

2020

## Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction's Impact on Productivity in the Distribution Industry

JESSICA COPELAND  
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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Jessica Elizabeth Lynn Copeland

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2020

Abstract

Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction's Impact on Productivity in the Distribution  
Industry

by

Jessica Elizabeth Lynn Copeland

MBA, Herzing University, 2011

BA, Emory University, 2007

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2020

## Abstract

Productivity deficiencies in distribution services are detrimental to profitability, annually causing billions of dollars in reporting losses industry-wide. Understanding employees' motivating factors in meeting metric-based expectations is essential to enhancing overall performance. Grounded in the motivation-hygiene theory, the purpose of this correlational study was to examine the relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity within the distribution industry. Electronic survey data were analyzed for 47 participants who completed the Mensah Employee Engagement Survey, Mensah Job Satisfaction Survey, and Utrecht Work Employee Engagement Survey. The results of the multiple linear regression were significant,  $F(2, 44) = 36.84, p = .001, R^2 = .63$ . In the final model, both predictors were significant. The findings of this study may benefit and equip progressive leaders of the distribution industry with tools to implement in order to retain skilled workers, reduce waste, and increase profitability. A recommendation is for leaders to create opportunities for internal, on-going communication to remain abreast of engagement and satisfaction levels to gauge progress. The implications for positive social change include highlighting the challenges affecting productivity that may improve operational efficiencies across the industry, resulting in increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and profitability in distribution organizations.

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## Dedication

Father God, I thank You! Your blessings make me rich and You add no sorrow to them! You have given me a name, praise, and honor everywhere I was disrespected. I dedicate this doctoral study to my late maternal grandparents, Willie Frank Bailey and Evelyn Jean MaHaffey Bailey, who truly believed in my capabilities, fully invested in my future, and sincerely valued educational pursuits. I also dedicate this study to my paternal grandmother, Nina McClendon Copeland, (and the memory of the late James Copeland), for her consistent encouragement and engagement in this process. This achievement is greatly dedicated to my beloved and devoted parents, Jerome Copeland, Sr. and Elizabeth Bailey Copeland, who have been steadfast intercessors and consistent encouragers of my dreams. I am beyond grateful for their support and am appreciative of their deep love for me. Please know that my words and actions could never express how much you both mean to me and I will always demonstrate my admiration, respect, and honor on your behalf. I further dedicate this study to my siblings: Tamika and Cornelius Hooper, Felecia and David Reed, and especially Jerome, Jr., and Bianca Copeland, for being supportive and helpful during this process. Jeromí, thanks so much for the research assistance and technical support – I could not have completed this without you. Lastly, I dedicate this doctoral study to my amazing nieces, Autumn, Ava, and Alessia. I pray that you all will be filled with God's knowledge surpassing love for you and know that you can complete any task through Christ who empowers you.

ELEVATE YOUR PERSPECTIVE & BROADEN YOUR HORIZON

## Acknowledgments

Thanks be to God, who always leads me in triumph in Christ Jesus and through me spreads the knowledge of His love everywhere. I am deeply grateful for my wonderful and supportive family. My parents, Jerome and Beth Copeland, and brother, Jerome, Jr., have been amazing supporters of my dream and immediately caught the vision when I shared my plan. I am thankful for Dr. Sis, Dr. Dawn Marie Kier, for her encouragement and truth while completing this doctoral journey together.

I also thank the family members who have been engaged in this process, especially Aunt Bernice and Aunt Alpha. I appreciate all of the friends, clients, and business acquaintances that supported me throughout this process with a listening ear and allowance to implement my theory in the workplace.

I had a great committee team during this process. Dr. Dereshiwsy, Dr. Brown, and Dr. Jack, your commitment to academia is apparent and appreciated. I met many colleagues along this process and am sincerely grateful for their support and camaraderie especially Dr. Olalya Bryant and Dr. Bettye Holston. Thanks to all of the Walden staff members for continued assistance and resources to complete this degree.

I remain grateful to Joseph Haley, leader extraordinaire, for his mentorship and assistance in me creating "clout" and solidifying my brand.

Thanks are in order to my PUT team members and the memory of Tomika Willis. The team unknowingly assisted me in formulating this project and provided me with a great deal of on the job experience in engagement management. Remember, you all are amazing and have the power to do incredible feats – 6K Club.

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## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

While conversing with leaders from the distribution industry who shared their challenges in connecting with their workers to perform to productivity standards, it occurred to me that employee engagement and job satisfaction might meaningfully impact overall operations. I postulated that factors such as high turnover, the expenses associated with recruiting and hiring new employees, the opportunity cost for the newly hired associate's acclimation to the position inclusive of training and development, and zero or low productivity could contribute to dampened profitability for a warehouse.

The purpose of a distribution center (DC) is to facilitate the movement of a company's products from vendors to customers or stores utilizing a warehouse hub for efficient allocation and inventory. Many DCs do not positively add to a firm's bottom-line as they operate as cost centers rather than profit centers. Efficiency is necessary for decision-makers to deem a DC as a cost-benefit. Therefore, the lack of productivity at a DC negatively affects a business' overall bottom-line.

When I first began researching, I noticed that workers were not discussed as frequently as leaders, yet their jobs comprise base-line operations and significantly factor into determining a firm's profitability. While speaking with front-line employees, I learned that some workers do not believe that their leaders are concerned with them as an associate or otherwise. Some expressed a need to connect with their leaders in order to consistently work at productivity standards. Accordingly, leaders encounter a substantial amount of issues and these influences lead to low productivity.

Despite equal training practices, some distribution center employees exceed required production expectations while others have difficulty performing at goal. The results of this study may aid leaders in determining if engagement and job satisfaction are valid barriers that impact employees' ability to meet production standards. The study may be of value to distribution leaders whose teams struggle to make production.

To assist in overcoming the issue of productivity, I postulated questions that leaders could consider. How can leaders enhance interactions to improve employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity for these skilled employees? What information can be obtained in the development of strategic plans to ultimately increase profitability? Leadership's influence in such matters is vital to the success of a company. Productivity affects every component of business operations. It is imperative that decision-makers learn how to determine the relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity in order to become more profitable.

### **Background of the Problem**

The success of some businesses is directly contingent upon labor outputs. Employees are responsible for producing units of work. Some leaders consider employees to be human capital and routinely accommodate employees' needs and wants for retention and profit purposes (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2014). Leaders who create a positive workspace for employees may notice an increase in employee motivation (Drake-Brassfield, 2012). Kehoe and Wright (2013) noted that low productivity directly impacts organizational effectiveness scores. Researchers conduct directed studies to

examine problems that arise within the workplace. I conducted research targeted at productivity in relation to employee engagement and job satisfaction self-ratings.

### **Problem Statement**

Disengaged associates at U.S. corporations contributed to \$300 billion in annual reporting losses (Pounds, 2018). Researchers found that employees' overall welfare and productivity output increased by 34% when properly coached (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). The general business problem addressed in this study was that lack of employee engagement and job satisfaction results in a loss of profitability. The specific business problem was that some business leaders within the distribution industry do not know how to determine the relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity to increase profitability.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The independent variables were employee engagement and job satisfaction. The dependent variable was productivity. The targeted population consisted of workers at distribution companies in southwest Georgia. The implications for positive social change included the potential to assist decision-makers in determining valid barriers that impacted associates' ability to meet production goals.

### **Nature of the Study**

The quantitative research method was appropriate for the study as this method involves testing hypotheses to determine relationships among employee engagement, job

satisfaction, and productivity to increase profitability within the distribution industry. Quantitative methodology requires gathering, grouping, and synthesizing data in the effort to describe or explain a subject (Charlwood et al., 2014). The focus of this research was to analyze numerical data and infer the results to a larger population.

The qualitative research method was inappropriate for this study because the intent was to examine the relationships among the variables and analyze statistical data. Qualitative studies involve open-ended data from interviews or observation of human participants and analyzing those results thematically or providing a narrative of the phenomenon in question (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). Mixed methodology was not appropriate for the study because mixed methods require a combination of the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative methods (Breevaart et al., 2012). Researchers conducting mixed methods studies use quantitative and qualitative methods in tandem (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). Because the qualitative component was not relevant to the purpose of my study, a mixed method was unnecessary and inappropriate for arriving at an answer to the stated research question.

### **Research Question**

The understanding of management's impact on profitability in the distribution industry is vital to an organization's survival. The central research question was as follows: What is the relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity?



## **Hypotheses**

*H1<sub>0</sub>*: There is no significant statistical relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity.

*H1<sub>a</sub>*: There is a significant statistical relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The motivation-hygiene theory, published first in 1966 by Herzberg, was the theoretical framework for this study. Derby-Davis (2014), Flores and Subervi (2013), Gupta and Tayal (2013), Islam and Ali (2013), and Lumadi (2014) later expanded on the original work, all of whom are mentioned in the literature review section of this doctoral study. Herzberg (1966), via the motivation-hygiene theory, provided an explanation for leadership based on the premise that leaders were able to motivate associates to function at or above company-mandated goals (Flores & Subervi, 2013). Key constructs underlying the theory were (a) achievement; (b) recognition; (c) work itself; (d) responsibility; (e) advancement; (f) working conditions; (g) company policies; (h) relations with supervisors, subordinates, or coworkers; and (i) pay (Herzberg, 1966). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory independent variables were measurable by using surveys to determine productivity and profitability. The instruments used in this doctoral study included the Mensah Employee Engagement Scale, Mensah Job Satisfaction Scale, and Utrecht Work Employee Engagement Survey.

## **Operational Definitions**

*Employee engagement:* A strategy used by top-down management to improve employee and organizational processes and performance (Guo, Zhao, & Tang, 2013).

*Utrecht Work Engagement Survey (UWES):* The Utrecht Work Engagement Survey (UWES) is a measurement of employees' overall feelings toward their work (Mills, Culbertson, & Fullagar, 2012).

*Job satisfaction:* A combination of attitude and emotions influenced by internal and external factors that individuals feel about the job they are performing (Guan et al., 2013).

*Motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg's two-factor theory):* The theory envelops employees' motivators and what stimulates employees to become satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs (Herzberg, 1987; Herzberg et al., 1959).

## **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

The assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of this study are in the paragraphs to follow. Assumptions are ideally accurate but not yet corroborated (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Limitations are possible challenges that a researcher may face in presenting a complete study (Flick, 2014). Delimitations include the restrictions contained within the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

### **Assumptions**

Several assumptions existed in the research. Assumptions are factors in the research that, to a certain degree, are out of the control of the researcher, but are relevant to the integrity of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Researcher assumptions carry risk

and may potentially diminish the credibility of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). The first assumption of this study was that the respondents were knowledgeable about the study matter. Another assumption was that the participants answered the survey questions honestly.

