



**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
POLITICS, PUBLICS POLICY
AND SOCIAL WORKS
(IJPPSW)**
www.ijppsw.com



THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF EXECUTIVES' ENGAGEMENT ON EXECUTIVES' PERFORMANCE IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES AT KULIM HI-TECH PARK, KULIM KEDAH, MALAYSIA

Bokhori Md Amin¹

¹ Faculty of Management and Information Technology, Universiti Sultan Azlan Shah, Perak, Malaysia
Email: bokhori2024@gmail.com

Article Info:

Article history:

Received date: 01.04.2022

Revised date: 25.04.2022

Accepted date: 31.05.2022

Published date: 07.06.2022

To cite this document:

Md Amin, B. (2022). The Mediating Effect of Executives' Engagement on Executives' Performance in Manufacturing Industries at Kulim Hi-Tech Park, Kulim Kedah, Malaysia. *International Journal of Politics, Publics Policy and Social Works*, 4 (12), 08-22.

DOI: 10.35631/IJPPSW.412002.

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Abstract:

Executives' engagement plays the important role in addressing issues related to job performance. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to assess the extent of the mediating effect of executives' engagement and its contribution to the performance of executive in manufacturing industries. A questionnaire was designed for data collection to measure executives' engagement related participation in decision making, participation in training, participation in determining rewards, participation in communication session and participation in pass the opinion related bonus on executives' performance. Data were collected among executives in manufacturing industries at Kulim Hi-tech Park, Kulim, Kedah, Malaysia. Stratified sampling method was used to collect data and the data obtained were analyzed using SmartPls 3.7.8. The results of the study found that there is a significant relationship between participation in determining rewards, participation in communication session and participation in pass the opinions related bonus on executives' performance in manufacturing industries. While participation in decision making and participation in training has not-significant. It is proved from SmartPls analysis shown that three independent variables have a significant impact on executives' performance in manufacturing industries with two not-significant. The limitation of the research only covers the manufacturing industries. Another limitation is the respondents only included executives. Apart from these limitations, this research can give the strong impact to the top management of manufacturing industries to design the strategy of executives' engagement in order to be more effective in improving the work performance of executives.

Key Words:

Executives' Engagement, Participation in Decision Making, Participation in Training, Participation in Determining Rewards, Participation in

Introduction

Executives' engagement is a middle level of employee who works to engaged in any function that involved their interests in the workplace. Executives' engagement is very important as they are able to communicate to top management about their intention and representative for overall employees especially those involved rewards in the form of monetary incentives ((Jelagat & Koech, 2018; Mansor, 2018). Executives feel that they are highly valued when their views are given more attention by the top management of their organization for further action taken. Executives' engagement can strengthen the relationship between executives and employers. This situation created an attitude of mutual respect for each other. Executives' engagement can create high work motivation among them, can increase high work performance especially involved the quality and productivity of their daily work. While the top management of the organization feels that the role of executives in conveying ideas to improve good relationships can be maintained. Executives and top management of the organization work together as a group in increasing work productivity through improvement in their work performance through training and development practices (Slack, Corlett & Morris, 2018; Al-Hawary & Alajmi, 2017). Executives' engagement can directly help the organization build a peaceful workplace environment, teamwork and assist in enhancing the growth of the organization especially involving the profitability and retention of the organization in the global market (Mohan, Haque & Khan, 2018; Bai & Liu, 2018).

Objective and Research Questions of the Study

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study covered:

1. To evaluate the relationship between participation in decision making on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.
2. To examine the relationship between participation in training on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.
3. To identify the relationship between participation in determining rewards on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.
4. To find out the relationship between participation in communication session on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.
5. To evaluate the relationship between participation in pass opinion related bonus on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

Research Questions of the Study

1. Is there any relationship between participation in decision making on executives' performance in manufacturing industries?
2. Is there any relationship between participation in training on executives' performance in manufacturing industries?
3. Is there any relationship between participation in determining rewards on executives' performance in manufacturing industries?
4. Is there any relationship between participation in communication session on executives' performance in manufacturing industries?

5. Is there any relationship between participation in pass opinion related bonus on executives' performance in manufacturing industries?

