Employees' Engagement and Job Commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

A Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

By

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Abstract

When employees are properly engaged, they are more committed, and their performance increases, thereby improving organisational performance. In the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS), Maldives, we have been experiencing an increasing rate of staff turnover, especially in the lower levels, absenteeism and frequent sick leaves. Many employees take about two or three sick-leaves in a month while some staff who get late for work almost every day. I have traced the negative influences of the above to inadequate employees' engagement and weak job commitment to our organisation. Consequently, the primary purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between skills training programmes developed by our organisation and employees' engagement, in an attempt to encourage employees to be more engaged in their work. It also assessed the link between employees' engagement and job commitment, as well as the mediating influence of employees' job satisfaction on employees' engagement and job commitment in the MYS.

The study adopted a mixed-method of research, through the quantitative and the qualitative analysis. I began the study with the uncovering of eight engagement themes from the literature. After that, I conducted a survey involving the total population of the organisation, which was only 101 in the organisation, as the participants. The data collected were analysed using SPSS software, via factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. Then I tested the various hypotheses to uncover the crucial employees' engagement variables from the literature. The effectiveness of skills training programme was analysed using the quantitative and the qualitative analysis via semi-structured interviews. The nine participants for the interview were selected based on purposive sampling from a list of employees who received skills training over the past two years. The interview script was coded and analysed via the thematic analysis. Additionally, I discussed the study with the EXCO members (senior employees responsible for taking strategic decisions in our organisation).

The exploratory factor analysis results contrived only six (6) "factors" out of the eight (8) engagement variables. Consequently, findings from a three-step regression procedure, thematic

analysis and the discussions unanimously identified four (4) significant variables, namely; job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, training and development opportunities, and reward and recognition as capable of contributing to improved employees' engagement of the MYS. Surprisingly, employees' job satisfaction had no relationship and mediating influence between employees' engagement and job commitment. This surprising finding is seen as Potential Avenue for another research in my journey as a scholar-practitioner.

Therefore, I concluded that the skills training programme helped in enhancing employees' engagement level and that there is a relationship between skills training and employees' engagement, and that employees' engagement and job commitment are linked. Consequently, to enhance employees' engagement in MYS it needs to focus on improving the skills training programme that is ongoing and conduct skills training continuously, as well as, improving monitoring and supervision, reward and recognition and performance management. Additionally, based on suggestions from EXCO members, the study recommended; to develop a training policy stating various conditions for paid leave for studies and release for studies during office hours. And to development of a new policy on reward and recognition as well as practice existing rules and regulations on matters related to office mandate and improve supervision and monitoring of employees. Although somewhat premature, the implemented recommendations have started yielding positive results. This study, therefore, contributes to practice and literature, via the validation of our conceptual model of employees' engagement, job commitment and satisfaction. Additionally, other practitioners or researchers could use the study as a guide for conducting a research study in the public sector organisations of the small island nations, similar to the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS), Maldives.

Declaration

As the researcher of this study, I (Ms Aminath Ummu Kulsoom) confirm all the work included in this thesis titled "The Relationship Between Employees' Engagement and Skills Trainings in Ministry of Youth and Sports of Maldives" was only carried out by me. I did not seek assistance from anyone or sources except what was permitted by the relevant authorities; the supervisor, university and Ministry. Furthermore, I have fully justified all the sections of this document where the work of others I included, or quotations that I used or an argument referenced. And I have given the full acknowledgement to the authors to provide that those arguments, ideas, theories and concepts I took on as justification for this thesis.

NAME   SIGNATURE & DATE

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19th July 2020.

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List of Abbreviations

MYS   Ministry of Youth and Sports

SDT   Self-Determination Theory

JD-R   Job Demand-Resources

CSTI   Civil Service Training Institute

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Employees' engagement gained very much attention recently due to its link to organisations' performance and productivity (Tomanna., Gerbi., Hossin, & Zhang, 2018; Agyemang & Ofei, 2013; Andrew & Sufian, 2012). Consequently, employees' performance seems to be influenced by the extent to which they feel empowered to perform the jobs and the psychological connection they have with the organisation. In this respect, Albdour and Altarawneh (2014) stressed employees' engagement depends on the extent to which he/she is encouraged and keen to perform his/her job (Peng, 2018; Agyemang & Ofei, 2013). Work engagement and commitment affect organisations' outputs such as whether to stay or leave the organisation, absenteeism, productivity and performance (Eghlidi and Karimi, 2016; Agyemang & Ofei, 2013; Andrew & Sufian, 2012; Ganiron, 2013). On the other hand, having disengaged employees cost organisations; absenteeism, high employee turnover, and disengagement adversely affect organisations' performance, productivity and profit generation and organisations have been investing heavily in making employees more engaged and committed (Peng, 2018; Markos and Sridevi, 2010).

The Maldives is an island nation in the Indian Ocean consisting of about 1190 islands (198 are inhabited), with a population of 341,256 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2014) and a working population of 200,000. Its closest neighbours are India and Sri Lanka. The official name of the country is The Republic of Maldives whose Head of State is a president elected in every five years with a maximum term of 10 years. The country has a relatively young population, given the fact that 41% are under 15 years of age, while merely 3% are above 65 years of age (MMA, 2016). As per the National Bureau of Statistics (2014), the capital island Male' population is 133, 091, which is 39% of the total population. Out of the 200,000 working population, there are about 100,000 expatriates. The Maldives is a Muslim country, a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Corporation (SAARC) and a member of all the bodies of UN. The country heavily depends on tourism and fisheries due to lack of other natural resources. According to The World Bank (2017), over the past three decades, the Maldives has been a developing success story as it has developed from one of the 20 poorest countries to a middle-income country. The country has

attained significant development achievements over the past few decades with development in the tourism sector and public services.

The government's role has expanded over the past few decades requiring a more skilled labour force. National Bureau of Statistics (2014) reveals that 28% of the working population of Maldives is expatriates who work in elementary and professional sectors mostly and that among the Maldivians, 42% of the working people have never attained a formal education. Hence, this reveals a need for attracting and developing locals required for the jobs. Moreover, some changes took place over the political system of the country since 2005 that allowed multiparty politics (BBC, 2016). Thus, now the government has to compete with opposition parties for votes, demanding more efficiency in the provision of public services. Among the hundred thousand working population, 24,000 works in the civil service, which is the primary employer of the government.

Additionally, Maldives faces many development constraints that are common to other island nations as well. Despite this, the country's human development is ranked high among Asia-pacific counties (MMA, 2016). The challenges faced in the Maldives for development are lack of minerals, the inadequate potential for agricultural sector growth, susceptibility and environmental issues.

The public sector of the Maldives consists of government and state-owned enterprises that play a crucial role in the provision of banking services and transportation (both air and sea). Additionally, it provides transnational freight, communication services, the supplying of utilities, fisheries services, tourism (playing a vital role in the provision of food products), fuel supplies via import and distribution (MMA, 2016). Recently there has been a shift to privatisation, reduction in services provided by state-owned enterprises as the state believes that the private sector can provide such services better (MMA, 2016). Consequently, it demands efficient public services with engaged and committed employees.

1.2 Problem Statement

Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) intends to deliver its services to the general public on time, meet its deadlines, and be able to achieve its annual targets. However, it is facing the issues of delays in delivering its services, meeting deadlines, and is completing less than 50% of its work-plan yearly activities. Moreover, it shows that there is a high employee turnover, employees taking frequent sick leave, longer breaks and late deliveries. Empirical studies identified that those who

are on frequent sick-leaves are less engaged in the work and are also less productive, as they are unable to meet deadlines and the quality of work they do might not be up to the standard (Durcikova et al., 2018; Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2017). Work engagement and commitment affect organisations' outputs such as whether to stay or leave the organisation, absenteeism, productivity and performance (Eghlidi and Karimi, 2016; Agyemang & Ofei, 2013; Andrew & Sufian, 2012; Ganiron, 2013). Researchers and organisations have been attempting to identify the most significant facilitators of employees' engagement, and they have suggested that training is one of the facilitators that organisations can use to increase employees' engagement (Luthans et al., 2010 cited in Albrecht et al., 2015). Even though the training is listed as one of the leading facilitators of employees' engagement, there are not many empirical studies identifying the relationship between skills training and employees' engagement. The few studies that I came across conducted on training and employees' engagement talk about training and its impact on to commitment and satisfaction (Barlett, 2001; White, 2006 cited in Markos and Sridevi, 2010). The general business problem is that having disengaged employees are affecting organisations' performance and profitability adversely. The specific business problem is that in MYS, there is a lack of understanding of a driver that can encourage employees to perform better. Thus, through a mixed method of research in this study, I intended to identify a facilitator that can help employees to perform better and especially find out the effectiveness of a skills training programme that we had implemented pre-thesis.

Addressing the Issue

Since the mid-2015 MYS has been monitoring its annual target achievements, we have yearly targets that we were aiming to reach by the end of the 5-year term for the government's pledges. In other words, the government promised the public to deliver certain services within five years. At present it is unable to reach its targets; by the end of 2014, it was able to achieve only 30% of its target objectives while in 2015 it completed about 35% whereas, in 2016 the achievement was 40%. Even though the progress was improving, we noted that there was a need to improve its performance. Thus, to improve its performance, we were trying to find out the reasons for the late delivery of outcomes.

While problematising the issue, I noted that there was high employee turnover, absenteeism and frequent sick leaves. This issue was more common among junior level staff than those who

had received professional educations. Many employees take about two or three sick-leaves in a month while some employees are late for work almost every day. Few employees could meet deadlines, and about 40% lay idle without doing any productive work, not taking responsibilities and placing blame on each other. Most of the times, only one or two speak up in the meetings. In 2017 alone, five employees from IT Department, two employees from the Human Resource Department, five employees from the Administrative Department, four employees from the Planning Department and six employees from Arts Department left the organisation. Thus, meeting deadlines and reaching targets were becoming a challenge, and the provision of public services was inefficient. Another problem raised at the various consultative meetings of significant stakeholders was the low level of employees' job satisfaction.

To address the issue mentioned above, I was assigned the task of proposing some suggestions for the EXCO. For that, the first thing I did was conduct a literature review on the issues that we were facing and how to improve it. I discussed what I learned through the literature in the EXCO, and everyone agreed for a training plan. Thus, I developed a three-year plan for skills development and training. I had the discussions, literature review and development of the training plan before the thesis stage. Implementation of the Training Plan took place in 2015 while I started writing the thesis in late 2016. Once, the thesis stage came, I felt that this was an area that I can focus my research on for the study and find out the relationship between skills training programme that is ongoing and employees' engagement.

The absence of employees costs about 15% or more of the payroll of the organisations, and a study revealed that the cost of absenteeism to US organisations is as high as $3 billion a year (Delonzor, 2005). Those who take frequent sick leave, take longer breaks and who do not meet deadlines or are consistently late for work yet leave office on time and are reluctant to work overtime, or go the extra mile to meet deadlines and are not team players. I noted that in my department and some other departments as well that those employees who exhibit such behaviour are less satisfied with their work environment or organisation. Such employees seem to complain about situations or other matters and frequently give excuses for not being able to meet the deadlines. One of the major complains was that they do not have the necessary knowledge or skills to perform their job. Additionally, I noted that in some departments, employees were not assigned tasks well and did not have enough work to do, they did not have a job description and that they did not have some of the necessary resources.

I considered that the issue mentioned above was a severe problem that we have to address sooner. As stressed by Grint (2005) and Peng (2018), a wicked problem is a problem if not solved sooner, that it will lead to a crisis. As such, I noted that if we do not address this issue sooner, then it might lead to a crisis. While going through the literature, I came across terms such as disengagement, engagement, commitment and performance. I learned that when employees are disengaged organisations face high turnover, frequent sick leave and low performance. Besides, I learned that when employees are engaged, it improves the organisation's performance and productivity (Bello et al., 2018; Vance, 2006; Viljevac et al., 2012; Eghlidi and Karimi, 2016). Additionally, the mediating role of employees' job satisfaction on employees' engagement in the quest for improved employees' commitment has also been positioned as a veritable gap in the literature (Peng, 2018; Raza et al., 2017; Rich and Misener, 2017; Tomanna et al., 2018). I noted that many studies had linked employees' engagement and commitment.

1.2.1 The Organisation

Ministry of Youth and Sports is a government organisation mandated to empower youth, to provide services related to the youth, to develop sports facilities and to regulate youth and sports-related services. There are 13 departments in the Ministry, including Administrative Department, Human Resource Department, Accounts Department, Procurement Department, IT Department, Manifesto Implementation Department, Projects Department, Sports Department, Youth Department, Maldives National Institute of Sports, National Centre for the Arts, National Bureau of Classification and National Library. The government developed two manifestos related to this Ministry; a youth manifesto and a sports manifesto, for which the Ministry has to work to achieve goals and objective set, by the end of current government's five-year term. However, we noted that we were behind our targets in some areas, such as youth empowerment. To achieve this, engaged and committed workforce is needed, given that most of the works related youth department are behind schedule. As mentioned above, an engaged and committed workforce helps organisations to perform better and increase their productivity.

Furthermore, we noted that employees working in HR and procurement as well need to be more efficient, given that they provide a supportive role to all the other departments. The HR department has to find ways to make employees more engaged so that the organisation's overall performance will increase. The Manifesto Implementation Department monitors the progress of

the two manifestos related to this Ministry as well as develop policies and guidelines related to the organisational functioning, and I work as the Head of this department. My work involves developing various guidelines, papers, procedures, as well as conducting research related to organisational development. The organisational structure of MYS is attached in **Appendix V**.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The aim/purpose of this study was to test the effectiveness of the engagement programmes developed by our organisation to encourage employees to be more engaged in the organisation. Specifically, the study looked into how employees' skills training and work engagement are related, its impact on employee satisfaction and organisational performance. Thus, I aimed at explicitly finding out:

1. The effectiveness of the skills training programme in making employees more engaged by testing the effect of employees' engagement variables on job commitment
2. To assess the link between employees' engagement variables and job satisfaction
3. To determine the mediating influence of employees' job satisfaction on employees' engagement and job commitment

The literature review on employees' engagement and job commitment reveals that an organisation's performance and productivity is very much dependent upon how they deal with their employees and employees' reactions to the way the organisation treats them (Bello et al., 2018; Vance, 2006; Viljevac et al., 2012; Eghlidi and Karimi, 2016). In line with this, the MYS must address the issue of staff turnover, frequent leave, late attendees, taking longer breaks and delays in completing the tasks.

Consequently, to achieve the above objectives, answers to the following questions were sought empirically in this study:

1. To what extent has the skills training programme implemented for enhancing employees' engagement helped?
2. Are employees' engagement and job satisfaction related, in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives?
3. Is Employees' satisfaction capable of mediating the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives?

Some tentative, testable hypotheses were examined, based on readings from various literature to answer the above questions (Agyemang & Ofei, 2013; Andrew & Sufian, 2012; Ganiron, 2013; Joo & Ready, 2012; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). That is to test the effect of employees' engagement (exogenous constructs) on job commitment (endogenous constructs) (Hair et al., 1998; Frazier et al., 2004), I tested the following central hypotheses:

$H1_1$: There is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and skills training in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

Besides the central hypothesis, I tested the following hypotheses to provide the initial themes for the research segment of the thesis:

$H1_2$: there is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and employees' job satisfaction in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

$H1_3$: Employees' satisfaction strongly mediates the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

Employees are one of the most invaluable assets of any organisation as "satisfied, highly-motivated and loyal employees" signify the root of a competitive organisation (Gabčanová, 2011). Increase in employees' satisfaction leads to an increase in productivity, quality improvement of products and services and more innovations (Gabčanová, 2011). In that respect, I felt that it is essential to look into employees' engagement, satisfaction and commitment and the extent to which these factors are related to organisations' performance.

1.4 Focus or Scope of Study

The focus of the study is the employees' engagement and skills training. Skills training is a pre-thesis activity that was ongoing in the organisation, and I thought this was an area that I can focus my study on since through literature review I learned that training is one of the drivers of employees' engagement. Moreover, the literature revealed that training as one of the central and influential motivators for the employees. Thus, I thought rather than focusing on other drivers, only to concentrate on finding the relationship between skills training and employees' engagement. However, I did discuss other drivers as well as other related concepts very briefly in the thesis. Hence, in this study, I examined and analysed the relationship between skills training and

employees' engagement and its impact on other drivers of employees' engagement. Moreover, I analysed and interpreted if the ongoing skills training programme helped employees' engagement in the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

1.5 Employees' Engagement and Skills Training

Employees' engagement seems to be a broader concept that covers just about every part of the human resource management aspect that is known before. In that respect, I noted that this was a critical area that needed attention in this study. The idea of employees' engagement was developed from the basis of much older concepts such as job satisfaction, commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour (Altalhi & Alshammri, 2018; Markos and Sridevi, 2010). These concepts do not seem to have gained much attention, given that these concepts do not cover every part of human resource management. Since in this study, I focus on skills training and its impact on employees' engagement, I have looked into the few studies that had explored the relationship between skills training and employees' engagement. Empirical research conducted by Salanova et al. (2005) revealed that training has a substantial influence on employees' engagement. Another empirical study by Suan and Nasrudin (2014) carried across 438 hotel employees of Malaysia showed that training had a significant impact on employees' engagement.

Additionally, training is considered as a significant HR component that helps to improve employees' behaviours and performance (Luthans et al., 2010). Moreover, a meta-analysis conducted by Ahmed et al. (2015) on employees' engagement and training concludes that employee training can enhance the post-training engagement of employees, thereby increasing organisations' performance. Furthermore, Ahmed et al. (2015) argued that employee training could be used as a potential constituent to boost "psychological well-being" of employees by nurturing employees' engagement.

1.6 My Role in the Research

Being Head of Manifesto Implementation Department, I believe that I have enough authority and knowledge to research my workplace-based organisation. Although political appointees take major decisions, I have civil service employees and colleagues who are involved in implementing the decisions. Besides, since it is from my department that we develop policy papers, guidelines, and plans for managerial decisions and organisation development, I have greater autonomy to undertake a study for organisational improvement and human resource

development. A research of this nature conducted based on first-hand data, and proper analysis and findings will be a great help for the Human Resource Department as well. Moreover, I worked collaboratively with those who were involved such as department heads who provided insightful information when I was developing the training plan and the employees who provided information for training requirement so that I gained more in-depth understanding and knowledge. Also, my department's mandate requires me to conduct various studies, collect data and analyse those data. At the time of preparing the research proposal, I was collecting data for policy decision making.

I was the primary researcher from whom participants got clarification of any doubts they had concerning the research. Furthermore, data entry, analysis, and summing up of the main findings was done by myself, as the study does not allow involving others. However, there would be a need for follow-up research involving employees in each stage of the research process so that there will be more collaboration, coordination, and joint decision making.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This study was conducted as a requirement for Doctor of Business Administration thesis, focusing on skills training and employees' engagement of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Maldives. I researched the issue to serve the need of practical application and theoretical knowledge in attending the issue. I surveyed for the statistical analysis of the problem and conducted nine qualitative interviews of employees. I did a literature review to initiate the research, which I have portrayed in chapter 2. In this chapter, the general background of the study and the organisation, problem statement, main concepts of employees' engagement and skills training, and briefed my role as the research.

Chapter 2 is about literature review, Chapter 3 is about methods and methodology used for conducting the research, and chapter 4 is about presentation and discussion of findings of the study. Chapter 5 is about the proposed action plan, and chapter 6 is about conclusions, recommendations and implications.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis discusses the main concepts, theories and some of the empirical studies conducted in developed, emerging and developing counties of the related literature. The conceptual review section defines and explains all the various concepts/constructs as well as the drivers of employees' engagement. Then, the theories illuminate the fundamental assumptions that I have applied to this research. Finally, the empirical review section explores previous studies similar to this study and the findings of those studies about employees' engagement.

2.1 Employees' Engagement

The term employees' engagement first appeared in an Academy of Management Journal article under the title, "Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work" (Ke & Deng, 2018; Kahn, 1990, cited in Shuck and Wollard, 2010, p.95). In the article, Khan goes about explaining the reinforcements that mainly influenced his thoughts initiating with model sociology text, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1961, cited in Shuck and Wollard, 2010). Since then, the concept gained popularity, and researchers have conducted numerous studies conducted in the field. Zhang (2015) asserts that the word engagement could show a facilitating role in the relationship between employees' commitment and turnover intention. In that sense, organisations these days are trying to increase the commitment of employees through skills development, facilitating positive work experiences because, losing employees and not having employees' commitment costs the organisation (Bello et al., 2018; Klein et al., 2012, cited in Turunen, 2014). Some scholars' definition of employees' engagement concept involves three distinct sides: cognitive, behavioural, and emotional engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Shuck and Reio, 2011). One of the most widely referenced writers in the field of employees' engagement is Khan, whose work is appreciated by Shuck and Wollard (2010). One of the early writers of employees' engagement defined employees' engagement as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's preferred self in task behaviours that promote connections to work and others, personal presence, and active full role performances" (Khan, 1990, quoted in Shuck and Wollard, 2010, p. 95). Moreover, Macey et al. (2010, p.7) defines employees' engagement as "an individual's sense of purpose and focused energy, evident

to others in the display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward organisational goals". I note that in MYS as well those who are engaged and committed to work taking the initiative, are more willing to adapt to the situations and are more focused on organisational objectives.

Markos and Sridevi (2010) seem to make sense when they said that engaged employees perform better and are more committed. Additionally, Men et al. (2019) stressed that if the organisations have a healthy relationship with the employees, they are inclined to pay back with taking part in the organisations' activities and feel engaged. In MYS, we have a few employees who are very much engaged and committed while other employees are disengaged. Those employees have been taking more breaks, getting late for work and on many sick leaves. Moreover, they are unable to meet deadlines and perform low quality work, as the statistics on the first chapter shows), and this, in turn, affects the organisation's performance. Even though the motive of public and private organisations differ, performance is vital for public organisations as well. It is necessary to manage performance in the public sector as well to gain viable funds and to win the public trust, that the government spends their tax payments efficiently (Ke & Deng, 2018; Tilley and Smart, 2010). The same is true for the public sector organisations in the Maldives as well, including MYS.

2.1.1 Work Engagement and Organisational Performance

The numerous definitions on work engagement show that there are no single explanations of engagement as it involves attendance of employees for work, taking responsibilities, leadership connection with employees and leadership considering that employees are the main factor for organisations performance (Kazimoto, 2016; Shuck and Wollard, 2010). Employees engage in a complex work environment that often affects organisations' performance adversely. An individual employee's issues could be personal ability to work, issues related to supervision by leadership, and personal trauma to manage with the job (Lumina, 2014, cited in Kazimoto, 2016). Most often, organisations only consider the financial side of employees to attain the organisations' goals. However, Kazimoto (2016) notes that it will be better if organisations consider both financial and non-financial aspects for performance. These kinds of situations are quite evident in MYS; many times, we see the issue but do not think of the reasons for such problems.

Moreover, I have noted that determining the work engagement of employees could aid organisations to learn what they need to do for improving their performance. In line with this,

Sanneh and Taj, (2015) as well stressed that work engagement is related to organisational performance, efficiency, and effectiveness in achieving organisations goals. Moreover, focusing on employees' engagement will assist organisations in surviving as well as perhaps succeed in economic crisis as well (Akhmetshin et al., 2019).

Otieno et al. (2015) found that employees' engagement encourages employees' "development", thereby enhancing organisations' overall performance. In general, it is evident "that employees who are highly engaged in their tasks" put physical efforts on searching for goals related to their work and are "cognitively vigilant and emotionally connected to" organisation (Bello et al., 2018; Kahn, 1990 cited, in Crawford et al., 2010, p.619). These kinds of scenarios are evident in MYS as well given that employees who work hard put extra effort, take the initiative and provide feedback to the management. All the literature on employees' engagement and job commitment reveals that engaged employees perform better and increase organisational performance. I did not come across any source that says otherwise though the drivers that enhance one organisation might differ from other organisation depending on the corporate environment.

2.1.2 Facilitators of Employees' Engagement

Organisations have been using numerous drivers for employees' engagement, such as having open communication, authentic leadership styles, training opportunities, rewards, and recognition. As for this study, when I researched the literature on employees' engagement, I found out that various facilitators or drivers enhance employees' engagement and job commitment. These facilitators are essential aspects of any organisation as they involve communication, leadership, training and development, reward and recognition and many more. In an organisation where there is open communication between employees and supervisors, employees tend to feel positive about the organisation and its work, so employees get more engaged (Ke & Deng, 2018; Harter et al., 2002, cited in Sanneh and Taj, 2015; Krishnaveni and Monica, 2016). Each of these facilitators or drivers of employees' engagement is vital for the management of an organisation though, the extent to which it works in one organisation to that of other organisation may differ due to contextual differences. Hence, at this point, it seems to be essential to look into each driver or facilitator in more detail.

2.1.3a Job Characteristics

The nature of a job makes the job exciting, routine, challenging or autonomous. One of the definitions of Job characteristics states that "skills variety, task identity, task significance,

autonomy and feedback of a job" (Ali et al., 2013, p. 47). Moorhead & Griffen, (2008, cited in Steyn and Vawda, 2014) argued that "job characteristics have an impact on critical psychological states, which in turn influence personal and work outcomes, given the strength of the employees' growth needs" (Moorhead & Griffen, 2008, cited in Steyn and Vawda, 2014, page 281). Krishnaveni and Monica (2016) take Khan's fundamental theory to argue that when the job is exciting or autonomous, employees are more empowered to perform the tasks and so their engagement increases. In this respect, May et al. (2004) suggest that organisations must develop jobs in a way that is meaningful to the employees so that they will feel more engaged in the organisation.

Moreover, job enrichment as well plays a vital role in encouraging employees to be more engaged as routine, and monotonous jobs make it dull, and employees lose their morale (Sushil, 2014). Organisations must provide employees with challenging tasks with prospects for professional development since, the majority of employees wish "to do new things in their job" (Seijts and Cram, p.3). One of our staff (in MYS) left the organisation since we transferred her to the reception. When I asked her why she was resigning from the organisation, she said that she did not like working in the reception. Additionally, she told me that she was not informed about it at the time she joined the organisation.

2.1.3b Relationship Between Supervisor and Subordinates

A good working relationship between supervisor and co-workers build trust. Employees feel safe to express their concerns and views, and it helps them to be more engaged in the organisation (Krishnaveni and Monica (2016). A supervisor and a subordinate's relationship is mainly known as a link that occurs among the two that is a type of mental path along with every communication, response, as well as emotions, should flow back and forth (Doris and Drury, 2008). Supervisors seem to play a vital role in making the work environment safe, enjoyable, non-coercive and employees perform better in such a situation (Mullins, 1999). The way employees view their connection with supervisors directly reflects employees' engagement, and they see whether the organisation and its management "walk the talk" when they claim that their employees are the most valued assets of the organisation (Seijts and Cram, 2006, p.3). There are some departments of MYS where employees are quite displeased with their relationship with the supervisors.

2.1.3c Training and Growth Opportunities

Providing training, development opportunities and flexible working arrangement plays a vital role in empowering employees, which in turn enhances employees' engagement (Cattermole et al., 2013). I came across numerous definitions of training and development; that was developed 1961 onwards. However, I provide here the most comprehensive and that covered both training and development since the other definitions covered only training. Training and development are defined "as a process of systematically developing work-related knowledge and expertise in people to improve performance" (Swanson and Holton, 2001, p. 204).

One of the most effective ways to make employees get engaged in their work and organisation is to provide them with the opportunity to continue learning for career development (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2007). The literature reveals that training is one of the vital resources that are necessary and encourage employees to get more engaged in the job when we consider the resources required for performing a task (Ke & Deng, 2018; Gruman and Saks, 2011). As argued by Khan (1990), employees will be more willing if they do not feel insecure, have faith in themselves, feel confident, positive, and resilient, which organisations can achieve through training. It seems training programmes serve a necessary means that help in making employees handle job demands as they will be better equipped and willing to get engaged in their jobs as they will be more capable after training (Khan, 1990). Training is mainly concerned with the enhancement and development of abilities and knowledge of employees aimed at improving the present and future behaviour and performance of employees (Azeem et al., 2013). Training is considered a particular human resource development exercise that is facilitating performance since it helps in professional development as well as the personal knowledge required for carrying out a task well (Aguinis and Kraiger 2009).

