation.

Another dimension that was repeated in all engagement surveys, was having "friends" at work, or simply feeling comfortable among the work group. When it comes to relationships and social interactions, Kim, Lee, and Gim (2011) have assumed that there are deep interactions of culture and relationship length in intensive social relationship conditions than in loose conditions, and that the fundamental motivation for positive self-regard is universal, while the aspect of "Self-presentation" is more depending on the individuals' social needs. So in other terms, people would like to look good in all cultures, but it is different in the way they perceive "Look Good". Self-presentation as a concept has been supported by Maslow (1943), Rogers (1951), Allport (1955), and Tesser (1988), and has been further claimed to play a crucial part in an individual's mental and physical well-being by Taylor & Brown (1988) and Baumeister (1993). Luthans (2002) has also linked the "look good" feeling to the individual's success at their job. The influence of cross cultures on the aspect of human relationships has been further studied by and

Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit (1997) and Heine, Lehman, Markus, and Kitayama (1999); where they claimed that the "Self Enhancement Bias" is not existing in East Asian cultures. Heine and Lehman (1995); and Kitayama, Takagi, and Matsumoto (1995) supported the change in focus in Asian cultures and suggested that Japanese individuals have a higher tendency to listen to failure feedbacks than to listen to praising and positive feedbacks. Bond and Cheung (1983); and White and Chan (1983) have all supported this claim as their researchers found out that Chinese individuals would usually score less than their United States counterparts in terms of "Self Evaluation". This complicates the measurement of social relationships and makes one aspect of employee motivation that is derived from social relationships at work more complicated, since it will depend on the background of employees as well as which culture they were raised at, as well as what their expectations are from personal relationships at work.

In light of this variety of definitions, employee engagement aspects, and what really matters most to employees, it is very important to look at the current status of various differences in defining and measuring employee engagement and try to understand deeply what could be the real scenario.

Jones et al (2009) looked at a different dimension, which was the effect of Race / Ethnicity and Employee Engagement on Withdrawal Behaviour. They have found that race is a salient component of how United States workers view their experiences in the workplace. Dixon et al (2002) presented findings of a study of university workers, showing that African American and Hispanic workers believe themselves to be discriminated against and treated unfairly in the workplace as compared to their white counterparts. This was further supported by Jones and Schaubroeck (2004) who found that non-white employees reported lower levels of both job satisfaction and co-worker social support than did their white colleagues. This further supports the research's hypothesis that probably different factors affect engagement drivers, and maybe there are cultural and country barriers that should be taken in consideration when defining and measuring engagement at the work place.

Employee engagement has been linked by several consultancy organisations to levels of organisational commitment; however, when the academic literature is explored, Gelade, Dobson, and Auer (2008) gave organisational commitment another level of cultural dependency as they examined the dependence of organisational commitment on satisfaction with job characteristics that are valued differently in 29 nations. They found evidence for the moderating effects of national culture. Satisfaction with job characteristics that are highly valued in individualistic cultures has an increasingly strong effect on commitment as national individualism increases, while satisfaction with collectivist job characteristics has an increasingly weaker effect. Similarly, satisfaction with job characteristics that are highly valued in masculine cultures has an increasingly strong effect on commitment as national masculinity increases, while satisfaction with feminine job characteristics has an increasingly weaker effect. These findings, being very similar to Hofstede's (1980) model of cultural dimensions, assume that the sources of organisational commitment are culturally conditioned and that their effects are predictable from Hofstede's value dimensions (Hofstede's (1980) model is further discussed in page 86 of this research). Gelade, Dobson, and Auer (2008) have also discussed the practical implications of these findings and suggested that those cultural differences would have an effect on the existing "Psychological Contract" between an employee and his employer, which is quite a strong "non-verbal" commitment to do a certain job. The cultural difference could then have an effect in the psychological contract between employees and their employers may also affect the relationships between job satisfaction and commitment.

2.2.9. Engagement and employee age:

The issue of age is a very complex topic, as it progresses by time, meaning that an organisation which has an average age of employees 35 today, will not be the same next year (and this depends on the demographic profile of the organisation, the number of leavers and joiners and their age, as well as whether the organisation is growing or declining in size). This makes the employee engagement definition vary every year, if age is proven to be one of the key variables affecting engagement. Avery, McKay and Wilson (2007), studying a similar hypothesis of the effect of age

on employee engagement, and taking a sample from the United Kingdom as well, suggested that age similarity was associated with higher levels of engagement among older workers when they were highly satisfied with their co-workers over 55. However, lower levels of engagement were reported when the same group was not satisfied with their co-workers. This work, as it gives some emphasis on relationships importance in workers with more experience, is also a very hard aspect to measure, as age changes every year, and with the new hires / retirement status changes this demographic factor almost every year. This factor could flip from one side to the other in the same year at some organisations if the employee turnover is high in one age group.

From the dimension of increase in knowledge and maturity, Fernandez-Ballesteros et al. (2007); Gergen and Gergen (2003); Hill (2005); Ranzijn (2002); and Williamson (2002) have all described the progression in age as a very positive experience, as it is accompanied by an increase in knowledge and experience and would then be linked with higher levels of satisfaction and subjective feelings of well-being. Older employees are likely to have very different engagement drivers, and probably different engagement levels as well from younger employees, and as a support to Girzadas et al. (1993); Ho et al. (1995); Michalos et al. (2000); and Smith et al. (2002), and Avery, McKay and Wilson (2007) have looked into what makes older people happy, and they found that it is more related to their physical health, relationships with family and the presence of social support. So, looking at the possibility of inter-group differences in engagement drivers, how would organisations then approach employee engagement globally?

2.2.10. Engagement and globalisation approach:

Examining individual and group differences is an important topic which has strong relevance to this research, and in this regards, Kahn (1990) was one of the very first researchers to investigate this topic and touch on defining employee engagement in the work place. He has presented the "Theory of Self" postulating that:

"*People can use varying degrees of their selves, physically, cognitively, and emotionally, in the roles they perform, even as they maintain the integrity of the boundaries between who they are and the roles they occupy. Presumably, the more people draw on their selves to perform their roles within those boundaries, the more stirring are their performances and the more content they are with the fit of the costumes they don't.*" (Kahn, 1990: 692).

Kahn found that there were three psychological conditions related with engagement or disengagement at work: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. He argued that people enquired about three fundamentals, based on which they would be engaged: (i) How meaningful is it for them to bring themselves into this performance?; (ii) How safe is it to do so?; and (iii) How available are they to do so? He found that workers were more engaged at work in situations that offered them more psychological meaningfulness and psychological safety, and when they were more psychologically available.

Kahn's theory then presented one of the very first definitions for employee engagement and related this to how much an individual would be ready to dedicate part of their emotional, physical and motor energy to make their organisations succeed and grow.

Thinking then of happiness, satisfaction and engagement meaning, are those terms seen globally in the same manner? Do people in different cultures feel happy, or get satisfied in the same way? Kim et al. (1994); and Triandis (2001) have both agreed that researching happiness and satisfaction factors in different countries, led to very different outcomes comparing individualistic and collectivist countries, as the understanding of an individual's role to the society is very different, making the expectations from relationships also vary significantly. The dimension of age in itself adds more and more complexity to measuring and understanding employee engagement drivers at a certain organisation, as it takes the drivers to a very deep dimension that is related not only to the age of the work force, but to their backgrounds, their social groups and their interpersonal interaction trends, which

could suggest that it is almost impossible to find two organisations with all of the above factors in common.

O'Neal and Gebauer (2006) have suggested that employee engagement drivers would globally vary significantly. They have surveyed full-time workers in 16 countries across four continents to understand issues that matter to workers, why those issues matter and the differences companies need to take into account in operating across national boundaries. The overall top employee engagement driver appeared to be "opportunities for learning and growth", while if we examine their major samples, it was very different; in the United States and United Kingdom, the top engagement driver came as "Leadership", involving different aspects of their actions and behaviours, while in Japan, the top engagement driver was linked to opportunities to have their say into decisions affecting employee's work environment. So the issue of cultural "clusters" is highlighted here, which was defined earlier by Porter (1998) as "a geographic concentration of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, associated institutions and firms in related industries" (Porter 1998: 77). Porter (1990) has identified four main factors that are linked to national (country) segment's success, and those were: demand factors, related industries, factor conditions (such as skilled labour), and firm structure and rivalry. The above demonstrates that the overall result could not be weighed equally credible across various cultures. The above was emphasized by the overall result of O'Neal and Gebauer's work (2006) where the survey-abstracted global drivers (shown in the second column from the left) were different from major sampled countries' drivers (columns three to five from the left), so the question remains, whether there is a cultural factor involved. The major discrepancies among various cultures are shown in the following table:

Engagement driver	Global	United States	United Kingdom	Mexico	China
Opportunities to learn and develop new skills	1	-	-	-	-
Improved my skills and capabilities over the last year	2	2	2	1	1
Reputation of organization as a good employer	3	3	3	4	-
Input into decision-making in my department	4	-	4	3	4
Organization focuses on customer satisfaction	5	-	-	-	-
Senior management interest in employee well–being	-	1	1	-	-
Appropriate amount of decision-making authority to do my job well	-	4	-	5	-
Salary criteria are fair and consistent	-	5	-	-	5
In combination with government programs, benefit programs generally meet my needs	-	-	5	-	-
Organization effectively maintains staffing levels	-	-	-	2	-
Senior management's actions are consistent with our values	-	-	-	-	2
Good collaboration across units	-	-	-	-	3

Table (3)

Top five drivers of engagement globally

Source: Towers Perrin, 2005, in O'Neal and Gebauer (2006).

It is clear from the table above that some engagement drivers which came top in some countries, are completely out of the list for other cultures, and the overall global top driver is not ranked across some of the cultures contributing to the research sample, which raises the confidence in the question of cultural barriers towards engagement drivers. So is it the question of cultures? Does it link to the employees' backgrounds, education and job level? Does the society have an impact on the engagement drivers? What is the reason behind employees feeling different about work engagement drivers?

When exploring the reasons behind individuals' differences at work, one possible explanation could be the "Occupational Identity". Phelan and Kinsella (2009) linked the individuality of employees to their productivity at work, choices and conceptions of the society, and according to them, occupational identity has been conceptualized

with the individual at the core of the construct and assuming that autonomy and free choice are universally applicable constructs. This concept implies that workers are individuals with unique identities and this would affect the way they make choices and view the work environment.

Christiansen (1999, 2000, 2004) was the first academic to make an approach for a clear connection between occupation and individuals' personal and social identity in the occupation-based literature. He suggested that participation at work contributes to one's construction of identity and is the primary means to communicate one's identity, concluding that "when we build our identities through occupations, we provide ourselves with the contexts necessary for creating meaningful lives, and life meaning helps us to be well" (1999, p. 547).

Laliberte Rudman (2002) has suggested a strong link between how an individual would look to him/her selves and perceive what they can do, and the levels of engagement the same individual would show to their current occupation. Law et al. (1998) have focused on this aspect stating that an individual who is not allowed to be engaged in activities that they perceive of value to their lives, would have a serious reflection of their self-perception of wellbeing. It is then one dimension that mixes between an individual's identity, their engagement at work, and their own personal sense of logic to what they do and feel. This dimension is another very individualistic perception that depends on an individual's self-perception of what could be valuable and enable engagement at their work. It could possibly be very different among different cultures and if we think of a group of mixed cultures, the collective group agreement could vary with other groups as well as could also be not satisfactory to the certain minorities within the same group.

The above gives some insights about individual differences, but how about group dynamics and differences? What happens if we mix two groups of workers, as in mergers and acquisitions? How do the two groups of individuals mix? Padilla and Perez (2003) discussed the acculturative process that occurs when employees from a certain culture join another group of employees from a different culture, and suggested that this process would be more difficult for those persons who must cope

with the stigma of being different because of skin colour, language, ethnicity, or other differentiating factors. Linking this to the group dynamics and definitions of work engagement would assume that it will be more complex, as for example, a certain country's employees (A) in country (A) could then have different expectations from country (A) employees working in country (B) . It could even get more complex if more than 3 cultures exist in the same work place. The difference would be the effect of the acculturation process on their views for the working environment and their expectations from their fellow colleagues. Hannerz (1992) supported the concept of complexity when more than one culture exist and mentioned that "When the centre speaks, the periphery listens, and mostly does not talk back" (Hannerz 1992:219), indicating that the major culture will try to impose its opinion and artefacts over the minority. This is extremely important and could cause severe damage, as Leung, Wu, Chen, and Young (2011) thought that workplace Ostracism (rejection and dispelling) will have a direct negative effect on employee engagement and would affect the levels of employee relation and customer services provided by the organisation, which could then be very destructive to the firm.

There is a clear disagreement and lack of a unified approach to the term of "Employee Engagement" across various researchers, which makes the term very differently defined and measured across different bodies. Looking at the paper presented before by O'Neal and Gebauer (2006), and the discrepancies shown in one global research across various cultures, the same is also shown, and in the same serious extent when different researches are compared, across different cultures and different business models. To clarify more on the conflict of opinions, the main differences of the conducted surveys are summarized in the following table (4).

Survey			TUC Poll	NHS	CIPD	Concours Group	Towers Perrin
Country			UK	UK	UK	USA	USA
Parameter	Top Drivers of Engagement	1	Fair Pay	Enjoyable workplace	Upwards feedback	Security	Senior management's interest in employees' well-being
		2	Fair workload	Flexible work hours and work place	Feeling informed	Growth and development	Challenging work
		3	Training and career progression	Fair rewards	Management commitment	Enjoyable work place	Decision-making authority

Table (4)

Different views of drivers of engagement

Source: Compiled from various sources.

The above is just a compilation of some of the major research papers in this field, and there are more variations existing in other research documents as well on the way researchers define and measure employee engagement. The Institute of Employment Studies, IES, through Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004), despite running their survey in 14 organisations within the NHS, has developed four different drivers even from the NHS survey in the above table, which were:

1. Employee involvement in decision making.
2. The extent to which employees feel able to voice their ideas, and managers listen to these views, and value employees' contributions.
3. The opportunities employees have to develop their jobs.

4. The extent to which the organisation is concerned for employees' health and wellbeing.

Pay and benefits (appearing as third in the table above, came sixth in the IES report, while "family friendliness" came one before last (9th out of 10) in their list. This shows a difference in the importance of drivers and can provide different results if weighting was not accurately reflecting the cultural, environmental and organisational context of the employees.

This concept of drivers' differences has been picked up by one of the research consultants, "Kenexa", and as per their tool "JRA Key Drivers analysis"; those key drivers are not necessarily the items scoring less in an engagement survey, as those items might actually have a very low value or impact to employees. They use a multiple regression analysis method to ask employees which items make the most impact to them and their engagement at work from a list of several engagement parameters. The results are then plotted in a matrix composed of an Impact grid (How employees see an engagement parameter impactful), and a performance grid (how the company is performing at this specific engagement parameter). An example of this matrix is shown below in figure (5):

High Importance Low Performance (Priority for improvement)	High Importance High Performance (Reinforce)
Low Importance Low Performance (Low priority for action)	Low Importance High Performance (Reduce enforcement / emphasis)

Figure (5)

JRA's Performance / Importance matrix

Source: Adapted from Kenexa, JRA

The above figure (5) supports the research hypothesis as it directly assumes that engagement drivers will not have the same weight among all employees at different organisations, at different cultures; however, it does not highlight the background of those differences. The question then remains, for global organisations, to what depth should engagement drivers' analysis be run? And can we possibly assume that we know all possible engagement drivers for all employees across the whole world in order to list them? What about the age effect on engagement? How would average age affect the engagement drivers weighting? Can there be something unique to a certain culture that is not picked up by research? Will the engagement drivers be affected by environmental factors and change by time? All of those questions should also start with some investigation on why drivers are different, and if it is a cultural issue or an organisational aspect, or maybe a mix of both.

Banks (2010) discussed the differences in engagement among cultures in the context of the Canadian organisations, as they stated that there is a difference in the engagement equation between Canadian employees and European employees. This difference referred to the fact that Canadian employees log more working hours, take shorter vacations and have to wait for a longer time to get full retirement benefits and pensions. Kuhnel and Sonnentag (2011) have researched this factor in teachers and touched on the issue of the effect of vacations on engagement levels. Their research results suggested that the levels of work engagement have increased significantly and levels of burnout have decreased significantly after employees (teachers in this case) took vacations (relating to the job demands-resources model, figure (1)). They have related this change in engagement to the levels of emotional exhaustion that face employees after a certain continuous work time, which is accelerated at certain stages by work stress and overload. They have also linked the sustainability of high work engagement levels to regular breaks, referring here to the weekends, which are considered a good chance to relieve some stress built-up during the working week. This is of course implies that those employees who work on the weekend, with the excuse of having to do this due to the work load, are actually jeopardizing their engagement levels since theoretically they will not be able to sustain this and will face "burn out" sooner or later. Fritz and Sonnentag (2006) have supported the

importance of vacations to engagement and suggested that above relieving stress from work, vacations are considered a sort of "effort expenditure" and will have a direct positive effect on work engagement levels. Sonnentag (2003) related the feeling of "personal recovery" in the morning to levels of work engagement shown during the subsequent work day in a direct positive relationship. Gorgievski and Hobfoll (2008), Hobfoll (1989); and Meijman and Mulder (1998) have all researched in this field and supported the assumption that stress and strain reactions are accumulated during work hours, and can only be restored to normal levels during vacations and disconnecting time from work.

The focus on the work burn out, workaholism, and the effect of engagement has been the centre of a work done by Shaufeli, Taris, and Rhenen (2008) who found a strong relationship existing between them and have defined several factors that can affect this relationship, which are: (1) long working hours, (2) job characteristics, (3) work outcomes, (4) quality of social relationships, and (5) perceived health. They have mentioned that the three aspects (Burn out, Workaholism, and employee engagement) are interrelated but should not be represented as one factor, since each one has its distinctive characteristics. Spence & Robbins (1992) have thoroughly researched "Workaholism" and suggested three underlying dimensions for the term, those were: Involvement at work, drive shown to do work and enjoyment while at work.

Banks, Brian, Maclean (2010) have highlighted that employee engagement is a reflection of how companies are delivering against the expectations of their specific employees, and this will definitely be shaped by local culture and background of the employees and the history of the organisation as much as it is by best practices. So from their side, it is a relationship of "Expectations – Deliverables", and this in itself could be the first step in understanding why various researches could provide very conflicting data, as expectations of employees are not similar everywhere in the world. This implies that according to the organisational history of treating employees, and the employees' background in what they expect, adding to this the country labour status plus the environmental factors (like economic downturn or mergers

..etc.), the engagement equation could then be formed. This makes it a very unique formula that is extremely hard to replicate in two organisations at the same time.

In Hewitt's study of top employers in India (2009), it was revealed that the top driver for engagement among Indian employees was growth and career opportunities. This is not present, again in any of the reputable researches compiled in table (4) above. The relationship then would be a bit awkward, as the research bodies in the United States, U.K. or Europe are those who design the employee engagement measurement tools, and are the ones who provide a benchmark for organisations wishing to compare their performance at this parameter with the rest of the organisations in their field. So, if all parties are not on the same page, then the measurement tool would then be easily challenged, and would not reflect the real levels, consequently, would not lead to a proper action plan for enhancing the employee engagement levels at the organisation.

Table (4) shows that none of the surveys matches the outcome of the other neither in the driver nature, nor in the priority of the engagement drivers. This conflict could seriously damage the integrity of engagement measurement tools, as we cannot depend on one tool to identify the engagement drivers in all work conditions, but it would depend on how far the senior management of an organisation would "buy into" or "believe" a certain tool is valid for their organisation and employee group. Actually a closer look into the Towers Watson Global Workforce study (2010) shows that the key drivers of employee engagement in the pharmaceutical sector were not the same as the key drivers derived from the global sample, as for the pharmaceutical sector the drivers were in order: Leadership, Career development and empowerment. This in itself shows that even the same survey, using the same approach method would lead to different outcomes if it is run across different cultures, industries or time spans, which is a support to the research hypothesis (H1).

So how could those very reputable bodies differ in their outcome? Is it the research sample? Or the research time? Working conditions? National barriers? Cultural barriers? Can it be to the level of even corporate conditions / performance? Those are all possible assumptions, as there has not been any trial to academically study

those factors and their effect on engagement drivers; however, those are strong assumptions, due to the current disagreements in the research outcomes.

Those differences in outcomes are supporting the question now on the validity of the tools used to measure engagement, as the challenges to those tools appear to be: "Are those tools: Time Proof? Culture Proof? Corporate Proof?" or in other words, "Can we use one tool that will produce consistent results across all cultures at all times?"

Actually the answer to this question could be quite easy if we also look at the different concepts that were used to define engagement by different academic researches as well as consultancy firms, which are offering now business advice on engagement to various business companies.

2.3. The paradox of measuring employee engagement:

The following examples demonstrate the great confusion with engagement measurement tools. This will be shown via exploring the results of several approaches aiming to define what makes employees engaged at work. The examples set the floor for some critical thinking behind the research hypothesis and assumption. The question behind this section is: If employees are engaged differently, does it then make sense to use one global tool for measuring this engagement? Will asking the same questions, giving them the same weight then make sense?

The NHS – Maximizing Staff Engagement: This study was done in UK by the National Health Services' National workforce projects in 2007. The background to this paper is an original study undertaken by the Concours Group in the United States to look at engagement in the US working population. The study results were based on nearly 8,000 responses to an online staff engagement survey. The results of the US study have already given a significant insight into staff engagement. The analysis of the results showed no significant difference based on age, ethnicity or gender. In terms of the big issues of engagement at work we are all looking for

similar rewards. The survey was able to identify significant differences across six groupings or types of engagement. These six groups or segments show differences in their response to the survey and their engagement needs from an organisation. Figure (6) shows the six segments and the percentage of the workforce in the original US survey.
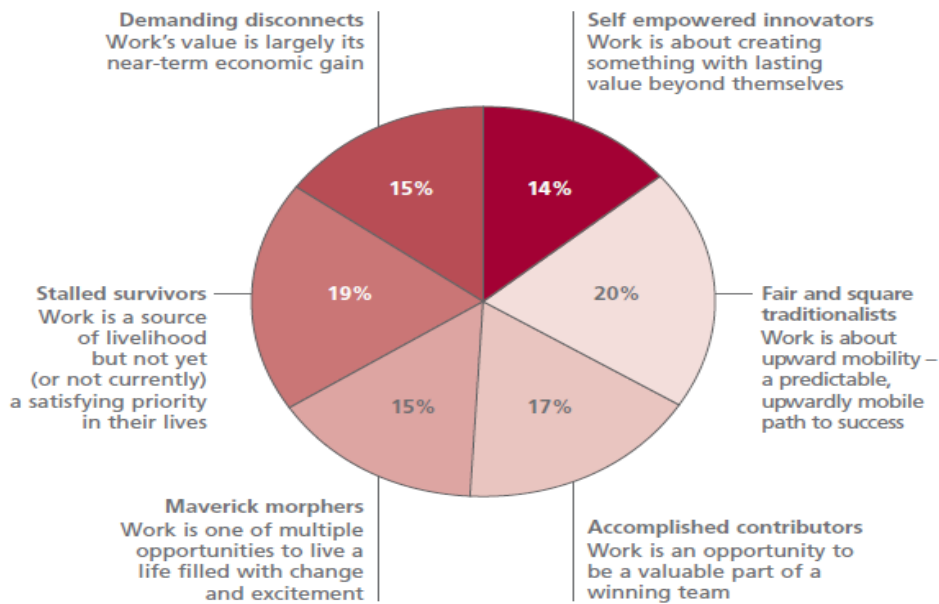
Figure (6)

Segment representation in the original USA sample

Source: The New Employee/Employer Equation, The "Concours Group and Age Wave", 2004

During 2006, the National Workforce Program (NWP) developed a UK version of the engagement survey and piloted it with three NHS organisations. The results were mainly that:

♦ Employees want a workplace that is enjoyable and a role that is personally stimulating.

♦ Employees want more control over their employment, specifically in areas such as work schedule and work flexibility.

♦ A desire for fair rewards and their abilities to be respected.

The above factors were opposed by Nuswanto et al's work (2011) who found no correlation existing between the employees' locus of control and the level of the employee engagement. Their work has been opposite to the NHS model which assumed that a positive correlation exists between employees' control over their work and the level of their engagement at work.

Why do engagement drivers then differ from one research to the other? Is it the way the research was done? The tools used? Methodology? Sample type and size? Is it the different cultures where the research has been conducted? Maybe all the previous factors together? Or probably these factors plus many others?

Some researchers have seen that selecting and inducing new employees to an organisation might be of importance to engaging employees. Martin and Bourke (2010) highlighted that the strategic process of "On-boarding" is extremely important for attracting and engaging new employees and sees that this is the step of "Re-affirming" their decision to join an organisation. They debate that achieving what is perceived by employees as essential will drive engagement to almost 89% of the employees and help them achieve their set objectives.

The CIPD annual survey report – 2006: "How Engaged are British Employees". Using a stratified sample of 2,000 employees from across Great Britain, the report is the latest in a long-running series by the CIPD, and provides an independent picture of the experience of work in Britain. The research was conducted for the CIPD (2006) by Kingston Business School and Ipsos MORI.

CIPD researchers have seen that employee engagement, or 'passion for work', involves feeling positive about your job, as well as being prepared to go the extra mile to make sure you do your job to the best of your ability. Diener et al. (2000) debated that "Positivity" as a concept, is linked to various cultural variables. According to Diener, the level of cultural positivity affects the perceptions of the world in the eyes of members of a certain culture. It strongly affects how people remember information and experiences, and how they interpret those in order to come to a decision. It is suggested that members of cultures with high positivity levels would

tend to be more positive and take more challenges easier than members of cultures with low positivity values. Bye and Sandal (2011) have also studied the effect of personal values on the self-presentation of individuals during recruitment interviews and found out that individual values accounted for 19.6% of the cross cultural differences in self-presentation. This makes the term "Satisfaction" very culturally variable, and one single situation (like economic crisis / leadership ...etc.) well taken in some cultures, while extremely destructive in other cultures, which could make this term "Culturally irrelevant".

The main outcomes of the CIPD survey were:

a. Three in ten employees are engaged with their work.
b. Levels of engagement among the under-35s are significantly lower than those in older age groups.
c. Engaged employees perform better than others, are more likely to recommend their organisation to others, take less sick leave, and are less likely to quit
d. Engaged employees also experience increased job satisfaction and more positive attitudes and emotions generally towards their work, suggesting that enhanced levels of engagement are of benefit to the individual as well as their employer.

From the CIPD (2006) survey, the main drivers of employee engagement were:

a. Having opportunities to feed your views upwards
b. Feeling well informed about what is happening in the organisation
c. Thinking that your manager is committed to your organisation.

They have also found that:

a. Women are more engaged with their work than men
b. Older employees are more engaged than younger employees.

The Towers Perrin (Now Towers Watson) engagement report, produced in 2003 and studying more than 35,000 employees working in U.S. companies emphasized that defining engagement is a crucial step in the process of laying the foundation for forward progress. They emphasised that the real value comes in determining what creates engagement through statistical analysis. Towers Perrin researchers have been trying in their study to identify a set of workplace attributes that, in combination, are critical to building high engagement. The Towers Perrin report arranged the drivers of engagement as follows:

1. Senior management's interest in employees' well-being.
2. Challenging work.
3. Decision-making authority.
4. Evidence that the company is focused on customers.
5. Career advancement opportunities.
6. The company's reputation as a good employer.
7. A collaborative work environment where people work well in teams.
8. Resources to get the job done.
9. Input on decision making.
10. A clear vision from senior management about future success.

Their statistics are presented in figure (7):

Top Drivers of Engagement: How Employees Rate Their Companies Today
(in descending order of importance)
% of employees rating company

| | 0% | 20% | 40% | 60% | 80% | 100% |

Senior management has sincere interest in employees' well-being
42 | 25 | 33

Company provides challenging work
53 | 33 | 14

Employees have appropriate decision-making authority
61 | 20 | 19

Company cares a great deal about customer satisfaction
75 | 16 | 9

Employees have excellent career opportunities
34 | 32 | 34

Company has a reputation as a good employer
55 | 30 | 14

Employees work well in teams
67 | 19 | 14

Employees have resources needed to perform jobs in high-quality way
58 | 21 | 21

Employees have appropriate decision-making input
64 | 16 | 20

Senior management communicates clear vision for long-term success
45 | 28 | 27

■ **Favorably** ■ **Mixed** ■ **Unfavorably**   Percents may not add to 100 due to rounding

Figure (7)

Top drivers of engagement: How employees rate their companies today

Source: Towers Perrin 2003 talent report

The same organisation, in their report "Closing the engagement Gap", which was also published as a book in 2009 mentioned a different outcome, when focusing on the most important factors for people at their jobs, as the results came:

1. Having a good work/life balance (65%).
2. Having a secure position for a long time (52%).
3. Maximizing earnings (48%).
4. Doing exciting and challenging work (47%).
5. Having adequate benefit protection for self and family (46%).

From the past examples, we can see some very contradictory outcomes. For example, the CIPD (2006) survey (second example mentioned above), shows that women are more engaged than men, and older employees are more engaged than younger ones; however, the NHS survey (also done in UK but based on the USA study model) showed that the analysis of the results showed no significant difference based on age, ethnicity or gender. So does age and gender differ only in UK? Could

then the drivers of engagement be similar among workforces in both countries? What about other countries which have not been studied? Why shall we assume that there is a global definition or solution for engagement?

It is then important to further investigate how various consultancy firms and other research bodies have explored the term and how they approach it in terms of definition and dimensions.

2.4. Difference in cultures and its effect on engagement.

Jarnagin and Slocum (2007) stated that the concept of organisational culture first appeared in 431 BC., when Pericles believed Athens could win the war with Sparta through strong, unified teamwork. This was one of the very first definitions of culture, relating it to the set of shared goals, values and behaviors among a certain group of people. So basically, this group of people could be inside an organisation (organisational culture), or in a certain country (national culture) or a demographic region (regional culture) or a certain even religious or race.

It is believed that the day-to-day practices of an organisation are embedded in its culture, which, according to Schein (2004) is the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize a company or corporation. Culture provides a pervasive context for employee actions. Because employee behaviours are greatly influenced by it, the conceptualization of culture has captured the imagination of executives for decades.

Is there a true difference in the way different employees in different cultures then view engagement? Is it linked to culture? Does culture have a direct effect on how employees would be engaged at work? The following section shall discover this dimension through exploring various key resources and researches in this field, and try to pin-point an answer to this aspect of employee engagement.

The differences between cultures have been approached by several papers, and are assumed to be due to several reasons; some of them are explained by the EEE survey in the following table (5):

Construct **What's the job?**	Structure and definition of the work *Degree of definition, pace, risk, degree of team interaction*
Compensation **What do employees get in return?**	The entire scope of the "deal" *Salary, benefits, deferred compensation, learning opportunities, satisfaction from giving back, pleasure from social networks*
Connection **How do we relate?**	Preferred style of management *Amount of interaction, frequency and formality of feedback, preference for hierarchy or participative management*
Communication **Why do we care?**	Key messages and shared values *Alignment with core values*

Table (5)

Employee preferences vary across the "4 C's"

Source: *The New Employee/Employer Equation*, The "Concours Group and Age Wave", 2004

In Table (5) above, "Risk Taking" in defining a job itself has been related to cultural variations and frequently been associated with entrepreneurial behaviour. Palich & Bagby (1995) and Busenitz (1999); highlighted that risk taking is more associated to entrepreneurs when facing business situations rather than non-entrepreneurs who would prefer less risk taking.

Since culture is assumed to be one of the key aspects affecting engagement by this research, it is very important to explore how culture is formed in an organisation and what are the key components of this dimension. Schein (2004) highlighted some mechanisms that could be useful in understanding how culture is embedded in organisations, as shown in the following figure:
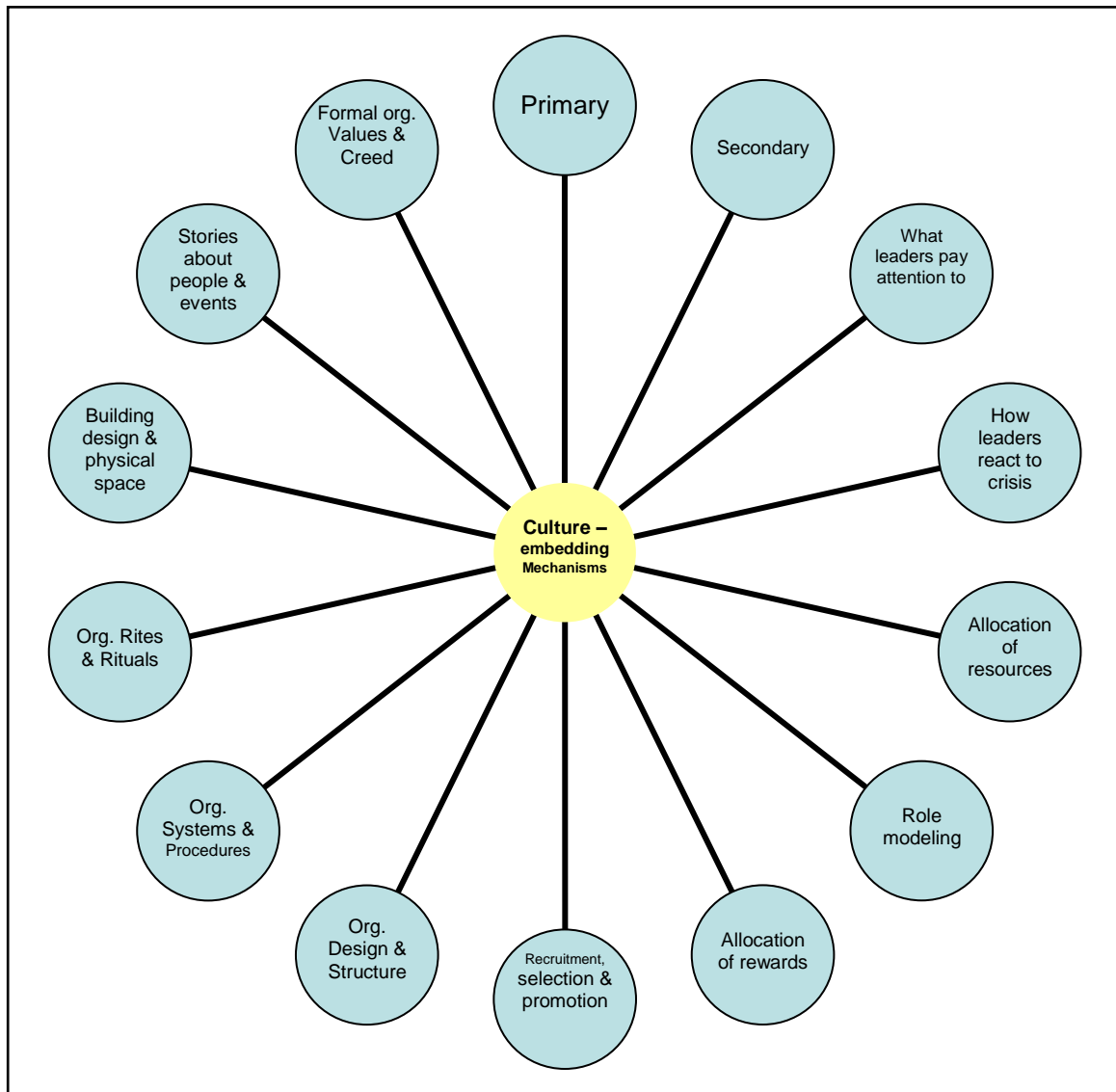
Figure (8)

Culture embedding mechanisms

Adapted from Edgar H Schein (Organizational culture & leadership)(2004).

Primary Embedding Mechanisms. Also called "climate" of the organisation. "Climate" precedes existence of a group culture.

Secondary Articulation and Reinforcement Mechanisms. In young organisations, design, structure, architecture, rituals, stories, and formal statements are cultural reinforcement aspects (support the belief that a certain culture exists), not culture

creators. Once an organisation stabilizes, these become primary (part of the culture) and constrain future leaders from changing the organisational culture.

Secondary reinforcement aspects are cultural artefacts that are highly visible but hard to interpret. When an organisation is in a developmental stage, the leader is the driving force. After a while these will become the driving forces for next generation. These secondary mechanisms will become primary in Midlife or mature organisations.

What Leaders Pay Attention to, Measure, and Control. What leader systematically pays attention to communicates major beliefs. Those are like:

- What is noticed
- Comments made
- Casual questions and remarks

Those could become powerful if the leader sees it and is consistent. If the leader is unaware and inconsistent then confusion can ensue. Consistency is more important than the intensity of attention.

Leader Reactions to Critical Incidents and Organisational Crises. In crisis, how do they deal with it? This creates new norms, values, working procedures and reveals important underlying assumptions.

Observed Criteria for Resource Allocation. How budgets are created reveals the leader's assumption. What is acceptable financial risk? How much of what is decided is all inclusive? Bottom up Or Top down approach.

Deliberate Role Modelling, Teaching, and Coaching. It is seen that the leader's own visible behaviour has great value for communicating assumptions and values to others. Using recording systems is a good option, as well as the informal messages which are very powerful.

Observed Criteria for Allocation of Rewards and Status. Members learn from their own experience with promotions, performance appraisals, and discussions with the boss. What is rewarded or punished is a message that is always delivered to the employees, whether the leader wants or not.

Actual practice is crucial, as it is always compared if it opposed what is written or said. If something is to be learned there must be a reward system setup to insure it.

Observed Criteria for Recruitment, Selection, Promotion, Retirement, and Excommunication. Adding new members is very telling because it is unconsciously done. Also if a good performing employee does not get promoted, this says something to the group.

Organisation Design and Structure. Organising organisations has more passion than logic. Founders have strong ideas about how to organise. They sometimes build a tight hierarchy that is highly centralized, or in other cases put more strength in people and decentralize organisations.

How stable the structure should be is variable, some stick to the original setup while others constantly rework.

The organisation design is vital as well, some articulate why it is organised this way, while others are not aware of why it was done this way. Structure and design can be used to reinforce leaders' assumptions.

Organisational Systems and Procedures. Routines are the most visible parts of life in organisations. Daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or even annually routine is always observed by the employees.

Groups' members seek this kind of order to formalize the process of "paying attention." Systems and procedures should give consistency to the organisation vision. Inconsistency allows a space for subcultures to exist.

Rites and Rituals of the Organisation. Rites and rituals may be central in deciphering as well as communicating the cultural assumptions. They can be powerful reinforcement aspects too. They are only views of a limited portion of the organisation, so leaders should be careful how to set them.

Design of Physical Space, Facades, and Buildings. Visible features or symbolic purposes may convey corporate philosophy. An example of this is designing an open office space, which may convey the culture of openness or control.

Stories about Important Events and People. As history develops, stories evolve. Stories reinforce assumptions, and in many cases, leaders cannot control stories about themselves. Using stories to decipher the organisation has its problems, as some employees might question and investigate their validity.

Organisations with a strong corporate culture also have recognition for heroes whose actions illustrate the company's shared philosophy and concerns. These organisations believe in building a common identity where there is a well understood sense of the informal rules and expectations, thus enabling the members of the organisation to understand what is expected of them.

Formal Statements of Organisational Philosophy, Creeds, and Charters. Formal statements only highlight a small portion of the assumptions, which only reflect what is available for public consumption.

During mergers and acquisitions, awareness of organisational culture and subculture is crucial. Mergers and acquisitions are blending two cultures together. The main problem in both situations is that there is no shared history.

Some key issues are rarely checked, those are mainly the philosophy and origins of both organisations. This all causes a cultural mismatch.

Schein emphasized that it is crucial to understand cultural risks and clash of assumptions as those might cause a cultural disaster. Sometimes this is due to that organisations are not aware of their own culture, other culture or do not their history.

Some differences in cultures relating to employee engagement, mainly between UK and USA, were seen from different dimensions through the NHS Survey in UK as follows: (Figures 9 and 10)
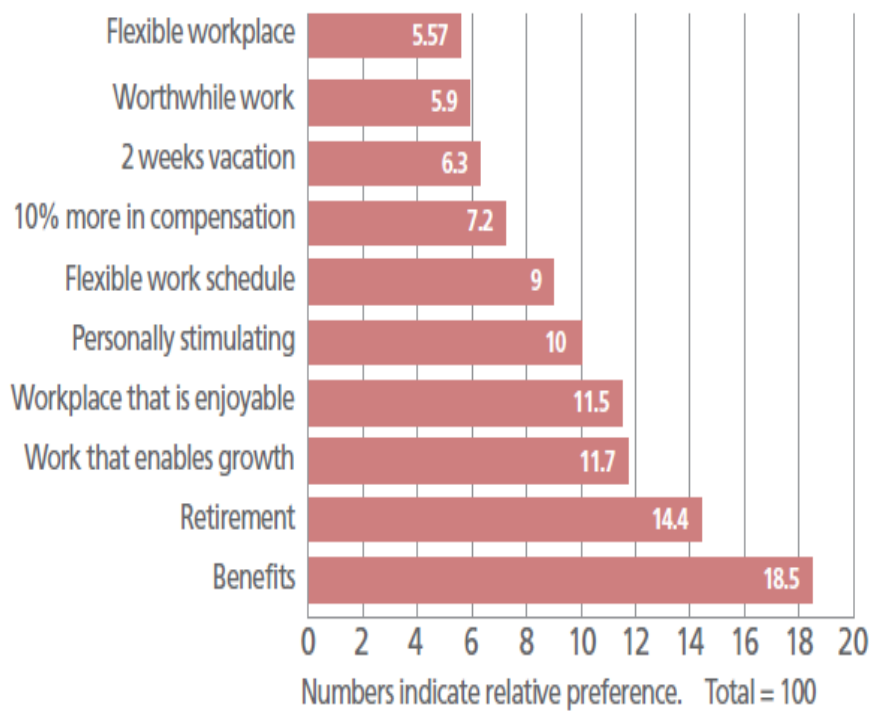
Figure (9)

What the original USA population valued most: **Benefits (Social security ..etc)**

Source: Concours group

Figure (10)

What NHS (UK) employees value most: **Enjoyable, Stimulating work**

Source: Concours group

The concept of difference in cultures and difference in workforce needs was further discussed by Appelbaum and Batt (1994) arguing that US firms needed to find their own version of the sort of advanced work systems seen in Japan ('lean production'), Sweden ('socio-technical systems'), Germany ('diversified quality production') and Italy ('flexible specialisation'). This further emphasizes on the fact that different cultures might have different needs and work focus. Guthrie's (2001) survey of 164 New Zealand firms shows that:

"When firms pursue high-involvement work practices, lower employee turnover is consistent with higher productivity. Conversely, when firms pursue more control-oriented forms of work organisation, higher employee turnover is consistent with higher productivity. In other words, firms which decide to make the costly investment in high-involvement work processes, and the related skills, will have better economic performance in conditions of low labour turnover" (In Boxall, P. and Macky, K. 2009: 10).

When such firms are affected by tight labour markets, they clearly need to take measures to improve employee commitment if they are to achieve low labour turnover and recoup their investment in human capital.

Different cultures also differ in the way they perceive corporate social responsibility (CSR), and there is now more focus towards companies turning "Green" with more focus to environmental protection as well as recycling products, waste and energy. Corporate social responsibility has been believed to pay off to organisations by enhancing employee engagement and sustaining high performance to an organisation. Crawford (2010) found a solid relationship between engagement and employees' positive views on Corporate Social Responsibility-related activities and behaviours, with responses gathered from more than 100,000 employees and leaders in 230-plus Canadian workplaces.

According to Crawford, eighty six per cent of employees at high-engagement organisations agreed or strongly agreed that they work for a socially and environmentally responsible employer. That figure was 71% for organisations with moderate engagement and only 60% for those with low engagement. And those organisations with high engagement have a higher return on their investment in employees compared with low-engagement organisations, in the form of lower absenteeism and turnover as well as higher talent attraction, productivity and readiness for change. So there is a strong tie, according to Crawford, between corporate social responsibility projects of an organisation and the relevant level of employee engagement and organisational commitment.

Organisational commitment is one of the points frequently explored in engagement surveys and has been related by Towers Watson and AON Hewitt to the levels of employee retention and relatedness to the organisational mission and vision, so it is important to understand what the term "organisational commitment" comes from and its background. The concept of organisational commitment has generated huge amounts of research from the 1980s onwards. Organisational commitment has been

defined by Mowday *et al.* (1979) as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organisation.

Workplace commitment includes both organisational commitment and individual commitment. Commitment is central to the understanding of both human motivation and system maintenance (Kanter, 1968). Workplace commitment consists of organisational commitment, individual commitment, and outcomes of workplace commitment. This is followed by a summary of the antecedents to workplace commitment leading to a Conceptual Model of Workplace Commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) have distinguished between the following:

♦ *Affective commitment*: essentially concerns the person's emotional attachment to his or her organisation.

♦ *Continuance commitment*: a person's perception of the costs and risks associated with leaving his or her current organisation. There is considerable evidence that there are two aspects of continuance commitment: the personal sacrifice that leaving would involve, and a lack of alternatives available to the person.

♦ *Normative commitment*: a moral dimension, based on a person's felt obligation and responsibility to his or her employing organisation.

So the work of Allen and Meyer (1990) assume that some employees would be committed to their organisations only because there are no other opportunities outside (which could be relatively correct in case of an economic crisis and lack of availability of jobs in the market). This concept questions if the organisational commitment can reflect engagement, as some employees according to this model could be committed (continuance commitment) but not engaged.

Since the publication of *Culture's Consequences* in 1980, Hofstede's model of national culture has exerted a widespread influence on cross-cultural and social psychology. In Hofstede's (1980) original model, culture was explained in terms of

five dimensions, called, respectively, power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity, and shown in the following figure (11):
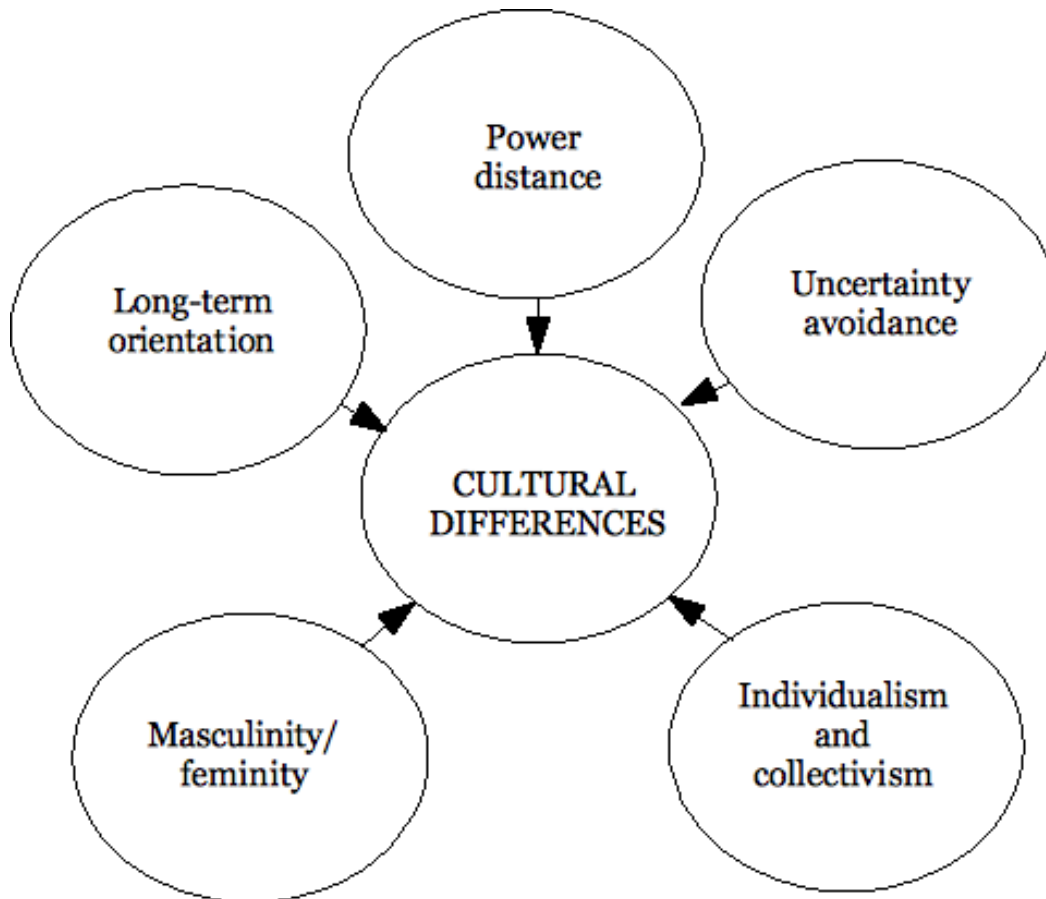
Figure (11)

Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1980)

Power distance index (PDI): Power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of organisations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. Cultures that endorse low power distance expect and accept power relations that are more consultative or democratic. People relate to one another more as equals regardless of formal positions. Subordinates are more comfortable with and demand the right to contribute to and critique the decision making of those in power.

In high power distance countries, less powerful accept power relations that are more autocratic and paternalistic. Subordinates acknowledge the power of others simply based on where they are situated in certain formal, hierarchical positions. As such, the power distance index Hofstede defines does not reflect an objective difference in power distribution, but rather the way people perceive power differences.

Uncertainty avoidance index (UAI): a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. It reflects the extent to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. People in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tend to be more emotional. They try to minimize the occurrence of unknown and unusual circumstances and to proceed with careful changes step by step by planning and by implementing rules, laws and regulations.

In contrast, low uncertainty avoidance cultures accept and feel comfortable in unstructured situations or changeable environments and try to have as few rules as possible. People in these cultures tend to be more pragmatic, they are more tolerant of change.

Individualism (IDV) vs. collectivism: The degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. In individualistic societies, the stress is put on personal achievements and individual rights. People are expected to stand up for themselves and their immediate family, and to choose their own affiliations. In contrast, in collectivist societies, individuals act predominantly as members of a lifelong and cohesive group or organisation. People have large extended families, which are used as a protection in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

Masculinity (MAS), vs. femininity: The distribution of emotional roles between the genders. Masculine cultures' values are competitiveness, assertiveness, materialism, ambition and power, whereas feminine cultures place more value on relationships and quality of life. In masculine cultures, the differences between gender roles are

more dramatic and less fluid than in feminine cultures where men and women have the same values emphasizing modesty and caring.

Long term orientation (LTO), vs. short term orientation: Describes societies' time horizon. Long term oriented societies attach more importance to the future. They foster pragmatic values oriented towards rewards, including persistence, saving and capacity for adaptation. In short term oriented societies, values promoted are related to the past and the present, including steadiness, respect for tradition, preservation of one's face, reciprocation and fulfilling social obligations.

McSweeney (2002) examined the Hofstede's model of national cultural differences and he examined five crucial assumptions upon which this conclusion is based, those are:

1. **Assumption 1**: Three discrete components: Organisational, occupational and national cultures exist in any defined work system.

   The reductive and mechanical basis of Hofstede's tri-partite cultural component assumption can be seen from its expression as an equation:

   $$(NC1 + OrC + OcC) - (NC2 + OrC + OcC) = NC1 - NC2$$

   In which NC = National Culture, OrC = Organisational culture, OcC = Occupational Cultures, and NC1 – NC2 = Difference(s) between two national cultures.

2. **Assumption 2**: The national is identifiable in the micro-local.

3. **Assumption 3:** National culture affects questionnaire response.

4. **Assumption 4**: National culture can be identified by response difference analysis.

5. **Assumption 5**: Answers will be the same in any circumstances within a nation.

The assumptions above constituted the beginning of a critique placed by researchers to Hofstede's model, as McSweeney, Brown, and Iliopoulou (2010) have suggested that the equation created by Hofstede based on the presence of "National Cultures" is widely contested and relies on several factors like the appropriateness, adequacy and representation of national cultures, making this topic a very complex one that can be very challenging to measure and assert.

Hofstede's model's validity and its limitations have been extensively criticized. Ailon (2008) deconstructed Hofstede's book "Culture's Consequences" by mirroring it against its own assumptions and logic. Ailon finds inconsistencies at the level of both theory and methodology and cautions against an uncritical reading of Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

Chiang and Birtch (2010) worked on the Hostede's model of cultural dimensions to deduct key differences that are expected to see between different cultures during performance appraisals. Taking the dimension of "Assertiveness" for example, employees coming from cultures / countries scoring high on this dimension would expect to have a clear difference in pay and treatment between high performers and low performers in the organisation, as described by Porter and Lawler (1968), and the opposite has also been assumed correct as supported by French and Weis (2000).