Literature Review

Participation in Decision Making

Lucas (2019) found that employees' engagement plays an important role in improving the quality and productivity of work. Studies conducted in various sectors shown that there is a positive relationship between employee engagement on job performance. This study found that employees' engagement in the organization in decision making helps in employees' performance. The results of this study shown that participation in decision making has a significant relationship on employees' output. The results of this study shown that employees' engagement through participation in decision making helped to improve job performance because each employee has a high level of motivation to improve their skills especially involved their daily responsibility tasks (Nalini, 2019; Saluy & Kemalasari, 2017). Employees' engagement that given space to each employee to engaged in joint decision making is a very important role of top management of the organization as a platform to strengthen cooperation between both parties in making a decision that can satisfy each employee and the organization appreciated the existence of employees as an essential asset for the continued growth of the organization. Ahmed and Dajani (2015) studied employee engagement in banks of Cairo found that quality and productivity can be produced through participation in decision making of employees because each employee feels they are very satisfied with the organization for giving them space to convey feedback of all employees in making a decision by the top management of the organization. While the dependent variable that involved employee performance and organizational commitment greatly affects the desire of employees to work harder. Both of these variables indicated a significant relationship through participation in decision making and employees job performance. Motivated employees given employees continues to work hard to ensure the organization can grow effectively. This situation existed because the involvement of employees in joint decision making has a very productive impact on job performance.

Participation in Training

Othman, Hasnaa and Mahmood (2019) stated that employees' engagement in training session and it's related to employees' performance in manufacturing firms shown that there is a significant relationship between employees' engagement on employees' performance. Training that included modules that are in line with the duties and responsibilities of employees attracted interest for employees to engaged in training activities made. Employees' engagement involved participant employees greatly affects the ability and skills of each employee ((Bon & Shire, 2017; Aktar & Pangil, 2017). Employees need to take the opportunity in engagement of training provided by organization because every knowledge required by the organization needs specialist by employees. While the organization needs to provide opportunities to each employee to continue to engaged in training activities because skills are very important to all employees to ensure the organization's ability to face the competitive market according to current economic factors (Ahmad & Abazeed, 2019; Shahid, 2019; Tsvangirai & Chinyamurindi, 2017). Employees who participate in any training activity allowed employees to act on behalf of employees in the organization by focusing on the interests of employees in the organization to obtain any benefits such as sponsored training whether training at workplace, training at outside place or continues training. This situation directly shaped the build two-way communication between employees in the organization and top management to enhance employee capabilities (Al-Dalahmeh, Khaled, Khalaf & Obeidat, 2018; Ang & Rabo,

2018). This situation given satisfaction to every employee because the management of the organization recognized their participation and this can strengthen the relationship between them in the long run as well as the skills and capabilities of organizational growth through comprehensive training. While human resource management practices that give employees the opportunity to make decisions involved in training activities have a positive impact on their job performance to perform a task (Yongxing, Hongfei, Baoguo & Lei, 2017; Lisbon, Palaci, Salanova & Frese, 2018). Sahni (2019) stated that every organization that existed has a variety of qualities and conditions that make it difficult for the practiced to be acquired quickly by the organization. Similarly, the involvement of employees who are drawn is likely to have a trustworthy and great organization with superiors. This attracts employees because it performs their jobs better and goes further in managing their job issues and managing their job needs.

Participation in Determining Rewards

Zein, El and Aridi (2018) in their study, the effect of employee involvement on employee job performance, case study for Bank In Lebanon. This study identified employee involvement such as participation in determining rewards that influence job satisfaction and job satisfaction influenced employee performance. The results of this study found that there is a significant relationship between employee involvement (participation in determining rewards) affects job satisfaction and job satisfaction affects employee performance. This study suggested that employers pay attention to employee involvement in any organizational activity as it contributed to job satisfaction. When employees are at a high level of satisfaction, this situation directly pushed them to work more vigorously to produce high work productivity to the organization. High levels of satisfaction and increased employee motivation directly affect employee job performance in the organization (August, 2015). Employee involvement covers organizational activities such as salary increases, bonuses, remuneration and financial incentives. This benefits the organization towards increasing employee productivity and performance. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, this situation leads to increased employee discipline, avoidance of absenteeism, low turnover rates and hiring costs (Jayaweera, 2015; Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017).