When organisations invest in money or provide training, it helps employee motivation which was argued in the social exchange theory as well. It provides them with more career development opportunities, opens them for various other jobs, assists in the improvement of their performance as they will be more efficient, and the quality of their work improves as well. As disclosed by Krishnaveni and Monica (2016), previous studies have shown that there is a significant link between employee training and improvement of their work engagement. It unveils that numerous approaches we can use to improve employees' engagement employing skills training that in turn, helps in organisational growth. When organisations provide employees with

development training, employees consider it an equal reward for their hard work (Chen, 2018; Alderfer, 1972). In that sense to increase employees' qualifications, the capability to cater for work demands and motivation, training opportunities have to be included in organisational policies since the low level of performance is linked to lack of relevant training of employees (Krishnaveni and Monica, 2016).

Consequently, it shows that training programmes, especially skills training programmes, help employees to learn what is applicable in the job and also, help build their confidence. Hence, leading to help with their engagement and commitment level as knowing to perform their tasks helps them to be more efficient and be more willing to work. In MYS as well, we have been using training as a driver to enhance employees' engagement and job commitment. Besides, when the quality of training is good, it helps in increased employees' engagement (Chen, 2018; Robertson-Smith and Markwick, 2009). Gruman and Saks (2011) stress raining as part of the resources for performing a task as well as help them sense further secure and feel more capable of doing the work. Training can be a vital source that will assist employees in managing their workloads (Altalhi & Alshammri, 2018; Gruman and Saks, 2011). These arguments are in line with the JD-R model as it is about giving employees the necessary apparatuses and resources that employees require for performing a job (Dajani, 2015). Furthermore, training and development act as intrinsic as well as an extrinsic motivational factor that supports in employees' engagement by improving satisfaction (intrinsic) and training as knowledge and a resource needed to perform jobs (extrinsic) (Dajani, 2015). Consequently, training is one of the most widely used drivers for employees' development and also an influencer of work engagement in the government organisations in the Maldives, including MYS.

2.1.3d Clear Communication

The importance of communication in the work environment goes without saying, and it will be incomplete if I leave out such an inevitable concept without looking into and its relationship with employees' engagement. There are numerous definitions of communication since communication is there ever since human existence. One of the definitions states that "Communication is the human language that is used to transmit information" (Beattie & Ellis, 2014, cited in Cacciattolo, 2015, p. 79). Moreover, it is stated that communication is reinforcing thoughts and beliefs (Beals & Hoijer, 1953, cited in Cacciattolo, 2015, p. 79). Supervisors should communicate vision and mission of the organisation, and the specific goals and objectives of the

respective department or section to the employees as employees will wish to understand it (Ke & Deng, 2018; Seijts and Cram, 2006).

Communication breakdowns will be overwhelming for any organisation in the current globalised context (Gaither, 2012). However, given the fact that communication is a vast concept, internal communication will be looked into, to find out its connection with employees' engagement. Internal communication is considered as an important "and an independent function within public relations and corporate communications functions" (Tkalac Vercic, Vercic, & Sriramesh, 2012, cited in Karanges et al., 2015). Carroll (2006, cited in Mishra, et al., 2014) disclose that employees adore working for organisations that they can trust, are proud of what they do and like their work colleagues. This kind of organisations typically allows open communication for employees (Mishra et al., 2014). Principled organisations provide for their employees, work for building trust with employees by constructive dialogue, respecting employees and working genuinely in all matters related to employees (Carroll, 2006, cited, in Mishra et al., 2014). Mishra et al., (2014) are of the view that internal communication occurs between supervisors and subordinates and consider that "employees' engagement which internal communication promotes is the degree to which individuals are attentive and absorbed in the performance of their roles". Internal communication encourages employees to deliver more excellent service to customers (Lowenstein, 2006). In this respect Gallup (2012) stressed that internal communication improves many significant results as well as helps increase productivity and profitability.

Communication techniques such as "storytelling, informal communication, and coaching resulted in better employees' engagement, increased levels of trust and increase in organisational income with an increase in customer satisfaction" (Altalhi & Alshammri, 2018; Ponsford, 2007, cited in Mishra et al., (2014). Consequently, an empirical study conducted by Karanges et al. (2015) disclosed the importance of supporting supervisors' communication with subordinates and internal organisational communication as well as policies and providing resources. Also, it backs social exchange theory through evidence that internal communication enables collaboration among the organisation, supervisors, and employees that develop organisational relations built on meaning and value. Moreover, it discloses the significance of internal communication in enabling supervisor-employee dealings as a means to convey morals and objectives, thereby resulting in promising organisational-employee affairs. An empirical study by Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (2011, cited in Gaither, 2012, p.2) revealed internal communication methods

such as "sharing organisational policies, mission, vision and values with employees resulted in greater performance" leading to better outcomes. It disclosed engaging employees, particularly in communication lead, making a difference in an organisation's performance as well as excellent and better outcomes. A continuous study by Watson Wyatt Worldwide (2008, 2009, 2010, cited in Gaither, 2012) revealed, when employees are engaged they are probably twofold likely to be highest performers, and 20% fewer days of absence from work compared to disengaged colleagues. Besides, the study disclosed employees would be positive about changes occurring in the work environment as well as lead to a reduction of employee turnover. In that sense "effective communication was found to be a key driver of employees' engagement" (Chen, 2018; Gaither, 2012, p.6).

It reveals that communication, especially internal communication helps employees to understand organisational goals, what the organisation expects from them and encourages them to be more involved in the decision making, thereby enhancing employees' engagement leading better organisational performance. In MYS, we face numerous communication issues that lead to policy-related severe problems. In an ongoing issue, employees said that the organisation was not appropriately communicating about matters related to policies, and procedures and they had to learn those things on their own.

2.1.3e Leadership

Needless to say, that today we live in a globalised world, the business environment is quite competitive and to be in line with the rest of the world, organisations are required to pay more attention to employees' engagement (Venkatesh, 2015). As Venkatesh (2015) further noted, the role of leadership plays a vital role in getting employees connected to the organisational job physically and psychologically and will be keen to relate, put extra effort in achieving their organisation's objectives. Leadership plays a vital role in enhancing employees' engagement since engaged employees indicate good leadership and the supervisor's role (Dajani, 2015). Northouse (2007, p. 3) defined leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal". Additionally, Sharma and Jain (2013, p. 310) defined leadership as "a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organisation in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent".

An effective leadership action focused on engagement shows "self-awareness, communication of information, transparency, respectful treatment of employees and

organisational standards of ethical behaviour" (Anita, 2014). Additionally, for employees' engagement leaders give challenging and meaningful work to the employees thereby stimulating knowledge by encouraging actionable creative ideas in a friendly environment (Ke & Deng, 2018; Bass, 1985; Bass et al., 2003). Furthermore, in the modern-day, leadership role has evolved as well, requiring leaders to be more democratic and authentic and adapt to leaderful practice, as Raelin (2003) had stressed. The way a leader makes a decision results in an employee to stay or leave the organisation, as a recent incident revealed in MYS. One of our employees recently left the organisation because the management transferred her to the reception desk. When I asked her why she was resigning from the organisation, she said she do not like to work at the reception. Therefore, we have to think about as leaders when assigning tasks to employees. We need to brief employees beforehand what kind of work they are supposed to do and talk to them about any change.

The connection between employees and their organisation is based on employees' engagement that includes being connected mentally, physically and emotionally (Venkatesh, 2015). With globalisation, organisational dynamics have changed the role of leaders, as employees are more knowledge-based and are more involved in decision making (Shuck and Herd, 2012). Today's leaders are not just positional leaders given that organisational dynamics continues and so the role of leadership has become complicated with leaders needing to perform simultaneous functions (Shuck and Herd, 2012). As a result, this leads to new challenges for today's leaders, and they have begun to try and understand the level of employees' engagement as an approach to shape the prospect of their organisations. At this point it is essential to look into at least one of the definitions of leadership; leadership is "a process whereby an individual influences a group . . . to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2010, p.3, cited in Shuck and Herd, 2012). In that sense, order to influence employees the leaders have to possess certain qualities so that their subordinates will be encouraged to be more engaged in the organisation.

Leaders are expected to influence employees positively, having a higher objective that changes employees positively (Maccoby, 2007). This quality of leaders is considered as linked to employees' engagement which was conceptualised by Kahn (1990, 2010). The style of a leader leads to situations that enhance employees' engagement or reduce it, and it is argued that leadership and employees' engagement "share theoretical and conceptual parallels" (Chen, 2018; Shuck and Herd, 2012). For effective leadership, a leader has to deal with the employees genuinely to promote

kindness within the organisation as well as achieve organisational results (Kouzes and Posner (2002). Authentic leadership could positively change "employee attitudes and behaviours" and organisational outcomes, job commitment, creativeness, employees' engagement and OCB (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010, cited in Wang and Hsieh, 2013).

The role of authentic leadership seems to have further links with social exchange theory and employees' engagement. Those who take social exchange theory to link with authentic leadership are of the view that employees perform better when there is mutuality; when organisations treat employees justly and when their leaders are concerned about the welfare of them, they reciprocate (Mayer et al., 2009). Morrison and Robinson (1997) assert that employees believe their supervisors should make them aware of what is happening in the company. If the supervisors do not provide with the information, they consider that they consider it as mistreatment, thereby leading to low morale and less engagement (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Thus, leaders have to be open, consistent in their talks and actions, transparent and ethical so that their subordinates will be more encouraged to be engaged to work.

2.1.3f Rewards and Recognition

Employees' rewards are an essential element of employees' engagement in the views of employees and are an emotive facilitator of engagement (Saks, 2006). Rewards comprise of compensations and benefits of financial as well as non-financial, including appreciation, day-care within the premises, worker aide programmes, discounted canteens, travel benefits, and many more (Dajani, 2015). Flynn (1998) stress that rewards and recognition activities make employees happy to increase their confidence and generate a connection between employee motivation and performance. The main aim of a recognition and reward system is to outline "a system to pay and communicate it to the employees so that they can link their reward to their performance which ultimately leads to employees' job satisfaction" (Danish and Usman, 2010, p. 160).

The extent to which employees get engaged in the work is affected by an attractive reward package as well (Anita, 2014). In that respect, it is essential to have fair procedures and allocations in providing training and development opportunities (Saks, 2006). Furthermore, not only should employees be given negative feedback when something is not up to expectation or done wrong, but they should be given positive feedback and appreciated for good or better performances (Seijts and Cram, 2006). In the Maldives, the civil service employees are paid the lowest wages, and many

say that civil servants are not engaged in their work, and this could be one of the reasons that they are not engaged to work. In the interviews conducted for this study, many employees of MYS said that they are not happy about the benefit packages, including salary and other benefits. Some said that they do not believe that there are reward and recognition in the organisation.

A survey conducted by Scot and McMullen (2010) revealed that when managers were encouraged to make employees more engaged and rewarded employees for their work engagement, their organisations became more effective in fostering employees' engagement and that in turn motivated them. Consequently, an empirical study undertaken by Bartlomiejczuk (2015) disclosed that reward and recognition had become influential mechanisms to use as an affirmative transformation in the organisations such as an increase in profitability or return on investment. On the other hand, not rewarding and recognising the work of employees leads to tension. Therefore, proper reward and recognition are essential for employees' engagement as disclosed in social exchange theory. As per social exchange theory, when employees are rewarded, and their work is recognised in the workplace, it makes them feel that they must reciprocate in doing quality work with better engagement (Ke & Deng, 2018; Maslach et al., 2001, cited in Ram and Prabhakar, 2011). It discloses that reward and recognition as well play an essential role in encouraging employees to be more engaged and leadership seems to play a vital role in this driver as well.

2.1.3g Organisational Justice

According to (Baldwin, 2006) organisational justice is the fairness of organisational procedures, actions, process, and results in the views of the employees. Furthermore, it is referred to as "a body of knowledge about the fairness evaluations, including how it is formed, their dimensional structure, and their effects" (Molina, 2015, P. 379). When employees consider their organisation treats them fairly and justly, then it will be reciprocated by them through better performance, increasing work engagement (Saks, 2006). Employees will feel safe if they think the organisation is reliable awarding fairly, providing resources and also in penalising in work-related matters (Khan, 1990). Organisational justice is about how employees decide if their organisation is fairly treating them and how that impact other related factors (Moorman, 1991).

Additionally, Coetzee (2005) asserts that organisational justice influences employees' attitude and behaviour that in turn, have effects on organisations performance and success. Hence, employees want to work for organisations that are ethical and are credible as a study by Seijts and

Crim (2006) disclosed. Unfairness leads to aggravating work stress, whereas, employees positively perceiving how fair the organisation is treating them is said to enhance their engagement level (Maslach et al., 2001). Further, organisations need to uphold the excellent reputation and excellent ethical standards so that employees will feel good to work for the organisation (Seijts and Crim, 2006).

2.1.3h Policies and Procedures Related to Work

The policies and procedures provide to matters related to work, including issues related to employees and what the organisations expected from them. The extent of assistance and support employees expect to get from the organisation influences the workers' mental security as well as it allows them to carry on their work fearlessly (Altalhi & Alshammri, 2018; Khan, 1990). And it makes employees have an understanding that they should think about the benefit of the organisation and work for reaching organisational objectives (Rhoades, 2001). It reveals that the policies and procedures should be fair and not one-sided and employees should not feel threatened by the policies and procedures. To enhance employees' engagement, an organisation's Human Resource, policies and procedures should be in line with other work-related matters (Anita, 2014). When employees believe that their organisation appreciates their work and is concerned about their welfare, it helps in enhancing their work engagement (Saks, 2006). Some employees whom I interviewed said that there were not many procedures related to work in MYS. Thus, it reveals that even employees in MYS believe that there should be policies and procedures related to work so that it will give a direction and way forward. However, the management believes that there are procedures in place and that not practising it does not mean that they are not there.

2.2 Employees' Training

Employees' training is stated as a vital human resource element that influences employees' performance (Luthans et al., 2010). Training is known as an organised practise that is intended to teach required skills that are essential for carrying out their tasks effectually and instinctively their respective organisation (Ahmed et al., 2015). As per Kiweewa & Asiimwe (2014, cited in Sendawula et al., 2018, page 1) "the concept of training has gained more popularity in human resources due to its positive impact on employee performance". Tahir et al. (2014) consider training as a part of improving the capacity of the organisations that leads to better performance and allow organisations to meet their objectives. Sultana et al. (2012) consider training as a kind

of an action that is deliberate, organised besides it improves skills and knowledge of employees that are required for performing their tasks effectually. According to Azeem et al. (2013), training is generally targeted to improve, advance skills and understanding of employees, thereby increasing their performance.

The Social Exchange Theory that is widely used in employees' engagement research states that when employees are provided with the training, they feel its time they pay-back to the organisation by being more engaged (Nawaz et al., 2014). Becker et al.'s (1997, cited in Albrecht et al., p. 10) explained that employees' skills and motivation lead to increase in productivity, creativity and discretionary effort that will, in turn, result in improved performance, profit, and growth". Recently, there had been many debates regarding HR practices that can be used for enhancing organisational performance. Becker and Huselid (2006) argued that there is a lack of evidence to support HR practices that can lead to organisational performance. Moreover, Messersmith et al. (2011, p.1105), debated that there is "lack of understanding of the main mediators" to use for high-performance work practices in the organisations.

Truss et al. (2013) suggested that employees' engagement can be the means to understand the impact of HRM techniques in enhancing employees and organisational performance. Huselid et al. (1997, cited in Nawaz et al., 2014) argued that as per strategic human resource viewpoint high-performance work practices such as empowerment and training impact work performance of employees as well as the organisations. However, this will happen if employees are 'motivated by high-performance work practices'. Employees' motivation is improved through training and empowerment (Nawaz et al., 2014). Becker et al.'s (1997, cited in Albrecht et al., p. 10) explained that employees' skills and motivation lead to increase in productivity, creativity and discretionary effort that will, in turn, result in improved performance, profit, and growth". Recently, there had been many debates regarding HR practices that can be used for enhancing organisational performance.

2.2.1 Training and Employees' Engagement

The increase in motivation results in an improvement in organisational performance by better engagement of employees (Babakus et al., 2003; Yavas et al., 2010). A meta-analysis conducted by Arthur et al. (2003, cited in Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009) that compared to before and after training situations of the employees revealed, training in general, having a positive impact on employees work performance. Additionally, Khan et al. (2011, cited in Taufek and Mustafa, 2015)

stressed that training is the utmost significant driver in the businesses since training leads to improvement in the performance of the organisations as well as the employees.

Parker and Griffin (2011) argue that employees' engagement as a dynamic, motivational concept and positive views about training helps in higher performance. Skills enhancement of employees and continuous chances for training are considered to enhance employees' engagement (Devi, 2009). Training and development opportunities help work to be meaningful for employees as it offers career advancement and to prepare them for more significant work obstacles (Bakker, van Emmerik, and Euwema, 2006, cited in Truss et al., 2014; Kahn, 1990). Moreover, training prepares them for roles that are more suitable in the organisation (Bakker, van Emmerik, and Euwema, 2006, cited in Truss et al., 2014; Kahn, 1990). Seijts and Crim (2006) stress that when employees are not provided with the training or skills enhancement gears, it not only affects their performance. Also, it is unethical since it lacks the necessary resources and affects their motivation in addition to being frustrated, which will eventually lead to disengagement (Seijts and Crim, 2006). As Woodruffe (2006) had stated, employees would be better engaged in the work when career development opportunities are provided, which will help in personal development as well, thereby enhancing the general engagement level.

There are not many empirical studies on skills training and its impact on employees' engagement. I came across a few studies that looked into training and its effect on employees' engagement and organisational performance. Studies show that there is a "strong positive relationship between learning opportunities and development of employees' engagement" (Altalhi & Alshammri, 2018; Shuck and Wollard, 2010, cited in Krishnaveni and Monica, 2016, p.12). As per Nawaz et al. (2014), the engagement of employees improves after the provision of training, and therefore, employees' engagement is associated with willingness to work hard and face challenges. Additionally, when organisations provide training for their employees, employees become more engaged in their work that results in an improvement in organisational performance (Nawaz et al., 2014).

Moreover, Otieno et al. (2015), stressed that by providing employees with the necessary resources such as training, they would feel further obligation pay back their employer via better engagement. The argument supports what Shantz et al. (2013), who argued that training helps in increase in employees' engagement that stimulates positive attitude, improve work dedication and interest. Sendawula et al. (2018) also stressed that training leads to job satisfaction and commitment in an organisation given that it makes employees feel that they belong to the organisation hence increase their performance. On the other hand, a study by Gallup Business Journal (2005, cited in Cheallaigh, 2015) disclosed employees that were considered as disengaged said that he/she was not ever informed about career development opportunities in the organisation, to help them to get more engaged.

2.3 Measuring Work Engagement

As organisations have been using multiple drivers for engagement, they have been using various mechanisms for measuring employees' engagement. One of the most widely used techniques for measuring engagement is a survey through which employee feedback is collected and analysed from time to time by the organisations (Altalhi and Alshammri, 2018; Balain and Sparrow, 2009). However, it is cautioned that due to the wide range of definitions available for engagement, expectations of the way employees are engaged and the varying degree of requirements of organisations, there might be considerable differences in measures of what is being measured (Balain and Sparrow, 2009). Mostly, organisations have been using two scales considering the definition of employees' engagement to measure work engagement (Chen, 2018;

Viljevac et al., 2012). Schaufeli et al. (2002) proposed a scale that is known as the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) that takes into account three dimensions, including vigour, dedications, and absorption. UWES has become the most popular measure for growth and research as it is used in many countries. But not all studies back the three-dimension measure (Sonnentag 2003; Halberg and Schaufeli 2006). May et al. (2004) have also established a scale that gas gained attention based on Kahn's (1990) concept of work engagement that includes cognitive, emotional and physical dimensions.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Viljevac et al. (2012) on employees' engagement measurement scales focused on the psychometric properties of the two scales mentioned above in relating to convergent, discriminant and predictive validity. However, it seems three-dimension scale measure provides the best fit, but confirmatory factor analysis showed weak support for three-dimensional scale. For this study, I used multi-dimensional factors as a measure of employees' engagement and commitment.

2.4 Job Commitment

There literature (Ke & Deng, 2018; Chot et al., 2006 cited in Khalid and Khalid, 2015) on employees' engagement shows that employees' engagement and job commitment are related. Therefore, it is crucial to have a look even if briefly into the concept of job commitment which is mainly "defined as the extent to which an employee identifies with and is involved in an organisation (Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian, 1974, cited in Curry et al., 1986). According to Rusu (2013, p.34) "Employment commitment" referred here to employees' non-financial commitment to paid work in a general sense (Esser, 2009; Warr et al., 1979, cited Turunen, 2014). Meyer et al. (2004) note that there are benefits of having committed employees and that there are several studies conducted in the field. Additionally, commitment is known as "the extent to which employees feel attached with the organisation and their willingness to stay in relationships with their organisation" (Men et al., 2019 …. page 3).

Khalid and Khalid (2015) believe that employees' commitment increases if constant educational or training chances are given. Employees experience career advancement when they are involved in career linked tasks (Bambacas, 2010). It also makes them get engaged to work that in turn, helps them to think of the welfare of the organisation and work harder to attain organisational goals (Khallash and Kruse, 2012). Robinson et al. (2004, p. 8 cited in Saks, 2006) stress that employees' engagement has several "elements of both commitment and organisational

citizenship behaviour, however, it is not completely similar to either". Furthermore, job commitment varies from engagement in the sense that commitment is about an individual's "attitude and attachment" to the organisation whereas, employees' engagement is not an attitude but is the extent to which an employee is focused as well as engrossed in performing his/her job (Saks, 2006). Hence, organisations should not just say that their employees are the most critical assets of the organisation but rather show it in their action. Cho et al. (2006) believe that employees who experience better working environments tend to be more engaged and committed to the organisation. Moreover, Agyemang and Ofei's (2013) study revealed a positive relationship between employees' engagement and commitment since increasing employees' engagement also shows an increase in their commitment that in turn support achieving organisational objectives.

On the other hand, if they are worried about their work and are not happy with the work, it could lead to tension related to the job that can lead to disengagement and low commitment (Khalid and Khalid, 2015). Further, a study by Saks (2006) also supports this as it showed that employees' engagement helps improvements in job satisfaction, job commitment, employees' turnover, and organisational citizenship behaviour. The study validates the finding of Hakanen et al. (2006), that engagement helped improvement in job commitment.

2.5 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience" (Locke, 1976, cited in Bhatti and Qureshi, 2007). Locke (1969, cited in Daud et al., 2014, p.362) defined job satisfaction as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's "job values". Moreover, Masood et al. (2014) described job satisfaction as a combination of aspects that create an emotion of pleasure. It involves various feelings, thinking and views of an individual employee's job that is influenced by numerous internal and external factors (Masood et al., 2014).

Some studies have shown that job satisfaction and employees' organisational commitment are expressively positively linked (Rutherford et al., 2009; Schwepker, 2001). However, Robertson-Smith and Marwick (2009) stressed that satisfaction and engagement vary to the extent of predictability of achieving organisational objectives as satisfaction is weak in predicting and it does not have a mutual relation, unlike job engagement. Thus, I felt that it is essential to have a look into what the literature says about satisfaction and do some analysis in this study. The reason being that a person can be satisfied even though his/her engagement level is low. Job satisfaction

is considered a happy feeling that employees have when their needs are fulfilled (Mathis and Jackson, 2007, cited in Daud et al., 2014). Some others have shown that job enrichment and promotion can improve job satisfaction and organisational commitment that in turn, can increase performance (Guest and Conway, 2011; McElroy, 2001).

On the other hand, Meyer, (1999, cited in Masood et al., 2014) argue that low levels of job satisfaction negatively affect employees' commitment as well as effect reaching organisations' goals, objectives, and performances. Sousa-Poza (2000) as well are of the view that improvement in performance can be a good indicator for checking job satisfaction level of employees. An exploration of "performance pointers" during hiring process showed 'that the extent of job satisfaction and motivation affected employees' efficiency' (Nanda and Brown, 1977, cited in Masood et al., 2014, p.101). The study by Masood et al., (2014) shows that though, job satisfaction and employees' commitment are related, what helps employees to be more committed is not the same as what helps job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is considered as an individual feeling an employee has when his/her expectations are met. At the same time, job commitment is known as dedication towards his/her organisation in achieving its goals and objectives (Mathis and Jackson, 2007, cited in Daud et al., 2014). Hence, the literature shows that though, job commitment and job satisfaction are different terms as satisfaction is one-sided and commitment cannot happen if it is not two ways, they are linked to a certain extent.

2.6 Discussion on Main Theories

Kahn (1990, p.694) who coined the term employees' engagement suggested in his initial work on employees' engagement that there was a need for a novel concept to learn about the managerial environment. He was of the view that "employees act out momentary attachments and detachments in role performances" referring to Goffman's internationalist theory that is explicit to the work environment. Khan defines employees' engagement "as the harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances". Additionally, "disengagement is the uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances" (Kahn 1990, p.694). These theories and models originate mainly from "two areas of research that is, job burnout and employee well-being" (Tomanna et al., 2018; Peng, 2018; Saks and Gruman, 2014, p.160). However, Meyer and Gagne' (2008) argues that there is a lack of a uniform theory in employees'

engagement. Thus, I have provided below some of the main theories of employees' engagement that I found useful to relate to the issue.

2.6.1 Self-Concordance Theory

As per Self-Concordance Theory, individual goal settings are devised on their self-evaluation of the factors that influence their self-esteem, interests, values and that those who have high self-esteem have high self-concordance. It is believed that all those who are motivated follow goals though, the extent to which different individuals are conscious about those goals on everyday life differs from individual to individual (Emmos 1986 cited in Sheldon and Elliot, 1999). In that sense, some individuals' goals may not be aligned with their well-being and beliefs (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). This theory is considered as an extension to SDT because as per SDT "goals are self-concordant" if it is carried due to intrinsic or for a specific drive (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In that sense, if an individual pursues due to substantial interest or due to self-identified own persuasions, goals are considered to be integrated with one's self.

On the other hand, if a goal is carried out just due to outside pressure or because of unease and guilt, then it will not be integrated within the self. Thus, it shows that leaders should be cautious about choosing and assigning tasks to employees given the fact that if the goals of individual employees are not integrated, then they may not be very engaged to the job. In MYS, we have employees who have been transferred from their original post to some other position on the same level. However, since it is not what they applied for, they express their unhappiness and most of the times, it affects their productivity. On one occasion, an employee left the organisation because the management transferred to another job which did not match with her educational qualification.

2.6.2 Job Demands-Resource Model (JDR-R)

The other theory or model that is widely in use is the JD-R model that was developed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli, looking into the conditions of work including physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects (Tomanna et al., 2018; Peng, 2018; Crawford et al., 2010). In the job demand part, it is vital to look into factors such as physical, cognitive and emotional aspects as well as identify what hinders the work of employees and what is challenging. The job resource part involves elements that assist employees in achieving organisational goals and objectives, inspire individual development, lessen job stresses, and related

outlays (Crawford et at., 2010). JD-R and Social exchange theory suggest that if employees are provided with the necessary resources and support is readily available from supervisors, they will be more willing to return the favour through fruitful actions (Agyemang and Ofei, 2013). Furthermore, it shows that resources are not only vital for carrying out a job but is necessary for its right (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). This model reach agreement with job characteristics theory that suggests the motivational force of resources, feedback, autonomy and conservation of resource theory positions that humans are mainly motivated by keeping and acquiring resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). The theory seems to agree with what I hear from MYS as well. When employees are questioned about work delay, they mention that a particular resource is not available such as network not functioning, a piece of equipment not being available and or due to some budget issue.

2.6.3 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory looks into the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards that an individual or community get in return for providing a service or performing a job (Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2017). Extrinsic rewards can be financial or physical performance while intrinsic can be pride, love or gratitude (Ritzer, 2010). In this respect, Emerson (1981, cited in Nunkoo, 2016) asserts that social exchange is a duo in the sense that one caters the other something beneficial in return for compensation or a reward. Those involved in the "exchange process depends on another for an outcome they value" (Nunkoo, 2016, p.590). The exchange process involves behaving in a manner that will increase outcomes that are valued as well as decreasing the results that have adverse effects (Cook, Molm, and Yamagishi, 1993, cited in Nunkoo, 2016). When paybacks are more than the costs involved, the parties in exchange get involved in repeated transactions (Cook, Molm, and Yamagishi, 1993, cited in Nunkoo, 2016). It seems that whether it is intrinsic or extrinsic people perform jobs in return for something, and they need the necessary backing from the management for completing the tasks. The theory is linked to JD-R in the sense that even if the employees are paid salary if they do not have the necessary resources to perform the job, they will not be able to carry out the tasks. Thus, if the employees are not paid well, their motivation will be lower, and if the necessary resources are not there they will not be able to complete tasks on time or their productivity will be lower.