The second dimension, "Uncertainty avoidance" is also referring to a key cultural and engagement aspect, which is how employees are likely to behave during a crisis, or when the organisation is taking risks. High scores on this parameter would imply that employees are not welcoming risk, and would therefore be seeing risky decisions as threatening to them, this perceived risk leads to taking them out of their comfort zone and increasing the retention risk of key talents. House et al. (2004); and Triandis (1995) have researched the third factor, which is "In group Collectivism" and suggested that employees coming from cultures scoring high on this aspect would express more cohesiveness to the group and willing to sacrifice the individual benefits for group success and welfare.

The last dimension, which is "Power Distance", refers to how employees in a society would accept the differences in distribution of power, and actually how they react to it. Hofstede (2001) has suggested that employees coming from cultures scoring high at organisational level on this aspect would have more tolerance to the power and status of their managers, thus taking more directive orders easier than others coming from cultures scoring low on the same aspect.

The factors mentioned above, and supported by several researches, have neglected one key dimension that Hofstede has based his model on; which is "Masculinity – Femininity" (referred to some times as "Assertiveness"). Hofstede (2005) has assumed that this dimension would affect the way individuals would handle work disagreements. He has defined this dimension as: "Assertiveness and competitiveness versus modesty and caring" (Hofstede and Peterson, 2000:401).

McSweeney, Brown, and Iliopoulou (2010) have argued with Hofstede's assumptions and tested his claims against a historical research of data on "industrial conflict" (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005: 143), as well as testing it in a cross-sectional and longitudinal manner against the countries' homicide rates, as an example of an indicator of the level of aggression within countries. They have found no relation existing between the Hofstede's model with the historical reality, suggesting that organisations could not predict work styles or cultures on the basis of "Masculinity" or "Femininity" countries alone.

How then could the cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede assumed to affect the level of organisational commitment? According to Allen and Meyer (1990), affective commitment develops through work experiences that "*Fulfil employees' needs to feel comfortable within the organization and competent in the work role*" (Allen and Meyer 1990: 4). Continuance commitment, on the other hand, is largely based on the investment that an employee has made in the organisation (e.g., pension contributions) and the perceived lack of alternative employment opportunities, while normative commitment is based more on early experiences of socialization than on experiences in the employing organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1996). The evidence for national differences in the sources of commitment is growing.

Buchko et al. (1998) found that job involvement and promotion were stronger predictors of commitment for Russian workers than is typically found for American workers, although there were no differences for pay satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, work satisfaction, or co-worker satisfaction.

In a seven-nation study, Andolšek and Štebe (2004) found that material job values such as job quality were more predictive of commitment in individualistic societies, whereas post materialistic job values such as helping others were more predictive of commitment in collectivistic societies. Ko, Price, and Mueller (1997) have questioned if the construct of organisational commitment is valid in East Asian samples. Other researches have also looked into this topic, covering employees from very different countries like the United Arabs Emirates (Yousef, 2003), Kenya (Walumbwa, Orwa, Wang, & Lawler, 2005), Belgium (Vandenberghe, 1996), Japan (White, Parks, Gallagher, Tetrault, & Wakabayashi, 1995), and China (Cheng & Stockdale, 2003).

Having listed all those researchers interested in the cross cultural dimension of differences in organisational commitment, it is clear that their work has shown by evidence some key differences existing between employees from one culture to the other. The fact that differences between cultures existed supports the research's approach to inspect the effect of cultures on engagement drivers.

Further support to the theory (that many factors contribute to the employee engagement equation and definition for every organisation) is obtained from the work of Kular et. al (2008) who have highlighted that personal variation, gender, emotional experience, perception, personal relationships at work, wellbeing, organisational environment as well as socio-cultural factors would all have an effect on the employee engagement definitions and drivers. The factors listed above by Kular et. Al (2008) would then participate in creating a unique formula to define employee engagement in the context of not only every specific organisation, but to every departmental or operational level of a single organisation.

One of the frequent incidences happening in several industries nowadays is that of organisational mergers and acquisitions, which is worth reviewing if it also has an impact over employee engagement or not.

Vaara, Sarala, Stahl and Bjorkman (2010) have researched this aspect specifically, as they have investigated the effects of national, organisational and cultural differences on international acquisitions. They have suggested that boundaries exist and could be solid stones in building up the feeling of "us versus them" during mergers and acquisitions, which could be destructive to the group employee engagement and cause extra challenges for the merger process. One of their key findings was that cultural differences existing at the organisational level can be a predisposing factor for social conflict, while the national cultural differences can oppositely cause a decrease in the social conflict.

Krishnan et al. (1997) have positively seen the cultural differences and assumed that this causes extra value during mergers and acquisitions, while Reus and Lamont (2009) see that those differences can cause both; positive and negative effects over this critical period.

Datta and Puia (1995), Krug and Hegarty (1997); and Weber et al. (1996) have all reached the same assumption that mergers or acquisitions occurring between organisations employing people from culturally-similar nations would be easier to process and would lead to positive outcomes quicker and easier that those occurring between organisation which differ a lot in the cultural background of their employees.

There is an opposite school, represented in the work of Krishnan et al. (1997); and Morosini et al. (1998) who encourage mergers occurring from different cultural backgrounds, since they see this diversity as a sense of strengths in sharing knowledge and diversity in experience, thus elevating the organisational capability and enriching the "know how" of the new organisation with new experience.

The challenge for the theory of Krishnan et al. (1997); and Morosini et al. (1998) is how can management ensure harmony between different employees and enhance

the sense of trust between employees who deal with situations in a different way. This challenge is usually doubled if the new organisation has overlaps in positions and announces a certain percentage of turn over (layoffs) post integration. Keeping employees positive and motivated at this critical stage of organisations' lifecycle is then a key factor in maintaining high levels of engagement. But what if the employees being merged come from very different cultures, shall the motivation strategy be the same? Does culture affect motivation factors?

Iguisi (2009) studied motivation-related values in four European countries (France, Italy, Netherlands and Scotland) and one African country; (Nigeria). The research found significant differences in cultural values for motivation in the five European countries with a significant role for the "collective interest" in Nigeria. One of the conclusions of the research and possible assumptions was that the Western management models may not be applicable or appropriate for adoption in Nigeria in particular and African countries in general without recourse to the prevailing local cultural values.

Iguisi (2009) assumed in the research that individuals will always have several layers of values carried in them, naming: National level (depending on the country), Ethnic / Religious level, Gender, Social class, and Generation levels.

Schwartz (1999) has looked into the model of cultural values in terms of possible conflicts occurring between certain values, giving an example for some values that promote self interest in some cultures, which might be conflicting and contradicting to other values focusing on child care and future generations' well-being. Particularly in this case, the value of "egalitarianism" (focusing on equity between all human beings in rights and responsibilities), and "hierarchy" (focusing on the un-equal distribution of power, responsibility, authority and facilities between people according to their level in the society pyramid).

If we take those both core values (egalitarianism and hierarchy), just as an example, and compare employees coming from various cultures embracing those two values on this level, then link the values' satisfaction to engagement, the result would be

assuming the possibility of different engagement drivers for employees coming from different cultures, since those who value egalitarianism would need to see more of equity at the work place, in terms of work load, facilities and resources, while those who embrace hierarchy as a value, would expect and accept a certain difference between themselves and their managers in terms of work load, office spaces, facilities and resources.

Rohan (2000); Rokeach (1973); and Schwartz (1992) have all viewed the assumption of differences of engagement drivers based on cultures since they have suggested that at the individual employee level, the values would constitute specific motivational needs that would then require satisfaction from respective leaders or organisations.

On the group or national level, Hofstede (2001); and Inglehart (1997) have looked into this aspect and suggested that values at this level would represent what the group values and could enable clear comparison between cultures in this aspect. Williams (1970) has earlier seen the same view of Hofstede (2001); and Inglehart (1997) and highlighted that those specific cultural values would represent what is expected and accepted at a certain culture, which could be very different from another culture and in some times opposite.

The link between specific cultural values and people's needs, behaviours, attitudes and interests have been the focus of several researchers. While Kluckhohn (1951); Rohan (2000); Rokeach (1973); Schwartz (1992) have all linked cultural values to certain behaviours that people show and appreciate, Hogan and Blake (1996) saw the close relationship between values, needs and interests. Allport (1961) and Rokeach (1973) viewed the strong link between values and beliefs, while Campbell (1963) saw the link with attitudes, and Maslow (1954) linked this with needs. Allport (1961) and Perry (1954) have linked the values with interests and Katzell (1964) and Rokeach (1973) linked them with preference.

The above examples of research linked "values" to several aspects that reflect on engagement, giving an indication that if the values are not defined in the same manner across various cultures, it would then be very difficult (and actually

unpractical) to build surveys crossing cultures, assuming that individuals would define values in the same manner.

Values concern what people want rather than how they typically behave; in this manner, Hogan (1995) created the "Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory" (MVPI) which contains ten scales that identify a person's core values. Those tend items are:

1. Recognition: the individual need to be known, recognised, appreciated, and famous.
2. Power: wanting to be in control, to succeed, and create a legacy
3. Hedonism: wanting fun, variety, excitement, and pleasure
4. Altruism: wanting to help, serve, and encourage others
5. Affiliation: wanting frequent and varied social contact
6. Tradition: believing in personal customs, duty, hard work, and respect for authority
7. Security: need for predictability, structure, and order
8. Commerce: interest in money, profits, investment, and business opportunities
9. Science: enjoying research, interested in technology, and preferring data-based decisions
10. Aesthetics: need for self-expression, desire for quality in the look, feel, and design of work product.

The above is believed by Hogan (1995) to be a strong predictor of what culture an organisation is likely to have since corporate culture is greatly defined by leadership within an organisation and depending on which values the leader places emphasis on, they will determine what is valued, not valued, and what is actively encouraged or discouraged.

O'Neal and Gebauer (2006) have suggested that leadership, despite being a common factor and playing a strong role in employee engagement, has always been a source for scepticism among employees, and it is extremely difficult to find a consistent leadership satisfaction when it comes to vision or communication styles.

Different cultures would perceive "Good Leadership" differently, and in multicultural organisations, getting this "One leader who inspires all" is very difficult.

To explore further about how the effect of differences in culture on employee engagement is viewed on the industrial level, several industry experts have been interviewed in this research (Interview details and profiles of the interviewees are attached as Appendix (D).

There is almost a consensus among the interviewed industry experts that even if some aspects of engagement are identified as common (like leadership, work life balance, feeling of ownership ...etc.), there is also an agreement that there is a cultural and organisational context to those main terms, and what could be defined as "fitting" to expectations in one culture, could be very different from what fits in another culture.

These industry experts, having studied, worked and led teams at various cultures, have all seen that agility is extremely important when leading teams in various cultures, and agreed that interpretation of behaviour could be very different from one culture to the other.

There appears to be an agreement between industrial as well as academic researchers that engagement is not universally defined, and flexibility should exist in leadership to adapt and change according to the culture of the employees they operate in.

It is then strongly suggested from the work reviewed in this section that different cultures should be approached differently, and the issue of globalising engagement and its application in real life across various cultures is a genuine concern among academics as well as practitioners and business leaders.

2.5. Engagement and its effect on corporate performance.

Fleming, Coffman and Harter (2005) viewed that employee engagement affects corporate performance in the sense that employee engagement would also drive customer engagement. This link between employee engagement and customer engagement is basically generating strong emotional connection to the company (indicated by customer behaviour such as attrition, frequency of use, total revenue, and total spending). The dimension they look at comes from the fact that every interaction an employee has with a customer represents an opportunity to build that customer's emotional connection or to diminish it. Obviously, these interactions are not the only way to the customer's heart, but they are a large and largely untapped resource. In the United States, just 29% of employees are energized and committed at work, according to Gallup Poll data. 54% are effectively neutral and they show up and do what is expected, but little more. The remaining employees, almost two out of ten, are disengaged. The whole concept of "Employee and Customer engagement", leads to better profits and overall better organisational performance, as they have seen that fully engaged customers deliver a 23% premium over the average customer in terms of share of wallet, profitability, revenue, and relationship growth. The concept above (linking employee engagement to customer engagement) is summarized in the following figure (12):

High	These partially optimized units are **1.7** Times more effective than the baseline	These optimized units are **3.4** Times more effective than the baseline
Customer Engagement	[1] Baseline units are non-optimized	These partially optimized units are **1.7** Times more effective than the baseline
Low		

Employee Engagement   **High**
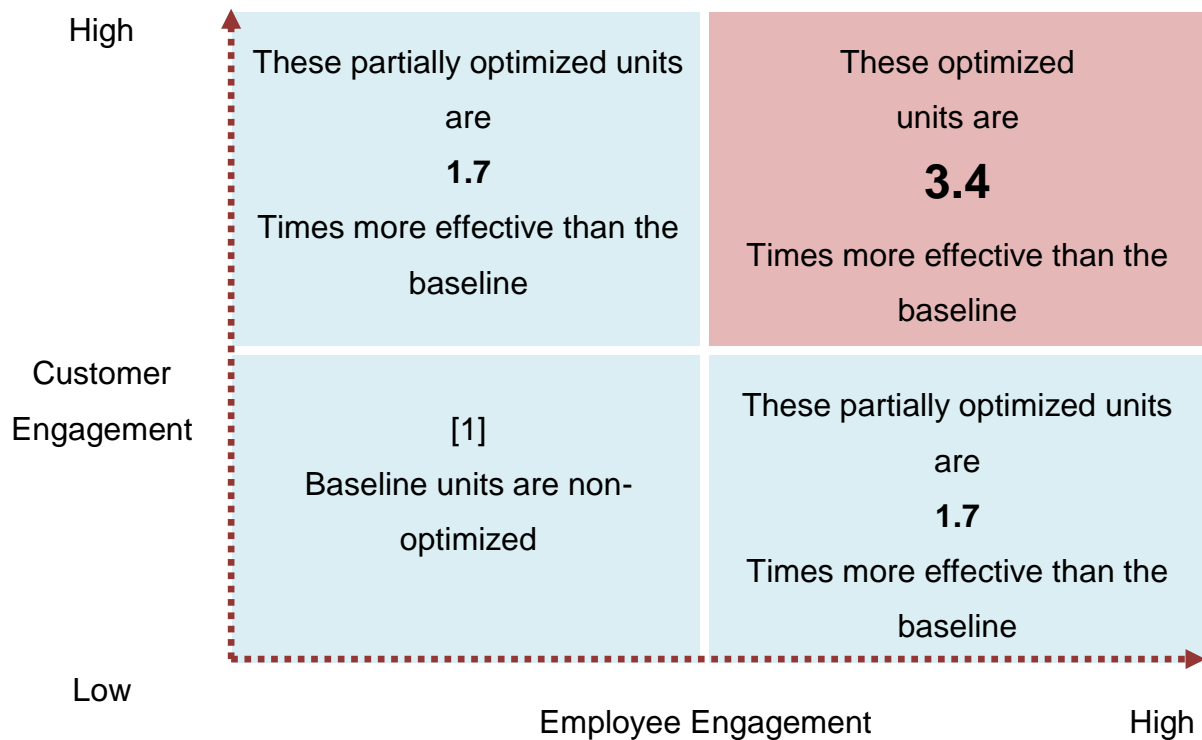
Figure (12)

The interaction of employee and customer engagement

Source: THE HIGH-PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION, "Manage your Human Sigma", John H. Fleming, Curt Coffman, and James K. Harter, Harvard Business Review, July-August 2005.

The researchers have concluded that local business units with even moderately high levels of both worker and customer engagement are, on average, more effective financially than units with very high levels of only one form of engagement. This model, despite supporting the link between employee engagement and corporate results, has a weak point, which is the sample nature and studied industry. The work of Fleming et.al (2005) has focused on one large retailer without a clear challenge of how applicable this would be to other industries. The market dynamics associated with the success in engaging customers were not as well explored and trends in similar industries were not compared. The results were built on comparing various stores' results within the same retailer at the same culture (regionally) rather than cross-comparing the credibility of this model in other industries and other cultures.

The question then comes back: If this model is checked in other cultures, would the same results be obtained? Would culture affect customer engagement? Do customers coming from different cultures require different communication styles?

Shaules (2007) suggests that individuals coming from different cultures would try to reach for a common meaning in order to communicate together, and this would be crucial to establish a communication method or strategy. Byram (1997) has seen the importance of communication as well and suggested that tolerance and flexibility are key values that would affect the levels of intercultural communication and understanding.

Frauenheim (2009) debates that the most common step organisations are taking to enhance employee engagement is increasing and enhancing communications across the organisation. According to Frauenheim (2009), study by "The Institute for Corporate Productivity research group" looking at around 290 organisations, found out that 58 per cent of firms were taking actions to prevent the increase in labour turnover during the economic crisis. Out of the 58 per cent, 81 per cent cited increased communication to employees, making it the top-ranked answer for the steps organisations took to boost employee engagement at this difficult time. Balain and Sparrow (2009) linked staff engagement to an effective service-profit chain for the organisation, as displayed in the following figure (13):
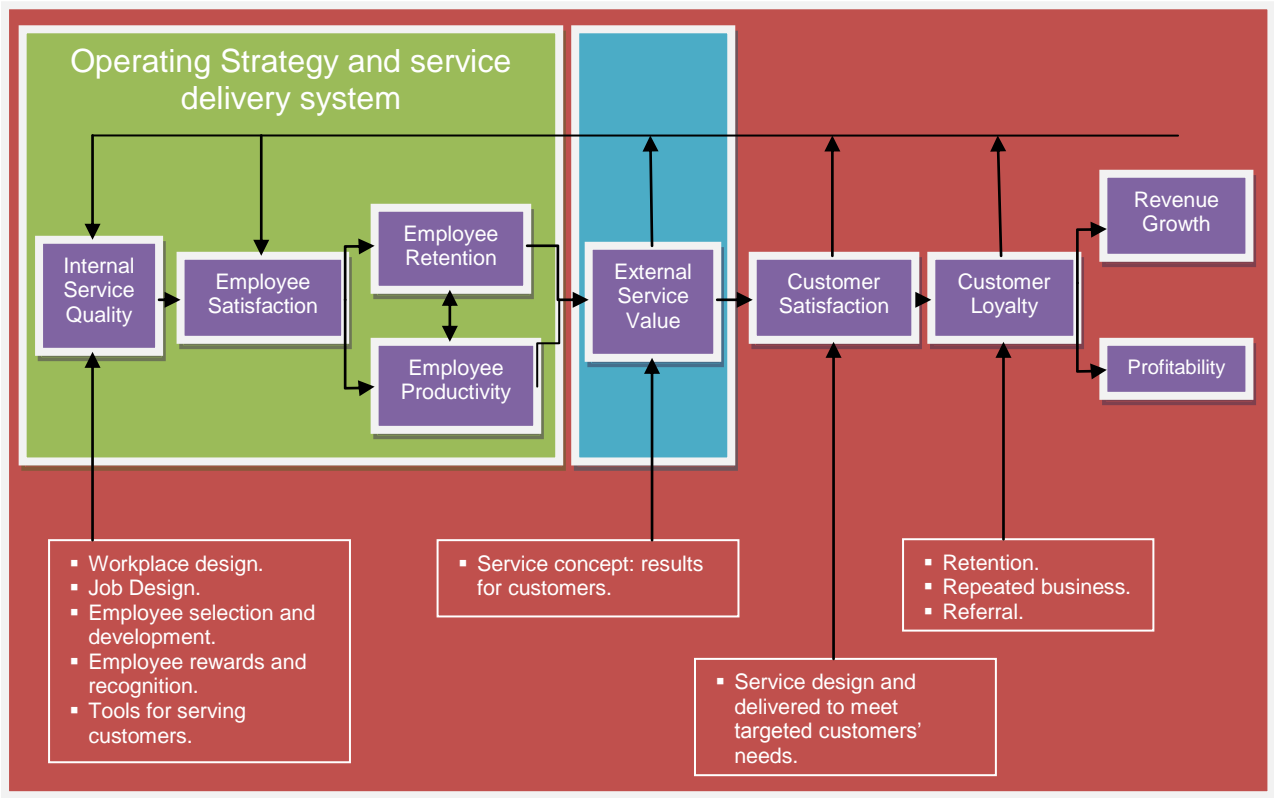
Figure (13)

The Service-Profit chain

Source: Balain and Sparrow (2009), CPHR.

They have shown that as employee engagement was being believed to influence shareholder value, some companies chose to make employee engagement an important benchmark in their annual Human Capital Report (HCR). The challenge would still remain how this is defined, driven, and measured in the specific context of every organisation.

2.6. Effect of time on staff engagement drivers.

Staff engagement is assumed by this current research to change over time (H4), and the activities some companies do today to enhance engagement, might become less valid in the future. This was supported by the outcome of the Engage Group, the specialist employee engagement consultancy, who commissioned YouGov to conduct the most comprehensive study of employee engagement practice ever undertaken in the UK. They have surveyed a total of 23,585 people across Great

Britain, representing a wide range of employees, managers and directors from all parts of the British economy. They focused a number of questions on more than 2,500 board-level executives from a broad range of sectors, and one of their major findings is displayed in table (6) below:

New World (Gen Y)	Old World (Gen X & Baby boomers)
Management of Change Level of satisfaction among employees with the way change is managed	**Employer advocacy** Extent to which employees are advocated of their organisation.
Involvement in "big-issue" decisions Extent to which employees feel actively involved in major decision making from outset.	**Deserved loyalty** Extent to which employees believe their organisation deserves their loyalty.
Understanding of personal contribution Level of satisfaction with employees' understanding of their contribution to the organisation's strategy	**Fairness** Extent to which employees feel they get a fair deal from their employer.
Empowerment Extent to which employees feel empowered to take decisions	**Motivation** Extent to which employees feel motivated to perform.
Involvement in "Everyday" decisions Extent to which employees feel actively involved in routine decision making	**Pride** Level of employee pride in working for their organisation.

Table (6)

The elements of successful engagement

Five elements of the successful 'Generation Y' organisation emerge

Source: Engage group, Empowering employees: The new rules of engagement (2008).

The economic crisis that started by the end of 2008 could also have its effect on engagement, and this can be demonstrated in the following question, that is usually asked in engagement surveys:

"Are you currently seriously considering leaving your company?"

□ *Yes*   □ *Don't know*   □ *No*

After the recent economic crisis (i.e. since 2008) hit the world, and many people were laid off, this question could well lose its validity in measuring the engagement levels, as many people would hold their jobs, or search for any jobs, even if they were not getting what makes them engaged. The search for a job could overrule the search for engagement due to the perceived overall lack of job security levels among all employees because of the external environmental conditions. (i.e. continuity commitment.)

"Quantum Workplace" researchers have shown that employee engagement declined at 66 per cent of U.S. companies, according to a comparative survey of 2007 and 2008. By almost a two-to-one margin, more employers had lower overall employee engagement scores in Autumn 2008 than in Autumn 2007, the research found. "*This result is out of the ordinary from our trends for the last five years and strongly suggests that external circumstances regarding the economy may well be influencing employees' attitudes about their jobs and workplaces*" (HR Focus, 2009: 9).

Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010) support research hypothesis 4 as the drivers of engagement have been seen to change from one year to the other. In their research, published in 2010, the drivers of engagement have changed from 2008 to 2009 as follows:

In 2008, the top drivers of engagement were in order:
1. Leadership (100%).
2. Career Development (64%).
3. Image (29%).

4. Empowerment (21%).

While the priorities and weights given to the same parameters in 2009 were:
1. Leadership (80%).
2. Image (60%).
3. Career development and Empowerment on same level of importance, at 47%.

The above shows a clear example on how the engagement drivers' ranking have changed, using the same tool in only one year. This effect of time on engagement drivers is a critical one, since it raises the bar of challenges in developing a long term strategy for engaging employees, since this would be seriously questioned for validity if there is a strong belief that the drivers which the strategy were built on are not valid any more, or at least do not constitute the same weight of importance in the employees' perspective.

Bunting (2004) has noted this change in her research from an employee generation perspective and suggested that employees nowadays are different than before in the sense that they look for more freedom, get easily frustrated with the work environment, and would look for more opportunities for self-expression. Kompier (2005) has supported the existence of this difference between workers' generations in the sense that the new generations are assumed to be more educated than the ones who leave work due to the evolution of many new concepts and learning trends every day (like the possibility for many high quality distance learning opportunities through the evolution of modern learning technology). So do education levels also have an effect over employee engagement drivers?

Kompier (2005) work could be debated in a way as it depends on the individual's learning capacity as well as the corporate investment in learning and development and if learning is taken as a serious aspect for the success of the organisation. Kompier's work can also be challenged in practice as some individuals who are senior in working years with an organisation are keen to get new learning every day, and those would then be out of the equation of Kompier; however, this is not always the case, as some senior employees as well would be satisfied with what they have

already learnt and could take their employment for granted, not focusing on new learning trends or methods. The possibility of existence of the two scenarios (senior employees keen to learn and senior employees satisfied with what they have achieved) challenges the reliance on Kompier's work as a single dimension of engagement.

Sources of confusion for employee engagement

It is now becoming clear that employee engagement has been seen from very different angles, and through time, the definition of employee engagement seems to have evolved across various regions, but still there is no consensus to date as to what this could mean. This confusion was raised earlier by Vosburgh (1979) as employee engagement measurement was seen as having evolved somewhat from the traditional measurement of ''job satisfaction''.

Macey and Schneider (2008), 30 years later than Vosburgh, noticed the current presence of several definitions of employee engagement either being derived from practitioners or from researchers as well. They saw the current definitions and methods only increasing the confusion and inconsistency surrounding the meaning and measurement of employee engagement. The confusion in their point of view is coming from the referral of the term "Employee Engagement" to three main dimensions; the psychological state, the performance construct, the employee disposition, or most probably, a combination of the three terms.

Macey and Schneider (2008) argue that employee engagement is made up of many various and different components (shown in table (7) below) and there is a blend of those components that forms a specific organisational definition which is hard to reach using current methods.

The lack of consistency in defining what engagement meant was further supported by Newman and Harrison (2008), but challenged and disagreed by Frese (2008), who disagreed with Macey and Schneider's (2008) assumption that science was lagging behind in the field of employee engagement, and argue that science was

actually a key player in this field and has been able to deliver models which helped in the creation of several practical solutions at that time. (Referring to the models of Kahn, (1990); Bateman & Crant (1993); Ashford & Black (1996); Frese, Kring, Soose, and Zempel, (1996)).

The psychological state, discussed by Macey and Schneider (2008), was also discussed by Meeks and Looney (2011) who have focused on the effect of psychological depression on levels of engagement and positive reinforcement. Achterberg et al. (2003); and Libet and Lewinsohn (1973), have linked depression to a lower level of engagement into interpersonal interactions, while Lewinsohn and Graf (1973) and Lewinsohn (1975) have linked this to social interaction and suggested that social interaction plays a very important role in recovery from depression in individuals.

Dalal, Brummel, Wee, and Thomas (2008), have seen the work of Macey and Schneider (2008) as of value to the topic of employee engagement and have commented on the work as focusing on the cognitive-affective side of engagement, which is translated into the states and traits of employee engagement (explained in table (7) below). They add on the work of Macey and Schneider (2008) the assumption that other factors in life in general would also affect engagement levels which broadens the area of research and would support this piece of research, as this new factor (cognitive affective side of engagement) will increase the number of factors affecting employees' engagement, which will make it extremely difficult to globalise in the way the term is defined and consequently measured.

Dimension	Trait Engagement *(Positive views of life and work)*	State Engagement *(Feelings of energy, absorption)*	Behavioural Engagement *(Extra-role in organisation)*
Components	Proactive Personality	Satisfaction (Affective)	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)
	Autotelic Personality	Involvement	Proactive/Personal Initiative
	Trait Positive Affect	Commitment	Role Expansion
	Conscientiousness	Empowerment	Adaptive

Table (7)

Framework for understanding the elements of employee engagement

Source: Adapted from Macey and Schneider (2008)

Harter and Schmidt (2008) commented on the paper by Macey and Schneider (2008) and saw that they referred frequently to the Gallup measure of employee engagement (known as the Q12), conceptually describing it as a measure of conditions under which people work but one where 'the state of engagement is not assessed.'

The concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) mentioned in Macey and Schneider (2008) in table (7) above, was discussed by Bateman and Organ (1983); and Smith et al. (1983), and was described as the un-contractually rewarded achievement by employees who show an extra effort to do a certain task that is way beyond their defined job description in order to add value to the organisation they belong to. Ma and Qu (2011) have developed a three dimension model for Organisational Citizenship Behaviour measurement and definition and those were organisational, interpersonal and customer. They have assumed that the social exchange between employees is of extreme importance to develop such behaviour. Blau (1986) defined "Social Exchange" as the individual actions that employees might voluntary decide to make, based on their expectations of returns from their fellow colleagues. Organ (1988), Graham (1989), Podsakoff et al.(1990), Moorman and Blakely (1995), and LePine et al. (2002) have all seen that the organisational citizenship behaviour is a multidimensional construct and depends on more than one aspect.

Griffin, Parker and Neal (2008) challenge the concept of behavioural engagement mentioned by Macey and Schneider and adapted in the table above. They challenged the whole concept of behavioural engagement and argued that the concept implies that employee engagement underpins a particular set of behaviours. This connection is seen problematic from their side as they debate that an employee might display innovation, which will be considered by the authors as a sign of behavioural engagement, not because they feel engaged but because they fear redundancy and want to prove their capability. On the other side, another employee might not show innovation, not because they are not engaged, but because the organisational context does not encourage this or simply because the organisation does not support and provide the technical tools required for the employee to innovate and produce a new idea. They have referred to examples from Macey and Schneider (2008) themselves as they described some situations where this controversy existed. Frese (2008) agrees with Macey and Schneider (2008) model in this aspect and sees that job satisfaction should not be calculated as a factor in the employee engagement equation. He takes it to an extreme level of opposites when he debates that employees could show a big motive towards a behavioural change,

just because they are so dissatisfied and wish to change things around, referring this to the negative feelings that sometimes trigger the spark and initiate the will in people to change.

Griffin, Parker and Neal (2008) suggest that Macey and Schneider's findings about behavioural engagement can be developed by linking the facets of psychological engagement to the broad performance domain and not to the aggregate group of behaviours and by considering the dynamics of the process. The same need for further development was seen by Dalal, Brummel, Wee, and Thomas (2008), who saw that further modifications on this model need to be done. They have seen that "State Engagement" should be simply called "Engagement", with the focus that the term could include both the "State-like" and "Trait-Like" components, as well as linking the term to the cognitive-affective construct and not the dispositional or behavioural construct.

Zigarmi et al (2009) have highlighted the lack of inconsistency among various academic and practitioner papers dealing with employee engagement. They have tried to use a different term to define the concept, which they named "Employee Work Passion". Changing the word "Engagement" was seen from their side beneficial due to the use of the word in several academic studies of work burnout, involvement and wellbeing. Their concept was based on social cognitive theory and recommended that human resource professionals should assess the affective components of the appraisal processes, differentiate between cognitions and intentions, and separate intentions from behaviours. Fletcher and Perry (2001); and Huo and Von Glinow (1995) have stressed that the performance appraisal process is one of the extremely challenging practices for management, especially when it comes to the cross cultural context, where the appraiser and the appraise are from different national or cultural backgrounds. Newman and Nollen (1996) have argued that aligning management practices between various operations for the organisation and across different cultures is crucial for the success of the business and ensuring employee management integrity and harmony. This issue is crucial and has a direct influence on employee engagement, since the appraisal process is the formal means of an organisation encouraging certain behaviours, attitudes, and outcomes from

employees, as well as discouraging others, so it is a mean of communicating to employees directly and indirectly as to what is accepted and expected in the organisation, and in the cross cultural dimension differences, this could mean very different, and sometimes opposite behaviours (like confrontation for example, which is encouraged in some cultures and discouraged, as a sense of disrespect, in other cultures). Elenkov (1998), Milliman et al. (1998), Ramamoorthy and Carroll (1998); and Snape et al. (1998) have all supported this assumption as they have demonstrated substantial differences occurring in various cultures regarding values and expectations from the performance appraisal process. House et al. (2004) have gathered those differences and grouped them into some key aspects like assertiveness, in-group collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, which is quite similar to the Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions.

Curtin (1984) has shown three main areas of possible conflict when facing cross-cultural communication, those were: Language, uncertainty in relationships, and trust. The first one (language) is a clear aspect of communication as language is considered the resource for transactions when it comes to communication, and its absence (or inadequacy) would limit the exchange of information made during communication. The second and third aspects (uncertainty and trust) are somewhat linked to each other, since Curtin believed that sometimes the cultural barriers would be translated into a communal fear, which could transfer an unnecessary feeling of "risk" or "danger" to the host society. Curtin (1984) work provides very good insights to the work environment from this aspect. Percentage of having "expatriates" working in countries other than their home countries is increasing, which adds more complexities to the work environment due to the indefinite possibilities of cultural mixes, at all hierarchical levels. So if we assume that the universal business language would be English in most multinational organisations, and eliminate this factor as most organisations would require good command of English language in order to get hired, then the question of whether other aspects of uncertainty and trust would still be valid, affecting several sides of the business environment, with specific importance towards leadership – followership relationships, as those include very sensitive topics like promotions, performance appraisals, individual development plans, and might also touch upon grievances or disciplinary measures.

This conflict of research suggestions and data supports the current research hypothesis (H1) since it implies that employees, when thinking of a culture of engagement are not likely to define drivers of engagement in the same manner, even if they are in the same country. Some terms are still not globally defined and dependant on individuals' values. Thinking of "Leadership" as a term that has been supported by many researchers as a key driver of engagement, some cultures would see it as the position which is high in authority and power, and actually like this, while other cultures would like to see it more as the humble and "employee level" position. Therefore; it is suggested that some employees will not be engaged with certain leadership styles (who are accepted by other cultures). The data above suggests that when it comes to cultures and occupational psychology, it might make sense then to consider other factors that possibly could affect the employees' attitude at work and levels of engagement in organisational goals.

Totterdell (2000) supports the thinking that employee engagement has its very own organisational context model and sees that groups develop collective mood as a result of experiencing similar workplace events and having emotional contagion processes. This collective group mood will lead to employees having similar affective reactions towards a certain situation or decision. The group thinking concept was supported by Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), where they believed that employee engagement, if shared among employees, accompanied by an enjoyable work environment, will create a shared memory and builds up a sense of "groupness". Fine (1998) agrees with the group perception concept and suggests that good healthy relationships between employees help them perceive the work place as more enjoyable and pleasant.

In addition to the theory of contagious moods, Kelly and Barsade (2001) saw that modelling and emotion management are formed strongly in groups and contribute to the way they react to external stimulus. Totterdell (2000), researching professional cricket teams, found evidence for mood convergence that confirms the above statement as well. Jean Martin, the Executive Director for the Corporate Leadership Council, has supported the strong effect of the emotional side of engagement and

has stressed that it is actually four times more powerful than the rational side when it comes to driving business outcomes, Ketter (2008).

Since the evolution of employee engagement measurement was led by the consultancy companies, focusing on business outcomes and selling their product to the business, it was not coordinated by an accredited body, which could offer a neutral academic opinion and tries to unite their efforts towards one agreed definition and measurement of employee engagement.

Smith (2006) and Torraco (2005) offer support to this research's hypothesis in their views of the existing gap between research and practice when defining or measuring employee engagement. Zigarmi et al (2009) have clarified the difference between academic and consultancy firms in defining engagement; however, they see that there are some common areas that can be noticed between both approaches; namely: having common conceptual components, lacking common conceptual framework, and a multidimensional definition of the term "Employee Engagement". Zigarmi et al (2009) support that three main components should exist in any definition of employee engagement, which are: the cognition part, affection part; and the intention part.

The above literature reviews clearly show the agreement on the inconsistency of definitions and measurement methods for employee engagement, and the current existing gap in knowledge of how to objectively approach the term and measure the levels of engagement across various organisational and cultural contexts. Since employee engagement has been shown by various consultancy firms to be of extreme benefit to organisational performance metrics, then getting the right definition of what engagement means in the context of each organisation and how to measure it is crucial for organisations' success.

The conclusion drawn from this chapter is that current engagement measurement tools face a question of validity in the context of cross cultural differences. This conclusion sets the pace for the thesis research and for proposing a method that

could then make sense to the related work and help in objectively measuring engagement in a diverse cross cultural context.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY / RESEARCH APPROACH

This chapter discusses the local survey study done with reference team members in the Middle and Near East to define staff engagement, the methodology used for the thesis research, including the challenges faced in the design of the survey, and the techniques used in collecting the information to be analysed. The research indicators are also highlighted in this chapter, and those indicators will help to establish or deny the hypotheses.

Since the study aimed to identify engagement within a group of employees who are distributed among thirteen different countries, it was very important to identify the best practice of how this could be done, so that employees could have common understanding to the questions and could provide credible answers for them. For this, the research has used a **mixed methodology of Emic-Etic approach** as well as a **mixed qualitative-quantitative approach**. This was done aiming to achieve the following benefits:

1. Understand what engagement means in the context of the larger specific studied work culture (the sample group in total).
2. Compare between the definitions of engagement and drivers between different micro groups identified in the same sample.
3. Understand the significance of results via statistical analysis.
4. Capture the context of what terms mean in the studies sample group via open ended questions to understand the real meaning behind words that could be taken as globally recognized. (Leadership / Enjoyable work environment / Fairness..).

In the following section, the different approaches will be explained, including the benefits and challenges in using those approaches in the current research.

Schaffer and Riordan (2003) argued that the development and focus of the cross-cultural research question has important implications for further design and measurement within a study. Two issues are particularly relevant for this stage. Researchers must establish whether their studies will have an emic or etic perspective, and they must also determine the way in which they will define or treat culture.

Emic approach: The emic approach focuses on examining a construct from within a specific culture and understanding that construct as the people from within that culture understand it (Gudykunst, 1997). Much of the work-related researches are emic in the sense that they examine soft aspects of work-related issues as they apply to a specific group of employees (such emic research is common in USA as well as other countries). Emic studies can be considered cross-cultural when they are run in various countries and take into account, either implicitly or explicitly, other cultures. This type of research often takes constructs, theories, or measures that have been developed in one culture (typically the United States, UK or Europe) and adapts them for use within other cultures like Asia, Middle East and Africa. In addition, these studies commonly include narrative comparisons between theories or findings in one culture and previous research in other cultures.

An important issue to consider when using an emic approach is that shared frames of reference may not exist across cultures (Ronen & Shenkar, 1988) due to the difference in thinking patterns and priorities. As this type of approach researches behaviour from within a single culture, it is then crucial to understand the specific culture insiders' viewpoints and their cognitive thinking patterns within the particular setting (Weick, 1979). Understanding the specific cultural approach will ensure that the unique features of a particular culture are incorporated into the theory, hypotheses, measurement, and analyses. This would lead to limiting globalisation across cultures.

The research targeted the use of the emic approach through the local survey which is conducted over the 13 countries in the Middle and Near East regions, aiming to look deeply into the employees' perceptions in order to identify what drives engagement in

the context of their specific culture and focus on studying what engagement meant from within the Middle East, then understanding how this can be best measured.

Etic approach: Unlike the emic approach, which captures important aspects of the particular culture under study, the etic approach employs broader comparative analyses involving two or more cultures. Specifically, etic cross-cultural research involves developing an understanding of a construct by explicitly comparing it across cultures using predetermined characteristics. For example, in examining fairness reactions to personnel selection techniques, Steiner and Gilliland (1996) administered their survey to French and U.S. respondents and proceeded with some comparative analyses. The main assumption with this type of research is that shared frames of reference exist across culturally diverse samples. Thus, key constructs (and construct measurement) are usually applied to all samples in the same way, ultimately allowing for more generalizability (Ronen & Shenkar, 1988). In this sense, measurement criteria in an etic approach are often viewed as common absolutes that can be applied across cultures (Berry, 1979; Hesketh & Rounds, 1995), which is challenged in this research, since it is assumed that common frameworks for employee engagement are not the same, and employees would not perceive items like "Fairness" and "Work-life balance" in the same manner across different cultures, as discussed in the literature review chapter.

The research has also used the etic approach through comparing the global staff engagement results and benchmarking the perception of engagement in the Middle East versus the Global vision in order to demonstrate or deny the existence of this common link. This is built on the vision of Berry (1990) who has debated that cross-cultural researchers often use the etic approach because of certain features that are thought to facilitate the research process. For example, differing events around the world might be viewed with broader perspectives, providing a basis for which similarities and differences can be recognized.

So the research has then combined the use of both, the emic and the etic approaches for various reasons. This combined approach is supported by Schaffer and Riordan (2003) who have suggest that a best-practice approach could be a

combined emic-etic or a derived etic approach when making cross-cultural comparisons in organisational research. Rather than identifying emic dimensions from one culture and simply applying those dimensions to the other culture(s) in a study, a derived etic approach requires researchers to first attain emic knowledge (usually through observation and / or participation) (in this research it was done via informal interviews) about all of the cultures in the study (Berry, 1990; Cheung, Conger, Hau, Lew, & Lau, 1992). The derived etic approach allows researchers to put aside their culture biases and to become familiar with the relevant cultural differences in each setting, which is exactly one of the key goals of this study. When the derived etic approach is done, it may then be possible to make cross-cultural links between the emic aspects of each culture. Although some common dimensions will emerge in all cultures, some dimensions may emerge in only one of the cultures (Cheung et al., 1992). Only where there are observed commonalities can cross-cultural comparisons appropriately be made.

This common emic-etic approach has been also supported by Church and Katigbak (1988) who have suggested that researchers should search for universal (or derived etic) components of constructs by assessing whether the emerging dimensions are unique to one culture, comparable across cultures, or overlapping. Triandis (1992) effectively described this type of approach in the context of studying individualism and collectivism. His proposed steps are as follows:

1. Begin with a theoretical framework and decide what specific constructs are to be studied.
2. Engage in idea sharing across different cultures about the constructs, with researchers from all cultures working together (emic).
3. Generate items and have samples of convenience respond to all items. Isolate etic dimensions during this step, for example, factors that look alike (items that are determined to have different meanings across different cultures are dropped from the pool).
4. Once etic dimensions are identified, develop emic item scales in each culture that measure the etic construct.

One important issue in the development of the cross-cultural research question is understanding how culture will be treated in the research design and how this would be defined, since a country can be considered a culture, a region can be considered a culture and maybe a certain district or county can be considered a culture. Ryan, McFarland, Baron, and Page (1999) recognized this problem when they examined human resource selection practices in 20 different countries: "*A concern is that the use of nation as a basis for examining cultural differences can be criticized as not attending to sub cultural differences*" (Ryan, McFarland, Baron, and Page, 1999: 388). The implications of this potential conflict in definition are crucial since the size of what defines a "culture" could be very different from other researches (a culture in one research could be considered a sub culture in another one, and thus ignored in the overall research outcomes).

An additional issue regarding the treatment of culture is the level of analysis at which relationships are to be observed (how deep this would go). One problem in cross-cultural research is that there are often two (or more) levels of researching (general culture and subcultures) that if not coordinated effectively into a research design, may actually compete with one another. These levels include the individual level, where psychological processes, attitudes, and values are often studied, and the societal level, where political and anthropological trends are common (Hofstede, 1991). An understanding of the different levels within a cross-cultural context is an important prerequisite for analysing and reporting research results.

Reviewing the field of research methodology, specifically in the cross cultural analysis levels field, three methods for dealing with level of analysis issues seem to be existing, which can be utilized in cross-cultural research. Those are: the interrater agreement index (rwg), within and between analysis (WABA), and hierarchical linear modelling (HLM). Bliese, (2000) saw these methods as of high importance to help in establishing construct validity in research applications that involve multiple levels.

Chan, (1998); and James, Demaree, and Wolf (1984) discussed the "rwg", and saw this as an indicator of intra group agreements that could provide justification for the use of higher investigation level constructs based on the consensus achieved from

lower levels. This index is calculated by comparing the variance of a specific group's (or subgroup) scores to an expected random variance derived from the collective group (larger group) score average. Generally speaking, this comparison allows researchers to assess the degree of integrity between the individuals score within a selected group and the collective group score to the same studied aspect.

"WABA" was described by Dansereau, Alutto, and Yammarino (1984); as well as Dansereau and Yammarino (2000) as a statistical approach that can be used to define which groups or levels in a certain study might link to a certain construct, thus define its validity to this group.

Hofmann, Griffin, and Gavin (2000) defined the third method, "HLM", in a more complex manner, and saw that it can be very useful when there is a relationship between variables at different levels (either influencing or getting influenced by each other). This is often the case in cross-cultural research when climate or culture and individual behaviour are examined together in the same framework. Hofmann et al. (2000) suggested that HLM may be the researcher's best option for these types of cross-level analyses: "*HLM explicitly models both the lower-level and the higher-level random-error components, therefore recognizing the partial interdependence of individuals within the same groups (or collectives)*" (Hofmann et al. 2000: 471).

Schaffer and Riordan (2003) suggest that a best practices approach that intends to ensure the integrity of their cross-cultural research could mean that researchers should pay attention to whether their treatment of culture is appropriate, as suggested earlier by Ryan, McFarland, Baron, and Page (1999). Schaffer and Riordan (2003) have discussed two related best practices. First, researchers should minimize the use of country as an entry point or definition for culture, and this is specifically important for countries which are considered as "cosmopolitan" since the definition of culture then would reflect the "real cultural mix" of the sample studied. In this regards, it is suggested that the specific constructs or variables in a study should be carefully examined to assess the appropriateness of using other definitions or dimensions of culture (besides using only "country") (Like city, district, educational

level ...etc. – wherever valid). The second recommendation is to incorporate culture into the researchers' theoretical frameworks.

Schaffer and Riordan (2003) also suggest that researchers should take good consideration for alignment of the research context and validation of the research instruments. The alignment of contexts refers to establishing congruence between the different cultures being studied (Equivalence of samples to demographic, environmental, experience and industrial differences), and the validation of research instruments refers to the way researchers will ensure that the measures of a construct developed in one culture can be applied to a different culture before they can establish a basis for theoretical comparisons.

The research aimed to discover employee engagement aspects through various qualitative and quantitative methods. Using multiple methodologies to collect data is recognized as an essential component of any organisational diagnosis (Paul, 1996). Open-ended questions were key aspects of the informal interviews and constituted high importance in this research, since they were attempts to access elicit qualitative information from the respondent free from the conceptual boundaries that exist in a structured quantitative survey instrument, which was essential in this research, provided the fact that no common solid definition exists for employee engagement, and the need to identify what this meant in the context of the specific culture studied was very high. On the other hand, a quantitative survey instrument was designed to demonstrate and compare responses gathered from the main culture as well as subcultures, aiming to provide some data to signify the importance of the research hypothesis.

Di Pofi, (2001); and Weisburg, Krosnick, and Bowen, (1989) have supported the use of mixed methodologies and highlighted that when combining methods in a survey design, qualitative methods are recommended for letting respondents determine their own frame of reference for answers, whereas quantitative methods are recommended when quick tabulation or empirical generalizability is desired. Mixing quantitative (closed-ended items) and qualitative (open-ended items) data collection

approaches within the same method (i.e., in the questionnaire) has also been labelled "intra-method mixing" (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

Vitale, Armenakis and Feild (2008) suggested that despite the increasing popularity of the practice of attaching open-ended questions to quantitative questionnaires, there are a small number of research papers investigating the possible effects of combining these quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. With regards to the closed-ended questions and its used in quantitative analysis, the existing theoretical and empirical research describing its contextual effects is many, including answer construction in consumer behaviour research (Peterson, 2005), answer retrieval and accessibility (Schuman & Presser, 1981), question comprehension in behavioural frequency reports (Schwarz, 1999), and relative scale context effects (Schwarz & Hippler, 1995).

It is clear that the advantages of mixed methods research are well recognized throughout the literature. Combining, or linking, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods within studies can offer numerous benefits (Fielding & Fielding, 1986; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Koch & Rhodes, 1979; Paul, 1996). Rossman and Wilson (1991) summarized these advantages, describing three major reasons for linking qualitative and quantitative data:

a. To enable confirmation or corroboration of each other via triangulation.
b. To elaborate or develop analysis, providing richer detail.
c. To initiate new lines of thinking through attention to unexpected results or conflicting outcomes, providing fresh insight.

For those reasons, mixed methods were not only considered an addition to the research design, but they also provided the opportunity for patterns identification and analysis.

Qualitative methods:

Qualitative collection methods may include information gathering activities like interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and open-ended survey items. Jackson and Trochim, (2002) viewed those methods to have great potential for exploring new topics, assisting theory building, and providing context for quantitative data. They have also, along with Sproull, (1988), seen the qualitative survey responses as a crucial method used in organisations, either in practice or pure research to collect information about an experience or topic, to explain or clarify quantitative findings, and to explore different dimensions of respondents' experiences. Borkan (2004) debated that qualitative data collection techniques are particularly effective at gaining insight into the processes and events that led up to the observed variation.

3.1. Research indicators

This section will describe what type of research indicators where used and which targets were set in order to verify if the research achieved its desired objectives. Research indicators provide evidence that a certain condition exists or certain results have or have not been achieved (Brizius & Campbell, 1991). Research indicators are extremely important for research progress monitoring and decision making.

There have been four main research indicators identified:

3.1.1. Inputs' indicator

Input indicators were focused on resources devoted to this particular research (i.e., number of case samples that are considered acceptable) as well as constitute a measurement of characteristics of the target populations (i.e., number of case samples within the target regional and industrial research group).

The desired confidence level was set to be 95% with a maximum variation of 5% in the sample size, which is quite a high aim for the research; however, looking at the

focused target group (Pharmaceutical industry workers in the Middle East), this confidence level was chosen to achieve a significant input.

3.1.2. Process indicator

This was mainly focused on the error rates across the samples taken, which define the quality of the research process.

The process indicator was decided to be the Cronbach's alpha figure, which decides on the internal consistency of the research and is called the "reliability coefficient". A target score of 0.70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations.

3.1.3. Output indicator

This indicator is focused on the degree of alignment of the research outputs to the hypothesis suggested by this research. Both agreement or denial of the research hypothesis are considered acceptable as the aim of the output is to provide evidence to the questions whether a relationship exists between country, culture and time with employee engagement or not.

3.1.4. Outcome indicator

Outcome indicators will measure the broader results achieved through the application of the tool provided by this research, and if it has provided practical business value to organisations and professionals.

The target here is qualitative in terms of feedback from organisational leaders.

3.2. Informal interviews

This has been done with a random sample of the Middle and Near East teams. (The sample comprises 50% of the total team. 110 team members out of a total of 225 team members).

The informal interviews were scheduled for an average of 45-60 minutes for each employee, where open ended questions were asked and the following protocol was followed:

1. Beginning with an introduction that includes the questionnaire's purpose, identifies its source, explains how the information obtained will be used, and assures respondents of confidentiality.
2. The first questions were meant to be easy, avoiding controversial topics. They are clearly related to the questionnaire's purpose and do not require lengthy answers.
3. Questions were arranged so that they flow naturally. The aim was to start with general questions (What do you think about the culture?) and then move to those that are specific (How can we achieve a "High Performing" culture?).

Further to these interviews, a group of informal interviews was coordinated with industry experts and global consultants who have researched and worked on the topic from a practical angle (Attached as Appendix (D)). Kvale (1996) highlighted that qualitative research interview seeks to describe and the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects and the main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. McNamara (1999) supported the importance on interviews and mentioned that interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g. to further investigate their responses. The challenge in those types of interviews is to avoid the interviewer's bias towards a certain aspect, so that the questions could be leading in a certain way to the same

answer. In this research, avoiding bias was well taken in consideration as questions were set to open a discussion and allow for open opinions of the respondents, since the main aim of this research is to find, either by confirmation or denial, if the hypothesis was confirmed.

Purpose:

The goal of the informal interviews was to encourage the participants to talk freely, without feeling that they have to fill in documents. This is aimed to give a feeling of confidentiality and security to the teams, who mostly come from the Middle East region, and would feel more comfortable with face to face discussions.

The informal interviews were done on the basis that respondents would more likely give a tacit feedback on how they feel about the culture, as well as the industry experts' feelings toward the hypothesis of the research and their experience in the questions that this research has provided.

Subjects:

The subjects for the informal interviews were selected from different levels, different backgrounds, and different countries to support the consistency and credibility of the information obtained.

The industry experts were selected to include researchers in the field, like David MacLeod, Towers Watson, Heads of employee engagement and CEOs at multinational companies and others. The details are attached as Appendix (D).

The Middle and Near East teams were represented in thirteen countries; seven in the Middle East which are: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Yemen; and six countries form the Near East region, which are: Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine.

There were 165 team members in the Middle East and 75 team members in the Near East. The survey intended to include 50% of the pool sample in each level in each country, taking in consideration that at least one member out of each level should

participate in small countries. So the target sample was 80 team members from the Middle East and 30 team member from the Near East.