Participation in Communication Session

Kasaya and Munjuri (2018) in their study of the effect of employee involvement on job performance. The study was conducted in the Medical Research Industry in Kenya. This study has discussed employee involvement in communication sessions and its relationship with employee job performance in organizations. The level of employee involvement in a communication session in performing a task is a measure of success in an employee's job performance. The objective of this study was to find out the detailed impact of employees' participation in communication sessions on job performance in the Medical Research Industry in Kenya. The results shown that there was a significant relationship between participation in communication sessions on executive performance ((Roslan, Yahya, Ahmad, Hani & Mokhtar, 2017; Tepayakul & Rinthaisong, 2018).

While most concepts related to employee engagement in communication sessions from previous studies found employee engagement was defined as a method that utilized workforce capacity and it has been carefully designed to increase employee commitment to their work performance and the organization as a whole. Employee participation in communication sessions in the organization is characterized as employees who have a positive attitude towards noble values and disciplined work ethic code in the organization due to high satisfaction (Altunel, Kocak & Cankir, 2015; Nasurdin, Ling & Khan, 2018). In turn, employee

involvement in communication session activities and their attitude to work in a team can improve their work performance for the benefit of the organization (Sulistiowati, Komari & Dhamayanti, 2018; Boikanyo & Heyns, 2019).

Participation in Pass the Opinions Related Bonus

Aizat, Ramli, Isa, Baharin and Ibrahim (2018) in their study of the role of employee involvement on employee performance. The study was conducted in a randomly selected GLC company in Malaysia. This study emphasized the importance of employee involvement through involvement in communicating opinions to top management for organizations to build employee satisfaction especially related rewards, make relevant performance appraisal decisions, participation in approving opinions in training activities, bonuses and participate in any decisions involving employees and the organization itself. An employee can come up with new ideas that can help the organization move faster as a result of the talent they already have. Employees in an organization are considered to have good job performance when they are able to generate creative ideas to top management as a result of their involvement with top management in discussions on various issues related to the organization. Employee engagement is the action of an employee in an organization who is engaged, enthusiastic and satisfied in carrying out his or her duties effectively. While talent management is a method used by organizations to produce a talented workforce in generating the contribution of good ideas during participation in approving opinions when employees in the organization are directly involved with top management in making any decisions involving the interests of the workforce and organization. (Aug, 2015; Pratima & Bhagirathi, 2016). This study shown that there is a significant relationship between talent management (participation in passing opinions) on employee involvement in the organization.

Executives' Performance

The performance of an organization is the result of the excellent work performance shown by executive level employees. Executives are middle -level management staff who are responsible for planning and executing tasks assigned by top management. While the achievement of an organization is evaluated based on the performance of the executive employees of the organization (Singh, Chandra & Sharma, 2016). Executives can be defined as employees who are responsible for planning, organizing, executing and monitoring all their daily work responsibilities by focusing all activities towards achieving organizational goals (Amin, Halim & Majid, 2017; Mutua & Kinyili, 2017). Executive performance refers to the skills, abilities and competencies possessed by executives in an organization. There is a previous literature review showed that there is a positive relationship between executive performance on work quality and productivity, skills and efficiency, creativity and innovation, problem solving and decision making, work knowledge, attitude and discipline, communication, teamwork, management skills and professionalism with the work performance of each employee in an organization. Ahmad in his study stated that an executive in an organization has a big role to perform especially a job designed to achieve maximum profit for a long time. In addition, executives also have a role to play in ensuring that their organization's existence is very important in the marketplace. global and the ability to move the organization forward over other competitors. An executive is said to be an efficient and skilled person when they are able to perform a task with excellence. As a result of success in the execution of a task, the organization also move forward to achieve the success that has been set based on the vision and mission that has been framed about what needs to be achieved in a given period.