In MYS, each year, we prepare a work-plan, and we have to carry out the tasks as per the work plan. However, when I look into the progress based on our work-plan, I see that we are

unable to perform most of the activities due to lack of funds, lack of some resources such as staff and necessary machinery or equipment. It is quite common to find situations in which employees say that they do not have the required knowledge, guidance, equipment or machinery, and sometimes staff to perform a job. When employees are questioned for not meeting deadlines, it is always the case of not having a support staff who will be doing part of the work, due to an out of order machine, network issue, and or due to budget constraints. I have experienced these kinds of situations, such as not having the necessary budget to purchase a piece of equipment or not having qualified employees to perform specific jobs.

2.6.4 Job Characteristics Theory (JCT)

This theory considers that mainly a set of 5 "job characteristics bring about an impact on the level of a set of 3 critical psychological states. Job characteristics such as skill variety, task identity, and task significance have to be mainly related to experienced meaningfulness to work" (Champoux, 1991, p.431). However, it is noted that these three characteristics need not be existing at the same time to bring about optimistic meaningfulness as it may not be at the same level, some could be high or low (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). The theory encourages organisations to develop a suitable working environment as well as enhance the quality of the work by improving the five characteristics of the job. The specific characteristics are; a variety of skills, the extent to which the job requires full completion, the degree to which it brings an impact on the others, the needed technology, the level to which explicit instruction is provided (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006). It shows that organisational leadership plays a vital role in creating meaning in the jobs that employees perform and the way they view their posts. I notice such situations in MYS as well, if employees are not provided proper information, or if the supervisor does not provide the necessary support then they will not be able to get fully engaged in the jobs they perform.

In a recent staff meeting that was held in my department, some employees stated that they are having a backlog of work since their supervisor does not monitor them adequately. Additionally, the employees said they have so much of unfinished work because others do not do their part. In the qualitative part of this study, one of the employees said (in the interview) that they feel their work is significant and meaningful because the management keeps reminding them about the importance of their work and the deadlines.

2.6.5 Conservation of Resources Theory (COR)

When employees are faced with the stress that is related to their jobs due to abusive behaviours of their supervisors, they limit or conserve their resources. COR defines "stress as a reaction to the situations where there is a threat of a net loss of resources and lack of resource gain after an investment of resources" (Tomanna et al., 2018; Hobfoll, 1989, cited in Kim et al., 2016, p.1108). When we consider the resources that employees offer to an organisation in carrying out the tasks, it can be identified as their characters such as knowledge and self-confidence, group support, autonomy in performing the job as well as taking part in decision making (Wilk and Moynihan, 2005). If the supervisor is abusive towards employees, then these resources of employees will not be available for the organisation (Kim et al., 2016). It has been noted that these resources help in work engagement as well as helps in dealing with work stress (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Thus, as per COR theory, when supervisors mistreat employees, those who are having fewer resources are likely to share less knowledge to conserve their valuable resources (Kim, Lee, and Yun, 2016) and this seems to be quite logical. However, I have not experienced such a situation in our work environment but have experienced situations where employees take leave or increase in absenteeism when their supervisor is abusive.

The theories described above were considered relevant for employees' engagement and job commitment based on their characteristics and based on the main arguments of those theories in which the literature identifies those theories as related to employees' engagement. The self-concordance theory is mainly about motivational factors of employees' engagement and without which employees' engagement will not happen. In the case of Job Characteristics Theory, it is related to two of the drivers of employees' engagement that is, job characteristics and leadership. Employees' engagement seems to be affected by the kind of jobs assigned to employees and how leaders create meaningful work for the employees. Conservation of resources theory was chosen by considering that employees' quality of work and their performance depends on the effort employees put and their and willingness to work. If their supervisor is abusive, then they may not be that dedicated to the work that, in turn, will affect the quality of their work. Even though this kind of behaviour is not evident in our work environment, it is crucial to be aware of these kinds of situations so that it will help when making decisions related to employees and explore ways to enhance employees' engagement and commitment.

Social exchange theory is one of the popular theories related to employees' engagement. Its main focus is on extrinsic and intrinsic rewards provided to employees in return for performing the jobs, which is one of the drivers of employees' engagement. In that sense, this theory is linked to rewards and recognition of employees (Tomanna et al., 2018). The other theory that I have looked into is Job Demand-Resources Model, as per this theory if employees are provided with necessary resources and if support from their supervisors is available it will help them to perform the jobs better. This theory is related to employees' relationship between supervisors and subordinates, which is another driver of employees' engagement. I did not discuss not directly related to the study such Theories elated to motivation (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Hertzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Hawthorne Effect or theories such as open-systems. Moreover, theory or leadership theories that I have not considered in this study since, those theories are related to broader Human Resource or organisational concepts (Tomanna et al., 2018).

2.7 Empirical Review

Numerous empirical studies have been conducted related to employees' engagement and its impact on organisational performance. Even though each research might differ from one another, in general, it shows that when employees are engaged, organisational performance improves and that there are different drivers of employees' engagement as discussed in the conceptual review section of this chapter. In this part, I decided to include various empirical studies conducted in developed, emerging and developed countries, to compare how it differs from the nature or condition of nations.

2.7.1 Empirical Studies on Developed Countries

A study conducted in South Korea supports the enhancement of employees' engagement improving organisational performance through better communication, information sharing and working in teams, stressing the critical role played by leadership in helping employees to be more engaged (Song et al., 2012). A research conducted in the United States of America on employees' engagement supports the role of leadership and the relationship between employees and their superiors. It disclosed that a positive liaison between employees and managers helps in organisational effectiveness and managerial development. Besides, self-confident leaders, have knowhow knowledge of the matters related to his/her job as well as being able to guide and support subordinates seems to have a positive impact to the employees' engagement (Luthans and Peterson, 2002). Thus, to increase the self-efficacy of leaders, training, learning through the job,

and various training related to the job seems to help (Altalhi and Alshammri, 2018; Luthans and Peterson, 2002). Training being one of the drivers of employees' engagement seems to play a vital role in employees' engagement and leadership development. For this study, I have taken training as the main focus of my workplace-based organisation.

2.7.2 Empirical Studies on Emerging Countries

A study of this nature will be incomplete if emerging economies or major countries such as India or China is not taken into account. However, it is noted that there is limited empirical research in this field though, the idea has become quite popular recently as the general literature or the concept revealed. A study conducted on a private bank of India on employees' engagement disclosed that when there is a higher level of employees' engagement, there is an increase in organisational growth that in turn helps in reducing employee turnover leading to a win-win situation (Kumar, 2015). Besides, it revealed that employees were not satisfied with demographic factors, working situation, work contentment, and the likes, discloses an improvement in these factors helps in employees' engagement (Kumar, 2015). While the empirical study on India's private bank was about employees' engagement and its impact on the performance of the organisation, the empirical study of China on a particular province of state-owned enterprises focused on factors that enhanced employees' engagement. It revealed that organisational trust and work ethics positively impact employees' engagement.

Consequently, it was suggested to enhance organisational leadership, communication and leaders' guidance on improvement of work ethics, mutual respect and trust to encourage employees to be more engaged (Hui et al., 2015). Even though both countries focused on different drivers of engagement, it revealed the importance of employees' welfares and work-environment in enhancing employees' engagement (Hui et al., 2015). Even in MYS, those who are dissatisfied with the organisation quite often find another job and leave the organisation. Furthermore, when there is an accomplishment of a task or conclusion of an event, employees seem to be happy, and as the whole team feels content, they give positive feedback.

2.7.3 Empirical Studies on Developing Countries

Sanneh and Taj (2015) undertook an empirical study that revealed how important the role of the work situation is to motivate employees in increasing work engagement, thereby helping them to perform better. On the other hand, team and co-worker relationships almost have no impact

on engagement. Besides, it showed there was a robust link between workplace "well-being" and employees' engagement. Furthermore, their findings support arguments of May et al. (2004); Saks (2006); Shuck and Reio (2011); Helbesleben and Wheeler (2008); Harter et al. (2002) revealing that engaged employees perform much better than disengaged employees. The study was conducted in a West-African country, Gambia's public sector organisation and the sector seems to be very much under-researched. Since Gambia and Maldives are developing countries, and MYS is a public organisation, the outcome of the study appears to be quite similar to what we are experiencing in MYS. It shows that numerous factors influence employees' engagement and performance of employees. And the managements of the organisations have to enhance employees' engagement. It is evident from the study that even though it is a public sector organisation, if employees' engagement is not taken seriously, then the organisations' performance will not improve compared to the private sector. Hence, it was argued that there is a need for organisations to improve working conditions of the workers and improve the relationship with the workers as it consequently helps to improve organisational performance, reduce employee turnover and increase customer satisfaction.

Another empirical study conducted by an African country, Uganda on employees' engagement was conducted to see the extent of employees' engagement and its impact on performance taking non-financial factors into account (Kazimoto, 2016). Findings of the study revealed that job commitment, the position of the organisation in a similar market, justly rewarding, job satisfaction, provision of tools and resources have a more significant favourable influence on employees' engagement. Moreover, being able to have work-life balance and justly rewarding are essential aspects that lead to a positive impact on work engagement. However, it showed that there was a robust negative link between job description, accepting employees' views and recommendations and paying attention to individual needs and image of the company in the society. On the other hand, a study by Freeney and Tiernan (2009) focuses on the drivers and barriers to engagement. The study was conducted on Irish Nursing field employees, which revealed that despite the field being stressful when they find that their patient is recovering, they feel happy. Thus, it showed that when employees feel that they can attend to an issue, they get an intrinsic reward and having a good relationship between relevant others, thereby help them to get more engaged. It was noted that the barriers to work engagement were work-overload, not having authority, being mistreated, and the organisation putting its interest first rather than its customers.

Though the study was conducted on nursing staff, the facilitators and barriers seem to be quite familiar with what we experience in my organisation (MYS) as well. Many employees, even department heads, say that they do not have authority but have the responsibility, and they are being blamed for issues but not appreciated for their work.

A study conducted in a Nepalese Telecom company exposes the extent of influence of employees' engagement that differs with age. However, it disclosed that career development affects all generations of employees equally. In contrast, quick promotion affects younger employees than older ones, whereas paid leave seems to have more effect on mid or more former employees (Chaudhary, 2016). This study, in general, reveals the critical role of training opportunities and leadership given that without an effective leadership there will not be a good relationship between supervisor and subordinates that in turn helps to understand the needs of employees. In contrast, the role of training and development paves the road for career development (Chaudhary, 2016). It was revealed for MYS as well training is instrumental and is a significant driver for work engagement and helps employees to work harder when they get trained and can apply it to their work.

Since this study is focused on an organisation of Maldives, it is vital to have a look into some previous empirical studies conducted on employees' engagement in the Maldives' organisations as well. I noted that there is limited published academic research in the field of employees' engagement in the Maldives. However, I came across two studies. One was focused on the public sector while the other on an organisation of the private sector. A research conducted by Civil Service Commission of the Maldives disclosed factors such as the relationship with employees, communication, reward, and recognition, helping to work-life balance, job satisfaction, getting the right workforce and training and development seems to help in employees' engagement (Zuhair and Ibrahim, 2016). Also, a study on a private organisation of the Maldives telecommunication industry by Mansoor and Hassan (2016) disclosed communication does not play a significant role. Still, leadership plays an essential role in communicating organisational vision, mission, and ethics (Mansoor and Hassan, 2016). Additionally, a positive relationship between supervisor and subordinates and providing training and development opportunities seems to help in enhancing employees' engagement (Mansoor and Hassan, 2016). Thus, it disclosed the critical role leadership plays in making employees more engaged that in turn helps in increase in

productivity leading to improvement in organisational performance, reduction in absenteeism, hiring costs and work accidents (Mansoor and Hassan, 2016).

Although each of these studies differs on the focus of the factors that influence employees' engagement, all the studies revealed that employees' engagement helps increase productivity and organisational performance. However, it was noted that leadership, training, and development, relationship with supervisor and subordinates and communication are drivers that are common in both developed and developing countries. Furthermore, in developing countries, other drivers are equally important such as working condition, trust, work ethics, fair rewards, and resources in addition to leadership, training, and development, relationship with supervisor and subordinates and communication. These drivers are the drivers that the interviewees of the study stressed in MYS, especially training and development, leadership and relationship with supervisors.

2.8 Employees' Engagement and Motivation

Self-Concordance Theory shed light on the importance of employee motivation on employees' engagement. Given that motivation is a crucial attribute of human resources, it is vital to have a look into the effect of employees' motivation on employees' engagement. There are numerous definitions of motivation that have been developed over the past years (George and Jones, 2012). One of the concise but popular and general definitions of motivation was developed by Ryan and Deci which states "motivation refers to when a person is moved to do something" and that when a person "is energised or acted towards an end, is considered motivated, whereas, a person who feels no inspiration to act is considered as unmotivated" (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 54). On the other hand, a definition that focuses on the workplace was developed by George and Jones (2012, p. 157) who defined motivation as "the psychological forces that determine the direction of a person's behaviour in an organisation, a person's level of effort, and a person's level of persistence in the face of obstacles". By looking at the definitions of motivation, it is evident that when employees are motivated, they have the willingness to do the work and have the dedication to work and carry on the tasks assigned even with challenges. Amabile, (1993) and Ryan and Deci (2000) assert that there are various levels as well as numerous types of motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is known as internal factors, while extrinsic motivation is known as external factors (Giancola, 2014, p. 25). Some of the intrinsic forces that influence an employee to work may depend on how interesting the work is, difficult or the level of personal satisfaction he/she might have in doing a task (Ke and Deng, 2018; Giancola, 2014; Amabile, 1993; George

and Jones, 2012). Kamal et al. (2006) argue that intrinsic motivation is linked to inner desire, and extrinsic motivation is linked to external surroundings. In that respect it is vital to learn about these various motivational factors so that there will be an enabling work environment since, employees require intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation (Kamal et al., 2006).

Extrinsic motivation is not about internal desire or personal meaning related to the work; instead, it is about external effect related to work such as financial rewards, benefits or salary (Giancola, 2014). Amabile (1993, p. 188) defined, "an individual is extrinsically motivated when they engage in the work in to obtain some goal that is apart from work itself". Also, is it considered that an extrinsically motivated person possibly will work to escape punishment (George and Jones, 2012). A study conducted in Pakistan by Ali and Ahmed (2010) on extrinsic motivation revealed that rewards, recognition, and promotion were linked to employees' satisfaction. Thus, it shows the importance of extrinsic reward in motivating employees.

To link these motivational forces to employees' engagement, I reflect upon what the definition of employees' engagement says, as previously highlighted, Kahn (1990) who initially came up with the term employees' engagement. Employees' engagement is being mentally existing in doing a particular task and carrying out other necessary work (Kahn (1990). In line with this, May et al. (2004) stressed that employees' engagement is about an employee's effort in doing a particular work by using excitements, actions, and reasoning. For this, motivation seems to be vital whether it is intrinsic or extrinsic. It is noted that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are not mutually exclusive as an employee could be motivated based on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (George and Jones, 2012). Some might be driven by intrinsic motivation, while extrinsic forces could motivate others. Thus, when trying to make employees more engaged to work, it is vital to look into which force enables a particular employee to get motivated or which intrinsic forces motivate employees, and which extrinsic forces or both motivate employees. In MYS as well; some employees are motivated by extrinsic factors such as pay while others say that they love their work.

2.9 Relationship Between Employees' Engagement and Commitment

I noticed that the literature on employees' engagement quite often talks about job or work commitment and its link to employees' engagement. Hence, I briefly discussed what the literature says about employees' engagement and job commitment. Employees' commitment is the extent to

which an employee attaches to the organisation, is dedicated to achieving vision and mission of the organisation whereas, employees' engagement is referred to as devotion and dedication for his/her job (Little and Little, 2006). Robinson et al. (2004, p. 8, cited in Saks, 2006) stress that employees' engagement has several "elements of both commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour, however, it is not completely similar to either". Additionally, job commitment varies from engagement in the sense that commitment is about an individual's "attitude and attachment" to the organisation whereas, employees' engagement is not an attitude but is the extent to which an employee is focused as well as engrossed in performing his/her job (Saks, 2006). Hence, organisations should not just say that their employees are the most critical assets of the organisation but rather show it in their action. Cho et al. (2006) believe that employees who experience better working environments tend to be more engaged and committed to the organisation. Moreover, Agyemang and Ofei's, (2013) study revealed a positive relationship between employees' engagement and commitment since increasing employees' engagement also shows an increase in their commitment that in turn support achieving organisational objectives. On the other hand, if they are worried about their work and are not happy with the work, it could lead to tension related to the job that can lead to disengagement and low commitment (Khalid and Khalid, 2015).

Moreover, a study by Saks (2006) as well as supports this as it showed that employees' engagement helps improvements in job satisfaction, job commitment, employees' turnover, and organisational citizenship behaviour. The study validates the finding of Hakanen et al. (2006), that engagement helped improvement in job commitment.

Other than employees' engagement, job commitment, and job satisfaction there are other related concepts such as OCB, motivation and employee communication and employees' engagement and leadership (Welch, 2011; Bergström and Martínez, 2016). However, these concepts were discussed as drivers of employees' engagement (employees' engagement and communication and leadership) since the focus is on employees' engagement. Furthermore, I have considered the most related ideas such as commitment and job satisfaction and analysed its links with employees' engagement in chapter 5.

Conceptual Model of Employees' Engagement

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐         ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Employees' Engagement (Independent       │    →    │    Employees'        │
│ variable, represented by the sum of      │ ······· │    Commitment        │   ↓
│ facilitators)                            │         │ (dependent variable) │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘         └──────────────────────┘
         ↓
┌──┐  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│F │  │           Job Characteristics           │
│a │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│c │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│i │  │ Relationship with Supervisor and        │
│l │  │ Subordinates                            │
│i │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│t │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│a │  │      Training & Growth Opportunities    │
│t │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│o │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│r │  │          Clear Communication            │
│s │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│  │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  │  │              Leadership                 │
│  │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│  │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  │  │         Rewards & Recognition           │
│  │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│  │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  │  │        Organisational Justice           │
│  │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
│  │  ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  │  │ Policies and Procedures related to work │
│  │  └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
└──┘
   ↓                                                                    ↓
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                       Organisational Performance                         │
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Facilitators of Employees' Engagement (leading to employees' engagement)

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Employees' Engagement & Job Commitment

The conceptual framework was developed based on what I learned from the literature review. From the literature review, I understood that employees' engagement and commitment helps in organisational performance and productivity. It further revealed that enhanced performance leads to more profitability in the case of corporate organisations. Moreover, it

revealed that employees' engagement has several drivers of engagement (as shown in Figure 1), and that leads to commitment. It further disclosed that commitment is dependent upon engagement, thereby making engagement the independent variable. The framework shows the links between independent and dependent variables and how it leads to organisational performance. However, it is not a conceptual framework of the whole process of this study. The data was collected based on the facilitators of employees' engagement, job commitment and job satisfaction, as disclosed in the questionnaire and interview guide.

Furthermore, it shows, various facilitators/drivers of engagement represent employees' engagement. Job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, training and development, clear communication, leadership, reward and recognition, organisational justice and policies and procedures contribute to employees' engagement. These drivers are independent variables, while employees' commitment is the dependent variable. The questionnaire covered questions on the employees' job, their relationship their supervisor, Thus, as per the literature, it means that if there is an improvement in employees' engagement that helps in employees' commitment as well and that in turn lead to better performance. I noticed that organisations use numerous drivers or facilitators to enhance employees' engagement that, in turn, helps in job commitment as well.

2.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the general terms of employees' engagement, theories related to employees' engagement, the drivers of employees' engagement, and employees' engagement's link to job commitment and job satisfaction. I noticed that employees' engagement is a more recent and broader concept than job commitment, job satisfaction, and employee citizenship behaviour. Additionally, it was enlightened that employees' engagement helps in the improvement of productivity and organisational performance. Besides, it illustrates factors such as clear communication, a good relationship with senior management, fair reward and recognition, assigning exciting and challenging tasks, having proper policies and procedures related to the job, treating employees fairly and providing the required training helps in employees to be more engaged to the organisation and work, in developing countries. In the next chapter Methods and Methodology will be discussed based on the mixed-method of research.

Chapter 3 - Methods and Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In the chapter, I describe answers to the research questions, the research design, and methods and methodology used for collecting the data, analysis of the data, and performance of the analysis. In section 2.1, I described the type of research, as well as justification for adopting a mixed-method for this study. Section 3.2 methodology discusses the survey, factor analysis and correlation and the reason for choosing survey research for this study. Section 3.3 is about how data was collected, what tools I used, used and the participants of the study, and the sample size. Section 3.5 is about factor analysis which I used as one of the statistical tools for analysing the data and how I projected the outcome. Section 3.6 describes regression and how I calculated it, and finally, section 2.7 summarises what I covered in the whole chapter.

3.1 Research Design

I adopted a mixed-method of research in this study and used a questionnaire as the measuring instrument for the quantitative part. In contrast, I used an interview guide for the qualitative component. This method of research will help in addressing the quantitative analysis of the data and get a deeper understanding of the situation (Burke and Onwuegbhuzie, 2004). I learned that a mixed-method of research is defined as research involving data collection, analysis, and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data in one study or continuous studies that look into a particular occurrence (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2008). Thus, I noted that a statistical analysis was needed requiring quantitative data and then to have an understanding of the impact of the skills training programme, an analytical quantitative as well as a qualitative analysis was necessary.

After conducting the literature review on employees' engagement, I learned from authors such as Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004), Cattermole et al. (2013), Schaufeli and Salanova, (2007), Gruman and Saks (2011) that training is one of the drivers of employees' engagement as it helps in personal development and career advancement. Thus, I chose the identified issue for this study since there was a Training Plan which I had developed in 2015 and started implementing in 2016. The organisation implemented the Training Plan to encourage employees to be more engaged and committed to their work. The plan was about upgrading and increasing the skills of employees of the organisation. It was a three-year plan with a target of providing at least one

training for each employee of the organisation, as mentioned before. We believed that when employees know how to perform their tasks, it will help them to be more engaged and committed as it will help their personal development as well.

I prepared the plan after discussing with the Executive Committee (EXCO). Then the required training was identified by talking with Heads of Departments, the employees of each department and taking into account training the requirement of the organisation. The Heads of Departments and employees suggested the training based on their work and area of interest. Besides, we decided that the training courses have to be relevant to their work or use for the organisation. More than MVR 360, 000 was budgeted (equivalent to USD 23,000) for the training programme. It included short-term, long-term, in-house training, overseas training as well as training conducted by Civil Service Training Institute (CSTI). However, due to unavailability of funds, later it was decided that only training conducted by CSTI and in-house training in which the instructor is a professional from the organisation will be utilised until sufficient funds are available.

Since the implementation of the plan, 65 staff were trained or were provided at least one skills training over the past two years. Through this study, I intended to find out if there is a link between skills training and employees' engagement. Further, I decided to discover the relationship between various drivers of engagement that represents employees' engagement and its relation to job commitment and how satisfaction have a mediating effect. The training was skills training that was mostly short-term. However, few long-term training courses were provided to specific employees based on their position and the duration of their service in the organisation. Long-term training intended to reward them based on their services as well as upgrade their qualification so that they will have more knowledge related to their position and in turn help them to be more engaged and committed to the organisation. Training is considered long-term if it is for more than six months. Over the past two years, only four long-term training was conducted due to lack of funds and because only up-to diploma level training is offered in the Civil Service Training Institute (CSTI). On average, 15 training was conducted in a year, and the average duration of the training was two weeks. Moreover, several short-term overseas study tours and exchange programmes were conducted for which a total of 65 employees were involved.

I searched for the literature through university online library, google scholar and through other search engines to uncover the essential themes for the study. Then I chose literature on

employees' engagement, job satisfaction, and employees' commitment based on the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the hypotheses. As I mentioned in the introduction and through various parts of the literature, it was disclosed that an organisation's performance is based on the performance of employees that is based on the extent to which they feel empowered to perform the jobs, and the mental connection they have with the organisation (Agyemang and Ofei, 2013; Andrew and Sufian, 2012). Furthermore, the literature reveals that work engagement and commitment affects organisations' outputs such as whether to stay or leave the organisation, absenteeism, productivity and performance (Eghlidi and Karimi, 2016; Agyemang and Ofei, 2013; Andrew and Sufian, 2012; Ganiron, 2013). Thus, I have covered the various concepts of employees' engagement, theories, empirical evidence related to employees' engagement, commitment and multiple facilitators of employees' engagement and commitment in the literature review, to have a better understanding of the issue.

The concepts, theories and empirical evidence covered in the literature review seems to make sense given the fact that issues related to disengaged employees mentioned in the literature review are evident in the organisation. Furthermore, the productivity of engaged and committed employees are better than those who are disengaged such as less absenteeism, more punctual, being more educated and spend more time in performing the tasks thereby increasing their performance.

3.2 Methodology

For the quantitative part, I did not draw any sampling since I selected all the employees of the organisation to make it representative, due to the small size of the organisational population (Short et al., 2002). The type of quantitative research depends on the data the researcher intends to generate and the needed information. As noted by Sukamolson, (2005), there are several types of quantitative research such as survey, correlation and experiment research. For this study, I did survey research and calculated correlation and factor analysis. Generally, the survey is used for scientific methods and most often used for finding out how many and how often and the interrelations (Kerlinger, 1973; Sukamolson, 2005). In survey research, the researcher asks several questions from the participants, recapitulate the answers in statistical terms after face-to-face/telephone interviews or by emailing the questionnaires to the participants (Polland, 2005). The use of survey is broadly suitable in three kinds of situations such as when there is a need for quantitative and qualitative data, and the required knowledge is particular and acquainted to the participants and when the researcher has preunderstanding of the likely responses (Polland, 2005).

These three situations were well applicable to this study and seemed to be an appropriate methodology for this research.

I surveyed by distributing questionnaires to employees in person and provided them with the privacy and sufficient time to fill the questionnaire (maximum of a week). I read out the questions in the local language to those who cannot read English, after assuring of confidentiality. Although generalisation is not the main focus of the study, as noted by Joo and Ready (2012) survey research is always good at generalising to the whole population based on some samples. In other words, to give an objective and appropriate results while testing hypotheses, a post-positivist style in which quantitative techniques are used to test the hypothesis shall be adopted (Bello et al., 2018; Ganiron, 2013); where cause and effect relationship is studied (Creswell, 2013; 2009). The questionnaire as a tool for data collection was on a five-point Likert Scale (from 5=Strongly Agree to 1=Strongly Disagree) (Joo & Ready, 2012).

In quantitative research, units, variables, and hypotheses were used for data collection and analysis. Units are considered as the cases such as humans, countries, firms, and variables are known as the notions or individualities that may differ from one unit to another (Patel, 2009; Muijs, 2004). I collected data for MYS on employees who were taken as units, and data collected from the employees were taken as the variables. The variables can be dependent or independent. Dependent variables are the variables that bring about change, and independent variables are variables that are used for clarifying the changes occurred to dependent variables (Ke & Deng, 2018; Patel, 2009). To check the extent to which these variables are related, I conducted hypothesis testing. The independent variable in this study was employees' engagement which involves several drivers or facilitators of engagement such as training, leadership styles, resources provided, reward and recognition and the likes. I did the statistical analysis to see the extent to which employees' engagement and job commitment are dependent upon the drivers of employees' engagement. Furthermore, it was used to check the degree to which the training is linked to employees' engagement of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Factor analysis and regression analysis was done for analysing these factors and variables.

3.2.1 Data Collection

After choosing the research topic, I started collecting as many information as possible regarding the issue, including some basic statistics related to the problem. I initiated the research design after obtaining approval from the University of Liverpool and MYS. After developing the

research design and plan, I focused was on research methods for collecting data. Here again, I had to think of various aspects related to gathering the data as it includes getting the necessary approval, consensus, dependable sampling method, how to record information as well as research ethics (Ke & Deng, 2018; Creswell, 2013).