Procedure

The subjects were interviewed informally, either personally or via the phone. There was a pre-prepared sheet that the interviewer approached to fill in each interview, to ensure the consistency of flow of information.

The odd and extreme answers were removed (either extremely positive or extremely negative), unless those were consistent and repeated by more than 10% of the sample subjects.

A copy of the structured sheet that was prepared for the informal interview is in Appendix (B).

3.3. Use of secondary data

This data was obtained via the corporate staff engagement survey, conducted worldwide by a third party prior to the merger and also after it.

Purpose

To analyse the current existing engagement culture of the organisation by generating quantitative data that could indicate the significance and relevance of the cultural aspects.

Subjects

Total of 30,000 employees participated in the survey, of which, 36% were from the managerial sector and the rest were from non-managerial background.

All locations across the globe have participated representing employees in all sections of the company (R&D, Sales, Marketing, and Support functions).

Procedure

The global engagement survey aggregates 137 questions into 18 different assumed dimensions of engagement. It has to be noted that some questions and dimensions were revised and modified in the corporate surveys carried from the year 2009 to 2010, and those are highlighted in Appendix (C).

The dimensions assumed by the research organisation running the engagement survey for the studied sample organisation and the design was purely done in corporate headquarters in Germany, including questions to be added, removed or modified across the years of running the survey.

Quantitative methods:

Quantitative methods work best in isolating variables and demonstrating correlates associated with variation. A questionnaire can help in obtaining information about what people do, what they have, what they think, know, feel, or want.

Taylor-Powell (1998) distinguished four different types of information. Anyone or a combination of these types may be included in a questionnaire.

Knowledge: What people know; how well they understand something. This type of question asks about what people know. Knowledge questions offer choices such as correct vs. incorrect or accurate vs. inaccurate. They may ask what respondents believe is true or factual, or about awareness. This type of question was used in the research in the informal interview stage, with industry and research experts, when discussing if there is a common definition for engagement or if it makes sense to ask the same questions in order to measure engagement across different cultures. It was neither used in the staff questionnaire, nor in the informal interviews with the staff, since this type of question requires sufficient subject knowledge which is not quite possible for the topic of engagement with baseline employees (non-managerial staff), as the topic is still quite debatable between researchers.

Beliefs / Attitudes / Opinions: these terms refer to the psychological states and the perceptions people hold, their thoughts, feelings, ideas, judgments, or ways of

thinking. Questions may elicit respondents' perceptions of past, present or future reality, their feelings about a subject, or their opinions. This type of question was used a lot in this research either with the industry experts or with the subject staff, since this type highlights what people may think or believe, and this is important to the research as it studies the perception of engagement in different cultures, which could be reflected by this type of question. To ensure that perception was properly handled in this research, the interviewer took the necessary time to explain what engagement meant in different contexts and asked respondents how they relate to it, to ensure the perception of the term and following questions were built on clear understanding of what this research was trying to measure.

Behaviour: What people do; questions on behaviour ask people what they have done in the past, do now, or plan to do in the future. This was not used in the survey, as it was not a core focus for the research outcomes. This research was not intended to study the behaviour employees would show when they are engaged at work.

Attributes: What people are; what people have. Attributes are a person's personal or demographic characteristics like age, education, occupation, or income. Attribute questions ask people about whom they are, rather than what they do. This was used in the research as a mean to sub-categorize results and enable easier filtering of data per country, function, or location later on during results analysis.

3.4. Locally conducted survey and informal interviews

The study was achieved through distributing a cultural evaluation questionnaire then running focus groups and informal interviews for the Middle and Near East teams in order to get more context on the quantitative data.

Purpose
The goal of the locally conducted staff survey was to generate a figure that describes the extent people feel towards the cultural aspects of the company in the Middle East.

The survey constituted a tool to analyse and compare the corporate and senior management vision with the perception team members feel locally.

Subjects

The subjects for the survey were ideally all the team members in the Middle East and Near East; however, a result of participation of more than 60% of the team members was counted as satisfactory.

Design

Burgess (2001) stated that a crucial part of good research design concerns making sure that the questionnaire design addresses the needs of the research. He has defined the basic processes of survey research and outlined them as follows:

1. Define your research aims
2. Identify the population and sample
3. Decide how to collect replies
4. Design your questionnaire
5. Run a pilot survey
6. Carry out the main survey
7. Analyse the data

The questionnaire was designed based on the various dimensions identified in the global survey as well as in other engagement surveys run by different providers like Towers Watson, Gallup and other consultancy companies. The aim was to check if the employees of the Middle East region would identify the items focused upon by the global survey as important, or come up with new items that are specific to this culture or deny the importance of some dimension in affecting the engagement levels at this specific cultural and organisation context.

Taylor-Powell (1998) argued that wording the questions to obtain the intended information and to be understood by all respondents is a challenging task. He has recommended considering three things:

1. The particular people for whom the questionnaire is being designed;
2. The particular purpose of the questionnaire.
3. How questions will be placed in relation to each other in the questionnaire.

For that reason, the questionnaire was designed according to the Middle East perspective and the language used was easily understandable to all participants.

Sawer, (1984); and Dillman, (1978); suggested fifteen points of concern when wording questions, those are:

1. Use simple wording. Avoid confusing / double meaning words.
2. Avoid the use of abbreviations, jargon, or foreign phrases.
3. Be specific.
4. Use clear wording.
5. Include all necessary information required for respondents to answer the questions.
6. Avoid questions that may be too precise. (recalling details of specific event that happened years back).
7. Phrase personal or potentially incriminating questions (Ethnic ..etc.).
8. Avoid questions that are too demanding and time consuming.
9. Use mutually exclusive categories. Make sure that only one answer is possible.
10. Avoid making assumptions.
11. Avoid bias / leading in questions.
12. Avoid double-barrelled questions. (2 questions in one).
13. Make the response categories clear and logical.
14. Use complete sentences.
15. Plan ahead.

The questionnaire was developed in relation to those points, as it aimed to provide an easy, tick box style, where team members can select their choice, anonymously, without having to write any personal information that could reflect their identity. Some

questions contained more than one aspect, to provide the user with more options and to help the researcher analyse different angles of the same criterion. The questions were first explained to the respondents to ensure there was no confusion in what words / terms meant as well as to clear any misperception of what the research would do with the answers.

Copies of the questionnaires are in Appendices (A), (B) and (C). The questionnaires used three main techniques in asking questions, those were: (1) Choosing one best answer, (2) Rating scales, from "Value most" to "Value least", and (3) Adding qualitative comments.

Challenges and assumptions

The main challenge for the survey was as stated before, that people in the Middle East tend to avoid conflicts when it comes to written documents.

The research survey tried to tackle this issue by making the survey anonymously filled and filed. One hard copy was given to each member, and then the copies were collected as a group from each country. This ensured that each member got the opportunity to have his/her say, and gave some reassurance on the anonymity of the participants' identities.

The other challenge was that team members – who are Arabic First Language speakers, actually understood the vocabulary and text of the survey. For that reason, the research has used very common and easy words; however, there was also an Arabic and French translation for the survey, in case team members felt it was easier to use their mother tongue language. Few candidates have used other languages, as most of the staff members are assumed to be comfortable using the English version, which is the business language used at the organisation.

After the survey was conducted, the results were collated and compared to the corporate results. Appropriate qualitative and quantitative results were obtained and taken as an initial step to developing the desired "High Engaged Workforce". Recommendations were then given to the studied organisation.

This chapter justifies then, and explains the rationale for the research approach used, which is a mixed emic-etic approach as well as of a qualitative and quantitative aims. This shall help the research achieve its aim, as well as fit into the desired cultural context, where quantitative data will give some significance to the results, qualitative data shall help in defining the meaning of the results in the specific cultural context.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the primary and secondary data are analysed and discussed, aiming to support or deny the research hypothesis.

4.1. About the sample organisation:

The following section describes the sampled organisation in terms of demographic data, cultural background and hierarchical background. This research proposes that each organisation has a unique equation of engagement drivers, thus understanding the organisational context is an important factor in determining what drives employee engagement at this specific organisational operation.

4.1.1. Geographical location of employees:

The percentages of country employees' representation were as follows:
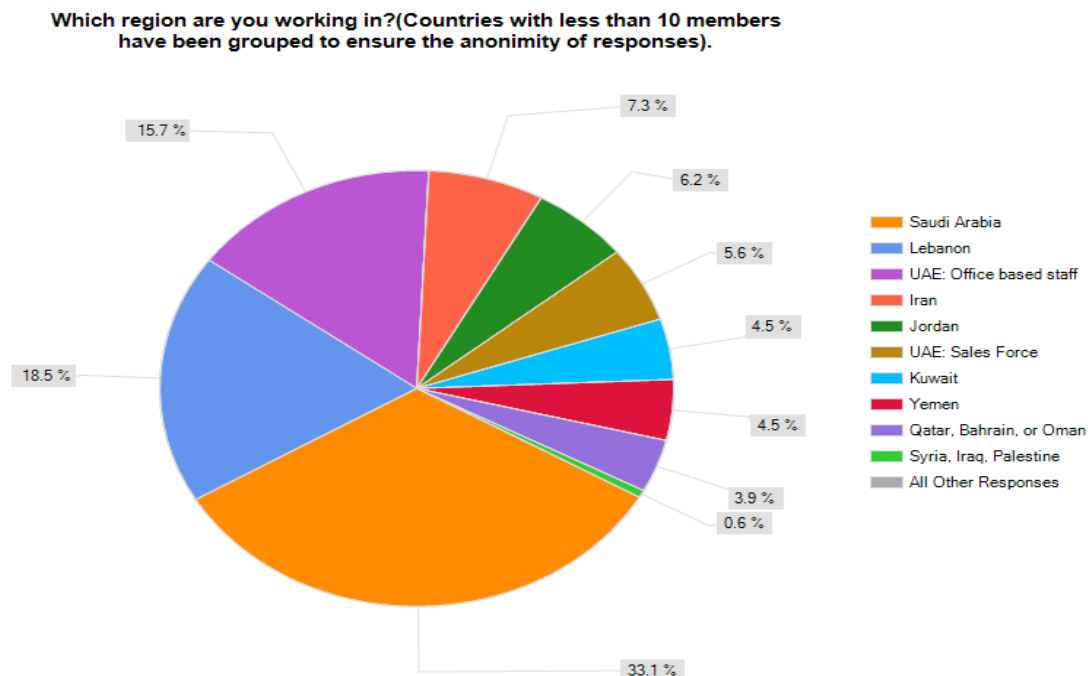
Chart (1)

Percentage of country representation in the survey

Descriptive Statistics: Country Samples

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Which region are you working in? (Countries with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure the anonymity of responses).	189	15.00	1.00	16.00	9.6878	.25044	3.44299	11.854	-.014	.177
Valid N (list wise)	189									

Table (8)

Descriptive statistics: Country samples

4.1.2. Nationality of employees:

The Middle East region is known for employing expatriates and the background of respondents (where they originally come from) was as follows:
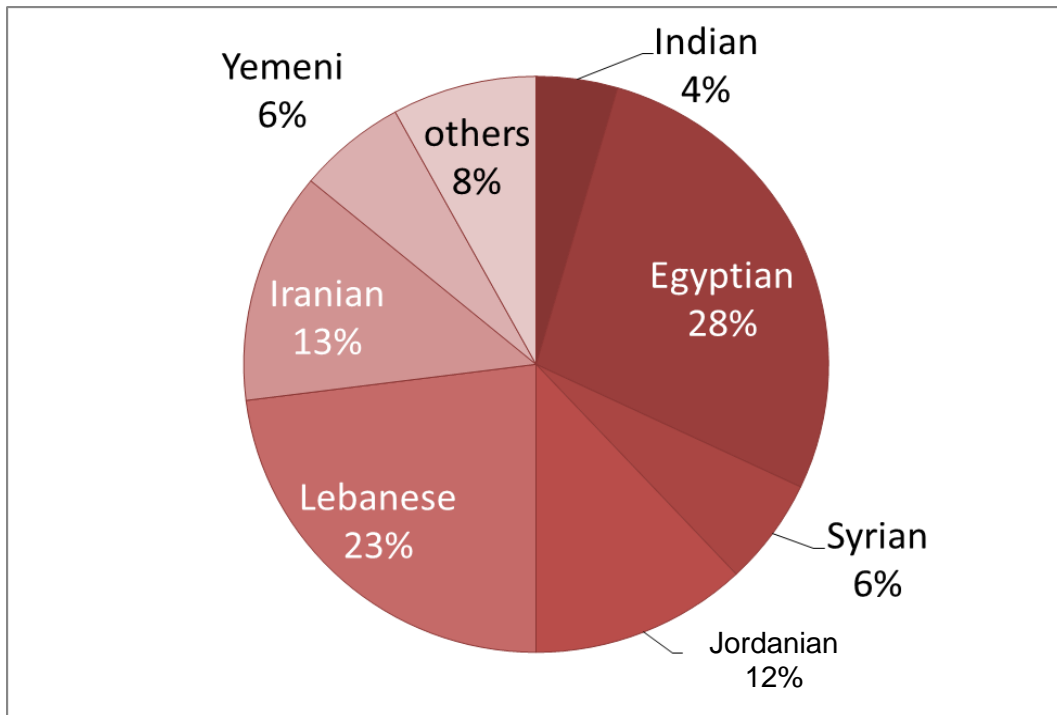
Chart (2)

Percentage of nationality representation in the survey

The chart above shows that almost 88% of the sample originally come from the Middle east region, giving more relevance to the results as representative of the actual Middle East population, rather than expatriates from other non-Middle Eastern origin.

4.1.3. Functional split of employees:

There was a split as well by function (area of work) and the representation was as follows:
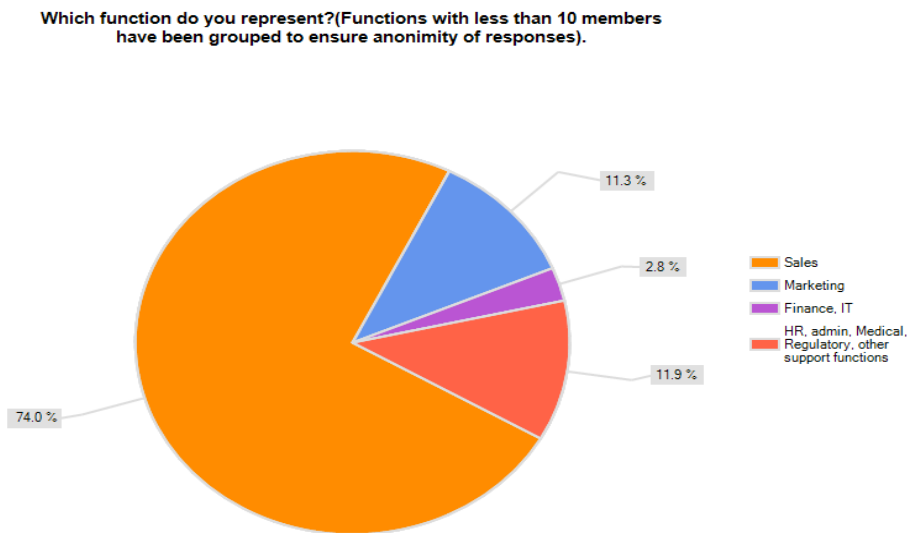
Chart (3)

Percentage of function representation in the survey

The total number of participants in the survey was 189 members distributed among the 13 countries. This figure is relevantly significant when compared to the Towers Watson global workforce study pharmaceutical sample, as it constitutes around 41 per cent of their sample, while they ran a global survey and this sample is a much more focused sample for the Middle East region. It is also a highly significant figure for the studied pharmaceutical organisation, since it comprises around 84 per cent of their workforce.

The main function for the sample was the sales organisation, which is the case in most of the multinational pharmaceutical organisations operating in the Middle East, due to the lack of local production sites owned by the multinational companies in the region.

All respondents to the survey are university graduates, with the majority (85.3%) belonging to the sales and marketing departments, who are involved with various scientific and medical information and knowledge transfer. Lowendahl (1997) described this type of workforce as "Knowledge Workers" who are professionals dealing with esoteric expertise and skills. The sales and marketing teams of the sampled organisation are considered of this type since they deal with very specific information related to the formulation and efficacy of their own medications, including various scientific trials that have been conducted in this field.

Lowendahl (1997) identified three main types of knowledge-intensive firms, as shown in the following table:

	Strategic focus	Resources	Examples
Client-based	Client relations	Individually controlled	Law and accountancy practices
Problem-solving	Creative problem-solving-innovation	Team-based	Advertising agencies, software development firms
Output-based	Adaptation of ready solutions	Controlled by the organisation	Some large management consultancy firms

Table (9)

Types of Knowledge-Intensive firms

Source: Adapted from Lowendahl (1997)

The sampled local operation of the organisation is more towards the "Output based" type according to this model, since the team is more involved in adapting ready-made solutions (medical products) to the needs of the medical community in their countries. Still, they also have some aspects of the "Problem Solving" type, since some members belong to the medical division and business development division, and those are responsible for suggesting new areas that the organisation can look into in order to meet specific requirements that might be locally demanded by clients.

The criticism of the model above (from a practitioner's point of view) is that it tends to "pigeon-hole" organisations into one sector rather than the other, and in today's practice world, organisations tend to embrace the three types, and several organisations rely on matrix structures, aiming to form operations that can link business, clients, manufacturing and shareholders' objectives together.

So what is different about "knowledge workers"? Are they any different from other employees? Kelley (1990) describes them as the "gold collar" workers, implying that they have high expectations and require careful management and excellent working conditions. This makes this sample, according to Kelley (1990), different from other employees in terms of expectations and work environment requirements. The question would still exist if Kelley's work, which has been run in the United States, would apply elsewhere, specifically in the Middle East.

4.1.4. Demographic split of employees:

The split between the gender of respondents was as follows:
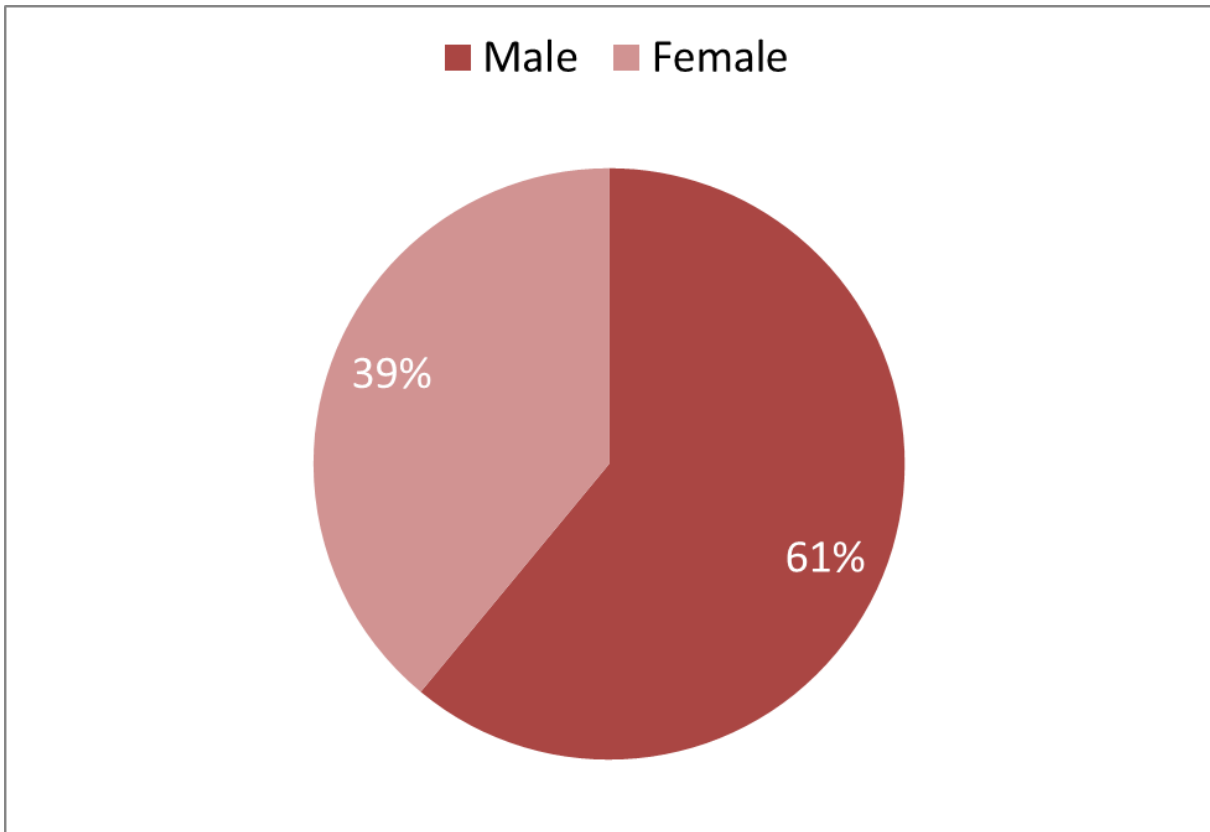
Chart (4)

Percentage of gender representation in the survey

The percentage above is considered by the researched organisation as a high percentage of female representation in the Middle East, driven by a strong diversity program that is implemented in the sample organisation to ensure proper reflection and representation of females.

The age group was also analysed and presented in the following chart:

20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60

1%

8%

37%

54%
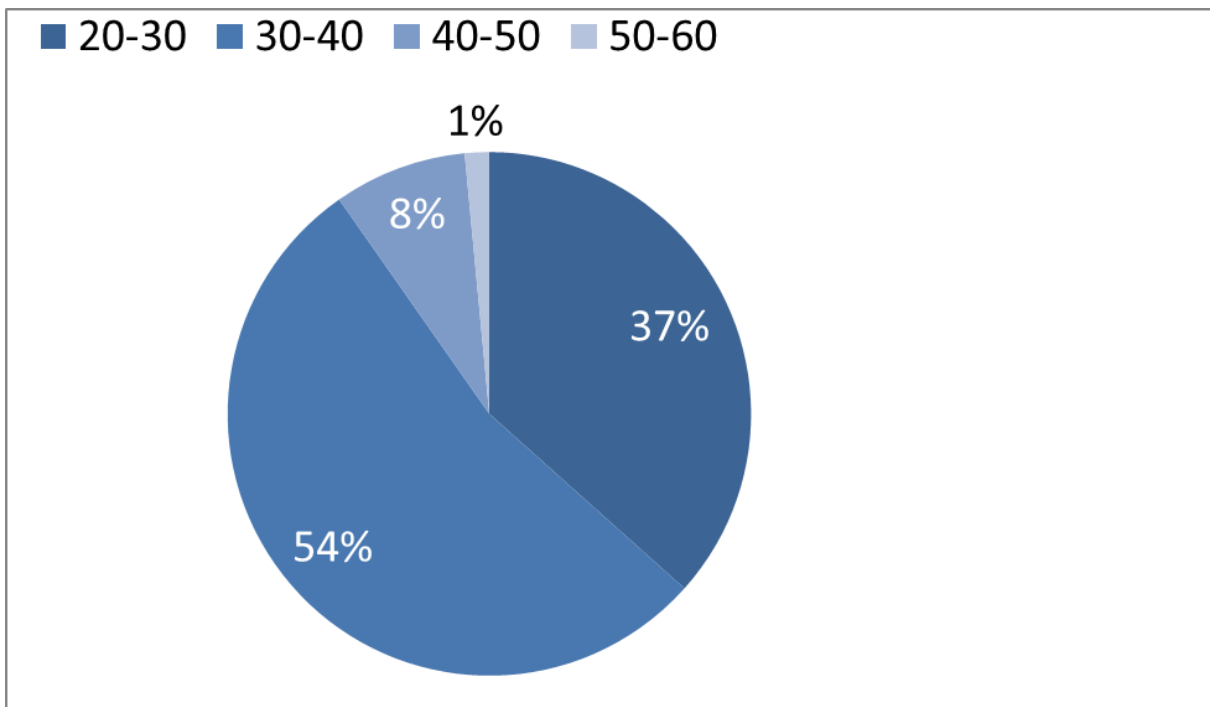
Chart (5)

Percentage of age group representation in the survey

It is shown from the chart that the majority of employees who responded to the survey are between the ages of 20-40 (91%), indicating more of a moderately young population of employees.

So how could the gender and age difference affect the results? Do those factors contribute to the engagement equation?

The CIPD (2006) survey (chapter two: 2.3. page 73) showed that women were more engaged than men, and older employees were more engaged than younger ones. The NHS survey (also done in UK, but based on the USA study model) showed that the analysis of the results showed no significant difference based on age, ethnicity or gender. So this point is a debated point from researchers' point of view and no agreement exists on how those factors can affect engagement drivers.

4.1.5. Organisational cultural background:

The studied organisation has been formed further to a recent acquisition (which occurred in 2006) that combined very successful German and Swiss entities together. Mergers and acquisitions were seen by several researchers like Terry (2001), Van Knippenberg and Van Leeuwen (2001), and Vaara (2003) and Phillips and Maguire (2008), as a key factor that affects the organisational culture and expectations of employees. The importance of defining the organisation identity and alignment between management practices plus cultural norms is crucial, as seen by Newman and Nollen (1996). It is assumed that the specific and unique norms, values, and beliefs embedded and inherited in different cultures affect the way individuals view the drivers for motivation as well as view equity, and justice.

The first step in defining the new organisation was identifying the most effective structure to start with after the merger, and this is shown in the figure below for the senior leadership team, who had a maximum of two layers below this (Supervisors / Staff), aiming to decrease communication gaps and enhance alignment:
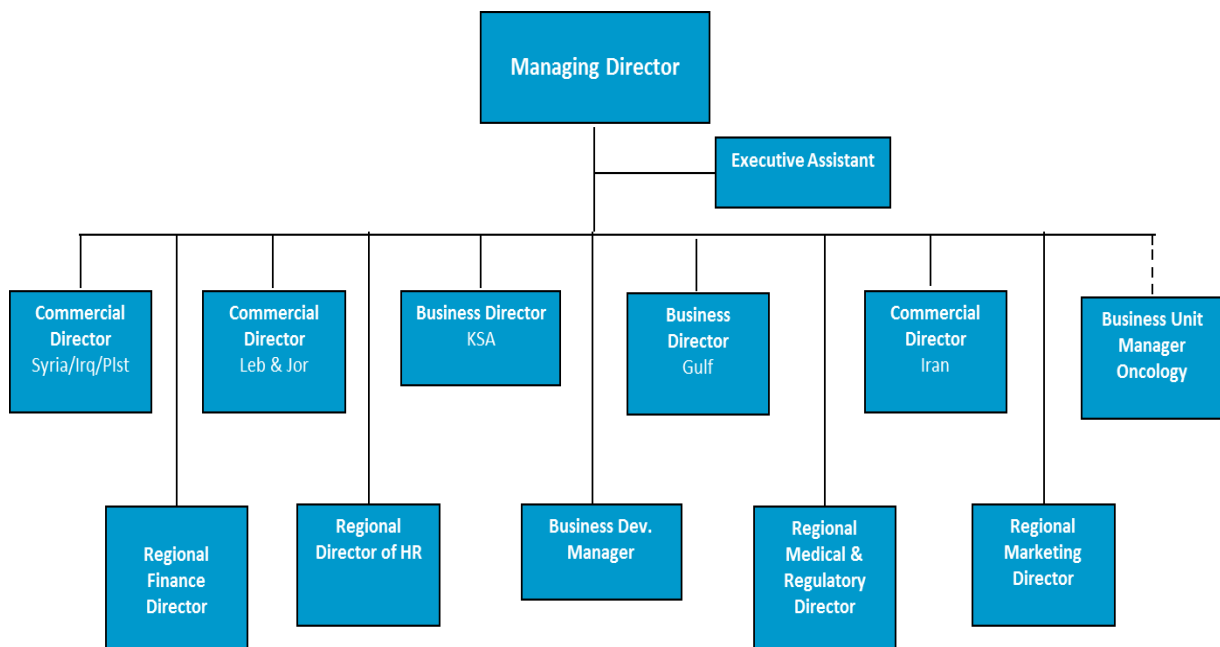
Figure (14)

Regional Management structure at the studied organisation

The organisation's local operation management has used the model developed by Goffee and Jones (1998) in order to try to define where the current culture was. Goffee and Jones (1998) named their model the "Double S Cube" model of cultural dimensions. This is demonstrated in the following Figure (15).
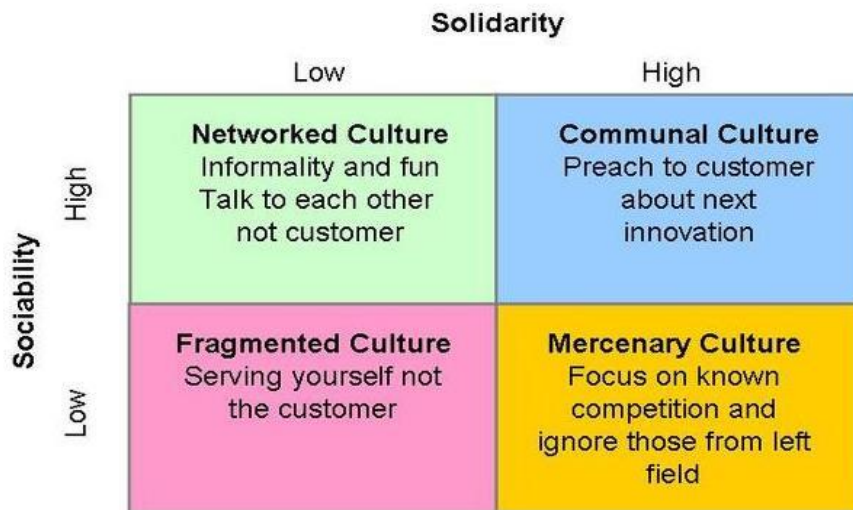
Figure (15)

Double S cube model of cultures

Adapted from Goffee and Jones (1998)

The model studies culture from two dimensions; solidarity and sociability. A summary of each culture is described in the relevant box. Goffee and Jones (1998) argued that there is not one best culture that fits all solution, but each culture has its advantages and disadvantages.

When this model was applied by the local leadership team, the score came towards the "Mercenary" culture, which indicates a culture characterised as high solidarity and low sociability. This highlights the focus of the newly formed culture on performance rather than team alignment, which comes with a package of possible loss of team healing, since everyone was focusing on proving themselves professionally regardless of how others would feel. Newman and Nollen (1996) stressed the importance of alignment after mergers and acquisitions, as people would come from different backgrounds and could possibly not share the same values and norms, and

in many cases, the work styles in terms of such issues as speed of decision making, authority, delegation, process orientation, and communication paths.

House et al. (2004) have seen this as well and clarified this in a "Cultural Wheel" as part of the "GLOBE" study, where they have seen common norms and practices that are shared between leaders in various cultures and suggested that they would genuinely share common values, as shown in the following figure:
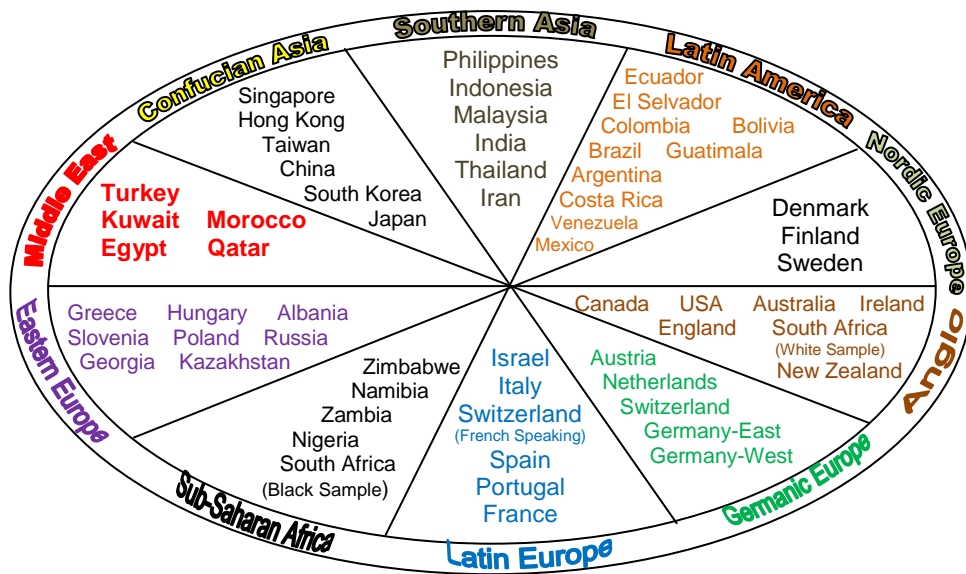
Figure (16)

The cultural wheel

Source: Adapted from House et al. (2004)

House et al. (2004), running their research across 950 organisations, with the inclusion of around 17,000 managers have identified the above clusters of common values and norms across various leaders. Their work was based on the Hofstede's model (2001), where they derived their clusters.

Thinking of the studied sample organisation from the GLOBE study perspective could predict several differences in the cultures, as the merger occurred between a French speaking Swiss organisation (clustered under "Latin Europe") and a German

organisation (clustered under "Germanic Europe"), while the local operation is clearly under "Middle East". So how are those cultures seen differently in the GLOBE study?

Cultural Dimension	High-Score Clusters	Low-Score Clusters
Assertiveness Orientation	Eastern Europe Germanic Europe	Nordic Europe
Future Orientation	Germanic Europe Nordic Europe	Eastern Europe Latin America Middle East
Gender Egalitarianism	Eastern Europe Nordic Europe	Middle East
Humane Orientation	Southern Asia Sub-Saharan Africa	Germanic Europe Latin Europe
In-Group collectivism	Confucian Asia Eastern Europe Latin America Middle East Southern Asia	Anglo Germanic Europe Nordic Europe
Institutional collectivism	Nordic Europe Confucian Asia	Germanic Europe Latin America Latin Europe
Performance Orientation	Anglo Confucian Asia Germanic Europe	Eastern Europe Latin America
Power Distance	No clusters	Nordic Europe
Uncertainty Avoidance	Germanic Europe Nordic Europe	Eastern Europe Latin America Middle East

Table (10)

Differences between cultural dimensions in light of the "GLOBE" study

Source: Adapted from House et al. (2004)

The above table suggests that there could be differences existing between the Middle East leadership and the German leadership styles. However, it does not clearly indicate where the differences could exist between the "Latin Europe" cluster and the "Germanic Europe" cluster, implying a possible alignment in terms of norms and values of leadership in both clusters. The key critique of this model is that it explains more of a "country" perspective (on which the clusters are based), so how

about the "Organisational" context? Which is stronger, the national culture? Or the organisational culture?

During mergers and acquisitions, awareness of organisational culture and subculture is crucial. The main problem in both situations is that there is no shared history.

Schein (2004) emphasized that it is crucial to understand cultural risks and clash of assumptions as those might cause a cultural disaster.

When applying Schein's model as a method to test the sampled organisational culture after the merger, 44% of the organisation indicated that there was lack of identity, highlighting that the best of the newly formed culture was the existence of good relationships (with 36% staff agreement), while the worst in their point of view was the existence of perceived politics (with 32% agreement). Employees described "Politics" as subjective decision-making without explanation of rationale and logic behind it to employees.

The above data shown in point 4.1.5 show that there is a possible strong organisational culture context. The effect of this context on engagement drivers should be investigated further and whether the differences in culture can affect how employees feel and demand as a priority in their work environment.

4.1.6. Market dynamics and organisational performance:

The studied organisation is a global company that operates in the Middle and Near East as a scientific marketing and sales organisation with no production capacity or research labs in the region. They are marketing products in the fields of Oncology, Neurology, Fertility, Endocrinology and Cardio metabolic care.

The organisation intends to be a market leader in most of their therapeutic areas. They are focusing on high performance and growth results without compromising their ethical standards or values, that are considered solid for all employees as well as external vendors and suppliers.

The pharmaceutical market size in the Middle East is estimated to be 12 billion US$, with a huge potential for growth (Arab Health World 2008:12). The Middle East strives to become increasingly self-sufficient in pharmaceutical production, and be less dependent on European or western companies. The number of active manufacturers is estimated by the report publishers to be over 450 today, all of which are determined to grab a share of the global export, research and contract manufacturing markets.

According to the report, the Middle East remains a very attractive market for pharmaceutical organisations, as in the US and Europe, market growth is slowing to under 5% because of factors such as the declining cost of drug treatment for major therapies and some uncertainty over drug reactions and safety.

In emerging economies (defined by a relatively fast growth of double digits per year) such as the Middle East, pharmaceutical markets continue to grow at between 10% and 15% a year, driven by greater access to generics and innovative new medicines at a time when primary care is constantly improving and more people are becoming covered by health insurance.

Within the gulf region, major initiatives are taking place in the pharmaceutical industry fuelled by 100% ownership and generous benefits for overseas companies setting up. Examples include Saudi Arabia's $534 million King Fahd Medical City in Riyadh and the Dubai Biotechnology and Research park (Dubiotech).

4.2. What drives employee engagement in the Middle and Near East regions?

This is one of the main questions of this research as based on this, further analysis should be done to identify if there is a true difference between global and regional results. The drivers of engagement were grouped by the research as: Total Area (MNE), Middle East, Near East, then by major country (Saudi Arabia, Gulf Council Countries – GCC, Lebanon and regional headquarters – based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates). This grouping was decided by the researcher to cross-compare different large populations in the same region and check if there are similarities in the nature and priorities of engagement drivers.

4.2.1. Top Drivers of engagement in the whole region – MNE:
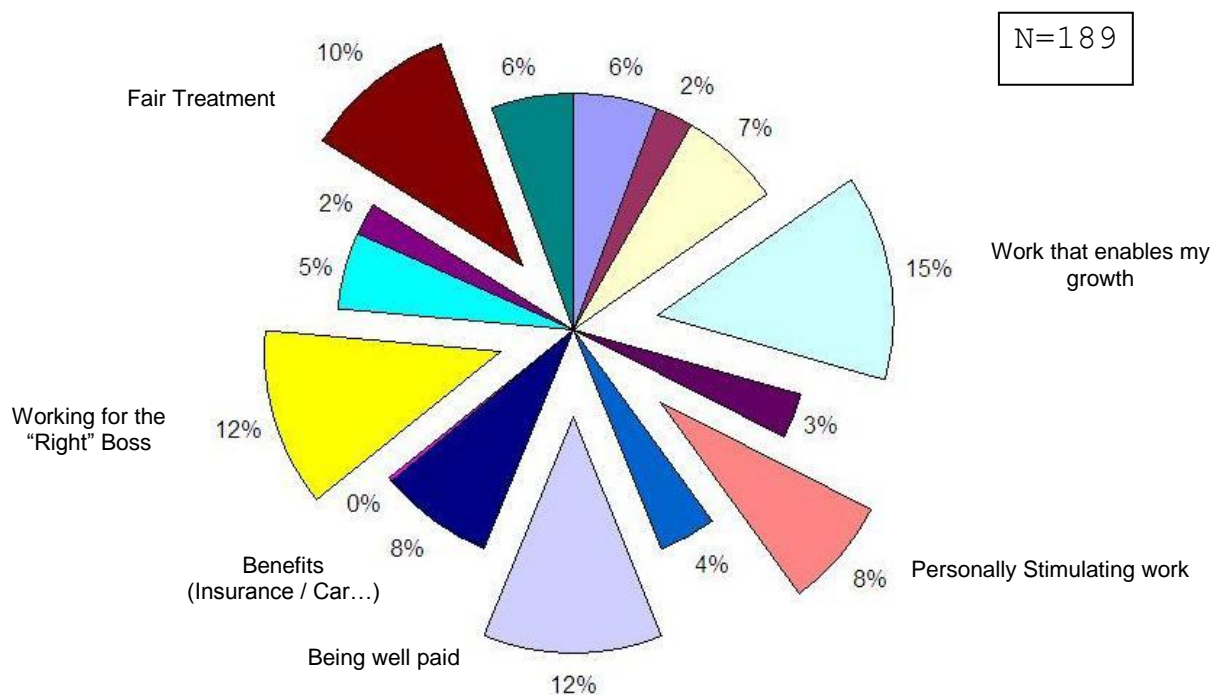
Chart (6)

Top drivers of engagement in the MNE region in 2009.

The results retrieved from the research sample are shown in the graph displayed above. It is obvious that personal career growth was vital for the employees in 2009 and came in the first level of importance for engagement in the area, which is a bit

different from the studies conducted in both USA and UK. Leadership came in second place, and the term "Right Boss" was used in the survey by intention, as more data shall be retrieved from the informal interviews on the definition of this "ideal boss" in the context of the Middle East employees. Salaries came third, while "Fair Treatment" came fourth in the level of importance, which is not an outcome of any of the engagement surveys reviewed in this thesis. This might be due to the fact that in European countries, fairness is due to the presence of strong labour groups, who stand for the rights of employees, while those do not exist in the Middle East (except in very few countries and they do not have the same influence as their counterparts in Europe. For example, by law in gulf countries, labour unions are not able to call for a strike), while in some of the researched Middle Eastern countries, it is forbidden by law to form labour unions. When the research was repeated in 2010, using the same questions and parameters, the results were as follows:

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what:1) Makes you go the extra mile?2) Makes you feel happy at work?3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time? (Please choose your top 3 items only)

Work that enables my growth	60.2 %
My voice is heard and of value to…	42.0 %
Fair working environment (No Politics)	39.8 %
Challenging work environment	38.1 %
Working with competent team	36.4 %
Working for the "Right Boss"	34.7 %
Being highest paid in the market	30.1 %
Work place that is enjoyable	23.9 %
Strong benefits plan	22.7 %
Flexible working hours	21.0 %
All Other Responses	5.1 %
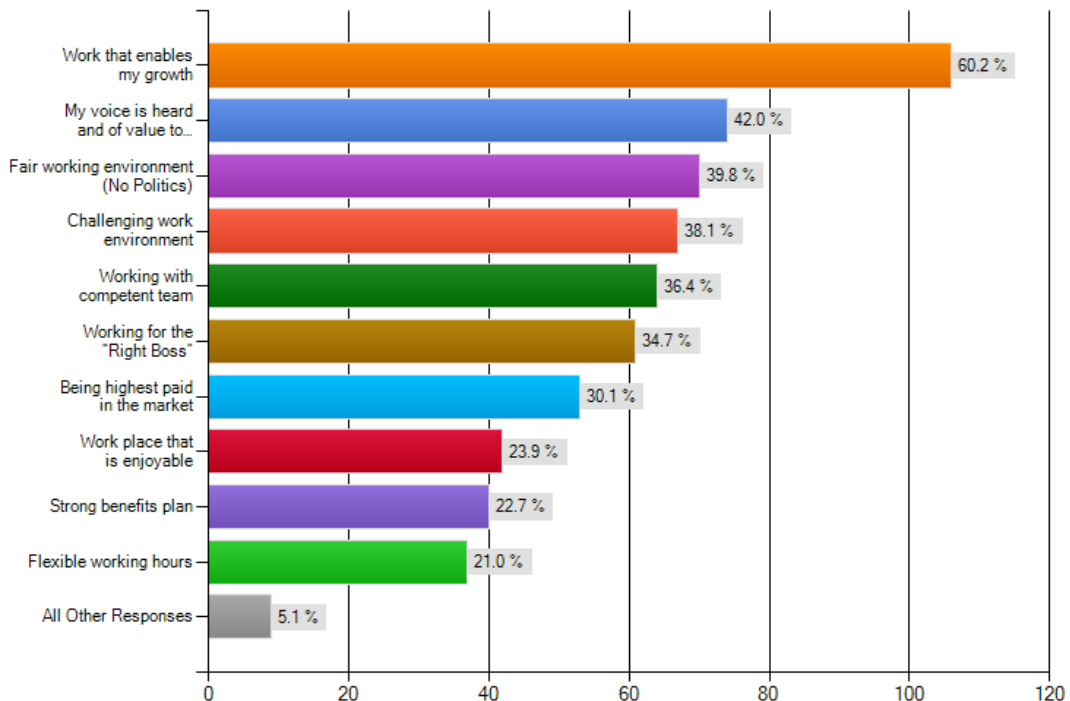
Chart (7)

Top drivers of engagement in the MNE region in 2010.

Descriptive Statistics: Drivers of Engagement

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Flexible Working Hours	40	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Workplace that is enjoyable	46	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Strong benefits plan	40	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Working for the "Right Boss"	64	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Work that enables my growth	113	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Challenging work environment	73	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Working with a competent team	67	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
My voice is heard and of value to the organisation	78	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Fair working environment (No politics)	72	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Being highest paid in the market	54	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Others	9	.00	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000	.00000	.000	.	.
Valid N (list wise)	1									

Table (11)

Descriptive statistics: Drivers of engagement

It is shown that a year later, the top driver of engagement remained the same (work that enables growth). However, the remaining rank of engagement drivers clearly changed. "Working for the right boss" moved from second in importance to sixth, and good payment moved from second to seventh. In results, having a voice that is heard jumped to second highest. "Fair working environment" remained consistent at the top three engagement drivers in the region. Some possible academic explanations for the effect of time on engagement drivers have also been explored in section 2.6 of this research (Page 99 onwards), which all can be briefly summarized as follows:

a) Occurrence on a strong external environmental crisis (or change) that affects priorities of drivers (Similar to the economic downturn).

b) Introduction of new workforce from a different generation than the majority of workforce, who could have new priorities (As explained in table 6, page 100).

c) Mergers and acquisitions where two workforces come together, from different backgrounds and expectations. (As supported by Terry (2001), Van Knippenberg and Van Leeuwen (2001), Phillips and Maguire (2008), and Vaara (2003)).

The results above suggest a possible change in engagement drivers over a short time, which is touched upon in this research and supported by the results of the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010). When comparing the results above to the data presented in section 2.2.9 (p.58), the possibility that introduction of new colleagues could also have an effect on organisational culture is also questioned (although maybe on a longer term than severe environmental conditions), in the context of changing the work force backgrounds as well as age and maturity averages (as shown in section 2.2.9 P.58), consequently, affecting the engagement drivers among the total workforce.

Table (11) describes the absolute count of engagement drivers as selected by the research sample; however, a deeper look into the analysis based on which drivers candidates selected first (primary), second and third shows the following tables and charts:

Statistics

		Primary Engagement Driver	Secondary Engagement Driver	Tertiary Engagement Driver
N	Valid	189	189	189
	Missing	0	0	0

Table (12)

Sample distribution statistics

Primary Engagement Driver

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Challenging work environment	12	6.3	6.3	6.3
	Flexible working hours	39	20.6	20.6	27.0
	Strong benefits plan	28	14.8	14.8	41.8
	Work place that is enjoyable	28	14.8	14.8	56.6
	Work that enables my growth	43	22.8	22.8	79.4
	Working for the "Right Boss"	31	16.4	16.4	95.8
	Working with competent team	8	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	189	100.0	100.0	

Table (13)

Primary engagement drivers frequency analysis

The results above show that "Work that enables growth" comes consistent with the overall result as the main driver of engagement and the highest first-selected driver among sample members. However, the second first-selected driver was "Flexible working hours" which did not come in the first five overall drivers across the region.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Per cent	N	Per cent	N	Per cent
Which region are you working in? (Countries with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure the anonymity of responses). * Flexible Working Hours	40	21.2%	149	78.8%	189	100.0%

Table (14)

"Flexible working hours" case processing summary

The above table shows that the total percentage of selection of the factor is 21.2% while it came as the first selection in 20.6% of the sample, indicating that only 0.6% of the sample see this as important, while the 20.6% who have selected this see this as top priority. Is there a country or functional context here? The following table might highlight this:

Which region are you working in?

(Countries with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure the anonymity of responses). * Flexible

Working Hours Cross tabulation

Count

		Flexible Working Hours	
		Flexible working hours	Total
Which region are you working in? (Countries with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure the anonymity of responses).	Switzerland	2	2
	North Africa (Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, Libya)	1	1
	Saudi Arabia	12	12
	UAE: Sales Force	2	2
	UAE: Office based staff	4	4
	Kuwait	2	2
	Qatar, Bahrain, or Oman	1	1
	Yemen	3	3
	Lebanon	5	5
	Jordan	5	5
	Iran	3	3
Total		40	40

Table (15)

Cross tabbing "Flexible working hours" with location

It appears that the largest selection number came from one country (Saudi Arabia) while it is spread across different other countries as well. So is it country specific? Or is the number just relevant to the team size (since Saudi Arabia has the largest

population)? Further analysis is shown when cross tabbing this to the sample function, as shown below:

Which function do you represent?

(Functions with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure anonymity of responses). * Flexible

Working Hours Cross tabulation

Count

		Flexible Working Hours	
		Flexible working hours	Total
Which function do you represent? (Functions with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure anonymity of responses).	Sales	31	31
	Marketing	1	1
	Finance, IT	1	1
	HR, admin, Medical, Regulatory, other support functions	7	7
Total		40	40

Table (16)

Cross tabbing "Flexible working hours" with function

Results revealed that 31 members of the sales team, constituting 16% of the total sample population and more than 22% of the total sales force of the sample population, see flexibility as their primary driver.

Similar to the above, the secondary and tertiary drivers were analysed in the following tables:

Secondary Engagement Driver

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Challenging work environment	29	15.3	15.3	15.3
	Fair working environment (No Politics)	14	7.4	7.4	22.8
	My voice is heard and of value to the organisation	21	11.1	11.1	33.9
	Strong benefits plan	7	3.7	3.7	37.6
	Work place that is enjoyable	17	9.0	9.0	46.6
	Work that enables my growth	49	25.9	25.9	72.5
	Working for the "Right Boss"	23	12.2	12.2	84.7
	Working with competent team	27	14.3	14.3	98.9
	Others	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	189	100.0	100.0	

Table (17)

Secondary engagement drivers frequency analysis

Tertiary Engagement Driver

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Being highest paid in the market	40	21.2	21.2	21.2
	Challenging work environment	22	11.6	11.6	32.8
	Fair working environment (No Politics)	40	21.2	21.2	54.0
	My voice is heard and of value to the organisation	40	21.2	21.2	75.1
	Strong benefits plan	6	3.2	3.2	78.3
	Work that enables my growth	12	6.3	6.3	84.7
	Working for the "Right Boss"	6	3.2	3.2	87.8
	Working with competent team	17	9.0	9.0	96.8
	Others	6	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	189	100.0	100.0	

Table (18)

Tertiary engagement drivers frequency analysis

The above results suggest a cultural as well as organisational context affecting the drivers of engagement, since a top driver appearing at almost fifth of the population seems to be not important at all for other members. The discussion of this point relates to several leadership, cultural, team and individual aspects as dealt with in the literature review chapter earlier.

A further look into the sub-regional statistics would give a better idea on this aspect.

4.2.2. Top Drivers of engagement in the Middle East Region:
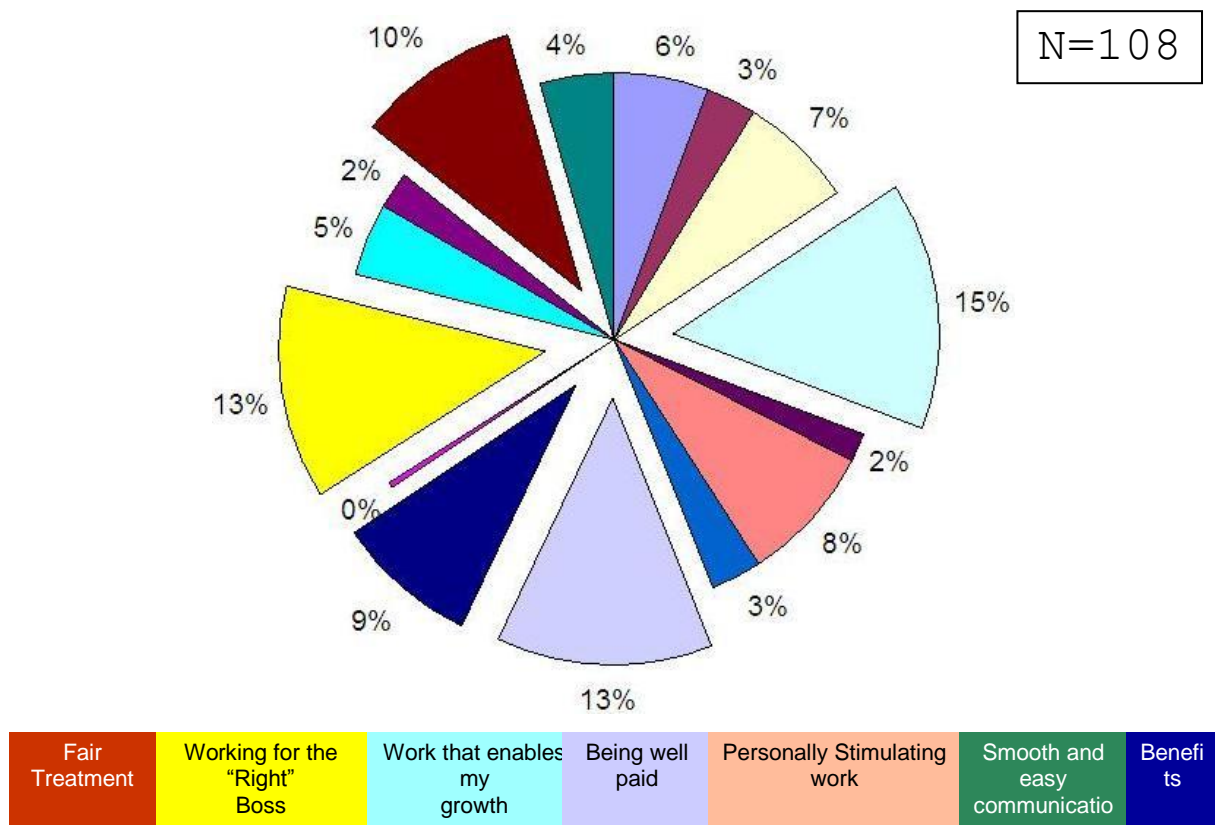
Chart (8)

Top drivers of engagement in the Middle East region

(Gulf Countries + Saudi Arabia + Yemen).