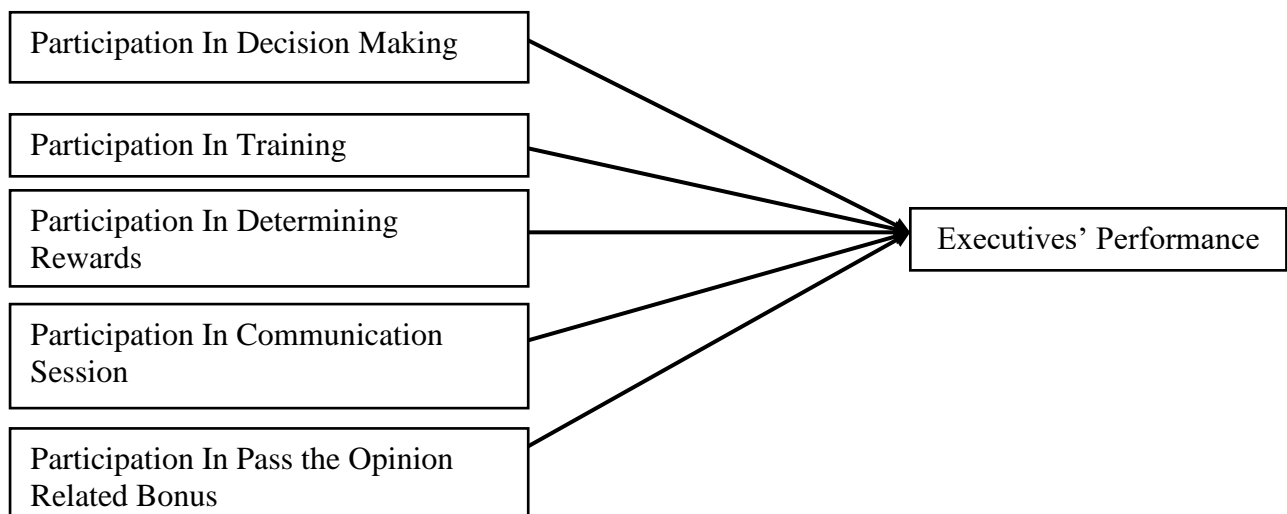
Theoretical Framework

Independent Variables

- Participation In Decision Making
- Participation In Training
- Participation In Determining Rewards
- Participation In Communication Session
- Participation In Pass the Opinion Related Bonus

Dependent Variable

- Executives' Performance In Manufacturing Firms



This research was conducted to identify the relationship between participation in decision making, participation in training, participation in determining rewards, participation in communication session and participation in pass the opinions related bonus on executives' performance. A questionnaire was designed to collect the data from manufacturing industries at Kulim Hi-tech, Kulim Kedah, Malaysia.

Hypothesis Development

Objectives of the study covered:

H1: There is significant relationship between participation in decision making on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

H2: There is significant relationship between participation in training on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

H3: There is significant relationship between participation in determining rewards on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

H4: There is significant relationship between participation in communication session on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

H5: There is significant relationship between participation in pass opinion related bonus on executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

Result

Participants

The data was collected from 25 manufacturing industries, 351 questionnaires were distributed and 196 questionnaires were analysis among the employees. The respondents were selected using the stratified sampling technique.

Measurement Scale

Questionnaires are designed in Linkert Scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)

Data Analysis

The data obtained were studied using SmartPLS version 3.7.8 to discuss the findings obtained. SmartPLS is highly recommended by statistical scholars in producing accurate analysis of the cause and effect relationship of each variable. SmartPLS is also referred to as a large multivariate analysis technique in social and psychological research. SmartPLS is capable of analyzing measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation.

Table 1
Loading, CR & AVE Results

	<i>Loading</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Participant In Decision Making		0.9218	0.5420
PDM1	0.7195		
PDM2	0.7176		
PDM3	0.8263		
PDM4	0.7833		
PDM5	0.7656		
PDM6	0.7022		
PDM7	0.7549		
PDM8	0.6861		
PDM9	0.6867		
PDM10	0.7079		
Participation In Training		0.8845	0.5045
PIT1	0.6868		
PIT2	0.7075		
PIT3	0.7326		
PIT4	0.7472		
PIT5	0.7912		
PIT6	0.6089		
PIT7	0.5914		
PIT8	0.7679		
PIT9	0.7331		
Participation In Determining Rewards		0.9101	0.5627
PID1	0.5329		
PID2	0.7578		
PID3	0.7890		
PID4	0.8306		