### **Limitations**

Several limitations existed in the research. The limitations of the research study are any unfavorable aspects identified and disclosed to applicable parties (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The usage of an online survey may have introduced questions and misinterpretations because some participants may have lacked technical skills in using electronic or internet-based communications. A Likert-type scale was the chosen survey format, which may have prevented participants from selecting more accurate, specific sentiments. Additionally, the focus on a geographic area minimized the study's scope and may have been too narrow to generalize findings for other distribution facilities elsewhere. Flick (2014) posited that such limitations might arise in a study regardless of the research method.

### **Delimitations**

Several delimitations existed in the research. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) wrote that the delimitations of a research project refer to the scope and associated confines of the study. The survey invitations, distributed by Survey Monkey, were defined by the parameters of current, active employees of distribution companies located in southwest Georgia. The second delimitation was that associates under the age of 18 could not participate in the research. The third delimitation was the selection of participants

through internet-based, type sampling, whereby participants opted into the study, might have introduced bias or limited generalizability to other populations.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study was to extend or contribute to the existing knowledge of employee engagement and job satisfaction challenges in the distribution industry. The negative effects of employee engagement and job satisfaction represented significant impacts to employees, the distribution industry, and society. The findings from this study may allow leaders in the distribution industry, and related industries, to create strategic plans to diminish low productivity while increasing profitability and functionality within business operations. The key contributing factors were awareness and understanding the importance of employee engagement and job satisfaction. When leaders in the distribution industry understand these issues, employee productivity may improve and assist in establishing a tenured, skilled workforce.

### **Contribution to Business Practice**

My research may assist in filling gaps in managers' knowledge regarding employee engagement and job satisfaction. The findings from this study provided additional information about any impact upon productivity and profitability. The results from this doctoral study may equip decision makers with the strategies to engage their associates on a personal, relational level to increase employee commitment and job satisfaction.

## **Implications for Social Change**

Promoting awareness of the challenges affecting distribution productivity could improve operational efficiencies across the industry, resulting in increased profitability, job satisfaction, and employee engagement in distribution companies. When leaders invest in their workers, the associates may begin to develop a high sense of worth and belonging (Flores & Subervi, 2013). With their newfound perspective, some of the motivated employees may create positive social change in their respective communities. Workers may choose to extend services to neighbors and champion others to follow suit.

## **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

I concentrated this literature review on the impact that employee engagement and job satisfaction have on productivity by utilizing information from several different industries. A literature review is an evaluation of a body of research that addresses a research question (Rowe, 2014). A literature review provides a new understanding for researchers and scholars on how a study corresponds to existing research, while adding significant contributions to the existing literature (Shepard, 2013). I welcome leaders to utilize the best practices shared in this review.

Many leaders employ workers to aid in the operation of an organization. Due to human nature, challenges arise within the workplace among employees, as well as with the managerial teams. Employee relations comprise a number of issues and challenges that leaders must react to on a daily basis. This literature review contains comprehensive research from multiple business functions as well as applications to describe a quantitative correlational study within the distribution industry. Leaders in other fields

may also find the study and results of the analysis helpful in addressing concerns that may arise with their own employees within their respective fields. Examples of probable applications include but are not limited to distribution, transportation, warehousing, shipping, and manufacturing, all of which may correlate to the objective of this study.

The objective of this literature review was to examine whether the study's independent variables, employee engagement and job satisfaction, impacted productivity within the workplace. I based the literature review upon Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory as well as additional theories regarding employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity within the marketplace. Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory and Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics model are discussed in this section as well. The theories provided further inquiry in testing the resiliency of those frameworks when juxtaposed to this doctoral study. Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory most adequately addressed the impact that employee engagement and job satisfaction had upon productivity. The altruistic behavior of exerting energy and passion for the benefit of an employer was measurable and referred to as employee engagement (Klein, Molloy, & Brinsfield, 2012). This literature review had specific themes significant to the study, the product of significant research.

The literature reviewed for this study consisted of items published since 2015 with a few exceptions from beyond that time, as was necessary for a complete theoretical foundation. The sources included in this section provide background, relevant theories, variable management, and the impact on productivity and profitability. Walden University's library databases were essential in addressing the literature, providing a

great deal of information related to employee engagement and job satisfaction in business operations. For research purposes, search terms consistent with this study were used such as: *engagement management, emotional intelligence, employee advancement, employee commitment, employee engagement, employee growth, employee recognition, disengagement, distribution, Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model, Herzberg's two-factor theory, human capital, job dissatisfaction, job embeddedness, job satisfaction, leadership, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, motivate, pay, productivity, and training.*

The purpose of the literature review was to identify and ascertain additional information relative to the main factors of this study. An analysis of previously written research studies that focus upon employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity was included. Recommendations for business leaders were available as well. Peer-reviewed journals substantiated any unresolved gaps. The information was applicable to leaders working in distribution companies but was not necessarily limited to that industry. The foundation of the theoretical framework featuring Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory aided in completing this section. A complete synthesis of facts easily disseminated to leaders of any industry and managerial efficiency level was available. This information aided in completing the analysis in Section 3 to test the hypothesis for this study:

$H1_0$  : There is no significant statistical relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity.

*H1<sub>a</sub>* : There is a significant statistical relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity.

Walden Library's extensive databases led to the accumulation of peer-reviewed articles and publications, specifically, ABI/Inform Complete, Business Source Complete, and EBSCOhost. Researching using the dissertations at Walden selection, mining other author's reference sections, and keyword searching helped in completing this review. I exhausted the searches by using variations of the original terms in order to benefit from the different tenses of the words by gaining additional resources such as *engage*, *engaged*, *engagement*, *engaging*, *motivate*, *motivation*, *motivator*, *motivated*, and *motivating*. I also utilized Google Scholar to identify relevant sources that I accessed using my Walden Library credentials.

Nine major themes, based on Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, are included within this review. The themes included (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) work itself, (d) responsibility, (e) advancement, (f) working conditions, (g) company policies, (h) relations with supervisors, subordinates, or coworkers, and (i) pay. The previously listed factors' application to the variables and the alternate theories are further discussed in the study.

### **Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene (Two-Factor Theory)**

I based this literature review upon Herzberg's (1959, 1966, 1974) motivation-hygiene theory also known as the two-factor theory. Herzberg et al. developed the theoretical framework during the 1950s and 1960s. Originally developed to address AT&T's human resources needs, the theory was an international success with multiple



reprinting cycles. Many people utilized the theory and adapted its implications to address issues in several different industries with varying applications. Herzberg and Herzberg et al.'s two-factor theory delineated properties for positive and negative job attitudes as was applicable to employee engagement and job satisfaction as well as for employee disengagement and job dissatisfaction in association with motivation factors.

The motivation factors or satisfiers that comprised the positive job attitudes for employee engagement and job satisfaction included (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) work itself, (d) responsibility, and (e) advancement. The hygiene factors or dissatisfiers that comprise the negative job attitudes for employee disengagement and job dissatisfaction included (a) working conditions, (b) company policies, (c) relations with supervisors, subordinates, or coworkers, and (d) pay (Herzberg et al., 1959). In this literature review, I highlighted each of the above-mentioned factors in relation to employee engagement and job satisfaction, as well as the opposing factors of employee disengagement and job dissatisfaction.

In Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory, the authors found that a person who does not experience hygiene factors is not necessarily an engaged or satisfied employee. Per Herzberg's (1974) research, a worker felt disengaged or dissatisfied with apparent negative job attitudes, as each factor allowed for unique effects on individuals. Business leaders increased their focus on negative job attitudes whenever hygiene factors were raised concerns from their employees (Herzberg, 1974). The satisfiers contributed long-run success to employee engagement and job satisfaction, whereas the dissatisfiers contributed success in the short-run. Rahman and Iqbal (2013) noted that leaders who

created a reduction in job dissatisfaction levels due to hygiene factors decreased the rate of voluntary turnover. Employee engagement and job satisfaction were contingent on job context and job content.

Job content and job context have a significant impact on employee behavior. Herzberg (1959, 1966) wrote that job content and job context had important implications for employees in differing methods. According to Herzberg, job content predominantly caused employee engagement and job satisfaction based on the positive job attitudes. Job content or job satisfaction was a predictor variable for loyalty (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg (1987) wrote that satisfying hygiene requirements was not solely sufficient to improve productivity and profitability. Herzberg (1976) argued that workplaces must maintain motivation factors to ensure employee fulfillment and perceived value. An employee's perception of equitable treatment and operations impacted engagement and satisfaction with the firm.

Wise leaders focus attention toward fueling positive job attitudes to ensure employees enjoy and regard their occupations highly. Job context predominantly caused employee disengagement and job dissatisfaction based upon negative job attitudes (Herzberg, 1959, 1966). Herzberg et al. wrote that employees' negative job attitudes toward the organization leads to psychological withdrawal from business operations. AlBattat and Som (2013) discovered the most critical factors to distinguish job dissatisfaction were poor work environment and low compensation. Gkorezis and Petridou (2012) encouraged leaders to focus on communicating the organizational and departmental vision to employees in order to improve morale. Herzberg et al. redefined

the status quo for employee engagement and job satisfaction by determining that the motivation factor of achievement was the primary factor leading to enhanced performance in both regards. The secondary factor for higher productivity, recognition, can be especially helpful to increasing employee engagement and job satisfaction in workplaces that feature feedback models in an elevated function (Herzberg et al., 1959). Many leaders institute one-on-one sessions with their teams in accordance with many feedback models.

Frequent feedback and accountability sessions should assist workers in better understanding their roles and responsibilities. Two other satisfiers, work itself and responsibility, centered on employees being accountable not only to their supervisors but also to themselves to perform at or above goal (Herzberg et al., 1959). The provisions of the motivation factor of responsibility dictated that an associate having the authority to communicate, control resources, and own accountability will increase motivation factors of the employee per Herzberg et al. (1959). Employee engagement and job satisfaction increased as employees made autonomous decisions backed by the full faith of their managers. Accountability was essential for an associate's development of skills and led to further growth opportunities.

The final positive job attitude was advancement, frequently cited as growth in the literature. Growth is the pruning and development of current faculties and introduction of new opportunities (Herzberg et al., 1959). Receiving direct feedback and counseling for specific job duties bolstered the effect to advancement on an employee (Lester, 2013). Herzberg et al. noted that employees groomed with necessary training and development

should advance in their careers. Employees who receive such benefits and study their craft on their own may experience further growth (Matache & Ruscu, 2012).