The top four drivers here are exactly similar to the bigger region (Middle and Near East region), and this may be due to the fact that the majority of the sample came from the Middle East as it has the larger team in the area.

4.2.3. Top Drivers of engagement in the Near East Region:

N=44

| Fair Treatment | Working for the "Right" Boss | Work that enables my growth | Being well paid | Personally Stimulating work | Smooth and easy communicatio | Benefits |
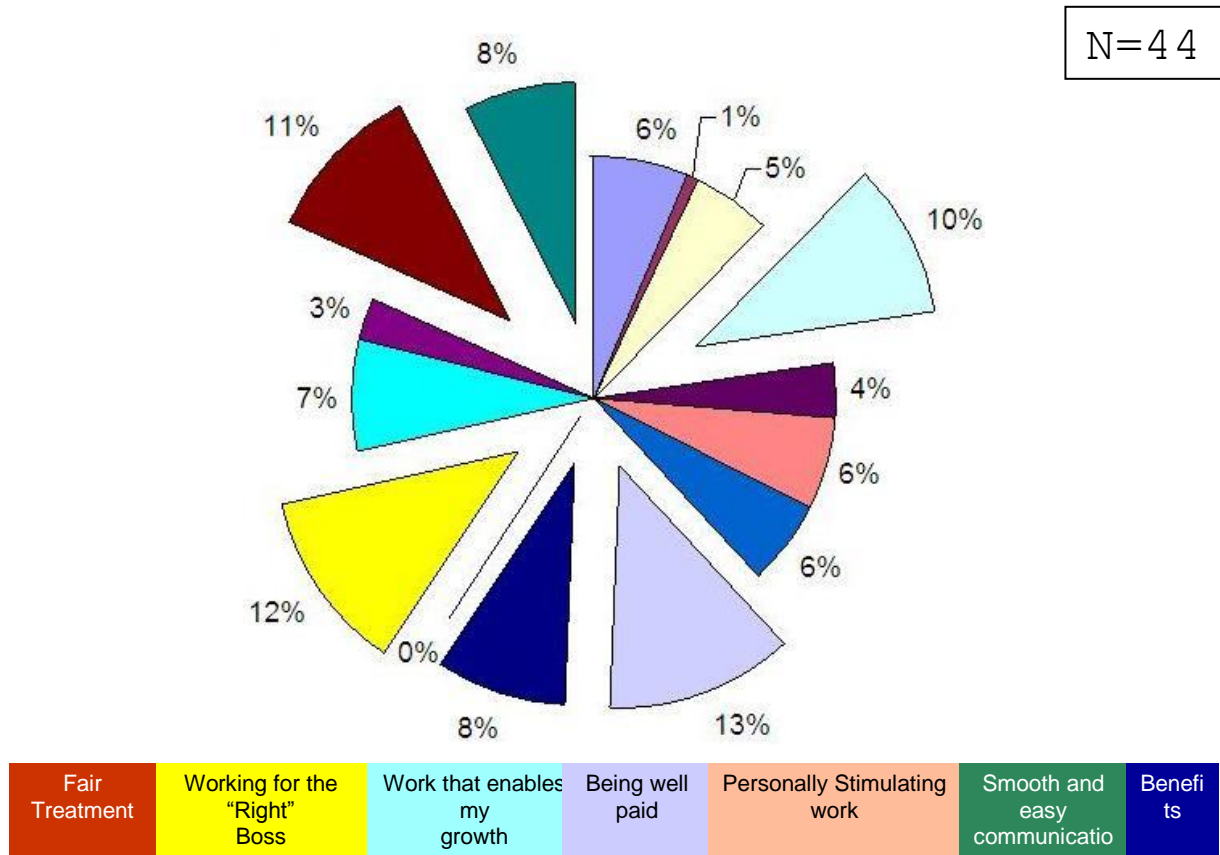
Chart (9)

Top drivers of engagement in the Near East region

(Lebanon + Jordan + Iran + Iraq + Syria + Palestine).

For the Near East area, the picture is different from the Middle East, as pay came first, and career growth came fourth, while leadership still retained its positions as second priority.

When thinking of the reasons behind differences in engagement drivers between the Middle East and Near East (Levant) regions, one of the factors to consider is that most of the employees in the Middle East regions are considered as expatriates (they are not originally from those countries – above 98%, according to the studied sample organisation's records). Since those employees have left their families and home countries, they mentioned in the informal interviews that they attach more importance to career progression and a "Good Career Pay back" for detaching from their homes.

While in the Near East region, it is completely the opposite, and almost 100% of the employees are local hires, and live within their families, friends and community so they look more towards having a stable life with good income. Still career growth came in the top five priorities, but not as obvious a top priority as the Middle East.

So could expatriate hires be another dimension that affects staff engagement? Working in another country than your home country, does it have an effect on engagement drivers? This could be an interesting dimension to investigate further.

4.2.4. Top Drivers of engagement in the Regional Head Quarters (Dubai):

| Fair Treatment | Working for the "Right" Boss | Work that enables my growth | Being well paid | Personally Stimulating work | Smooth and easy communicatio | Benefits |
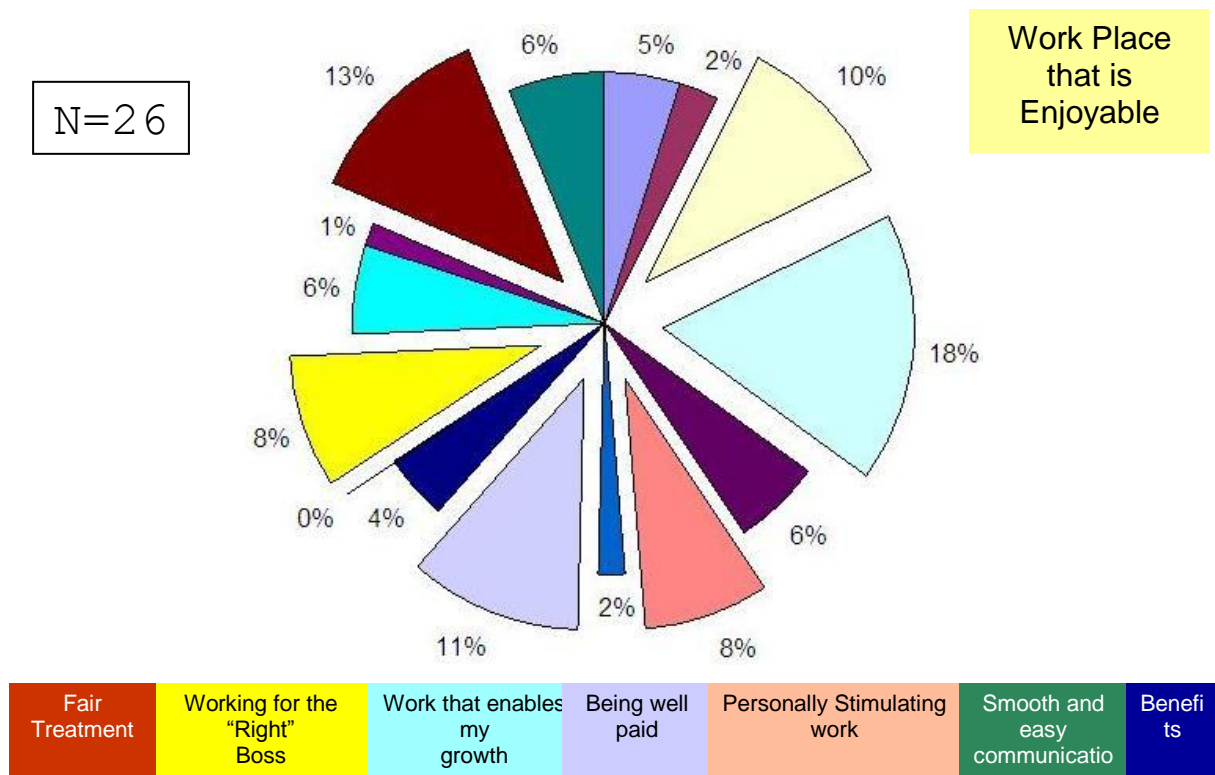
Chart (10)

Top drivers of engagement in the regional head quarters

(Dubai, United Arab Emirates).

Many threads are coming together from this graph, as career growth is a more significant top priority while a new dimension came through which is "Work Place that is enjoyable". This might be linked to being in the regional headquarters, where

opportunities come and the growth opportunities are larger than in remote subsidiary offices. At the same time, working in the regional office might be stressful due to the presence of all regional senior management staff as well as corporate headquarters visitors to the office which could be a cause for stress to the employees working at this site and the need for a "De-stressing" work environment is crucial. The other thread that can be concluded is that "Fair Treatment" came stronger as the second priority, and this was investigated more in the informal interviews.

One dimension related to the headquarters office, which is the need to respond and communicate to members in very different time zones, from +1 GMT (German and Swiss global offices), to +5 GMT (Iran), and over seven days a week, as the week end across the thirteen countries is not the same. In many cases, people in the regional headquarters have to be available for emergency responses seven days a week, from 8 AM in the morning to 9 PM at night, which could add a stress factor to being in the regional headquarters.

In the studied organisation, it also has to be noted that their current office has moved to a new location, away from the city, which could be a factor; however, this will be investigated further in the qualitative sector of the research.

The research has also aimed to cross the local national barriers and look deeper into major countries' results in order to investigate further if there is a country / local barrier at the national level.

4.2.5. Top Drivers of engagement in the GCC:

N=51

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefits
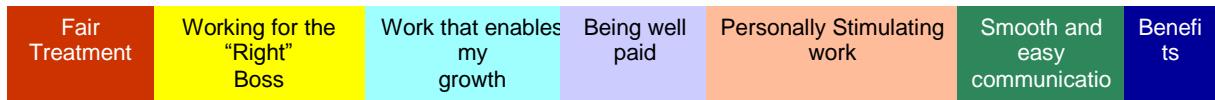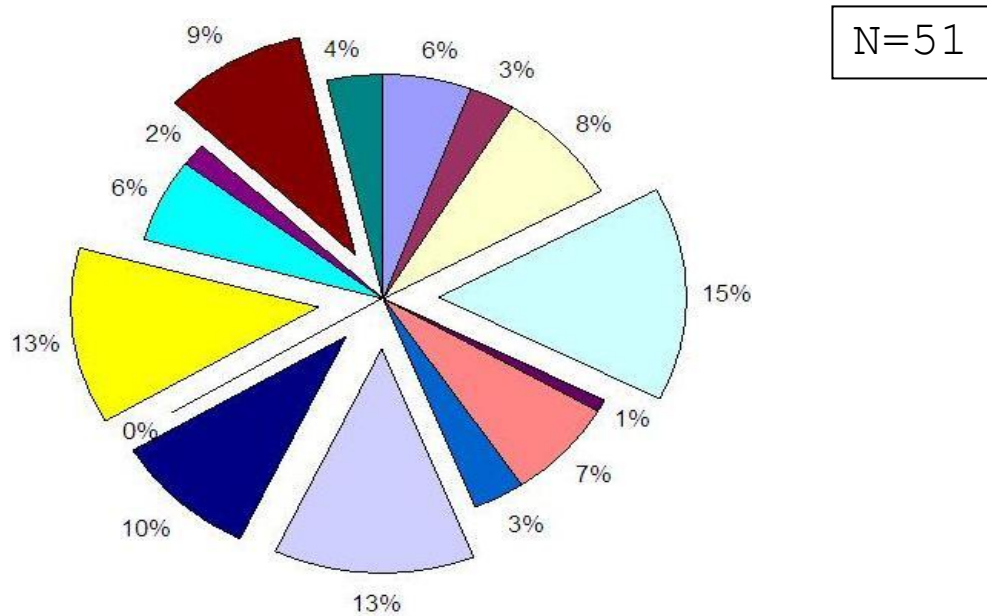
Chart (11)

Top drivers of engagement in the GCC

(Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and UAE Sales force – off office staff).

The GCC seems to be in line with the Middle East region and the results are harmonized between the bigger region and the sub-region.

4.2.6. Top Drivers of engagement in Saudi Arabia:

N=59

| Fair Treatment | Working for the "Right" Boss | Work that enables my growth | Being well paid | Personally stimulating work | Smooth and easy communicatio | Benefits |
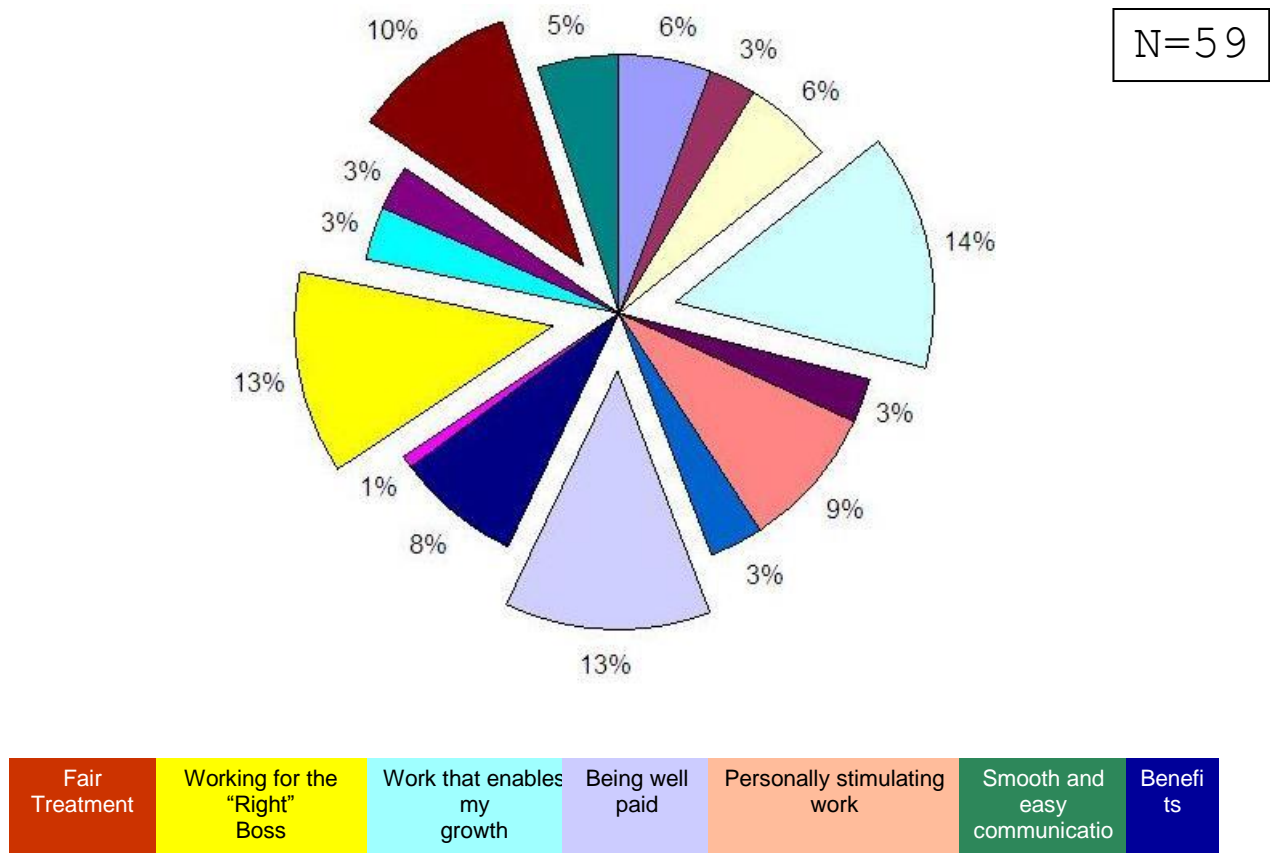
Chart (12)

Top drivers of engagement in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Similar to the GCC, Saudi Arabia seems to be in line with the Middle East region's results.

It has to be noted that the Gulf countries' team, along with Saudi Arabian team are also the teams with the largest percentage of expatriates, and it would be interesting to compare them with other countries mainly composed of local employees like Lebanon, Jordan and Iran.

4.2.7. Top Drivers of engagement in Lebanon:

N=27

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefi ts
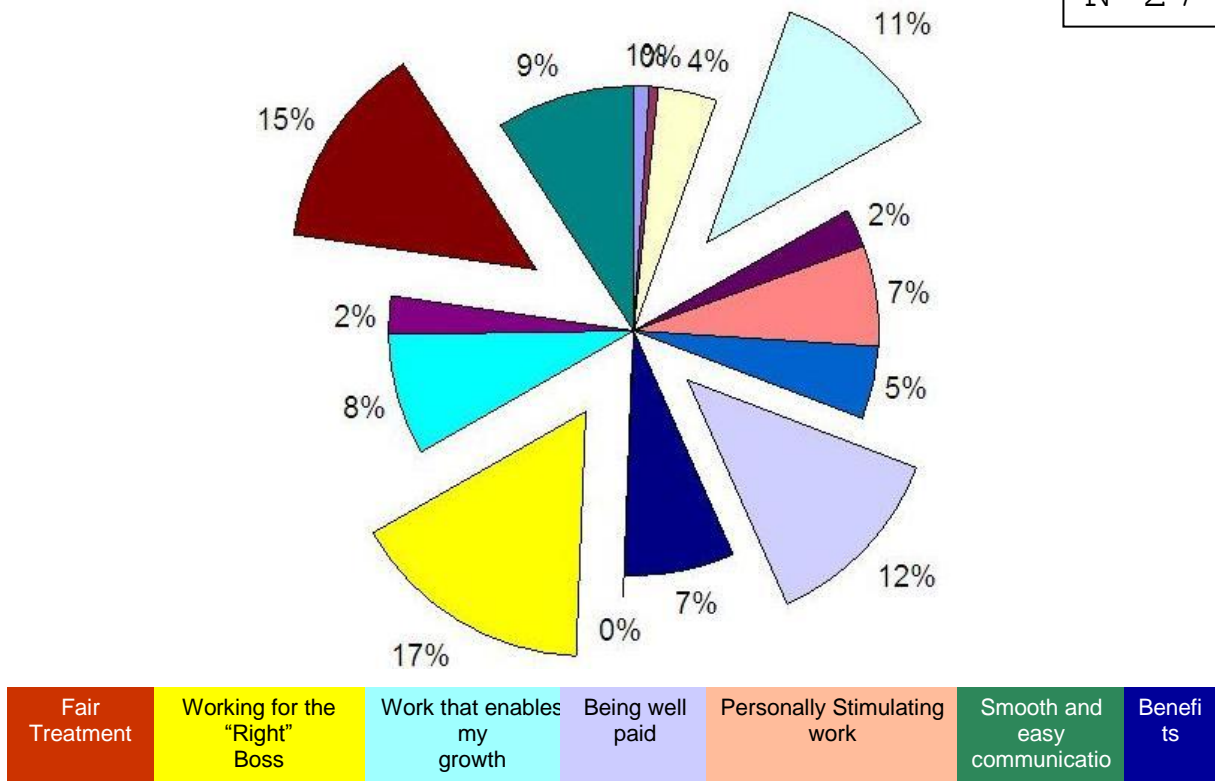
Chart (13)

Top drivers of engagement in Lebanon

Here, the situation is reversed and totally the opposite in terms of priorities. Leadership came on top, while fair treatment second, then payment third and career growth next.

Lebanon appears to have a different dynamic than the Middle East and even the Near East region, where it belongs in the survey group. This observation has also been investigated further in the informal interviews.

The summary of the top drivers of employee engagement in the region are displayed in the following table (19):

Segment	Driver A	Driver B	Driver C	Driver D
All	Work that enables my Growth	Working for the "Right" Boss	Being well paid	Fair Treatment
M.E.	Work that enables my Growth	Working for the "Right" Boss	Being well paid	Fair Treatment
N.E.	Being well paid	Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my Growth
HQ	Work that enables my Growth	Fair Treatment	Work Place that is Enjoyable	Being well paid
KSA	Work that enables my Growth	Working for the "Right" Boss	Being well paid	Fair Treatment
GCC	Work that enables my Growth	Working for the "Right" Boss	Being well paid	Fair Treatment
Lebanon	Working for the "Right" Boss	Fair Treatment	Being well paid	Work that enables my Growth

Table (19)

Top drivers of engagement in the Middle and Near East regions

Comparing this to the table abstracted from various sources before:

Survey			TUC Poll	NHS	CIPD	Concours Group	Towers Perrin (Now Towers Watson)
Country			UK	UK	UK	USA	USA
Parameter	Top Drivers of Engagement	1	Fair Pay	Enjoyable workplace	Upwards feedback	Security	Management's interest in employees' well-being
		2	Fair workload	Flexible work hours / place	Feeling informed	Growth and development	Challenging work
		3	Training /career progression	Fair rewards	Management commitment	Enjoyable work place	Decision-making authority

Copy of Table (4)

Different views of drivers of engagement

Source: Compiled from various papers.

The preliminary deduction could be that the top priority in the Middle and Near East regions does not come as top priority in any of the conducted surveys across the globe. This supports the first hypothesis of this research, that drivers of engagement are not similar across the globe and there is a possible cross-cultural barrier toward the globalisation of engagement drivers. This is still to be explored further in comparing secondary data as well as in the qualitative section of the survey.

A further thread that could be deducted from Table (4) that only two bodies have mentioned anything about management and leadership (CIPD mentioning "Management Commitment" as a third important driver, and Towers Perrin (Now Towers Watson) mentioning "Management interest in employee wellbeing" as a first important driver). So leadership is not an agreed factor between all engagement researchers, and this is confirmed further by Lucey (2009) who highlighted one of the engagement surveys done in 2002, which displayed the following results:
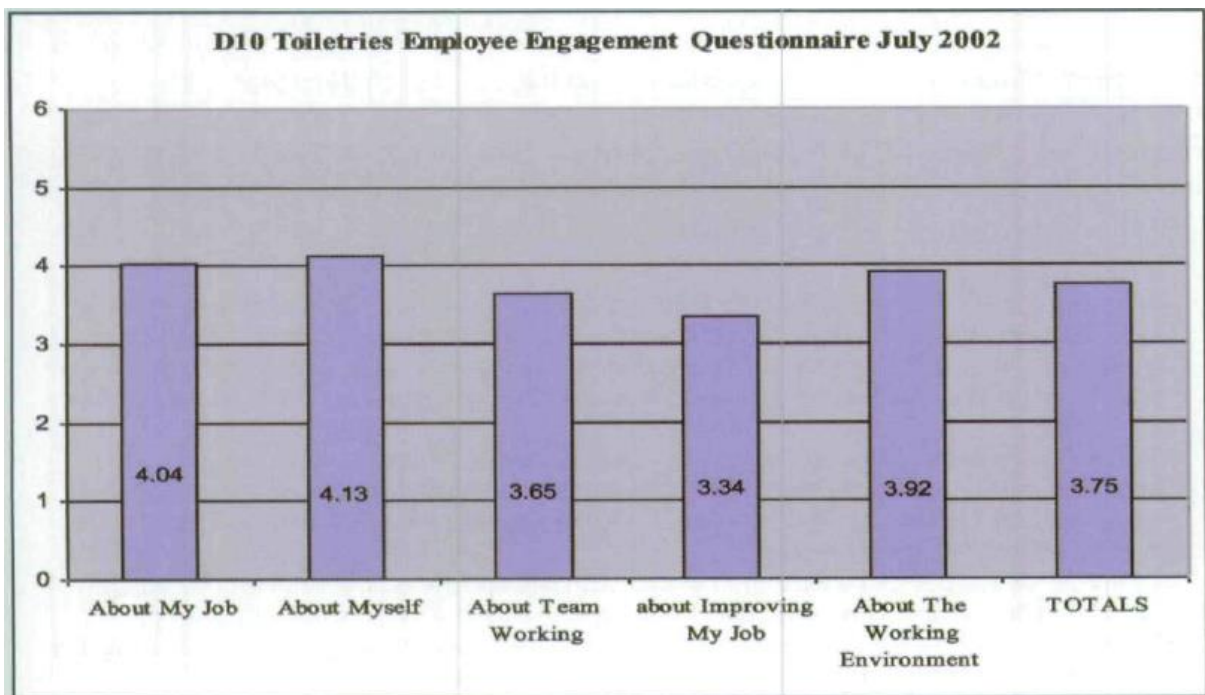
Figure (17)
D10 Toiletries employee engagement survey-July 2002
Source: Boots manufacturing employee engagement –survey-July 2002

The above figure shows that leadership was not even a direct factor that was measured when evaluating engagement at the surveyed company, so was this not important to the employees? Was it not an engagement driving factor? Leadership and management in general were not even touched upon in the engagement questionnaire sheet, as shown in the figure (18) below:

Figure (18)

Boots manufacturing's employee engagement survey questionnaire

The questionnaire above also measures a possible unique feature to industrial sectors, which is how employees feel about safety in their job, as an indication of the level of engagement, and this seems not to be considered for people working in administrative jobs, away from production zones, machines, or various health hazards.

Table (4) as well as figures (17) and (18) demonstrate that drivers of engagement could be very different from one environment to another, and some drivers could be very cultural or national specific (and even organisational context specific). This raises the assumption that it could even be different from one industry to the other, even if at the same country, since the organisational context sometimes is very unique and different, due to the era of mergers and acquisitions, which in many cases form new organisations from the combination of two old existing organisations (which was the case in the studied organisation).

This concept has been researched and discussed by Phillips and Maguire (2008), Terry (2001), Vaara (2003); Van Knippenberg and Van Leeuwen (2001) who have all supported the assumption that differences occurring in organisational and national aspects will affect the identity building of organisations, especially in times of mergers and acquisitions. Terry (2001), Van Knippenberg and Van Leeuwen (2001) have supported the change in identity during the formation of new teams and suggested that during this stage, either in newly formed organisations or during mergers of two existing ones, teams would start building their new identity and would incline to associate the similarities in beliefs to some sort of trustworthiness among each other, which could potentially end up in the formation of two groups; the ones who buy in, and the ones who do not. The later would eventually be outside of the group circle and would be repelled by the group.

The above situation would then increase the organisational barriers towards globalising employee engagement, since even in global organisations, some affiliate operations are newly formed, and some would then be formed by moving old and existing members from one country to the other, while a third group might hire experienced people from very different organisations. This will lead to very different

definitions of engagement, and very different views and beliefs of individuals, which will affect the group thinking and intra-group definition of trustworthiness. In order to avoid this, several multinational organisations (like the studied organisation in this current research) are trying hard to make sure that the recruitment processes are aligned (as per the leadership statement during the interviews), so that new people coming into the organisation can all share the same values and beliefs; however, those efforts are not guaranteeing the outcomes, since many members define values in a generic way (rather than the way the studied organisation defined them in the specific context of the studied organisation), as stated by the organisation's leaders during the informal interviews stage.

4.3. What do Middle and Near East employees need to increase their level of engagement?

Since the research is intended to offer practical advice and possible solutions to the studied organisation, the research also aims to identify the top needs for intervention in order to enhance the engagement levels of the local operation. This is very crucial for the research, as the global engagement survey came with specific recommendations for action plans, based on benchmarking the level of scores that the local employees have scored in different aspects, versus the global score and the score of high performing companies. It is important to see if the global recommendations, in the context where the survey was done, are in line with the local needs, and the actual requirements of the team working in the regional operation.

4.3.1. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – MNE:

| Fair Treatment | Working for the "Right" Boss | Work that enables my growth | Being well paid | Personally Stimulating work | Smooth and easy communicatio | Benefits |
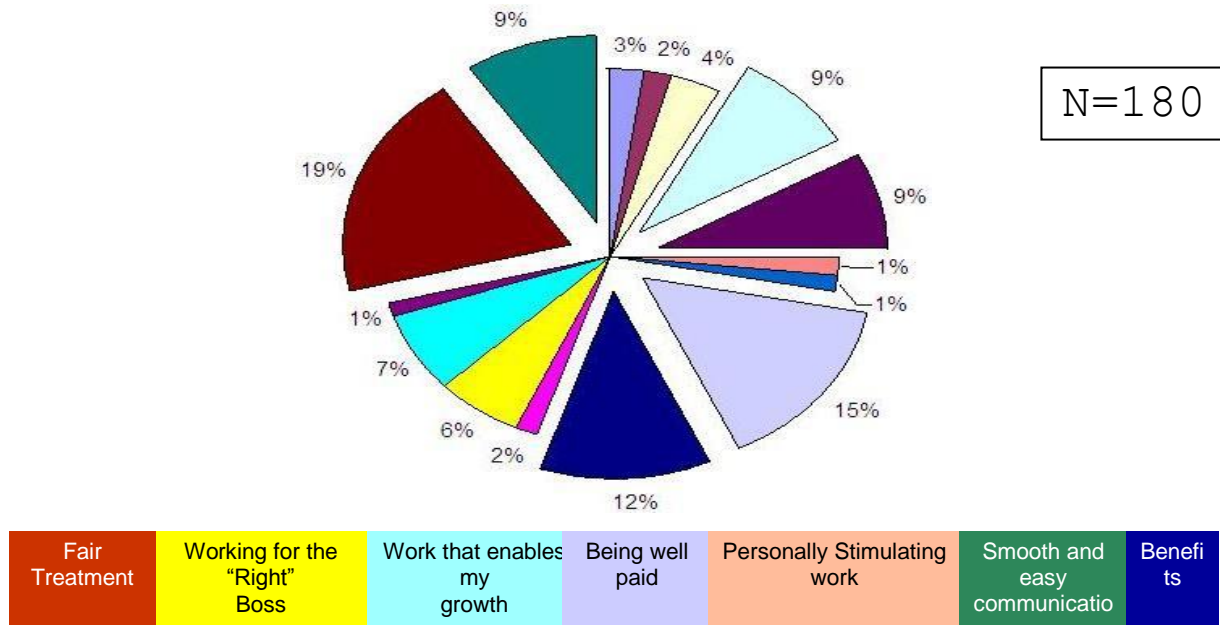
Chart (14)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Middle and Near East Regions

The top need for action came as "Fair Treatment", which is something that never came up in the global survey (used in this research as secondary data) recommendations. This aspect came with a very strong significance versus other aspects, as almost one fifth of the organisation scored it as the top priority. This fact, in itself could support the second and third hypothesis of the research as the outcome was clear and was not tackled in the global recommendations report. If we think also of this aspect from the dimension of its measurement, it was also weakly emphasized upon during the global survey measurement, as it was touched upon very lightly, while it seems to be extremely important and a crucial need for the local organisation.

"Fair treatment" is something that might be strange to some cultures at it is supposed to be a given in various work cultures, and should be protected by the labour laws as well in different countries. The term itself was discovered more in the informal interviews and focus groups, in order to define what employees meant by this and why this term was mentioned as a top priority.

This need was consistent with 2010 survey data as the following result was obtained:

Politics play a big part in career progression in my organization.

58.5 %

41.5 %

- Yes
- No
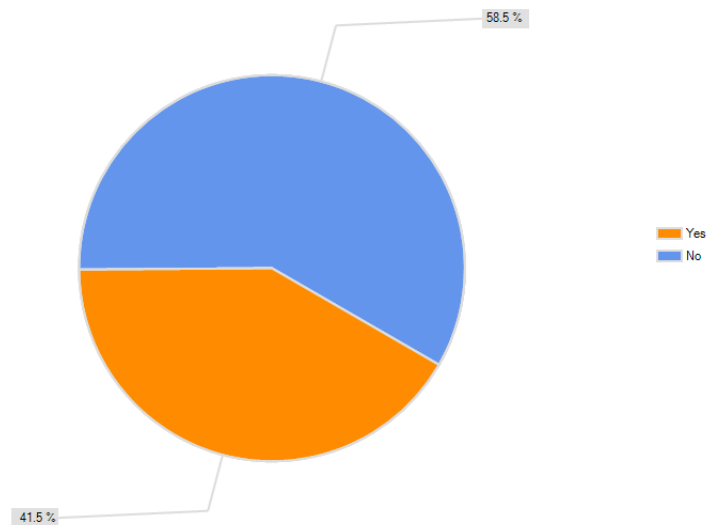
Chart (15)

Stage 2 of the survey: Politics at work.

Descriptive Statistics: Politics in the organisation

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Politics play a big part in career progression in my organisation.	142	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.5845	.04150	.49455	.245	-.347	.203
Valid N (list wise)	142									

Table (20)

Descriptive Statistics: Politics in the organisation

Very near to half of the organisation feel that "Politics" plays a very important part in moving forward in the organisation, which is consistent with data obtained from the same group over three years.

A deeper look into this factor shows that some countries face this problem more than the others, as shown in the following table:

Which region / country are you currently working in? (Countries / regions with less than 10 members are grouped to ensure anonymity of responses). * Politics play a big part in career progression in my organisation. Cross tabulation

Count

| | | Politics play a big part in career progression in my organisation. | | Total |
		Yes	No	
Which region / country are you currently working in? (Countries / regions with less than 10 members are grouped to ensure anonymity of responses).	Kuwait	2	2	4
	Bahrain / Qatar / Oman	3	3	6
	Yemen	5	3	8
	UAE	4	6	10
	UAE (office based staff)	8	9	17
	KSA	22	25	47
	Lebanon	3	25	28
	Jordan	3	5	8
	Iran	9	4	13
	Iraq / Syria / Palestine	0	1	1
Total		59	83	142

Table (21)

Cross Tabbing "Politics in the organisation" with location

The above table shows that most of the countries feel this issue significantly (like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, as well as Iran and other gulf countries), while in Lebanon; this does not appear to be an issue at all. So does this feeling affect the driver of engagement "Fair working environment"? The following table offers more evidence:

Which region are you working in?

(Countries with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure the anonymity of responses). * Fair

working environment (No politics) Cross tabulation

Count

		Fair working environment (No politics)	Total
		Fair working environment (No Politics)	Total
Which region are you working in? (Countries with less than 10 members have been grouped to ensure the anonymity of responses).	Switzerland	1	1
	North Africa (Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, Libya)	1	1
	Saudi Arabia	23	23
	UAE: Sales Force	6	6
	UAE: Office based staff	17	17
	Kuwait	4	4
	Qatar, Bahrain, or Oman	3	3
	Yemen	3	3
	Lebanon	7	7
	Jordan	2	2
	Iran	5	5
Total		72	72

Table (22)

Cross Tabbing "Fair working environment" with location

The above table shows that more than 50% of those who selected "Fair working environment" as their key driver for engagement came from countries who felt that politics exist in their workplace. This finding could suggest an organisational context and link to the engagement drivers as suggested by the research hypothesis.

Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) highlighted the importance of the presence of "Psychological safety" as a crucial factor to enhance employee engagement. They

have described this "Psychological safety" as a non-threatening and accommodating environment that allows space for feedback, even if opposing the leader's vision and strategy. Kapoutsis, Papalexandris, Nikolopoulos, Hochwarter and Ferris (2011) linked the high levels of political skills that individuals sometimes possess to the levels of performance, and they have assumed that they are in a positive exponential relationship in settings characterized by lower perceived politics, while the opposite is also assumed according to their research. So in other terms, in organisations where politics is perceived to be highly relevant, an individual having these high political skills would be assumed not of "High Performance" and the opposite is also assumed to be supported by their research. Ferris et al. (2005) defined the "Political skills" as the ability to "read and understand people and situations at work, and to act upon such knowledge to influence others so that goals can be accomplished".

The questionnaire allowed some space for further comments / explanations from the respondents in order to ensure proper understanding of the context of the answer and give some qualitative feedback, that would be further investigated in the informal interviews part. When asked to give some feedback to explain what employees mean by politics, the following comments were given: (The table below was copied without any modification or correction of spelling mistakes as a sign of integrity to the exact comments written by employees who are mostly not English native speakers).

1.	relationships play a big part in career opportunites- Fixed agenda whatever you do
2.	Friends sapport frinds
3.	i cant cover some potential area organiz of unstability there
4.	I think that considering our strengths points encourages us,and sometimes it was ignored
5.	an advice by a member out of the team can play a great role in promoting
6.	There are like and dislike politics.
7.	politic for me means: doing good,truly, sensible & excellent function in my job
8.	sometimes NOT always
9.	Politics now are less than before but there's still more room for progress.
10.	We deal with different people,cultures,departments and behaviours.
11.	Definately only those who play politics grow, those who stay out stay stagnant.
12.	Some business directors are not qualified for the job they are holding
13.	Personal relations in senior management recruitment

Table (23)

Stage 2: Unedited employees' comments on "Politics" in the organisation.

The feedbacks from the employees shown above focuses more or less on the job promotions side, and the decision to promote employees or give them a special assignment. There is a feeling that the most competent people do not make their way to the top, and this would either point to a "gap in communication", "gap in trust" or possibility of "wrong decisions". This factor was explored further during the informal interviews.

Linking the above results to "Knowledge Workers" that has been discussed earlier, shows that there is a possible loss to the performance of the organisation due to the gap in trust among almost half of the working group. Von Krogh et al. (2000) stressed that lack of trust affects the levels of knowledge sharing and creation, which could dangerously split the organisation into silos and can affect the transfer of intellectual power and proper use of information transfer internally and externally as well.

Edvinsson and Malone (1997) and Stewart (1997) have supported Von Krogh's (2000) findings as they described the market value of an organisation as an outcome of two main factors; the financial capital and the intellectual capital. This gives great emphasis on the importance of knowledge transfer and human assets to the success of any organisation.

The "Politics free environment" remains as the top priority of the sample studied and there is a good possibility that it is unique to the region. "Politics" is a perception but in this group, it is given more focus in their responses than any other criteria. Hochwarter, Meurs, Perrewé, Royle, and Matherly (2007) assume that in political environments, information distortion is high, and the ability of individuals to focus becomes a big challenge. This sort of distraction could be destructive and has adverse effects to the organisation, according to Hobfoll (2002); and Hochwarter et al. (2010).

A factor that could contribute to the above feeling is the lack of official labour groups / unions in the majority of the countries studied, as they are not allowed by the law in many of the regionally studied countries.

One more result came supporting to the above assumption, which was "equal rights" among different employees from different backgrounds, as the following was obtained:

Employees in my organization are treated equally and fairly.

28.9 %

71.1 %

Yes
No
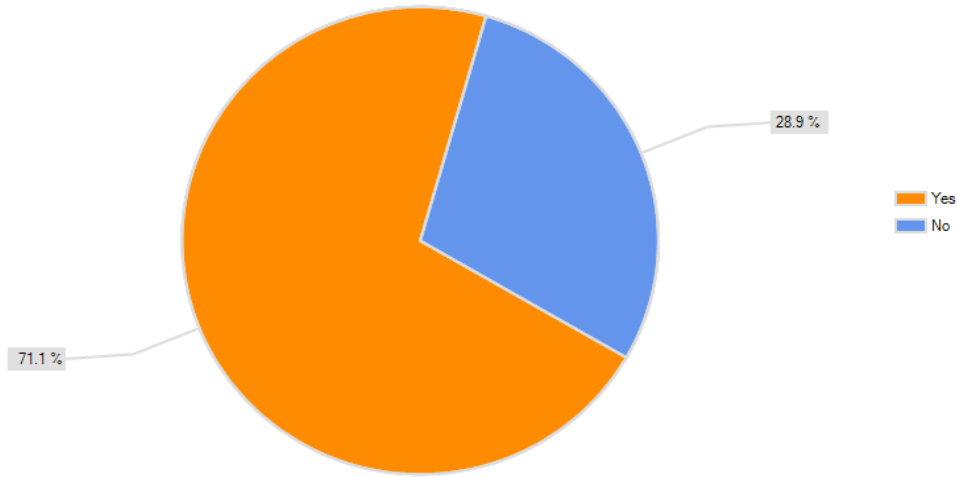
Chart (16)

Stage 2 of the survey: Equal rights at work.

Descriptive Statistics: Equal and Fair treatment

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Employees in my organisation are treated equally and fairly.	142	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.2887	.03816	.45478	.207	.942	.203
Valid N (list wise)	142									

Table (24)

Descriptive statistics: equal and fair treatment

The table shows that almost a third of the organisation attribute "Politics" and unfairness to a perceived discrimination in rights between different employees. When the sample group filled the open ended (optional) part in the survey, the following was obtained: (The table below was copied without any modification or correction of

spelling mistakes as a sign of integrity to the exact comments written by employees who are mostly not English native speakers).

1.	some achievments is ignored although it is significant and strategic oriented and that to undermine some members who might have a good opportunity to shine in the organization
2.	if employees are treated fairly,we will find chance to increase our motivation
3.	If you are in the circle of trust, you don't need to work! Othere wise you are slave
4.	fairly:yes – equally:no
5.	Due to the Cross functional departments,My department is deprived from the oppurtunities in the others according to there requirments and privacy.
6.	sometimes rules are broken for some employees
7.	There is no consistency in the organization. People at certain levels in the organization are often neglected and career growth takes a back seat
8.	No on development issues

Table (25)

Stage 2: unedited employees comments on "Equal rights" in the organisation.

The comments above do not focus on a clear issue to address or tackle, as it is ranging from development issues, promotion issues, to more serious issues like work values and ethics.

This is a serious concern for the studied group and the gap could either be a gap in perception or a true discrimination in treatment. To explore more about this factor, the following chart (17) (which was obtained from stage 2 of the survey) was cross-tabbed and compared to the above results:
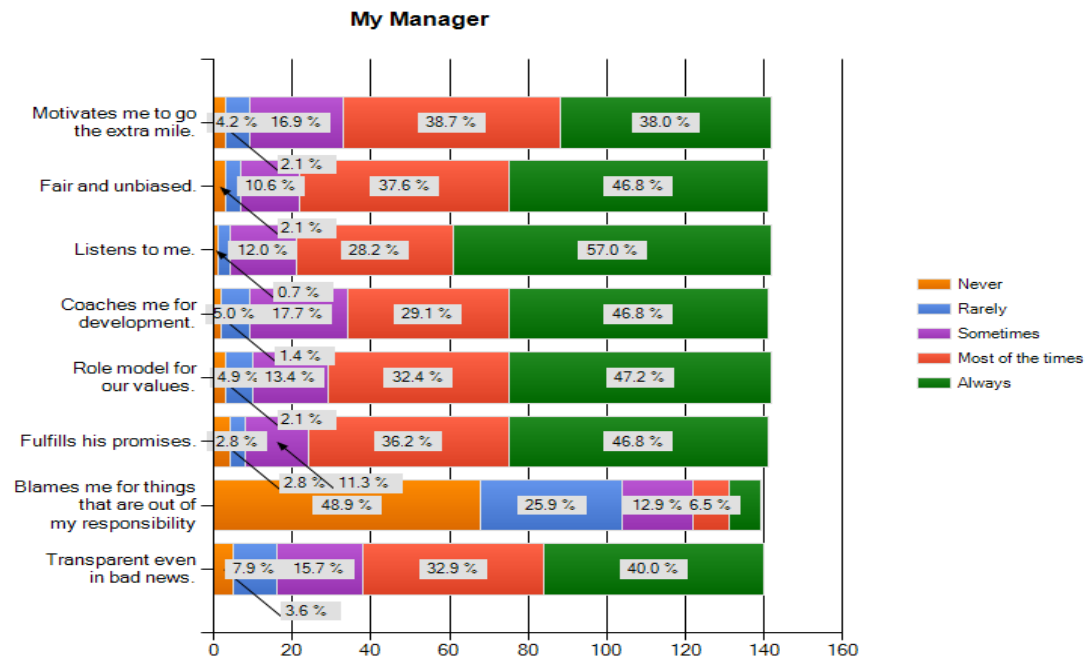
Chart (17)

Stage 2 of the survey: Describing managers in the organisation.

Descriptive Statistics: Managers in the organisation

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Motivates me to go the extra mile.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.0634	.08009	.95438	.911	-1.022	.203
Fair and unbiased.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.2411	.07659	.90948	.827	-1.423	.204
Listens to me.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.3873	.06985	.83240	.693	-1.357	.203
Coaches me for development.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1489	.08235	.97787	.956	-1.002	.204
Role model for our values.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1761	.08260	.98427	.969	-1.222	.203
Fulfils his promises.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.2128	.08040	.95475	.912	-1.439	.204
Blames me for things that are out of my responsibility	139	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.9424	.10045	1.18426	1.402	1.202	.206
Transparent even in bad news.	140	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.9786	.09262	1.09589	1.201	-.989	.205
Valid N (list wise)	134									

Table (26)

Descriptive statistics: Managers in the organisation

From the above chart and table, almost 80% of employees see managers as "Fair and unbiased", good coaches, good listeners, and motivating. This is a result that conflicts with the previous assumption of "Politics" and further supports the possibility of an existing gap in communicating certain decisions which might result in the perception of "Politics" in the organisation. The other possible inference to this is that "Politics" could be seen as a result of the senior management level rather than the direct managers' level. This would be explored further through analysing other results and checking for possible threads.

The next level of management was also surveyed where opinion on senior managers (directors) was gathered and the following chart was obtained:

The senior management team (Directors).
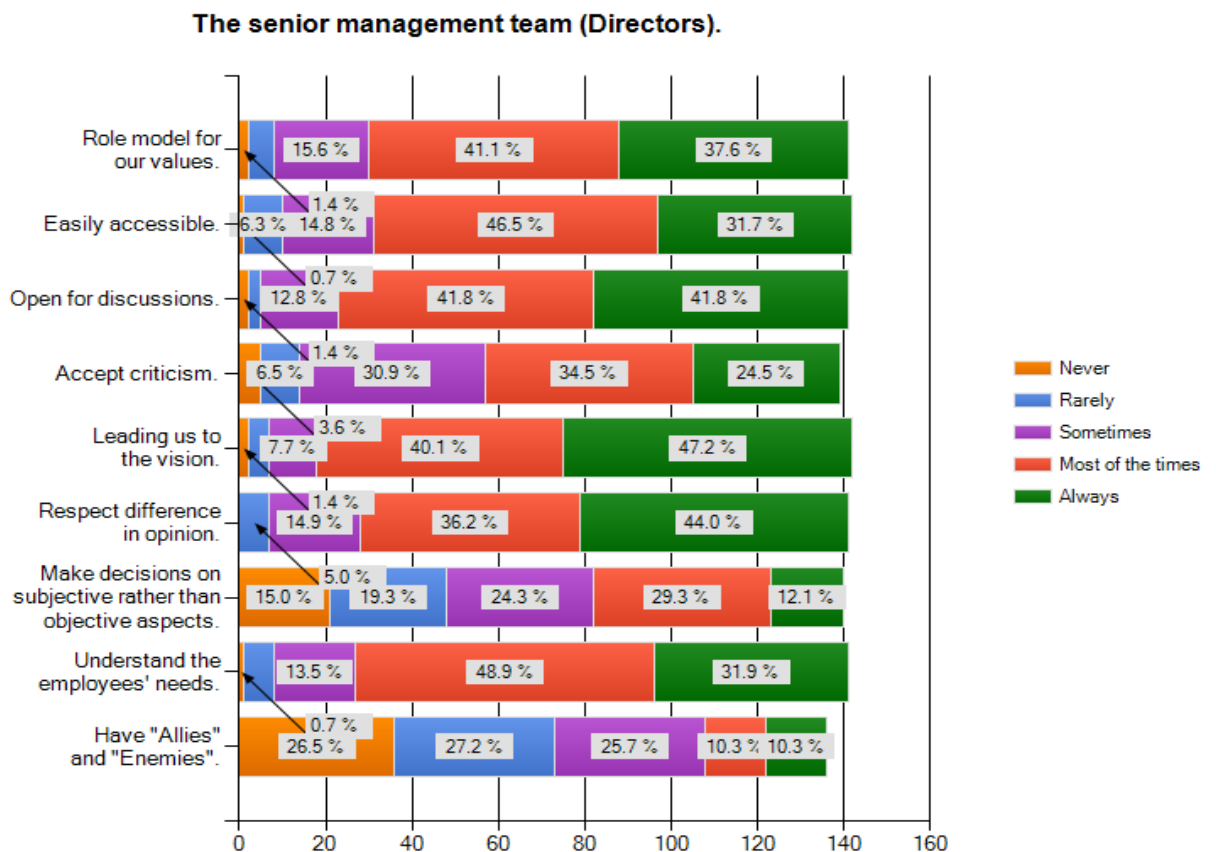
Chart (18)

Stage 2 of the survey: Describing senior managers (directors) in the organisation.

Descriptive Statistics: Senior managers in the organisation

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Role model for our values.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.0922	.07659	.90948	.827	-.993	.204
Easily accessible.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.0211	.07444	.88701	.787	-.846	.203
Open for discussions.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.2057	.07154	.84952	.722	-1.189	.204
Accept criticism.	139	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.6978	.08704	1.02614	1.053	-.547	.206
Leading us to the vision.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.2817	.07232	.86185	.743	-1.457	.203
Respect difference in opinion.	141	3.00	2.00	5.00	4.1915	.07322	.86944	.756	-.847	.204
Make decisions on subjective rather than objective aspects.	140	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.0429	.10626	1.25733	1.581	-.170	.205
Understand the employees' needs.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.0638	.07133	.84695	.717	-.910	.204
Have Allies and Enemies	136	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.5074	.10896	1.27073	1.615	.511	.208
Valid N (list wise)	126									

Table (27)

Descriptive statistics: Senior managers in the organisation

According to the results above, around 80% of the employees see the senior managers as role models for the values, easily accessible, open for discussions, accepting criticism (slightly below average), leading the team to the organisational vision, respect difference in opinions, and understanding employees' needs. Two results confirm the possible gap in communication which could lead to the perceived "Politics"; the first is "Make decision on subjective rather than objective basis", which 41.4% of the organisation feels, and the second is "Have allies and enemies", which 20.6% feel. Those two results raise the probability of communication gap which leads to "Political decisions" perception, as if employees are not clear to why a decision is taken, then stories could be built in the underground network, which usually supports the "conspiracy theory".

The other needs for driving engagement in the local operation are pay and communication respectively. Career growth, despite being on top of the engagement

drivers for the region; seem to be in the fifth position when it comes to the needs for action, which mean that organisation managers could focus on other priorities first.

The second factor has changed over time, as in the 2010 survey, the second top need was delegation at work and more job enrichment and decision empowerment.

My full capacity is used at my current job.

37.3 %

62.7 %

Yes
No
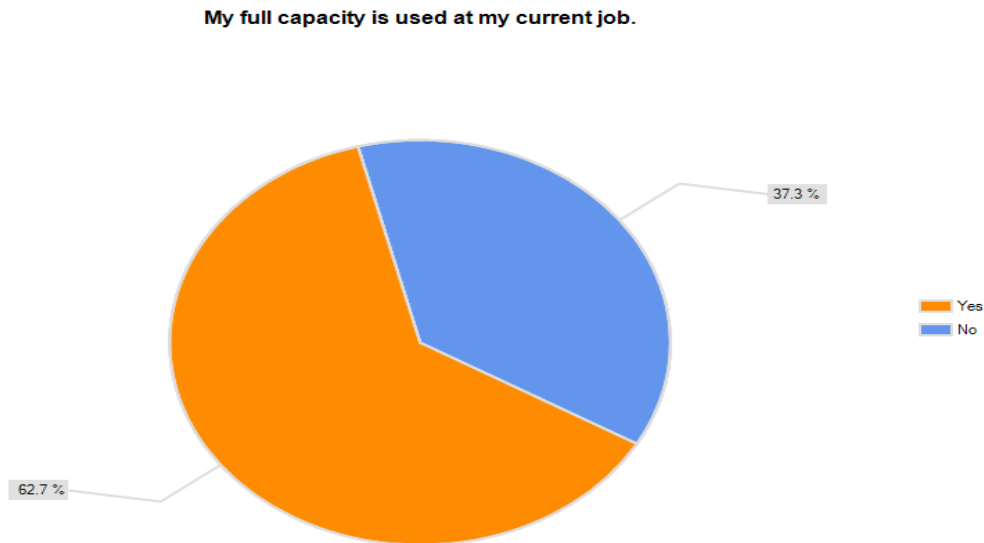
Chart (19)

Stage 2 of the survey: Capacity used at work.