PID5	0.8226		
PID6	0.8170		
PID7	0.7401		
PID8	0.6625		
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Participation In Communication Session		0.9172	0.5521
PIC1	0.7188		
PIC2	0.7355		
PIC3	0.7184		
PIC4	0.7471		
PIC5	0.7902		
PIC6	0.7646		
PIC7	0.7697		
PIC8	0.6944		
PIC9	0.7436		
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Participation In Pass the Opinion Bonus		0.9378	0.5588
PIP1	0.6956		
PIP2	0.6094		
PIP3	0.7721		
PIP4	0.7084		
PIP5	0.7361		
PIP6	0.6332		
PIP7	0.8037		
PIP8	0.8010		
PIP9	0.7869		
PIP10	0.8169		
PIP11	0.8243		
PIP12	0.7453		
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Executives' Performance		0.9377	0.5578
EP1	0.7427		
EP2	0.7611		
EP3	0.7530		
EP4	0.7491		
EP5	0.7567		
EP6	0.7718		
EP7	0.6251		
EP8	0.6461		
EP9	0.7491		
EP10	0.7567		
EP11	0.8136		
EP12	0.8141		
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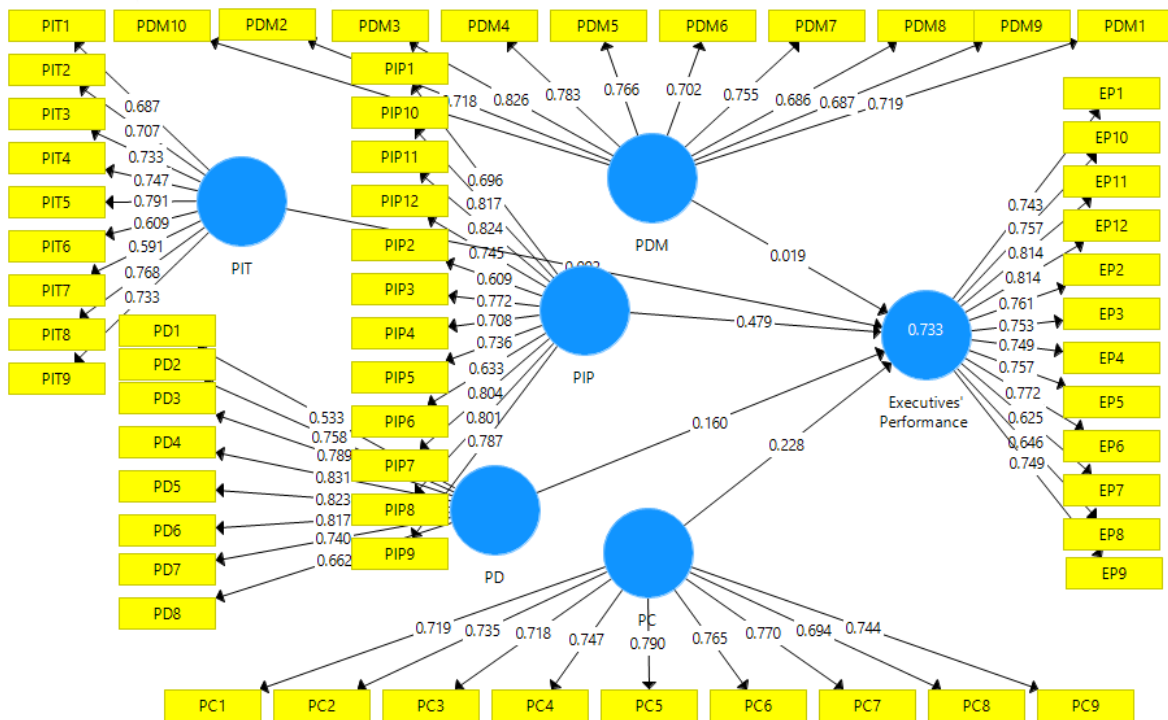


Figure 1: Structural Model Direct Effects

The discriminant validity test was measured through two methods, namely the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion test and cross loading (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Table 2 below shows the output from the HTMT analysis. The results can be calculated easily using the formula as in (Hair, Joseph, Money, Samouel & Page, 2007).