3.2.2 Questionnaire

Conducting a survey using a questionnaire as a tool has advantages over other tools in the sense that it is cheaper than many different methods, there is homogeneity in the questionnaire, and it provides anonymity and freedom for the respondents (Bello et al., 2018; Mathiyazhagan and Nandan, 2010). Furthermore, in the modern-day, emailing questionnaire to the participants is quite common as it provides the participants with more freedom and privacy in filling the questionnaire (Sappleton and Lourenco, 2016). The questionnaire was developed by extracting ideas from various standard questionnaires on job engagement and commitment. I provided the participants with a participant information sheet, the questionnaire, and obtained their consent as well. Besides, whenever they needed any clarification, I clarified it to them and informed that they can withdraw at any point in time and that their participation was voluntary. In the questionnaire (**Appendix I**), participants had to answer four crucial sections; section A with regards to the demographic data, section B, Employees' engagement. Section C contained items on job satisfaction, and section D included questions on job commitment. All subjects were multiple-choice close-ended questions for which participants had to choose between a scale of 5 choices from strongly agree to disagree strongly. These questions covered essential aspects of the independent variable, such as the numerous drivers of employees' engagement, various questions related to the dependent variable (commitment) and questions to find out the mediating effect of employee satisfaction. The questions related to employees' engagement covered aspects of job characteristics, the relationship between supervisor and subordinates, training, communication, leadership, reward and recognition, organisational justice and policies and procedures. Moreover, questions related to commitment covered questions related to organisational vision, mission, decision making, goals and attachment of employees to the organisation. Also, questions related to employees' feelings towards the organisation and accomplishing tasks.

I entered data collection though the questionnaire for coding and analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), version 20 (Yong and Pearce, 2013). I conducted a pre-test (pilot study) to get insights into the essential effect of employees' engagement and job

commitment, using satisfaction as the mediating variable. Reliability analysis was directed towards measuring internal consistency (Hair et al., 1998). Based on the data generated at the pilot stage, Cronbach's alpha scores were computed for each construct (employees' engagement, job satisfaction, and job commitment) to measure the internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha scores were .938 for questions related to engagement, .881 for question relayed to satisfaction and .913 for questions about commitment.

3.2.3 Factor Analysis of Drivers of Employees' Engagement

Data generated from the administered questionnaires were carefully analysed to contrive the important engagement variables capable of influencing employees' engagement. Consequently, I performed factor analysis on the mean of the eight (8) themes identified during the literature review segment, such as job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, training and growth opportunities, clear communications, leadership, rewards and recognition, organisational justice and policies and procedures related to work. To establish the essential variables of employees' commitment, factor analysis (a validation and data reduction tools) was chosen for eliminating other data that were not useful for the factor calculation (Durcikova et al., 2018; Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2017). After data reduction and grouping the factors that have similar characteristics, I used the analysis option for analysis by selecting the variables that were useful for estimating our multiple regression analysis. It helped to understand the variable that influence employees' job commitment and which variable was mostly preferred by the respondents. In that sense, it helped to understand the potential of the skills training programme's positive influence on employees' engagement.

The Rationale for Using Factor Analysis

Literature disclosed that factor analysis helps to understand the interrelationships between the data gathered (Altalhi and Alshammri, 2018; Rummel, 1970) and in the case of this study, I used it to identify the relationship between various factors that influence employees' engagement and job satisfaction. Besides, I used factor analysis to reduce our variables to a smaller and practicable set of factors (Hair et al., 1998). After factor analysis, the output of the exploratory factor analysis was subjected to multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses (Hair et al., 1998; Frazier et al., 2004). The analysis helped to find out the inter-relationship between various drivers of employees' engagement, job satisfaction, and job commitment. I noted that numerous

factors influence employees' engagement and job commitment, and these factors I summarised into a table for statistical analysis. However, it is essential to note that different factors will influence different people depending on the organisation, country or the situation (Bello et al., 2018).

3.2.4 Regression Analysis

I selected the data for regression calculation and did various tests for regression analysis. These data were represented in a table with the correlated data set and uncorrelated data set. Then data were analysed and represented in tables. The interpretations are provided in the presentation and discussion of findings chapter, which is chapter 4. The analysis shows whether employees' engagement and job commitment are related, whether satisfaction has a mediating effect and whether skills training programme helped in employees' engagement. Also, it shows the factors that helped in employees' engagement and job commitment and the extent of it.

The Rationale for Using Regression Analysis

I tested the various hypotheses in this study using multiple regression analysis. The multiple regression analysis is capable of analysing the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment (dependent variables) and many independent variables, representing drivers of employees' engagement (Hair et al., 1998). However, since I intended to understand the mediating effect (satisfaction) as well, the Path Analysis Technique was subsequently used to test the hypotheses (Bello et al., 2018; Hair et al., 1998). It, therefore, follows a three-step regression procedure as recommended by Frazier et al. (2004) and Hair et al. (1998). The testing allowed me to find out the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. There are several independent variables related to employees' engagement and job commitment, which included variables such as reward and recognition, leadership styles, resources provided, the working environment, organisational culture and the like. Besides, I did a regression and hypothesis testing to check whether employees' engagement and job commitment are positively related (Ke & Deng, 2018; Shuck and Wollard, 2010).

Philosophical Approach

The philosophical approach used in the study is pragmatism approach. In the pragmatic approach, both the quantitative and qualitative research strategies are used (Memon, Syed and Qureshi, 2017). Jogulu and Pansiri (cited in Memon, Syed and Qureshi, 2017) stress that pragmatism

utilises both the positivist (quantitative) and post-positivist (qualitative) philosophies in one study. Hence, mixed methods of researchers use pragmatic research approach (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004 cited in Memon and Syed, 2017). Moreover, Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, cited in Kaushik and Welsh, 2019) note that researchers should use approaches that are useful for the particular issue that is being studied. Several researchers have pointed out pragmatism as mixed methods of research or multiple methods (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Maxcy 2003; Morgan 2014a; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009 cited in Kaushik and Welsh, 2019).

3.2.5 Interview Guide and Conducting the Interviews

I used an interview guide (**Appendix II**) for the qualitative part with structured, semi-structured and open-ended questions. I conducted the interviews individually with the nine participants that I selected for the interviews, based on a list of those who had received skills training over the past two years. The interviewees represented departments that provide service to the public. However, it does not include senior officials and department heads. I felt that it would be more appropriate to choose a purposive sampling (Dennis, 2014; Sargeant, 2012) since not all employees had received the training and junior level employees were the majority of employees.

Moreover, we focused on skills training mostly on junior employees. As asserted by (Sargeant, 2012), in drawing out the sample for the interviews, I paid attention to obtaining information from the relevant employees; those who had experience and knowledge of the skills training. Selection of participants for "qualitative research is purposeful" as I have chosen the respondents based on the response required for the questions and to improve the knowledge of the phenomenon that is being studied (Sargeant, 2012). The interview guide contained 20 questions, including aspects such as employees' awareness of the training programme and the number of training received over the past two years. It further included, if the training helped their job performance, how satisfied they were with the programme if they were satisfied with the style of the and mode of the training, and aspects related engagement, commitment and communication.

I used the interview guide for asking questions and noted the answers in the form of note-taking, and I did not record the interviews. Each meeting lasted about half an hour. Before conducting the interview, I provided the interviewees with information about the conversation; told that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any point in the meeting. Moreover, I obtained their consent and assured of the confidentiality of the interviews. I gave them information on how we would use the information and why I was conducting the interviews. Once

I provided them with the information, each interviewee gave the interview quite confidentially without any fear. I was able to gain their trust by providing the information and obtaining their consent. We chose a location in the office where they felt comfortable and confident, and there was no other person in the place other than the respective interviewee and me.

3.3 Integration

To arrive at a conclusion and to provide recommendations, the analysis and findings, I combined the quantitative analysis with the qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis helped me to provide a statistical figure for questions related to the training programme, while the qualitative section explained why it helped with suggestions for further improvement. Furthermore, in the quantitative part, I disclosed statistical testing of whether employees' engagement and commitment are related and the mediating effect of satisfaction. Additionally, the analytical method provided the views of employees on various areas of the organisation in statistical form, while qualitative analysis provided further explanations of their opinions.

3.4 Challenges Faced Conducting the Mixed Methods of Research for this Study

Since in my workplace, I had never conducted a quantitative method of research it took me quite some time to learn and understand quantitative methods. If it was only a qualitative method, I could have completed the study much earlier as I would be concentrating solely on one method. However, learning the quantitative method and conducting the research posed a challenge for me. Further, since this is a study conducted as a Thesis requirement, I was not able to get the benefit of teamwork. However, I believe this study provided an excellent opportunity to learn about the method and develop as a scholar-practitioner.

3.5 Subjectivity Statement

Since this study is about the effects of skills training on employees' engagement within my workplace-based organisation, it is vital to reflect upon my subjectivity. Being a DBA student, I believed it is essential to consider what I can do for my workplace-based organisation in the process of this study. I felt that it is an excellent opportunity for me to work on the issue as it will help me learn through practice. In the process of the DBA programme, I had some opportunities to apply what I learnt and address some of the issues. Moreover, being the head of the planning department, I had the responsibility to conduct studies, prepare policy documents, procedures, develop plans and monitor the progress.

Furthermore, I had some opportunities to work with international research experts who conducted an impact study on one of the projects that I worked. I had the chance to be part of the team doing a mixed-method of the research study. While working with foreign experts, I developed an interest to become a consultant and conduct research studies. With the interest that I had developed, I intended to pursue a research degree such as a PHD, and while searching for universities, I came across the DBA programme. I learned that DBA is more suitable for me as I work in the management of an organisation and that I am a practitioner. Thus, I went ahead and started the DBA Programme and found out that the modules that I studied are very relevant to the organisation and that I should be applying what I learn for the improvement of the organisation.

Moreover, I am quite fond of conducting research and have developed a passion for managerial research through this study. I feel delighted to have enrolled in the DBA programme and learn about scholar-practitioner. Thus, when we were facing the issue of labour turnover, absenteeism, frequent sick leaves, I was assigned the task of addressing the problems, it made me realise that as an excellent opportunity for me to research the issue in this study.

3.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I described the method of research as a mixed-method (quantitative and qualitative). The methodology adopted for the study was surveying using a questionnaire of which 101 respondents participated that is the whole population of the organisation. And an interview guide for the qualitative part was used. Besides, the statistical approach used for analysing quantitative data was described as factor analysis and regression analysis to find out the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. As an initial step of the study, I planned how to research after that, conducted a literature review on employees' engagement, which I have provided in chapter 2. The next chapter will cover the presentation and discussion of findings.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Discussion of Findings

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I disclosed the results of the data that I collected for the study and its analysis. I obtained the data based on the problem and research questions that I have mentioned in chapter 1. I focused the analysis on three main objectives. That is, to find out the relationship between skills training and employees' engagement, engagement and the relationship between employees' satisfaction, and mediating effect brought by job satisfaction. I calculated hypotheses testing to find out the relationship between employees' engagement and skills training, satisfaction and the mediating impact of job satisfaction on employees' engagement and job commitment. The quantitative part was analysed using factor analysis and multiple regression while the qualitative part was analysed using thematic analysis.

4.1 Response Rate – Quantitative

Since I surveyed for collecting quantitative data, to make it representative (Duta and Duta, 2017), I used a total of 101 questionnaires for collecting the quantitative data. The total sample size was also 101, and the response rate was 100%, as all the participants were employees of the organisation. The questionnaires were distributed in person by me to a focal point of some departments. In contrast, I distributed others directly to the participants due to the unavailability of a volunteer in some departments. No participant requested to email the questionnaire. However, I told them that the option was there. It took more than three weeks to complete the survey as it involved departments that were outside the main building of MYS. Due to the small sample size, I made sure that I did not leave out any employee, even if they were absent on a particular day, I provided the questionnaire when they reported back to work.

4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative part was mostly focused on the skills training programme, even though it covered other drivers of employees' engagement. The purpose of the qualitative section was to understand the impact of skills training programme more in-depth. I used the interview guide for interviewing two close-ended questions and 18 open-ended questions. I interviewed nine employees whom I selected based on a purposive sampling drawn among a list of participants who

received training over the past two years. Each interview took about 30 minutes. The results disclosed that employees believed that the skills training programme helped to improve their performance and engagement. I assured employees confidentiality of their interviews, and before conducting the survey and interviews, I obtained their written consent.

The table 1 below shows summarised answers provided by participants related to the training received. It indicates that on average most of the employees completed three training over the past two years. However, employees stated that some staff received more training, whereas, the organisation provided them with a fewer training in a year or they received just one training (PA stands for the participant, and the number is the sequence number given for ease of analysis). It reveals that there was no careful selection process. The table below displays employees' responses to the number of training received. There was no fair selection process, and neither focused on achieving the objectives of the skills training programme.

PA1	PA2	PA3	PA4	PA5	PA6	PA7	PA8	PA9
1	2	8	4 or 5	2 or 3	1	4	2	3 or more

Table 1: Summary of the Answers Related to Training Received

I conducted a literature review on qualitative analysis to analyse the data, and I found that Thematic Analysis was the most appropriate option for this kind of data analysis as it is an approach that can be used in any textual data (Brooks and King, 2014; Braun, Clarke, and Rance, 2014). Thematic Analysis seems to be suitable for the analysis of different sizes of data to an extensive set of data. It appears to be an extremely flexible approach that provides "a rich and detailed, yet the complex account of data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 5). As an initial step of Thematic Analysis, I familiarised with the interview data written in the form of texts, after that I did the coding which was later re-defined to a certain extent after going through the interviewees' responses. I have attached The Framework of coding in **Appendix III**. As stated by Joffe and Yardley (2004) and Braun and Clarke (2006), the themes were created based on participants' responses which they provided based on their experience and perceptions of the skills training programme. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that codes would mostly be a combination of "descriptive and interpretive" as such the codes I had created are also a mix of descriptive and interpretive. To create the codes, I read through the transcripts, highlighted keywords or phrases. After that, I grouped similar responses to a certain aspect in one group. After coding I made the

interpretation based on individual case s identifying differences and similarities between cases and created the themes by making sense of the responses, thinking of the research purpose and questions as suggested by Joffe and Yardley (2004) and Braun and Clarke (2006).

4.2.1 Inadequate Timely Information About the Skills Training Programme

Not all the employees were aware of the skills training programme though most were aware of the programme. It seems that several needed more information, some interviewees stated that even though they were aware of the training programme they did not get much information about the programme. Most of the employees did not know the purpose of the skills training programme. They did not know if the organisation had implemented such a programme to encourage employees to be more engaged and committed. The employees were in need to understand the purpose of the skills training programme, the kind of training provided and the options that were available for them.

4.2.2 Lack of Consideration of the Training Plan & Objectives

The management had not been allocating the training fairly - no consideration on the objective of the Training Plan, at the time of selecting applicants. All the interviewees stated that they had received training, but one of them said that she/he received one training course within the past two years while one of the interviewees said he received eight training over the past two years. The objectives of the skills training programme were not paid much attention to when selecting employees for skills training. Unfairness in allocating training seems to affect employees' motivation, engagement and adversely affecting the programme's objectives.

4.2.3 Positive Feelings Towards the Training Provided

As can be seen from the graph below, all the nine employees whom I interviewed felt happy about the training they had received. One mentioned that it was "awesome" and one said that it is useful and helps in getting refreshed. The skills training seems to be applicable and enabled employees to learn new aspects relevant to their job performance. Even though employees expressed positive feelings toward the training provided, it also discloses their desire to have advanced level training, and some modifications in the programme.
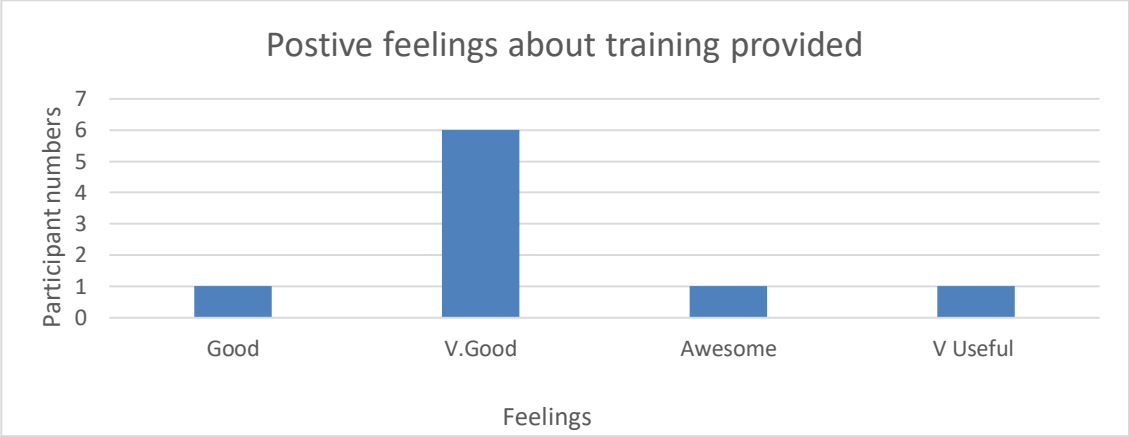
Figure 2:Graphical Representation of Employees' Feelings

4.2.4 Applicability of the Training

Overall, it revealed that the contents of the training courses provided were useful and practically applicable in their work. It disclosed that the training programme was very much targeted to organisations' work. Employees found the training to be valuable, helping to improve their performance, enabling them to be motivated, and relevant for their work. One of the overwhelming response from a participant was that it assisted her/him plan the work. However, delivering the training in the same style seems to make employees lose interest in the skills training courses. The interviewees said the material appears to be too basic, and they want long-term training.
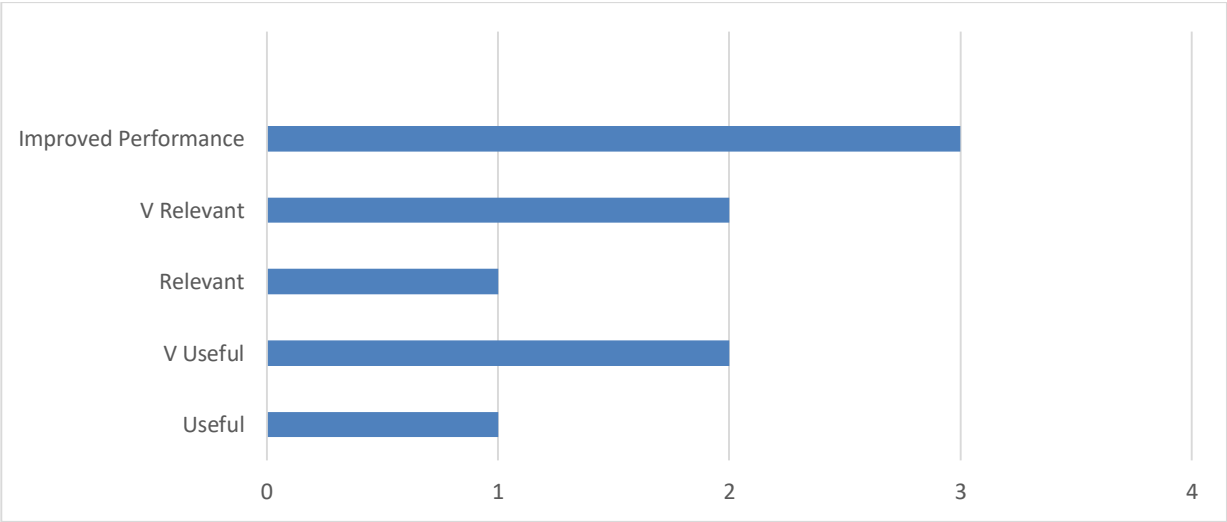
Figure 3:Participants Views on Skills Training Provided

4.2.5 How the Training Helped the Employees' Performance

Most employees did believe that their level of commitment had increased after receiving the training, as they were able to learn several new knowledge even though they wish for long-term training. Training courses were something that employees look forward to as it helps their personal development, increase motivation and increase their productivity. The training helped increase their level of commitment as it enabled them to boost their morale, confidence and that it gave them more exposure to new experiences and knowledge. It also revealed that the training helped them perform better; when they know what they were doing, it increases work efficacy.

4.2.6 How Training Programme Helped Employees' Communication

Several employees believed that their level of communication had not improved after the training, or that the content did not cover communication. However, it seems the training courses did help to improve some employees' communication indirectly through increased networking, enhanced interpersonal relationships and enhanced leadership. It revealed that the organisation lacks in this area, and not many training courses were conducted on those aspects.

4.2.7 Lack of Clear Instructions

The organisation does not seem to have been providing explicit instruction for the employees and make them understand their duties and responsibilities. Even though most employees were aware of their duties and responsibilities, and in most cases, they had clear their job descriptions, some found out what they were supposed to do on their own. And, it is not because of the skills training that they were aware of their duties and responsibilities. One of the employees stated that "yes, now I am aware of my duties and responsibilities more but not sure if it is due to the training" and the other interviewee said that "at first did not know but later got to know, learned by doing". It seems there were no written job descriptions for some employees while in some departments, they did not know what they were supposed to do unless their supervisor tells them. Not knowing what to do seems to affect the performance of those employees and losing interest in the work, thereby affecting their work engagement.

4.2.8 Suggestions for Improvement of the Training Programme

Currently, there is no proper selection process, and the training courses are offered to employees who are interested in receiving the training. And this sometimes means if an employee wants training, even if his/her work is not related to the training, they will still get selected.

Furthermore, employees stressed the need for further studies and more accredited training programmes even if it is short. They expressed the importance of choosing the most relevant staff for the training courses. Additionally, the interviewees seem to struggle to manage time between office, training and personal life. Besides, some employees did not like sitting all the time in the classroom and listen to lectures. They prefer role plays and more practice-based activities, and the desire to have the flexibility to choose training after office hours. Moreover, they requested to make the delivery of the training more fascinating such as one of the employees stated: "rather than having a presentation all the time better to have a role play or something interesting".

Figure 4:Suggestions for the Improvement of the Skills Training Programme

4.2.9 Employees in Need for Soft Skills Enhancement

It revealed that there is a need for enhancing soft skills training in the organisation. When I asked the interviewees what kind of training they needed, most of them said they needed soft skills related training such as communication, leadership training and training related to improving interpersonal skills. Additionally, they said they needed more accredited training while few stated that they require technical training. Leadership, communications, and interpersonal skills training fall under soft skills, and many employees expressed the need for such training courses. The programme offers all these kinds of training courses. It further revealed that the organisation's awarding committee had not been identifying the training needs of the individual employees at the time of selection. It also disclosed that the training courses were not accredited and that it would not help them to get placements from colleges or educational institutions for further education.
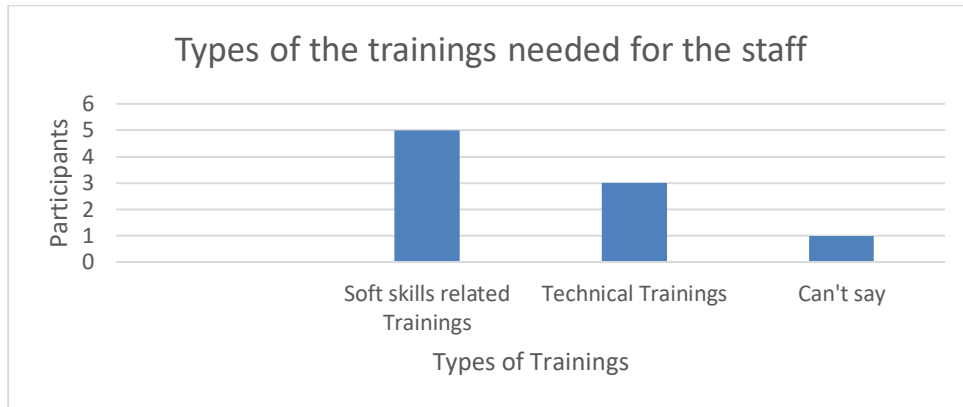
Figure 5:Types of the Training Needed for the Staff

4.2.10 Need for Part-time on the Job Training

Most of the interviewees seemed to prefer part-time on the job training courses, though there were who prefer full-time training. The programme offers mostly part-time on the job training and a few long-term full-time training. However, some found it hard to manage time between work and personal life. Many employees needed salary as well as self-development. Hence, they preferred part-time on the job training.
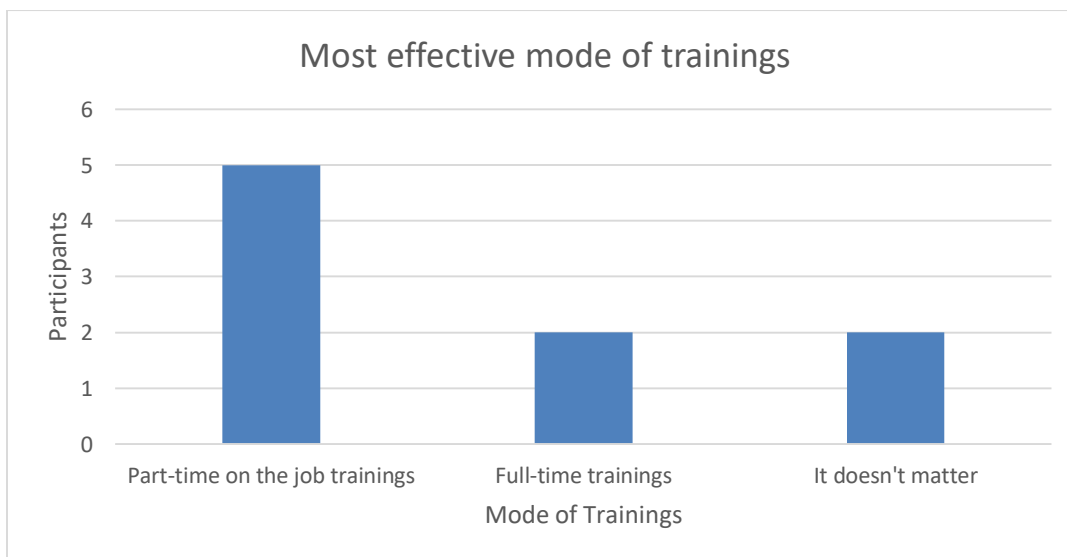
Figure 6:Most Effective Mode of Training

4.2.11 Improvement for Training Programme Selection Process and Conduction

Employees expressed the need to carry on the programme continuously, to provide additional reading materials, change-classroom set-up and to provide at least water if they cannot offer refreshment. Furthermore, some employees preferred having training in working hours.

Besides, the learning documents seemed to be not very up-to-date, and they expressed a lack of additional reading materials to refer later on if they forget something or if required to refresh what they learnt. Other than this, they suggested a change in classroom set-up from time to time to make the training exciting. Another essential aspect which seemed to be crucial to the participants was, providing a refreshment during the break or at least water. Most of them join the classes straight from the office, and would not have had lunch by then.

4.2.12 Lack of Proper Reward & Recognition

It seemed that employees did not believe that there were reward and recognition or that the organisation had been rewarding them for the work they do or that their superiors recognise their work. Only one interviewee said satisfied while the rest said there is no such thing as reward and recognition in the organisation. Hence, they long for more appreciation, gratitude and rewarding of the hard work that they do for the organisation. Lack of reward and recognition seemed to affect their motivation and performance. As the self-determination theory (Lange et al., 2012) argues, positive feedback and choice seems to improve competence and self-determination showing the significance of intrinsic motivation. Generally, it reveals that appreciation is vital for employees and that in MYS, there is lack of recognition. Verbal appreciation does not seem to help much. They look forward to a proper reward and recognition system.

4.2.13 Need to Supervise and Monitor Employees

Most interviewees stated that there was no proper monitoring and supervision of employees. It revealed that in some departments, the employees were not happy about the way their supervisors monitor them. Those employees who were satisfied with their superiors seem to be pleased with how they were monitored and supervised. It also revealed that employees do want their superiors to monitor and supervise. The statistical analysis as well revealed that this is one of the areas that need more attention. When the organisation do not supervise and monitor the employees, it leads them taking work lightly and take things for granted as most of the interviewees said. Supervision is part of work ethics as well, and an empirical study undertaken in China revealed that communication and leaders' guidance on improvement of works ethics, mutual respect and trust helps employees to be more engaged (Hui et al., 2015).

However, one of the fascinating facts that I have noticed from the responses was one of the employees saying: "my supervisor helps me realise the importance of my work by appreciating,

renovating the place and monitoring". It shows that even indirect gestures such as improving working condition help employees to realise that their superiors appreciate their work. Moreover, it showed that in some departments, there was no follow-up on the tasks and no proper task assignment. Also, some departments did not have regular meetings. When employees are over-burdened, and when their superiors continually blame them for not being able to meet deadlines, they do not consider that their superiors help them make realise the importance of their work.