Descriptive Statistics: Full Capacity at work

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
My full capacity is used at my current job.	142	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.3732	.04073	.48538	.236	.530	.203
Valid N (list wise)	142									

Table (28)

Descriptive statistics: Full capacity at work

The above graph shows that 37.3% of the employees feel "Under-delegated" or "under-utilized" in their current job and this would conclude the possibility of either true underutilization of the current employees or over expectation of their own capabilities.

This factor is related to three main possible dimensions; the management style of direct managers, the employees own development levels, and personal capabilities and definitions of capacity by individuals. It shows a strong need for good coaching from front line managers, as if some employees are truly over-qualified or more capable than what their current job, then managers should use delegation and empowerment towards their direct reports. If the case is the other way around (where some employees over-estimate their performance), then good coaching and development is required with honest feedback to what they still need to learn in order to be ready for the next move. The Lane4 study (2010) regarding coaching teams at work has revealed that coaching teams is said to be a key player in increasing engagement by 28% of the employees participating in this survey.

To explore more, the following response chart was generated from the employees, describing themselves and their performance.
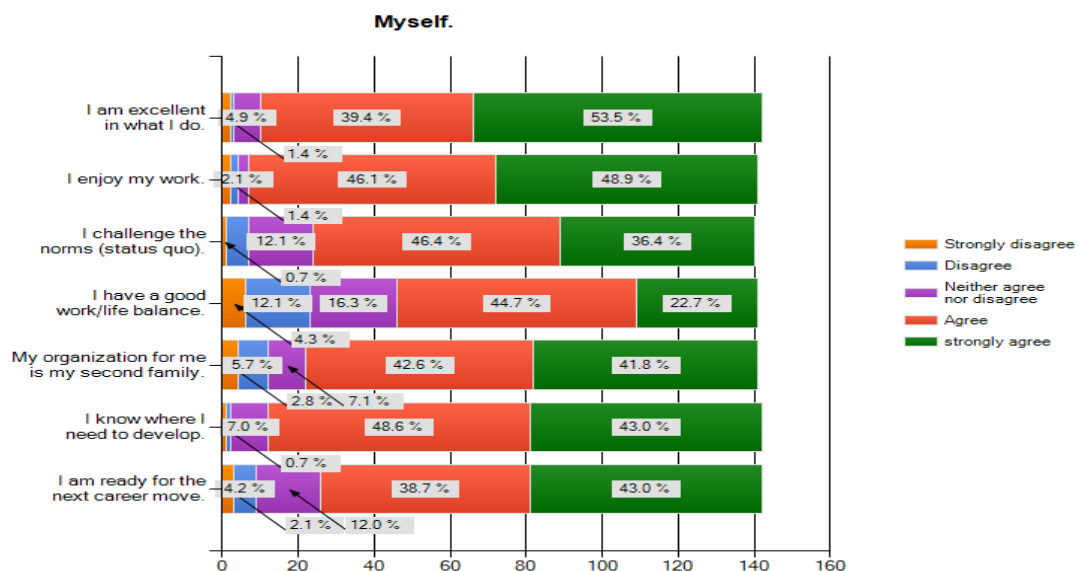
Chart (20)

Stage 2 of the survey: Employees describing themselves.

Descriptive Statistics: Self evaluation

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
I am excellent in what I do.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.4296	.06273	.74755	.559	-1.822	.203
I enjoy my work.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.3972	.06195	.73562	.541	-1.877	.204
I challenge the norms (status quo).	140	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1357	.07112	.84147	.708	-.997	.205
I have a good work/life balance.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.6950	.09112	1.08195	1.171	-.773	.204
My organisation for me is my second family.	141	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1489	.08235	.97787	.956	-1.420	.204
I know where I need to develop.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.3239	.05875	.70004	.490	-1.174	.203
I am ready for the next career move.	142	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1620	.07910	.94259	.888	-1.258	.203
Valid N (list wise)	137									

Table (29)

Descriptive statistics: Self evaluation

Almost 80% of the employees are in favour (agree or strongly agree) that they evaluate themselves as excellent in what they do, enjoy their work, comfortable in challenging the status quo, maintain good work / life balance, feel "family-like" at work, know where they need to develop and most importantly, "ready" for the next career move. This would assume the over-expectation of their capabilities and the need for proper coaching and delegation from management in order to stretch the abilities and performance of their teams and offer new challenges which will also be great learning experience.

The following comments were obtained in the open comments box in the survey, following the self-description chart:

1.	I joined MSME only a few months back so I need a bit more time to establish myself in my current position
2.	I really want to progress myself in my work.
3.	i am exposing myself when ever possible in a professional way
4.	I do not have a clear career plan inside the company due to the company situation.
5.	I need to recive more help from organization to develop.,Like TSMP result
6.	i'm ready to whatever career if I want. But what I want is to stay in that COMPANY.
7.	next career move in the organization
8.	I need to progress in my job, I need new challenges, I have a lot more unused potential in my current position

Table (30)

Stage 2: unedited employees' comments on "Self-evaluation" in the organisation.

The comments above also focus on career moves and personal development, which could indicate the over-perception of employees' self-performance, and the need for new assignments. Employees' self-perception seems to be very high at this sample group and combining this with career progression results (as top drivers for engagement) makes this aspect in the top priorities for engagement plans in the regionally studied sample.

4.3.2. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Middle East:

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefits
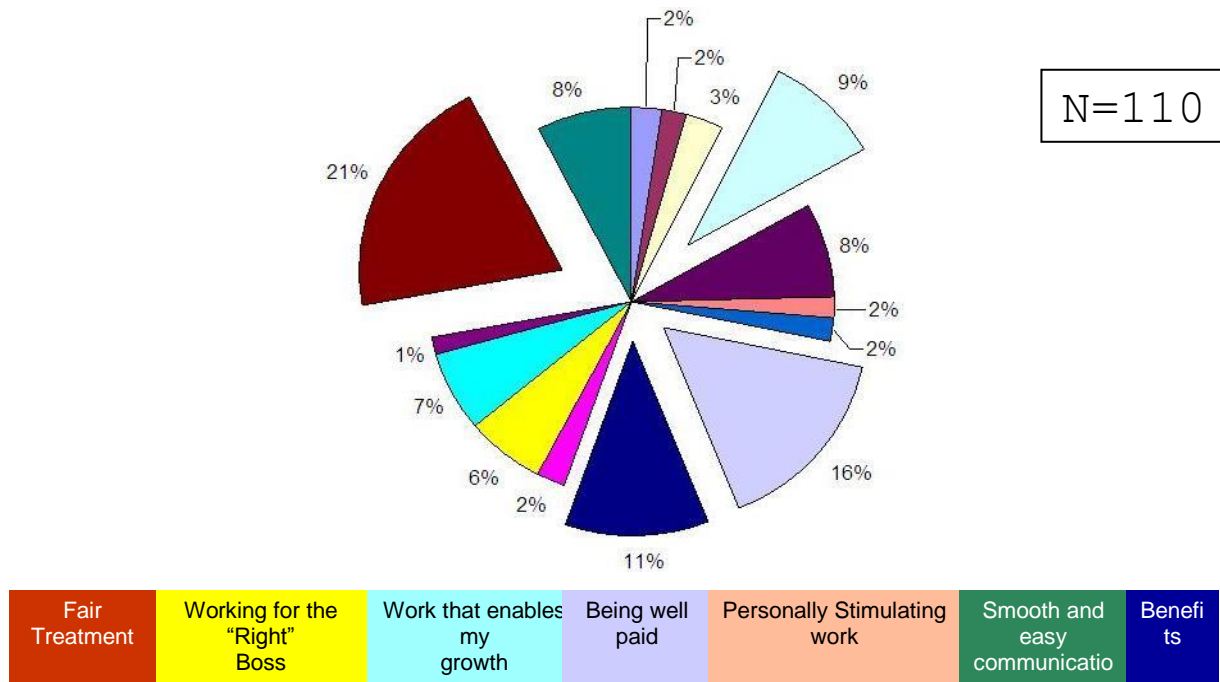
Chart (21)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Middle East region

(Gulf Countries + Saudi Arabia + Yemen).

The same aspect of "Fair Treatment" came in the Middle East region, but more significant than the whole region's score, with 21% of the responses rating it as "Urgent" need for intervention. Pay and career growth also follow, similar to the bigger region's data.

Working relationships came as the ninth rank (one before last) in the drivers of engagement of pharmaceutical industry employees in the Towers Watson Global Workforce study (2010) while it is a focus for employees in the Middle East, which further supports the research hypothesis that there are some cultural contexts behind drivers of engagement and will also affect the weight impact in any survey. This is, at the same time, in line with the Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions, where interpersonal relationships play an important part in the Middle East culture, and as highlighted as well by the GLOBE study (House et. Al, 2004).

4.3.3. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Near East:

N=44

| Fair Treatment | Working for the "Right" Boss | Work that enables my growth | Being well paid | Personally Stimulating work | Smooth and easy communicatio | Benefits |
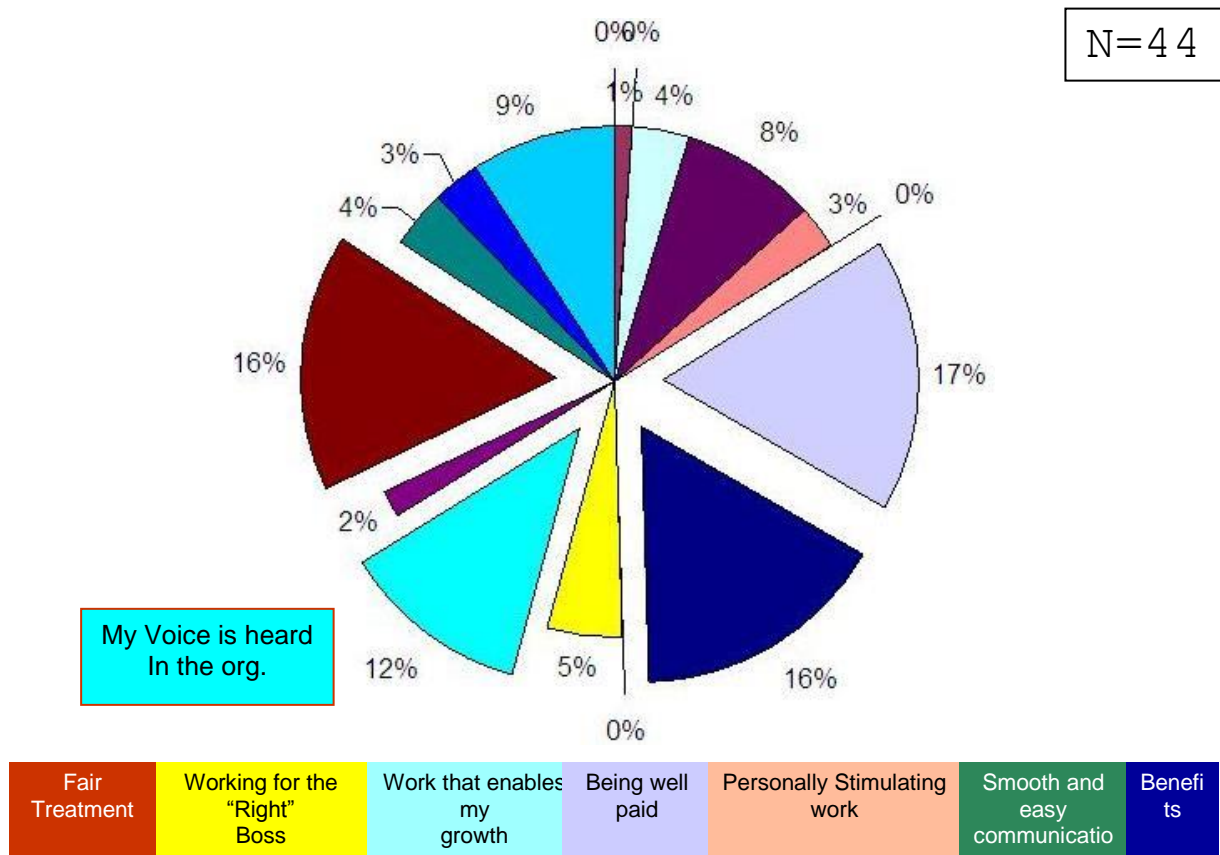
Chart (22)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Near East region

(Lebanon + Jordan + Iran + Iraq + Syria + Palestine).

"Fair Treatment" still comes in a very high rank, as the second most important need for intervention; however, pay comes on top, consistent with their driver rankings. A new need for intervention came specific to the Near East region, which is "My Voice is heard in the organisation", and this might be due to the fact that they are distant from the headquarters. This point shall be investigated further in the informal interviews.

4.3.4. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Regional HQ:

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefits
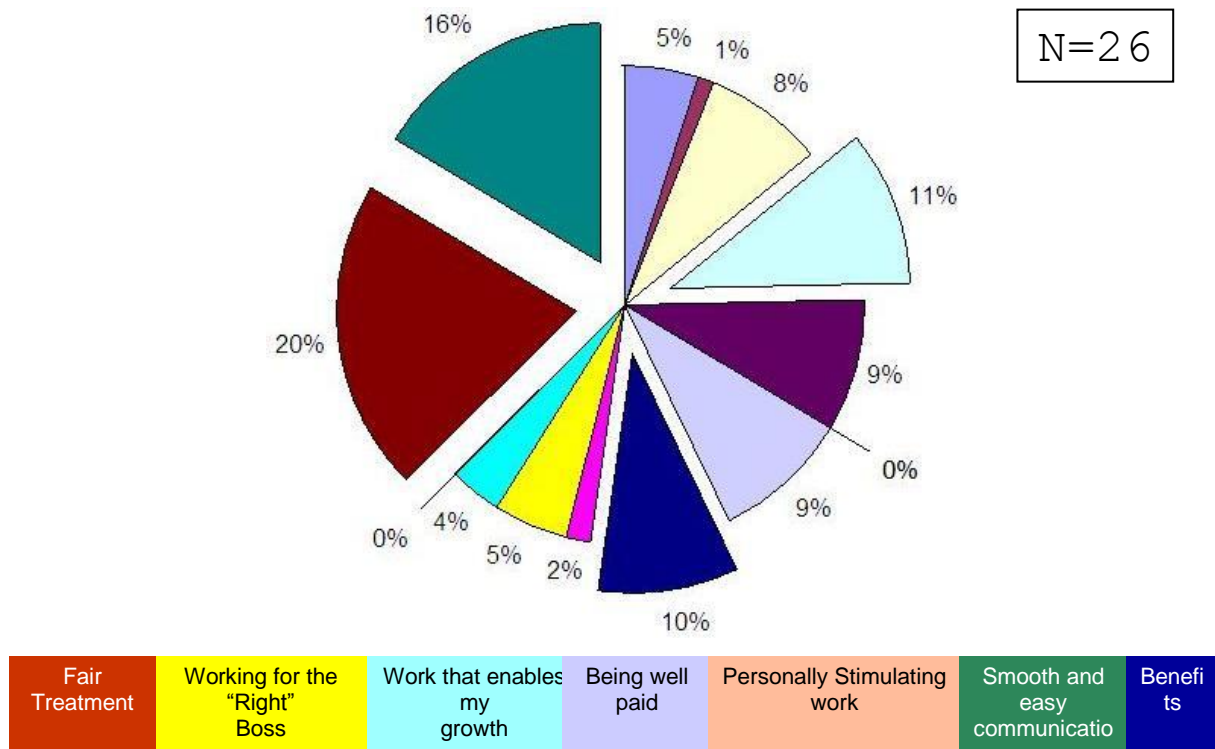
Chart (23)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Regional headquarters – Dubai

"Fair Treatment" is consistent again in the headquarters, while a strange second aspect came, which is "Smooth and easy communication". This is a strange aspect as people present in the headquarters can easily communicate with top managers and almost everyone in the office follows an "Open Door Policy"; however, this could link to previous research done by Elewa (2008) studying the organisational culture at the same organisation and aiming to create a "High Performing Culture", where a major outcome of the research that a big hurdle against the organisation going forward was "politics". At this time, 64% of the responses to the survey confirmed that political games prevail in the local organisation. The same outcome was confirmed again by Elewa (2008) when 32% of the organisation confirmed that "politics" represented the worst of the organisation at this time. This point will be investigated further during the informal interviews with the head-quarters' employees.

Crossing again the local national barriers, the research investigates the major country results.

4.3.5. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – GCC:

N=51

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefits
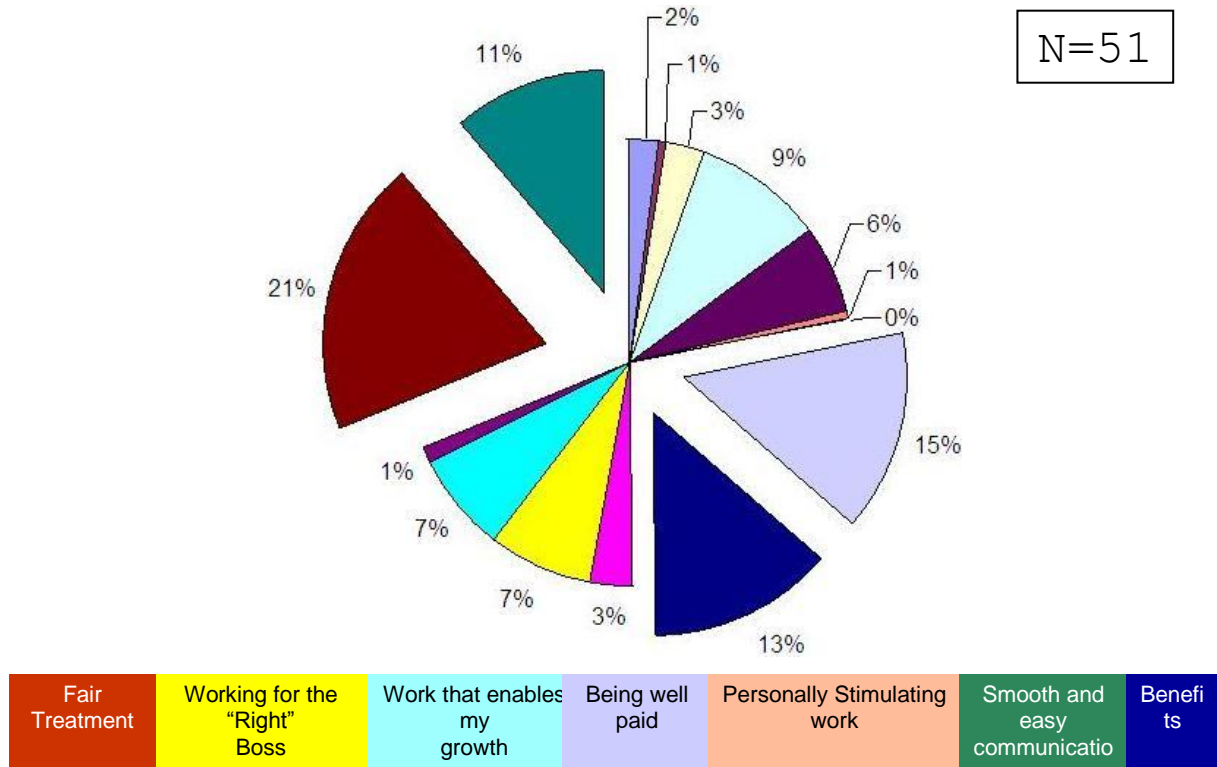
Chart (24)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – GCC

(Gulf Council Countries – Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and UAE: Sales force only).

The GCC needs seem to be in line with the Middle East needs, as fair treatment comes first, then pay, then communication.

4.3.6. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – KSA:

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefits
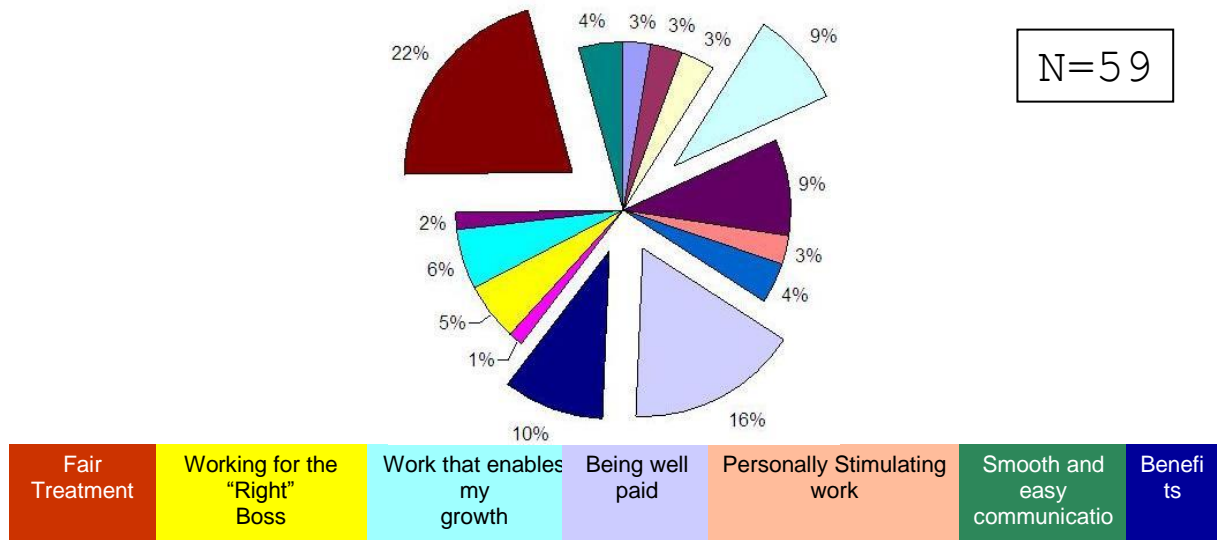
Chart (25)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – KSA

(Kingdom of Saudi Arabia).

4.3.7. Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Lebanon:

Fair Treatment	Working for the "Right" Boss	Work that enables my growth	Being well paid	Personally Stimulating work	Smooth and easy communicatio	Benefits
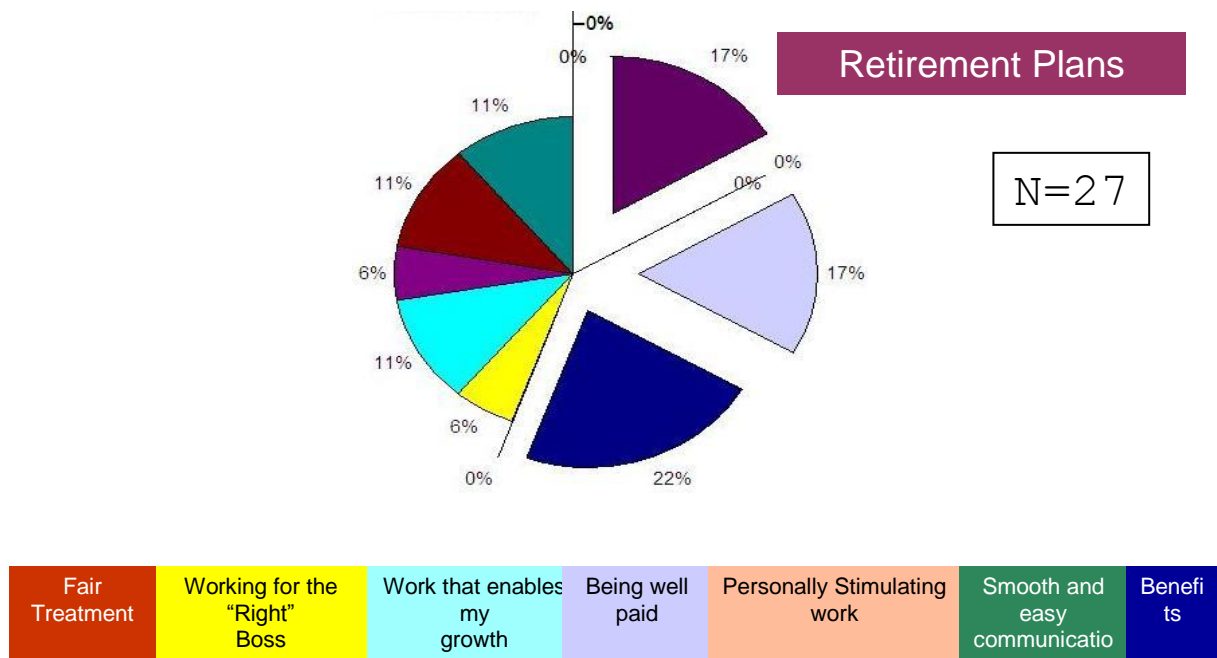
Chart (26)

Top needs for action to enhance engagement – Lebanon

The Lebanon group came up with a new aspect that is unique for Lebanon only, which is the "Retirement plans". This could confirm the previous assumption of why the Near East and Middle East have different engagement drivers, and the point that maybe expatriate hire could have an effect on engagement drivers. Since the Lebanese team is all local hires, they look at retirement plans and long term benefits, while the expatriate hire in the other areas look after career growth and short term benefits.

Again, this is an assumption of the deducted data, and shall be further investigated during the informal interviews.

To summarize; the following is a table displaying the summary of intervention needs through different regions / countries aiming to increase the engagement levels:

Segment	Need A	Need B	Need C
All	Fair Treatment	Being well paid	Smooth and easy communication
M.E.	Fair Treatment	Being well paid	Work that enables my Growth
N.E.	Being well paid	Fair Treatment	Work that enables my Growth
HQ	Fair Treatment	Smooth and easy communication	Work that enables my Growth
KSA	Fair Treatment	Being well paid	Work that enables my Growth
GCC	Fair Treatment	Being well paid	Smooth and easy communication
Lebanon	Being well paid	Retirement Plans	Benefits

Table (31)

Needs for intervention aiming to enhance the engagement levels in the Middle and Near East regions.

From the summary table above, several assumptions could be deducted. One of them is that regional barriers or specific contexts exist. The other strong one, that it is

not only regional, but possibly national or local management context as well that makes a difference. The region is run through the same management board, but local managers are different, and the effect of local leadership could well influence the engagement drivers of the employees in the local team.

4.4. Analysis of the secondary data (Corporate Staff Engagement Survey):

The discussed and analysed data will include the results for the survey for the Middle and Near East regions, which were abstracted by corporate HR for the specified region.

The survey was based on the assumption that absolute survey scores can be misleading. To control for such bias, the company's survey results have been compared to the following external benchmarks: (so as to neutralize the effect of absolute figures).

- The **Global Pharmaceutical Companies Norm** (GPN): 21 organisations, representing more than 145,000 employees.

- The **Global High Performing Companies Norm** (GHPN): 35 global organisations (more than 140,000 employees) that demonstrate both superior financial and business performance and effective human resource management.

The results were presented in the following form:

Agree	Tend to agree	?	Tend to disagree	Disagree
28%	35%	16%	14%	8%

63% favorable
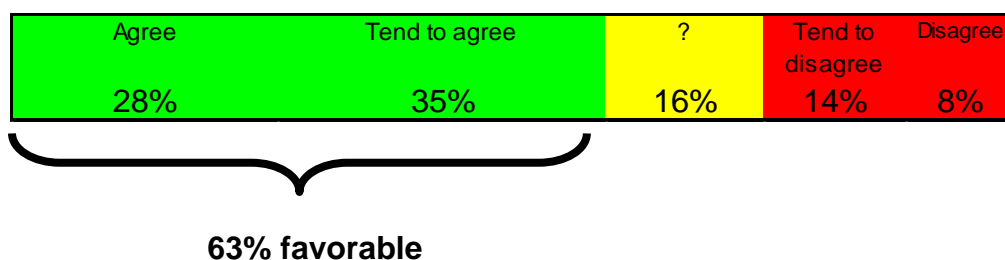
Figure (19)

Example of result presentation in the staff engagement survey

The results were then collated into two main groups; the top 10 favourable aspects, and the bottom 10 favourable aspects, where both of them were benchmarked to external and internal (corporate wide) benchmarks.

4.4.1. Overview of 2008 data:

We will review now the top and bottom 10 scores and analyse how those agree / disagree with the primary data obtained for the purpose of this DBA thesis.
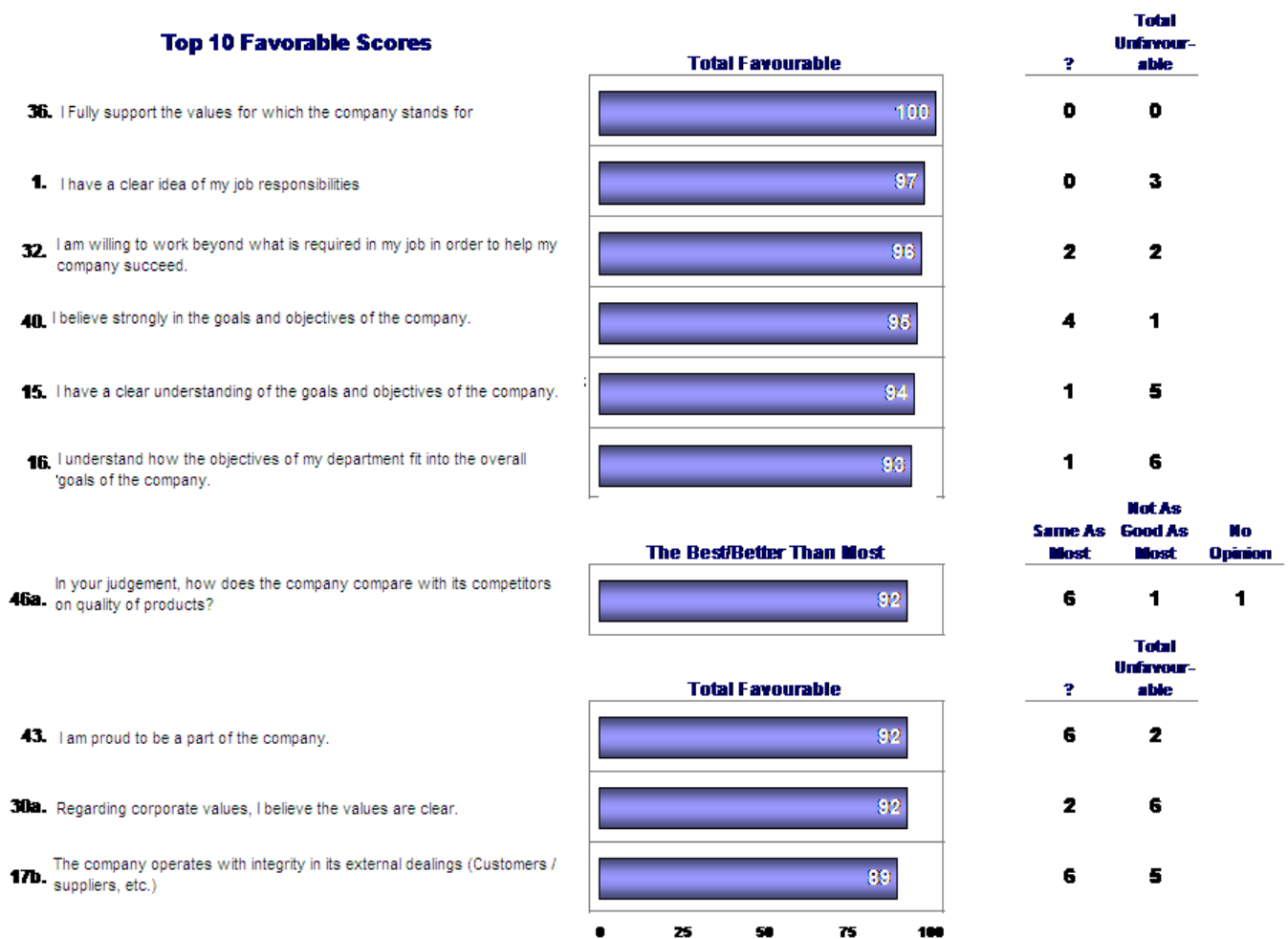
Figure (20)

Top 10 Favourable scores for the company in the staff engagement survey, '08

The top ten favourable scores are in line with the results of the quantitative and qualitative data, where most of the results focus on the achievement of objectives, being a dynamic organisation and having good products / image of the company.
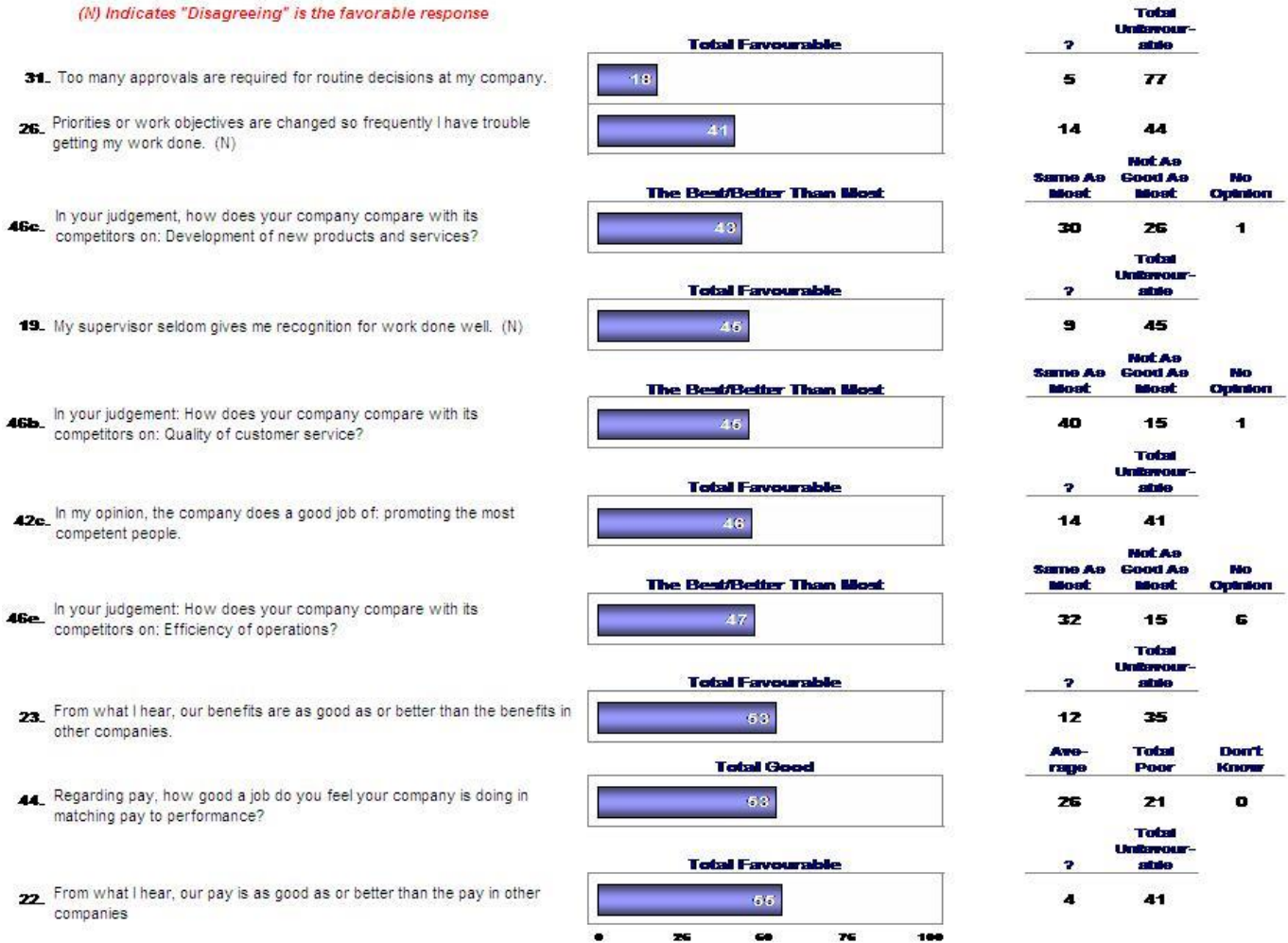
Figure (21)

Bottom 10 Favourable scores for the company in the staff engagement survey, '08

The bottom ten scores also come in consensus with the primary data, as most of the results focus on "Wrong people in wrong places", "Lack of recognition", Bureaucracy, lack of consistent system and financial package. Those were the basis of the 2010

decisions and some of those have seen a great improvement already in the 2010 data analysis.

What was also striking in the secondary survey is that almost 35% of the participants were thinking of or not sure whether to leave the company. This might indicate that there is a sort of frustration in the company that is a bit "sleeping" now. This might link to the high level of frustration noticed from level (4) in the primary survey, as those are key players in the organisation; they mentor new colleagues and they are the front line directly below management. However, if we look at the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010), the percentage of employees working in the pharmaceutical sector who are not sure whether they will leave the company is 55% (4% have plans to leave, 9% actively looking for a new job, and 42% not looking but open to possible job offers). If we compare this percentage to the studied organisation, then the organisation is in a better position than the rest of the industry norm. The Towers Watson Global Workforce study (2010) showed that this percentage (55% of employees not sure whether they would stay in their organisations) was lower in other industries (51% in the global norm) (4% have plans to leave, 8% actively looking for a new job, and 39% not looking but open to possible job offers), which could indicate an industry specific context for employee engagement, and a further support to the research hypothesis.

The organisation that ran the secondary survey globally, benchmarked the Middle East results versus corporate results (Global results of the secondary survey worldwide), without asking the question whether the engagement drivers which were measured globally and considered priority, were actually the same across the Middle East region and had the same weight. How can then the organisation's leaders ensure that we are comparing items that are actually comparable and have the same weight? This was unanswered, while the results were also presented in top 10 and bottom 10 scores.

Results Vs the whole company (12,839 Employees)
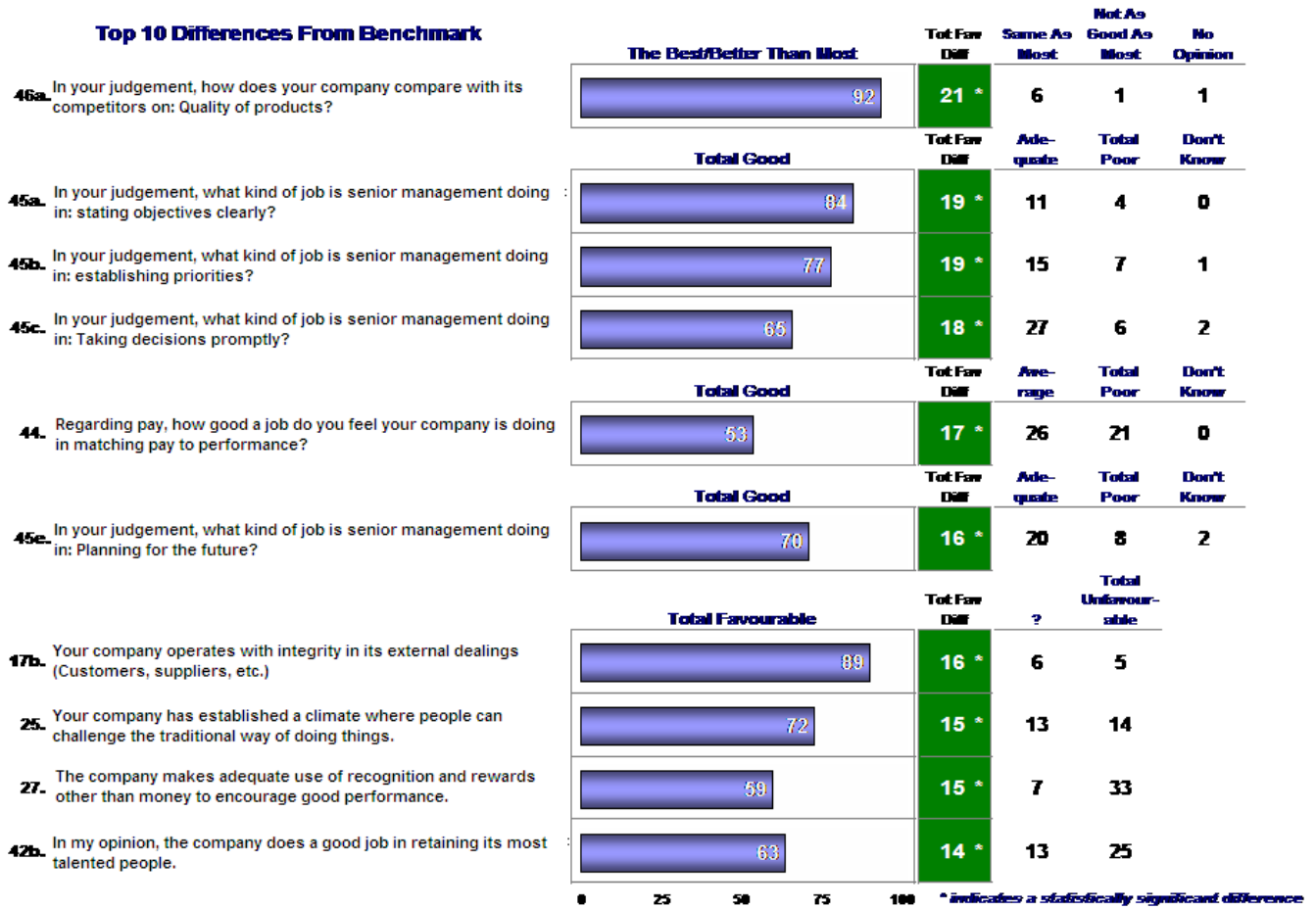
Figure (22)

Top 10 Middle East differences from the global benchmark, '08

The results all come out in favour of performance and achievement aspects, suggesting that the Middle East's leadership were better perceived by their employees than most of the global leaders in setting objectives, taking decisions and establishing priorities. However, the results here lack some clarification of terms, and how much emphasis (weight) employees would put to those aspects in the Middle East and globally.

The 2008 bottom results versus the global benchmark were:
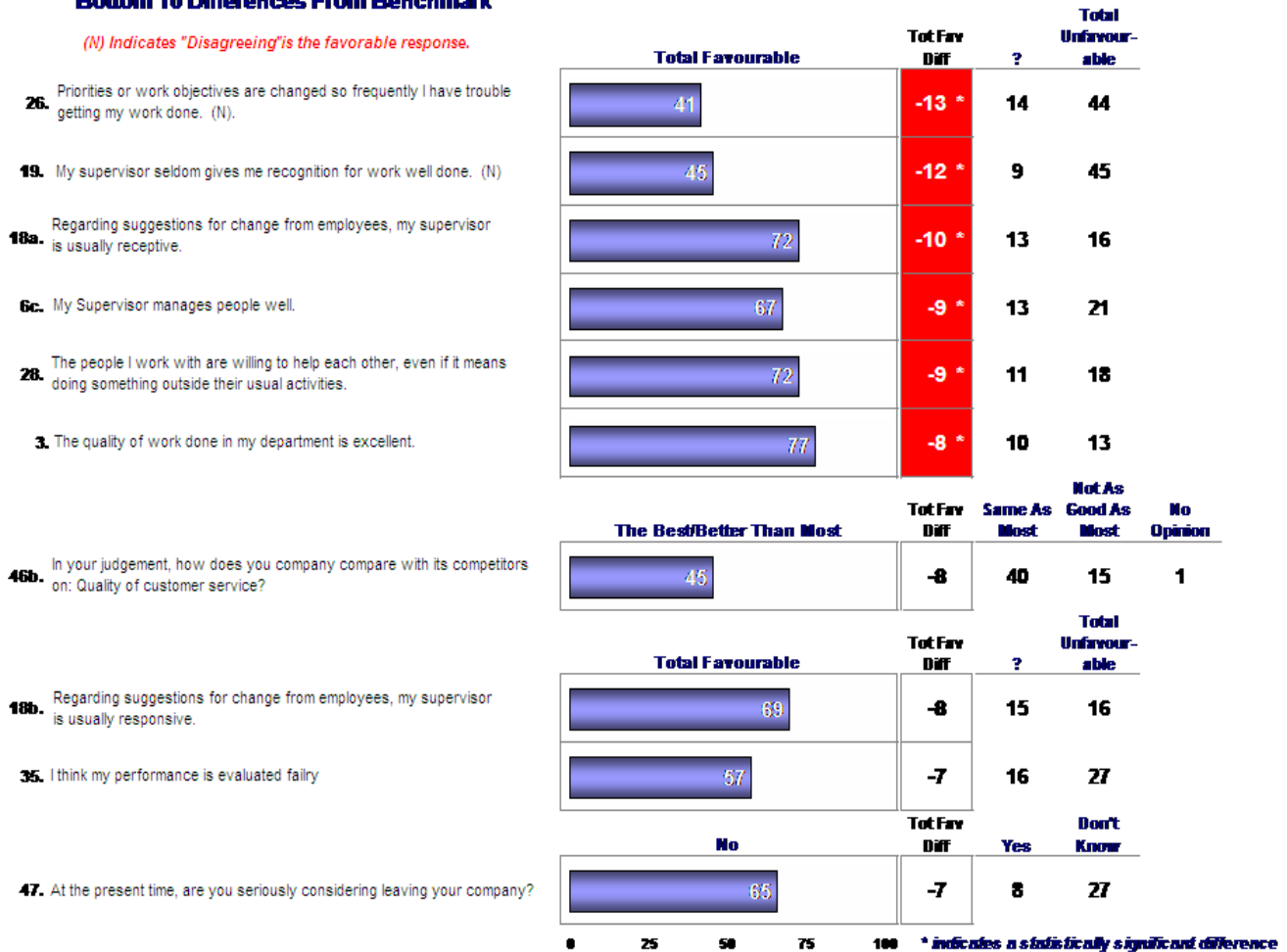
Figure (23)

Bottom 10 Middle East differences from the global benchmark, '08

The results from the bottom ten scores focus on the majority of the top ten aspects, like "Objectives", "Management", "Response to change" and professional evaluation. The bottom ten results end up with 35 team members (almost 35% of the Middle East Team at the survey time) not sure whether they want to leave the company.

In times of economic growth, and job market expansion with plentiful opportunities, employees would look at attractive opportunities outside the organisation and would be looking for taking the next step in their careers through moving to other jobs.

However, moving easily between jobs is challenged in times of economic crisis and job market shrinking, where employees who have a secure job would look inside only and try to satisfy their needs by changing, or developing their own work environment. This point is tackled further during the 2010 survey data analysis.

The overall conclusion from the 2008 data was that the Middle East operation is:

a. Below the corporate benchmark in Quality, Operational Efficiency, Work Relationships and supervision.
b. Below the global pharmaceutical norm in Image, Talent Management, Quality and Supervision.
c. Below the High Performing companies in Customer Focus, Corporate responsibility, Operating efficiency, work relationships, training and development, quality, talent management, corporate image and supervision.

4.4.2. Overview of 2009 data:

The 2009 secondary survey top 10 results versus the Global Benchmark were:

Top 10 Favourable Scores

	Total Favorable	?	Total unfavorable
44. I fully support the values for which the company stands	96	4	0
51. I feel personally accountable for the work that I do.	96	3	0
35a. I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of my division or central function.	96	3	1
41. I understand how the objectives of my department fit into the overall goals of the company	96	3	2
38. I am willing to work beyond what is required in my job in order to help the company succeed.	95	4	1
1b. I have a very clear idea of the job responsibilities of the people I work with.	95	2	3
54. I am proud to be a part of the company.	94	3	2
40. We are encouraged to act respectfully towards our colleagues.	94	3	3
1a. I have a very clear idea of my own job responsibilities.	94	2	4
48. I believe strongly in the goals and objectives of the company.	93	6	1

Figure (24)

Top 10 Middle East differences from the global benchmark, '09

The top 10 favourable results were focused on the job objectives and personal commitment towards achieving the expected results from work.

The bottom 10 favourable results were:
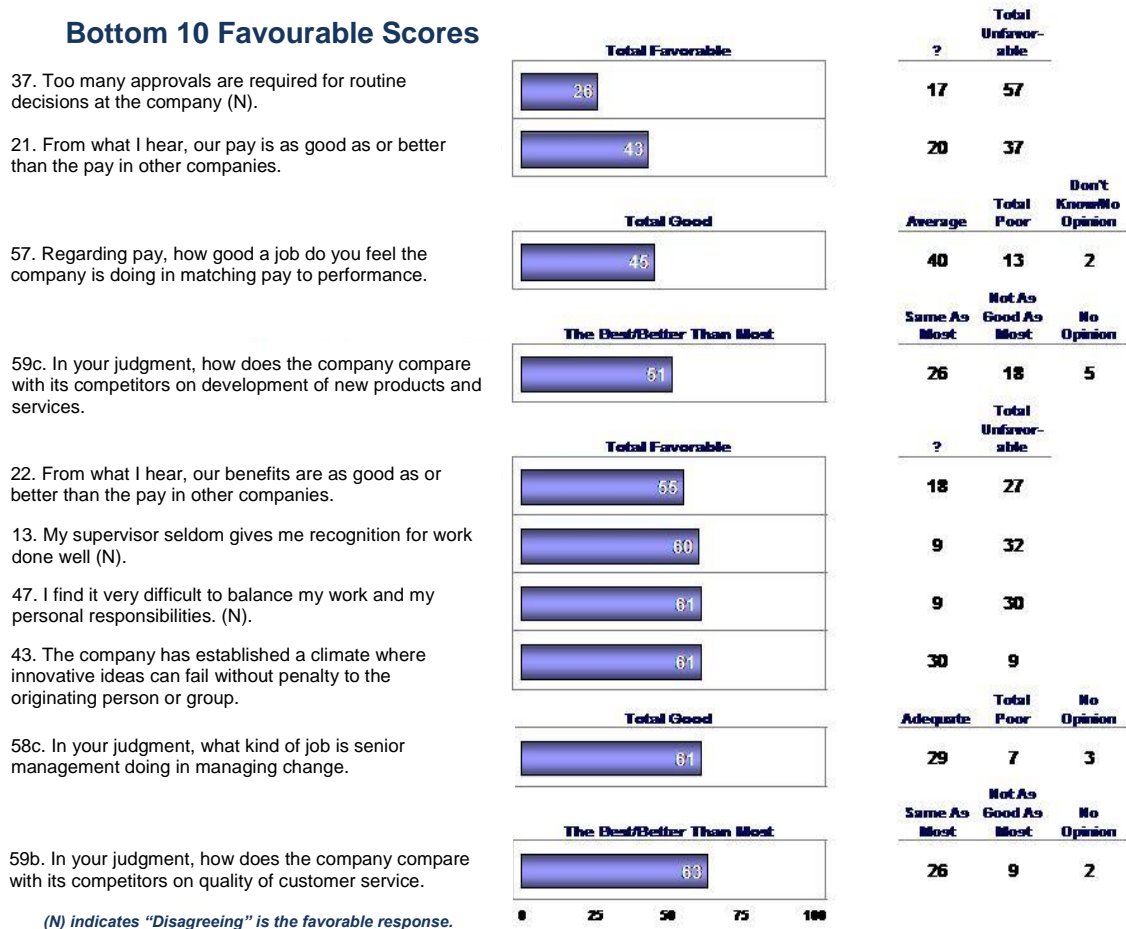
Figure (25)

Bottom 10 Middle East differences from the global benchmark, '09

The supervision part remained consistent with 2008 data, lying among the bottom 10, while a new criticism came to senior management in the way they manage change and encourage innovation. What was still significant is that 33% of the participants are still not sure whether they will leave the company. This is very much in conflict with the local 2010 survey, detailed in the earlier sector, where most employees felt that their direct front line managers were very good coaches, and senior managers were role models for corporate values. Again, if this result is related to the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study, then the percentage is much lower than the industry norm as well as the global workforce results.

The overall conclusion from the 2009 data was that the Middle East operation is:

    a. Above the corporate benchmark in all aspects.

    b. Above the High Performing companies in all aspects except reward and benefits.

Furthermore, the engagement survey company came with a conclusion that the studied organisation actually improved by 3% on engagement versus last year.

The questions and challenges here are many:

    a. How can a 3% increase in engagement push the company above all high performing companies?

    b. Is it possible to actually measure the improvement in engagement by just comparing the favourable results versus last year? What if the engagement drivers change?

    c. What is the system of scoring? Is it harmonized across the whole world? Is this possible and practical?

    d. If engagement has really improved by 3% and now the company is above all high performing companies, how come that one third of the company is still thinking of leaving the organisation? Does this make sense and link to engagement? Is engagement directly related to staff retention?

    e. Can a company really jump from below high performing companies in nine aspects to above the norm in 8 aspects in only one year?

