



## INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY ON WORK ENGAGEMENT OF MANAGERS IN STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA

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### **Abstract**

*Work engagement represents positive work experience that affect organizational life. When an employee is engaged actively in their work, there is work and organizational commitment leading to self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a critical predictor of adjustment and the degree to which employees use affective behavioral strategies. This study sought to investigate the extent to which the self-efficacy influences work engagement among middle level managers in state corporations in Kenya. The study was informed by social learning theory. To achieve this, study adopted a cross sectional quantitative survey design. The target population was the middle level managers in state corporations in Kenya. A total of 389 middle level managers were sampled. The data collected through questionnaire was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools using SPSS. The multiple regression model indicated that the self-efficacy predicts 19.1% of work engagement. Regression coefficients showed that Work engagement predicted in relation to the Self-efficacy was significant;  $\beta_1 = 0.397 (p < 0.01)$ . There was a positive influence of the self-efficacy and work engagement. The more the managers believed in their abilities and capabilities, the more they invest themselves in work. The predicting role of self-efficacy in work engagement highlights the significance of development and enhancement of self-efficacy as a strategic direction to improve employees' commitment to work which leads to organizational performance.*

*Key words: Self-Efficacy, Work, Engagement, Managers, State, Corporations*

## INTRODUCTION

The global economy has in the recent times integrated in a manner that organizations are presented with both opportunities and threats on equal measures. Only organizations that are competitive enough would survive the market conditions. State enterprises are not spared either; governments are no longer willing to support struggling organizations within its ranks because they no longer make economic and political sense doing so. Many are left to collapse or sold off, others are merged. Kenya, for example has focused on an ambitious program to transform State Corporations into viable entities by gradually implementing reform initiatives that would reduce the current 197 state corporations through mergers and transfer of functions (SCAC, 2015).

Work engagement has become one of the most vital concepts underpinning motivation, well-being and performance (Gubman, 2004, Bakker & Leiter, 2010). It focuses on optimal functioning and encapsulates how an employee experiences work, as stimulating, energetic, meaningful and as something to which they would really want to devote their time to (Bakker, 2010). Traditionally, the concept of engagement was an expectation many organisations rarely had to question, because it was always assumed that employment implied engagement and there was often no reason for organisations to imagine that an employee would not be engaged in their work (Schumann, 2010). However, this assumption has changed. Employees are now expected to be proactive, show initiative and take responsibility for their own professional development while being committed to high quality performance standards. Driven by the growing need to maximize employee input, organisations required employees to feel energetic and dedicated – i.e., engaged in their work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010).

Work engagement, as positive work behaviour is receiving deserving attention in management literature (Truss, 2006). According to Kahn (1990) work engagement is the state at which an employee is emotionally committed to his organizations' goals resulting in the use of discretionary effort characterized by vigour, absorption and dedication in assigned tasks. Truss, Soane, Delbridge, Alfes, Shantz, & Petrov (2014) observed that work engagement is a positive work performance culture that influence individual employees' and organizational performance. Measuring employee engagement levels is now a common practice in Northern America and this may explain the statistics by Aon Hewitt placing the continent among the leading in work engagement as at 2013.

In Europe research in employee engagement was initially active only in Netherlands amongst psychologist led by Professor Wilmar Schaufeli, (Truss *et al.*, 2006). According to Katie Truss, UK government began to take interest around 2006 and scholars in business management and strategic human resource have since taken centre stage. Many European

scholars are now advocating for development of the concept work engagement into a major science in order to improve human resource management theory and practice (Truss, Shantz, Soane, Alfes and Delbridge, 2013). This may be timely given that Europe registered the lowest engagement levels according to Aon Hewitt global work engagement report for 2013. Work engagement research is receiving deserved attention in the Asian academic literature (Ahlowalia, Tiwary & Jha (2014). Reports show South Pacific companies enjoyed work engagement levels of between 64% and 61% with mixed growth and stagnation between 2012 and 2013 according to Hay group (2013) and Hewitt Associates (2014)