4.2.14 Unhealthy Supervisor-subordinate Relationship

The supervisor-subordinate relationship seemed to be very unhealthy in some departments while in other departments, it appears to be quite healthy. It showed many employees did not believe they were respected, and there appears to be a communication gap. Something that I had noticed in the process of the interviews was, the unhappy employees were from the same departments, while those who were happy belongs to some other department. If employees say the relationship with the subordinates and superiors was not healthy, then it was unanimous even though the interviews were individual and conducted separately. Thus, there are specific departments in MYS in which the relationship between supervisor and subordinates were unhealthy while in some departments it was healthy.

4.2.15 Preferred Mode of Communication

Most employees preferred face-to-face communication so that they can ask for better explanations and clarifications. However, on essential tasks, they wanted written communication as well so that it will be available for further reference. It disclosed that the most effective means of communication depends on the situation and what is being communicated. Thus, revealed that for relevant information, face-to-face communication crucial first and then communication seems to help with follow-up in written communication through memos or emails. Whether it is written or verbal communication, clear communication appears to matter most (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006).

4.2.16 What Makes Employees More Engaged

When it comes to making employees more engaged, it showed that there are numerous ways employees can be helped to be more engaged to work. Training is one of the facilitators or drivers of employees' engagement which some of the interviewees stated as the most effective way to make employees engaged. Some of the ways that appear to help employees to be more

engaged to work are - guiding them, making them understand how they shall do the work, improved teamwork, assigning tasks justly, better supervision, having a sound reward system. Most of the interviewees mentioned appreciation, reward, recognition and staff appreciation events. Rewarding the employees seems to be utmost importance as discussed above (4.2.12), employees believed that they were not appreciated and rewarded much. A previous study conducted by Civil Service Commission of the Maldives disclosed that factors such as the relationship with employees, communication, reward, and recognition, helping to work-life balance, job satisfaction, getting the right workforce and training and development seem to help in employees' engagement (Zuhair and Ibrahim, 2016). It shows quite a similarity with this study given that guiding the employees is part of communication that is mentioned in the above research. Then there is reward and recognition, getting the right workforce is related to teamwork, though not the same, and there are training and development.

4.2.17 How Satisfaction Employees with the Organisation

Most employees were satisfied with the organisation, loved the environment, and happy to work in the organisation. Most employees were female and married employees, and even though the salary is low, they were satisfied with the organisation since less pay means less work to be performed. Thus, it means they were happy to work for a government organisation despite a low salary as it gives them more flexibility and lesser working hours. Furthermore, it revealed that satisfaction has no significant relation to employees' engagement and commitment in MYS, which was mentioned in the quantitative analysis section as well.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Skills Training

I analysed the data generated through the skills training programme using qualitative and quantitative tools. I used the Likert scale (Boone and Boone, 2012) for rating the answers and produced five choices (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). Strongly agree is considered as 5, Agree as 4, Neutral as 3, Disagree as 2 and Strongly Disagree as 1. I did a descriptive analysis for this section using the data entered, a to see the extent to which the skills training programme was useful for job performance. Besides, I intended to understand how beneficial the training courses were for the personal development of employees, and whether employees were aware of the programme and whether enough time was given for the employees to apply for the training programme. Table 2 shows the percentage of employees that considered

the usefulness of the programme for their job performance in general. It indicates that 56.5% agree (41.6% agree, and 14.9% strongly agree) that they were aware of the skills training programme that was ongoing for employees' engagement and job commitment. While 23.8% said that they were neutral, 15.8% disagreed, and merely 4% strongly disagreed. When asked if they had enough time to apply, hardly 50% said that they had enough time to apply for the training programme (31.7% strongly agreed, 17.8% agreed).

In comparison, 27.7% were neutral, whereas, 18.8% disagreed that they had given enough time to apply for the training programme and only 4% strongly disagreed that they had enough time to apply for the training programme. When asked if the training programme was useful for job performance 74.3% agreed that it was helpful for employees' job performance (33.7% strongly agreed, 40.6% agreed), 19.8% were neutral while 5.9% disagreed. The other question that I asked through the questionnaire was whether the training courses the organisation provided through the skills training programme helped their personal development. A considerable percentage agreed that it helped their personal development, as 79.2% agreed (30.7% strongly agreed, 48.5% agreed), 17.8% were neutral while only 3% said they disagreed. Hence, it disclosed that it helped in increasing the performance of employees and helped in their personal development. Most of the employees felt positive about the training programme even though quite a number disagreed that enough time was provided to them to apply for the training and many were not aware of the skills training programme.

Variable	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
Aware of the Training Programme	14.9	41.6	23.8	15.8	4.0
Enough Time to Apply	17.8	31.7	27.7	18.8	4.0
Usefulness of Training	33.7	40.6	19.8	5.9	0
Personal Development	30.7	48.5	17.8	3.0	0

Table 2:Frequency Table of Skills Training Programme

4.4 Relationship Between Individual Drivers of Employees' Engagement

4.4.1 Mean & Standard Deviation

To find out the relationship between various factors that influence employees' engagement and the extent to which engagement and job commitment are related, I undertook some tests through a factor analysis technique. First, the data were entered, coded and labelled for analysis, identifying nominal and ordinal variables. To calculate factor analysis for various drivers or facilitators of employees' engagement, I selected all the factors that represent the

drivers/facilitators of engagement and tested for purification and correlation. The reason I did the calculation was to examine the extent to which each factor influences the other factors, as well as, the convergent and divergent validities of each construct (Peng, 2018). The mean and standard deviation (**Appendix IV**) of the drivers of engagement shows what the employees feel about the extent to which each driver help in enhancing employees' commitment. It disclosed that most employees were neutral (since in the Linkert scale answers for neutral three is assigned) about the use of each driver in the organisation as the mean score for most of the responses were around 3 (except for training). Whereas, for training, it is about 4, which shows most employees agreed on the usefulness of the training provided and that helps in their personal development. On the other hand, monitoring and supervision of employees, for reward and recognition and policies and procedures it is around two revealing most employees were unhappy about the reward and recognition system, policies and procedures as well as performance management of the organisation. These answers deviate from one another about one standard deviation disclosing most people's views were similar on the matter.

4.4.2 Most Significant Drivers of Engagement

When I calculated correlation through factor analysis, it disclosed six constructs accounted for more than 65% of the total variables (Table 3) related to drivers of engagement and employees' commitment. And each variable adequately loaded on the six constructs, confirming both divergent and convergent validity of the instruments (Durcikova et al., 2018; Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2017). The six dimensions or factor loadings of the employees' engagement variables are job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, training and growth opportunities, clear communication, rewards and recognition, policies and procedures related to work. Thus, I did another correlation after reduction of factors that did not fall into 65% of the variables. It showed a significant and robust relationship between all those six constructs. Consequently, I excluded variable 5 (Leadership) and 7 (organisational Justice) from the next stage of analysis (the three-step regression analysis).

Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Job characteristics 11.231		37.436	37.436
Relationship with supervisor & subordinates 2.273		7.577	45.013
Training and growth opportunities 1.917		6.389	51.402
Clear communication 1.585		5.283	56.685
Rewards and recognition 1.442		4.807	61.492
Policies and procedures related to work 1.290		4.300	65.792

Table 3: Most Significant Variables

When I calculated factor analysis with those six factors with the commitment, it disclosed that there is a moderate and significant correlation between "work being appreciated by supervisor" and commitment (.478 and .000). Further, it showed that supervisor helping employees to realise the importance of their job and commitment have a significant and robust correlation (.682 and .000). Likewise, it disclosed that there is a significant and robust correlation between employees perceiving positive outcomes because of their work and commitment (.588 and .000) while, it revealed a moderate and substantial correlation between supervisor having high expectations and encouraging open communication and commitment (.434, .479 and .000). Hence, it showed that there is a positive relationship between supervisors' role and commitment. In other words, healthy relationship between supervisors and subordinates enhance employees' commitment to a greater extent. It also displayed that when supervisors have high expectations of the employees, it helps employees to be more engaged. It further revealed that training has a significant relationship between employees' engagement and commitment as it is one of the constructs that accounted for 65% of the total variables.

4.5 Important Employees' Engagement Variables

I have tested the various hypotheses which I have mentioned below to uncover the crucial employees' engagement variables from literature.

H1$_1$: There is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and skills training in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

H1$_2$: There is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and employees' job satisfaction in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

H1$_3$: Employees' satisfaction strongly mediates the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

Consequently, to test the first two hypotheses and also the mediating effect (third hypothesis), then I performed a three-step regression procedure, as suggested by Paraskevaidis and Andriotis (2017); Durcikova et al. (2018 and Hair et al. (1998). Based on the multiple regression equation 1, the three steps are as follows: Step one: Regression between Mediator and Independent Variables; Step two: Regression between Dependent Variable and Independent Variables; while Step three: Regression between Dependent Variable and Independent Variables plus Mediator (Durcikova et al., 2018; Hair et al., 1998).

$$EC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (JC) + \beta_2(RSS) + \beta_3(TGO) + \beta_4(CC) + \beta_5(RR) + \beta_6(PP) + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots.\text{Equation 1}$$

$$JS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (JC) + \beta_2(RSS) + \beta_3(TGO) + \beta_4(CC) + \beta_5(RR) + \beta_6(PP) + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots.\text{Equation 2}$$

$$EC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (JC) + \beta_2(RSS) + \beta_3(TGO) + \beta_4(CC) + \beta_5(RR) + \beta_6(PP) + \beta_7(JS) + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots.\text{Equation 3}$$

Where:

EC= Employee Job Commitment

JC = Job characteristics

RSS = Relationship with supervisor and subordinates

TGO = Training and growth opportunities

CC = Clear communication

RR= Rewards and recognition

PP= Policies and procedures related to work

JS= Job Satisfaction

ε = disturbance

$\beta_0 \ldots \beta_7$ = unknown population parameters

Decision rule: all the hypotheses were tested at P<5% level of significance.

4.5.1 Training and Employees' Engagement

The calculation of correlation (Table 4) of training and employees' engagement by the selection of the responses of employees views about performance and self-development disclosed that there is a positive and significant relationship between employees' engagement and training in MYS. When I calculated correlation using the attributes; training being useful for performance and employees' engagement, it disclosed a significant and positive relationship (.460: 000). Additionally, I calculated the correlation on training being helpful for personal development and engagement; it also showed a positive and significant relationship (.372: 000). Thus, it disclosed that the training courses helped enhance employees' engagement and play a substantial role in employees' engagement in MYS proving H1$_1$. It agrees with what the qualitative analysis has shown as well. The literature on employees' engagement and training has also revealed that training has a positive impact on employees' work engagement.

Correlations				
		Engagement	Training & Growth Opportunities-trainings are useful for job performance	Training & Growth Opportunities-trainings are helpful for personal development
Engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.469**	.372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	101	101	101
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 4: Correlation of Skills Training & Employees Engagement

4.5.2 Employees' Engagement and Job Satisfaction

Again, based on the multiple regression equation 2 results, I checked the effect of employees' engagement on job satisfaction. The results disclosed that out of those six drivers of employees' engagement only "communication" and "policies and procedures related to work" are not statistically significant as its unstandardised beta value is less than 0.1 (Table 5). Furthermore, overall it shows there is no significant effect on employees' satisfaction as the adjusted R Square shows that .321 and the standard deviation is .6847 (68.5%) which is more than 50% (Table 6). Thus, it revealed that satisfaction did not influence much on employees' engagement in MYS. As the qualitative analysis revealed, employees may be satisfied with the organisation but do not seem to be much engaged in their work.

Drivers	Unstandardised beta value
Job Characteristics	.179
Relationship with supervisor & subordinates	.111
Training and growth opportunities	.195
Clear communication	**.097**
Rewards and Recognition	.181
Policies and procedures related to work	**.099**

Table 5: Coefficients of Employees' Engagement and Satisfaction

Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.321	.68477

Table 6: Coefficients of Employees' Engagement and Satisfaction

4.5.3 Mediating Influence of Job Satisfaction on Employees' Engagement and Job Commitment

I used the output of our equation 3, to check the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the employees' engagement and job commitment. It revealed that R is .741 or 74.1% (Table 9) explaining that there is a high correlation between job commitment and job satisfaction and R square of .549 meaning 54.9% of the job commitment was based on job satisfaction. Besides, it exhibited the adjusted R Square figure that I calculated after adjusting for overestimation was .544 or 54.4% which was still high. Further, the coefficient showed satisfaction having a strong positive effect on commitment as the unstandardised beta value was .934 (Table 7) and that it was significant as p-value is less .05 (Table 6). However, the overall mediating effect of satisfaction with commitment showed that there is no meaningful relationship (Table 8). The reason is that, even though R is quite high (.741), R square is 549 and adjusted R Square is .544 the standard error is .707 which was more than 70% that is more than the minimum acceptable level of less than 50%. Hence, it revealed that satisfaction did not play a mediating role in the employees' engagement and commitment at MYS. In other words, it does not affect the relationship between employees' engagement and commitment. Therefore, being satisfied or unsatisfied in the job does not increase or decrease the positive relationship that is evident in employees' engagement and commitment.

Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients
B	Std. Error	Beta
-.004	.314	.741
.934	.085	

Table 7: Satisfaction and Commitment Mediating Effect, Coefficients

Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
Beta		
	-.013	.090
.741	10.969	.070

Table 8: Satisfaction and Commitment Mediating Effect, Coefficients

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.741a	.549	.544	.70713

Table 9: Model Summary Table of Satisfaction and Commitment Mediating Effect

Summary of Decisions

Thus, based on the above analysis, it is revealed that:

$H1_1$: There is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and skills training in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

$H1_2$: There is an insignificant relationship between employees' engagement and employees' satisfaction in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

$H1_3$: Employees' satisfaction does not have significant mediating effect between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

4.6 Summary of Quantitative Analysis

The above factor analysis and three step-multiple regression analysis revealed that there is not much significant relationship between individual drivers of engagement except for variables related to job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, training and growth opportunities, and rewards and recognition. These four (4) constructs are, therefore, the most significant determinants of improved employees' engagement. The statistical analysis of employees' engagement and skills training revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between employees' engagement and skills training. In other words, skills training helps to improve employees' engagement to a greater extent ($H1_1$). Furthermore, regression analysis and correlation showed that there is a weak positive relationship between individual drivers of engagement and commitment and satisfaction. Moreover, it showed that there is an insignificant relationship between overall employees' engagement and employees' satisfaction in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives ($H1_2$). Moreover, it revealed that employees' satisfaction does not have a significant mediating effect on employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives ($H1_3$).

4.7 Discussion of Findings and Interpretation

Training and Development are known as one of the most widely used and effective means to help employees' engagement and improve organisational performance. The analysis of this study proved the statement above and from the literature review. The literature on employees' engagement shows that one of the most effective ways to make employees engaged in their work and organisation is to provide them with the opportunity to continue learning for career development (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2007). Additionally, studies show that there is "strong

positive relationship between learning opportunities and development of employees' engagement" (Altalhi & Alshammri, 2018; Shuck and Wollard, 2010 cited in Krishnaveni and Monica, 2016, p.12). Training is mainly concerned with the enhancement and development of abilities and knowledge of employees aimed at improving the present and future behaviour and performance of employees (Azeem et al., 2013). The quantitative analysis on the "usefulness of the skills training" programme of MYS and when "training helps personal development" reveals that most employees (mean score of 4.) agree that it does help their personal development. Also, the qualitative analysis shows that training helps employees perform better, builds their confidence, helps them apply what they learnt and that it improves their engagement.

Although most employees (74.3% of employees agree that the training programme is useful) believed that it helps improve work engagement and performance (79.2% agree), it also revealed that several employees were unaware of the skills training programme and its purpose. The above high percentages are from those employees who received the training. The reason was information on the skills training programme was not widely disseminated (only 56% said that they were aware of which is merely more than a half). Additionally, hardly 50% said that they were given enough time to apply for the skills training programme which makes those employees unhappy and feel quite sceptical about the programme. A study by Gallup Business Journal (2005 cited in Cheallaigh, 2015) disclosed employees that were considered as disengaged said that he/she was not ever informed about career development opportunities in the organisation, to help them to get more engaged.

As for the contents of the training provided, it revealed that the training courses were too basic, short-term, and most training courses were not accredited. The literature shows that training provides employees with more career development opportunities, opens them for various other jobs, assists in the improvement of their performance as they will be more efficient and the quality of their work improves as well. As disclosed by Krishnaveni and Monica (2016), previous studies have shown that there is a significant link between employees' training and improvement of their work engagement. Thus, with basic training or less accredited training means some employees consider that the training courses did not provide them with development opportunities and will not be motivated to improve their performance. Additionally, employees offered numerous suggestions, including the ideas mentioned above for content and to provide more relevant training. It seems that since the organisation allowed employees the opportunity to choose whichever training they want, the training they had received may not be the training applicable for

the work they do. Even though, in general, participants were positive about the training courses, there is a need to improve various aspects of the training programme to increase positive views of the programme. Parker and Griffin (2011) state that positive views about training help in higher performance.

Most of the participants preferred part-time on the job training as a mode of training and various kinds of training related to their job. However, some preferred full-time long-term training. Since the training courses are intended to improve and advance skills and understanding of employees, thereby increasing their performance (Azeem et al., 2013), it is essential to cater to the needs of those staff based on the technicality and importance of their work. Highly technical and professional staff are not easy to replace, and retaining them in the organisation is vital.

One of the main issues noted is that in MYS; there is a lack of reward and recognition, weak supervisor-subordinate relationship, and a lack of monitoring and supervision. The extent to which employees get engaged in the work is affected by an attractive reward package as well (Anita, 2015). The fact is evident from the analysis of this study as well; as most of the participants stated, there was no sufficient reward and recognition in the organisation. Additionally, it shows that employees view their connection with supervisors directly reflects employees' engagement, and they see whether the organisation and its management "walk the talk" when they claim that their employees are the most valuable assets of the organisation (Seijts and Cram, 2006, p.3).

Moreover, quantitative as well as the qualitative analysis reveals that employees level of engagement had increased after the training. The reason was, their confidence had risen since they were able to apply what leant for work performance. Since, there is a link between employees' engagement and commit, when engagement increases, so do commitment. Studies have revealed that there is a positive relationship between employees' engagement and commitment since increasing employees' engagement also shows an increase in their commitment (Agyemang and Ofei, 2013; Saks, 2006; Hakanen et al., 2006). However, it also revealed that the level of communication and whether employees were aware of their duties and responsibilities after the training have no relation to training that they had received.

Quantitative analysis on the significance of each driver of employees' engagement revealed that most employees were neutral about the impact of drivers such as job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, clear communication, leadership and organisational justice. Additionally, the qualitative analysis also revealed that training does not necessarily have an impact on these drivers meaning that there is no significant impact on these drivers even though

training has a positive effect on employees' engagement in general. On the other hand, employees were unhappy about the monitoring and supervision of employees, reward and recognition and policies and procedures. It shows other drivers especially reward and recognition and policies and procedures, are neglected in MYS. As the SDT theory states, if an individual pursues due to substantial interest or due to self-identified own persuasions, goals are considered to be integrated with one's self. Whereas, a goal is carried out just due to outside pressure or guilt will not be integrated within the person, leading to disengagement of the employees.

Additionally, JD-R and Social exchange theory suggest that if organisations provide employees with the necessary resources and support is readily available from supervisors, they will be more willing to return the favour through fruitful actions (Agyemang and Ofei, 2013). Besides, the Job Characteristics theory encourages organisations to develop a favourable working environment as well as enhance the quality of the work by improving the five characteristics of a job. That is a variety of skills, the extent to which the work requires full completion, the degree to which it brings an impact on the others, the needed technology, the degree to which explicit instruction is provided (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006).

Hence, even though it reveals skills training have a relation to employees' engagement as per the survey analysis and analysis of the interviews, there is a need to find out the impact of the training. Thus, there is a need to find evidence of improvement from the documents in the organisation. At the time of the study, the data was not available since such a report was not compiled. Thus, a follow-up study will be needed to find out the relation with evidence from the organisation. However, it is evident from the literature that there is a significant positive relationship between employees' engagement and skills training, as mentioned above. Moreover, there is a meaningful relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment; however, a weak relationship between employees' engagement and satisfaction. Besides, the quantitative analysis of employees' engagement and skills training revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between employees' engagement skills training (74.3% agree that the skills training that they receive is useful, and 79.2% agree that it helped their personal development).

Furthermore, when I did the correlation to find out the variables that accounted for employees' engagement, it revealed that Training and Development is one of the most significant variables as it included among that comprised more than 65% of the variables that accounted for employees' engagement. Thus, it revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between employees' engagement and skills training. However, the analysis also revealed other significant

drivers also have to be taken into accounts such as job characteristics, reward and recognition, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, clear communication, and policies and procedures related to the work.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered the factor analysis and correlation of employees' engagement and commitment. It revealed that there is no significant relationship between individual drivers of engagement except for job characteristics and relationship with supervisor and subordinates. When I calculated factor analysis on the six variables related to job characteristics and relationship with supervisor and subordinates, it covered more than 65% of the total variances. Thus, I chose those six variables for correlation and regression analysis of employees' engagement. And I discovered that overall, there is a correlation between skills training, employees' engagement and that there is no strong mediating effect of job satisfaction on employees' engagement.

Additionally, to find out to what extent the skills training programme helped in enhancing employees' engagement, I did a quantitative as well as the qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis exposed that 74.3% agree that the skills training programme helped in improving their job performance. When I calculated the qualitative analysis, it disclosed that most employees are positive about the training programme and that they feel it is useful and that it helps in improving their level of engagement and commitment in the organisation. The reason given was that when the skills and knowledge to perform a job is enhanced or gained, it helps in their confidence, motivation, and satisfaction that, in turn, improves their engagement and commitment. However, there were suggestions for improvement of the training programme such as more advanced level training courses or long-term training of more than one year and they wish to have more interactive and exciting way style of delivery.

On the other hand, I noted that employees were not happy about pay, reward, and recognition, the level of supervision and monitoring and policies and procedures of the organisation. However, it is noteworthy that they like working in the organisation in general. The next chapter will provide proposed actions based on the main findings concerning research questions and hypothesis.

Chapter 5: Proposed Action Plan

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I have provided the proposed action plan for addressing the organisational issue that I researched in this study. I have segmented the chapter into various sections, namely; 5.1 Drafting of Action Plan, 5.2 Testing of Questionnaire, 5.3 Recommendations, and Development of Proposed Action Plan, 5.4. Feedback from EXCO, 5.5 Recommendations, 5.6 Potential Benefits, Obstacles, and Unintended Consequences, 5.7 Implementation and Results, and 5.8 Chapter Summary.

5.1 Drafting of Initial Action Plan

I drafted a Training Plan based on the literature review that I conducted, which I did on the request of EXCO members to address the issues of high turnover, absenteeism, frequent sick leaves and longer breaks. I completed the development of the Training Plan pre-thesis, seeking some solutions for the mentioned issue. While conducting the literature review, I noticed that the problem is related to employees' engagement, and there are many drivers of employees' engagement with which training and development are one of the drivers. Thus, I discussed it in the EXCO, and all the members unanimously agreed to come up with a Training Plan. To prepare the Training Plan, I looked into the training needs identified in the staff appraisal and through discussions with the respective department heads since they will know better the kind of training needed for their departments.

Further, I looked into the existing mandate of the departments, the qualifications of the present employees and the type of work they perform. After developing the Training Plan, I took it to EXCO for their comments and approval. The reason was that any plan or policy document had to be approved by the EXCO. As soon as it was approved, and the HR department commenced the implementation, our department began monitoring the implementation of the plan.

The research for this study involved a mixed-method of research that included a survey and qualitative interviews. After the analysis and findings, I proposed an action plan for further improvement of the training programme and employees' engagement. I developed the proposed action plan based on the results of the study. I collected the data from all the employees of the organisation to make it representative. I took into account the views of all the employees, even though I conducted only nine interviews. I selected nine interviewees among the employees who

had received the skills training over the past two years. After completing data entry, I discussed the preliminary findings of the data in the EXCO.

The preliminary findings disclosed that most employees were displeased with the salary and benefits packages, supervision and monitoring, reward and recognition and policies and procedures of the organisation. When I discussed these findings with the members of EXCO, the members unanimously agreed that being a government Ministry, it will not be possible to increase the salary or benefits package of the employees. I stressed that even though we will not be able to increase salary and benefits packages, there are other things that as an organisation that we can do, such as, training and development. And also I mentioned about monitoring and supervising, which many employees said that MYS lacks behind much. Additionally, I stressed that we should try to provide as many training opportunities as possible. However, we noted that due to budget constraints, we have difficulty in providing long-term and overseas training. Thus, members of EXCO, including myself, agreed that we should provide paid leave for staff who wish to study on their own.

5.2 Testing of Questionnaire

I tested the questionnaire (**Appendix I**) with some department heads and employees. However, there was no suggestion or comments, so I used as per how I developed it.

5.3 Recommendations and Development of Proposed Action Plan

The proposed action plan was developed based on the review of the relevant literature regarding recommendations for addressing poor **Employees' Engagement in Ministry of Youth and Sports of Maldives** and feedback received from data collection (hypotheses testing and interviews). The proposed plan includes four primary objectives to be applied to addressing the identified organisational issue:

- Promote higher levels of employees' engagement and commitment thereby increasing organisational performance by decreasing employee turnover, absenteeism, sick leave, longer hours of breaks and low productivity
- Identify the link between employees' engagement and commitment

5.3.1 Promote higher levels of employees' engagement thereby increasing organisational performance by decreasing occurrences of employee turnover, absenteeism, frequent sick leaves, and longer-breaks

The overall objective of this study was to test the of the employees' engagement programmes developed by our organisation and to encourage employees to be more engaged in their work. Moreover, in the study looked into how employees' work engagement and commitment are related, what factors that we can use to enhance employees' engagement and commitment in public sector organisations in the Maldives, specifically in Ministry of Youth and Sports. The proposed actions are listed and explained below.

- **Increase Training and Development Opportunities.**
  To include more long-term training: when I discussed this recommendation with the members of EXCO, one of the respondents said that "it is the employees' responsibility to self-develop by pursuing higher studies. However, we can play some supportive roles such as giving them paid leave for studies". Besides, it was agreed to develop a training policy and a guideline. Currently, there is no such policy. When a request from an employee comes for paid leave and funding for long-term training or release for studies, we send those cases to the Human Resource Development Committee (HRMD) for approval. The committee reviews case-by-case and approves or reject the request. I am vice-chairperson of the training panel, which is a sub-committee of HRMD. Thus, I will be involved in developing the training policy and guideline. Being the vice-chairperson of the gives me the authority to enforce my recommendation and suggestions of employees which they provided during my interviews with them.

- **Reward and Recognition**
  More reward and recognition such as appreciating employees' hard work: when I discussed this recommendation with the members of EXCO everyone agreed that this was an area that we have to put an extra effort and pay more attention. The chairman of EXCO stated that this was an excellent idea and we had already planned but implementation. And if he is around, he will implement it in a few months and instruct other departments to follow the same. I suggested that being a government organisation, we have no funds and no authority to provide financial rewards and other benefits as rewards. Still, we can have employee appreciation functions, social events and certificate awarding ceremonies. Other members also agreed that we have to plan employee appreciation events, social events for employees and recognising an employee of the month and year.

- **Increase Monitoring and Supervision of Employees**

  Supervision of staff: Even though we are required to supervise and monitor employees, many staff believed their superiors do not supervise them much. In discussion with EXCO members, everyone agreed that this is something that we have to do, and it is good to know about this from the staff. "It is good to know from employees that they are not supervised - now we know we have to supervise them more," said the chairman of EXCO. A previous empirical study conducted in the Maldives related to employees' engagement suggested that a healthy relationship with supervisor and subordinates and providing training and development opportunities seems to help in enhancing employees' engagement. It revealed the showing the critical role leadership plays in making employees more engaged that in turn helps in increase in productivity leading to improvement in organisational performance, reduction in absenteeism, hiring costs and work accidents (Mansoor and Hassan, 2016).

5.3.2 Identify the Link Between Employees' Engagement and Commitment

Since there is ample literature that talks about employees' engagement in line with commitment, I felt that is it important to have a look into the link between employees' engagement and commitment. The literature reviews, as well as analysis of the statistical data collected from the survey for this study, revealed that employees' engagement and commitment are linked. It seems that engaged employees perform better and are more committed (Markos and Sridevi, 2010). Additionally, Zhang (2015) stresses that work engagement could show a facilitating role in the relationship between employees' commitment and turnover intention. In that respect, organisations these days are trying to increase the commitment of employees through skills development and facilitating positive work experiences (Klein et al., 2012; Rubin, 2012 cited in Turunen, 2014). Thus, when there is an improvement in employees' engagement, it will help in their commitment as well since commitment is dependent upon employees' engagement. In that sense, MYS need to pay attention to the factors that contribute to employees' engagement, especially factors or drivers that were suggested by the interviewees or drivers that most employees suggested that were mentioned above in 5.4.1.