The above questions and many others reinforce the four hypotheses of this research, and further challenge the globalisation of engagement measures and solutions. This is also in line with Macleod and Clarke (2009) who emphasized that employee engagement is not a science, but the development of survey tools and questionnaires such as Gallup's Q12 allow levels of 'engagement' within an organisation to be measured. However, looking at aspects of engagement these

questionnaires analyse, it is strongly assumed that those aspects might vary from one company to the other. This variation is what supports this research's hypothesis, as it is challenged that it is practical to benchmark different organisations using the same engagement drivers / parameters and questions. Further clarification is obtained from the informal interviews and the focus groups held to analyse the results of the local survey as well as the corporate engagement survey.

4.4.3. Overview of 2010 data:

After acting on the above outcomes, 2009 data was taken as a benchmark, and every year is going to be compared to the previous year, and also a possible comparison could be made between where we have started (2008), and where we are now (any consecutive year). The 2010 data compared to 2009 has shown improvement in the following areas:
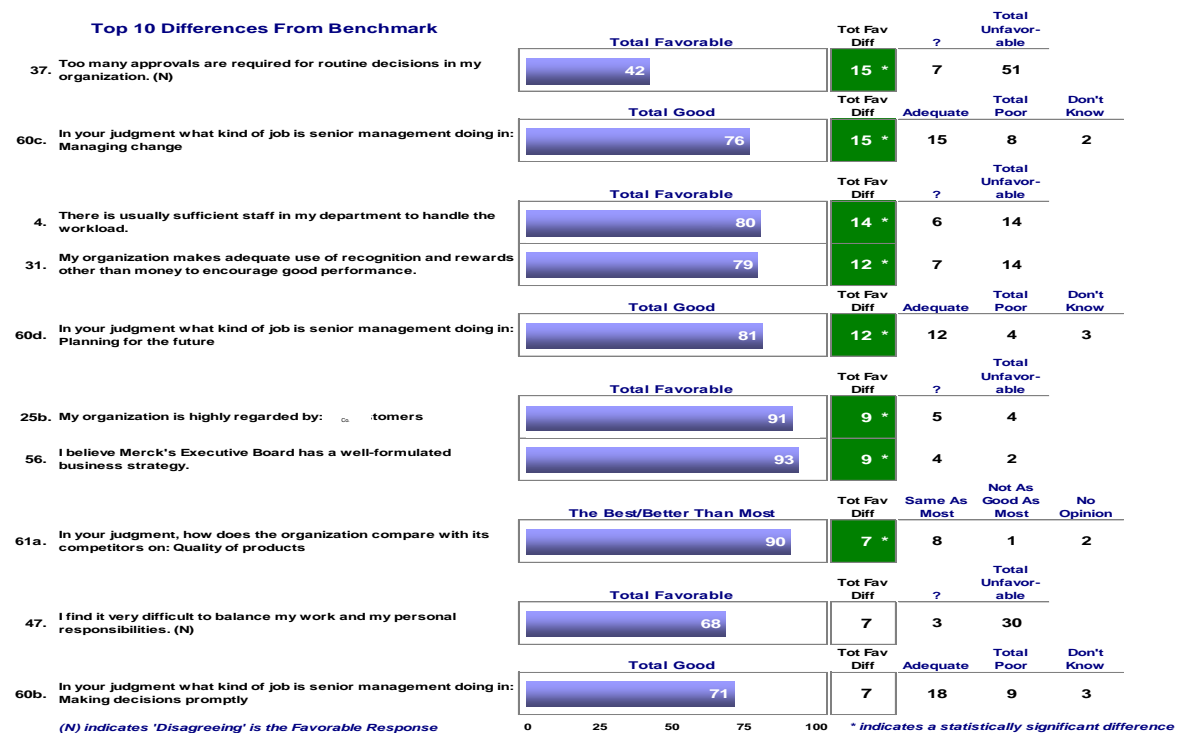
Figure (26)

Top 10 Favourable differences (improvements) for the company in the staff engagement survey, 2010 Vs. 2009

Reading this graph, there are three points to focus at:

1. The difference Vs. previous year.
2. The absolute percentage of agreement.
3. The percentage of people who scored "Don't know".

It is seen that while bureaucracy has seen the biggest improvement across the region, its absolute percentage of favourable responses is 42%, i.e. less than half of the organisation see it as positive. This reflects a serious need for action and reflects a possible communication gap across the region. The organisation is rapidly growing, and this leads to an increase in auditing standards. Possible this is not well communicated or perceived by the rest of the employees.

The results show the positive trust shown in senior management, which was mentioned earlier, due to the strong action plans that were taken by the organisation to enhance and improve the work culture, based on the feedback from the previous year's survey. The actions taken were: (as mentioned in the organisation's local affiliate engagement action plans log).

1. Leadership-wide assessment of competencies in line with the organisational competency compass and the need for future competencies to fit with future organisational plans (Ability to change / agility and succession development).
2. Restructuring for better communication and ease of decision making (removal of too many hierarchical layers).
3. Shuffling of senior leaders to ensure fresh look over processes and business opportunities as well as give an opportunity for leaders and sub-ordinates to re-fresh working styles.
4. Change of leadership in some areas, for those leaders who were not fit for the future, thanking them for the long service and deciding to refresh leadership blood in order to increase integrity and reflect the essence of the future direction.

The focus on integrity has also been supported by the employees as they have seen that "Planning for the future" has improved versus the previous year as well as the perceived improvement in change management. Those are all future goals as the organisation prepares itself for the challenges in a proactive way.

The results also show a positive improvement in the sense of pride people felt towards the organisation (item 26.b). Knowing that the organisation did not introduce any new products to the market or the customer, the positive improvement in the customer perception as well as the company image, reflects and possible supports the proposition that "Engaged Employees would lead to Engaged customers" (Fleming et. Al (2005)).

The overall comparison is a total increase in engagement by 1% across the region. Here lies the biggest challenge as the question remains, how did the survey company place impact weights on the survey response scores? Knowing that the ranking (weight) of engagement drivers have changed from one year to the other (as supported by the primary research data), then how could the weight be consistent? The secondary survey company produced the following chart to show the engagement level measurement in 2010 Vs. 2009:

Favorable Score	Difference From Benchmark	Key Drivers	Beta Weight

76 | -4 | Performance & Development | .39

83 | -5 | Values & Ethics | .30

93 | 2 | Strategy & Objectives | .24

Favorable Score: 87 — Difference From Benchmark: 1

Engagement

Variance Explained: 67%
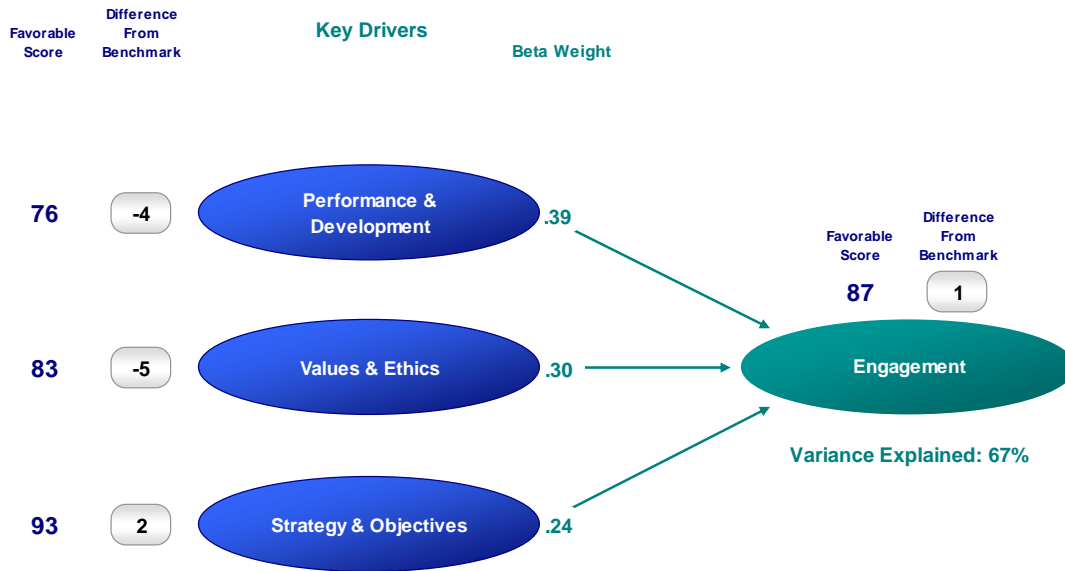
* indicates a statistically significant difference

Figure (27)

Survey company outcome of engagement level, 2010 Vs. 2009

To check if different engagement measurement tools provide the same engagement level outcome, the research tried measuring the engagement level using a very simple model that is abstracted from The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) which depends on vigour, absorption and dedication, and the outcome average score was 86.5% favourable, which is comparable to the company survey outcome of 87% favourable scores. So the scores are similar, but is it reflecting the way people want to be engaged in this specific culture / context?

Looking at the main definitions of engagement, where do you think you are today?
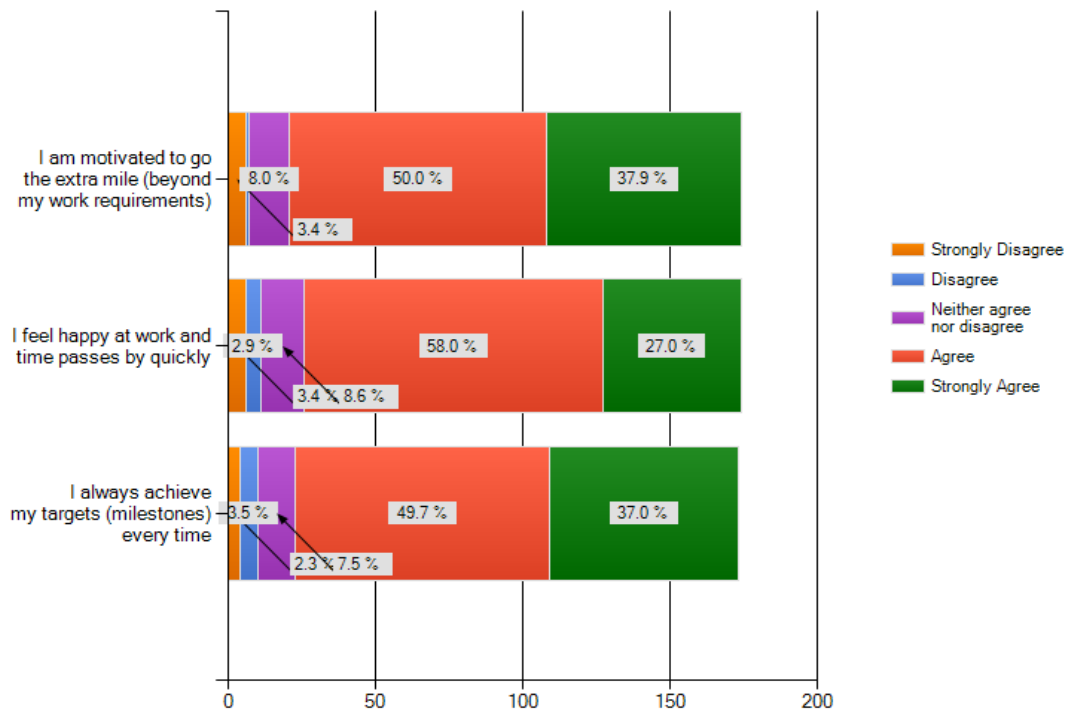
Figure (28)

Measuring engagement levels using a simple model similar to the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES).

Descriptive Statistics: Engagement levels (Analogy to UWES model)

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
I am motivated to go the extra mile (beyond my work requirements)	185	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1676	.06409	.87167	.760	-1.627	.179
I feel happy at work and time passes by quickly	185	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.0324	.06363	.86541	.749	-1.538	.179
I always achieve my targets (milestones) every time	184	4.00	1.00	5.00	4.1413	.06456	.87568	.767	-1.366	.179
Valid N (list wise)	183									

Table (32)

Descriptive statistics: Engagement levels (Analogy to UWES model)

When asking respondents on where the organisation needs to develop most, the secondary research showed the benchmark again for the 2010 data Vs. 2009, and the following outcome is shown:

	Bottom 10 Differences From Benchmark	Total Favorable	Tot Fav Diff	?	Total Unfavorable
9b.	There are sufficient opportunities for me to receive: Training to increase my eligibility for a better job	65	-12 *	6	29
7.	In my experience, all employees are held to the same standards of ethical behavior.	69	-12 *	8	23
13.	My supervisor seldom gives me recognition for work done well. (N)	50	-10 *	5	45
53a.	In my opinion, Merck does a good job of: Recruiting the right people for its future needs	72	-9 *	10	17
52b.	My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Differences in cultural background or lifestyles	82	-8 *	3	14
36a.	Regarding core values, I believe: The values are put into practice and applied in our daily work	80	-8 *	7	14
18.	My department constantly looks for better ways to serve its internal/external customers.	84	-8 *	6	10
53c.	In my opinion, does a good job of: Promoting the most competent people	63	-8	8	29
27.	Managers in my organization are held accountable for their actions.	74	-7 *	12	14
17.	The people I work with take responsibility for the quality of their work.	84	-7 *	5	10

(N) indicates 'Disagreeing' is the Favorable Response   0   25   50   75   100   * indicates a statistically significant difference

Figure (29)

Bottom 10 negative differences (declines) for the company in the staff engagement survey, 2010 Vs. 2009

Analysing the results above in the same manner as before and focusing on the three main aspects (difference, absolute rate, and passive responses), it is obvious that direct management recognition is an issue as it has scored the lowest absolute value as well as a significant decline versus last year.

During 2009, and due to the economic downturn, some budget cuts were required, and one of the affected areas was the learning and development budget, which was cut by around 30%. This has appeared in the engagement results, as employees felt

that there were fewer opportunities for development in 2010 when compared to 2009. The rise of a new engagement driver due to the economic situation change is supportive to the research hypothesis (H4) that engagement drivers could change by the changing circumstances across time, and is reconfirmed again by the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010) which has revealed the change in engagement drivers over 2008 to 2009.

The second and fourth hypothesis (H2 and H4) are further supported by the results shown in the survey, highlighting the major change in ranking of the engagement driver over one year. The change in raking of drivers would be reflected on the weight given in any engagement survey when measuring the degree of engagement, and will affect the total score.

There are two serious and critical threads in the results above; the first is about the work environment ethics and values, and the second is about management image / perception. It is obvious that 23% of the organisation is seeing that core values and work environment ethics are not consistent across all members and across different regions, and this would be a point to investigate in focus groups.

The secondary results showing that 28% of the respondents believe that current managers are incompetent to lead their teams to the future challenges the current level of leadership perception at the organisation. The above is to be also investigated in focus groups, as it conflicts with the locally run survey which has indicated a higher perception of front line managers as well as senior managers.

In 2010, the benchmark was obtained and the following were the outcomes:

Top 10 Differences From Benchmark

No.	Statement	Total Favorable	Tot Fav Diff	?	Unfavorable
65.	There has been effective follow-up to the results of last year's PULSE survey.	70	22 *	16	13
31.	My organization makes adequate use of recognition and rewards other than money to encourage good performance.	79	12 *	7	14
4.	There is usually sufficient staff in my department to handle the workload.	80	7	6	14
30.	My organization has established a climate where people can challenge traditional ways of doing things.	80	7	9	10
9b.	There are sufficient opportunities for me to receive: Training to increase my eligibility for a better job	65	7	6	29
56.	I believe 's Executive Board has a well-formulated business strategy.	93	6 *	4	2
11a.	I am sufficiently informed about: My organization's plans	85	6	4	11
37.	Too many approvals are required for routine decisions in my organization. (N)	42	6	7	51
2.	The information I need to do my job is readily available.	90	5	2	8

No.	Statement	To a Great/Some Extent	Tot Fav Diff	To a Little/ No Extent	Don't Know
62a.	To what extent do the following help us meet the needs of our internal/external customers: Our organizational structure	88	5	10	2

(N) indicates 'Disagreeing' is the Favorable Response

0   25   50   75   100   ** indicates a statistically significant difference*

Figure (30)

Top 10 Middle East differences from the global benchmark, 2010

The strongest edge over the global benchmark was the seriousness of acting on the 2008 engagement results as perceived by the regional employees. This in itself is a strong cultural building point, as it shows employees feel that management are trustworthy, and they act openly on the engagement results in a serious step towards creating the best working environment for their people.

The second strongest point confirms the gap in front line managers – employees relationship, as it highlights that the "organisation" is perceived positive in using different tools to reward people, while the gap previously was in management recognition. So, it is perceived more as a human error in relationship rather than an organisational decision that should be taken. This will be further expanded upon on page 277 of this research (recommendations for the studied organisation).

Looking at the 2010 results, benchmarking the regional results versus the global results, the following outcome was generated:

Bottom 10 Differences From Benchmark

		Total Favorable	Tot Fav Diff	?	Total Unfavorable
7.	In my experience, all employees are held to the same standards of ethical behavior.	69	-7 *	8	23
53a.	In my opinion, Org does a good job of: Recruiting the right people for its future needs	72	-7 *	10	17
13.	My supervisor seldom gives me recognition for work done well. (N)	50	-5	5	45
50.	It would take a lot to make me look for another employer.	71	-4	9	20
52b.	My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Differences in cultural background or lifestyles	82	-4	3	14
17.	The people I work with take responsibility for the quality of their work.	84	-4	5	10
21.	From what I hear, our pay is as good as or better than the pay in other companies.	40	-4	12	48
52c.	My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Gender differences	82	-4	8	10

		Total Good	Tot Fav Diff	Average	Total Poor	Don't Know
59.	Regarding pay, how good a job do you feel the organization is doing in matching pay to performance?	38	-3	40	21	1

		Total Favorable	Tot Fav Diff	?	Total Unfavorable
52a.	My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Ethnic differences	84	-3	7	10

(N) indicates 'Disagreeing' is the Favorable Response   0   25   50   75   100   * indicates a statistically significant difference*

Figure (31)

Bottom 10 Middle East differences from the global benchmark, 2010

The significantly lower results came in the work environment ethics and recruitment, which were also concluded from the regional results.

So why would no one speak up for the "misalignment" or "wrong behaviour"? The primary 2010 research data released that quarter of the organisation (24.6%) do not feel it is safe to speak up and they would fear the possibility of management retaliation.

I feel it is "Safe to Speak up" in my organization

24.6 %

75.4 %

Yes
No
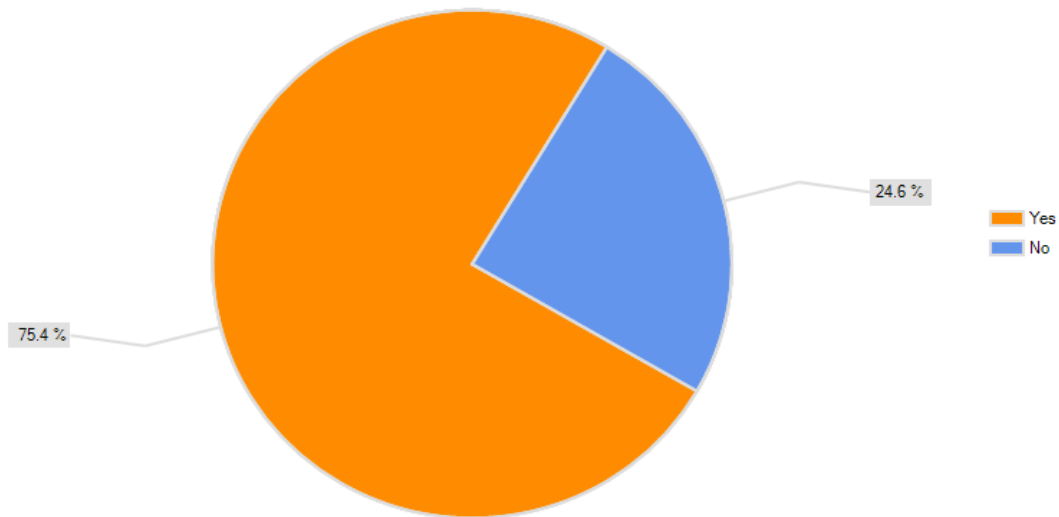
Chart (27)

Stage 2 of the primary survey: Freedom to speak at work.

Descriptive Statistics: Safe to speak up

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
I feel it is Safe to Speak up in my organisation	142	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.2465	.03629	.43249	.187	1.189	.203
Valid N (list wise)	142									

Table (33)

Descriptive statistics: Safe to speak up

24.6% of the employees did not agree that it is safe to speak up, and this could conclude the possibility of underground issues in the organisation that are hidden as employees do not trust in the reporting system and in their own protection if they decide to report any system abuse.

The major critique about the 2010 staff engagement survey at the studied organisation is basically that the survey was designed in the same manner of the previous 2 years and almost the same questions being asked in each year, with only two new questions introduced to the whole survey, which were:

1. My work schedule allows sufficient flexibility to meet my personal/family needs.
2. Priorities or work objectives are changed so frequently I have trouble getting my work done.

So, despite the agreement that engagement drivers might change over time, if not in the explicit content, but at least in their orders of priority, and despite the economic crisis hitting in 2009 as a new factor affecting employee engagement levels; the survey still asked the same questions and looked at comparing the results year to year, although what could mean a lot to employees in one year, it could mean very little (or maybe nothing) during such a crisis, where hundreds of thousands of employees across the world lost their jobs.

4.5. Informal interviews / Focus groups:

The informal interviews were designed to shed some light on the results of the quantitative survey and dig more into what each aspect meant. It also aimed to give the participants the chance to comprehend more and explain, from a Middle Eastern perspective, what they meant by the terms provided in their quantitative responses.

A framework for the informal interviews discussions have been provided to the participants to make sure that the data provided from the 12 held focus groups is consistent and could be grouped and analysed. A copy of the informal interview framework is in Appendix (B).

The quantitative responses have shown that the top four drivers of engagement for the Middle East employees in the sample population are:

i.   Work that enables my growth.

ii.   Working for the "Right Boss".

iii.   Being well paid.

iv.   Fair treatment.

As point (iii) is self-explanatory, the research aimed to define and analyse the other three points.

4.5.1. Defining "Work that enables my growth":

The collated responses for the choices respondents made to this point are displayed in the following chart (28).

N=142

"Work that enables my growth means: "
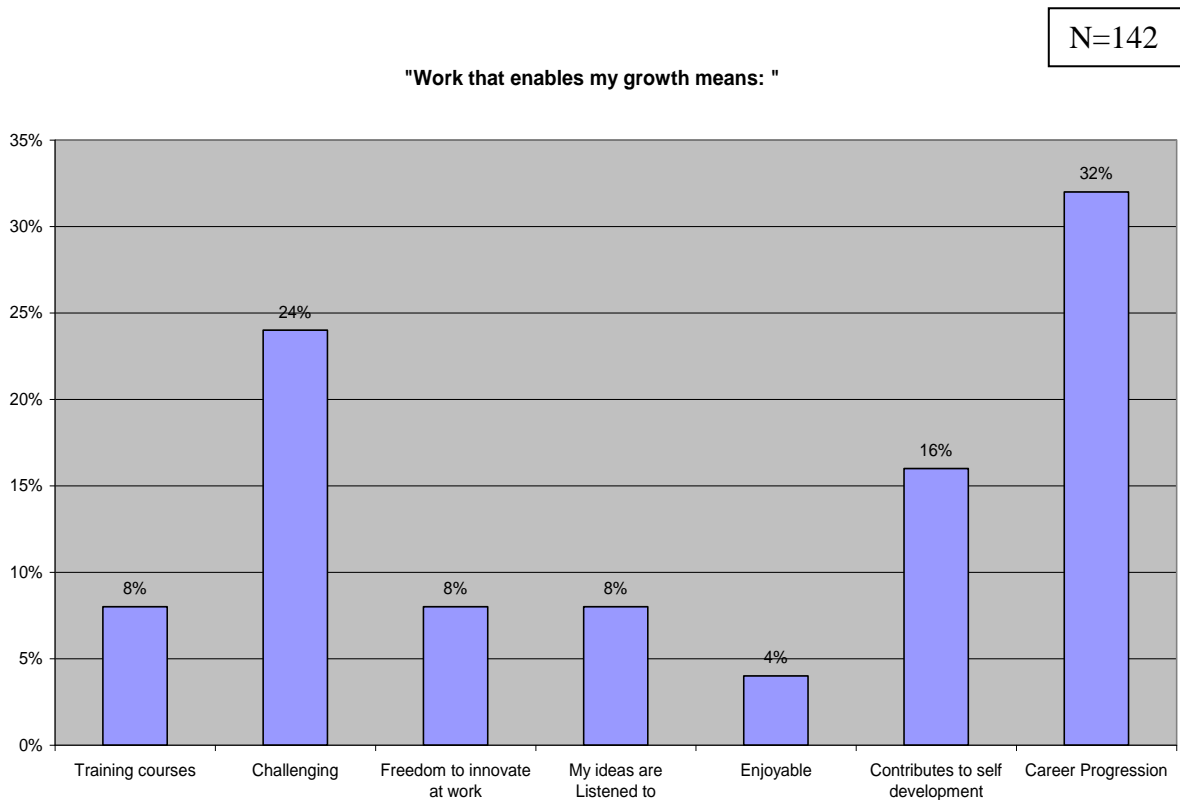
Chart (28)

Defining "Work that enables my growth" from a Middle East perspective

From the graph above, career progression comes on top of the requirements of the participants, reflecting the strong need to move forward in promotions and up in the hierarchical ladder. Examples of the quotes mentioned during the informal interviews by respondents:

- "I need to feel that I am moving ahead in the organisation and not stay as I am for the past 5 years like what is happening with me now".
- "Simple .. promotions".
- "Career ladder"
- "A difference between myself and new colleagues who joined just yesterday".
- "Increase in my status .. feeling that my work lead to something other than just a pay increase over years".

Taking over challenging tasks and new responsibilities came second, and it reflects the third aspect as well, which is the contribution to personal development and learning new skills. Some examples of the quotes mentioned regarding those two points were:

- "A work that enables growth for me is a job that challenges my capabilities and stretches me to make decisions and try things that I did not do before".
- "I don't want to feel that I am in routine, like a machine that starts and stops at certain times without the flexibility of moving forward to do things I did not do before".
- "More opportunities for off-the-job training".
- "Some real training sessions that are high quality and they advance as much as we advance in the organisation, so that senior colleagues attend higher advanced courses".
- "Feeling that my full capacity is being used and utilized by the organisation".

The comments above link to the results of the primary survey, where employees felt they were underutilized, and it raises the context of management behaviour effect on

employees' feelings. The researchers assume that if proper coaching and honest advice was given on the employees' performance, a clear evaluation and correct estimation of their strengths would then be communicated and they would have a clear idea on where they need to develop in order to move forward in their careers.

Referring to the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010), the definitions of "Career advancement" according to the employees working in the pharmaceutical field were mainly around the following aspects: making more money, acquiring skills to perform better, acquiring skills to be eligible for other jobs, achieving higher status / recognition, and moving up a well-defined career path. Comparing those results to the Middle East results, shows the difference in focus on priorities, as "Making more money" came the highest in percentage in the Towers Watson survey, while it did not show at all as a factor for the Middle East results. "Training" came at 8% in the Middle East survey, while in the global survey it came at 53%.

The above results would assume a specific cultural or organisational context that affects the results.

4.5.2. Defining the "Right Boss":

The collated responses for this point are displayed in the following chart (29).

The "Right Boss" for me is the one who: N=142
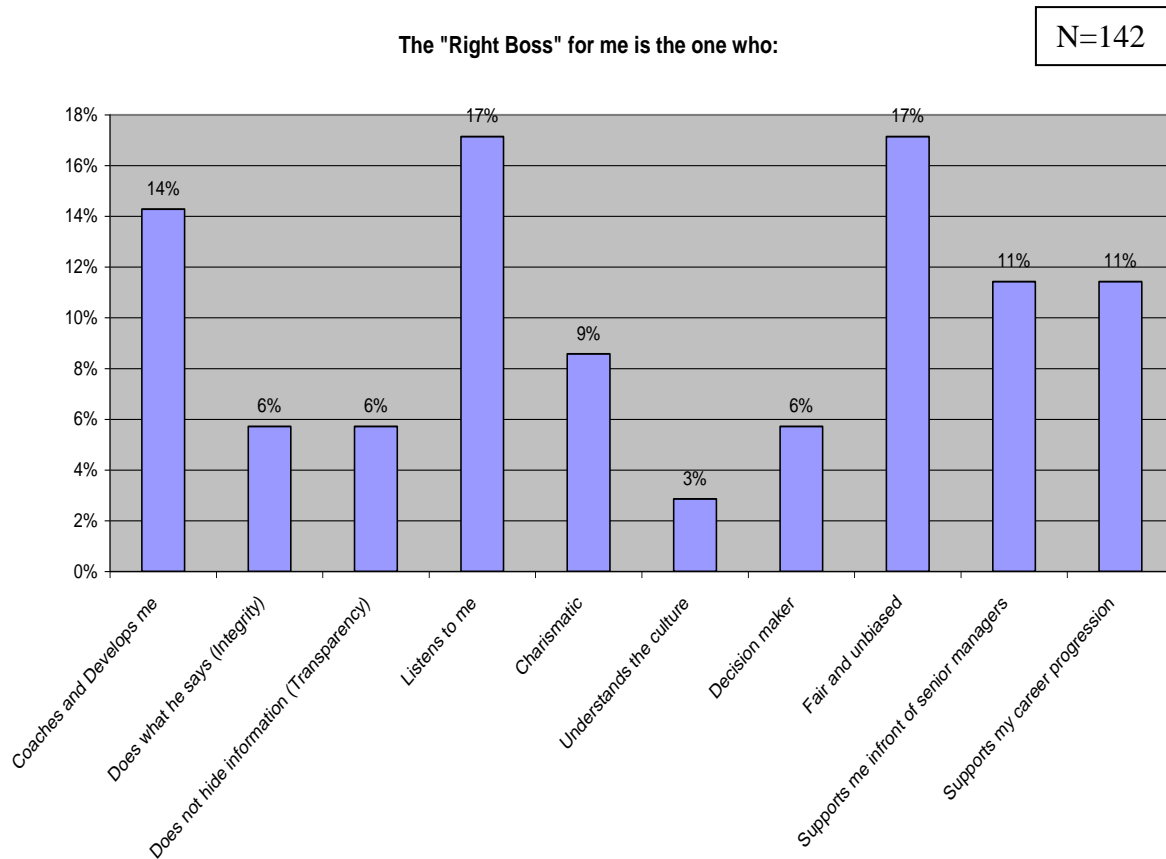
Chart (29)

Defining the "Right Boss" from a Middle East perspective

Being "Fair", "Unbiased" and "Active Listener" came strongly in the first position on the requirements for the participants, highlighting the fact of personal biases that are practiced by some managers and might result in unfair decisions. Some examples of the quotes mentioned during the interviews were:

- "Feeling that my boss only looks at my work, not where I come from".
- "Not seeing my boss dining with one of his direct reports privately without telling the rest of the team".
- "Seeing my boss recommending people's work and acknowledging them based on their performance and not country of origin".
- "Someone who listens to me genuinely trying to understand where my concerns are".

- "Someone who listens and gives me time and priority over what he wants to say".
- "Helps me grow and not blame me for things that I did based on lack of experience".

Elewa (2008), studying the same sample group, found out that 32% of team members agreed that the worst aspect of the culture is "Politics" and that 16% of the sample group think that the management decisions are "Subjective" and come from a personal view rather than based on logic. Furthermore; 36% of the employees have seen that the single greatest weakness at the local organisation is "Subjective Management". Those findings could link to the above results, displaying the need for a "Fair" boss who listens to employees and team members' requests.

Kingston Business School (CIPD 2009) identified some practices by managers that could well be barriers against employee engagement like:

●● Reactive decision-making that fails to address problems in time.
●● Inconsistent management style, based on the attitudes of individual managers which lead to perceptions of unfairness. (Supports the research's assumption).
●● Lack of fluidity in communications and knowledge sharing, due to rigid communication channels or cultural norms;
●● Low perceptions of senior management visibility and quality of downward communication;
●● Poor work-life balance due to long hours culture.

The Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010), in their attempt to define what employees in the pharmaceutical field mean by "Leadership", focused on three main attributes: Senior Managers being trustworthy, senior managers caring about the well-being of others, and senior managers encouraging the development of talents. Comparing this to the Middle and Near East outcomes, there is quite an agreement with the main definitions (Trust, Coaching and good listener).

4.5.3. Defining "Fair treatment" as per the Middle East sample group:

Fair treatment is an issue that came up several times in the survey and was a top priority in the region, so discovering what is means in the regional and organisational context was crucial to understand further the meaning and context of this concept. It is also an aspect that never arose as an engagement driver in any of the surveys published earlier and not touched upon in any of the questionnaires.

N=142

"Fair Treatment" for me is:
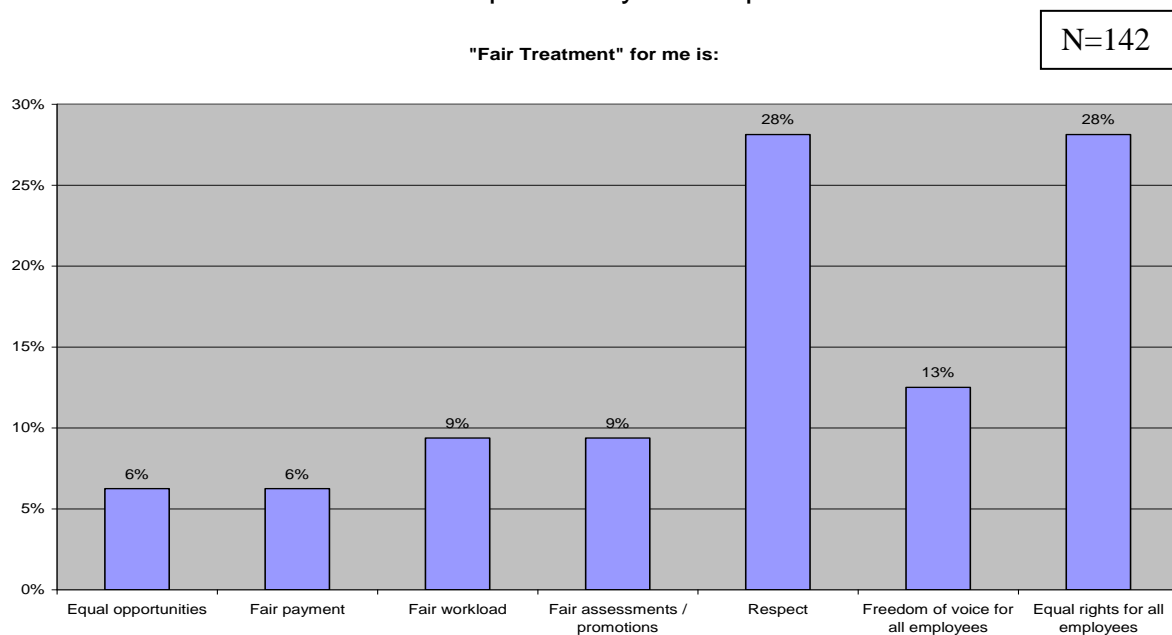
Chart (30)

Defining "Fair Treatment" from a Middle East perspective

The definitions of "Fair Treatment" were largely consistent and in line with the previous terms such as: supporting the need for "Equal Rights" and "Respect" to all employees. This specific aspect received most attention in qualitative explanations from the team members, and samples of those responses were:

♦ "Policies and procedures are only followed by and applied to some people while others don't."

♦ "Not following the labour law, and using the power of the employer to force unfair rules."

♦ "When we travel as a group, senior managers travel on business while we fly economy."

♦ "Biased treatment: Job descriptions are not available for all jobs and we don't know our job description."

While the above aspects might seem primitive and immature to some Western and European organisations, they are crucial to the employees in the Middle East due to the lack of labour unions and common understanding of employee rights. This could support the research's hypothesis (H1 and H2) further.

There is also an organisational context to be added to the above factors, as there are people from seventeen different nationalities working in the same Dubai-based regional head-office in the studied organisation, and this adds complexity to the perception of fair treatment, due to the huge differences in work environments from people coming from countries like USA, Germany, UK to other developing countries like India, Philippines, Bangladesh while working in a completely cosmopolitan environment like UAE. This point was even emphasized further, in the point of making the work place "More Enjoyable" (Question 2 in Appendix B), as the following responses were obtained:

4.5.4. Defining "Work Place that is Enjoyable" as per the Middle East sample group:

To make our work place more enjoyable we need to be:

N=142
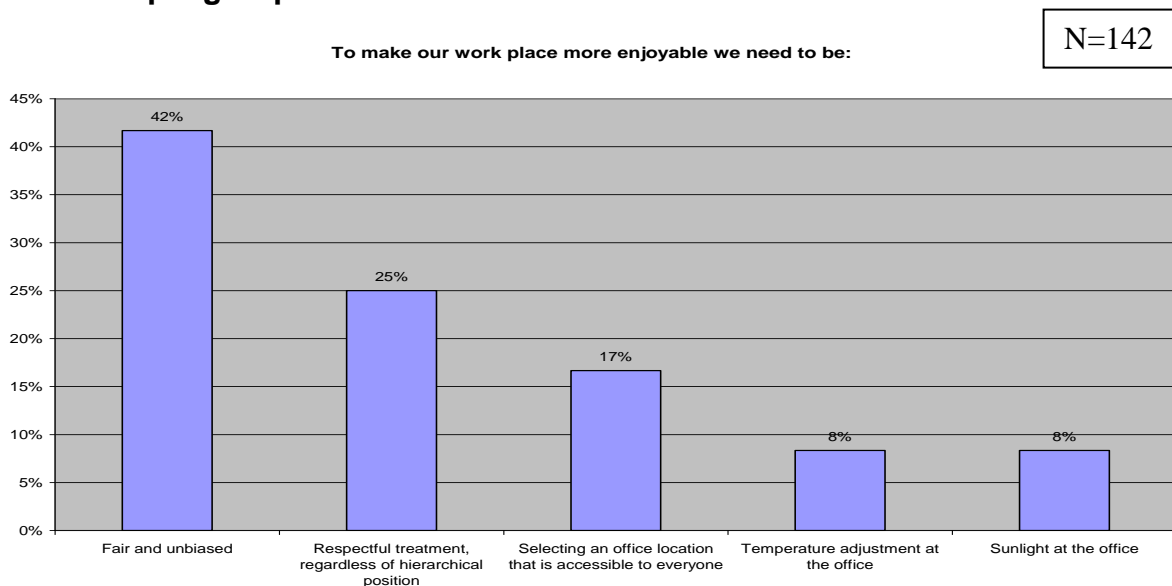
Chart (31)

Top needs for making the work place more enjoyable.

Almost half of the office-based employees see "Fairness" and "Unbiased" treatment as the top requirement for an enjoyable work place. This is now an issue that is confirmed by all responses and came linked to many aspects (Leadership, pay, work load, working hours ….). This issue might not be of the same importance to other western organisations which operate under strict labour laws and have strong presence of employees' unions.

One of the dimensions related to looking at working hours was explored by Buelens and Poelmans (2004); and Scott et al. (1997) who have seen that employees who are "workaholics" would tend to normally work beyond working hours, therefore; perceiving working extra hours as normal. This dimension adds to the complexity of engagement at work, since the view of one of the dimensions (like working hours) would depend on the percentage of employees who are "workaholics" in a certain organisation.

The point above also links with the specific very diverse team structure of the organisation, where 17 nationalities work together in the same office and try to find a common way to go forward together. During informal interviews, a simple fact like coming exactly on time and leaving exactly on time is considered "Fair" and "Normal" by the members from Germany and UK, while coming early and leaving later than all other employees was seen as a sign of commitment by other members coming from different countries. It could then be assumed that some cultures would not compromise on work life balance, while others see this as a sign of job commitment. When both groups look at each other in the office, there would definitely be a different view to what is "Fair" from each side's point of view.

The above finding can link to, and support the work of Jones and Schaubroeck (2004), who found that the levels of work satisfaction differed between different ethnic groups working at the same place. The data presented above give strong evidence that country and cultural barriers to engagement do exist, and the question remains, shall we try to cross those boundaries and unify engagement measurement tools? Or keep the boundaries and try to divide the engagement measurement tools according to time, place, culture and nature of the organisation measured?

Pahl (1994) adds to this dimension by arguing that the twentieth century witnessed a new era in anxiety, where there was a greater focus on the work life balance and the need to fulfil the employees' family needs, and spending more time on the social side rather than focus only on work. Pahl (1994) work supports the assumption that as generations change, individual needs change as well. Pahl's work can be challenged to be an individual factor since not all employees have been subjected to the same external environmental factors. Collins and Porras (1994); and Miller and Skidmore (2004) supported the work of Pahl (1994) as they debated that there is currently an increased pressure from employees to have their work aligned with their personal values, consequently meaning that many employees would have no issue with leaving their employer if they feel a strong conflict exists between the work values and personal values. This issue then becomes crucial for an organisation to look at the levels of values matching between employees' personal values and the work values seen in practice. Significant mismatch could result in talent migration, which could be destructive to the overall work engagement levels and also organisational performance.

The Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010), in surveying pharmaceutical industry employees, asked the same question of how would employees define the work culture and what would be the focus aspects. The results were: Organisation has adequate tools for effective remote collaboration; Work suffers when employees cannot meet in person and working remotely is critical for me to stay with my organisation. Those were different aspects when compared to the Middle East results as the focus was more on the soft issues like "Working Relationships" while in the global survey it was more about "Getting the job done" smoothly and efficiently.

4.6. Statistical significance of the results.

Statistical significance is a mathematical tool used to determine whether the outcome of an experiment is the result of a relationship between specific factors or due to chance. Statistics are the mathematical calculations of numeric sets or populations

that are manipulated to produce a probability of the occurrence of an event. Statistics use a numeric sample and apply that number to an entire population.

In this research, data was collected and analysed. It is known that if the statistical analysis of the data produced a number that is below 5%, then it is statistically significant, and is also called the confidence level. In other words, if the likelihood of an event is statistically significant, the researcher can be 95% confident that the result did not happen by chance.

4.6.1. Significance of the research sample size.

The research focused on a certain organisation in a specific industry in the region, in order to take it from the base level and make a relevant comparison, taking the local sample and its representation in the global sample from the same industry.

a) To the researched organisation:

Best Estimate for the Population Size	225 (Actual)
Target rate for population	80%
Maximum Acceptable difference	5%
Desired confidence level	95%
Required sample size	117
Actual Sample size	189

Table (34)

Sample size significance

- Sample size comprises 84 per cent of the regional Middle East staff, which is significant to the regional staff work force size.
- The researched sample is significant to the organisational global survey results, from a regional perspective, since this sample is representative of the Middle East region employees.

b) To the Pharmaceutical industry:

Best Estimate for the Population Size	461
Target rate for population	80%
Maximum Acceptable difference	5%
Desired confidence level	95%
Required sample size	160
Actual Sample size	189

Table (35)

Sample size significance to other pharma industry researches

- There have not been surveys or data highlighting the number of employees in the pharmaceutical industry in the Middle East region, so the data will be compared to the Towers Watson global work force study (2010), which has studied engagement drivers and has extracted the pharmaceutical industry sample size (461) (It has to be noted that this sample is not highlighted to be from the Middle East region, but global).

- The sample size (189) compared to the Towers Watson global work force study (2010) pharmaceutical sector sample size (461) is comparable (41 per cent).

c) To the Middle East population:

- Sample size is not significant to the Middle East population and this was not intended by the research, since the focus was on a specific industry and work force in the region.

The above sample then achieves the first research inputs' indicator regarding the sample size and type.

4.6.2. Reliability and internal consistency of the survey items.

Reliability is a key important factor to measure, since it is crucial to identify how closely related the set of items used in the data collection are as a group. For this the research used Cronbach's alpha as a measure of internal consistency. A "high" value of alpha is often used (along with substantive arguments and possibly other statistical measures) as evidence that the items measure an underlying (or latent) construct.

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	141	74.6
	Excluded[a]	48	25.4
	Total	189	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table (36)

Cronbach's alpha case processing summary

Only 141 members fully completed all sets of questions for the survey including both stages without missing any single items. The reliability statistics came as follows:

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.755	20

Table (37)

Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics

The alpha coefficient for the twenty items is 0.755, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency, since a reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations. This gives good confidence levels about the items used in the survey and supports the predictions

suggested by the outcomes analysis. This also serves as a good result for the second research indicator (Process Indicator).

4.6.3. Factor Analysis.

In addition to computing the alpha coefficient of reliability, which came supporting the reliability and consistency of the test items, the results have also been investigated in terms of the dimensionality of the scale. In this regards, factor analysis has been performed and has shown the following outcome:

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Clear idea about strengths and areas for development	1.000	.508
Year after year I am growing in experience	1.000	.655
Clear idea on where I want to drive my career	1.000	.651
I feel that I can progress my career with my organisation	1.000	.542
Full capacity is used at my current job	1.000	.668
Interesting challenges at my daily job	1.000	.630
Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning	1.000	.447
My manager knows where my strengths are	1.000	.676
Politics play a big part in career progression in my organisation	1.000	.653
I feel that I am dealt with respectfully in my organisation	1.000	.616
Decisions made in the organisation are well studied	1.000	.671
Employees in my organisation are treated equally and fairly	1.000	.530
I feel it is "Safe to Speak up" in my organisation	1.000	.522
My boss listens to my concerns	1.000	.600
My manager is a coach rather than a manager	1.000	.449
I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop	1.000	.742
If something goes wrong, I am always the one to be blamed	1.000	.759
My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organisation	1.000	.677
I believe that we have a great team	1.000	.569
We have an open door policy	1.000	.524

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table (38)

Factor analysis: Communalities of the test items

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.387	26.934	26.934	5.387	26.934	26.934	2.595	12.976	12.976
2	1.523	7.617	34.552	1.523	7.617	34.552	2.380	11.900	24.876
3	1.510	7.550	42.101	1.510	7.550	42.101	1.935	9.676	34.552
4	1.327	6.634	48.735	1.327	6.634	48.735	1.920	9.600	44.152
5	1.265	6.324	55.059	1.265	6.324	55.059	1.813	9.064	53.216
6	1.077	5.383	60.443	1.077	5.383	60.443	1.445	7.227	60.443
7	.973	4.866	65.308						
8	.873	4.364	69.672						
9	.817	4.084	73.756						
10	.724	3.618	77.374						
11	.645	3.224	80.598						
12	.618	3.088	83.686						
13	.559	2.794	86.480						
14	.470	2.350	88.831						
15	.450	2.251	91.081						
16	.442	2.211	93.292						
17	.430	2.149	95.441						
18	.364	1.821	97.262						
19	.314	1.572	98.834						
20	.233	1.166	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table (39)

Factor analysis: Total variance explained

Looking at the table above, we see that the Eigen values for the first six factors are quite a bit larger than the Eigen value for the next factors (The first six factors are above 1.0). Additionally, the first six factors accounts for 60.4% of the total variance. This suggests that the scale items are multi-dimensional. (So more than two factors – 6 main ones as shown by the table - contribute to the scale score, with differences in impact weights on each other).

Extracting the six components then and rotating them into the component matrix result in the following table:

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

		Component					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop	.825					
2	My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organisation	.773					
3	My manager is a coach rather than a manager	.543					
4	I feel it is "Safe to Speak up" in my organisation	.321	.632				
5	Decisions made in the organisation are well studied		.606	.475			
6	I feel that I am dealt with respectfully in my organisation		.595		.368	.312	
7	My boss listens to my concerns	.440	.579				
8	We have an open door policy		.506	.318			.303
9	Politics play a big part in career progression in my organisation			-.784			
10	I feel that I can progress my career with my organisation	.360		.593			
11	Employees in my organisation are treated equally and fairly	.329	.416	.461			
12	Clear idea on where I want to drive my career			.354	.711		
13	Clear idea about strengths and areas for development		.394		.588		
14	Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning				.584		
15	My manager knows where my strengths are	.491			.545		
16	If something goes wrong, I am always the one to be blamed					-.722	
17	Interesting challenges at my daily job					.690	
18	I believe that we have a great team					.617	
19	Full capacity is used at my current job						.764
20	Year after year I am growing in experience					.352	.667

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.

Table (40)

Factor analysis: Rotated component matrix

This table contains the rotated component loadings, which are the correlations between the variable and the component. Because these are correlations, possible

values range from -1 to +1. The data has neglected values of (0.30) and below, which makes the output easier to read by removing the clutter of low correlations that are probably not meaningful anyway.

The data suggests 6 main components for the engagement equation studied in this research (scoring higher than 0.3), and those are:

- Management interest in the employees' progress.
- Communication and open door policies.
- Equity of treatment.
- Career progression.
- Team integrity.
- On-the-job experience and learning.

Figure (32)

Component plot in rotated space

The above plot supports the suggestion of multi-dimensionality of engagement drivers and components where they are interdependent and affect each other in several means. This supports the research hypothesis that engagement is not a

simple direct measurable term, and that several factors contribute to defining and measuring this concept. To test this correlation further, regression analysis has been performed for the 20 proposed components.

4.6.4. Correlations and regression analysis.

Pearson correlation is used in this step, as it provides a good statistical view of how different aspects of engagement are linked together, and whether the link is strong or weak when it comes to their impact on each other. The correlation numbers measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. The correlation coefficient can range from -1 to +1, with -1 indicating a perfect negative correlation, +1 indicating a perfect positive correlation, and 0 indicating no correlation at all.

The stronger the association of the two variables the closer the Pearson correlation coefficient, r, will be to either +1 or -1 depending on whether the relationship is positive or negative, respectively. Achieving a value of +1 or -1 means that all data points are included on the line of best fit - there are no data points that show any variation away from this line. Values for r between +1 and -1 (for example, r = 0.8 or -0.4) indicate that there is variation around the line of best fit. The closer the value of r to 0 the greater the variation around the line of best fit.

This is important for the research as it shows how each item has an impact on the other, and demonstrate the multidimensionality of engagement as a concept.

		Clear idea about strengths and areas for development	Year after year I am growing in experience	Clear idea on where I want to drive my career	I feel that I can progress my career with my organization	Full capacity is used at my current job	Interesting challenges at my daily job	Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning	My manager knows where my strengths are	My manager is a coach rather than a manager	I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop	My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organization
Clear idea about strengths and areas for development	Pearson Correlation	1	.119	.274**	.148	.067	.052	.207*	.329**	.279**	.173*	.127
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.161	.001	.080	.432	.543	.014	.000	.001	.041	.134
Year after year I am growing in experience	Pearson Correlation	.119	1	.156	.129	.251**	.246**	.112	.321**	.008	.149	.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.161		.064	.128	.003	.003	.187	.000	.928	.078	.187
Clear idea on where I want to drive my career	Pearson Correlation	.274**	.156	1	.245**	.104	-.023	.268**	.370**	.257**	.160	.101
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.064		.003	.220	.788	.001	.000	.002	.058	.235
I feel that I can progress my career with my organization	Pearson Correlation	.148	.129	.245**	1	.238**	.110	.261**	.315**	.350**	.231**	.363**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.080	.128	.003		.004	.196	.002	.000	.000	.006	.000
Full capacity is used at my current job	Pearson Correlation	.067	.251**	.104	.238**	1	.132	.030	.139	.129	.129	.261**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.432	.003	.220	.004		.118	.724	.099	.126	.128	.002
Interesting challenges at my daily job	Pearson Correlation	.052	.246**	-.023	.110	.132	1	.161	.185*	.154	.296**	.233**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.543	.003	.788	.196	.118		.056	.028	.069	.000	.005
Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning	Pearson Correlation	.207*	.112	.268**	.261**	.030	.161	1	.281**	.114	.143	.173*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.187	.001	.002	.724	.056		.001	.177	.091	.040
My manager knows where my strengths are	Pearson Correlation	.329**	.321**	.370**	.315**	.139	.185*	.281**	1	.331**	.494**	.405**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.099	.028	.001		.000	.000	.000
My manager is a coach rather than a manager	Pearson Correlation	.279**	.008	.257**	.350**	.129	.154	.114	.331**	1	.455**	.402**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.928	.002	.000	.126	.069	.177	.000		.000	.000
I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop	Pearson Correlation	.173*	.149	.160	.231**	.129	.296**	.143	.494**	.455**	1	.578**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.078	.058	.006	.128	.000	.091	.000	.000		.000
My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organization	Pearson Correlation	.127	.112	.101	.363**	.261**	.233**	.173*	.405**	.402**	.578**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.134	.187	.235	.000	.002	.005	.040	.000	.000	.000	

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

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

Table (41)

Correlations between test components

The table above shows that the degrees of correlation between various factors are significant, mostly appearing at the 0.01 level and some at the 0.05 level. This data supports the assumption of multi-dimensionality of engagement and the possible effects of one factor to the other, making drivers' analysis a very unique and specific situation that can differ from one team at the same organisation to another.