In 2012, a Scottish government commissioned study showed work engagement was low globally. Individual researchers have also reported low work engagement among public sector employees compared to their private sector counterparts (Agyemang and Ofei, 2013); besides Quantum consultancy firm reported work engagement levels in the private sector stood at 65% and 45% in the public sector in the United States of America for 2013. Alarmed by low employee work engagement levels in the public sector, Canada much earlier in 2004 developed an employee engagement model and implemented an employee engagement survey program across the governments' jurisdictions (Kosuta, 2010).

According to Ahlowalia, Tiwary and Jha (2014) the concept is fast gaining acceptance among companies in Asia Pacific as an attempt to improve human resource performance. Many of them are instituting measures to raise engagement levels. In their report for 2012, Hay Group (2013) reported work engagement rose to 64% in 2012 among companies in the region. A country level analysis showed wide variations; India and Japan witnessed improvement, whereas Singapore and Hong Kong have had their levels unchanged for the year under review. Nevertheless, recent reports by Hewitt Associates (2014) indicate Asia Pacific witnessed a rise in engagement levels.

In Africa, the picture about work engagement is still not clear, academic as well as practitioner's literature is scanty; there are sporadic reports of high work engagement by consultants. For example, Aon Hewitt, Emergence Growth and Open Symmetry consultancies in a survey in 2013 involving 300,000 employees in three regions of Sub Sahara Africa indicated high engagement levels of 74 % for East Africa, 68% for South Africa and 70% for Southern Africa. According to Hewitt Associates (2014), Africa and Middle East is reported jointly to have shared growth in levels of engagement at 61% in 2013. However, these statistics need to be taken with caution since countries in these regions are independently unique. Agyemang *et al.*, (2013) reported disparities in levels of work engagement between the public and the private sector in Ghana.

Kenyan researchers have also reported high work engagement among employees in the private sector (Mokaya and Kipyegon, 2014), however Kangure, Wario & Odhiambo (2014) reported a moderate work engagement levels among employees in a state agency. The above scenario may explain the disparities in efficiency and productivity between the sectors globally. It is widely perceived that under performance at individual and organizational levels is more pronounced in the public sector among developing countries (World Bank, 2004). According to Omollo (2012), the public sector is known for inefficient use of resource and low productivity, and the probable reason could be deficiency in positive work behaviours including low work engagement levels. Despite the apparent compelling arguments for work engagement as a new frontier towards organizational effectiveness, Africa and Kenya in particular still lacks behind in empirical studies on the subject. Besides, though the concept is receiving deserving attention in the global academic literature, studies connecting work engagement with self-efficacy remain scanty.

Self-efficacy is the self-aspect that is generally related to the endurance (Salanova *et al.*, 2006), self-control ability (Lorente *et al.*, 2014), the ability to reach the goals (De Neve *et al.*, 2015), to meet the demand that is motivated by challenge and efforts, as well as the perseverance to face the hurdles, to trigger employee's satisfaction (Luthans and Youssef, 2007). Mastenbroek *et al.* (2014) suggest that self-efficacy is measured by attitude (for example: extraversion, emotional stability) that is the act in cognitive level, and circumstances (those are: self-esteem, optimism, and hope) which is proactive attitude. These things may influence the perception and interpretation of a situation and how someone would react.