**Research findings relative to Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory.** Several other researchers utilized the motivation-hygiene theory as a theoretical basis in their own research. Asegid, Belachew, and Yimam (2014), Derby-Davis (2014), Flores and Subervi (2013), Gupta and Tayal (2013), Islam and Ali (2013), and Lumadi (2014) expanded upon Herzberg's (1959, 1966, 1974) original work, among many other researchers. Each of the studies provided a unique perspective on the original theory that is applicable to this doctoral study. The authors cemented the authority of Herzberg's theory and demonstrated the transcendence of the tool by utilizing diverse applications ranging from academia to nursing and even retail operations.

Researchers routinely used the motivation-hygiene theory to answer inquiries in the healthcare field. Asegid, Belachew, and Yimam (2014) studied factors that impact the nursing staff's job satisfaction at public healthcare facilities located in South Ethiopia. Alshmemri, Shahwan-Akl, and Maude (2013) used applications of the motivation-hygiene theory to research the Saudi Arabian nursing staff's habits. The authors determined long-term strategies to procure and preserve quality nurses in the national healthcare system (Alshmemri et al., 2013). From Derby-Davis' (2014) review, it was evident that the factors of the motivation-hygiene theory can lead to employee engagement and job satisfaction in certain sectors, specifically, the nursing industry. The factors provided managers with an improved understanding of the length of time an individual will remain in employ at the hospital and at what level of leadership they may

ascend to, demonstrative of one's growth level (Derby-Davis, 2014). Employees, encouraged by the progress of peers, shift towards productive working.

Employees positively align to a company's vision when they notice others promoted from within the ranks of their organization. Advancement, or growth, was the primary cause of employee engagement and job satisfaction (Flores & Subervi, 2013). Growth allowed leaders to retain their talented workers (Flores & Subervi, 2013). Gupta and Tayal (2013) studied the competitive nature of the motivation-hygiene factors and renamed them as forces. The dueling forces impacted motivation predominantly, and higher levels of motivation positively impacted employee engagement and job satisfaction within the workplace and were transferable to academia as well (Gupta & Tayal, 2013). Academia is a field where the motivation-hygiene theory has useful applications.

Employee engagement and job satisfaction is essential to gauge in higher education as well. Islam and Ali (2013) focused on comparing job satisfiers and dissatisfiers in academia. Utilizing Herzberg's (1959) theory, the authors determined that the components that increased on-the-job enjoyment, engagement, and satisfaction were (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) work itself, (d) responsibility, and (e) advancement, all of which comprised the motivation factors (Islam & Ali, 2013). Achievement and work itself were the most salient contributors to increased engagement and satisfaction in employees when contrasting the positive job attitudes (Islam & Ali, 2013). The authors also noted that working conditions and company policies aligned with employees being disengaged and dissatisfied with their employment (Islam & Ali, 2013). However, Islam

and Ali further wrote that relations with supervisors, subordinates, or coworkers were a leading contributor to positive employee engagement and job satisfaction in stark contrast to the other negative job attitudes. One of Islam and Ali's findings differed from Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory. Islam and Ali noticed that advancement opportunity closely aligned with motivational factors which was in stark contrast to the original theory (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). The findings did not translate to any of the other private school districts with the exception of Peshawar (Islam & Ali, 2013). Nonetheless, the study's results provided information that aided in improving the education experience for many students (Islam & Ali, 2013). The acknowledgement of advanced educational levels by the leadership team improved employees' marketability and engagement levels (Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Bentein, 2013). Higher engagement levels enhanced an employee's perception of herself.

Leaders must possess emotional intelligence and adjust their leadership style to specific associates with whom they are engaging. Mayo (1933) wrote that leaders should be aware of an employee's self-esteem during any interactions. Mayo learned through research that higher performing employees feel that they are important to their leader, team, and organization (Krishnan, 2012). Accordingly, communication was a significant factor in the profitability of a firm. Leaders are encouraged to effectively communicate with their teams in order to increase productivity. Chen (2012) wrote that the benefits of communicating effectively are the employee's alignment with the organizational goals and ability to work together in unity. Managers can improve poor communication habits and effective leadership is a learned skill (Tuffley, 2012). Lumadi (2014) used Herzberg

et al.'s (1959) theory to determine that other underlying factors may influence employee behavior. Lumadi noticed that workplaces that promoted active involvement in operations may have more engaged employees who are satisfied with their jobs. Lumadi also identified several other factors about that potentially influence employee engagement, employee disengagement, job satisfaction, and job dissatisfaction.

**Implications of using Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory.** Researchers analyzed Herzberg et al. (1959) two-factor theory across multiple industries creating alternate applications and conclusions in varied environments for each factor. The satisfiers were consistent with Herzberg's (1966) theory and postulated motivators leading to improved engagement and job satisfaction in employees (Islam & Ali, 2013). The converse was mostly true regarding the impact dissatisfiers had on disengagement and job dissatisfaction (Ghazi, Shahzada, & Khan, 2013). Many associates deemed recognition as a highly motivating factor, further proving Herzberg's (1974) theory. Ultimately, researchers demonstrated on multiple occasions that the results of the original theory, applied in work environments that focus upon monitoring engagement and satisfaction indiscriminate of a particular industry, had enhanced ratings in employee engagement and job satisfaction. Providing quality customer service enhanced employee motivation and job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Empowered and knowledgeable employees reduced the number of managerial interactions, decreased customer wait times, and enhanced their own job satisfaction level (Herzberg et al., 1959).

### **Alternate Theories of Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory**

Two theories were similar to the selected theoretical framework; however, both did not sufficiently capture the essence of this study as well as Herzberg et al.'s (1959) theory. Maslow (1943) and Hackman and Oldham (1976) concluded that psychological and physiological needs are a component of working and gauging an employee's effectiveness. Maslow introduced a theory named the hierarchy of needs that include five main goals: (a) physiological needs, (b) safety, (c) social, (d) self-esteem, and (e) growth needs or self-actualization. Hackman and Oldham introduced the job characteristics model (JCM) for overall job effectiveness that encompasses three psychological states: (a) meaningfulness of work, (b) responsibility of outcomes, and (c) knowledge of results.

The hierarchy of needs focused primarily on elements consistent with Herzberg et al.'s (1959) positive job attitudes or motivation factors. Within the theory, an application called the foundation of goals of predominance was included that stated that before employees meeting higher needs, the lower needs must first be met (Maslow, 1943). Maslow further explained that each need is dependent upon another. Therefore, when an employee successfully met the expectations for all of the lower needs, the higher needs then appeared (Maslow, 1943). The basic needs were physiological and met before securing the next level goals. Continuing the chain, individuals required social needs after the safety function (Maslow, 1943). An employee's self-esteem increases when they receive encouragement and recognition for doing good work. Accordingly, the employee has a need to satisfy the self-actualization component of the theory, which is the highest need objective (Maslow, 1943). At this point, the associate may choose



engagement or disengagement and satisfaction or dissatisfaction relative to their workplace experience. Adiele and Abraham (2013) found that low levels of engagement and job satisfaction in the five hierarchies of needs impacts productivity and profitability. Leaders should enrich the atmosphere at work to improve production levels.

In general, leaders must be engaged in all aspects of operations to enhance the bottom-line performance. Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics model (JCM) described a framework for employees, the outcomes for which can result in positive and negative consequences. The five core job dimensions of the JCM are autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task identity, and task significance (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Employee behavior factors may increase engagement or job satisfaction with enhanced opportunities for advancement, all of which may lead to a highly skilled and motivated worker (Hogan, Lambert, & Griffin, 2013). The JCM parameters were that positive outcomes strengthen and increase employee engagement, job satisfaction, and other motivating factors, while negative outcomes weaken or dampen results associated with turnover and employee absenteeism (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

#### **Strengths and weaknesses of alternate theories of Herzberg's theory.**

Throughout the years, many researchers analyzed the hierarchy of needs for effectiveness within the workplace. Deci and Ryan (2014) demonstrated that although the basic needs of Maslow's (1943) theory listed the attainment of needs in sequential order, there are opportunities in which attaining to the higher-order needs created a better impetus under working conditions rather than the lower-order needs. Having the higher-order needs fulfilled increased motivation and led to increased employee engagement and

job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2014). Therefore, when one has higher-order needs met, the presumption was that she will likely be an engaged and satisfied employee.

Leaders need assistance in better understanding how to augment employee engagement and job satisfaction. Lester (2013) as well as Matache and Ruscu (2012) noted that Maslow's (1943) theory included advancement needs for employees to aid decision-makers in better understanding motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction factors. It was therefore in the best interest of leaders to focus on realizing those needs to increase profitability first before fulfilling lower-order needs. Bryant and Allen (2013) wrote that the loss of human capital impacts profitability. Leaders attuned to the needs of their people reduce turnover, employee disengagement, and job dissatisfaction (Chang, Wang, & Huang, 2013). Hancock, Allen, Bosco, and Pierce (2013) noted a negative relationship between turnover factors and productivity. A disengaged, dissatisfied worker is more likely to resign than an employee who is engaged and satisfied with the workplace.

Dissatisfied workers and/or those who are not committed to remaining with the company seem to have lower productivity than those who identify as a satisfied associate. Taormina and Gao (2013) further explained that both needs have identical response mechanisms when fulfilled. Leaders who met lower-order needs noticed the same level of satisfaction in employees as when they met the higher-order needs (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Heavey, Holwerda, and Hausknecht (2013) wrote that the psychological significance of the variables explains the impact of negative job factors on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity (Regts & Molleman, 2013). Başlevent and

Kirmanoglu (2013) and Bayoumi (2012) determined employees focused on needs that directly concerned them regardless of hierarchy order. Bayoumi observed that self-actualization was the prominent need over the belonging needs of associates. Employee behavior is a significant factor in gauging engagement and satisfaction.

Leaders need further information to better understand employee behavior. Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristic model (JCM) assisted decision-makers in understanding traits that required improvement as well as those that increased employee engagement and job satisfaction. The JCM also aided leaders in determining best practices for their workspaces and which core dimensions to implement (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The JCM highlighted motivational tools, such as incentives for associates, for the benefit of leadership (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Leaders who provided frequent, constructive feedback sessions bolstered an employee's performance and confidence in completing tasks (Kanten, 2014). The JCM is transferable to other industries such as hospitality services.