**Table 2
Discriminant Validity**

Constructs	EP	PIC	PID	PDM	PIP	PIT
EP	0.7469					
PIC	0.7397	0.7430				
PID	0.6855	0.7111	0.7501			
PDM	0.5323	0.5288	0.6479	0.7362		
PIP	0.8057	0.6979	0.6190	0.4979	0.7475	
PIT	0.6403	0.5843	0.5943	0.5520	0.6469	0.7103

Note: Values in Bold face are the square root values of average variance extracted

Assessment of Structural Model

The findings for testing this direct effect model using SmartPLS software package version 3.7.8 that is through the structural equation model. This measurement aims to test the direct effect model and the effect model of the mediated variable. Therefore, empirical evidence has been used to construct a direct effect model as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Summary of Hypotheses

<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Summary of Hypotheses</i>				
	β	Std Error	T-Value	P-Value	Decision
PDM ->EP	0.0190	0.0672	0.2824	0.7776	Not-Significant
PIT ->EP	0.0917	0.0672	1.3653	0.1722	Not-Significant
PID ->EP	0.1602	0.0687	2.3318	0.0198	Significant
PIC ->EP	0.2281	0.0653	3.4912	0.0005	Significant
PIP ->EP	0.4785	0.0730	6.5528	0.0000	Significant

Discussion

Participation in Decision Making

The results obtained shown that the participation in decision making variable has a not-significant relationship on executives' performance in manufacturing industries ($\beta = 0.0190$; $t = 0.2824$; $p = 0.7776$). The results also shown that participation in decision making contributed 1.9% ($R^2 = 0.019$) to changes of executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

The results of this study shown a not-significant relationship between participation in decision making on executive work performance. These results shown that every executive is not motivated to improve their work performance because manufacturing industries do not give space to engage in participation in decision making, especially in determining the direction of industries whether short or long-term period. Every executive feels that they are not valued for co-operating with top management in making any decisions for the mutual benefits between executives and top management in manufacturing industries. The effect of failure to involved executives for participation in decision making causes executives to feel that their views are not valued. This situation has a not-significant impact on their job performance. It is recommended for manufacturing industries to always give opportunities to each executive for participation in decision making, especially the direction of firms to ensure that the planned policy can be understood, shared by all parties and ideas from executives are accepted to be studied for the future of each executive and industries. Participation in decision making is very important for the purpose of disseminating information related to the development of industries and ensuring job security among executives is maintained. The failure of manufacturing industries to involved executives in participation in decision making directly affected their job performance especially their daily tasks became inconsistent.

Participation in Training

The results obtained shown that the participation in training variable has a not-significant relationship on executives' performance in manufacturing industries ($\beta = 0.0917$; $t = 1.3653$; $p = 0.1722$). The results also shown that participation in training contributed 2.3% ($R^2 = 0.023$) to changes of executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

Findings from this study found that there is a not-significant relationship between participation in training on executives' performance in manufacturing industries. Every executive should be given an equal right to attend any training that has a need for them to follow. Training is one of the human resource management activities that is very important in providing knowledge

and capabilities to ensure that every executive has a high level of skills in carrying out their daily tasks. Selective training practices have a detrimental impact and affect their job performance. Manufacturing industries should provide adequate and satisfactory training to all executives so that they can specialist all the necessary skills. Training Need Analysis should be planned more carefully so that every executive does not miss out on training related to their daily responsibilities. The failure of manufacturing industries to provide training appropriate to their day -to -day duties and responsibilities has a negative impact on the job performance of each executive. Every training needs to be well organized so that no executive misses out on any training that benefits on their job performance.