Administration and output of the study feedback, development of the proposed action plan

5.4 Feedback from Focus EXCO Discussion

The previous section explains the initially proposed action plan and how I revised it in response to the collective feedback from EXCO members. This section discusses the final analysis of the revised action plan in which I shared my ideas with EXCO members, and everyone believed the recommendations were excellent and that it is practically possible to implement the plan. However, there were some minor changes that they recommended; I have mentioned below some of the comments received:

The first two questions asked from the EXCO members were, to gather general feedback about their feelings towards the survey findings. The bulleted list below includes both summarised and quoted responses from participants. I have categorised the responses by staff, faculty, and administrators.

- **What are your thoughts about the survey research findings?**

  o **EXCO members Responses**
    - "That seems to make sense as most of us feel that way, and we are not surprised at all with the results" –*Support Member of EXCO*
    - "We do understand that the organisation has some good things to boast about, but we do not disagree with the findings. Most of us believe those are true views of the employees" –*Support Member of EXCO*

  o **Departments Responses**
    - "We generally agree with the survey and interview results. However, there were some parts we disagree such as stating that we do not have policies; actually, we do have policies, but we need to practice it." – *departments*
    - "There are no surprises, and it confirmed our views as well. Even though some of the suggestions we cannot take as it is." – *departments*

  o **Permanent Secretary's Responses**
    - "I am kind of unhappy to know that employees are not being supervised and monitored well. It is our Heads of Departments' responsibility, and they should be responsible for ensuring that their employees are being supervised and monitored well. It is good that you are sharing those findings with me as I should know and make them responsible, which I will ensure in future".
    –*Permanent Secretary*

- *"Self-Development is a personal and individual matter of employees. I believe we cannot provide long-term training for the employees. However, we can try to facilitate by providing them with paid leaves and releases for studies during working hours"* – *Permanent Secretary*

The feedback I received from EXCO members revealed that in general, they all agree with the recommendations even though I had to make few changes such as due to budget constraints we might not be able to provide long-term training. However, we can encourage employees to study further by providing paid leaves or providing releases from the office during working hours for study. Additionally, even though some stated we have the policies, it was agreed that we need to make a few policies such as a training policy and make use of the existing policies.

Concerning the need to address the identified issue of poor employees' engagement and commitment, the EXCO members gave the following responses: **Do you believe that we need to address the identified problem?**

- **HOD Human resources**
  - Yes, we have to address the issue. (There was a consensus among participan*ts*) – *Heads of Department, Administrator (Permanent Secretary)*
- **Head of Procurement**
  - Yes, we have to address the issue. (There was a consensus among participants) – *Heads of Departments and Administrator (Permanent Secretary)*
- **Chief Accountants Officer's Responses**
  - Yes, we have to address the issue. (There was a consensus among participants) – *Heads of Departments and Administrator (Permanent Secretary)*

Responses revealed a consensus among participants at all levels of the organisation (i.e. support staff, heads of departments and administrators (permanent secretary) that we have to address the issue.

The final question I asked was to express their support in implementing the proposed plan. I have included the responses below:

- **Would you implement the proposed action plan?**

  - **Departments Responses**
    - Yes. (There was a consensus among participants. However, other recommendations were mentioned above) – *Heads of Departments Administrator (Permanent Secretary)*

- **Administrator's Responses**
  - Yes. (There was a consensus among participants) – *Heads of Departments Administrator (Permanent Secretary)*

The EXCO members were collectively in support of implementing the proposed action plan. However, some offered specific feedback relevant to the importance of gaining the support of organisational leaders and executing the action plan in a manner that encourages participation. Besides, we recognise that this plan may take some time for it to reap its full benefits to our organisation and other organisations.

5.5 Recommendations Based on the Discussion

Overall, based on the findings of this research and the proposed objectives of the action plan, I explicitly recommend that the ministry develop a new policy related to training for attending the issues addressed in this study and start practising other existing guidelines related to work procedures, rules, and regulations, promote the objectives of the proposed plan and the reduction of poor **Employees' Engagement in Ministry of Youth and Sports of Maldives:**

Develop a new **Training Policy** focusing on improving the skills of employees and on increasing training and development opportunities for employees. The policy should explicitly state who can apply for paid leave, who are eligible for the limited long-term training available and to whom and how long to provide release from work during office hours and the conditions for such provisions. Furthermore, it should state the need for developing a better training requirement, thereby focusing on the needs of the organisation and opportunities for employees who need more training and who deserve it most. The purpose is to enhance employees' engagement and commitment since it will improve the know-how of employees that in-turn will increase their performance, as mentioned in the qualitative part of this study.

The analysis revealed many employees of MYS believe the organisation do not reward them well and that there is a lack of recognition of their work. Thus, I firmly believe that there is a need to develop a reward and recognition policy so that they will be encouraged to get engaged in their work better. In the interview, employees said that saying just a thank you was not enough, and there should be more than that. Hence, my other recommendation is to develop a new **Employee Reward and Recognition Policy** to reward employees, such as recognising the best employee of the month, the best employee of the year, to have social gatherings at least once a

month and to generate funds for such events by organising fundraising events through employees' club.

The other recommendation proposed is to make use **of the existing policies** to supervise and monitor employees and practice more collaborative leadership practice. Based on the analysis, I initially recommended developing new policies only, given that many employees are of the view that in MYS, we do not have all the required policies and procedures. However, after discussing the recommendations with EXCO members, I changed my recommendation as mentioned above and to make use of existing policies and procedures. Even I believe that we do have many good policies and procedures that we hardly practised. One of such procedures is monitoring and supervising employees daily, based on the targets established at the beginning of the year. It seems to be high time that we started supervising and monitoring employees more. Some employees whom I interviewed said that when they were being supervised and monitored it makes them realise the importance of their job and their role and when they understand their importance it helps them to be more engaged and committed.

The research findings also warrant a more collaborative effort relevant to implement the recommended action plan given that this is about the whole organisation and I cannot do it by myself if others are not practising it themselves. However, I have the power to influence as a department head and a member of EXCO. As noted by Owen (2014) who synthesised three authors work, collaborative decision-making sums up each other's views in decision making rather than a concession by taking into account individual consideration of the structure of the decision.

5.6 Potential Benefits, Obstacles, and Unintended Consequences

To enhance the validity of the proposed actions, I evaluated feedback from EXCO members regarding the potential benefits, obstacles, and unintended consequences of the proposed action plan. I found that members believed that the proposed actions would benefit the organisation by:

- Promoting awareness of employees' skills training and engagement
- Fostering a better work environment; and
- Promote collaborative decision making about organisational policies

5.7 Chapter Summary

In summary, the proposed action plan was developed based on the research conducted for the organisation. In general, all the recommendations were taken positively by EXCO members. However, I amended some recommendations after my discussion with the EXCO members. The recommendation concerning training, I modified with the suggestion of development of training policy and recommendation related to the organisation not having some policies was taken with, making use of existing policies and developing new policies when needed such as a reward and recognition policy.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

6.0 Introduction

The chapter starts with a summary and a conclusion based on the whole study. In this chapter, I have highlighted the main findings based on analysis and literature review and whether it proved the hypotheses. Furthermore, I have explained the main findings related to research questions and recommendations based on the results. Besides, I have highlighted the findings in connection to previous researches, limitations of this study and reflections on the researcher's learning experience as well as the main challenges faced in the process of research.

6.1 Summary

In the study, I focused on finding the effectiveness of the skills training programme for employees' engagement and the relationship between skills training and employees' engagement of MYS. I conducted a mixed-method of research for the study. The quantitative, as well as the qualitative analysis, revealed that the majority of employees are of the view that the skills training programme helped in improving their engagement, job commitment, and performance. However, there were suggestions for further improvements, such as long-term training, providing more information and time to apply for the training courses. Furthermore, as the findings revealed (chapter 4), there is a connection between employees' engagement and skills training and employees' engagement and commitment.

Additionally, it disclosed job satisfaction had an insignificant mediating effect on employees' engagement and job commitment. The literature review (chapter 2) revealed various drivers of employees' engagement or facilitators that help in employees' engagement, multiple theories and empirical studies were used to relate to the findings of the study. One of the drivers of employees' engagement is training and development, which I looked into in this study.

Employees' engagement seems to be quite a recent yet popular topic in the area of management literature even though there are few empirical studies conducted about the concept (Bergström and Martínez, 2016). The literature on employees' engagement shows that when employees are engaged, it leads to an increase in productivity as their performance increases. Thus, it helps to increase organisational performance as well leading to a gain in profit of the organisations in the case of the corporate sector. Various theoretical and empirical conceptual

reviews disclosed that employees' engagement is, in fact, one of the most critical factors of an organisation and that it should be paid greater importance and effort on enhancing employees' engagement. The most popular theory related to employees' engagement seems to be the social exchange theory. The theory states that employees of an organisation think of the benefits they gain from an organisation including reward and recognition, career development opportunities and the kind of work they have to perform. Employees of MYS as well stated the need for advanced training, reward and recognition, supervision and monitoring and performance management. In this study, I focused on employees' engagement and skills training of MYS. It revealed that the training helped in the improvement of the engagement of employees as more than 70% of respondents were positive about the skills training programme.

Additionally, the statistical analysis conducted disclosed that there is a significant and positive relationship between employees' engagement and skills training in MYS. The results confirmed the findings of the literature on employees' engagement and training. Based on the readings from the literature review, I developed a conceptual framework, which shows employees' engagement and commitment leads to organisational performance. It revealed that engagement comprises of several drivers, and the combined drivers lead to commitment. Thus, displaying commitment is dependent upon engagement which is the independent variable. Hence, I have summarised links between engagement comprising of several drivers, and commitment in the conceptual framework. It also helped me to develop my hypotheses and research questions.

Through the statistical analysis, I examined the impact of employees' engagement, and commitment had on one another, and it disclosed that there is a link between these two concepts. Thus, revealing an improvement in engagement helps in increase in commitment as well. The qualitative analysis enabled me to find out how effective the skills training programme was in assisting the employees to be more engaged in their work. The correlation calculation revealed that there is a positive and strong correlation between employees' engagement skills training. Furthermore, most employees whom I interviewed explained how it helped them in their work, in terms of improvement in the quality of their work which in turn aided them to perform better. However, it also revealed that skills training alone is not enough to make employees more engaged in the organisation. There are other critical drivers of employees' engagement, such as reward and recognition, job characteristics, effective communication, supervision and monitoring and policies and procedures. Furthermore, it revealed that there are various aspects to be improved in the skills training programme such as delivery style, conducting advanced level training and the like.

Then I reflected upon the actions taken to attend the issue such as what I did at the planning stage of addressing the problem, such as developing a three-year skill training programme. The target of the programme was to provide at least one training related to work for all employees of the organisation by the end of the three years. I developed the plan after discussing with department heads, employees and executive committee members. Analysis and recommendations were discussed and shared with EXCO members who provided feedback on the recommendations. The initial recommendations were to offer more long-term training, change the style of training delivery, develop policies and procedures related to work, to hold employee appreciation events. Based on their suggestions, I revised the recommendations, which include providing the release for training to the employees who pursue long-term training, since, due to unavailability of a budget for training MYS will not be able to offer much long-term training. Further, I suggested to make use of existing policies and procedures as much as possible and develop a policy for training and release of employees for training. Additionally, I suggested to establish a reward and recognition policy and start supervising and monitoring employees properly.

6.2 Interpretation and Conclusion

Employees' engagement seems to be a critical aspect of any organisation without which it will not function properly. Engaged employees help the organisations to save time, money and make a better profit, and helps the organisations to perform better and achieve their main objectives in due time. The numerous theories and empirical researches on employees' engagement and commitment disclosed that these two concepts are different but linked. Commitment is being committed to staying in the organisation. Whereas engagement is a dedication to performing the job, fulfil the tasks with enthusiasms, putting extra effort and willingness to go beyond.

Furthermore, I discovered that satisfaction is as well linked to commitment though its link to engagement was not significant compared to commitment. As the literature has revealed in this study, also it showed that employees' engagement and job commitment are linked. Thus, supporting the hypothesis (H1$_2$).

Employees' engagement being a new concept; the literature did not provide much empirical research on how it will work differently in the private or public sector. Still, the public sector faces many challenges that are different from the private sector. Challenges faced by public sector organisations are mainly related to budget constraints, leadership style and not been open for change. Thus, modern public sector organisations need to be open to change and improve

internal communication, its leadership style even though we cannot resolve budget issues quickly. I notice such cases in MYS as well; many are not open for change, and there is high bureaucracy. Hence, to improve employees' engagement and commitment level of MYS, it needs to focus on drivers of engagement mainly, enhancing the skills training programme, reward and recognition and leadership style.

The mixed-method of research helped me to understand the situation of employees' engagement in MYS and the effectiveness of skills training programme implemented. It disclosed that the skills training programme is, in fact, useful and that many employees are positive about the programme even though there were suggestions for improvement. I shared and discussed the preliminary findings, as well as my recommendations, with EXCO. After the discussions in EXCO, we made some decisions regarding training and development, reward and recognition, supervision and monitoring and policies and procedures of MYS. During the conversation with EXCO members, we agreed to develop a training policy to provide training for the employees as much as possible. Still, more focus will be on facilitating employees by providing paid leave or releasing from work during office hours for pursuing higher education on their own (due to budget constraints). Besides, to monitor employees well and develop a new policy on reward and recognition so that monthly and annual recognition events can be held and practising existing policies and procedures appropriately and developing new policies mentioned above.

Based on the analysis from the reviewed literature, survey and discussions, I noticed that skills training and employees' engagement plays a vital role in an organisations performance and job satisfaction. Thus, MYS needs to take into account what was suggested by employees in the qualitative part of the analysis. That is to have the skills training programme continuously and develop a training policy detailing what shall be done about long-term training courses that are more than one year. And providing paid leave or release from work for those who pursue long-term training on their own, providing more information and enough time to apply for the training courses. In line with this, MYS need to concentrate on paying more attention to practising existing policies and performance standards as well as supervise and monitor the work of employees. It is equally important to develop a reward and recognition plan to reward and recognise the work of employees other than just by saying "thank you" or "well done"'. Otherwise educated and experienced employees might leave for better-paid jobs where leadership provides them guidance on performance and where their work is recognised better or where they get a better chance of career development. In this respect, leadership, training and development, reward and recognition,

supervision and monitoring seem to be the most critical areas in MYS that need immediate attention to improve its performance and deliver services to the public efficiently or to fulfil government pledges within the specified time frame.

Summarily, since the primary purpose of this study was to find out the effectiveness of the skills training programme and the extent to which it helped employees to be more engaged and committed to the organisation, through the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the study, the following recommendations were contrived, based on the various discussions with the EXCO:

1. The analysis disclosed that many employees agree that the skills training did help them. Nevertheless, they requested more long-term training. However, due to a limited budget, only a few long-term training can be provided. Thus, I recommended providing a more supportive role for employees who wish to pursue higher education by releasing employees for study without salary deduction. Also, to develop a training policy and guideline for approving and deciding how and whom to release for further studies so that most appropriate and deserved employees are provided such opportunities. Besides, the literature provides enough materials on the challenges faced by public sector organisations that are quite similar to what is evident in this organisation (MYS). As understandable, public sector organisations are not run for profit but rather to fulfil public needs such as to provide basic services and to fulfil pledges of the ruling government. A study conducted by the United Kingdom disclosed that employees who work in the public sector are least satisfied with where they work (Pritchard, 2008), compared to other sectors. Pritchard (2008) asserts that this leads to poor performance due to poor views on training, organisation, and the benefits they receive from the organisation. The public sector organisations must be more open for change to address these challenges, and get opinions of employees and act upon it, which is very poor in public sector organisations (ORC International, 2008). I come across quite similar situations occurring in the public sector organisations of the Maldives.

   Additionally, public sector organisations in the Maldives, especially government ministries, face budget constraints resulting in fewer funds for employees' benefits, training, and provision of resources needed. Most of the employees whom I interviewed in MYS stated that they were not happy about reward and recognition in the organisation. Many related reward and recognition to financial benefits or something tangible that helps their personal development, such as training or holiday packages which private sector

organisations provide. However, public sector organisations are unable to provide such benefits as rewards even though they provide essential benefits within the salary package. Some of the employees said that although their supervisor appreciates their work, verbal appreciation is not enough. It seems extrinsic motivation factors are vital as the SDT and self-concordance theory that is related to motivational factors reveal. Hence, to enhance employees' engagement and job commitment to MYS, it needs to focus on improving the skills training programme that is ongoing.

2. There is an urgent need for improved reward and recognition to appreciate the hard work of employees. Specifically, responses that are related to reward and recognition show that the mean scores are around 2. For this, I recommend having employee appreciation functions, social events, and certificate award ceremonies. It should, at the same time, have more social events for staff appreciation and try to involve as many staff as possible in the skills training programme and have long-term training as much as possible. Thus, MYS needs to have more social functions in appreciating employees, even if there is a limited budget for staff activities.

3. Since many employees believed that their superiors do not adequately monitor and supervise them, there is a need for improved supervision and monitoring of employees. Thus, MYS need to supervise and monitor the employees to check if they are performing their job well by following rules and regulations as well as by following the lay-down procedures. It will show the critical role of leadership on the part of superiors since junior employees require guidance and support from supervisors. Another important and vital aspect is leadership style since modern leadership style requires employees' involvement in decision making and open communication. With a limited budget, it will need considerable effort by leaders in engaging employees for work and to be more committed. Thus, it requires continuous effort by leaders rather than a once-off programme that is implemented for a specified period. It requires constant actions and implementation by involving employees of the organisation. Unfortunately, three of the main drivers of employees' engagement in the literature are among the main areas that employees in MYS are unhappiest about, as shown in the qualitative analysis (chapter 5). Specifically, most participants were of the interview stated that the supervisors and employees' relationship is unhealthy at MYS. Additionally, as can be seen from the quantitative analysis the mean

score related to employees' supervision and monitoring is 2.80 which means most of the employees disagreed to that fact that employees were well supervised and monitored. The aspect related to leadership shows that there is a need for proper guidance from leaders by supervising and monitoring the work of employees and giving them feedback. Generally, the challenges faced by public sector organisations are more significant, though, few challenges are different from the private sector (Ferguson, Ronayne and Rybacki, 2014).

The role of leadership style seems to be crucial; most of the interviewees said that they are unhappy about the supervisor and the subordinate relationship of the organisation. Here again, budget plays a vital role, given that there will not be much a leader can do without sufficient budget (Ferguson, Ronayne and Rybacki, 2014). As mentioned in the analysis (chapter 4), I noticed that if employees of a particular department are unhappy about the supervisor and subordinate relationship, then it is mostly unanimous though I conducted the interviews individually. In public sector organisations, there is the high bureaucracy that is more autocratic, thus requiring transformational leadership style in which collaborative decision making happens (Scofield, 2008). From the interviews, I learned that there was no proper communication and no respect for employees in MYS and that they are not involved in decision making. Therefore, in MYS, one of the areas that need improvement to better employees' engagement is leadership style. And this seems to be quite an area that needs development in the public sector in general as well.

4. There is an urgent need for the MYS to pay more attention to the factors that help employees' engagement, especially the crucial factors/drivers. MYS need to focus more on drivers such as job characteristics, monitoring, and supervision of employees (relationship with a supervisor or subordinate), training and growth opportunities, reward and recognition and policies and procedures. Although many employees believed there were not enough policies and procedures, the members of EXCO debunked this in discussion set. Members maintained that there were enough policies and procedures and they promised better implementations are going forward. Thus, the study recommends improved utilisation of existing policies and procedures. And the development of new ones such as a training policy and a reward and recognition policy. Studies have shown that (Markos and Sridevi, 2010; Zhang, 2015; Klein et al., 2012; Rubin, 2012 cited in Turunen, 2014) when there is an improvement in employees' engagement it will help in their commitment as well since commitment is dependent upon employees' engagement. For

example, another factor that employees in MYS were unhappy about was policies and procedures. The results disclosed that employees disagreed that there were significant performance standards and that there is performance management in the organisation. It displays that on average employees were unhappy about performance standards and performance management in MYS. Specifically, after the discussion with EXCO members, my recommendation is to develop a new training policy and policy on reward and recognition. Also, to practice existing policies and procedures and to supervise and adequately monitor employees. What enhances employees' engagement and job commitment seems to be the factors that require improvement in MYS.

6.3 Reflection on Research Hypotheses

I tested the various hypotheses to uncover the crucial employees' engagement variables from all reviewed literature during the first stage. Consequently, since I adopted a mixed-method in this study, the quantitative part involved the development and testing of specific hypotheses. In that sense, it is imperative to reflect upon the hypotheses, analysis, and findings related to the two hypotheses:

$H1_1$: There is a significant relationship between employees' skills training and employees' engagement in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

$H1_2$: There is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and job satisfaction

$H1_3$: Employees' satisfaction strongly mediates the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives

The quantitative analysis indicated that there is not much correlation between individual drivers of engagement except for variables related to job characteristics, relationship with supervisor and subordinates, training and growth opportunities, clear communication, rewards and recognition, and policies and procedures related to work. However, these six constructs loaded more on variables related to job characteristic and relationship between supervisor and subordinates in the estimated factor analysis. Thus, MYS shall pay more attention to making employees realise the importance of their jobs, help them understand and recognise positive outcomes because of their job. And appreciate the works of employees and communicate the kind of performance expected from them, encourage open communication so that they do not feel threatened if they communicate honestly. Also, share as much information as possible to avoid or

reduce miscommunications and misunderstandings. It supports what I found in the literature on empirical studies on employees' engagement and commitment in emerging and developing countries. Communication, leadership, supervisor and subordinates' relationship, fair rewarding and training are the main drivers of engagement that help in employees' engagement of developing countries and previous studies in the Maldives as well have disclosed.

Additionally, it revealed that job satisfaction did not bring significant effect on individual drivers of engagement (H1$_2$:) and it did not have a mediating effect on the overall employees' engagement and job commitment (H1$_3$:). Therefore, to make employees more engaged, employees' level of commitment and satisfaction has to be increased too. However, it should be noted that as previously mentioned, satisfaction is one-sided; an employee can be satisfied while not being engaged or committed to working whereas, employees' engagement and job commitment work two ways. Since employees' engagement and job commitment have a significant correlation, what enhances one factor seems to improve the other factors. There again revealing the significance of job characteristic and the relationship between the supervisor and subordinates. I found this agreeing with the definition of engagement provided by Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, (2002) which stated that employees' engagement is the individual's participation and satisfaction along with interest for the job. Besides, Batista-Taran et al. (2013) view employees' engagement occurring if employees are aware of what is happening related to the job, the outcomes required, are provided with the necessary resources. And also, if they are involved in organisational development, allowed open communication, and are made to realise the significant role that they play in the organisational performance (Batista-Taran et al. 2013). However, since this study focused more on skills training and employees' engagement, perhaps for future research, it is crucial to focus on job satisfaction.

6.4 Reflection on Research Questions

Similarly, through the research, answers to the questions mentioned below were sought:

1. To what extent the skills training programme implemented for enhancing employees' engagement has helped? (Are engagement and job satisfaction positively related?)
2. Are employees' engagement and job satisfaction related to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives?
3. Is employees' satisfaction capable of mediating the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives?

I sought the answers to the question related to skills training programme through qualitative and quantitative analysis and literature review. As the literature described (chapter 2), training and development for employees seem to be one of the most significant drivers of employees' engagement. Even though I noticed that there are few empirical studies on employees' engagement and training (Salanova et al., 2005; Suan et al., 2014), it shows that training plays a vital role in employees' engagement and as per the study conducted for MYS as well. As shown in the findings (Chapter 4) the survey results disclosed that 74.3% agreed that the skills training programme helped in their job performance, and 79.2% agreed that it helped in their personal development. Furthermore, the participants of the interview said that the skills training programme is worthy and that it helped. Employees added that they were able to apply what they learned, and it helped them perform better.

Moreover, they said that it is useful given the fact that it helped them communicate better since some of those training courses were for soft skills development such as communication and leadership. However, the research for the skills training programme was carried out not long after it was implemented and focused only on participants' views and their suggestions, and there were few noticeable change observations. And there was no further research on the documents related to employees' performance or results achieved after the skills training programme. Hence, another research will be needed to see the performance of the organisation at the end of the three years to obtain a better picture and impact of the skills training programme. The future study will assist in identifying the performance of the organisation before and after the skills training programme. It will also focus on the performance of employees who received the skills training before and after receiving the training. In the future studies, observation of behaviour and data on results achievement has to be checked, other than survey and interviews of the employees.

Even though the overall impression on the skills training programme seems to be positive, there were suggestions for further improvement that is vital for organisational learning and development and employees' engagement. Some employees requested long-term training such as diploma and higher-level courses, having training courses with more interactive activities rather than just traditional style delivery in which the tutor delivers the course through presentations and handout. Conducting training that is less crashed and select participants based on their work rather than giving a choice to staff based on their interest. Furthermore, based on the findings, I suggested that it would be good if the organisation decide the training to be conducted based on a well-prepared training requirement. And that it will be better if the lecturers are more prepared and to

have continuous skills training programme. Thus, it is essential to include long-term training as much as possible so that employees will feel more motivated to get engaged in their work as this seems to be something many employees look forward. However, as mentioned previously, based on recommendations from EXCO members, I amended the recommendations, to include the development of a training policy which will detail who and how to provide paid leave for training as well as release from work.

6.4.1. Are employees' engagement and job satisfaction related, in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives?

I found the first surprising result of this study seeking the answer to this question. And indeed, another probable round of research by me as a scholar-practitioner. Specifically, the question of whether employees' engagement and job satisfaction are positively related was addressed in the analysis section (chapter 4) and through hypothesis $H1_2$. Again, based on the multiple regression equation two results, when I calculated the effect of employees' engagement on job satisfaction overall, it shows there was no significant effect on employees' satisfaction. The analysis showed that it differs from what the literature on employees' engagement and job satisfaction states.

6.4.2. Is Employees' satisfaction capable of mediating the relationship between employees' engagement and job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives?

Again, this was the second surprising result of the study. And another probable round of research by me as a scholar-practitioner. Specifically, based on the output of equation 3, aimed at checking the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the employees' engagement and job commitment. It revealed that the overall mediating effect of job satisfaction with employees' engagement and commitment that there is no significant relationship. Again, the analysis showed that it differs from the literature on the mediating influence of job satisfaction on employees' engagement and commitment states.

6.5 Learning from the Study

Researching this study provided me with an invaluable learning experience in terms of conducting the research. It helped me learn about the methods and methodology for researching in addition to planning, designing and conducting research for this study. I have learned the importance of scholar-practitioners in the working environment. The study further provided me with an insight into continuous organisational development and taking actions. Additionally, it helped me to learn more about quantitative research and statistical analysis, which refreshed my

previous learning. In the process of the interviews, I learned some invaluable knowledge about leadership, feelings of employees and what they expect from their supervisors. Hence, it helped me to reflect upon the interviews and get ideas from it when I make decisions related to employees in the organisation. Besides, it helped me to empathise with other researchers who approach me for help in getting questionnaires filled and confidentiality issues related to employees.

Moreover, it helped me empathise with employees as well. For example, when an employee whom I interviewed mentioned that his/her supervisor does not delegate work or do not involve them in decision making, it made me reflect upon my decision-making process. And when I make decisions to think carefully. It made me put myself in their shoes and determine not to do that to my employees.

6.6 Personal Development as a Scholar-Practitioner

As a scholar-practitioner, I learned the importance of learning through experience, applying what works in a given situation and understand that sometimes there might not be a fixed solution but rather a continuous cycle of actions. I learned the importance of being prepared for change and organisational crisis. Moreover, I learned that a plan might change until it is implemented, and it might further improve in the process of implementation, which I have been practising in my organisation as well. Another important aspect that I learned and started practising is creating knowledge by preparing documents myself if no employee can do it and then making it available for organisational use. Further, we have started with partnering with NGOs and international organisations who have knowledge and experience in the areas related to MYS. For example, we have partnered with the development of sports facilities, getting technical assistance from international organisations and having discussions with experts in the field who are not employees of the organisation. Furthermore, since learning about the leaderful practice, I have been adapting my leadership style based on the situation. And sometimes I get involved with staff and perform tasks with them while other times I perform a task myself if there was no staff to complete it, and sometimes I show them how to do by providing guidance and instructions.