Employees working in the hospitality field represent an organization in a unique manner and leaders should ensure their happiness as it may well transfer to guest satisfaction. Kanten (2014) used the JCM applications in analyzing four five star hotels in a city, the results of that study may not be directly applied to other hotels in another area. The JCM applications were helpful factors in understanding how each employee met the demands of the hotel's customers (Kanten, 2014). Hackman and Oldham (1976) included individual employees in the JCM because of unique approaches to a situation. Kanten noticed that not all traits correlate with job constructing. Kanten demonstrated

that positive job attitude and performance rises when leaders expand and develop core job dimensions. The chain reaction produced a highly engaged employee who was satisfied with her position.

Leadership needs to understand core job dimensions in order to improve engagement and satisfaction. Hackman and Oldham (1976) used the JCM 's core dimensions to demonstrate that an employee's state of mind leads to behavioral responses to triggers. In order for the JCM to be efficient, all of the core job dimensions must sequentially follow each other (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Hauff and Richter (2015) noted that engagement and job satisfaction might increase, contingent upon the situation and the intrinsic or extrinsic nature of the task. The JCM demanded that job dimensions follow sequentially. However, employees were unique individuals who reacted unpredictably to different stimuli (Hauff & Richter, 2015). Human behavior is at times erratic and unable to measure.

Leaders must maintain a pulse on operations and people to improve morale. Maslow (1943) as well as Hackman and Oldham (1976) wrote about the motivating factors that contributed to the ranges of employee engagement and job satisfaction within the workplace. The theories were similar in topic to Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, but did not fully examine the impact of employee engagement and job satisfaction on productivity. Maslow prioritized the needs of the worker and discounted an employee's ability to achieve higher-order needs before fulfilling lower-order needs. Hackman and Oldham also ranked the completion of core job dimensions in sequential order with no allowance for completing tasks out of order. The hierarchy of needs theory

and JCM were in contrast to answering the research question and hypothesis of this study. Herzberg et al. provided concepts within the theory that address the core concepts of this doctoral study. As such, Herzberg et al.'s motivation-hygiene theory was most appropriate as the theoretical framework of this study.

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is a quantifiable representation that signifies the level of an employee's acknowledgment and acceptance of the ideals of an organization while becoming an ambassador for the brand. Job embeddedness is a subgroup within engagement as it further defines the ability for employees to amalgamate with the company and local community (Collins, Burrus, & Meyer, 2014). Marckinus-Murphy, Burton, Henagan, and Briscoe (2013) studied the manner in which job embeddedness affects employee engagement and job satisfaction. Engaged employees were less likely to leave the organization, meaning that many active associates were dedicated to the job (Heavey et al., 2013). Tse, Huang, and Lam (2013) discussed that decision-makers enhanced their managerial and leadership skills in the effort to boost employee engagement. Leaders who cultivated a positive work environment consistent with respect, recognition, and appreciation reduced negative job attitudes and disengagement (Bhatnagar, 2014; Stinchcomb & Leip, 2013). To accomplish this goal, decision-makers should remain attentive to their employees.

Leaders must value associates and treat them appropriately. Hon, Chan, and Lu (2013) determined that timely feedback from the leadership team encourages employees to be free to express themselves in the workplace. Gkorezis and Petridou (2012) defined

empowerment as the transference of power to employees giving them certain control, power, and authority. Empowering employees illuminated individual creativity and ideas to improve the production process and positively affected the organization's profitability (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). Empowerment without the continuance of innovation was unserviceable and unproductive (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). Marescaux, De Winne, and Sels (2013) touted employee empowerment and job satisfaction as influential to shifting HR practices and scope. Leaders must purpose to reinvest in their teams.

Effective leaders provide their employees with encouragement and incentives. Roche and Haar (2013) found that leaders should provide their employees with intrinsic rewards such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness to increase engagement and motivation. Leaders can use positive elements of feedback to broadcast and celebrate the employee's achievement (Herzberg et al., 1959). Wan, Sulaiman, and Omar (2012) noted that employees used the feedback from their leaders to adapt for promotional opportunities. For many employees, the presence of a career path enhanced personal engagement and job satisfaction (Wan, Sulaiman, & Omar, 2012). Leaders should devote time and resources to equip employees for competence in current positions and growth for future opportunities (García, Lajara, Sempre, & Lillo, 2013; Salazar, Torres, & Reche, 2012). Perez and Mirabella (2013) explained lack of training was a contributor to loss in productivity, profitability, and business failure. When resources are restricted, one of the first budget eliminations by leaders is typically training and development.

Training and development is an important asset to the health of a corporation. Competent employees affected profitability and increased an organization's levels of

success by further innovating and developing their skills (Ji, Huang, Liu, Zhu, & Cai, 2012). Growth and sustainability occurred when employees were free to brainstorm and implement ideas (Ji, Huang, Liu, Zhu, & Cai, 2012). Sustainability is challenging when a competitive market emerges (Stambaugh, Zhang, & DeGroot, 2013). Employees who bought into the organizational vision and their own personal development had higher engagement, satisfaction, and commitment to a company (Biswas, Varma, & Ramaswami, 2013; Nouri & Parker, 2013). Bapna, Langer, Mehra, Gopal, and Gupta (2013) encouraged business leaders to invest in developing employees to increase productivity and profitability. Baron and Kreps (2013) noted leaders who understand the motivational factors of employee behavior routinely experience successful relationships within the workplace. Paillé, Boiral, and Chen (2013) wrote that engagement influenced job satisfaction, which in turn predicted turnover intentions. Cavanagh, McNeil, and Bartram (2013) asserted that office interactions and effectiveness improves when employees are developed and engaged in the future of the organization. Frequent team engagement exercises were beneficial to improving morale and leadership's approval rate.

Leaders who inspired employees to improve themselves and become brand ambassadors were usually successful and considered highly by the staff. Carter and Tourangeau (2012) noted that developmental opportunities directly correlate to engagement and commitment to the organization. McGilton, Boscart, Brown, and Bowers (2013) discussed how employees given the opportunity to increase skills and develop professionally are more engaged and more inclined to remain with the company,

further enhancing profitability. Armstrong and Taylor (2014) discussed the significance of having an engaged and productive workforce to increase sustainability. Van Dam, Meewis, and Van der Heijden (2013) noted that leaders must create a supportive environment for employees to develop in order to increase engagement and commitment. Employee engagement and job satisfaction bolstered employees' desire to advance in their field (Van der Meer & Wielers, 2013). Marckinus-Murphy et al. (2013) noted engaged and committed employees remained with their employer in an economic downturn. I am familiar with several people at distribution warehouses who have not received earned merit increases for three years but are nonetheless committed to their organization.

Despite the economy, some associates remained faithful to a company due to leadership's influence. Leaders are further encouraged to provide open lines of communication and appropriate but attractive compensation plans to enhance engagement (Selden, Schimmoeller, & Thompson, 2013). Rost and Weibel (2013) noted that executives gauge the labor market rate in order to provide employees with objective compensation plans. Lee and Chen (2013) further asserted that increasing salaries was a suggestion to improve employee engagement. Nitesh, NandaKumar, and Asok Kumar (2013) discovered that employees who were satisfied with their compensation packages were more engaged and prominent supporters of the organizational vision. Butler, Brennan-Ing, Wardamasky, and Ashley (2014) defined tenure as the time an employee spends in their current occupation. Newman and Sheikh (2012) found that employee engagement was usually high in workplaces where micromanagement is negligible, the



workers are tenured, and employee attach rates were high. Michel, Kavanagh, and Tracey (2013) noticed that an employee's firm-specific skills increased with tenure at an organization. Maden (2014) wrote that some researchers proposed that employees were reluctant to tender resignations due to an accumulation of organizational investments or benefits. Bal, De Cooman, and Mol (2013) observed short-tenured employees had lower turnover intentions. Leaders should identify barriers to retaining quality talent and remove them swiftly.

Smarter, engaged teams usually make solid business decisions and perform well. Battistelli, Galletta, Portoghese, and Vandenberghe (2013) noted that an employee's motivating factors correlated to enhanced engagement and productivity. Training and development have a significant impact upon employee commitment and engagement (Jehanzeb, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2013). A strong relationship exists between employee engagement and an organization's culture (Islam, Ahmad, & Ahmed, 2013). Harmonious workplaces that focus on mentoring workers benefit from increased engagement (Islam et al., 2013). Percival, Cozzarin, and Formanek (2013) revealed that leadership's challenge is to manage rapid business operations, refine employees' knowledge base, and ensure corporate engagement. True engagement is on going, not a single, hurried interaction.

Leaders must take time to effectively engage with their people in part to reduce employees' lack of knowledge in the workplace. Hill, Seo, Kang, and Taylor (2012) found that some leaders failed to engage with employees because the workers were not involved with making weighty decisions. Appelbaum, Louis, Makarenko, Saluja,

Meleshko, and Kulbashian (2013) concurred with Hill et al. and further noted the disconnection often results in diminished engagement and productivity in the employee. The more engaged an associate becomes, the higher their commitment and production levels (Allen, Ericksen, & Collins, 2013). Researchers discovered that certain levels of commitment have an intervening impact upon mentoring and voluntary resignations (Craig, Allen, Reid, Riemenschneider, & Armstrong, 2012). Leaders must be fair and equitable in the treatment of their teams.

Decision-makers must ensure parity in dealings with all employees. Leaders should consistently monitor relationships and behaviors while maintaining a positive work climate (Kim & Mor-Barak, 2014; Sun, Chow, Chiu, & Pan, 2013). Collins and Mossholder (2014) defined organizational justice as the employee's perception of fair treatment in the workplace. Leaders are essential in the shaping of an employee's work perceptions (Campbell, Perry, Maertz, Allen, & Griffeth, 2013). McClean, Burris, and Detert (2013) deduced that employee perceptions of a leader's decisiveness determined the likelihood of turnover. Organizations committed to job fairness principles may notice higher levels of employee commitment, engagement, productivity, and even safety (Colley, Lincolne, & Neal, 2013; Misra, Jain, & Sood, 2013). Giauque, Anderfuhren- Biget, and Varone (2013) noticed employee fairness perception affects volunteerism and profitability. Leaders should be aware that gender disparities are mediators in the appearance of fair treatment and job satisfaction (Nishii, 2013). Leaders should vocalize their commitment to ensuring a fair and inclusive work environment (Nishii, 2013). Job satisfaction increases or remains constant when leaders set the standard for respect and

include all employees in the decision-making process (Nishii, 2013). Imparting partnership to employees allows leaders to better demonstrate accountability in operating according to the mission of the organization.