Bandura (2009) states that even tough individual perception environmental adaptation are variables, depends on self-efficacy level, since they are nurtured by environmental factors so that an individual tends to be engaged in his job and performs it well. Self-efficacy and the change of motivation level are often described in employees' focal attitude. Self-efficacy and motivation level changes represent personal perspectives in employees on how they see themselves as professionals in their work. Employees regards that there is a possibility of reaching a valuable result will lead them to certain attitude. If an employee believes that he can get a positive result, consequently, he will possibly repeat the same attitude. The objective of the research is to find out empirically; the effect of work engagement on self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy through continued expression of their expectations and assurance and reassurance of their ability to meet them. As such, practice of positive feedback in communication increases employee confidence and Self-efficacy. Moreover, Salanova *et al.*, (2011) study on nurses in a Portuguese hospital showed that Self-efficacy relate significantly with tenets of transformative leadership traits such as inspirational motivation and idealised

stimulation. Interestingly, they could not establish a relationship between Self-efficacy and citizenship behaviour.

In addition, Tims *et al.*, (2011) in a study involving Dutch consultancy employees established that Self-efficacy significantly relate with work engagement. Similarly studies by Salanova *et al.*, (2006) showed that employees who have Self-efficacy experience higher levels of flow over time, whereas Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova (2007) found students high in Self-efficacy reported higher levels of vigour, dedication and absorption in their tasks. Similar positive relationship between Self-efficacy and OCB has been reported; a study by Beauregard (2012) involving 223 public sector employees in UK, showed heightened Self-efficacy among men elicited more participation in citizenship behaviour than women.

Attempts have been made to discuss Self-efficacy in Kenya; Kay (2014) observed that although Self-efficacy significantly relates to work engagement, it is depleted by experiences of emotional exhaustion among high school teachers. From the foregoing, it is apparent there is an established theoretical and empirical link between Self-efficacy and positive work behaviour. This link was tested by way of hypothesis to confirm its applicability in the Kenyan context.

Self-efficacy is the individual persons' beliefs that one's capabilities are able to control the environmental events that affect his or her life (Bandura, 1989). The researcher argued that Self-efficacy beliefs contribute to motivation by influencing the challenges people pursue, the effort they put in and the resiliency to withstand challenges. Besides, Self-efficacy is not a personal trait which is fixed, but it is a virtue that can be developed through learning. Through mastery experience one is able to create a strong sense of efficacy; and experiences of successes go a long way in building one's personal efficacy. However, experiences of failure undermine largely when it precedes establishment of a firm sense of efficacy.

Public service agencies are crucial entities in influencing business processes, economic development and of course stability of nations in most developing countries. Many essential services such as education, health, communication and finance are within the jurisdiction of these bodies, therefore their efficient and effective performance is critical in the functioning of the nation state. Moreover, in the recent times, the Kenya government has initiated reform initiatives aimed at improving efficiency and productivity of State Corporations (SCAC, 2013), however to realize this, public employees need to perform and engage in favourable attitudes and behaviours including being highly engaged in their work.

In Africa, the picture about work engagement is still not clear; academic as well as practitioner's literature is scanty; there are sporadic reports of high work engagement attributed to consultants. Agyemang & Ofei, (2013) reported disparities in levels of work engagement between the public and the private sector in Ghana. Kenyan researchers have also reported

high work engagement among employees in the private sector (Mokaya and Kipyegon, 2014), however Kangure, Wario & Odhiambo (2014) reported a moderate work engagement levels among employees of Kenya Ports Authority and Oduor (2015) also reported moderate engagement levels among media industry employees. Therefore, there was a need to establish the effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement

## LITERATURE

### Concept of Work Engagement

Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonz lez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). The construct work engagement is new in the literature, it has featured for just over two decades (Markos *et al.*, 2010); however, its' usage and research is gaining immense prominence. According to (Schaufeli, 2013), the term is believed to have been coined by a consultancy firm Gallup in the 1990, though many scholars believe Kahn (1990) is among the first scholars to discuss work engagement theory (Alfes *et al.* 2013, Harter *et al.*, 2002; Rich *et al.*, 2010). The decision to engage is a choice an employee makes and no organization can force or enforce it; though it can enhance it because it is a work practice which an organization benefits in overall. Perhaps this may explain why the concept is of late receiving much attention (Rurkkhum & Bartlet, 2012).