6.7 Recommendations

Based on my discussion with EXCO members, the members assured me that I would have full support for the mentioned action plan and specific tasks. The organisation very much look forward to such a detailed study conducted for the first of its kind. The analysis chapter provided support for me in coming up with such a plan and specific actions. Thus, to improve MYS's current

situation, it shall follow the proposed plan and appropriate steps. The Action Plan is a practical plan which is developed specifically for MYS based on the data I gathered from the employees for this study. After discussing my recommendations with the EXCO members, I have adjusted my recommendations as mentioned provided below:

Specific Action MYS Shall Take

MYS shall assign someone to develop the new policy on training and development. Training Panel will be most suitable for this task. Additionally, members of EXCO can assign the work of developing a recreation plan, and the Human Resource Department shall establish a policy for reward and recognition, as suggested in the Proposed Action Plan in Chapter 5. Besides, MYS shall inform all departments to start supervising and monitoring employees properly and have follow-up meetings with a brief to find out whether it is happening. Furthermore, MYS may target to begin practising the new plans before the end of 2020 and review the progress of the organisation after every six months. Moreover, follow-up research shall happen at the end of 2021.

In summary, MYS shall take specific actions stated below:

#	Proposed Action	Plan Date	Action Date
1	Assign the task of developing the Training Policy	Oct 2019	
2	Assign MYS Employees' Club to develop a recreation plan	Oct 2019	
3	HR Department to develop reward & recognition policy	Oct 2019	
4	Start practising as per the plans		Jan 2020
5	Inform all supervisors to start supervising & monitoring employees properly	Jan 2020	
6	Review meetings		August 2020
7	Organisation's progress review		Bi-annual
8	Follow-up Research		Nov 2021

6.8 Action Implementation and Results

We have started the implementation of the recommendations about six months back, and results may be somewhat not known since it will not be possible to find out a valid result within such a short period. However, we have received over twenty commendations and "thank you"

letters from participants, attesting to the much-desired awareness of the "influence of employees' engagement and job commitment and satisfaction in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives". The overwhelming recognition on the fact that all the one hundred and one (101) employees of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives participated in this study.

Again, I noted that employees are now released from work for long-term training that they pursue on their finance if they requested. Specifically, ten employees from various departments of MYS were issued release letters to continue a one to two-year management development courses at various international universities such as British Universities in Colombo, National University of Maldives and national universities in India, since 2017. Of course, we have a draft training and developed and finalised release policy. Besides, five employees have been released from work during office hours to pursue a Diploma in Public Administration at the Civil Service Training Institute. However, since it will take some time to implement all the results, as a scholar-practitioner, I intend to conduct an impact assessment study after about a year or two.

6.9 Contribution to the Knowledge

6.9.1 Contribution to Management/Practice

The contribution to the management from the study will be the practical application to the organisation and helping to address one of the main issues of the organisation. It revealed the views of the employees related to their engagement, satisfaction, commitment and how the training programme facilitated them in improving their performance. Thus, this will lead the organisation to make further improvement in their training programme, identify the importance of employees' engagement and commitment for the organisation, and what measures can be taken as a government organisation to improve its performance.

Additionally, it helped MYS to look into the areas that need most attention such as reward and recognition, the relationship between supervisor and subordinates, policies and procedures and supervision and monitoring as revealed by the qualitative analysis. Moreover, it helped MYS to look into other related areas that improve employees' engagement, commitment, and satisfaction, given that the hypotheses testing disclosed that there is a link between employees' engagement and training, commitment and an insignificant link to satisfaction. Additionally, the study will help MYS to develop the most important policies related to employees as mentioned above, such as a training policy and a reward and recognition policy.

6.9.2 Contribution to the Society

The study will help other organisations to get an idea of employees' engagement, commitment, satisfaction, and the importance of skills training. It will help them to try and see if a training programme will be useful in their situation, if not, to seek the driver most preferred by their employees. Additionally, it will assist in identifying the real challenges government organisations similar to MYS face and how organisations can minimise such challenges. For instance, identifying the main issues in the organisation in a collaborative manner (Burns 2010 cited in Kasula, 2015) so that it will help them to identify the main challenges they face and how organisations can address such issues by collaborative action-taking.

I firmly believe this study will contribute to the community in general since in this study, as well the issue is being addressed through actions, taking into account the services to be provided to the community in general. As mentioned previously, being a government Ministry, we have to fulfil the government's pledges and given the fact that we are behind our schedule and having high absenteeism and turnover, I took into account the issue of employees' engagement and commitment. Furthermore, my recommendations are based on suggestions from employees, and I discussed it in EXCO to see if it is possible to implement those actions. My recommendations were not a wish list of mine or the employees but rather practical solutions that can be worked only by taking steps.

6.10 Personal Development

Through this DBA programme and by conducting research for this thesis and writing the thesis, I have learned the importance of learning and development and continuous improvement. I have learned the importance of learning by taking action; the importance of change that is required for constant growth. Also, I have been practising these in my workplace. The journey has also made me practice open communication and an open mind for knowledge creation. It also taught me leaderful practice; that leaders have to act based on situations and that for employees' engagement leaders play a very critical role. Thus, in my daily work life, I have become a more conscious leader. I try to provide guidance when needed, delegate work to more confident and efficient employees and monitor less those employees. Moreover, I try to practice open dialogue whenever possible to hear the employees and take into account their suggestion as well as attend their concerns.

6.11 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study

In this study, I intended to address the issue of employees' engagement and the effectiveness of skills training programme that we implemented in MYS, which is a government Ministry. Thus, what was applicable in this organisation may not be applicable in general but could apply to a public sector organisation in island nations. However, I explained the general concepts, the importance of employees' engagement and various empirical studies taking into account public, private, developed, emerging and developing countries so that it will help in general contribution to the literature despite having the mentioned limitations. One of the main problems that I came across during data collection was, initially, I planned to complete data collection within three weeks. However, it took me more than a month to complete the data collection and the interview process. The reason was due to the unavailability of some employees as they were on leave or training, and it was not possible to leave out any employee due to small sample size. The other problem was, some participants lost their questionnaires in time for collection, and I had to reprint and provide additional questionnaires. These were not related to the quality of the data or information, but rather some administrative matters.

In the case of the qualitative part, some employees were suspicious and reluctant to provide some answers and asked whether what they say will be confidential and whether the organisation will penalise them if they responded honestly. It took some time for me to convince them that it will be confidential and that I have received their consent in writing, so I will be responsible if there is a breach of confidentiality. Even some department heads were reluctant to send their subordinates for interviews fearing those subordinates might be too open about their views related to the department.

I would like to highlight that the actual results of the change process and decisions taken based on the suggestion given by employees will be more visible only after a year or more. Impact of the skills training programme will be noticeable after completion of the three-year plan; at the time of data collection, only one and a half year had passed. To reduce the limitations and find out actual results of the implementation of recommendations, I intend to carry a follow-up study so that I can obtain a better outcome of the training programme and documentary evidence to analyse the results better.

Finally, and as a scholar-practitioner, two surprising results I noticed were that employees' job satisfaction had no relationships and mediating influence between employees' engagement and job commitment. I consider this unexpected finding as Potential Avenue for another research.

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Appendix I: Survey Instrument

Questionnaire on Employees' Engagement, Satisfaction and Job Commitment

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify the engagement and commitment level of employees of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and identify which factors that influence employees' engagement of the organisation.

A. Demographic Information
1. What is your gender?
    a) Male
    b) Female

2. What is your age group?
    a. 25 or under
    b. 26-35
    c. 36-45
    d. 46-55
    e. 56 or older

3. What is your highest qualification level?
    a. Secondary school or higher secondary school
    b. Vocational/technical school
    c. Some college
    d. Bachelor' degree
    e. Master's degree
    f. Doctoral degree
    g. Other, please specify ……………..

4. What is your marital status?
    a. Single
    b. Married
    c. Divorced
    d. Separated
    e. Widowed

5. How long have you been working in this organisation?
    a. Less 1 year
    b. 1-3 years
    c. 5 or more years
    d. 6-10 yeas
    e. 10 or more years

B.   Employee Engagement

Job Characteristics

1. My work is appreciated by my organisation

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

2. My supervisor helps me realize how important my work is to the organisation

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

3.   Mostly I perceive positive outcomes because of my work

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

Relationship with supervisor and subordinates

1. My manager always shares information with his/her subordinates

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

2. My supervisor has high expectations for our team's performance

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

3. My supervisor encourages open communication without judging me

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

Training and Growth Opportunities

1. I'm aware of the skills training programme of the organization

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

2. I'm provided with enough time to apply for the programme

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

3. The training is useful for my job performance

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

4. The training help my personal development and skills improvement

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

Clear Communication

1. Top management effectively communicates with other employees of the organisation

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

2. Expression of opinions and passing of information is encouraged in this organisation

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

3. I understand the strategic goals of the broader organisation

    ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

4. I know what I should do to help the company meet its goals and objectives

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

Rewards and Recognition
    Leadership

1. Employees are well supervised and monitored in this organisation

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

2. Senior management is answerable for generating outcomes

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

3. I can easily express my opinions regarding matters related to work

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

4. Top management sincerely asks and considers employees' views and thoughts

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

5. Having difference of opinions is not looked down on this organisation

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

1. The pay I get is reasonable for my job

      ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
          Disagree   Agree

2. My pay is competitive with similar jobs from other organisation's

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
        Disagree   Agree

3. The compensations that I receive in this organisation are similar to those
offered by other organisations

     ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
        Disagree   Agree

4. I'm aware of my benefit plans

     ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
        Disagree   Agree

5. I'm happy with my benefit package

     ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
        Disagree   Agree

Organisational Justice

1. I have all the resources needed to perform my job

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
      Disagree   Agree

2. Employees are always treated with respect in this organization

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
      Disagree   Agree

3. I can approach management with suggestions and criticisms

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
      Disagree   Agree

Policies and Procedures related to work

1. This organisation has great performance standards

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
      Disagree   Agree

2. Employees are made answerable for achieving goals and meeting expectations

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
      Disagree   Agree

3. There is performance management to ensure all employees are achieving results

    ○ Strongly   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly
      Disagree   Agree

C. Employee Satisfaction

		Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	In my organisation, employees are encouraged to come up with new and innovative ideas	○	○	○	○	○
2.	I realise it is very vital to value diversity (to recognize and respect the value of differences in race, gender, age)	○	○	○	○	○
3.	My job enables me to make good use of my skills and abilities.	○	○	○	○	○
4.	I am very satisfied with the information I receive from management on what is going on in my division	○	○	○	○	○
5.	I am satisfied with my involvement in decisions that affect my work	○	○	○	○	○
6.	Considering everything, I am happy with my job	○	○	○	○	○
7.	I am happy with the information I receive from management on what's going on in the organisation	○	○	○	○	○
8.	I am happy with my opportunity to get a better job in this organisation	○	○	○	○	○

D. Job Commitment

1. The vision and goals of this organization are important to me personally

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

2. The organization consults employee on matters that affect them

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

3. My job is vital for achieving the organisation's missions

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

4. My supervisor keeps me updated about the goals and mission of the organisation

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

5. I'm aware of and know about the organisation's strategic goals

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

6. I feel personally happy after accomplishing my tasks well

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

7. I am proud to tell others that I work for this organisation

   ○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

8. My values and this organisation's values are quite similar

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

9. I will recommend this organisation to my friends

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

10. This organisation has a good reputation locally

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

11. I am willing to accept any task to keep working for this organisation

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

12. I'm ready to put extra effort to support this organisation to be successful

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

13. I truly care about the fate of this organisation

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

14. This organisation has developed as a place to work over the past few years

| | Strongly Disagree | | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Strongly Agree |

15. This organisation is well managed

○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

16. I would say morale in this organisation is good

○ Strongly Disagree   ○ Disagree   ○ Neutral   ○ Agree   ○ Strongly Agree

Appendix II: Interview Guide

1. Are you aware of the engagement training programme that is going on in the Ministry of Youth and Sports?	
2. Have you received any training over the past two years?	
3. What do you feel about the engagement training that you received?	
4. How useful is the training programme for your job performance?	
5. Are you satisfied with the content of the training programme?	
6. Has your level of job commitment increased after the training?	
7. Has the level of communication improved after the training?	
8. Are you now aware of your duties and responsibilities in your organisation?	
9. What needs to be improved in the training programme?	
10. What kind of training should be provided to you?	

11. What are the most effective mode of training?	
12. Have you got any suggestion on training programme?	
13. How satisfied are you with the reward and recognition is the organisation?	
14. Kindly tell how your superiors and superior officers assist you in realizing the importance of your work to your organisation	
15. Can you explain the supervisors and subordinates' relationship in your organisation?	
16. What is the effective communication in your organisation?	
17. What is the level of supervision and monitoring in your organisation by superiors in your organisation	
18. Is there effective reward and recognition in your organisation?	
19. What would be the most effective way to make employees more engaged to the organisation?	
20. Generally, how satisfied are you working for your organisation?	

Appendix III: Thematic Framework

Codes	Themes
Sometimes get information, but not much Some times they do provide information They send when it is about to start They send the information about upcoming training to HR	Inadequate information about the training programme
2 training over the past 2 years provided 8 training over the past 2 years Received about 4 or more training Received 2 per year Received 2 or three	Lack of consideration of the training plan & objectives of it
The training is good but a little basic Gets refreshed, very useful Really good & useful Got new knowledge Got new skills Effective Got more knowledge helps self-development	Positive feelings towards the training provided
Relevant to work Work improved Related to work Can apply for work Able to perform better More knowledge about palming the job Focused for work Targeted to job performance	Applicability of the Training
Got to know more Increased motivation level of commitment increased More confident Helps in moral support Speed improved Efficiency improved Exposure to new knowledge	How the Training Helped the Employees' Performance
Covered how to deal with customers Helped improve networking Interpersonal relationship improved Able to apply what was learned in training on communication	How Training Helped Employees' Communication
Was not aware of what to do, learned by doing Did not know, with time I found out Was not told but I make sure that I'm aware of Initially didn't know what to do Was not briefed but found out with time	Need for Clear Instructions
Conduct more relevant training Careful selection process Supervisor to identify the staff in need of training Advanced level training Chance to interested staff	Suggestions for Improvement of the Training Programme
Training on conflict resolution Training on Communication Training on Leadership	Employees in need of soft skills enhancement

Training in interpersonal skills Training on Stress management	
Part-time on the job training Practice-based part-time Part-time on the job trainings Part-time on the job training	Need for part-time on the job training
Process and Conduction Proper training requirement proper selection process Training within the working hours To have a selection process Seating arrangement Delivery Style Same content always Refreshment Roleplay Something interesting Additional materials Classroom set-up	Improvement for Training Programme Selection
Not much reward & recognition No such thing Need more appreciation Need more appreciation No reward and recognition Sometimes supervisor recognize work	Lack of Proper Reward & Recognition
Don't feel that they do that Not much supervision No guidance given not much supervision monitoring to a certain extent much supervised No proper supervision No proper task assignment, we don't know what to do Not monitored much No proper supervision	Need to Supervise and Monitor Employees
Supervisor subordinate relationship is not good Directs by rules Unhealthy relationship No proper communication Currently not effective the way they communicate No respect for staff	Unhealthy Supervisor-subordinate Relationship
Face to face for more clarification Face to face communication face-to-face communication through meetings Face-to-face Better to communicate nicely face-to-face	Preferred Mode of Communication
Having a proper reward & recognition system Supervisor appreciating work Appreciating work improve teamwork assign tasks fairly supervise more, give orientation, training at the beginning of the job tenure monthly staff appreciation event	What Makes Employees More Engaged

Building teamwork, social events, improve soft skills monitor and give mentoring, supervisor also getting engaged	
happy to work in this organisation Satisfied, low salary but not much work not fully satisfied Not satisfied at all due to low recognition In general, everything is very good I love this place I'm really happy and satisfied	How Satisfied Employees are with the Organisation

Appendix IV: Mean & Standard Deviation of Drivers of Engagement and Satisfaction and Variance Calculation of drivers of Engagement

Variables	Mean
Job Characteristics-work is appreciated by supervisor	3.3366
Job Characteristics-supervisor helps to realize importance of job	3.6931
Job Characteristics-perceive positive outcomes because of work	3.5149
Relationship with Supervisor & Subordinates- manager shares information	3.5446
Relationship with Supervisor & Subordinates- supervisor has high expectations	3.9208
Relationship with Supervisor & Subordinates- encourages open communication	3.6139
Training & Growth Opportunities- aware of skills training prgramme	3.4752
Training & Growth Opportunities-provided with enough time to apply	3.4059
Training & Growth Opportunities-trainings are useful for job performance	4.0198
Training & Growth Opportunities-trainings are helpful for personal development	4.0693
Clear Communication-Effectiveness of top management's communication	3.0693
Clear Communication-Expression of information & passing of information	3.1386
Clear Communication-understand strategic goals of the organisation	3.4059
Clear Communication-understand what to do to help the org meet goals & objectives	4.0297
Leadership-employees are well supervised and monitored	2.8020
Leadership-senior management is answerable for generating outcomes	3.2673
Leadership-can easily express opinions regarding matters related to work	3.5446
Leadership-top management sincerely asks & considers views & thoughts	3.0099
Leadership-having difference of opinions is not looked down	3.1782
Rewards & Recognition-pay is reasonable for the job	2.0891
Rewards & Recognition-pay is competitive with similar jobs	2.3267
Rewards & Recognition-compensations are similar to other organisations	2.3069
Rewards & Recognition-aware of benefit plans	3.2871
Rewards & Recognition-happy with benefit package	2.4257
Organisational Justice-have all the resources needed to perform job	3.0297
Organisational Justice-employees are always treated with respect	3.2772
Organisational Justice-can approach management with suggestions and criticisms	3.3069
Policies and Procedures-organisation has great performance standards	2.9703
Policies and Procedures-employees are made answerable for goals & expectations	3.2871
Policies and Procedures- there is performance management	2.9604
Commitment	3.3564

Mean & Standard Deviation of Drivers of Engagement & Job Commitment
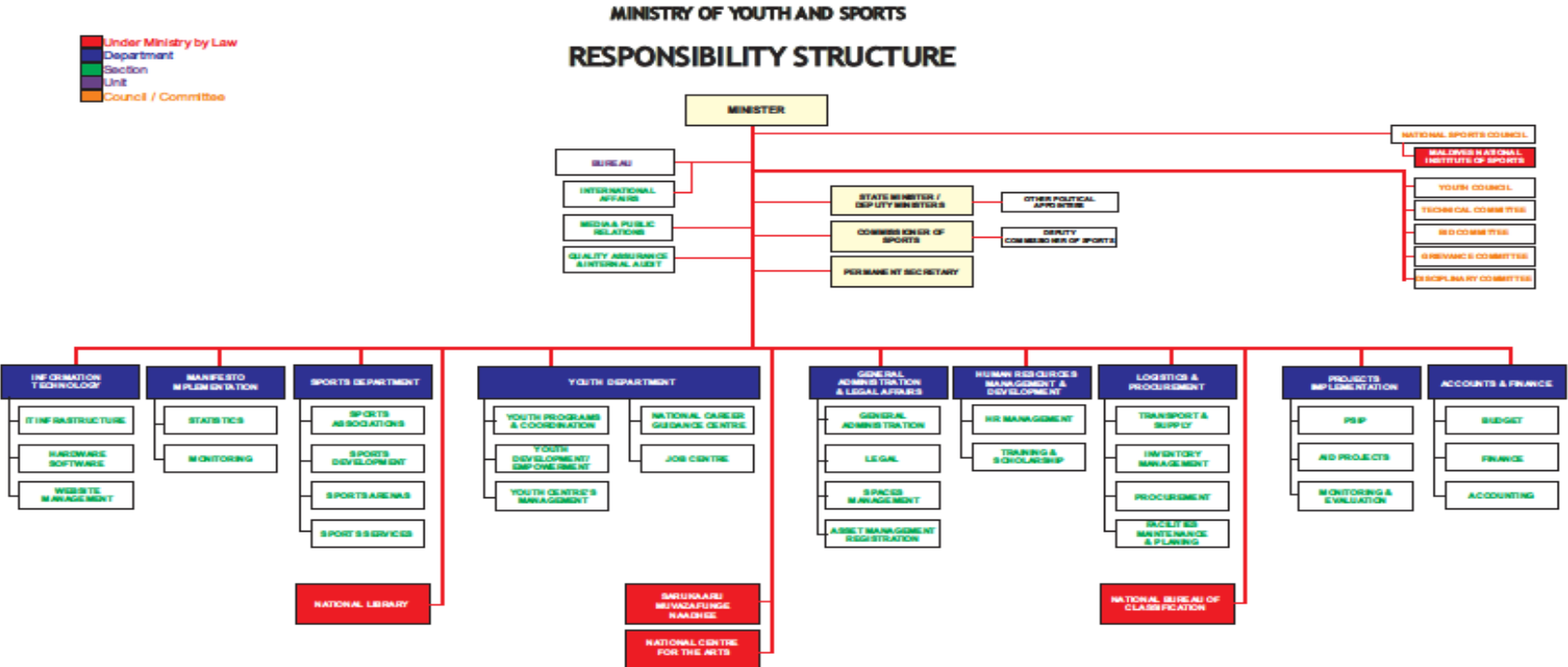
Variables	Mean
Job Characteristics-work is appreciated by supervisor	3.3366
Job Characteristics-supervisor helps to realize importance of job	3.6931
Job Characteristics-perceive positive outcomes because of work	3.5149
Relationship with Supervisor & Subordinates- manager shares information	3.5446
Relationship with Supervisor & Subordinates- supervisor has high expectations	3.9208
Relationship with Supervisor & Subordinates- encourages open communication	3.6139
Training & Growth Opportunities- aware of skills training programme	3.4752
Training & Growth Opportunities-provided with enough time to apply	3.4059
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Clear Communication-Effectiveness of top management's communication	3.0693
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Clear Communication-understand what to do to help the org meet goals & objectives	4.0297
Leadership-employees are well supervised and monitored	2.8020
Leadership-senior management is answerable for generating outcomes	3.2673
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Leadership-top management sincerely asks & considers views & thoughts	3.0099
Leadership-having difference of opinions is not looked down	3.1782
Rewards & Recognition-pay is reasonable for the job	2.0891
Rewards & Recognition-pay is competitive with similar jobs	2.3267
Rewards & Recognition-compensations are similar to other organisations	2.3069
Rewards & Recognition-aware of benefit plans	3.2871
Rewards & Recognition-happy with benefit package	2.4257
Organizational Justice-have all the resources needed to perform job	3.0297
Organizational Justice-employees are always treated with respect	3.2772
Organizational Justice-can approach management with suggestions and criticisms	3.3069
Policies and Procedures-organisation has great performance standards	2.9703
Policies and Procedures-employees are made answerable for goals & expectations	3.2871
Policies and Procedures- there is performance management	2.9604
Satisfaction	3.5990

Mean & Standard Deviation of Drivers of Engagement and Satisfaction

Appendix V: Organisation Structure

MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS

RESPONSIBILITY STRUCTURE

Legend:
- Under Ministry by Law
- Department
- Section
- Unit
- Council / Committee

MINISTER

- BUREAU
- INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
- MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS
- QUALITY ASSURANCE & INTERNAL AUDIT

- STATE MINISTER / DEPUTY MINISTERS — OTHER POLITICAL APPOINTEE
- COMMISSIONER OF SPORTS — DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF SPORTS
- PERMANENT SECRETARY

- NATIONAL SPORTS COUNCIL
- MALDIVES NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SPORTS
- YOUTH COUNCIL
- TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
- BID COMMITTEE
- GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE
- DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- IT INFRASTRUCTURE
- HARDWARE SOFTWARE
- WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

MANIFESTO IMPLEMENTATION
- STATISTICS
- MONITORING

SPORTS DEPARTMENT
- SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS
- SPORTS DEVELOPMENT
- SPORTS ARENAS
- SPORTS SERVICES
- NATIONAL LIBRARY

YOUTH DEPARTMENT
- YOUTH PROGRAMS & COORDINATION
- YOUTH DEVELOPMENT EMPOWERMENT
- YOUTH CENTRE'S MANAGEMENT
- NATIONAL CAREER GUIDANCE CENTRE
- JOB CENTRE
- SARUKAARU MUVAZAFUNGE NAADHEE
- NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION & LEGAL AFFAIRS
- GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
- LEGAL
- SPACES MANAGEMENT
- ASSET MANAGEMENT REGISTRATION

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT
- HR MANAGEMENT
- TRAINING & SCHOLARSHIP

LOGISTICS & PROCUREMENT
- TRANSPORT & SUPPLY
- INVENTORY MANAGEMENT
- PROCUREMENT
- FACILITIES MAINTENANCE & PLANING
- NATIONAL BUREAU OF CLASSIFICATION

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION
- PSIP
- AID PROJECTS
- MONITORING & EVALUATION

ACCOUNTS & FINANCE
- BUDGET
- FINANCE
- ACCOUNTING

Appendix VI: Approval Letter

Ministry of Youth and Sports
Ameeru Ahmed Magu, Male' 20096, Republic of Maldives

Date: 23rd January 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear members of Research Ethics Approval Committee:

It is our understanding that Student Researcher Ms. Aminath Umma Kulsoom will be conducting a research study at University of Liverpool (online DBA Programme) on "Employee Engagement and Job Commitment" related to this Ministry (Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives). Ms. Kulsoom has informed us of the design of the study as well as the targeted population.

We support this effort and will provide any assistance necessary for the successful implementation of this study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. We can be reached at (+960) 3347-477.

Sincerely

Mamdhoon Rasheed
Director

Fax: (960) 332 7162, Website: www.youth.gov.mv, Email: info@youth.gov.mv
PABX: (960) 334 7300, 334 7366

Appendix VII: Approved Ethics Response Form

ETHICS RESPONSE FORM

PLEASE NOTE: Once approval is given if there are any subsequent modifications to the study once it is underway a further Ethics Response Form and re-approval is required

Researcher name (student): Aminath Ummu Kulsoom	Faculty reviewer: Professor Hefin Rowlands	Date of Review: 04.03.2017
Working Title of Proposal or summary of study scope: **Employee's Engagement and Job Commitment in Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives**		
Proposal attached? ___ Yes	Academic Honesty Declaration signed? __Yes	

Each of the ethical standards below must be adequately addressed by the researcher in order to obtain ethics approval.

In the blue column, the RESEARCHER (student) should perform a self-check using these 35 questions before submitting the ethics form to the faculty member supervising the study. In each row of the blue column, the RESEARCHER should enter YES, NO, or NA as well as a very brief explanation. The Academic Honesty Declaration must be attached and should be signed and dated.

In the yellow column the ETHICS REVIEWER (supervising faculty member) will enter YES, NO, or NA to confirm or challenge the RESEARCHER'S self-check on each standard. With each NO, the ETHICS REVIEWER will indicate what revisions are required for ethics approval. The faculty reviewer will also render a decision at the end of this form and return the form to the RESEARCHER.

If the ETHICS REVIEWER (supervising faculty member) is able to approve "as is" then the orange column is left blank.

In the orange column, the RESEARCHER (student) will respond to each of the ETHICS REVIEWER'S concerns to explain where/how each of the reviewer's concerns was met in the resubmitted materials.

