

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK ENGAGEMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION
AMONG THE SEASONAL WORKERS OF A BANANA PLANTATION
IN DAVAO CITY**

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ABSTRACT

The interplay of job satisfaction and work engagement among seasonal workers is less explored in the academic literature. Thus, this study aimed to explore the relationship of the two variables among the seasonal workers of a banana plantation. Using survey questionnaires, the researchers collected quantitative data from 105 seasonal workers and it revealed that they are highly engaged with their work. At the same time, the results revealed that the seasonal workers are highly satisfied with their job. With the use of multiple regression analysis, the results indicated a significant relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. Out of the indicators, the study found out that absorption is less significant to job satisfaction compared to the other indicators. With this, organizations should maintain a good working environment and conditions so that workers become more engaged and satisfied with their jobs and will allow them to be productive and help achieve organizational goals.

Keywords:

Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Seasonal Workers, Banana Plantation

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary employment, the exploration of the intricate interplay between job satisfaction and work engagement has become increasingly crucial. This study delves into the unique context of seasonal workers within a banana plantation in Davao City, aiming to unravel the nuanced relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement in this specific occupational setting. As the global economy continues to witness a surge in temporary and seasonal employment, understanding the intricate dynamics that underlie the satisfaction and engagement levels of workers in such environments becomes pivotal for both employers and policymakers (Idris, 2014).

Bananas are one of the most exported fresh fruits in the world, excluding plantain, global export volume has reached 18.1 million tons in 2017 (FAO, 2017). While this fresh fruit has been consumed locally yet the quantities produced and exported have been growing as did the number of families that depend on this product to sustain their livelihoods. It is important for the banana industry to sustain its operation to avoid catastrophic effects to those that depend on its output. It is vital for the banana industry to investigate the thoughts and needs of its employees to sustain its daily operation.

The banana industry, being a cornerstone of Davao City's economic landscape, presents an intriguing backdrop for this investigation. Seasonal workers, often engaged in cyclic employment patterns, confront distinctive challenges and opportunities that can significantly impact their job satisfaction and work engagement (Masvaure, 2012). Exploring

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this nexus is not merely an academic pursuit but carries profound implications for the management practices within the banana plantation sector, as well as broader implications for the well-being and productivity of the workforce. This research aspires to contribute empirically grounded insights to the existing body of knowledge on organizational psychology and human resource management. By scrutinizing the specific dynamics at play within the banana plantation setting, we seek to unravel patterns, identify determinants, and offer practical implications that can enhance the job satisfaction and work engagement of seasonal workers (Van den Broeck et. al, 2013). Through a meticulous examination of factors such as working conditions, job roles, and interpersonal relationships, this study endeavors to shed light on the intricate web that connects the contentment and engagement of seasonal workers in the banana industry.

As we embark on this exploration, we anticipate not only advancing academic discourse but also fostering a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of those contributing to the flourishing banana plantation economy in Davao City. By doing so, we aim to provide a comprehensive foundation for future research endeavors, management strategies, and policy formulations geared towards enhancing the overall well-being and productivity of seasonal workers in similar contexts worldwide.

OBJECTIVES

This study has the following objectives:

- To identify the level of work engagement among seasonal workers of the banana plantation.
- To identify the level of job satisfaction among seasonal workers of the banana plantation.
- To identify if there is a significant relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction among seasonal workers of the banana plantation..
- To identify if the work engagement of seasonal workers in the banana plantation has a significant influence on their job satisfaction.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzales-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008). Meanwhile, dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Absorption, on the other hand, is defined as being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004).

Work engagement refers to the level of involvement an individual has with his or her work. Individuals who are actively engaged with their work are vigorous and consistently involved in their work environment (Jones, 2021). Anwar and Hussein (2017) found out that challenges in the workplace highly affect employees' work engagement due to their time management, too much workloads, and their communication within the workplace. In 2013, Bakken & Torp studied employees' work engagement in an industrial company in Norway. Their study revealed that conditions such as the opportunity to utilize their strength and potentials and the upholding of fairness in the workplace has been seen as important in enhancing the work engagement among the employees.

Employee engagement refers to individuals' participation or attachment to the organization (Yuang, et al., 2016). According to (Orgambidez-Ramos, et al., 2014), employee engagement is significant for every organization, because high levels of employee engagement results in higher level of job satisfaction. On the other hand many academic scholars proved a positive relationship between employee engagement and employee satisfaction (Kooij, et al., 2017). Organizations can benefit from engaged employees in many ways for instance, reducing employee turnover and increasing level of job satisfaction (Karanika-Murray, et al., 2015). According to Knight, et al., (2017), job satisfaction is an emotion or feeling that an employee has regarding their current job.