The regression analysis showed the following summary result:

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.538[a]	.290	.229	.320

a. Predictors: (Constant), My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organization, Clear idea on where I want to drive my career, Year after year I am growing in experience, Clear idea about strengths and areas for development, Interesting challenges at my daily job, Full capacity is used at my current job, Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning, My boss listens to my concerns, My manager is a coach rather than a manager, My manager knows where my strengths are, I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop

Table (42)

Regression analysis model summary

The Capital R is the multiple correlation coefficient that tells us how strongly the multiple independent variables are related to the dependent variable, and the above results show a statistically good chance of the variables listed in the correlation table (42) being related to and having an effect on each other.

The value of the R^2 is 0.290, which means that 29 per cent of the total variance in engagement length has been 'explained'. This is comparable with the R^2 values that are usually deducted from the analyses of social survey data. (European Social Survey Education, 2013).

To test the strengths of correlations further, the same tests for correlation and regression have been performed for the six proposed main components and their relevant items to test the strength of the correlations.

Correlations

		My manager knows where my strengths are	My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organization	My manager is a coach rather than a manager	I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop
My manager knows where my strengths are	Pearson Correlation	1	.405[**]	.331[**]	.494[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	141	141	141	141
My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organization	Pearson Correlation	.405[**]	1	.402[**]	.578[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	141	141	141	141
My manager is a coach rather than a manager	Pearson Correlation	.331[**]	.402[**]	1	.455[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	141	141	141	141
I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop	Pearson Correlation	.494[**]	.578[**]	.455[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	141	141	141	141

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

Table (43)

Correlations between test components and relevant factors: Management knowledge and Interest in employee progression.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.524[a]	.274	.258	.258

a. Predictors: (Constant), My manager is keen to develop my career and push me forward in the organization, My manager is a coach rather than a manager, I receive good advice from my manager that helps me to develop

Table (44)

Regression analysis model summary: Management knowledge and Interest in employee progression.

The above results show a strong correlation between the four items mentioned in the table above, which all relate to the point of "Management Knowledge and Interest in

employee progression". This suggests that the point of management interest in the employee wellbeing is in itself composed of several dimensions internally.

Correlations

		I feel it is "Safe to Speak up" in my organization	Decisions made in the organization are well studied	I feel that I am dealt with respectfully in my organization	My boss listens to my concerns	We have an open door policy
I feel it is "Safe to Speak up" in my organization	Pearson Correlation	1	.398**	.214*	.387**	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.011	.000	.000
	N	141	141	141	141	141
Decisions made in the organization are well studied	Pearson Correlation	.398**	1	.482**	.298**	.362**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	141	141	141	141	141
I feel that I am dealt with respectfully in my organization	Pearson Correlation	.214*	.482**	1	.312**	.262**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.000		.000	.002
	N	141	141	141	141	141
My boss listens to my concerns	Pearson Correlation	.387**	.298**	.312**	1	.234**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.005
	N	141	141	141	141	141
We have an open door policy	Pearson Correlation	.414**	.362**	.262**	.234**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.002	.005	
	N	141	141	141	141	141

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

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

Table (45)

Correlations between test components and relevant factors: Open communication

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.476a	.227	.204	.357

a. Predictors: (Constant), I feel that I am dealt with respectfully in my organization, I feel it is "Safe to Speak up" in my organization, My boss listens to my concerns, Decisions made in the organization are well studied

Table (46)

Regression analysis model summary: Open communication

Similarly, the above results show a strong correlation between open communication and various items used in the survey questions to measure this as one dimension of engagement, supporting strong correlation between measured items.

Correlations

		Politics play a big part in career progression in my organization	I feel that I can progress my career with my organization	Employees in my organization are treated equally and fairly
Politics play a big part in career progression in my organization	Pearson Correlation	1	-.348[**]	-.375[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	141	141	141
I feel that I can progress my career with my organization	Pearson Correlation	-.348[**]	1	.413[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	141	141	141
Employees in my organization are treated equally and fairly	Pearson Correlation	-.375[**]	.413[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	141	141	141

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

Table (47)

Correlations between test components and relevant factors: Politics and equity

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.463[a]	.214	.203	.325

a. Predictors: (Constant), Politics play a big part in career progression in my organization,

Employees in my organization are treated equally and fairly

Table (48)

Regression analysis model summary: Politics and equity

"Politics" being a unique engagement driver that is negatively correlated to engagement in the studied sample group, appeared to have a significant negative correlation with other items measured in the survey, like "Career progression", and "Equity".

Correlations

		Clear idea on where I want to drive my career	Clear idea about strengths and areas for development	Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning	My manager knows where my strengths are
Clear idea on where I want to drive my career	Pearson Correlation	1	.274[**]	.268[**]	.370[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.001	.000
	N	141	141	141	141
Clear idea about strengths and areas for development	Pearson Correlation	.274[**]	1	.207[*]	.329[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.014	.000
	N	141	141	141	141
Projects that require intellectual thinking and planning	Pearson Correlation	.268[**]	.207[*]	1	.281[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.014		.001
	N	141	141	141	141
My manager knows where my strengths are	Pearson Correlation	.370[**]	.329[**]	.281[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001	
	N	141	141	141	141

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

[*]. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table (49)

Correlations between test components and relevant factors: Career progression

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.431[a]	.186	.168	.305

a. Predictors: (Constant), My manager knows where my strengths are, Projects that require

intellectual thinking and planning, Clear idea about strengths and areas for development

Table (50)

Regression analysis model summary: Career progression

"Career Progression" appeared to be linked to other factors as well like knowing where an employee can possibly be in a few years, management support for

development and working on projects that stretch their capabilities further (Plus its link to other factors like "Politics at work", explained in tables (47) and (48)).

Correlations

		If something goes wrong, I am always the one to be blamed	Interesting challenges at my daily job	I believe that we have a great team
If something goes wrong, I am always the one to be blamed	Pearson Correlation	1	-.306**	-.343**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	141	141	141
Interesting challenges at my daily job	Pearson Correlation	-.306**	1	.278**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.001
	N	141	141	141
I believe that we have a great team	Pearson Correlation	-.343**	.278**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	
	N	141	141	141

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

Table (51)

Correlations between test components and relevant factors: Team integrity

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.388[a]	.150	.138	.279

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interesting challenges at my daily job, If something goes wrong, I am always the one to be blamed

Table (52)

Regression analysis model summary: Team integrity

Having similar correlations shown for the values of "Team Integrity", the tables above show consistent significant correlations between measured engagement factors and their sub-items, suggesting that the engagement factors measured in this research have strong links to their components, as well as to each other, and predicting that engagement drivers are having various dimensions as well as sub-dimensions, which makes the assumption of "globalisation" of drivers strongly questioned, as suggested by the research hypothesis.

The above statistical results, therefore; support the third research indicator (3.1.3. P.121) with regards to the output of the research, since they present strong statistical evidence that different drivers did exist between employees working in various functions and countries.

The above results, therefore; support the suggestion that in order to measure employee engagement objectively, organisations need to first identify what they are measuring, by defining the term, then by understanding what drives this term, and finally building up a survey tool that can capture the feelings and opinions of employees towards the defined, understood, and broken down items. But how can this be done in a global organisation in practice? Benchmarking is a very important aspect that MNCs seek, and need to compare performance across different countries. Can this be achieved in practice?

The research has taken a step to find a solution to this taking in consideration that the core finding of this research is that engagement drivers are not similar, so the tool should address the differences in drivers, but in the same time help to evaluate and compare the total engagement levels of employees in various operations. This is introduced below and has been tested as well in two multinational organisations in the Middle East.

Introducing: New approach of objectively measuring engagement:

Figure (33)

Engagement research tool derived by this research

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Tune in: Listen to each specific group of employees and define what makes them tick. What is important to them and its ranking (to establish the specific importance weight to each specific group)?

Understand: After detecting engagement aspects define them and establish an agreement to the reflective behaviours.

Nano-measurement: measure the current status of every behaviour defined by employees as important

Effect: Create an action plan based on your measurements of the current engagement status.

Status-check: As you effect the action plan, check as you go with the employees if they feel positive towards the changes and communicate progress and milestones as you go.

The tool is based on the concept of listen first, and then understand before you start diagnosing. It aims to measure the employee engagement levels through comparing the current employee status versus the specific drivers of employee engagement in every specific context.

The survey will then generate a relevant status report that organisations can use to benchmark the levels of engagement, without comparing engagement drivers, so it is comparing apple to apple, regardless of the origin.

Action plans can then be generated locally / regionally, which will then ensure the local efficiency of the employee engagement plans and in the same time, the possibility of corporate benchmarking and understanding where the organisation is on the employee engagement scale.

To explain the principles of the tool in a practical example, the first step is to listen to employees "Tune-in" and check what makes them engaged at work. In the studied organisation the following was the outcome:

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what:1) Makes you go the extra mile?2)
Makes you feel happy at work?3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time?
(Please choose your top 3 items only)

Driver	%
Work that enables my growth	60.2 %
My voice is heard and of value to…	42.0 %
Fair working environment (No Politics)	39.8 %
Challenging work environment	38.1 %
Working with competent team	36.4 %
Working for the "Right Boss"	34.7 %
Being highest paid in the market	30.1 %
Work place that is enjoyable	23.9 %
Strong benefits plan	22.7 %
Flexible working hours	21.0 %
All Other Responses	5.1 %
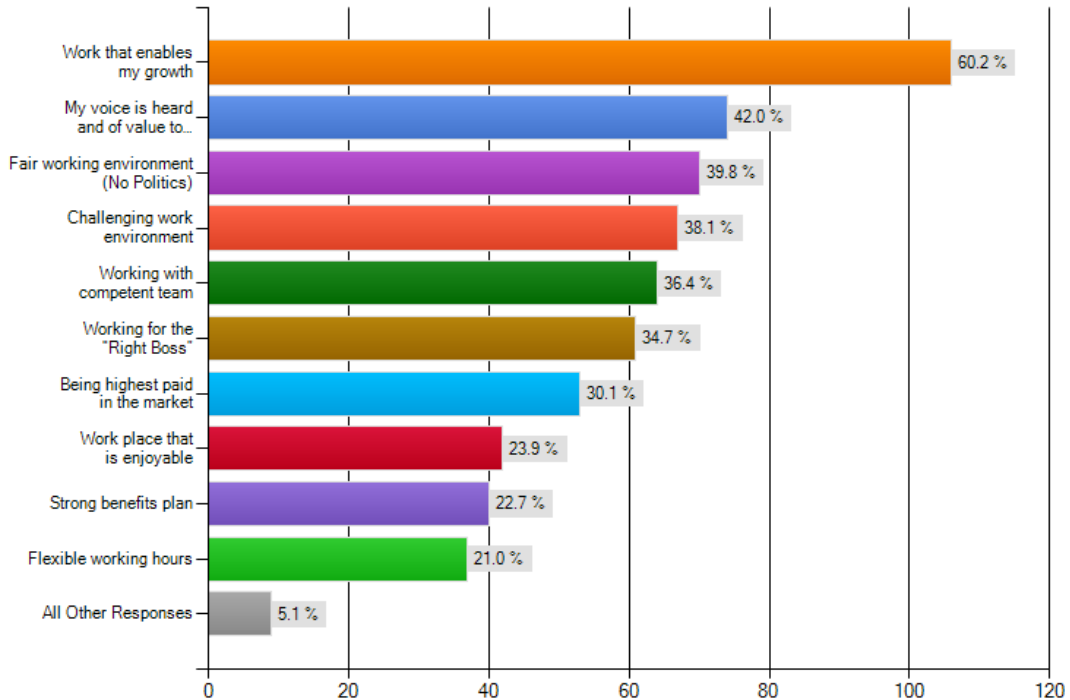
Copy of Chart (7)

Top Drivers of Engagement in the MNE Region in 2010.

Employees then would have mentioned what makes them engaged at work by selecting from options the survey provide, but also giving them a space for "others" in case they would like to mention something that is not listed in the survey options. This could be a cultural specific aspect or a time-generated aspect (new driver that evolved due to specific circumstances).

The second step is to "Understand", and this is a crucial part of the survey, as the survey basis is "No-assumptions". Here some focus groups or personal interviews, having various members from different backgrounds participating, define what each aspect means in their own context. So in simple terms, what is "Leadership", what is "Career progression" or "Challenging work environment" in their context? It is very important as the definitions could vary from one culture to the other, and this will

determine the specific questions that should be asked in the following step and will constitute the building block of the survey afterwards.

The survey has tackled this point in the studied organisation and the following is an example of one of the focus group outcomes:

To make our work place more enjoyable we need to be:
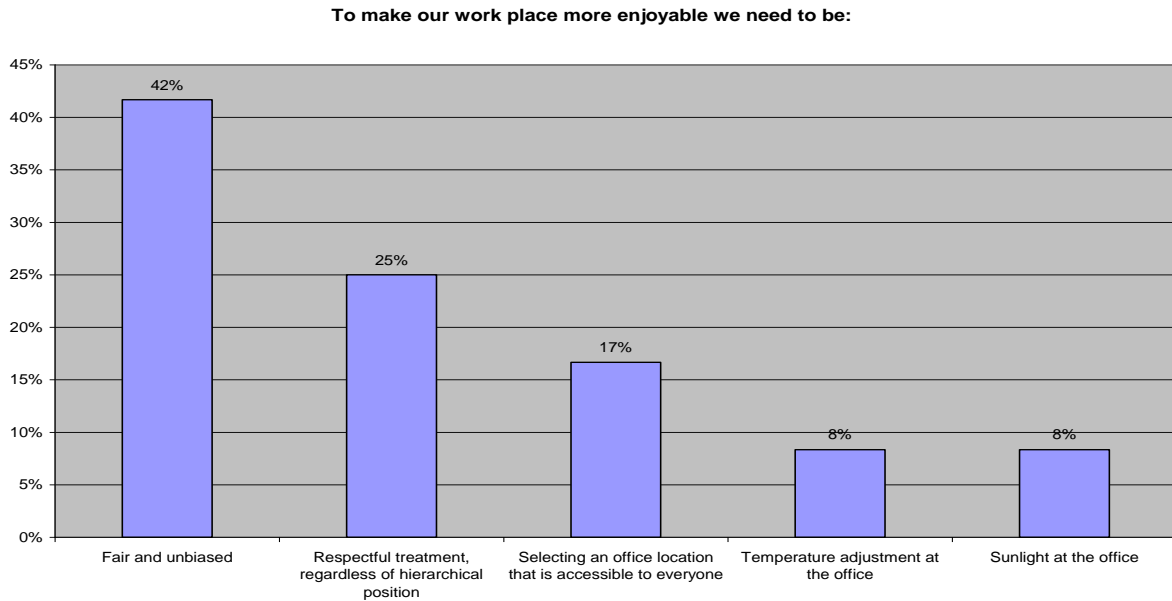
Copy of Chart (31)

Top needs for making the work place more enjoyable.

The third step is then to start designing the cultural / corporate specific employee engagement questionnaire, building on the listening and understanding steps that were performed, and putting a weight to the questions that is relevant to the priority of every aspect.

Examples of some questions that were derived from the previous chart (A work place that is enjoyable):

9. Politics play a big part in career progression in my organization.

○ Yes   ○ No

If you selected "Yes" would you like to comment (Optional)

10. I feel that I am dealt with respectfully in my organization.

○ Yes   ○ No

12. Employees in my organization are treated equally and fairly.

○ Yes   ○ No

If you selected "No" would you like to comment (Optional)

1. Myself.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	strongly agree
I enjoy my work.	○	○	○	○	○
I challenge the norms (status quo).	○	○	○	○	○
I have a good work/life balance.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization for me is my second family.	○	○	○	○	○

Any clarifications (optional)

Figure (34)

Examples of questions built from drivers' analysis

The measurement of the employee engagement levels then would be relevant to the specific context of the employees' culture, organisational context and time-specific context, which could differ from one year to the other.

A similar chart to the following would be generated:
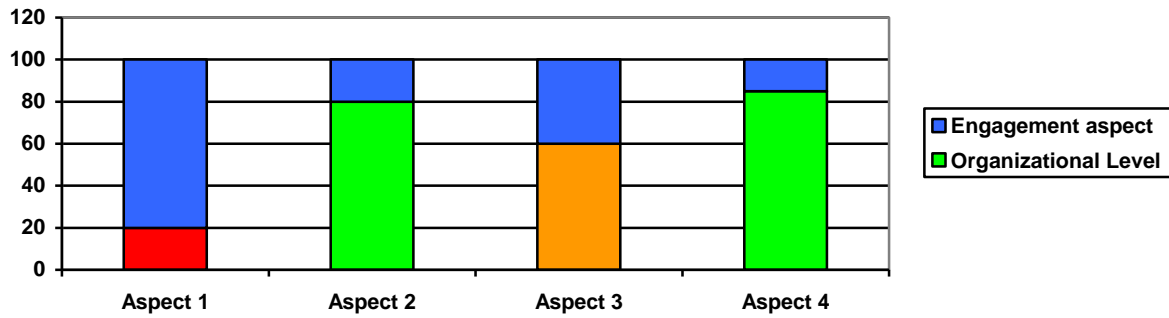
Chart (32)

An example of the Engagement TUNES © organisational chart

Colour codes:

→ Red: Urgent need for correction / intervention. (scores less than 40% match)

→ Green: Healthy. (Scores above 80% match).

→ Orange: Alert zone. (Scores from 50% to 80% match).

Then, adding up the four to five top aspects of the organisational unit, the whole organisation can be compared in total levels of employee engagement, but at the same time, in the context of their own specific engagement drivers.

An example chart is the following:
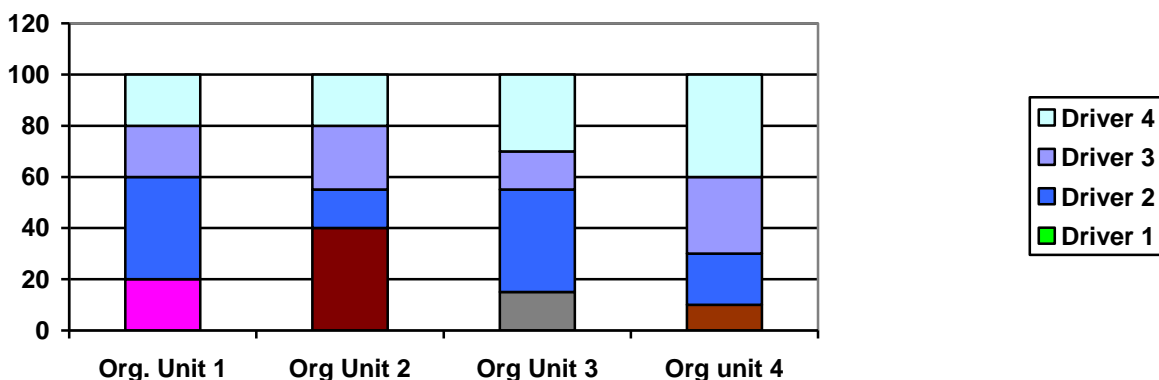
Chart (33)

Comparing different organisational units in their own unique mix of employee engagement drivers.

Colour codes in the above chart represent different engagement drivers and their percentage of weight to the specific employee group.

The final comparison and benchmark could be then as follows:
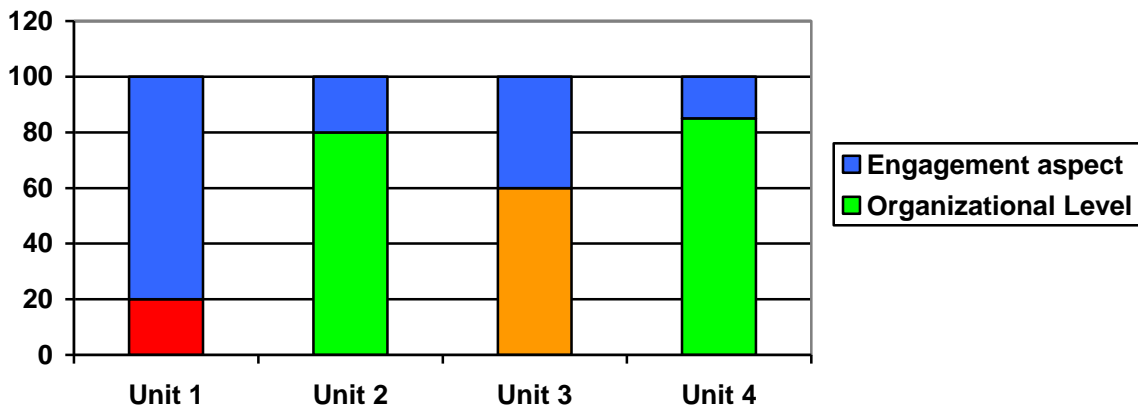
Chart (34)

An example of the Engagement TUNES © organisational benchmarking chart

Colour codes:

→ Red: Urgent need for correction / intervention. (scores less than 40% match)

→ Green: Healthy. (Scores above 80% match).

→ Orange: Alert zone. (Scores from 50% to 80% match).

The research tool then provides a solution that is cultural and organisational proof. It works on detecting the specific employee engagement drivers in the context of every specific work group, then understanding the background of the drivers, and finally analysing the current levels of employee engagement in the group.

It also provides a proper way of benchmarking different organisational units, regardless of where they operate and who are in the team, which could offer organisations a good tool for benchmarking different operations' performance.

The actions are then not globalised, which makes lots of sense, as it is not sensible to globalise action plans, if the employee engagement drivers are shown to be different, so an action plan that would hit the target in one place, could be of little relevance to different groups in different areas.

Testing the tool in a Diverse Multinational Organisation:

The Engagement TUNES © has been tested at Merck Serono operation in the Middle East, head quartered in Dubai and involving around 250 employees, coming from 18 different nationalities and located in 13 countries across the region. The organisation has previously been using the Towers Watson engagement survey as a guide towards engagement, and the survey was globally designed and run, then regional reports were generated based on the region's responses to the globally asked questions.

Based on the Towers Watson model, the following points came as the bottom differences for Merck Serono Middle East operation from the global pharmaceutical benchmark:

1. Aspect 22: From what I hear, our benefits are as good as or better than the benefits in other companies. Indicating that almost 50% of the organisation agreed and did not like this.
2. Aspect 61b: In your judgment, how does the organisation compare with its competitors on quality of customer service? Indicating 51% of employees dissatisfied with this aspect.
3. The next following two aspects were also linked to pay and customer service.

Now looking at the above results, showing almost half of the employees dissatisfied with pay and customer service, it might be obvious to have those two points as priority in the organisation's action plan.

When the Engagement TUNES © model has been applied to the organisation, the following results were retrieved:

Engagement TUNES © Results Analysis for Merck Serono Middle East
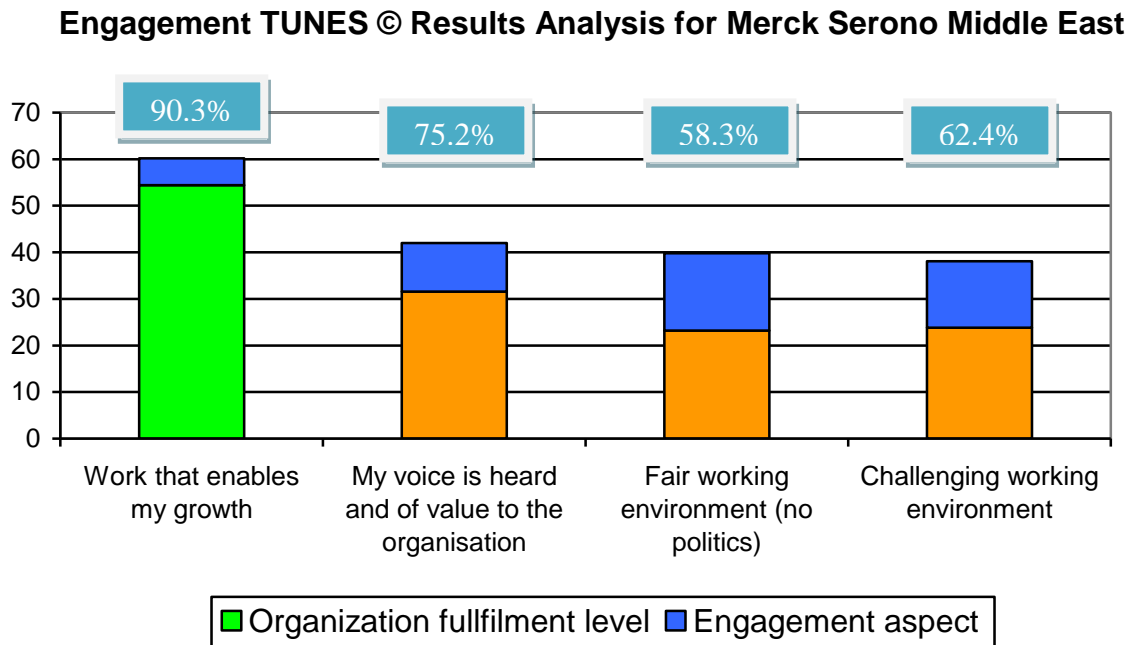
Chart (35)

Engagement TUNES © results analysis for Merck Serono Middle East

Colour codes:

→ **Red**: Urgent need for correction / intervention. (scores less than 40% match)

→ **Green**: Healthy. (Scores above 80% match).

→ **Orange**: Alert zone. (Scores from 50% to 80% match).

From an overall look over the Middle East operation, it can be analysed that the organisation is doing quite well in the top important aspect for its specific employees, which is "Work that enables personal growth", with an agreement of 90.3%.

Looking at the top drivers of employee engagement for this specific group of employees, career progression is on top while the next three aspects are almost similar in their impact, and the lowest performance level among them is "Fair working

environment (No Politics)", which could give an indication to leaders in this region that impartiality and integrity in applying the systems is something that should be considered and worked upon. The next priority could then be stretching the workforce to use more of their capabilities at work and working on improving the communication methods and making sure that the bottom line feedback is reached to the executive level.

The actions above completely are in a different direction from the globally run survey, as pay, benefits and customer service (which came as possible action points in the global survey) were not in the top 6 priorities of this employee group at all and came in a very low percentage of priority to this specific group of workforce. The above results further support the research hypothesis and suggest that it is practical evidence to how global surveys could be misleading.

The Engagement TUNES © tool does not stop here, and can go deeper to the desired employee break levels, and looking deeper in the results and trying to see the cross country barriers, even in the same region, the following drivers for engagement were retrieved:

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what: 1) Makes you go the extra mile? 2) Makes you feel happy at work? 3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time? (Please choose your top 3 items only)

Driver	Percentage
Work that enables my growth	57.6 %
Fair working environment (No Politics)	39.0 %
My voice is heard and of value to…	35.6 %
Being highest paid in the market	35.6 %
Working with competent team	33.9 %
Working for the "Right Boss"	30.5 %
Strong benefits plan	27.1 %
Challenging work environment	27.1 %
Work place that is enjoyable	22.0 %
Flexible working hours	20.3 %
All Other Responses	1.7 %

Chart (36)

Engagement drivers at the Saudi Arabian operation

Showing top drivers as:

1. Work that enables personal growth.
2. Fair working environment (No politics).
3. My voice is heard and of value to the organisation.
4. Being highest paid in the market.

The pay / benefits have appeared specific for this country and not among the regional results.

Islamic Republic of Iran

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what: 1) Makes you go the extra mile? 2)
Makes you feel happy at work? 3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time?
(Please choose your top 3 items only)

Category	Percentage
Work that enables my growth	61.5 %
My voice is heard and of value to…	61.5 %
Challenging work environment	46.2 %
Fair working environment (No Politics)	38.5 %
Flexible working hours	23.1 %
Work place that is enjoyable	23.1 %
Working with competent team	23.1 %
Being highest paid in the market	15.4 %
Working for the "Right Boss"	7.7 %
Strong benefits plan	
All Other Responses	

Chart (37)

Engagement drivers at the Iranian operation

Showing the top drivers as:

1. Work that enables my growth.
2. My voice is heard and of value to the organisation.
3. Challenging work environment.

4. Fair working environment (No politics).

Lebanon

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what: 1) Makes you go the extra mile? 2) Makes you feel happy at work? 3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time? (Please choose your top 3 items only)

Driver	Percentage
Challenging work environment	48.4 %
Work that enables my growth	45.2 %
Working with competent team	45.2 %
My voice is heard and of value to…	32.3 %
Working for the "Right Boss"	25.8 %
Being highest paid in the market	25.8 %
Fair working environment (No Politics)	22.6 %
Strong benefits plan	19.4 %
Flexible working hours	16.1 %
Work place that is enjoyable	12.9 %
All Other Responses	6.5 %
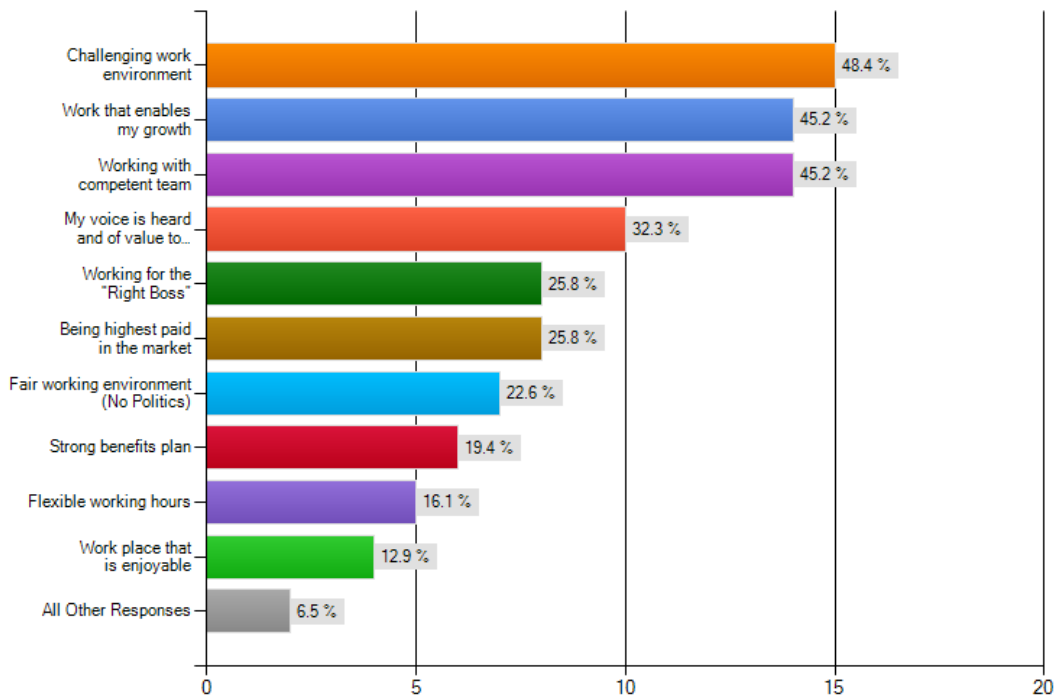
Chart (38)

Engagement drivers at the Lebanese operation

Showing the following as the top drivers of engagement:

1. Challenging work environment.
2. Work that enables my growth.
3. Working with a competent team.
4. My voice is heard and of value to the organisation.

The team competency was stressed upon in this operation as an important factor for employee engagement, which did not appear in other countries.

From the above three examples only (through applying Engagement TUNES ©) out of the thirteen countries, it is obvious as well that the country and cultural barriers exist, supporting the hypothesis that employee engagement is related somehow to their expectations, and those differ depending on the specific employee group background as well as the organisational context and history in this specific country.

To look even deeper, in a further level of focus and look more into the effect of the specific working conditions on engagement drivers, the model has compared employees working in the same country (United Arab Emirates), but in different working conditions. The first group worked at the office (Based at the regional headquarters for the Middle East operation), and the second were the sales group working mainly in the field and front line with the customers. The following results were obtained:

UAE Sales Force (Field Based)

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what: 1) Makes you go the extra mile? 2) Makes you feel happy at work? 3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time? (Please choose your top 3 items only)
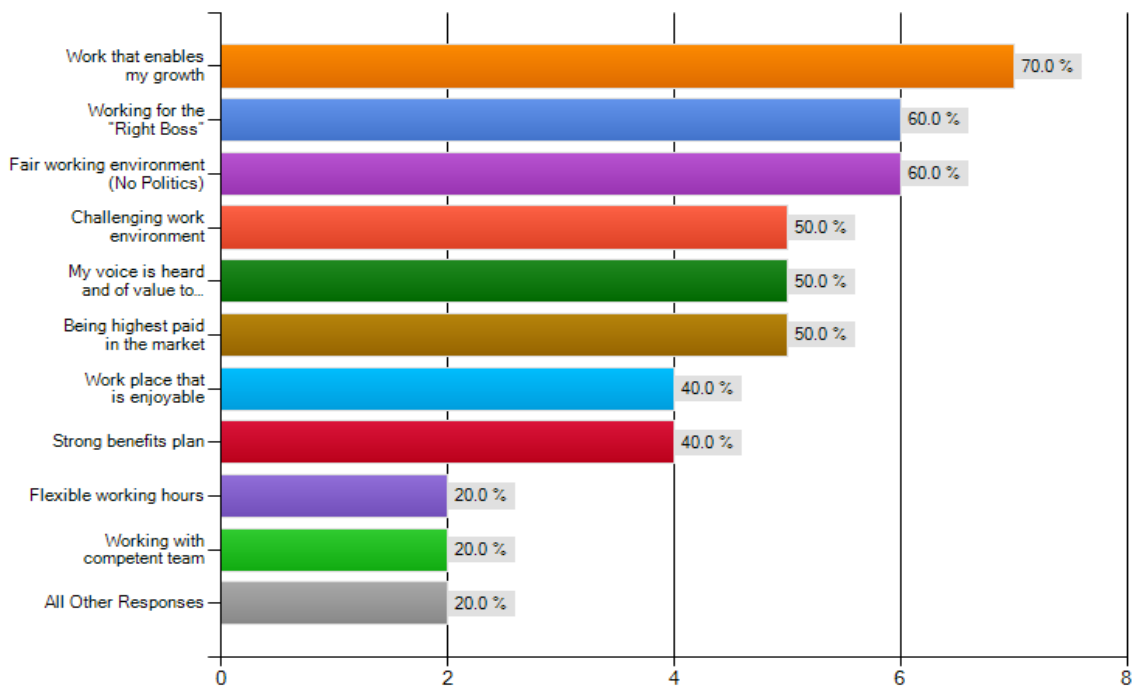
Chart (39)

Engagement drivers for the UAE field based staff

Highlighting the following as their top engagement drivers:

1. Work that enables my growth.
2. Working for the right boss.
3. Fair working environment (No Politics).
4. Challenging work environment.

The "leadership" factor appeared here as the second most important factor in driving employee engagement in this specific group.

UAE – Office Based Staff

What makes you engaged at work? In simple terms, what: 1) Makes you go the extra mile? 2) Makes you feel happy at work? 3) Makes you ensure that you achieve your milestone every time? (Please choose your top 3 items only)

Engagement Driver	Percentage
Work that enables my growth	71.4 %
Fair working environment (No Politics)	60.7 %
Working for the "Right Boss"	50.0 %
Working with competent team	35.7 %
Work place that is enjoyable	32.1 %
My voice is heard and of value to…	28.6 %
Challenging work environment	25.0 %
Being highest paid in the market	17.9 %
Flexible working hours	14.3 %
Strong benefits plan	14.3 %
All Other Responses	7.1 %
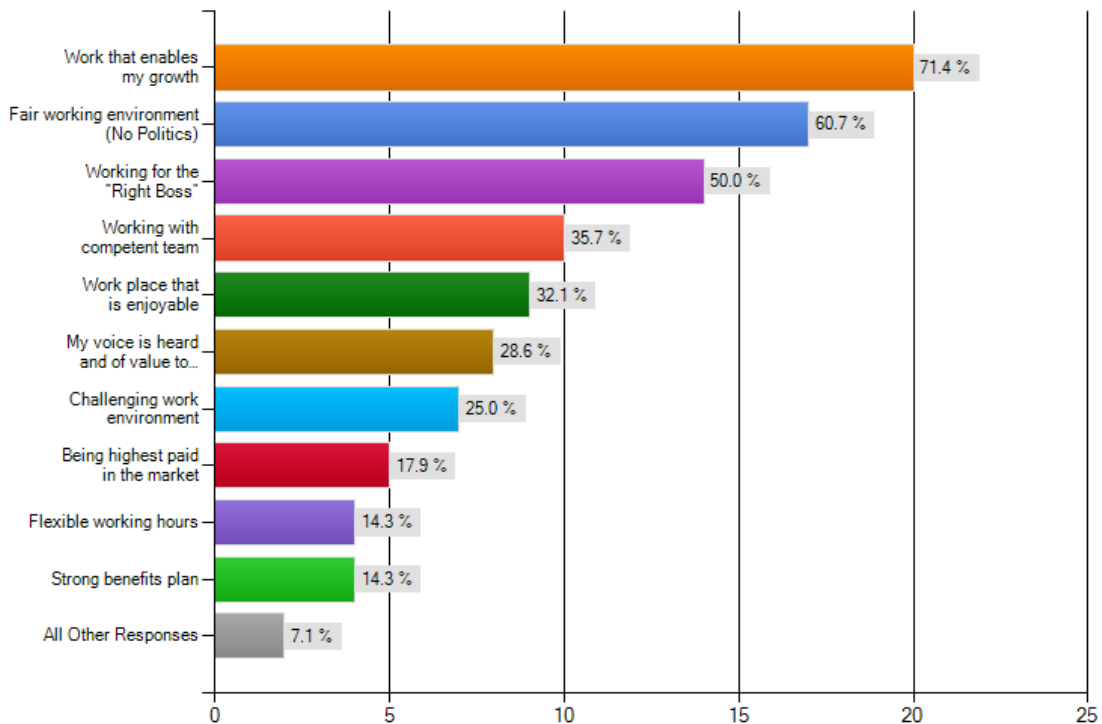
Chart (40)

Engagement drivers for the UAE office based staff

The chart above shows less emphasis on the leadership factor and more on the fairness side.

The Engagement TUNES © model offers a unique and objective benchmarking tool to the very different engagement drivers for all of those groups as the following graph shows the various employee engagement dynamics:

Engagement TUNES © Regional Drivers' chart

	KSA	Iran	Lebanon	UAE - Field Based	UAE - Office Based
	21.2	18.6	18.9	20.8	16.3
	21.2	22.1	26.4	25	23
	23.2	29.6	26.4	25	27.9
	34.4	29.6	28.3	29.2	32.8

Chart (41)

Comparing different organisational units in their own unique mix of employee engagement drivers. (Drivers shown in their impact percentages, including the top four drivers for every desired specific break of employee group).

Colour codes:

Work that enables my growth	Fair working environment (No Politics)	My voice is heard and of value to the organisation
Challenging work environment	Being Highest paid in the market	Working with a competent team
	Working for the "Right Boss"	

The above chart is very indicative and informative to the HR professionals as well as to business leaders and CEOs, who can understand the dynamics of their workforce

per specific country and employee mix. It can also help in identifying required leadership styles per country / region, which can support the talent positioning and leadership recruitment process.

The final step then is to understand how each operation is performing versus their top employee engagement drivers, and present an overall chart that CEOs can view and compare the performance of HR functions as well as local / regional leadership teams in terms of employee engagement environment support. This is the challenge of employee engagement models, and one of the main reasons why some companies still insist on global surveys, as they give them a tool for benchmarking and comparison. The Engagement TUNES © offers the benchmarking ability while capturing on the drivers of engagement in the local context of the operation. The report of Engagement Tunes © provides an objective view in two steps:

Step 1: Creating country / desired employee break chart, as follows: (for the above example, KSA chart will only be shown as an example)

Engagement TUNES © Results Analysis for KSA operation
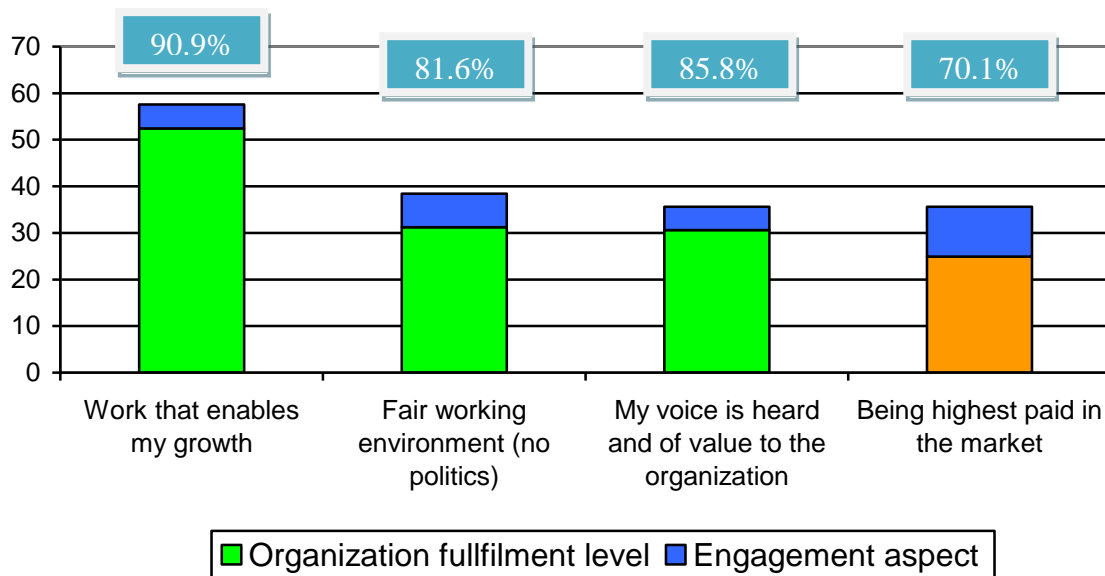
Chart (42)

Engagement TUNES © results analysis for KSA operation

Colour codes:

→ **Red**: Urgent need for correction / intervention. (scores less than 40% match)

→ **Green**: Healthy. (Scores above 80% match).

→ **Orange**: Alert zone. (Scores from 50% to 80% match).

The above chart shows an excellent employee engagement performance for the Saudi Arabian operation with an alert for pays / benefits. Acting on this while maintaining performance on other levels could bring employee engagement levels further up. A similar chart would be created for every desired break unit across the region / globe.

Step 2: Compiling all charts of country / desired employee break groups, as follows:

Engagement TUNES © Regional (Global) Engagement Performance chart
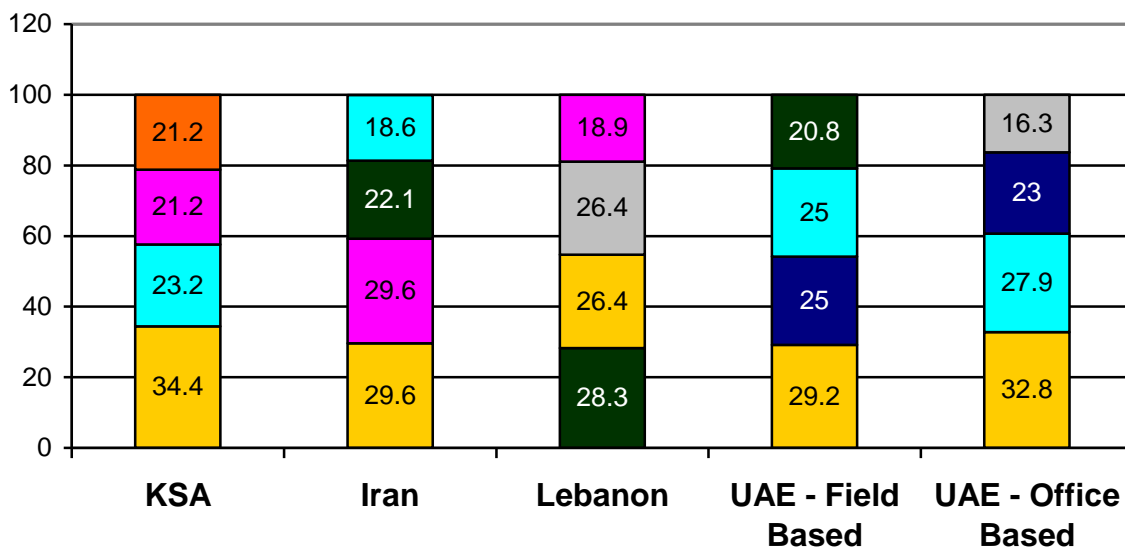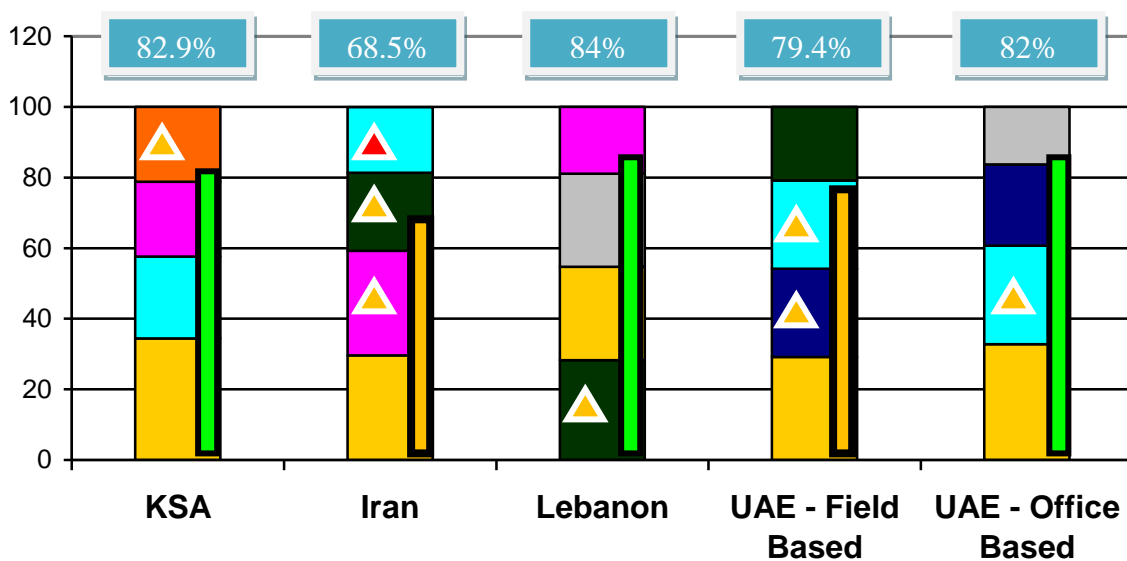

Chart (43)

Comparing different organisational units, in their own unique mix of employee engagement drivers. (Drivers shown in their impact percentages, including the top four drivers for every desired specific break of employee group. Inner bars are colour coded and show the level of overall performance, and inner triangles show the action areas in colour codes according to urgency).

Colour codes:

Work that enables my growth	Fair working environment (No Politics)	My voice is heard and of value to the organisation
Challenging work environment	Being Highest paid in the market	Working with a competent team
	Working for the "Right Boss"	

Bars / Triangles Colour codes:

→ **Red**: Urgent need for correction / intervention. (scores less than 40% match)

→ **Green**: Healthy. (Scores above 80% match).

→ **Orange**: Alert zone. (Scores from 50% to 80% match).

The graph above is a "Picture that says more than a thousand words". This is the ultimate outcome of the Engagement TUNES © and briefs CEOs, HR, and leadership teams of their global or regional performance in staff engagement. The performance chart is based on the very specific employees' segments and reflects what they really expect in the context of their work environment, cultural backgrounds, behavioural backgrounds, work experience, country work context and all other factors that might be affecting their engagement levels at work.

The chart also shows the required areas for actions with their priority using the colour codes, which could help regional / global leadership team in identifying which action plans could be global and which ones should be regionally / locally run. From the chart above, for example, "Fair working environment (No Politics)" appears as a pattern and should be addressed regionally, while other parameters are country specific and should be dealt with by the local leaders and HR professionals.

The Engagement TUNES © is not a magic bullet, and does not offer a solution for every country every year, but it is a "Pulse Check" that reflects the current status of employee engagement expectations, and therefore, should be run annually or

biannually to detect the "Pulse" of the employees and to ensure that action plans are in the right direction.

A criticism of the method could be that it depends on employee expectations, which could change from year to year, and therefore; long term projects would then be affected and it would be very challenging to plan for an employee engagement project that runs for 3-5 years, as other priorities might pop up during this period, bringing the planned project to a lower priority or maybe to a stop. This is a very valid critique to the tool, though drivers are unlikely to be opposite from one year to the other, and it can be solved through running the tool every 2 years (for cost effectiveness and avoiding employees suffering through having to answer too many surveys, as well as giving management the time to reflect on results and implement actions before the next survey); however, the essence of this tool is to act like an "Employee Engagement Gram" (similar to the Electrocardiogram used to monitor the heart function in hospitals), and it helps organisations fine tune their "Treatment" to the employee engagement year after year. So the long term projects could be "fine-tuned" annually to match with the changes in employee expectations.

Agility and change are factors that have been agreed as crucial for organisations to succeed in the future, and this tool helps organisations in making change decisions that make sense to their employees, as they meet their current expectations and not built on obsolete feedbacks that are not valid anymore.

From the data obtained and analysed in this chapter, it has been shown that engagement drivers have differed from one country to the other, and also year over year. The challenge for organisations was to find an engagement tool that can measure engagement basing its weight on the differences in impact of engagement drivers, but in the same time allowing a window for cross-comparing the engagement performance of various operations. This challenge has been addressed through the tool introduced in this chapter, which has set the pace for further testing and development on the practical level.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter explains the key research findings, discussions of the hypothesis as well as the original research contributions to the body of knowledge and to professional practice. Further research areas emerging from this research are also explored at the end of the chapter.

The current research has compared a significant sample of one multinational pharmaceutical organisation (more than 80% of their employees in the middle and near east regions), with the global engagement survey results for the same pharmaceutical organisation, and has clearly shown some specific cultural gaps that are not covered by global engagement surveys. It has also shown that the engagement drivers have changed over time for this significant sample group.

The following were the proposed hypotheses, upon which the research was based:

H1 Drivers of engagement are not similar across the world.

H2 Measuring engagement using fixed questions / tool is not accurate across different cultures.

H3 Regional operations could well identify their engagement drivers, and this can then help them to fine tune their actions step by step, to match this with the globally required level of engagement.

H4 In a fast changing world, drivers of engagement could be changed by time and different emerging circumstances.

5.1. Research key findings:

➢ The research data supported the existence of unique engagement drivers in the Middle East studied sample, referred to as "Fair treatment – No politics" environment (Chapter Four: 146, Chart (7)).

➢ Across various countries within the same organisation, priorities for engagement drivers were different, highlighting differences in weights of impact for those drivers among represented groups. (Chapter Two: 62, Table (3), and Chapter Two: 65, Table (4)).

➢ Engagement drivers for the studied sample have changed priorities over time (Chapter Three: 145, Chart (6), and Chapter Three: 146, Chart (7)), supporting the assumption that weights given to impacts for certain drivers can change by time, making the use of a standardized engagement survey questionnaire less reliable over the years.

➢ The definition for "Employee Engagement" is not common amongst researchers as well as in the professional world (Appendix (D)), and the research proposes the following model for defining employee engagement in a multicultural context:

The 4H© model for defining employee engagement

© Tamer Elewa

The model suggests that the elements of employee engagement are the Head, the Heart, the Hand, and the Hope, representing how employees use their intellectual power, affection power, behavioural power and common vision to benefit their work place. Those were the main key threads that were found during the research to be of common existence in defining engagement, where:

 The Head refers to the individual's decision making process and how the organisation is placed in order of priority during this process. (Budget spending, business decisions, customer negotiation, customer service, resource planning, and

recruitment decisions are all examples of using the "Head" to serve organisational goals). (Related to factor analysis components: 5,11,12,13,14,17,19,20 in this research, page 222).

It has been shown from the research's results that there is a strong link between engagement and how employees use and develop their intellectual capacity at work. "Work that enables growth" showed as the highest engagement driver in this sample group (Chart 7, P. 146) and this dimension has been explained by the sample group (Chart 28, P. 208) as the ability to progress in the career and use their brains to solve challenging situations. This "Head" dimension then is suggested to be of importance to enhancing employee engagement.

 The Heart is concerned with the emotional contract and relatedness to the organisation. (The "good feeling" of employees within the organisation, amount of discretionary effort exerted, extra miles achieved with the individual's own will, care about organisational image, team alignment and the way conflict is handled in an organisation and how employees would speak about their workplace among their communities are all aspects of this dimension: Related to points 4,6,7,8,9,11,16,18 in this research, page 222).