Leaders who actively observe inter-personal interactions and reset expectations when associates deviate from appropriate business behavior set the standard of demeanor in the workplace. Chen, Mao, Hsieh, Liu, and Yen (2013) determined that the perception of fair treatment within the workplace is a crucial aspect of social exchange relationships. Jung and Kim (2012) determined the three components of organizational commitment are affective, continuance, and normative, all of which are relative to engagement. It is important that leaders monitor affective commitment as it correlates to engagement and productivity (Garland, Hogan, Kelley, Kim, & Lambert, 2013). Employees who maintain high self-efficacy were routinely committed workers (Bang, Ross, & Reio, 2013). Improved HR practices produced educated leaders and engaged associates (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). Garg and Dhar (2014) wrote that leader-member exchanges and managerial oversight are predictor factors to an employee's engagement and commitment to the organization. Manager-employee relationships are not the only indicator of engagement: many associates inherently devote to their tasks.

Employee engagement is personal to the individual and based upon one's perception of job values. Some DC employees are engaged simply because their moral compass consistently guides them in that direction (Stanley et al., 2013). Raub and Liao (2012) found that workers in customer-facing roles must have self-motivation to deliver quality service to both internal and external clients. Per Xerri and Brunetto (2013), some

employees propelled business operations via their commitment to the company through innovative ideas. Some researchers noted through mathematical analysis that there are weak relationships among absenteeism, affective commitment, and desire to leave (Garland et al., 2013). Employees who like their leadership teams emotionally invest in the organization (Newman & Sheikh, 2012). Emotional investiture is an attribute of an engaged employee.

Leadership must cultivate employee engagement. Smith and Kumar (2013) further stated that the commitment level of the employee and employer relationship flourishes as workers notice that leaders actively engage in interactions. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a positive contributor to fostering engagement in the workplace (Smith & Kumar, 2013). High commitment levels enhance social interaction with the company as well as the local community, which promotes positive social change (Suliman & Al Kathairi, 2013). Tews, Stafford, and Michel (2014) discovered that employees self-monitored their commitment and engagement levels using external personal events, external professional events, and internal network. Experienced, oftentimes tenured, employees solidly committed to the organization in contrast to their inexperienced, frequently young, coworkers (Tews, Michel, & Ellingson, 2013). Disengaged workers wreak havoc on engagement, productivity, and, ultimately, profitability (Simon, 2013). Ultimately, fiscal and social responsibility, in addition to, well-placed acts of gratitude enhanced employee performance and engagement.

Leaders may use incentives to enhance overall engagement. Nyman, Sarti, Hakonen, and Sweins (2012) determined that recognition and appreciation, in all forms,

directly link to an employee's engagement level. Factors that affect engagement positively or negatively includes open lines of communication, incentive programs, on-the-job training and development, recognition of accomplishments, and compensation plans (Choo et al., 2013). Gajendran and Joshi (2012) found that trust must be the foundation of a successful leader-employee relationship. Kuo (2013) determined trust promoted knowledge-sharing experiences within the workplace. Strong leadership and attention to employees increased an employee's engagement level by 43.2% (Choo et al., 2013). Webster and Beehr (2012) reported that leaders who practice these tools increase employee engagement and productivity. Effective leadership is the foundation of an employee's engagement level and is a significant factor in turnover rate.

Engaged workers are likelier to remain with an organization longer.

Ramamoorthy, Flood, Kulkarni, and Gupta (2014) proposed that highly productive teams are comprised of senior workers and top producers were less likely to voluntarily resign. An organization's market competitiveness, productivity, and profitability diminishes when a knowledgeable, high-performing employee ends employment (Bebe, 2016; Cole et al., 2012). Kwon and Rupp (2013) deduced that the loss of expert performers and relational networkers resulted in lower profitability. Wright, Coff, and Moliterno (2014) found that the addition of highly trained employees positively correlated to increased productivity and profitability.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is the quantifiable level of an employee's contentment, agreement, and approval of an organization and its officers. Abii, Ogula, and Rose

(2013) defined job satisfaction as the positive mentality of an employee in regard to the working conditions and experiences. The topic of job satisfaction encompasses diverse working scenarios in the government, non-profits, and both the public and private sectors (Herzberg et al., 1959; Maslow, 1943). Several researchers further developed Herzberg et al.'s motivation-hygiene theory to address job satisfaction in various industries.

Job satisfaction impacts turnover intentions. Hofaidhllaoui and Chhinzer (2014) noticed that job satisfaction is an employee's gratification level with a position. The team further noted that job satisfaction is a significant contributor to productivity and turnover (Hofaidhllaoui & Chhinzer, 2014). Jyothi and Ravindran (2012) found a correlation between job satisfaction and retention rates. Mencl and Lester (2014) examined generational work attitudes, job satisfaction, job security, and turnover intentions to determine overall job satisfaction level. While they did not find any differences generationally, Mencl and Lester found more similarities concerning job satisfaction, satisfaction with pay, and turnover intentions. Zaniboni, Truxillo, and Fraccaroli (2013) found that work outcomes had unique ramifications based upon age. Employees of all ages valued a positive perspective of work.

Job satisfaction ratings are a significant factor in the overall fitness of an organization. Job satisfaction is a mediating variable for productivity, retention, and work itself (Brewer, Kovner, Greene, Tukov-Shuser, & Djukic, 2012; Lee, 2013; Matz, Wells, Minor, & Angel, 2013). Cho, Rutherford, and Park (2013) defined job satisfaction as the elements that comprise the actual job and the workplace culture. Ünal (2013) determined that job satisfaction was an employee's outlook on the job and/or assimilated

other factors. Herzberg et al. (1959) simply defined job satisfaction as how an employee liked or disliked their employer/employment situation. Kumar, Ahmed, Shaikh, Hafeez, and Hafeez (2013) argued that a relationship existed among job satisfaction, work environment, compensation, and job requirements. Employee engagement, job satisfaction, and fairness perception were mediating and moderating factors in relation to an organization's performance rating (Bouckenooghe, Raja, & Butt, 2013; Gillet, Gagne, Sauvagere, & Fouquereau, 2013; Karatepe, 2013; Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh, & Callan, 2014). Scheers and Botha (2014) noted the importance of employees building strong relationships with external customers to enhance profitability. Satisfied employees tended to have better interactions with clients than those dissatisfied with their jobs.

Employee job satisfaction impacts all areas of a company. Lam and Chen (2012) noted that employees who provide exceptional customer service are less likely to be dissatisfied and have a higher level of commitment. Employees who have a high level of job satisfaction are more inclined to be dedicated to their employer (Ünal, 2013). Lam and Chen (2012) also found that employees who are satisfied with their job are less likely to resign, allowing the employer to retain quality talent. Vasquez (2014) noted positive work environments encourage employees to pursue tenure. Scheers and Botha (2014) mentioned that an employee's job satisfaction links to their motivation and productivity levels. A significant factor of job satisfaction is the relationship between time spent doing work versus time away from work.

Employees who are satisfied with their working hours are more likely to be satisfied with their positions. Karatepe (2013) suggested leaders assist employees in creating a healthy work-life balance. Work overload negatively impacts employees by causing mental, physical, or even emotional exhaustion (Karatepe, 2013). Lee and Ok (2014) defined work exhaustion as burnout, a factor that reduces growth. Karatepe found that work exhaustion negatively affected job embeddedness and productivity. Ultimately, customers suffer due to poor service quality and will patron another company, which negatively impacts profitability (Karatepe, 2013). Work exhaustion is a defining component that leads to job turnover.

Employee turnover rates are contingent upon employee job satisfaction. Job satisfaction influenced productivity and intention to stay (Roche & Haar, 2013). Tews et al. (2014) suggested job satisfaction impacts employee turnover. McCarty and Skogan (2013) determined job satisfaction impacts productivity and accelerates turnover. Hofaidhllaoui and Chhinzer (2014) further expounded that leaders should proactively monitor associated factors of job satisfaction that influence the organization and bottom-line performance. Kehoe and Wright (2013) and Zelnik, Maletič, Maletič, and Gomišček (2012) added open lines of communication are necessary between leaders and employees. Leaders who intently listen to their employees' feedback should notice a positive shift in job satisfaction (Scheers & Botha, 2014). Motivating factors also influence an employee's perspective of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a source of motivation for productivity. Overall job satisfaction enhances total work quality, regardless of an employee having positive or negative



motivation (Gomes, Asseiro, & Ribeiro, 2013; Panagopoulos, 2013). Higher motivation directly correlates to higher job satisfaction and productivity (Islam & Ali, 2013). Linz and Semykina (2012) noted that some employees feel dissatisfied with their positions when they do not have any motivating factors. The factors that influence job satisfaction are (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) work itself, (d) responsibility, and (e) advancement/growth (Herzberg et al., 1959). Zedelius, Veling, Bijleveld, and Aarts (2012) noted that productivity increases with employee job satisfaction and motivation. Employee job satisfaction is measurable via psychometric scales with existing internal consistency reliability. Matkar (2012) defined a rating scale based upon Cronbach's coefficient alpha where  $>.90$  was excellent,  $.80-.89$  was good,  $.70-.79$  was acceptable,  $.60-.69$  was questionable,  $.50-.59$  was poor, and  $<.50$  was unacceptable. Jang and George (2012) noted that researchers utilize psychometric scales to test general or facet-specific job satisfaction for employees. Facet-specific job satisfaction differs from general job satisfaction, as it measures employee attitudes about certain job details rather than the job as a whole. Employees who exceed performance metrics are more likely to be satisfied with their employment.

Highly performing employees are usually satisfied with their positions and workplace as a whole. Kang, Gatling, and Kim (2015) wrote that employees are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs when they accomplish a level of achievement within the workplace. Lester (2013) noted that training and development of employees is essential to their growth. Matache and Ruscu (2012) further explained that leaders must provide training and development to their employees, as doing so increases productivity

and job satisfaction. McSweeney-Feld and Rubin (2013) noticed that continuous development of employees leads to an enhanced focus on organizational goals and the mission, which increases profitability. In certain sectors, training and development is crucial because of the nature of the position, such as customer-facing roles (Garcia, Lajara, Sempere, & Lillo, 2013). Vance, Chow, Paik, and Shin (2013) determined that well-trained employees are more competent and likely to succeed in business operations. Hofstetter and Cohen (2014) determined that development opportunities and advanced education is an asset to the organization. Reinvesting in associates is a wise choice and further enhances productivity and earnings.