Meanwhile, the investigation of job satisfaction tries to explore how individuals perform in their work. It relates to their performance, absenteeism, turnover, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), counterproductive work

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behavior (CWB), and organizational profitability (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012 as cited in Judge, Zhang, & Glerum, 2020). Robbins and Judge (2017) regard job satisfaction as an affirmative feeling that came about the evaluation of the worker's characteristics while according to Kreitner & Kinicki (2012) it is how an individual likes his or her career. In theory, a worker with a high level of job satisfaction feels positive feelings regarding their work while workers that are not satisfied with their job have a negative feeling.

According to Luthans (2011), there are six dimensions of job satisfaction and they are demonstrated in salary, supervision, coworkers, the job, promotion, and working conditions. Salary entails the compensation the workers receive in doing their job. Supervision is the support from the superiors that the workers receive in the workplace. Coworkers are the team members or the colleagues in the workplace. It is important to note that their support and proficiency in working affects how the individual workers feel about their job. The job is the tasks that need to be accomplished. Promotions are the opportunities to advance in the hierarchical ladder of the workplace. Lastly, the working condition is the environment in which the individual performs.

In a study in the Philippines in 2015, among the antecedents of job satisfaction, job characteristics and training and development revealed to have a strong effect on job satisfaction (Lomoya, Pingol, Teng-Calleja, 2015). Torkuglo (2011) found out that organizational commitment, intraorganizational communication, salary expectancy, and occupational expectancy have a relationship with job satisfaction. This result is also supported by the findings of Yakin & Erdil (2012) and at the same time manifested that focused effort relates to job satisfaction.

In investigating the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction, literature shows that work engagement is positively related to job satisfaction (Yeh, 2013). A study on nurses in Portugal found out that job satisfaction was predicted by work engagement as well as their social support from their supervisors and colleagues (Orgambidez-Ramos & Almeida, 2017). These social supports are found to be helpful in enhancing the nurses' work engagement. Moreover, Rai & Maheshwari (2020) revealed that job characteristics positively influence work engagement, their engagement in their organization, and job satisfaction. And many factors related to job satisfaction for instance, social relationship, job analysis, employee training, desires and needs, recruitment and selection, orientation, working conditions, development and quality of management (Aunola, et al., 2016).

Given the limited available literature that explored the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction (Yakin & Erdil, 2012; Lomoya, Pingol, & Teng-Calleja, 2015; Zhang & Glerum, 2020), there has been a need to explore the variables and their interconnections among seasonal workers of a banana plantation especially that this workforce fuels the socio-economic movement of the local communities in Davao City up to the macro-level.

METHODOLOGY

In collecting the quantitative data, the researchers surveyed 105 banana plantation workers using a survey questionnaire. The survey was conducted in a banana plantation in Davao City, Philippines. The survey contained questions that seek to determine the seasonal worker's job satisfaction and work engagement. The survey questionnaires were adopted from the study of Liu et. al., (2016) and Forootan (2012). An examiner validated the survey questionnaire prior to the data gathering process.

In determining the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among seasonal workers, the researchers utilized a multiple regression analysis to know the relationship of the variables. The researchers performed a regression analysis employing the SPSS statistical software to examine the influences of the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Table 1: Level of Work Engagement among the Seasonal Workers in the Banana Plantation**

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Level
Vigor	0.72	4.17	High
Dedication	0.64	4.42	High
Absorption	0.75	3.72	High
Overall	0.59	4.10	High

Scale: 4.50 - 5.00 Very High 3.50 - 4.49 High 2.50 - 3.49 Moderate 1.50 - 2.49 Low 1.00 - 1.49 Very Low
Table 1 shows that the level of engagement of the seasonal workers in the banana plantation is high with an overall mean of 4.10.

The level of vigor among the seasonal workers is high with a mean of 4.17. The respondents noted that when they get up in the morning, they already feel like going to work. While at work, they often feel strong, vigorous, and bursting with energy. And even when things do not go well, they persevere and feel very mentally resilient. The result coincides with the study of Gera, Sharma, & Saini (2019) which discussed that vigor is equivalent to the energy levels for working in an organization and the willingness to go to the workplace in the morning with high energy levels.

Moreover, the study found that the level of dedication among the seasonal workers is high with a mean of 4.42. The respondents noted they often find the work they are doing is full of meaning and purpose. While they think their job is challenging, they feel enthusiastic about it and even inspires them, thus they are proud of it. The result coincides with the study of Gera, Sharma, & Saini (2019) which defined dedication as the purpose for which an employee is working, the challenges of the job, and the enthusiasm for the job.