	Researcher's ethics self-check In each row, the researcher should confirm compliance with the ethical standard by entering "Yes," "No," or "N/A," along with a brief	Ethics Reviewer's assessment: After the researcher has presented the evidence for compliance with each ethical standard, the Ethics Reviewer	Researcher's response to Ethics Reviewer Researcher must use this column to explain how and where each of the Ethics

	defense of the response (i.e., stating keywords that point to how the ethical standard has been met).	should either confirm by entering "Yes" or challenge with "No." With each "No," the reviewer must specify what revisions are needed to obtain ethics approval.	Reviewer's concerns (in the yellow column) has been addressed.
Example: Will data be stored securely?	**Yes. Data files will be kept on a password protected computer.**	**No. Please also address how the paper surveys will be secured prior to being entered as electronic files.**	**Paper surveys will be in a locked file cabinet. Proposal has been updated.**
The first 11 questions apply to all studies (even when the researcher is not interacting with participants to collect new data). **Hover the mouse over the blue footnoted words to view extra tips and definitions.**			
1. Are participant recruitment and data collection steps adequately described, such that the study's risks and burdens can be discerned?	Yes it has been addressed, there is no physical risk other than confidentiality issue which will be addressed by maintaining anonymity and securing data in password protected electronic mediums locking hard copies in a cabinet with restricted access. Additionally, the participants will be briefed about the survey, who will have access to information related it the study and their informed consent would be obtained	No. Ethics application form sections E and F need to be updated to reflect this.	**Section E & F of ethics application form has been updated**
2. Will the research procedures ensure privacy during data collection?	Yes, confidentiality will be addressed by maintaining anonymity and if participants wants privacy they will be provided the privacy to fill the questionnaire	No. How will this be achieved?. This needs to be indicated on the PIS.	**It is now indicated in PIS**
3. Will data be stored securely with adequate provisions to maintain the confidentiality of the data?	Yes, data would be stored in electronic medias with password protection and only hard copies of survey instrument would be kept ad it would be stored in a locked place and only research can access it	No. Update Section F in the Ethics application form to reflect this.	**Section F of ethics application form has been updated**
4. Will the data be stored for at least 5 years?	Yes, hard copies would be stored for 5 years.	No. Ok on PIS. Update ethics application from to reflect this.	**ethics application form has been updated**
5. If participants' names or contact info will be recorded in the research records, are they absolutely necessary?	N/A. No such information would be collected	Yes	
6. Do the research procedures and analysis/write-up plans include all possible	Yes. Information related to personal identification	No. Update Section F on Ethics application	**F of ethics application form**

measures to ensure that participant identities are not directly or indirectly disclosed? For secondary data analyses, the proposal must clearly state when/how de-identification will occur.	would not be collected. The collected data would be securely kept with password protections, locked and access restricted	from to reflect this	**has been updated**
7. Have all potential psychological, relationship, legal, economic/professional, physical, and other risks been fully acknowledged and described?	Yes, participants would be briefed about all potential risks and benefits.	No. Identify risks in section E of Ethics application form.	**Section E of ethics application form has been updated**
8. Have the above risks been minimized as much as possible?	YES. No such risk is foreseen however the only is management's attitude towards employees which is taken care of by getting their approval and maintaining anonymity	No. Explain the compensation aspect and how it will operate.	**This part is now changed**
9. Has the researcher proactively managed any potential conflicts of interest? Note that student researchers may not utilise research assistants to recruit participants or collect research data on behalf of the researcher.	Yes. Though I'm a work supervisor I should bear in mind that purpose of the study is find a practical solution or to address an issue and the results are collective and not personally about me	Yes	
10. Are the research risks and burdens reasonable, in consideration of the new knowledge that this research design can offer?	Yes, the findings would help both the organization and the participants as it would be used to improve the working environment, condition, for development and learning	No. Develop this explanation in the consent form and in the Ethics application form.	**PIS and ethics application form has been updated**
11. Is the research site willing to provide an Authorisation Letter (or email) granting permission for all relevant data access, access to participants, facility use, and/or use of personnel time for research purposes?	Yes. I have provided information about the research and they have provided the letter	Yes	
		The remaining questions only apply to studies that involve recruiting participants to collect new data (such as surveys, interviews, observations). _____ Please place an X on this line if NONE of the questions in the next section are applicable to the proposed study.	
12. Applicable for student researchers: Will this researcher be appropriately qualified and supervised in all data collection procedures?	Yes. In Msc. Degree there was a module on data collection and in the work environment I have been involved in conducting research and there is an adequately qualified supervisor to provide guidance	No. Also mention that supervisor is adequately qualified.	**This part is now changed**
13. Is participant recruitment coordinated in	Yes, the participation is	No. The method of	**This part is now**

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a manner that is non-coercive? Coercive elements include: leveraging an existing relationship to "encourage" participation, recruiting in a group setting, extravagant compensation, recruiting individuals in a context of their treatment or evaluation, etc. A researcher must disclose here whether/how the researcher may already be known to the participants and explain how perceptions of coerced research participation will be minimized.	voluntary and emailed to them if they prefer it that way so that their partition is based on their choice	distributing the questionnaire is not discussed in the Ethics application form. This option also needs to be included in the PIS.	**included in PIS**
14. If anyone would be excluded from participating, is their exclusion justified? Is their exclusion handled respectfully and without stigma?	No exclusion is used	No. Describe how you will ensure that the questionnaire is only sent to permanent staff in the organisation.	**This part is now changed**
15. Where the researcher proposes to use an interpreter, has adequate consideration been given to the interpreter's training regarding confidentiality and principles of informed consent, etc.?	N/A. No interpreter would be used	Yes	
16. Do the informed consent procedures provide adequate time to review the study information and ask questions before giving consent?	Yes, participants would be provided about a week to read the documents and information related to research giving their consent	No. Update the Ethics application form and PIS to reflect this.	
17. Will informed consent be appropriately documented?	Yes, university's consent form would be used and their signatures would be obtained	Yes	
18. Is the participant information sheet (PIS) written using language that will be understandable to the potential participants?	Yes, everyone understands English and if required additional explanation would be provided	Yes	
19. Does the PIS include an understandable explanation of the research purpose?	Yes, the purpose of research, how the findings would be used would be shared with participants	No. The PIS doesn't include a statement on how the research findings will be shared.	**This is now included in PIS**
20. Does the PIS explain the sample's inclusion criteria in such a way that the participants can understand how/why THEY are being asked to participate?	Yes, information about who are included as participants with justifications would be provided	Yes	
21. Does the PIS clearly state that participation is voluntary?	Yes, it is clearly stated that they have choice of not participating	Yes	
22. Does the PIS convey that the participant has the right to decline or discontinue participation at any time?	Yes, it is stated that the participants have a choice of stopping at any point even after joining	Yes	
23. Does the PIS include an understandable description of the data collection procedures?	Yes, it is stated that a questionnaire would be used for collecting data from participants	No. Update to indicate how the questionnaire will be distributed and any options available to how questionnaire is receive and filled in. See also Q13.	**This is now included in PIS**
24. Does the PIS include an estimate of the time commitment for participation?	Yes, it is stated that I would take about 20 mins to complete a	No. Check that this is realistic since 10 minutes to complete	**This is changed in PIS as well**

	questionnaire	45 questions seems on the short side.	
25. Does the PIS describe any thank you gifts, compensation, or reimbursement to participants (for travel costs, etc.) or lack thereof?	N/A. Compensation is not explained given that it will not be given for participation	No. This contradicts your response to Q8.	**This is changed now**
26. Does the PIS include a description of reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts?	Yes, it is stated that there is not physical risk and how confidentiality issue would be dealt with	No. Explain how this will be achieved. See also Q2	**This is changed now**
27. Does the PIS include a description of anticipated benefits to participants and/or others?	Yes. The PIS states that the findings would use for improving employees working conditions	Yes	
28. Does the PIS explain how the participant can contact the researcher and the university's Research Participant Advocate? (USA number 001-612-312-1210 or email address liverpoolethics@ohecampus.com)	Yes. The PIS explain how the participant can contact the researcher and the university's Research Participant Advocate	Yes	
29. Does the PIS describe how privacy will be maintained?	Yes. The PIS mentioned that all soft copies would be kept in electronic medias with password protection and hard copies would be kept in a locked cupboard.	No. Update Ethics application form to reflect this.	**This is changed in Ethics application form**
30. Does the PIS disclose all potential conflicts of interest (specifying that this study is separate from the researcher's other professional role)?	Yes. The PIS states that this is for study purpose, however, that findings would be used for benefit of employees and the organization	Yes	
31. Do the consent documents preserve the participant's legal rights?	Yes. The consent documents preserve the participant's legal rights.	Yes	
32. If vulnerable individuals will be specifically sought out as participants, is such targeted recruitment justified by a research design that will specifically benefit that vulnerable group at large?	N/A. Coulnerable individuals will not be participants in this study.	Yes	
33. If the researcher happens to also serve in a trusted or authoritative role to the participant (e.g., health care provider, teacher etc.), do the recruitment procedures ensure voluntary participation?	Yes. The recruitment procedures ensure voluntary participation	Yes	
34. If the research procedures might reveal or create an acute psychological state that necessitates referral, are there suitable procedures in place to manage this?	N/A. The procedures do reveal or create an acute psychological state that necessitates referral	Yes	
35. If the research procedures might reveal criminal activity, child/elder abuse, or employer policy non-compliance that necessitates reporting, are there suitable procedures in place for managing this? Are limits to confidentiality (i.e., duty to report) appropriately mentioned in the Participant Information Sheet?	N/A. The procedures do not reveal criminal activity, child/elder abuse, or employer policy non-compliance that necessitates reporting	Yes	

ETHICS **APPROVAL DECISION**		
THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE POSTED IN THE 'ETHICS' THREAD/FORUM IN THE STUDENT RESEARCHER'S CLASSROOM AFTER THE SUPERVISING FACULTY MEMBER HAS RENDERED A DECISION. THE APPROPRIATE ETHICS PATHWAY(S) MUST ALSO BE ENTERED INTO THE MiTSA , eg EXPEDITED; EXPEDITED & LOCAL; IOREC AND IOREC & LOCAL APPROVAL(S); ALONG WITH THE TITLE OF THE DISSERTATION. **The supervising Faculty Member will mark an X next to box A, B, or C. If box A or B is marked, then the supervising faculty member will also mark an X next to the applicable subcategory (1, 2, 3, etc.):**		

	A. APPROVED VIA EXPEDITED (LIGHT TOUCH) ETHICS REVIEW: "X"
	
	"X". As the supervising faculty member, I confirm that all applicable criteria 1-35 above are met with either a "Yes" or "N/A.": "X"
	
	   • ☐ **I understand my responsibilities as supervisor, and will ensure to the best of my abilities that the student investigator abides by the University's policy on Research Ethics at all times.**
	
	   • ☐ **I affirm that the research activities fall entirely within the parameters of the design indicated with an X below (1, 2 or 3) that the International Online Research Ethics Committee has authorized faculty members to approve via the expedited (light touch) review:**	

		1. analysis of public docum artifacts, behaviour or data;
		2. secondary analysis of existing data that is privately held but released for research

		purposes (with all identifiers removed);
		3. surveys or interviews of non-vulnerable adults on non-sensitive topics (i.e., no potential to participants of coercion, distress, loss of work/school time, damage to professional reputation). Vulnerable populations include children, clinic patients, prisoners, military personnel, facility residents, anyone over whom the researcher holds authority (e.g., students, subordinates), anyone who might feel undue pressure to participate in the study, and any individuals with severe enough mental disabilities to interfere with capacity to consent to the study.
	B. REFERRED TO ETHICS COMMITTEE: • ☐ **As the supervising faculty member, I am referring this study to the full ethics committee (IOREC) because** [mark 1, 2, 3, 4 or Other below]. • ☐ **I will email the student's ethics application and all attachments as a single zip file to the ethics committee via liverpoolethics@ohecampus.com, copying the DOS (or Programme Director where this exists).** The ethics committee accepts applications until 5 pm Liverpool timezone on the 3rd Thursday of every month. Decisions and feedback will be emailed to the student and DA within 5 business days after the 4th Thursday of the month.	

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		1. the researcher proposes to collect data from vulnerable individuals such as children, clinic patients, prisoners, military personnel, facility residents, anyone over whom the researcher holds authority (e.g., students, subordinates), anyone who might feel undue pressure to participate in the study, and any individuals with severe enough mental disabilities to interfere with capacity to consent to the study.
		2. some (potential) participants may find the research topic or premise sensitive
		3. participants' jobs or livelihoods may be placed at any risk by the study activities
		4. the participants' culture and/or international location suggest that extra participant protections may be necessary
		Other: _____
	C. REVISIONS REQUIRED: **The student needs to revise the proposal and ethics materials to address the concerns in the yellow column and resubmit to me before I can select A or B above.**	

Footnotes

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Appendix VIII: Full Ethics Application Form

UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A PROJECT INVOLVING

HUMAN PARTICIPANTS, HUMAN DATA, OR HUMAN MATERIAL

NOTES

1) This application form is to be used by researchers from the Online programmes seeking research ethics approval from the University, as per the University's Policy on Research Ethics involving Human Participation. If an application qualifies for expedited review it may be reviewed at Level 2, by the relevant programme sub-committee.

2) Applications to the International Online Research Ethics Committees must normally include an **application form, participant information sheet and consent form** (all templates available online), along with any other relevant information, and should be submitted by email to the relevant contact atliverpoolethics@ohecampus.com.

3) Applications from Student investigators: the Committee will require proof that the research Supervisor has approved the application to be submitted. Please attach a copy of the Ethics Response Form to the email. Your supervisor must be copied in on all correspondence relating to your application.

4) This form must be completed by following the guidance notes attached to this Application Form. **Please complete every section, using N/A if appropriate. Incomplete forms will be returned to the applicant.**

5) For studies involving sites outside the UK, please ensure you have researched any local approvals that might be required. Wherever possible this should include local research ethics approval. In the absence of a research ethics approval body, other relevant local approvals should be obtained, e.g. authorisation from a site, letter from a local organisation or group etc.

6) This form does not constitute insurance approval which must be sought separately. Please contact AcademicOffice@ohecampus.com if your project involves sites outside the country in which the researcher works and lives, vulnerable groups or is a clinical trial.

7) <u>Staff investigators:</u> You are encouraged to discuss your proposal with your Academic Director or the Chief Academic Officer, Laureate Online Education International prior to submitting for research ethics approval.

RESEARCH MUST NOT BEGIN UNTIL ETHICAL APPROVAL HAS BEEN OBTAINED

FAILURE TO SEEK RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL IS TAKEN EXTERMELY SERIOUSLY BY THE INSTITUTION.

BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION PLEASE CONFIRM WHAT APPROVAL YOU ARE SEEKING

(please check with "x")**:**

a) Expedited review of an individual research project   .....X.......

b) Full committee review of an individual research project ....

c) Committee review generic* approval   ....

*to cover a cohort of projects using similar methodologies and in line with Policy on Generic Approvals which can be found at www.liv.ac.uk/researchethics . Boundaries of the research must be defined clearly. Approval may be granted for up to 3 years and will be subject to annual review.

Declaration of the:

Principal Investigator _____ **OR** **Supervisor and Student Investigator**

Supervisor: Dr. Awolusi Olawumi; Student: Aminath Ummukulsoom _____

(please check with a "x")

X. The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I take full responsibility for it.

X. I have read and understand the University's Policy on Research Ethics

X. I undertake to abide by the ethical principles underlying the Declaration of Helsinki and the University's good practice guidelines on the proper conduct of research, together with the codes of practice laid down by any relevant professional or learned society.

X. If the research is approved, I undertake to adhere to the study plan, the terms of the full application of which the REC has given a favourable opinion, and any conditions set out by the REC in giving its favourable opinion.

X. I undertake to seek an ethical opinion from the REC before implementing substantial amendments to the study plan or to the terms of the full application of which the REC has given a favourable opinion.

X. I understand that I am responsible for monitoring the research at all times.

X. If there are any serious adverse events, I understand that I am responsible for immediately stopping the research and alerting the Research Ethics Committee within 24 hours of the occurrence, via liverpoolethics@ohecampus.com. .

X. I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.

X. I understand that research records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future.

X. I understand that personal data about me as a researcher in this application will be held by the University and Laureate Online Education International and that this will be managed according to the principles established in the UK's Data Protection legislation.

X. I understand that the information contained in this application, any supporting documentation and all correspondence with the International Online Research Ethics Committee relating to the application, will be subject to the provisions of the UK's Freedom of Information Acts. The information may be disclosed in response to requests made under the Acts except where statutory exemptions apply.

X.   I understand that all conditions apply to any co-applicants and researchers involved in the study, and that it is my responsibility to ensure that they abide by them.

X.   **For Supervisors**: I understand my responsibilities as supervisor, and will ensure, to the best of my abilities, that the student investigator abides by the University's Policy on Research Ethics at all times.

X.   **For the Student Investigator**: I understand my responsibilities to work within a set of safety, ethical and other guidelines as agreed in advance with my supervisor and understand that I must comply with the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.

Signature of Principal Investigator   or   Supervisor: ………………………………….

Date: (06/02/2017)

Print Name: Dr. Awolusi Olawumi

Signature of Student Investigator: ………………………………….

Date: (06/02/2017)

Print Name: Aminath Ummu Kulsoom

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SECTION A - IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

A1) **Title of the research** *(PLEASE INCLUDE A SHORT LAY TITLE IN BRACKETS).*

<u>Employee's Engagement and Job Commitment in Ministry of Youth and Sports, Maldives</u>
(The main focus of the study is to find out the effectiveness of the Various engagement programmes developed for encouraging employees to be more engaged and committed to the organisation. Moreover, the study would look into how work engagement and commitment are related, main challenges that are faced in public sector organisations in influencing employees to be more engaged and what factors can be used to enhance employees engagement and commitment in public sector organisations in Maldives, specifically Ministry for Youth and Sports)

A2) **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR / SUPERVISOR** *(PLEASE DELETE AS APPROPRIATE)*

Title:	Dr.	Staff number:	N/A
Forename/Initials:	Olawumi	Surname:	Awolusi
Post:	DBA Supervisor	Department:	Management
Telephone:	+27627589658	E-mail:	olawumi.awolusi@online.liverpool.ac.uk

A3) **Student Investigator(s)**

Title and Name	Current programme	Phone	Email

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Ms. Aminath Ummu Kulsoom	Doctor of Business Administration	+9609915288	aminath.ummukulsoom@online.liverpool.ac.ukk

A4) **Co-Applicants**

Title and Name	Post / Current programme (if student investigator)	Department/ School/Institution if not UoL	Phone	Email
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

B1) **Proposed study dates and duration** (RESEARCH **MUST NOT BEGIN** UNTIL ETHICAL APPROVAL HAS BEEN OBTAINED)

Please complete as appropriate:

EITHER

a) **Starting as soon as ethical approval has been obtained**

YES

Approximate end date:	December 2017

OR

b) **Approximate dates:**

Start date:		End date:	

B2) **Give a FULL LAY SUMMARY of the purpose, design and methodology of the planned research.** *N.B. Please use as little jargon or technical language as possible. Where jargon / technical language is unavoidable, please ensure you provide a lay explanation. Please define any acronyms. The summary must be understood by persons outside of the subject area including members of the general public*

> The main objective of this study is to find out the various engagement programmes on employees job commitment in the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Maldives. Being a government organisation we face many challenges in making employees engaged and committed despite the fact that numerous programmes are being undertaken. One such programme is a skills training programme that was implemented last year and through this study it is aimed at specifically find out:
>
> 1. The effectiveness of the skills training programme in making employees more engaged and committed
> 2. The link between engagement and commitment
> 3. Find out most preferred antecedent of employee engagement

A survey, using questionnaires would be carried out to elicit information from respondents. It is planned to have about 101 questionnaires for surveying employees who received skills trainings. The data collected using questionnaires would be entered for coding and analysis. Data analysis would be through factor analysis, correlation and multiple regression analysis (Yong and Pearce, 2013).

B3) List any interpreters, translators or others not named above who will be involved in the research and detail their involvement.

NA

B4) List below all research sites, and their Lead Investigators, to be included in this study.

Research Site	Individual Responsible	Position and contact details
Ministry of Youth and Sports of Maldives	Aminath Ummu Kulsoom	Deputy Director General +9609915288 aminath.ummu@youth.gov.mv

B5) Are the results of the study to be disseminated in the public domain?

YES

➢ *If not, why not?*

B6) Give details of the funding of the research, including funding organisation(s), amount applied for or secured, duration, and UOL reference

Funding Body	Amount	Duration	UoL Reference
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

B7) **Give details of any interests, commercial or otherwise, you or your co-applicants have in the funding body.**

N/A

C1)

a) Will the study involve recruitment of participants outside the country in which the researcher works and lives? *For studies involving sites outside the UK, please ensure you have researched any local approvals that might be required. Wherever possible this should include local research ethics approval. In the absence of a research ethics approval body, other relevant local approvals or endorsements should be obtained, e.g. authorisation from a site, letter from a local organisation or group etc.*	No
b) Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? *(e.g. children, people with learning or communication disabilities, people in custody, people engaged in illegal activities such as drug-taking, your own students in an educational capacity)* *Note: this does not include secondary data authorised for release by the data collector for research purposes.*	No
c) Will the study require obtaining consent from a "research participant advocate" (for definition see guidance notes) in lieu of participants who are unable to give informed consent? *(e.g. for research involving children or people with learning or communication disabilities)*	No
d) Will it be necessary for participants, whose consent to participate in the study will be required, to take part without their knowledge at the time? *(e.g. covert observation using photography or video recording)*	No
e) Does the study involve deliberately misleading the participants?	No
f) Will the study require discussion of sensitive topics that may cause distress or embarrassment to the participant or potential risk of disclosure to the researcher of criminal activity or child protection issues? *(e.g. sexual activity, criminal activity)*	No
g) Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	No
h) Will samples (e.g. blood, DNA, tissue) be obtained from participants?	No
i) Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	No
j) Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	No

k) Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	No
l) Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	No

C2)

a) Will the study seek written, informed consent?	Yes
c) Will participants be informed that their participation is voluntary? They would be given a week's time to decide whether they want to participate at all and the questionnaire would be emailed to those who prefer it that way	Yes
c) Will participants be informed that they are free to withdraw at any time?	Yes
d) Will participants be informed of aspects relevant to their continued participation in the study?	Yes
e) Will participants' data remain confidential?	Yes
f) Will participants be debriefed?	Yes

If you have answered 'no' to all items in SECTION C1 and 'yes' to all questions in SECTION C2 the application will be processed through expedited review.

If you have answered "Yes" to one or more questions in Section C1, or "No" to one or more questions in Section C2, but wish to apply for expedited review, please make the case below. See research ethics website for an example "case for expedited review" at:
http://www.liv.ac.uk/researchethics/apply,for,research,ethics/ethicsguidance/

For guidance, examples where a valid case might be made include:

- Where the study conforms to a standard set of procedures for working with a particular population / methodology, which have been approved by the University Research Ethics Sub-Committees.
- Internet-based projects where written informed consent is not required;
- Ethnographical or observational projects where the sample of participants is not defined in advance, and hence informed consent cannot be given, but where relevant community consent is gained;
- Food studies in which both samples and participants have been adequately screened, using readily available (as opposed to new) products, and are taking place in a suitable hygienic environment;

- Observational projects where debriefing is unlikely or impractical.

C3) **Case for Expedited Review –** *To be used if asking for expedited review despite answering YES to questions in C1 or NO to answers in C2.*

N/A

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D1) **How many participants will be recruited?**

Approximately 101

D2) **How was the number of participants decided upon?**

This is the entire work force employees in the Ministry

D3)

a) **Describe how potential participants in the study will be identified, approached and recruited.**

Personally administered to participants at the headquarter and in all the branches

b) **Inclusion criteria:**

All employees will be encourage to participate in the study

N/A

c) **Exclusion criteria:**

d) **Are any specific groups to be excluded from this study? If so please list them and explain why:**

N/A

e) **Give details for cases and controls separately if appropriate:**

N/A

f) **Give details of any advertisements:**

N/A

D4)

a) State the numbers of participants from any of the following vulnerable groups and justify their inclusion

Children under 16 years of age:	N/A
Adults with learning disabilities:	N/A
Adults with dementia:	N/A
Prisoners:	N/A
Young Offenders:	N/A
Adults who are unable to consent for themselves:	N/A
Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. those in care homes, students of the PI or Co-applicants:	N/A
Other vulnerable groups (please list):	N/A

b) State the numbers of healthy volunteer participants:

Healthy Volunteers	**Approximately 100**

D5)

a) Describe the arrangements for gaining informed consent from the research participants.

By following university regulations and guidelines and briefing them about information for participants and getting their signature on consent forms

b) If participants are to be recruited from any of the potentially vulnerable groups listed above, give details of extra steps taken to assure their protection, including

arrangements to obtain consent from a legal, political or other appropriate representative in addition to the consent of the participant *(e.g. Prison Service for research with young offenders, Head Teacher/School Principal for research with children etc.).*

> N/A

c) **If participants might not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information given in English, describe the arrangements for those participants** *(e.g. translation, use of interpreters etc.)*

> N/A. All read and speak English

d) **Where informed consent is not to be obtained (including the deception of participants) please explain why.**

> In this study all information collected would be based on participants consent

D6) **What is the potential benefit to research participants, if any?**

> Findings of the study would be used for improving employees' working conditions, management decisions related to employees, for better communication with employees, for providing better compensations so there is a benefit to you as your views are vital.

D7) **State any fees, reimbursements for time and inconvenience, or other forms of compensation that individual research participants may receive. Include direct payments, reimbursement of expenses or any other benefits of taking part in the research?**

> N/A

SECTION E - RISKS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

NOTE: Completing Section E fulfils the requirement for risk assessment, provided that this section is reviewed if circumstances change, or new information makes it necessary.

A copy of this form should be available to the relevant Academic Director for the programme, or their designate, to enable monitoring of risk assessments. The findings of the risk assessment, especially the precautions required, must be communicated in a user-friendly way to all those doing this work.

E1)   **Describe in detail the potential physical or psychological adverse effects, risks or hazards (minimal, moderate, high or severe) of involvement in the research for research participants.**

> No physical or psychological risk is foreseen

E2)   **Explain how the potential benefits of the research outweigh any risks to the participants.**

> Since there no foreseen risk only benefits are seen by implementing findings of the study

E3)   **Describe in detail the potential adverse effects, risks or hazards (minimal, moderate, high or severe) arising from this research to the researchers or anyone else.**

> No such risk is foreseen

E4)   **What precautions will be in place to minimise the risks identified in E1 and E3?**

> No risk is foreseen

E5)   **Will individual or group interviews/questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study** (e.g. during interviews/group discussions, or use of screening tests for drugs)**?**

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NO

> *If Yes, give details of procedures in place to deal with these issues.*

N/A

E6) **Describe the measures in place in the event of any unexpected outcomes or adverse events to participants arising from their involvement in the project**

By getting management's approval and that this is a study and the results would depend in majority response

E7) **Explain how the conduct of the project will be monitored to ensure that it conforms with the study plan and relevant University policies and guidance.**

By following university's ethical procedures and local rules

F1) **Where the research involves any of the following activities at any stage (including identification of potential research participants), state what measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data** *(e.g. encryption or other anonymisation procedures will be used).*

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL DATA MUST BE HELD SECURELY IN LINE WITH UNIVERSITY POLICY. VISIT THE UNIVERSITY'S WEBPAGES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AT http://www.liv.ac.uk/csd/regulations/

Electronic transfer of data by magnetic or optical media, e-mail or computer networks	It would be stored in password protected computer and magnetic and optical media would be stored in a locked cabinet with restricted access
Sharing of data with other organisations	It would only be shared if requested by other organisations in that case even anonymity would be maintained
Export of data outside the European Union	Only when necessary by maintaining anonymity with restriction of access
Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers	These kinds of data would not be collected
Publication of direct quotations from respondents	Only when it is really necessary however, participants identification would not be used
Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals	No such data would be published
Use of audio/visual recording devices	No such data would be collected
Storage of personal data on any of the following:	
Manual files	It would be stored in a locked cabinet with restricted access
Home or other personal computers	The computer would be password protected
University computers	The computer would be password protected, with restricted access
Private company computers	It would not be stored in such a computer

Laptop computers	The computer would be password protected

F2) **Who will have control of and act as the PRIMARY custodian for the data generated by the study?**

Dr. Awolusi Olawumi (SUPERVISOR) and Aminath Ummukulsoom (STUDENT)

F3) **Who will have access to the data generated by the study?**

Dr. Awolusi Olawumi (SUPERVISOR) and Aminath Ummukulsoom (STUDENT)

F4) **For how long will data from the study be stored?**

For 5 years after thesis completion

SECTION G – PEER REVIEW AND TRAINING

G1)   **a)**   **Has the project undergone peer review?**

NO

b)   ***If yes, by whom was this carried out?*** *(please enclose evidence if available)*

N/A

G2)   **a)**   **What date was your most recent training in research ethics?**

Date:	September –Nov 2006

b)   **Please provide details of the training provider and course:**

Training provider:	University of Braford, UK
Course title:	Research Methods for Social Sciences

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SECTION H - CHECKLIST OF ENCLOSURES

PLEASE ADD "YES" WHERE APPROPRIATE

Study Plan / Protocol	N/A
Recruitment advertisement	N/A
Participant information sheet	YES
Participant Consent form	YES
Research Participant Advocate Consent form	N/A
Evidence of external approvals	YES
Questionnaires on sensitive topics	N/A
Interview schedule	N/A
Debriefing material	N/A
Other (please specify)	YES
Evidence of peer review (If G1 = Yes)	N/A