The research has shown that several points related to "Fair Treatment" (Chart 30, Page 213) and "Working for the right boss" (Chart 29, Page 211) as well as enjoying their workplace (Chart 31, Page 214) are built on the perception of employees to how they are respected at work and treated equally to their fellow colleagues. This emotional link then is also suggested to have an impact on how employees get engaged at work.

 The Hand is focused on the actual results achieved. (How successful is the organisation, how the individual contributes to this success, the role of the team in

getting things done, the availability of resources to get targets achieved, and the presence of appropriate training and development initiatives to enhance the skills of employees relate to this factor: Related to points 1,2,3,10,13,15,19 in this research, page 222).

This has been shown in the research in how employees would like to use their energy at work as described by them in chart (19) (page 177) in order to succeed at work and drive the organisation forward. Results are some solid figures that organisations can track, but those actually come from efforts behind desks, in the field, and with customers.

The Hope is what binds the employee-employer relationship all together, and describes the degree of alignment of the individuals' goals and the organisational vision. (Understanding organisational mission, vision, values, and actually living them, believing in the individual's role in relation to the bigger organisational performance gear, caring about updating organisational news, upwards and downward communication paths, and feeling part of the mother ship's journey are examples of this dimension: Related to points 9,10,12,20 in this research, page 222).

The research results revealed several times the link between engagement drivers for the sample group and future outcomes like future career progression (Chart 8, Page 153) as well as future self-development (Chart 28, Page 208 and Table 40, Page 222). The degree of alignment to the employees' personal goals then and organisational goals are suggested to link to how they would be engaged at work.

The percentages of impact of every aspect then depends on the mix of cultural backgrounds present in every organisation as well as the external environmental factors affecting the work group, which all will formulate the unique definition of employee engagement at a certain organisation at one specific time.

Based on those findings, the research proposes the following theory:

> "Using a globally designed tool to measure engagement levels at different cultural, environmental, organisational and economical contexts would lead to less relevant results to the studied work group. Organisations would need to run engagement drivers analysis and design their surveys according to their specific context, before they jump into the measurement and analysis method, this should lead to relevant, accurate and sensible understanding of employees need, and should help in generating practical and effective action plans to boost employee engagement in the regional and local context".

The research has built its theory based on the four key hypotheses proposed by the research. The "Court room Trial" method for significance of research results has been used to check how the hypotheses are supported, and the tool depends on challenging a hypothesis based on assuming that errors of types I and II (displayed below) are rare and unlikely to happen (which is the case in this research, since none of the members have an idea on where the questions lead, and the questions have been run and explained in the local language and designed in the cultural context of the studied work group. This has also been supported by the significantly low standard error of the mean obtained by the qualitative survey analysis).

Neyman and Pearson (1967), identified "two sources of error":

  (a) The error of rejecting a hypothesis that should have been accepted.
  (b) The error of accepting a hypothesis that should have been rejected.

In 1930, they elaborated on these two sources of error, remarking that:

"...in testing hypotheses two considerations must be kept in view, (1) we must be able to reduce the chance of rejecting a true hypothesis to as low a value as desired; (2) the test must be so devised that it will reject the hypothesis tested when it is likely to be false." (Pearson and Neyman, 1967: 100).

In 1933, they observed that these "Problems are rarely presented in such a form that we can discriminate with certainty between the true and false hypothesis" (Pearson and Neyman, 1967: 187). They also noted that, in deciding whether to accept or reject a particular hypothesis amongst a "set of alternative hypotheses" (Pearson and Neyman, 1967: 201), it was easy to make an error:

... [And] these errors will be of two kinds:

      (I) we reject H0 [i.e., the hypothesis to be tested] when it is true,

      (II) We accept H0 when some alternative hypothesis Hi is true.

	Null Hypothesis (H_0) is true Drivers are Similar	Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) is true Drivers are not Similar
Accept Null Hypothesis	Right Hypothesis	Wrong Hypothesis
		Type II Error (False Negative)
Reject Null Hypothesis	Wrong Hypothesis	Right Hypothesis
	Type I Error (False Positive)	

Table (53)

"Court room trial" Significance analysis method.

A type I error, also known as a false positive, occurs when a statistical test rejects a true null hypothesis (H_0). For example, if a null hypothesis states a patient is healthy, and the patient is indeed healthy, but the test rejects this hypothesis, falsely suggesting that the patient is sick. The rate of the type I error is denoted by the Greek letter alpha (α) and usually equals the significance level of a test.

A type II error, also known as a false negative, occurs when the test fails to reject a false null hypothesis. For example, if a null hypothesis states a patient is healthy, and the patient is in fact sick, but the test fails to reject the hypothesis, falsely suggesting that the patient is healthy. The rate of the type II error is denoted by the Greek letter beta (β) and related to the power of a test (which equals $1-\beta$).

In colloquial usage type I error might be called "failing to believe the truth" and type II error "believing the falsehood". In light of hypothesis testing; however, type II error means more of "staying with falsehood for lack of better alternative", than active belief in it. Caution is advised, when applying statistical tests to philosophical and ill-defined problems, in which the notion of truth or "real state of things" is relative, as this might lead to confusion.

5.2. Discussion of Hypothesis:

The four hypotheses of the research were strongly supported from the research data analysis as well as the various literature reviews and interviews conducted and presented in this paper. In the following section, results supporting the research hypotheses are going to be collated and discussed in terms of supporting or denying each hypothesis.

The following are the research hypotheses, upon which the paper is based:

H1 <u>Drivers of engagement are not similar across the world.</u>

This is a main outcome of the research, as this has been supported through the specific terms that emerged from the Middle East sample group like "Politics" and "Fair Environment" that specifically came from the group as one of the top three priorities and consistently over three years of research. (Chapter Four: 146, Chart (7)). Those drivers appeared to be specific to the Middle East region employees and did not appear as studied drivers in the studied organisation's global engagement survey.

The hypothesis was also supported when looking at the priorities of the engagement drivers, which were very different from the global surveys as well as the global pharmaceutical companies' norm as defined in the Towers Watson Global Workforce Study (2010). (Chapter Two: 62, Table (3), and Chapter Two: 65, Table (4)). All the surveys mentioned yielded different engagement drivers' priorities, emphasizing the first hypothesis of the research and supporting the suggestion that engagement drivers are likely to differ across different cultures.

Distributing the results gathered from the research survey as well as secondary data analysis leads to the following table:

	Null Hypothesis (H$_0$) is true Drivers are Similar	Alternative Hypothesis (H$_1$) is true Drivers are not Similar
Accept Null Hypothesis		
Reject Null Hypothesis		**Research Data** **Conflicting data of the following surveys:** [Towers Perrin, TUC, NHS, CIPD, Concours Group]

Table (54)

Result distribution for H1 significance.

Data obtained from this research is supported by the analysis of the secondary data obtained from other researches, which all came in favour of different drivers of engagement across the world. The results lie in favour of rejection of the null hypothesis and support to the research hypothesis 1.

H2 Measuring engagement using fixed questions / tool is not accurate across different cultures.

This hypothesis is a logical consequence of supporting the first hypothesis, as since the drivers are proven to be different, then measuring them using the same tools and questions would then not make sense and would result in confusing data to the studied organisation. Referring to the quote by Rivenbark (2010), who has highlighted that "*Employee engagement surveys are only as good as the questions they're built on*" (Rivenbark, 2010: 48), it then comes in support of the second research hypothesis, and relates to the first hypothesis as well, since the drivers have been suggested to be different, then measuring them using the same "Ruler" would make less sense. The need for adapting the surveys according to regional needs is therefore required.

Each of the presented models (Towers Watson, TUC, Gallup, CIPD, NHS, The "Concours" group) had core questions and those are again challenged as the weighting for each of the question aspects could differ from one culture to the other (Chapter Two: 62, Table (3), and Chapter Two: 65, Table (4)). This has been confirmed as well through the research data as well as the experts' interviews which confirmed that in global studies, the larger population would affect the smaller populations by imposing their priorities and aspects' importance over the whole research outcomes (Appendix (D): Industry experts' interview).

	Null Hypothesis (H_0) is true One Global Tool is accurate	Alternative Hypothesis (H_2) is true Regionally Designed Tool
Accept Null Hypothesis		
Reject Null Hypothesis		Drivers are not the same (From H_1 Discussion).

Table (55)

Result distribution for H2 significance.

This hypothesis gets its support from the results of the first hypothesis, and could be considered a logical sequence for it, since if the engagement drivers are different, then using one global tool to measure engagement levels would be less accurate and less reflecting to the regional employees' needs. New drivers were shown to exist in some cultures and priorities (weight) of other drivers were also shown to be different.

H3 <u>Regional operations could well identify their engagement drivers, and this can then help them to fine tune their actions step by step, to match this with the globally required level of engagement.</u>

Linking the first two hypotheses to the third, makes a logical sequence for Rivenbark's (2010) words, who has stated that "*Employee engagement surveys are only as good as the questions they're built on*" (Rivenbark, 2010: 48). It is also supported by the fact that research organisations have started looking into this recently, referring to "Kenexa", and their tool "JRA Key Drivers analysis" (Chapter Two: 75, Figure (7)). The research has presented a new tool that can help organisations measure their engagement drivers in an efficient way that is cultural, organisational and national proof (Chapter four: 233, Figure (33)). The new tool is based on analysing engagement drivers at the micro level first, before designing the questionnaire and is intended to help organisations measure employee engagement objectively and still achieve the global benchmarking that is required for organisations to compare their employee engagement performance and levels across the world.

	Null Hypothesis (H_0) is true Global then regional strategy	Alternative Hypothesis (H_3) is true Regional then global strategy
Accept Null Hypothesis		
Reject Null Hypothesis		Drivers are not the same (From H_1 Discussion). Drivers' analysis methods. (Like Kenexa's JRA tool).

Table (56)

Result distribution for H3 significance.

H4 <u>In a fast changing world, drivers of engagement could be changed by time and different emerging circumstances.</u>

This hypothesis has been supported several times in the research through analysing the engagement drivers of the studied organisation over three years of time (Chapter Three: 145, Chart (6), and Chapter Three: 146, Chart (7)), the global engagement survey in the studied organisation (Appendix C: 280, Dimension 1.13, Appendix C: 283, Dimension 7.6; and Appendix C: 284, Dimension 11) as well as from the literature reviewed and presented in the research (Chapter Two: 101, Table (6)). The research has supported the suggestion that external economic and environmental circumstances affect the employee engagement drivers which have been proven to change from one year to the other, even across the same group.

	Null Hypothesis (H_0) is true Drivers do not change by time	Alternative Hypothesis (H_4) is true Drivers change by time
Accept Null Hypothesis		
Reject Null Hypothesis		Research data. Secondary data (global survey). Literature review.

Table (57)

Result distribution for H4 significance.

5.3. Achievement of Research Objectives:

The research was the first approach to raise awareness about the engagement drivers of the Middle East region and analyse how they could differ from the global drivers in a multinational organisation. The corporate world has been engaged for a long time in "Globalisation" and "Global Strategies" and giving less focus on how applicable could a global strategy be to the local operation context.

This research has clearly demonstrated a gap in the current methods, through analysing a live example of how a global multinational organisation is measuring employee engagement, which could be very similar to other organisations in the same industry or other industries. The research has shown, through support to the entire four hypotheses that the gap does exist in the studied sample group, and it should drive the possibilities that similar gaps could exist in various cultures. The research has challenged the status quo and questioned the current blind application of global engagement tools without checking if they are valid for the studied culture.

A further outcome of the research was also shown by data analysis that there are not only cultural specific engagement drivers, but also organisational specific issues that greatly depend on the context of organisational culture / behaviour at each specific

organisation. This information has been also supported through the informal interviews as well as literature analysis.

Most of the global researches have very limited data on the Middle East cluster of the world, and this research constitutes the first employee engagement drivers focused research on the Middle East sector.

5.4. Contribution of the research to knowledge:

The key findings of this research presented new engagement drivers that have been specific to the studied sample group. This supports further possibilities for un-discovered drivers among other cultures as well.

The findings as well have supported the change of impact of engagement drivers over time, adding a new dimension to previous research work regarding defining and measuring engagement. This time factor challenges fixing one engagement definition as well as measurement tool and taking this as an established fact.

The research has presented a model for defining and measuring engagement. The 4H© model, which helps researchers define engagement in a complex multicultural environment through building the definition over identified pillars. Those pillars have been the only common dimensions agreed upon by various researchers in this field.

The term "employee engagement" is relatively new to the academic world, and only started back in 1993, while business consultancy firms have taken the lead to find tools to measure and enhance engagement; this research is the first approach to question if the developed tools could be consistent over all cultures and across different time spans. The research presents a new tool to the industry, which aims to measure the specific employee engagement drivers and levels at the specific context of every organisation. The tool can measure engagement to the level of each department, and would simplify the data to be easy to understand and act upon for every organisation, regardless of the culture, country, or team it employs.

Employees who are highly engaged at work and committed to their organisational objectives could give their organisations crucial competitive advantages, reflected in higher productivity and lower employee turnover. Therefore, it is not surprising that many organisations of all sizes and types are investing substantially in practices that foster engagement and commitment in their workforces. It is extremely important that organisations ask the right questions, in order to get the proper answers, which would ultimately lead to the correct actions plans, and higher engagement levels for their staff.

As no agreement exists on the meaning of engagement, and as the current various tools to measure engagement depend on different conceptualizations; measuring engagement using a global tool is clearly questioned. Local cultural, industry, environmental and operational barriers could exist even in the same organisation or in different organisations at the same country. This would create several employee segments that would have different concepts of viewing engagement and this will create very strong barriers towards the currently used engagement measures.

If an organisation wants to drive performance through employees' satisfaction, they should focus on what drives performance in the first place. The following figure (35) explains what the research recommends:
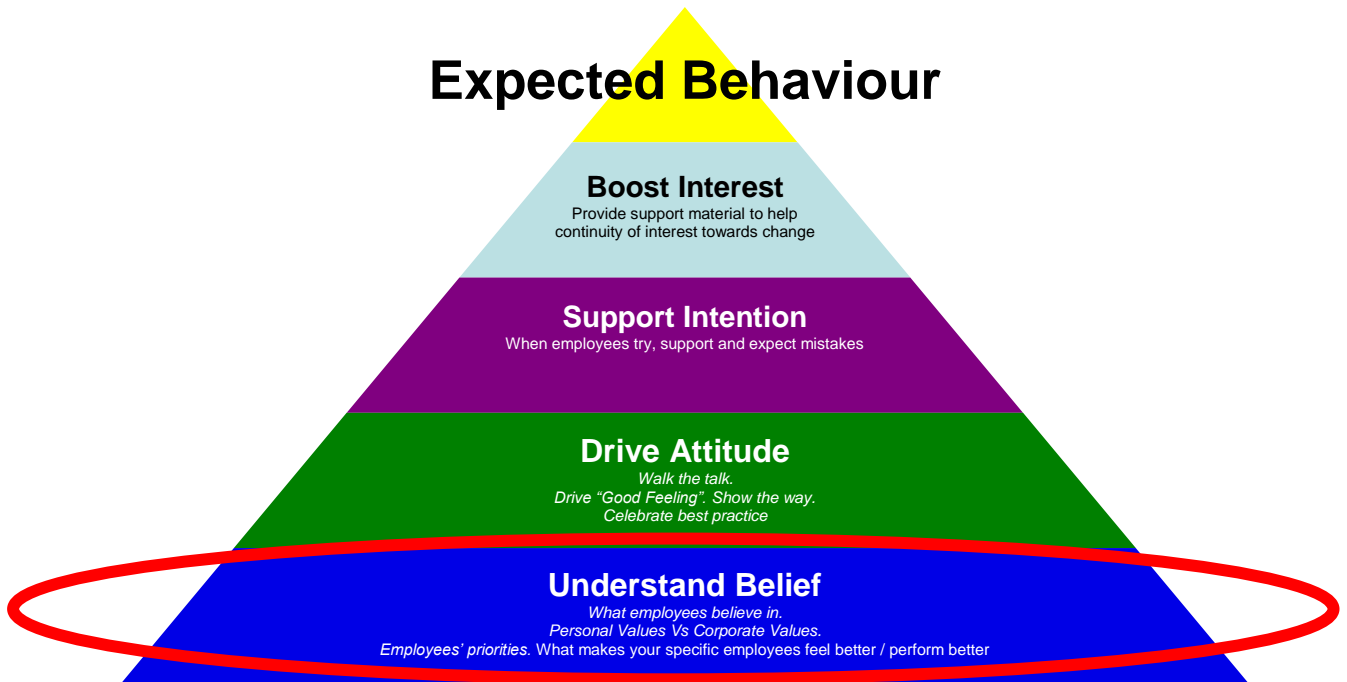
Figure (35)

The way towards driving employee engagement.

From the figure above, this research recommends that for any organisation wishing to enhance and boost its staff engagement, the way starts by understanding what do their employees believe in first, then measure if the organisation is providing employees with what engages them. What currently happens, is that organisations take the best assumptions towards what could make the employees engaged, based on other researches which might have been done in different environments and through studying different labour segments; however, using best assumptions would lead to best assumptions as well. What this research recommends, that it is very evident that employee engagement drives organisational performance and success, so if organisations really believe that engagement is important, then it is advised that they should understand first what makes their own specific employee segment engaged, and then they measure the organisation's deliverables towards those engagement drivers.

The above is actually in line and supported by the modified "Job Demand-Resources" model of work engagement by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) – Figure (36), as their model includes personal resources as predictors of engagement and reciprocal associations between personal and job resources, and engagement.
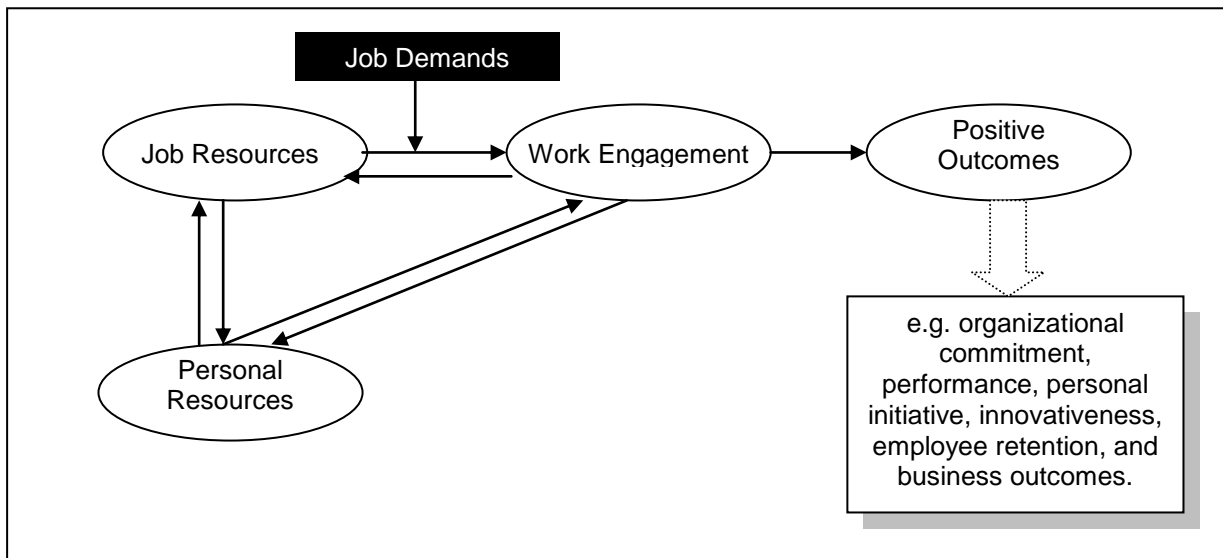
Figure (36)

The modified JD-R model of work engagement

(Based on Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

The model clearly supports this research as it shows the possible gaps in present knowledge and research in view of the predictors of engagement. This model stresses "Personal Resources" as a key driver of engagement since they reflect on the personal initiative to work and exert extra effort. He personal initiatives might differ from one employee to the other and from one working condition to the other and this is exactly one of the hypotheses of this research.

Macleod and Clarke (2009) found that there are differences between attitude, behaviour and outcomes in terms of engagement. An employee might feel pride and loyalty (attitude); be a great advocate of their company to clients, or exert extra effort to finish a piece of work (behaviour). Outcomes may include lower accident rates, higher productivity, fewer conflicts, more innovation, lower numbers leaving and reduced sickness rates. Macleod and Clarke (2009) supported the assumption that

all three – attitudes, behaviours and outcomes – are part of the engagement story. There is a virtuous circle when the pre-conditions of engagement are met when these three aspects of engagement trigger and reinforce one another.

There are many good supportive policies in place for staff but there is a danger that these are perceived as being only on paper. Staff will want to see any organisation follow through on the practical implementation of these initiatives. For an organisation to succeed, it is suggested that they communicate the value of employee engagement through their company mission statement, emphasize continuously the importance of having engaged employees for organisational success, continue to follow up and ensure that all units execute their engagement action plans, monitor progress on engagement-improvement efforts, and adjust their strategies and plans as needed. Equally important, they should make sure to recognize and celebrate progress and results.

A key challenge remains for global companies in figuring out how to best motivate and satisfy a workforce that is not only diverse in terms of geographic location and cultural values, but, as a result, also diverse in what they need and want from their jobs.

This research has added to the body of knowledge a new addition that focuses on the Middle East context and deals with it deeply. It is the first academic-focused research on what drives engagement in this specific culture, in light of the highly diverse workforce present in this region.

5.5. Contribution of the research to professional practice:

With the economic crisis across the world changing the dynamics of the business status quo, the research questions if HR professionals are changing the way they are looking at their Human Capital in terms of engagement practices. The research findings challenge if HR professionals are just taking the easy and standardized solution of using global tools, looking for benchmarks, or should they be better

advised to look into objective analysis that makes sense to their own employee groups. Is there a way to achieve both?

The research gave some supporting evidence to HR professionals on why running an 'engagement driver analysis' could be the first step in understanding employee engagement in the context of their own organisation and usually gives the leadership team important information regarding what engages their employees. The model presented in this research. The 4H© model, supports professional HR heads to get this done based on defined dimensions.

Based on getting the definition right, then designing the measurement tool would be sensible as well as reliable data could be obtained from results analysis. This has been tested in different organisations with positive responses from business leaders as demonstrated later in this chapter.

Recommendations for the studied organisation:

1. From the data analysis shown in the table below, it is evident that fairness is a clear issue and identified as a barrier to engagement, and a great deal of this perception was referring to proper treatment, appraisal, selection and promotion of staff. Many of those aspects relate to leadership and this would imply careful selection and continuous development for front line managers as well as organisational leaders to make sure their decisions are as objective and sounding to staff as possible, which is crucial. The research advises as well to assess the current leaders based on the agreed corporate values and competencies and removing members who are significantly far from the value of integrity. Team members' selection is crucial for building up the culture and leadership selection send a strong message to team members in organisation, to what is considered accepted in the culture, and what is encouraged and rewarded.

Segment	Need A	Need B	Need C
All	Fair Treatment	Being well paid	Smooth and easy communication

Snapshot of Table (31)

Needs for intervention aiming to increase the engagement levels in the Middle and Near East regions.

2. First line managers are crucial for enhancing engagement, as they daily interact with the majority of the employees in the organisation. Personal biases and favouritism should be seriously investigated, whether it is a true case or a gap in communication and clear strict decisions should be taken with this regards. Same as leadership assessment above, the rule should apply to the front line managers as this is the strongest message an organisation can send to its employees, showing its commitment towards creating the best environment for its employees, and its strong will to drive the positive attitude that can drive the organisation forward.

3. "True open doors policy" enabling employees to speak up freely will only be possible if the leaders / managers establish a culture of trust amongst the employees. It is recommended that the organisation starts first by having a secure complaints / compliance line, enabling employees to address their concerns with a guarantee of confidentiality. The crucial part is that after receiving a complaint something happens! This does not imply that the complaint is being taken for granted and an action is taken accordingly, but at least an investigation in the complaint should start and a clear communicated grievance / disciplinary procedure should be followed. Employees would not buy into the process immediately but building up trust takes time, and team members will build the perception from seeing an action after the other being taken in the right direction.

4. To ensure integrity is practiced among employees, an "integrity guard" is recommended, by having some values / competencies champions act like the referees and report how well the organisation is following the required behaviours to the managing director or the senior management board. It is

advised that those referees are selected internally from normal employees within the organisation and not from management positions, so they can truly sense what the majority of employees are feeling, and can then report more accurately how employees feel, which could be an excellent early bird alarm for the organisation, helping it detect any problems well before it arises, as well as recognizes the right behaviours and ensures celebrating best practice. Those members must have direct access to senior management team including the managing director, as they will have to feel secure with limited barriers existing between them and the top management team.

The Engagement TUNES © in live practice

The tool has been applied in Merck Serono Middle East operation and has been the core tool to develop employee engagement over three years. The results of the action plans derived from the tool were:

1. Merck Serono Middle East operation winning the "Best Pharma" award in the category of "Working Environment" 2010. This is the most prestigious corporate award designed to recognize top performers in various fields.
2. Merck Serono Middle East operation winning the top place among pharmaceutical companies in the "Great Places To Work ®" survey for companies operating from the UAE, 2011. Merck Serono was positioned as the fifth among all industries and the top among health care organisations, which is a very high ranking.

During the process of gaining this very prestigious award, the Engagement TUNES ©
model has been proving business sense to organisational leaders, with key
outcomes and results matching the TRUST © model that the "Great Place To Work"
institute is using. For example, the Engagement TUNES © has come up with
"Politics" as the biggest concern for employees and the hurdle that needs working on,
and the TRUST © model came up with "Impartiality" in the same context. Employees
still felt that there is a sort of favouritism from some managers and this affects the
promotion decisions. The same has been brought up by the Engagement TUNES ©
model as a key driver for engagement for the same group of employees.

To understand more from the practical ground level, the following interview was run
with the regional vice president for the intercontinental countries at Merck Serono,
Mr. Karim Smaira, who has been using this model and supporting the action plans
derived from it.

"Our environment, where learning and experience on the job are encouraged, leads
to innovation in developing new health solutions for our customers. Brand recognition
and loyalty are developed and ensure the sustainability of our organisational
success." Says Karim. "Merck Serono Middle East was the winner of the 2010 Merck
Best Pharma Award for working environment after the development of a strong
internal learning and development program, which we named "EMPower". This is an
innovative home-grown training program that includes a wide variety of topics, aiming
to help our employees develop healthy and long term partnership with our
customers".

"When it comes to employee engagement, we focus on engagement in the context of
our organisation, rather than employee satisfaction, which is covered by many
consultancy surveys. Achieving objectives for us is a given, surpassing those
objectives is what our employees get out of bed for." Says Karim. "The most
important factor in driving employee engagement is actually "understanding our own
employees", and what makes them go this extra mile for the organisation and for
their own success. What drives them as individuals? And what drives them as a
group is something extremely important for leaders to understand. Leaders, who are

copying best practices blindly, without putting into consideration the cultural backgrounds of their own employee mixes, are setting themselves as well as their organisations to big uncalculated risks."

The tool has also been used at one of the "Kodak" operations in the region (Finance Division) and the following recommendation has been written by the team head:

"I'm leading three teams from different cultural and ethnical back grounds. With limited face to face time, I face significant challenges to motivate and engage team members, or even to identify the factors that drive engagement and motivation.

Tamer's engagement tool is an online application in the form of 2 short questionnaires which are easy to administrate and takes less than 10 minutes for participants to complete. The results; however, are detailed and cross reference multiple factors that drive engagement and motivation based on the answers provided by participants. These factors are conveniently listed in a hierarchy to enable managers to identify the factors that are most likely to result in an engaging work environment.

Tamer's application is very informative and provided me with easy to implement, practical focal points to motivate and retain employees. It reduced uncertainty and the associated time and cost, and I would highly recommend it as a management tool"

Christiaan Nel, Controller Lead - International Cluster, Eastman Kodak
July 10, 2011

The above testimonies from two big organisations in the region serve as a support to the fourth research indicator (Outcome Indicator) as they support the practical benefits of the research and testify its applicability in providing an easy to understand, professionally sensible and logical outcome to the work place in multinational organisations.

5.6. Future research areas:

This research brought up further interesting areas for future research such as:

a. The role of the organisational context in affecting engagement drivers. Is there a relationship between the organisational culture type as defined by Goffee and Jones (1996) (Fragmented, Communal, Networked, or Mercenary) and engagement drivers?

b. When organisations decide on engagement actions, does this automatically dis-engage other employees (of probably minority cultures)? Or is this stereotyping not existing in engagement?

c. Is time a separate dimension that affects engagement? Or is it just an outcome of the changes in the external and maybe internal conditions? In other words; if all external conditions are constant, will engagement drivers still change by time?

d. Would testing Engagement Tunes © in a larger scope, in a higher diverse culture produce data that could provide global organisations a good benchmarking tool in practice?

e. Does the use of media play a part in setting engagement drivers' expectations by publicizing activities that other organisations are doing in other areas?

f. Could expatriate hires be a separate dimension that affects staff engagement? Working in another country than your home country, does it have an effect on engagement drivers?

An additional possible area for future research is a nation-wide study for a country in the Middle East, similar to the UK study done by David MacLeod.

6.   Appendices:

APPENDIX (A)
Copy of the local survey distributed to the Middle and Near East Teams.

All participants of this questionnaire will remain anonymous at all stages, and results shall be presented completely anonymous. No attempts or further discussions shall be taken to reveal the identity of any of the participants.

Question 1:

Which region describes your area of work?

☐Middle East   ☐Near East   ☐I work at the regional HQ

Question 2:

Which area describes your country of work best?

☐GCC countries   ☐KSA   ☐Iran   ☐Lebanon   ☐Others

Question 3:

Please let us know, what you value most at work, by ranking the following parameters according to (1) you value most, to (16-19) you value least. (Numbers should not be repeated).

☐ Flexible working hours   ☐ 10% more in my compensation

☐ Work place that is enjoyable   ☐ Work that enables my growth

☐ Retirement plans   ☐ Personally stimulating work

☐ Flexible working place (no fixed offices / virtual ..)   ☐ Being well paid (worthwhile work)

☐ Benefits (car allowances / insurance …)   ☐ Extra vacations

☐ Working for the "Right Boss".   ☐ My voice is heard in the org.

☐ Working with people coming from a similar culture   ☐ Fair treatment (No politics).

☐ Smooth and easy communication.

☐ Others: (1) ………………………………………………………………………………..

☐ Others: (2) ………………………………………………………………………………..

☐ Others: (3) ………………………………………………………………………………..

Question 4:

If you were to select out of the previous list, the greatest weak points that need development at our regional operation, the ones that if developed, will motivate you to go the extra mile, what would this be? (You can mention up to 3, in ranking order of importance. (1) Most Important).

(1) ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

(2) ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

(3) ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Thank You for your time

APPENDIX (B)
Copy of the Informal interview / Focus groups' discussion framework.

All participants of this interview will remain anonymous at all stages, and results shall be presented completely anonymous. No attempts or further discussions shall be taken to reveal the identity of any of the participants.

Please help us understand more about the drivers of engagement in your organisation by answering the following questions.

Question 1: For the Whole Region:

You have informed us that the major drivers of engagement in the region are: (a) Work that enables my growth, (b) Working for the "Right Boss", (c) Being well paid, (d) Fair treatment.

Please help us define each aspect through mentioning 3 main behaviours that display those aspects:

1.   "Work that enables my growth". This means to me:

   1.a. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   1.b. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   1.c. ………………………………………………………………………………………………

2.   "Working for the right boss". The right boss for me is defined as someone who:

   2.a. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   2.b. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   2.c. ………………………………………………………………………………………………

3.   "Fair Treatment". This means to me:

   3.a. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   3.b. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   3.c. ………………………………………………………………………………………………

Question 2: Sub Regions. *Please answer this question only if you work at the HQ in Dubai*
You mentioned "Work Place that is enjoyable" as one of the key drivers of engagement for employees in the HQ, please elaborate what can this mean to you:

   a. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   b. ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   c. ………………………………………………………………………………………………

Question 3: Your needs
You told us that we need to take actions with regards to some matters. Please explain why you said so by mentioning the biggest incidence that made you mention:

   a. "Fair Treatment". The biggest event that I think displayed "Unfair" treatment was
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   b. "Smooth and Easy Communication". The biggest event that I think displayed unsmooth communication was
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank You for your time

APPENDIX (C)
Engagement dimensions as set by the research organisation for the studied sample group (Secondary Data).

1. Dimension 1: Leadership:

   1.1. We trust senior management because they do as they say.

   1.2. Managers in my organization are held accountable for their actions.

   1.3. My organization does an excellent job of keeping employees informed about matters affecting us.

   1.4. I have confidence in the decisions made by senior management.

   1.5. As a result of this survey, I think management will act on problems identified.

   1.6. I am sufficiently informed about: my organization's plans.

   1.7. I am sufficiently informed about: my organization's performance.

   1.8. Regarding my organization's core values, I believe: Management decisions are consistent with the values.

   1.9. In your judgment what kind of job is senior management doing in: Establishing priorities?

   1.10. In your judgment what kind of job is senior management doing in: Making decisions promptly?

   1.11. In your judgment what kind of job is senior management doing in: Managing change?

   1.12. In your judgment what kind of job is senior management doing in: Planning for the future?

   1.13. There has been effective follow-up to the results of last year's engagement survey. (New item added in the 2010 survey).

2. Dimension 2: Strategy and objectives:

   2.1. I understand how the objectives of my department fit into the overall goals of my organization.

   2.2. I believe my organization's Executive Board has a well-formulated business strategy.

2.3. I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: My division or central function.

2.4. I have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of: my organization as a whole.

3. <u>Dimension 3: Values and ethics:</u>

   3.1. In my experience, all employees are held to the same standards of ethical behaviour.

   3.2. We are encouraged to act respectfully towards our colleagues.

   3.3. My organization operates with integrity in its: Internal dealings with employees.

   3.4. My organization operates with integrity in its: External dealings with customers.

   3.5. My organization is highly regarded by: Its employees.

   3.6. Regarding my organization's core values, I believe: The values are put into practice and applied in our daily work.

   3.7. My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Ethnic differences.

   3.8. My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Differences in cultural background or lifestyles.

   3.9. My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Gender differences.

4. <u>Dimension 4: Customer focus:</u>

   4.1. In my opinion, my organization is truly customer-oriented.

   4.2. My department gets feedback on how satisfied our internal/external customers are with the work we perform.

   4.3. My department constantly looks for better ways to serve its internal/external customers.

   4.4. My organization is highly regarded by: Its customers.

   4.5. To what extent do the following help us meet the needs of our internal/external customers: Our organizational structure?

4.6. To what extent do the following help us meet the needs of our internal/external customers: Our internal processes?

5. <u>Dimension 5: Innovation and quality:</u>

5.1. The quality of work done in my department is excellent.

5.2. People in my department are encouraged to come up with innovative solutions to work-related problems.

5.3. The people I work with take responsibility for the quality of their work.

5.4. Management is generally respected by employees.

5.5. My organization has established a climate where people can challenge traditional ways of doing things.

5.6. My organization has established a climate where innovative ideas can fail without penalty to the originating person or group.

5.7. In your judgment, how does the organization compare with its competitors on: Quality of products?

5.8. In your judgment, how does the organization compare with its competitors on: Quality of customer service?

5.9. In your judgment, how does the organization compare with its competitors on: Development of new products and services?

6. <u>Dimension 6: Supervision:</u>

6.1. My supervisor does a good job of building teamwork.

6.2. My supervisor seldom gives me recognition for work done well.

6.3. My supervisor is usually responsive to suggestions for change from employees.

6.4. My supervisor develops people's skills.

6.5. My supervisor encourages us to see change as an opportunity, not a threat.

6.6. My supervisor: Communicates effectively.

6.7. My supervisor: Manages people well.

7. <u>Dimension 7: Operating efficiency:</u>

   7.1. The information I need to do my job is readily available.

   7.2. Too many approvals are required for routine decisions in my organization.

   7.3. I have a very clear idea of: My own job responsibilities.

   7.4. I have a very clear idea of: The job responsibilities of the people I work with.

   7.5. There is usually sufficient staff in my department to handle the workload.

   7.6. I find it very difficult to balance my work and my personal responsibilities. (This item has been used in the 2009 survey but removed from the 2010 survey).

8. <u>Dimension 8: Working relationships:</u>

   8.1. The people I work with are generally open to change.

   8.2. There is good cooperation between my department and other departments.

   8.3. Most of the time it is safe to speak up.

   8.4. There is effective sharing of information across functions or departments.

   8.5. The people I work with are willing to help each other, even if it means doing something outside their usual activities.

   8.6. My decision-making authority is in line with my level of responsibility.

   8.7. Differing opinions are openly discussed in reaching decisions in my department.

9. <u>Dimension 9: Performance and development:</u>

   9.1. I think my organization offers long-term opportunities for me.

   9.2. I feel personally accountable for the work that I do.

   9.3. There are sufficient opportunities for me to receive: Training to improve my skills in my current job.

9.4. There are sufficient opportunities for me to receive: Training to increase my eligibility for a better job.

9.5. Regarding my performance: I understand how my performance on the job is evaluated.

9.6. Regarding my performance: I think my performance is evaluated fairly.

9.7. In my opinion, my organization does a good job of: Recruiting the right people for its future needs.

9.8. In my opinion, my organization does a good job of: Retaining its most talented people.

9.9. In my opinion, my organization does a good job of: Promoting the most competent people.

10. Dimension 10: Rewards and benefits:

10.1. From what I hear, our pay is as good as or better than the pay in other companies.

10.2. From what I hear, our benefits are as good as or better than the benefits in other companies.

10.3. My organization makes adequate use of recognition and rewards other than money to encourage good performance.

10.4. Regarding pay, how good a job do you feel the organization is doing in matching pay to performance?

11. Dimension 11: Workload and work-life balance: (This whole category has been added in 2010 and has not been used in previous engagement surveys at the same organization).

11.1. I find it very difficult to balance my work and my personal responsibilities.

11.2. My work schedule allows sufficient flexibility to meet my personal/family needs.

11.3. Priorities or work objectives are changed so frequently I have trouble getting my work done.

12. <u>Dimension 12: Engagement:</u>

   12.1.   My organization energizes me to go the extra mile.

   12.2.   I would recommend my organization as a good place to work.

   12.3.   I am willing to work beyond what is required in my job in order to help my organization succeed.

   12.4.   I fully support the values for which my organization stands.

   12.5.   I believe strongly in the goals and objectives of my organization.

   12.6.   It would take a lot to make me look for another employer.

   12.7.   I am proud to be a part of my organization.

   12.8.   At the present time, are you seriously considering leaving the organization?

13. <u>Dimension 13: Corporate values: "Courage":</u>

   13.1.   People in my department are encouraged to come up with innovative solutions to work-related problems.

   13.2.   The people I work with are generally open to change.

   13.3.   My supervisor is usually responsive to suggestions for change from employees.

   13.4.   Most of the time it is safe to speak up.

   13.5.   My organization has established a climate where people can challenge traditional ways of doing things.

   13.6.   My supervisor encourages us to see change as an opportunity, not a threat.

   13.7.   My organization has established a climate where innovative ideas can fail without penalty to the originating person or group.

14. <u>Dimension 14: Corporate values: "Achievement":</u>

   14.1.   The quality of work done in my department is excellent.

   14.2.   In my opinion, my organization is truly customer-oriented.

   14.3.   My supervisor seldom gives me recognition for work done well.

   14.4.   My organization makes adequate use of recognition and rewards other than money to encourage good performance.

   14.5.   My organization is highly regarded by: Its employees.

14.6. My organization is highly regarded by: Its customers.

14.7. In my opinion, my organization does a good job of: Recruiting the right people for its future needs.

14.8. In my opinion, my organization does a good job of: Retaining its most talented people.

14.9. In my opinion, my organization does a good job of: Promoting the most competent people.

14.10. In your judgment, how does the organization compare with its competitors on: Quality of products?

14.11. In your judgment, how does the organization compare with its competitors on: Quality of customer service?

14.12. In your judgment, how does the organization compare with its competitors on: Development of new products and services?

14.13. Regarding pay, how good a job do you feel the organization is doing in matching pay to performance?

15. Dimension 15: Corporate values: "Responsibility":

15.1. The people I work with take responsibility for the quality of their work.

15.2. Managers in my organization are held accountable for their actions.

15.3. My decision-making authority is in line with my level of responsibility.

15.4. I feel personally accountable for the work that I do.

16. Dimension 16: Corporate values: "Respect":

16.1. Management is generally respected by employees.

16.2. We are encouraged to act respectfully towards our colleagues.

16.3. Differing opinions are openly discussed in reaching decisions in my department.

16.4. My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Ethnic differences.

16.5. My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Differences in cultural background or lifestyles.

16.6. My organization provides a working environment that is accepting of: Gender differences.

17. Dimension 17: Corporate values: "Integrity":

17.1. In my experience, all employees are held to the same standards of ethical behavior.

17.2. We trust senior management because they do as they say.

17.3. We are encouraged to act respectfully towards our colleagues.

17.4. My organization operates with integrity in its: Internal dealings with employees.

17.5. My organization operates with integrity in its: External dealings with customers.

17.6. Regarding my organization's core values, I believe: The values are put into practice and applied in our daily work.

17.7. Regarding my organization's core values, I believe: Management decisions are consistent with the values.

18. Dimension 18: Corporate values: "Transparency":

18.1. The information I need to do my job is readily available.

18.2. There is effective sharing of information across functions or departments.

18.3. My organization does an excellent job of keeping employees informed about matters affecting us.

18.4. I have a very clear idea of: My own job responsibilities.

18.5. I have a very clear idea of: The job responsibilities of the people I work with.

18.6. I am sufficiently informed about: my organization's plans.

18.7. I am sufficiently informed about: my organization's performance.

APPENDIX (D)
Informal interview minutes with industry experts.

These interviews aimed to identify what key professional experts in this field think about the hypotheses of the research, based on their vast experience in the field of consultancy and practical research.

The framework of the interviews was around three main key points:

1. Is there a common globally agreed definition for "Employee Engagement"?
2. Why do you think there are differences in defining the term, despite the huge number of business researches in this field as well as global approaches from multinational companies to measure and enhance employee engagement?
3. Do you think it is sensible for organisations to ask the same questions across the world to measure the level of employee engagement?

A. Interviewees' profiles:

David Macleod: (Chief Editor and co-author of the "Macleod Report to the UK government", named "Engaging for Success"): David has a portfolio of responsibilities which include being a non-executive director of the department for international development and of the ministry of justice. He is a visiting professor of the Cass Business School and a fellow of the Ashridge Business School and Sunningdale Institute. He is also an associate of the Institute for Government. Earlier in his career, he was Head of Marketing for the Dulux brand before going on to be Managing Director of a European business and then CEO of Uniqema, a global ICI business. He also spent a year and a half working in the Cabinet office. He has co-authored a book called "The Extra Mile: on the theme of how to engage your people to win" and is co-author of the MacLeod Report to the UK Government, called "Engaging for Success".

Dr. Stephen Young: Director, Organisational Surveys and Insights at Towers Watson: Towers Watson is a leading global professional services company that

helps organisations improve performance through effective people, risk and financial management. With 14,000 associates around the world, they offer solutions in the areas of employee benefits, talent management, rewards, and risk and capital management.

Dr. Tarek Rabbah: (Company President, AstraZeneca, Arabian Gulf Region): Dr. Tarek Rabbah is currently the president of the Arabian Gulf Countries at Astra Zeneca, one of the very successful pharmaceutical organisations in the world and having a strong presence in the Arabian Gulf region. He has been managing people across Latin America, Asia Pacific; and the Middle East, hence; he has the experience of managing cross cultural teams in the same industry where this research has been conducted and in the same region as well, which makes his experience of high value to the context of this research.

Mr. Karim Smaira: (Regional Vice President, Merck Serono, Intercontinental Countries). (Intercontinental countries are including Africa, Middle East, Russian Federation and Commonwealth Independent States – CIS): Karim has been managing the Balkan countries at Merck Serono, and has been in business management positions, based in Geneva for nine years, before he has moved to the Middle East to be the managing director for the Near East Region (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine), then to the Middle and Near East, after which he was promoted to head the region of the Intercontinental Countries as a vice president, based in Dubai. He has a wide experience in managing a diverse workforce and has a Middle East origin, which adds value to the research as the focus is the Middle East and how it differs from the global picture.

Mr. Joe Henein: (President & Chief Executive Officer at NewBridge Pharmaceuticals): Joe is one of the most experienced leaders in the pharmaceutical industry in the region, who has been, since 1993 managing people and businesses in the Middle East, Central Europe; and North Africa. He has led operations in European as well as American organisations and has a vast experience in different work cultures and operations.

B. Interview Area one: Is there a common globally agreed definition for "Employee Engagement"?

All interviewees agreed on the thought that there is not one single global definition. David MacLeod highlighted that when they were doing their report, they stopped counting at fifty six different definitions, and he believes that if an organisation writes a definition that really resonates and works for them, that's the best definition, because they would own it, and they will easily relate to it. Dr. Stephen Young supported this view and emphasized that actually there should not be one single definition for engagement across the globe. From the practitioners' point of view, Dr. Tarek Rabbah stressed that the concept is still quite new, and many managers would mix this with staff motivation, while the two topics are different. So how do they approach engagement?

David MacLeod believes in a simple approach, which is getting "more" out of the capability and potential in every one of an organisation's employees, so that they deliver whatever the organisation tries to deliver. As simple as it seems, the equation involves understanding what culture the organisation lives in and in what market it is operating. Dr. Stephen Young breaks the term into three main parts; the rational part, the emotional part, and the behavioural part, which is similar to what several other consultancy organisations are also using but in different terminologies. It is still a challenge though to understand how each of these three factors affect each other, and if external environment (National culture and economic status) affect these three factors. Joe Henein related this difference to cultural differences between leaders and organisations, mainly in the amount of focus on IQ (Intelligence quotient) and EI (Emotional Intelligence).

Joe Henein structured his approach to five key basic and fundamental findings in motivating people and teams, which he found universal in his experience and were his mainstays across borders and throughout time;

a. Inspiration: The word "motivation" is becoming outdated in Joe's opinion, as he believes it is all about inspiration these days.

Teams needs to get aspired by their leaders and they need to see role models to assimilate to, so they work hard and excel to reach to that aspiration, they also need to see themselves on that growth curve or business upswing hence aspired by their leaders and their challenge to them.

b. <u>Role Model</u>: Teams to see the talk and the walk, if you ask the team to work hard, you the leader should be the first one to work harder, to come earlier, and leave later and be as engaged as all of them – teams who see their leaders provide the first and real example, very hard to be different.

c. <u>Transparency and Candour</u> – People need to trust their leaders and this is a big motivator, and this will not be achieved until leaders are transparent and candour about them, their work, their potential to grow, their development, ..etc.

d. <u>Empowerment</u>: sometimes taken lightly, or a misused word, but empowerment does not mean shifting all the work from you in his opinion, but empowerment is the art of letting go without disengaging and holding accountability with the power of driving businesses through your key talents.

e. <u>Challenge and Stretched Goals</u>: a main driver of engagement as well, never to underestimate the motivating power when people are challenged, it provides the motives to work hard and excel since in an environment of inspiration and role modelling, teams would strive to prove to their role model their value in the organisation.

C. Interview Area two: Why do you think there are differences in defining the term, despite the huge number of business researches in this field as well as global approaches from multinational companies to measure and enhance employee engagement?

David MacLeod broke this into four main reasons; the environmental contexts, the individual context, the national context, and the organisational context. He believes that those aspects would affect how employees would feel, thus affecting their

morale and expectations. Dr. Stephen Young believed they would only fall into two main dimensions; the cultural and organisational dimensions. He referred to the Global Workforce survey, where it was shown that the drivers of engagement were different country by country. Still, he believes that generic drivers of engagement do exist (giving an example of Leadership, empowerment, and organisational branding), and then each company is different from each other company according to the context of the organisation and where they operate. Still, the relationship and relative weight between those drivers were agreed to be very different from one organisation to the other.

Dr. Rabbah highlighted that from his experience, working cultures were very different and this difference mainly arises from differences in expectations of employees across different cultures. Comparing work cultures in Latin America and the Middle East, for example, he has seen in the Middle East more of a sense of camaraderie, a family sense atmosphere where people celebrate each other's successes and care for their families, with a focus, at the same time, on work and social status. When comparing employees from Europe to the Middle-East, Dr. Rabbah believes that people in the Middle East pay more attention to job titles and status and maybe in the Gulf countries career progression is in high demand as people are going there on a transitory basis most of the time and peer pressure is high, reflecting the status in the Arabian Gulf Countries, where most employees are actually expatriates, and come from various parts of the world for a temporary period, while in more developed markets the focus is more on stability, work-life balance and policies that reinforce this, such as flexi-time, job sharing, and sabbatical leave. He also stressed the role of cultural differences in focusing on the way employees would like to be rewarded, giving an example from his experience on U.S.A., U.K, Europe, where employees would focus on more individualistic incentives, benefits and rewards, while in the Middle East and Latin America, he has seem more focus on the collectivist benefits (Group trips / Incentives / Family health benefits).

Karim Smaira saw the reason for conflict in engagement surveys is the source from where they have originated, highlighting that concepts would either come from an academic perspective / source, or from a business consultancy perspective / source.

The source, in his views, makes the big difference afterwards, as usually the consultancy firms are quicker to release results and assumptions, since they do not have to go through a wide process of researches before they develop their own model / tool to define and measure a term such as employee engagement, while academic researches take time to prepare; time to run, time to discuss, time to validate and then time to publish, which gives them credibility, but after the term has been already defined and identified by others. He has also stressed that consultancy firms have a stronger communication tools, and their presence among the business community is strong, when compared to the academic side, he has rarely seen a university or a business school participating or involved in business forums and trying to educate the business community to what is happening in the academic field that could reflect on their businesses. Karim believes that academic institutes are the ones who have been distant from the business and not the opposite, and this might be the reason why many business people think that the academic work is more theoretical rather than practical and there is a missing link between how theory could turn into a benefit in practice. This link is seen by Karim to be offered by consultancy firms who are very good to communicate the benefit of using a certain tool in the field of practice.

Joe Henein's experience took him to the USA, Europe and MENA and worked with many nationalities and led different teams of different seniorities, and from his perspective, he does not believe that there are different motivating factors depending on the geographies, instead, he thinks that there are different cultural aspects leaders need to be aware of regardless of the location, as the world is more of an open place now. So it is more of a cultural background than a geographical location, from Joe's point of view. He gives an example of this from his work experience, as he believes that the further one goes east in the globe, the more emphasis EQ – emotional intelligence plays in managing teams, which is critical in building the credibility the leader needs to be successful in "marching the troops – WILLINGLY – behind him". In western cultures, he thinks it is more about exhibiting intelligence, knowledge, assertiveness and ability to communicate and articulate. While he believes that leaders still need to address some of these issues as well in Eastern Cultures, but the personal attention and care to the team prevails in eastern cultures.

C. Interview Area three: Do you think it is sensible for organisations to ask the same questions across the world to measure the level of employee engagement?

David MacLeod believes that typically most organisations have a core set of questions that are used around the world, and then allow tailoring to do with whatever the local context is, be it a national context or be it a context to do with the different market system. Dr. Tarek Rabbah agrees with him and stresses the need to consider an additional factor that the world is changing when it comes to working environments, and workforces are becoming more diverse now than ever – background, race, gender as well as age groups: "Gen Y and Gen X". So the effect of time on definitions of work engagement as well as the effect of the unique mix of generations over the understanding of the term as well as the expectations from the employee groups will be something that leaders would need to look at and consider when they approach engagement in their workplace.

Dr. Young pointed out an important statistical aspect, that would always come up in surveys of large groups, where parameters marked as important in minor populations will be masked in the larger population's mix of needs, and will be less likely seen in the overall workplace engagement drivers / needs. So how do we measure engagement then if the drivers are different? How do we give weighting to specific parameters, in order to generate a comparative score?

Dr. Young mentioned that when they ask questions, they would weigh the importance based on an average score across the whole company, so for example if they have a big U.S. population, and a small German population, then the U.S. population will have a heavier weight and will affect the average score. This is, of course, not ideal, and breaking the scores to departmental level analysis would give more relevant responses to the work group.

Mr. Smaira sees this point as crucial and stresses it from a practitioner's point of view. He believes that defining employee engagement is very important; however,

measuring it is very tricky and could lead an organisation to take a decision from one side without seeing all angles. In other words, this could lead to impractical decisions that could maybe have a negative effect as well as being ineffective. It would be very dangerous if employees lose trust in the leadership team and think that they do not have a clue what they feel or need, and then this would add a new dimension of mistrust to the senior leadership team which could be devastating to the engagement levels and to the whole organisation's performance.

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