Furthermore, the results showed that the level of absorption among the seasonal workers is high with a mean of 3.72. The respondents noted when they are at work, they often think that time is flying as they forget everything else around them. They find it difficult to detach themselves from their job as they get carried away when they are working. Oftentimes, they are immersed in their work and feel happy when they are working intensely. The result coincides with the study of Gera, Sharma, & Saini (2019) which discussed absorption as working for an Institute immersed in work, happily performing at the workplace, and forgetting everything when they are at work.

Table 2: Level of Job Satisfaction among the Seasonal Workers in the Banana Plantation

Indicator	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Level
Sense of work achievement	0.65	4.32	High
Remuneration satisfaction	0.73	4.14	High
Superior satisfaction	0.69	4.43	High
Work support	0.71	4.32	High
Colleague support	0.65	4.31	High
Promotion opportunity	0.77	4.18	High
Overall	0.56	4.49	High

Scale: 4.50 - 5.00 Very High 3.50 - 4.49 High 2.50 - 3.49 Moderate 1.50 - 2.49 Low 1.00 - 1.49 Very Low

Table 2 demonstrates that the seasonal workers of a banana plantation have a high level of job satisfaction with an overall mean of 4.49. The seasonal workers are highly satisfied when it comes to the sense of work achievement, with a mean of 4.32. They feel that their work is interesting and meaningful which allows them to perform independently and capable of doing their tasks. This result coincides with the result of Levin et., al. (2022) which found out that workers when provided autonomy in their job become committed to their tasks and carry themselves to establish good relationships with their coworkers which results in their better performance at work and sense of personal achievement.

The seasonal workers are also highly satisfied with their remuneration with a mean of 4.14. This shows that the seasonal workers are satisfied because they receive the benefits they deserve from their workplace, their salary increases how they wanted, and they are paid fairly. The result coincides with the results of Martono, Khoiruddin, & Wulansari (2018) and Ardiansyah & Wulansari (2018) where they found out that remuneration satisfaction helps the worker improve their attitude towards work motivation, their creativity in their tasks, and their job satisfaction.

When it comes to their superior satisfaction, the seasonal workers feel highly satisfied as reflected in the 4.43 mean. This illustrates that the workers are well treated by their supervisors as they see their superiors capable, caring, fair, and decisive. The result relates to a study in Poland which revealed that a good subordinate-superior relationship in the workplace has a good effect on employee's job satisfaction (Wińska, 2010).

Furthermore, the seasonal workers feel highly satisfied with the support they get from their workplace with a mean of 4.32. This shows that the seasonal workers are well provided with clear and specific information they need to complete their tasks, able to obtain the needed resources to perform their tasks, able to learn from their tasks, and are provided with safe and comfortable working conditions. This result supports the findings of Lancaster & Milia (2014) that for employees to learn, the organization must provide them with relevant programs for employee development, the content for the program course should follow the organization's goals and align with the worker's roles, and that the management is committed to worker's development. The study of Yusuf et., al., (2012) also revealed that organizations must improve their occupational safety and health as it affects job satisfaction. The sense of comfort and lesser fear for incidents in the workplace help workers increase their energy and performance at work.

The seasonal workers also feel highly satisfied with their colleague support having a mean of 4.31. This states that the workers like their colleagues that they work with, they have a good time working, they communicate well with one another, and they help each other to finish their tasks. A study in Indonesia revealed that social support and good communication between workers significantly affect job satisfaction (Adriyanto, 2021). Making friends in the workplace helps increase satisfaction and work engagement (Durrah, 2022) and encourages innovation towards workers.

Lastly, the seasonal workers are highly satisfied with the job promotion opportunity in their workplace with a mean of 4.18. This result tells that the workers are satisfied with their equal and numerous promotion opportunities as well as that workers who perform well are provided with fair promotion opportunities. The result agrees with the conclusion of Mustapha & Zakaria (2013) which explains that when promotion opportunities in the workplace are available and fair, employees are motivated to become productive and are less likely to leave the organization.