Similarly, Schaufeli (2002b) thought work engagement is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption. Engaged employees are physically involved in their tasks, cognitively alert, and ardently connected to others in ways that demonstrate their thoughts, feelings and values. Besides, they are high in energy and identification with work (Gruman *et al.*, 2011). From the foregoing, it is apparent that Work engagement involves emotional and intellectual commitment to one's organization; varies with people; depends on the job processes and procedures as well as the quality of life and opportunities the organization provides (Supriya, Deepika & Ajeya, 2014).

In addition, Shuck *et al.*, (2010) refers Work engagement as an individual persons' cognitive, emotional and behavioral state in relation to ones' organizational and personal outcome. The cognitive factor is the thinking or the perception employees have about their job and the organization; the emotional factor is the feelings of the employees and the behavioral factor is the outcome and the behavioural outcome will depend on the cognitive and emotional factors. Moreover, Macey *et al.*, (2008) suggested that the cognitive and emotional factors that give rise to behavioral factors are driven by the conditions under which people work and the outcome improves organizational effectiveness. They concluded that Work engagement is

desirable because it serves organizational purpose. Indeed, many studies have demonstrated empirical evidence suggesting that engaged employees not only contribute to organizational performance but they are more loyal and less likely to voluntarily leave the organization (Takawira, Coetzee & Schreuder, 2014).

Critics of the concept have dismissed work engagement as nothing new other than the same constructs known in management theory and practice such as job satisfaction and involvement. However, according to Baron (2013) job satisfaction is not enough for the simple reason that a satisfied employee may derive satisfaction for reason unrelated to work performance. He or she can commit just to the minimum to keep the job. Work engagement is more than just satisfaction, principally it is about passion, commitment, and the willingness to invest oneself and expend ones' discretionary effort to help the employer succeed. Under ordinary circumstances a manager who fully embraces work engagement practices would only retain satisfied employees who are fully engaged.

Work engagement is measured at individual level though organizational factors influence the level of engagement of an employee (Naido *et al*, 2014). However, the definition adopted for work engagement for this study is that based on its dimensions. In summary, it's apparent there is sufficient foundational knowledge in the literature on the construct of engagement at work. Though there still no definite definition, work engagement can be defined as a positive psychological state that drives one to invest themselves actively in their roles and organization. In addition, work engagement in its own right as work place behaviour could be the driving force through which other positive work behaviours including citizenship behaviour are exhibited.

### **Concept of Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy is defined as the belief that one has the capabilities to exercise control over events that affect one's life, and to mobilise the motivational and cognitive resources and courses of action needed to meet given situation-demands (Bandura, 1997 cited in Breed, Cilliers & Visser, 2006). The term self-efficacy was popularized by Bandura (1986) to describe the individual's belief that he/she is able to execute successfully the behaviours required by a specific situation. Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) developed this concept further by distinguishing between task-specific self-efficacy (the perception of completing a task successfully) and general self-efficacy. The measuring instrument utilised in this study measures general self-efficacy which defined as the perception of competence over a wide spectrum of tasks and activities (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

Developed from the broad framework of social / cognitive learning theory (Kossuth & Cilliers, 2004a), self-efficacy focuses on the dynamic, triadic, reciprocal, causation relationship

between cognition, behaviour and the environment (Kossuth & Cilliers, 2004b). According to Bandura (1997) 'Efficacy beliefs are concerned not only with the exercise of control over action but also with the self-regulation of thought processes, motivation, and affective and physiological states' (Bandura 1997). According to Stadler and Kotze (2006), self-efficacy determines whether the individual will pursue a specific objective and how much effort will be put into attaining the stated objective. The higher the perception of self-efficacy, the more likely the individual will be motivated to persevere in attaining the objective, even if there are obstacles impeding him/her.