Some organizations utilize the term *human capital* when referring to its employees. Fulmer and Ployhart (2014) found that leaders valued human capital as an integral part of an organization. Jehanzeb, Rasheed, and Rasheed (2013) determined that the success or failure of an organization is contingent upon the quality of human capital and resource allocation. Jayasingam and Yong (2013) found that employees who earned college degrees were on productive teams and less likely to resign. Gkorezis and Petridou (2012) found that utilizing incentives increases employee productivity. Morgan, Dill, and Kalleberg (2013) added that other factors such as promotions and merit increases further bolster job satisfaction and productivity. Leaders may consider utilizing customer-service based incentives as a strategy to strengthen quality assurance with clients and productivity with associates.

Higher job satisfaction levels usually correlate to favorable customer service. Harrington, Ottenbacher, Staggs, and Powell (2012) discovered that an employee's level

of job satisfaction correlates to customer experience scores. Lumadi (2014) wrote that proper training affects the quality of production and work overall. Boxall (2013) shared that training also affects employee personal interests which factors as a significant role in work attitudes. Mathe and Scott-Halsell (2012) wrote that consumers identify high producing employees as trustworthy, which positively affects the brand's overall image. The researchers noticed that the converse was true based upon observation of employees with low morale (Mathe & Scott-Halsell, 2012). In the same manner, low morale may lead to serious safety incidents on the job.

Safety of the staff must be the primary concern of leaders. Dahl and Olsen (2013) wrote that job dissatisfaction leads to carelessness at the workplace. Employees' failure to abide by safety regulations causes accidents or incidents (Dahl & Olsen, 2013). Workplace injuries do not only affect the injured party. McCaughey, DelliFraine, McGhan, and Bruning (2013) found that recordable accidents led to job dissatisfaction, productivity, and intention to resign in non-injured associates. In order to combat these issues, Kumar et al. (2013) encouraged leaders to improve the working environment and communicate safe behavior best practices on a consistent basis. Kumar et al. shared that addressing safety concerns contributes to improved morale, among other positive results. Sang, Teo, Cooper, and Bohle (2013) noticed employee job dissatisfaction regarding safety translates to the perception that leadership is not committed about their well-being. Hancock et al. (2013) described safety as a mediating factor for job stressors that lead to job dissatisfaction. McCaughey et al. (2013) discovered that leaders who use positive engagement to interact with their teams develop a higher safety rating and are less

susceptible to accidents. The efforts significantly increase job satisfaction rates, productivity, and profitability. However, there are several opportunities for leadership to improve job satisfaction for associates.

Job satisfaction improves by leaders focusing on job characteristics. Per Kanten (2014), job characteristics that aid in improving job satisfaction and productivity include (a) autonomy, (b) task significance, (c) feedback, (d) skill variety, and (d) task identity. Employees tend to have enhanced efficacy while receiving directed training (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). High-performance work systems and operations influenced job satisfaction as they altered an employee's motivation, production, and engagement levels (Lee, Lee, & Kang, 2012). Lester (2013) noted employees crave job satisfaction and positive reinforcement. Gavino, Wayne, and Erdogan (2012) found that leaders who openly praise and recognize their staff usually lead employees who deliver the best customer service and productivity. Recognition programs encourage and support high productivity attainment (Haines III & St-Onge, 2012). Handgraaf, Van Lidth de Jeude, and Appelt (2013) discovered that many employees ranked recognition highly, superseding compensation. Ultimately, it is highly evident that job satisfaction is an important factor in the productivity of an associate.

### **Transition**

Section 1 included information that represented the foundation for this study. The material included the background of the problem and details about the general and specific business problems identified and addressed in the review of the literature. The

section included the purpose statement, nature of the study, research question, theoretical framework, and the causes, affects, and possible solutions to the research problem.

Section 2 includes the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, the participants, methods and designs, population, sampling, and ethical research. This section also includes descriptions of data storage, analytic techniques, data organization, determining reliability and validity of the instruments, and procedures for this study.

## Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes the purpose statement and discussion of the role of the researcher, a description of the participants, and the appropriateness of the research method and design selected for the research. This section also contains the description of the sampled population, sampling method, data collection process, and data analysis method used in this inquiry. In addition, the section includes an explanation of the instruments used in this study and associated validity.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The independent variables were employee engagement and job satisfaction. The dependent variable was productivity. The targeted population consisted of workers at distribution companies in southwest Georgia. The implications for positive social change included the potential to assist decision-makers in determining valid barriers that impact associates' ability to meet production goals.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The primary role of a researcher is to recruit participants, act as an impartial data collector, and report the result without judging the findings (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). My role in this study was to collect and analyze data, and I presented the findings while avoiding bias, respecting ethical standards, and protecting the rights of participants. The participants did not have any direct affiliation with my profession. Survey Monkey used their database of public sources to recruit participants. To ensure adequate ethical

protection of participants, I completed the National Institute of Health training on human-participant protection (see Appendix A) and earned the necessary qualifications to protect participants' rights during research. I obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board of Walden University to conduct the study (02-13-20-0436438). I complied with all of the guidelines established in the Belmont Report protocol. I did not have any influence over study participants. The three instruments used in the research registered a Cronbach's coefficient *alpha* of .72 to .93, which indicates a moderate to high level of reliability. Accordingly, there was no need for a pilot test.

### **Participants**

The participants represented the population of employees who worked in the distribution industry around southwest Georgia. The participants were comprised of both sexes and varied backgrounds. Cooper & Schindler (2008) noted that participant recruitment should yield a well-informed sample of individuals. I used Survey Monkey to gain access to employees working in the industry. Goodman (2011) noted that the use of Survey Monkey as a web-based survey tool in quantitative research has been a relatively new and evolving means for collecting data used in wide-ranging research efforts. The study participants were provided with my contact email as well as the IRB's information on the survey site for respondents to register any questions or concerns.

### **Research Method and Design**

#### **Research Method**

Three methods exist for conducting scholarly research: (a) qualitative, (b) quantitative, and (c) mixed methods (Karanja, Rajala, & Jyrämä, 2013). I selected a

quantitative research method to address the research question and test the hypothesis. Quantitative researchers can reject or accept a hypothesis and use sample sizes sufficient to support the generalizability of the study results to a specific population (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). The quantitative research method was the most appropriate method for this study because the focus of a quantitative study is to use measurable data to examine the relationship among variables (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013).

Qualitative researchers explore unstructured phenomena by discovering themes extracted from interviews or observations (Garcia & Gluesing, 2013; Noble & Smith, 2015). Although qualitative case studies deepen the examination for a specific phenomenon, such approaches generate insufficient data required for retaining or rejecting a stated quantitative research hypothesis (Masson, Delarue, Bouillot, Sieffermann, & Blumenthal, 2016). The process of conducting this study included collecting numerical data and examining relationships among variables. Therefore, a qualitative method was not appropriate for this study because the focus of such a study is to understand participants' beliefs, experiences, and perspectives (Zachariadis, Scott, & Barrett, 2013).

A mixed method study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, such that the results from one method can support the findings from the other method (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). The mixed method research strategy involves data collection, analysis, integrated findings, and interpretation using quantitative and qualitative approaches (Archibald, 2016; Butz & Stupnisky, 2016; Zachariadis et al., 2013). Collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data is quite time consuming



(Venkatesh et al., 2013). Therefore, a mixed method study was inappropriate for this study because the intent was to examine the relationship among the variables and not to explore the phenomenon at the same time.

### **Research Design**

Three types of research designs exist in a quantitative research study: (a) nonexperimental, including descriptive, correlational, and regression; (b) quasi-experimental; and (c) experimental (Zellmer-Bruhn, Caligiuri, & Thomas, 2016). The intent of this research was to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The quantitative method via correlation testing and multiple linear regression was the design selected for this study. Based upon the responses given from the data surveys, I provided an assessment of the evidence. The survey questions contained components of the Mensah Employee Engagement Survey, Mensah Job Satisfaction Survey, and Utrecht Work Employee Engagement Survey.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population group included employees working in unnamed distribution centers in southwest Georgia. The participants were comprised of both sexes and varied backgrounds. Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique by which researchers select participants because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher or because of the accessibility to the data collection tool in relation to potential participants (Nasomboon, 2014). A convenience sample was appropriate for this study because convenience sampling is an assumption of multiple linear regressions,

which is the data analysis in this study. An advantage of using convenience sampling is the ease of recruitment of willing and available participants (Bornstein, Jager, & Putnick, 2013). Convenience sampling strategies may be less expensive than other sampling strategies (Green & Salkind, 2016). The disadvantage of using convenience sampling is that the associated sampling bias may result in research findings only generalizable to the population of origin (Bornstein et al., 2013). The required sample of 42 was calculated using G\*Power with an effect size of .25, power of .8, variable count of 2, and an alpha of .05 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2008).

### **Ethical Research**

I considered the ethical protections of the participants in this research study. I did not collect any of the participants' personal, workplace-related information. The participants' responses will remain confidential from their employer as well as the public. I captured the responses electronically and utilized passwords on my electronic device to protect the identities and respective information of the respondents and maintain the privacy for a minimum of 5 years. Furthermore, as noted earlier in this study, I abided by my obligations as a researcher as outlined in the Belmont report.

The release document for participant consent was included on the electronic survey. The study participants took the survey of their own volition and were able to withdraw from study at any time by closing the survey window.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

I used SurveyMonkey to distribute the surveys to the participants and simplify the analysis of responses. To complete the survey, respondents selected the link contained in

the survey request email. The participants noted that the first page was the official consent form and that continuation implied consent. After completing the survey, the respondents manually submitted their final answers.

Survey Monkey automatically created a running tabulation of the respondents' answers from the Likert-type scale that was only accessible to me. I created questions to address the research question using the Mensah Employee Engagement, Mensah Job Satisfaction, and Utrecht Work Engagement Survey (see Appendices B and C), all of which adhered to the nominal scale. Cronbach's alpha measured internal consistency reliability that ranged from .85 to .94 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). The process of completing the survey should have been relatively simple for respondents accustomed to using electronic devices. Construct validity provided me with a definition of how well an instrument measured data. Researchers review instrumentation in order to assess its construct validity (Podsakoff, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Klinger, 2013).

I stored all tangible data associated with this study in a fireproof file cabinet in a supply room secured with a key lock. All electronic data was stored in a laptop with password confirmation necessary to open the files. Future researchers may obtain a copy of the data and I maintained a copy in iCloud.

### **Data Collection Technique**

For this study, Survey Monkey distributed online surveys to obtain data regarding the relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The method of survey collection was advantageous by readily transferring survey responses into quantifiable data. The survey method was also less expensive than physically

mailing surveys to a selection of site population groups. Additionally, participants were able to take their time in responding to questions, which increases the probability of receiving truthful responses (Chang & Vowles, 2013). The disadvantages to using this method were unintentionally excluding employees who wished to respond but could not operate an electronic device (Kayam & Hirsch, 2012).