Table 3: Significant Relationship between Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction of Seasonal Workers in the Banana Plantation

Work engagement	Job Satisfaction						
	Sense of work achievement	Remuneration satisfaction	Superior satisfaction	Work support	Colleague support	Promotion opportunity	Overall
Vigor	0.629** (.000)	0.432** (.000)	0.337** (.000)	0.528** (.000)	0.398** (.000)	0.486** (.000)	0.589** (.000)
Dedication	0.627** (.000)	0.450** (.000)	0.375** (.000)	0.536** (.000)	0.375** (.000)	0.454** (.000)	0.590** (.000)
Absorption	0.548** (.000)	0.442** (.000)	0.245** (.012)	0.324** (.001)	0.317** (.001)	0.430** (.000)	0.484** (.000)
Overall	.713** (.000)	.524** (.000)	.376** (.000)	.545** (.000)	.431** (.000)	.543** (.000)	.657** (.000)

**significant at 0.01

*significant at 0.05

Table 3 displays the relationship of work engagement and job satisfaction of seasonal workers of a banana plantation. With the overall p value of .657 and r value of .000, work engagement and job satisfaction among the seasonal workers in a banana plantation is highly related and impactful towards one another. The result is significant and the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

The results above imply that work engagement is tied to job satisfaction. It agrees with the paper released by Shmailan in 2015 that the satisfaction of workers is directly linked to worker's engagement. Satisfied workers help in a company's success because they perform more than what is expected of them which results in work becoming more meaningful and creating a sense of motivation towards work.

Furthermore, Khusniah et al. (2022) explained that when workers are happy with their jobs they are bound to stay in the organization for a long time. The dedication shown by workers may provide them a feeling of achievement, fulfillment, and readiness to go above and beyond for the organization as reflected in the results.

Vigor, dedication, and absorption as indicators of work engagement manifest a relationship to job satisfaction with the respective P values; .589, .590, .484. Mydin et al. (2018) affirms that work engagement is composed of three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption and these have a direct impact on work performance, job satisfaction, and productivity as mentioned by Zhang et al. (2022). Furthermore, Eldor & Harpaz (2016), in a research paper, pointed out that high levels of employee engagement sustain individual job satisfaction, adaptivity, and creativity.

Table 4: Work Engagement Significantly Influence on Job Satisfaction of Seasonal Workers in the Banana Plantation

Work engagement	Beta	T-value	P. value
(Constant)	1.655	5.479	0.000
Vigor	0.214	2.626	0.010
Dedication	0.284	3.307	0.001

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Absorption	0.130	1.934	0.056
<i>F value = 26.666</i> <i>P value = 0.000</i> <i>R square = 0.442 or 44.2%</i>			

a. Dependent Variable: job satisfaction.

Work engagement and job satisfaction is inseparable from each other which leads to boosting worker's morale crucial to the progress of every company. According to Johan (2014), employee engagement is a modern version of the concept of job satisfaction.

Among the indicators of work engagement, vigor and dedication have a significant influence on job satisfaction of seasonal workers in a banana plantation with a P of .010 and .001, respectively. Vigor refers to the employees being proactive towards work and involves taking initiatives (Chan, 2019). Yalabik, Popaitoon, Chowne, and Rayton (2013) and Barnes and Collier (2013) suggest that job satisfaction is important for employees to become invigorated. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, can be a result or a driving factor of dedication as another indicator of work engagement. Dedication based on Wozniak (2023) article said that investing yourself in your work brings a sense of fulfillment and purpose as seen in the findings. The satisfaction brought about by giving your all contributes to overall job satisfaction and personal accomplishment. Evident in the findings is that increased well-being goes along with higher job satisfaction (Browne, 2021; Machin-Rincon et al., 2020; Rhéaume, 2021; Wu et al., 2021).

However, absorption as an indicator of work engagement is least significant to job satisfaction. A similar observation was made by Baran et al., (2023) that absorption has no effect on job satisfaction levels. It implies that the level of energy, willingness to accept challenges, pride and a sense of importance are considered the most valuable. However, high levels of absorption exhibited by the inability to stop working and losing track of time can lead to workaholism which can directly affect the well-being of employees.

In addition, work engagement contributed at least 44.2% or the R value of .442 to job satisfaction. It means that there are factors that could positively impact job satisfaction like pay and benefits, work environment, top management leadership, and workload (Ong Choon Hee et., al., 2020).

Linear Regression Analysis

The study used the linear regression equation:

$$Y = a + bX, \text{ where } Y \text{ is the dependent variable and } X \text{ is the explanatory variable.}$$

Job satisfaction (JS) is the dependent variable while vigor, dedication, and absorption are the explanatory variables. Based on the data from Table 4, we get the result as follows:

$$JS = 1.665 + 0.214 \text{ vigor} + 0.284 \text{ dedication} + 0.130 \text{ absorption}$$

$$JS = 2.283$$

The result indicates that vigor, dedication, and absorption have a positive influence on the job satisfaction of seasonal workers in the banana plantation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, the researchers conclude that the level of work engagement and job satisfaction among the seasonal workers in the banana plantation is high. They also conclude that work engagement significantly influences job satisfaction. Vigor and dedication have high positive and significant influence on job satisfaction, while absorption has only little influence on job satisfaction. Thus, there is a significant relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction among seasonal workers.

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