Self-efficacy is the self-aspect that is generally related to the endurance (Salanova *et al.*, 2006), self-control ability (Lorente *et al.*, 2014), the ability to reach the goals (De Neve *et al.*, 2015), to meet the demand that is motivated by challenge, efforts, as well as the perseverance to face the hurdles, to trigger employee's satisfaction (Luthans and Youssef, 2007). Mastenbroek *et al.* (2014) suggest that self-efficacy is measured by attitude (for example: extraversion, emotional stability) that is the act in cognitive level, and circumstances (those are: self-esteem, optimism, and hope) which is proactive attitude. These things may influence the perception and interpretation of a situation and how someone would react (Bandura, 2009)

Self-efficacy makes a difference in how people think, feel, and act. In terms of feelings, a low sense of self-efficacy is associated with depression, anxiety, and helplessness. Individuals with low self-efficacy and who also have low self-esteem, and they harbour pessimistic thoughts about their accomplishments and personal development. In terms of thinking, a strong sense of competence facilitates cognitive processes and performance in a variety of settings, including quality of decision-making and academic achievement (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008).

In contrast to individual with low levels of self-efficacy, individuals with a high self-efficacy often choose to perform more challenging tasks. They set themselves higher goals and stick to them. Actions are preordained in thought, and once an action has been taken, highly self-efficacious individuals invest more effort and persist longer than those low in self-efficacy. If any setbacks occur, highly self-efficacious individuals recover more quickly and remain committed to their goals. High self-efficacy also allows people to select challenging settings and explore their environment or create new ones. Thus, it represents a belief in one's competence in dealing with all kinds of demands. (Luszczynska, Gutie ´rrez-Don˜a, & Schwarzer, 2005).

Self-efficacy also determines an individual appraisal of stress. People with strong self-efficacy recognize that they are able to overcome obstacles and focus on opportunities, and, therefore they perceive stressful situations as more challenging than those who harbour self-doubts about their ability to overcome difficulties (Luszczynska *et al.*, 2005). According to Scholz, *et al*, 2002, self-efficacy is commonly understood as being domain-specific. Meaning, an



individual can have more or less firm self-beliefs in different domains or particular situations of functioning.

Nevertheless, it is not an issue of whether efficacy beliefs can be generalized but rather the processes through which generality occurs and how this can be measured (Bandura, 1997). Research has also further suggested that specific self-efficacy (SSE) is a motivational state and GSE is a motivational trait. Although both constructs share similar antecedents, (i.e., direct experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological states) general self-efficacy transpires over one's lifespan as is the summation of accumulative successes and failures across different task domains. One important outcome of GSE is SSE, with GSE positively influencing SSE across tasks and situations. The tendency to feel efficacious across tasks has a spillover effect on specific situations as reflected by positive relationship between GSE and SSE for variety of tasks (Urban, 2006).

### **Relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement**

Empirical results had indicated that work engagement is positively related with self-efficacy (Salanova, Llorens & Schaufeli, 2001 cited in Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). It seems that self-efficacy does not only precede engagement but follows engagement which create an upward spiral in which self-efficacy fuels engagement which in turn increases efficacy beliefs (Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova in press; Salanova, Bresó, & Schaufeli 2005; Salanova, Grau, Cifre, & Llorens, 2000 cited in Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007).

Furthermore, the role of self-efficacy (as a personal resource) is noted not only as a driver of work engagement but as an antecedent of work engagement. Personal resources are linked to resiliency and refer to individuals' sense of their ability to control and impact upon their environment successfully (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Xanthopoulou *et al.* (2007) examined the role of personal resources (including self-efficacy, optimism) in predicting work engagement. The results indicated that employees with high levels of work engagement are highly self-efficacious; they believe they are able to meet the demands they face in various situations.