### **Data Analysis**

The objective of this research was to determine whether employee engagement and job satisfaction impacted productivity. The results of this work may empower researchers with resources and a better understanding of how the independent variables influence productivity. The research question was what is the relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and employee productivity? I developed a survey modified from the Mensah Employee Engagement Survey, Mensah Job Satisfaction Survey, and Utrecht Work Employee Engagement Survey (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). The survey questions' measurement used a Likert-type scale. I downloaded the results from Survey Monkey using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v. 25). After the import was completed, I then analyzed the data using analysis, specifically multiple regressions and correlation testing.

### **Study Validity**

This study was valid as the originators of the selected survey instrument, Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) and Mensah (2014), proved a high level of external validity through pilot testing. Several other researchers utilized the tool such as Littman-Ovadia

& Balducci (2013). The results from all previous studies indicated that the surveys had a high degree of construct validity.

### **Transition and Summary**

In Section 2, I described the process I used for answering the research question. This section included the project itself, study purpose, researcher and participant roles, and reinstatement of the purpose statement. The objective of this doctoral study was to help leaders examine the impact, if any, that employee engagement and job satisfaction had on productivity. The bottom-line of this project was to aid leaders with information on how they may increase the profitability of their organizations. Within Section 2, I also introduced the theoretical framework of the study, the motivation-hygiene theory for workplace effectiveness (Herzberg, 1966).

In Section 3, I offer practical applications for leaders as well as the research analysis findings from the study. I also provide suggestions for further research. Finally, my reflections on this exhaustive work are also included in this section.

### Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The independent variables were employee engagement and job satisfaction. The dependent variable was productivity. The null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Employee engagement and job satisfaction significantly predicted productivity.

#### **Presentation of the Findings**

I conducted correlation and multiple regression analyses via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v. 25) to examine the relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity in the distribution industry. The goal of the study was to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed among the variables. The data originated from workers in the distribution industry actively employed at DCs located in southwest Georgia. Participants completed an internet survey hosted by Survey Monkey. The following subsections include the results of the descriptive and inferential statistics.

#### **Descriptive Statistics**

To answer the research question, I uploaded the study's survey to Survey Monkey to obtain the data set from an appropriate population pool. Within 5 days of posting, SurveyMonkey garnered 59 participants who initially started the survey. Of the 59 participants who agreed to the informed consent at the beginning of the survey, 12

respondents failed to answer the survey in its entirety or exited the survey before submitting final responses. The G\*Power calculation indicated a need for a sample size of 42 study participants, and there were 47 eligible survey responses that met the established criteria. After Survey Monkey collected the data, I downloaded the results using the provided Excel file into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v. 25) to begin statistical testing. I completed multiple regression and correlation analysis to test the hypotheses. Table 1 is a summary of the descriptive statistics pertaining to the variables in the study.

Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations for Quantitative Study Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Bootstrapped 95% CI ( <i>M</i> )
EE	3.65	.84	[3.42, 3.88]
JS	3.64	.81	[3.42, 3.87]
P	3.48	.69	[3.28, 3.68]

*Note.*  $N = 47$ .

### **Employee Engagement**

The 47 survey respondents answered nine questions requesting their honest perception of their personal level of engagement at their workspaces. The resulting mean ( $M = 3.65$ ,  $SD = .84$ ) indicated that many of the participants had more favorable expressions of employee engagement than a neutral or negative view of their employer. A significant correlation existed among the all of the variables in relation to employee engagement. Employees who buy into the organizational vision and their personal development have higher levels of engagement (Biswas et al., 2013; Nouri & Parker,

2013). It is highly evident that employee engagement has a mitigating affect on productivity in the workplace.

### **Job Satisfaction**

The 47 survey respondents answered 11 questions requesting their honest perception of their personal level of job satisfaction at their workspaces. The resulting mean ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = .81$ ) indicated that many participants had more favorable expressions of job satisfaction than a neutral or negative view of their employer. A significant correlation existed among the variables in relation to job satisfaction. Paillé et al. (2013) found that employees' engagement influences job satisfaction, which in turn predicts turnover intentions. It is interesting to note that engagement and job satisfaction nearly mirrored each other in this study.

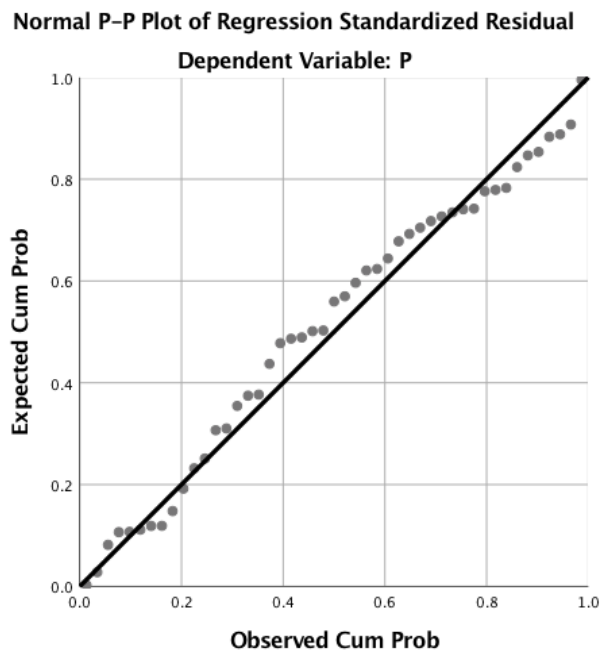
### **Productivity**

The 47 survey respondents answered 17 questions requesting their honest perception of their personal level of productivity at their workspaces. The resulting mean ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = .69$ ) indicated that many participants had more favorable expressions of productivity than a neutral or negative view of their employer. A significant correlation existed among the variables in relation to productivity. Zedelius et al. (2012) noted that productivity increased with employee engagement, job satisfaction, and even motivation. The more engaged an associate becomes, the higher their commitment and production levels increase (Allen et al., 2013). The variables coalesce as a whole in answering the research question rather than individualistic parts of a hypothesis.

Figure 1 is the P-P plot of the regression-standardized residuals. This plot shows

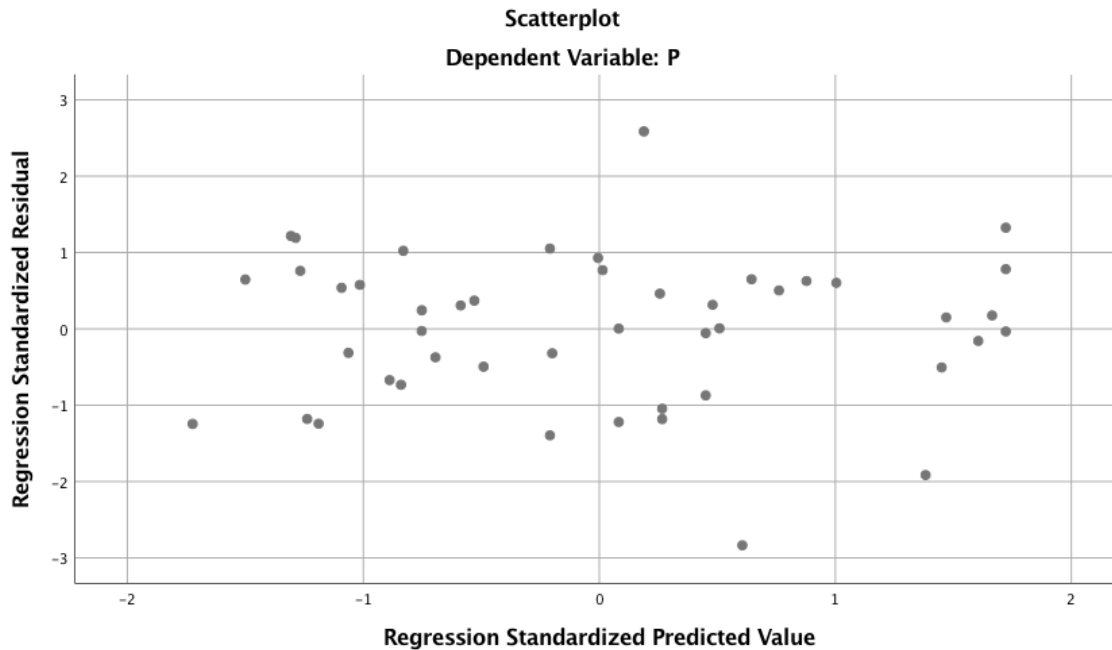


that the actual data values at the lower end of the distribution did not increase as much as one might expect for a normal distribution. The P-P plot also shows that the higher values in the data are lower than one might expect for the highest values obtained from this sample for a normal distribution. Even so, the distribution does not deviate greatly from normality.



*Figure 1.* Normal probability plot (P-P) of the regression standardized residuals.

Figure 2 is the Scatterplot of the standardized residuals. The data was normally distributed and a linear relationship was present among all of the variables. The variance around the regression line was not the same for all predictor variables. I used bootstrapping to address any possible violation of assumptions. I employed 2,000 repetitions of the procedure to appropriately report the distribution of the data.



*Figure 2.* Scatterplot of the standardized residuals.

### **Inferential Statistics**

Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity in the distribution industry. The overall intent was to determine whether any statistical significance existed among the variables and ascertain whether the null hypothesis could either be rejected or not. The results of the correlation testing (see Tables 2 and 3) revealed statistically significant correlations among all of the variables. This finding aligns with the research of Bhatnagar (2014) and Stinchcomb and Leip (2013) who posited that leaders focused on cultivating positive work environments reduce negative job attitudes and disengagement. In so doing, associates closely connect with both their

leader and organization and, consequently, function as brand ambassadors and high performers.

Table 2

*Correlation Among Study Predictor Variables*

Variable	EE	JS
EE	1.00	.79
JS	.79	1.00

*Note.*  $N = 47$ .

Table 3

*Correlation Coefficients Among Study Predictor Variables*

Variable	$\beta$	P
EE	.35	.03
JS	.48	.00

*Note.*  $N = 47$ .

The model was entirely able to significantly predict productivity,  $F(2,44) = 36.84, p < .001, R^2 = .63$ . The  $R^2 (.63)$  value indicated that approximately 63% of all variations in productivity was accounted for by the linear combination of the predictor variables (employee engagement and job satisfaction). Linear multiple regression analysis was performed in order to test the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. I rejected the null hypothesis because there was a statistically significant relationship among the variables. From the data, I interpreted that higher levels of employee engagement and job satisfaction correlate highly with productivity. As previously

mentioned in the literature review, Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2013) noted that empowering employees bolsters individual creativity and positively affects the organization's profitability. Plainly stated, happy employees tend to work efficiently and attentively, consistently meeting productivity expectations.