Participation in Determining Rewards

The results obtained shown that the participation in determining rewards variable has a significant relationship on executives' performance in manufacturing industries ($\beta= 0.1602$; $t = 2.3318$; $p=0.0198$). The results also shown that participation in determining rewards contributed 16.0% ($R^2 = 0.160$) to changes of executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

The results of this study shown that participation in determining rewards has a positive relationship with the job performance of each executive. This shown that manufacturing industries care about the importance of rewards to be given to their employees. All suggestions and views given by executives to top management get due attention for further action. Participation in determining rewards among executives is very beneficial to them because every proposal given is based on the current economic standard of living. The actions of the top management of manufacturing industries that give space to executives to engaged in participation in determining rewards make every executive feel proud and motivated that their all views and suggestions are highly ranked and appreciated by their top management. Thus, every executive feels that their presence in manufacturing industries is very important and this situation created a hormonal atmosphere where every executive feels proud that their existence is very important to manufacturing industries besides their work towards high quality and productivity of work to achieve the set goals of manufacturing industries. The results of this study shown a significant relationship between participation in determining rewards on executive work performance. Participation in determining rewards gives pride to every executive to work more diligently because their every effort gets serious attention for further action in ensuring the satisfaction and job performance of every employee can be maintained.

Participation in Communication Session

The results obtained shown that the participation in communication session variable has a significant relationship on executives' performance in manufacturing industries ($\beta= 0.2281$; $t = 3.4912$; $p = 0.005$). The results also shown that participation in communication session contributed 22.8% ($R^2 = 0.228$) to changes of executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

The results of this study shown that the participation of executives in communication sessions is very important in improving work productivity. Every executive was satisfied with the treatment provided by top management during the communication sessions held. Through this communication session, each executive can convey the problems that occur in manufacturing industries with an accurate decision has been reached for the benefits of both parties. Furthermore, all suggestions given by the executive are accepted and implemented more effectively. Thus, a sense of satisfaction exists among executives, every executive feels that

they are valued and this situation creates an atmosphere of a productive work environment. The results of this study shown a significant relationship between participation in communication sessions on executives' performance in manufacturing industries. Participation in communication is an important element in increasing the motivation of every executive that can have a positive impact on excellent work performance in producing high quality and productivity of work in ensuring manufacturing industries always move faster that can maximize their profits and retention in global business continuously.

Participation in Pass the Opinion Bonus

The results obtained shown that the participation in pass the opinion related bonus variable has a significant relationship on executives' performance in manufacturing industries ($\beta= 0.4785$; $t =6.5528$; $p=0.0000$). The results also shown that participation in pass the opinion related bonus contributed 47.9% ($R^2 = 0.479$) to changes of executives' performance in manufacturing industries.

Findings from this study indicated that there is a significant relationship between participation in pass the opinion related bonus on executive work performance in manufacturing industries. Top management has given opportunities to executives for participation in pass the opinion related bonus. The views of each executive are accepted and this affects the high level of satisfaction to them to work harder especially their daily work performance as each of their views related to bonuses is received. Every executive feels proud when their opinion for the bonus award has been studied in detail and approved without any hindrance. As it is known that every executive and overall employee is motivated by financial rewards. Giving bonuses indirectly makes them happy. Therefore, participation in pass the opinion related bonus is very important as it has a positive impact on their work performance as each of their opinions is valued by their top management, born a feeling of satisfaction with the environment where they work and a passion to improve their skills to be more excited as well as their work performance improved.

Conclusion

The findings in this study shown that participation in communication session, participation in determining rewards and participation in passing the opinion related bonus have a positive relationship on job performance of executives. Every executive always feels that their participant in the activities of manufacturing industries that involved financial incentives is very enjoyable because all their views are heard by their top management to be considered more carefully so that it can be implemented immediately. Executives' participation is highly motivated for them to improve their work performance more effectively, productive work and result oriented. However, participation in decision making and participation in training have a not-significant relationship on executives' performance. This is because manufacturing industries sometimes do not provide opportunities for executives to engage in making important decisions that involved the direction of industries, especially involving large financial expenditures in involving firms for investments that required high financial expenditure. Usually participation in decision making that involved high costs involved top management and directors from HQ at overseas. While selective training also has a negative effect on their work performance. Every executive should be given equal rights in engaging in any training especially training related to their daily tasks for improvement in the quality and productivity of their work. In addition, training that has nothing to do with the daily tasks of executives is a wasteful investment because the training provided to them has nothing to do with their daily tasks and executives are less interested in engaging with other employees

because it is considered a waste of time. The results of this study also emphasized that executives should be given opportunities for participation in decision making and participation in training because it gives them the motivation to work hard, high work productivity and feel their existence in manufacturing industries is valued by their top management.

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