These findings were replicated in a longitudinal study conducted by Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2008) cited in Baker *et al.* (2008) with the results indicating that self-efficacy among other personal resources explain variances in work engagement over time and over and above impact job resources and previous levels of engagement. In addition to the above-mentioned studies, Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova, (2007) investigated the reciprocal relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement. The premise of

research was based on the so called 'gain spirals' as described by Hobfoll and Shirom (2000) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory.

According to the COR theory, job resources may potentially be motivating in their own right through the creation, maintenance and accumulation of resources (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2000). Resources are defined as "those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a means for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions or energies (Hobfoll, 1989). The COR-theory further postulates that people strive to retain, protect, and build resources and what is threatening to them is the potential or actual loss of these valued resources (Llorens, *et al.*, 2007).

COR theory distinguishes between two types of spirals: resources that may diminish as a result of so-called "loss spirals" and that resources may increase as a result of "gain spirals" (Hobfoll, 2001). The "loss spirals" implies that people who lack resources are susceptible to losing even more resources, the "gain spirals" refers to gaining resources increasing the resource pool, which subsequently leads to the acquiring of additional resources. Resource loss decreases motivation, and may eventually lead to burnout (Demerouti, Bakker, & Bulters, 2004; Llorens, *et al.*, 2007), whereas resource gain increases motivation and well-being (Hobfoll, 2001 and Llorens, *et al.*, 2007).

The study by Llorens, *et al.* (2007) contributed to the validation of "gain spirals" as hypothesized by COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989). In a longitudinal design, Llorens, *et al.*, (2007) investigated the causal relationships between two potentially important resources in the use of Information & Communication Technology (i.e. time control and method control), efficacy beliefs and engagement. More specifically, two questions were addressed: (1) do personal resources mediate the relationship between task resources and work engagement? (2) does engagement increase personal and task resources? The results indicated that task resources, efficacy beliefs and engagement have reciprocal relationships over time.

The results also indicated that efficacy, plays a role as a mediator between task resources and engagement. It emphasized the importance of providing good resources that enhance efficacy and engagement, which, in turn, also increase efficacy beliefs, thus closing the spiral by leading to the perception of greater task resources (Llorens, *et al.*, 2007). Although efficacy and engagement are traditionally seen as an outcome, this study shows that both can be considered as causes and consequences in the gain spiral as well. In conclusion, research has provided empirical evidence that supports the hypothesis that work engagement is positively related to self-efficacy. Furthermore, and as a personal recourse, self-efficacy does not only drive engagement among individuals but plays a reciprocal role.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a cross-sectional survey design. The study participants were drawn from state corporations spread across the country, Kenya. This implies that the area of coverage was determined by the randomly sampled state corporations operating in all counties in the country, gave the sampling frame. Stratified sampling was used to select the primary sample of 32 organizations from a population of 197 State Corporation in Kenya. The strata constituted the five sectors of finance, commerce, public universities, regional development, regulatory bodies and services. A sample of 389 respondents was proportionately selected from a target population estimated to be 14363 managerial staff in the selected State Corporations. The formula by Yamane (1967) was considered;

$$\frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} = \frac{14363}{1 + 14363(0.05^2)} = 389$$

Where: The confidence level =95%, P=0.5, n=the sample size, N=the population size and e= the acceptance sampling error.

Therefore 389 middle level managers will be proportionately chosen from the 38 sampled state corporations. The researcher used self-administered questionnaires attached with authority letter from the University, authority letter from the state corporation, another letter stating the purpose of the study and a brief guide on how to fill the questionnaire. Self-efficacy was measured using a 10-item generalized Self-efficacy scale by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995), sample statements include “I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough”. The statement was rated on a scale ranging from (1) for “Strongly disagree” to (5) for “Strongly agree”.

Work engagement was assessed using the shortened nine-item version Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) developed by Schaufei and Bakker, (2003).The scale constitutes three indicators measured each with three items namely; Vigour (“At work I feel busting with energy”); Dedication (“My job inspires me”) Absorption (“I get carried away when I am working”) and scored on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 for “Strongly Disagree” to 5 “Strongly Agee”.