Table 4

*Multiple Regression Model Weights*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i> 95% Bootstrap CI
EE	.29	.12	.35	2.31	.03	[.04, .54]
JS	.41	.13	.48	3.19	.00	[.15, .67]

Table 5

*ANOVA (N = 46)*

Model	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Regression	13.80	2	6.90	36.84	.00
Residual	8.24	44	.19		
Total	22.04	46			

*Note.*  $p < .05$ .

### **Applications to Professional Practice**

The central focus of this research was to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The results from the varied analyses indicated a strong, positive correlation. Employee engagement and job satisfaction are the basis of health and utility for many organizations.

Associates who were disconnected with their leaders tended to perform at mediocre or unexceptional levels. It is important that leaders monitor affective commitment as it correlates to engagement and productivity (Garland et al., 2013). However, those associates who are fully engaged and satisfied with their workplace and leaders tend to produce at and above goal metrics for productivity.

The findings of this study may aid leaders in assessing and ensuring that their teams are fully engaged and satisfied with their employment. Dampened or stagnant productivity restricts the profitability of a firm. Disengaged workers wreak havoc on engagement, productivity, and, ultimately, profitability (Simon, 2013). When employees perform well, more often than not, the organization will be successful. Happy employees look for opportunities to streamline operations, assist their peers, and report challenges in a timely manner, saving the company's much needed revenues. Leaders should consider implementing policies, procedures, and activities to greatly enhance employees' perception of their workspaces. Suliman and Al Kathairi (2013) wrote that high commitment levels enhance social interaction with the company as well as the local community, which promotes positive social change. As DC associates become more engaged and satisfied with their employment, the overall profitability of the entire industry may surge along with acts of personal social responsibility.

### **Implications for Social Change**

Losing, replacing, and training employees is an expensive process. Well-developed workers enhance profitability due to their higher levels of productivity and generally positive outlook. The results of this study demonstrated the need for associates

to be engaged and satisfied with their employment in order to ensure higher levels of productivity. Promoting awareness of the challenges affecting distribution productivity could improve operational efficiencies across the industry, resulting in increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, productivity, and profitability in distribution companies. When leaders invest in their workers, the associates may develop a high sense of worth and belonging (Flores & Subervi, 2013). With their elevated perspective, some of the motivated employees may create positive social change in their respective communities. Workers may choose to extend services to neighbors and champion others to follow suit.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The findings that emerged from this study in addition to the referenced material previously mentioned offered opportunities to consider for creating action plans to address the presented challenge. It is my recommendation, based upon the results of this study, that distribution center leaders immediately make deliberate efforts toward better understanding the needs of their workers. It has now become evident that employee engagement and job satisfaction have a mitigating affect on productivity. Therefore, leaders must purpose to create a harmonious, supportive environment for their teams to ensure that the associates feel their voices heard and efforts appreciated. It is advisable that leaders create opportunities for internal, on-going communications to remain abreast of engagement and satisfaction levels to gauge improvement.

Accordingly, leaders should invest in training classes to strengthen their emotional intelligence in interacting with their people. Annual surveys should be

distributed to the employees to gather data regarding current engagement and satisfaction levels. Leaders should create action plans to address any issues that arise from the surveys. Bapna, Langer, Mehra, Gopal, and Gupta (2013) encouraged business leaders to invest in developing employees to increase productivity and profitability. Baron and Kreps (2013) noted that leaders who understood the motivational factors of employee behavior routinely experienced successful relationships within the workplace. More than anything, leaders must take the time to interact with their teams, which is where the foundational level of trust is built.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The gap in literature showed a lack of studies that centered upon employee engagement, job satisfaction, and the distribution industry. The Likert-type scale on the survey was used to assess the respondent's perception of the variables and may have limited the participant from sharing thoughts that are more direct. This study generalized job satisfaction; yet, the variable might possibly be measured differently in consideration of a pandemic, high unemployment, or recession occurring and associates not necessarily being engaged or satisfied with their jobs, but thankful to be employed. Further research can continue to answer these gaps and bridge understanding in this regard.

### **Reflections**

Having worked as a leader within the distribution industry for seven years, I witnessed a severe lack of engagement and job satisfaction in associates. When I began the DBA program, I knew that I wanted to explore these topics as applicable to the distribution industry. While working one day, I realized that some associates who were

disengaged and dissatisfied with their employment rarely reached their assigned productivity metrics. I assumed that any associate who was not aligned with the vision of the DC was a poor performer. Since completing the study, I now realize that my assumption was partly true. In learning about the motivation-hygiene theory, I was able to identify several examples of associates who did not like their company or leader, yet consistently performed at or above productivity expectations. However, I did not influence my personal perspective in the study. I am grateful for the opportunity to undertake this challenge as it has elevated my perspective and broadened my horizon. I am most certainly focused on building and maintaining strong relationships with my teams. I want them to not only be productive, but also feel appreciated and respected.

### **Conclusion**

Low productivity is a costly detractor to profitability. Employee engagement and job satisfaction are factors that contribute greatly to an organization's success. The motivation-hygiene theory served as the theoretical framework for this study to better understand critical background and support the platform for this work. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to identify if a significant statistical relationship existed among employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. The study survey was based upon the Mensah Employee Engagement Survey, Mensah Job Satisfaction Survey, and Utrecht Work Engagement Survey to address the research question. Forty-seven eligible participants completed the survey. The findings indicated a statistically significant relationship among all of the variables, strongly suggesting leaders in the distribution industry to take account of current procedures and maximize



interactions with their associates to improve the bottom-line. Focusing on the people and prioritizing their needs is essential to succeeding in the marketplace as I have demonstrated that employee engagement and job satisfaction have a statistically significant impact on productivity within the distribution industry.

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## Appendix A: The National Institute of Health (NIH) Certificate





## Appendix B: Request and Permission to use EE and JS Instrument

Dear Dr. Mensah:

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my doctoral study tentatively titled *Does Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction Impact Productivity?* under the direction of my doctoral study committee chaired by Dr. Mary Dereshiwsky, who can be reached at [mary.dereshiwsky@waldenu.edu](mailto:mary.dereshiwsky@waldenu.edu).

I am requesting your permission to use and reproduce in my study some or the entire (or a variation of the instrument) from the following study: "*Effects of Human Resources Management Practices on Retention of Employees in The Banking Industry in Accra, Ghana*". I am requesting to use and reproduce this instrument under the following conditions:

- I will use the surveys only for my research study and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will send a copy of my completed research study to your attention upon completion of the study.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by emailing a written approval by replying to me through e-mail, providing your written consent of the use.

Sincerely,

Jessica Copeland  
 Doctoral Candidate  
 Walden University

Dear Jessica

Thank you for your email and sorry for the delay in replying. I accept the terms and conditions of your request and hereby give you the permission to use my instruments. I wish you all the best in your doctoral programme and will be looking forward to receiving a copy of your thesis on approval.

Best regards  
 Becky

**Dr. (Mrs) Rebecca Dei Mensah**  
 Senior Lecturer  
 Department of Management Studies  
 School of Business  
 College of Humanities and Legal Studies  
 University of Cape Coast  
 Cape Coast, Ghana

### Section D: Employee Engagement

Please indicate the extent to which you agree to the following statements by ticking ( ) the appropriate response.

No.	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
25.	I care about the success of this organisation.					
26.	Communication across all levels in this organisation is good.					
27.	I am proud to tell others that I am a member of this organisation.					
28.	I am prepared to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this bank to succeed.					
29.	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this organisation.					
30.	This organisation recognizes and rewards employee loyalty.					
31.	I plan to build my career with this organisation.					
32.	My supervisor creates a motivating and supportive work climate.					
33.	My supervisor recognizes and values my ideas, suggestions and opinions.					

### Section E: Job Satisfaction

Please indicate the extent to which you agree to the following statements by ticking (  ) the appropriate response.

No.	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
34.	The working conditions in my organisation are good and safe.					
35.	The organisational structure facilitates teamwork, which enhances effective accomplishment of tasks.					
36.	Management has created an open and comfortable work environment.					
37.	My superiors make themselves easily accessible to discuss issues pertaining to my job and personal needs.					
38.	I receive recognition or praise for doing a good work.					
39.	My performance is appraised and my progress discussed with me from time to time.					
40.	Management treats me like a professional and allows me to use my discretion in my job.					
41.	I am fully able to utilize my skills, abilities and experience in my present position.					
42.	I have a clear understanding of performance standards and expectations to successfully perform my job.					
43.	My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.					
44.	I can work autonomously on my work assignments.					

## Appendix C: Request and Permission to use PS Instrument

Dear Dr. Attridge,

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my doctoral study tentatively titled *Engagement Management's Impact on Profitability in the Distribution Industry* under the direction of my doctoral study committee chaired by Dr. Mary Dereshiwsky, who can be reached at [mary.dereshiwsky@waldenu.edu](mailto:mary.dereshiwsky@waldenu.edu).

I am requesting your permission to use and reproduce in my study some or the entire (or a variation of the instrument) from the following study: "*The World Health Organization Health & Work Performance Questionnaire (HPQ)*". I am requesting to use and reproduce this instrument under the following conditions:

- I will use the surveys only for my research study and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will send a copy of my completed research study to your attention upon completion of the study.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by emailing a written approval by replying to me through e-mail, providing your written consent of the use.

Sincerely,

Jessica Copeland  
Doctoral Candidate  
Walden University

Sure. I will send to you. Mark

Sent from my iPhone

### Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) ©

The following 17 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the "0" (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1. \_\_\_\_\_ At my work, I feel bursting with energy
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Time flies when I'm working
4. \_\_\_\_\_ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I am enthusiastic about my job
6. \_\_\_\_\_ When I am working, I forget everything else around me
7. \_\_\_\_\_ My job inspires me
8. \_\_\_\_\_ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel happy when I am working intensely
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I am proud of the work that I do
11. \_\_\_\_\_ I am immersed in my work
12. \_\_\_\_\_ I can continue working for very long periods at a time
13. \_\_\_\_\_ To me, my job is challenging
14. \_\_\_\_\_ I get carried away when I'm working
15. \_\_\_\_\_ At my job, I am very resilient, mentally
16. \_\_\_\_\_ It is difficult to detach myself from my job
17. \_\_\_\_\_ At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well