The pilot study involved 50 respondents drawn from three state corporations in Busia, Kakamega and Uasin Gishu counties. For ethical purposes, authority to carry out the study was sought from the management of all the selected State Corporations and approval received. Respondents were formally informed of the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their opinions and identity. The reliability coefficient for the scale was estimated using Cronbach alpha. Factor analysis was used to ascertain the validity of the study instruments to ensure they meet the assumptions of regression including normality and linearity of the study variables. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) summarizing the

demographic characteristics of the population and variables was generated. Multiple regression analysis was applied to establish relationship between variables and test hypothesis.

## RESULTS

### Descriptive Statistics on Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy was conceptualized as an individual persons' perception regarding his ability to deal with situations and demands in a broad array of contexts (Chen Gully & Eden, 2001), this was operationalized in the questionnaire containing 10 items. The statements were computed to determine the mean score for each item (Table 1). Majority of employees usually thought of a solution when in trouble (M=4.31), they always managed to solve their difficult problems after trying hard (M=4.26). Largely, they are capable of coping with trouble as they come (M=4.17), this may explain why they generally succeed when they try (M=4.11). Majority of the respondents also appear very confident that they can get the success they deserve in life (M=4.10). In addition, many often have several solutions to problems whenever they come by (M=4.10). They often remained calm when faced with difficulties because of their superior coping abilities (M=3.98).

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics on Self-efficacy

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach Alpha
Can always manage to solve difficult problems if he/she try's hard enough	4.26	.840	-1.69	4.20	.880
Is confident that he/she can get the success he/she deserves in life	4.10	.850	-1.15	1.85	.881
Finds it easy to stick to things aimed to attain goals	3.96	.910	-.950	.970	.882
When she/he try's he/she generally succeeds	4.11	.830	-1.10	1.94	.879
Is confident that he/she can deal efficiently with unexpected events	3.92	.840	-.800	.970	.876
Knows how to handle unforeseen situations, thanks to his/her resourcefulness'	3.82	.920	-.550	.080	.877
Always remains calm when facing difficulties because he/she can rely on own coping abilities	3.98	.940	-1.04	1.11	.887
When confronted with a problem he/she can always find several solutions	4.10	.800	-1.07	2.070	.875
He/she usually thinks of a solution when in trouble	4.31	.760	-1.56	4.277	.875
Is capable of coping with most of his/her problems	4.17	.840	-1.33	2.544	.879
<b>Composite Value</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>-1.40</b>	<b>4.80</b>	<b>.890</b>

Other statements rated moderately high was that it was easy for the respondents to stick to things aimed at attaining their goals ( $M=3.96$ ), the confidence that one can deal efficiently with unexpected events ( $M=3.92$ ), and Knowledge of handling unforeseen situations because of one's resourcefulness ( $M=3.82$ ). Therefore, majority of the managers believe in their own skills to organize and execute courses of action to accomplish set goals as demonstrated by the high composite rating of ( $M=4.07$ ). From the findings the composite value of skewness was  $-1.40$  and the kurtosis was  $4.80$ , an indication that the distribution was not normal, since most of the statements used to explain Self-efficacy were positive. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of Self-efficacy ( $\alpha=.890$ ) confirming there was internal consistency of the variable.

### Descriptive Statistics on Work Engagement

The statements representing work engagement were 9 as shown in Table 2. Majority of them were proud of the work they do ( $M=4.42$ ) and often find time moving pretty fast when they are working ( $M=4.29$ ). They were quite enthusiastic about their job ( $M=4.26$ ). They really enjoyed and happy working intensely ( $M=4.23$ ). The perception that their jobs inspired them was high ( $M=4.19$ ) such that they always looked forward to working every morning ( $M=4.14$ ). While at work they felt very strong and work vigorous ( $M=3.97$ ) at the same time they get totally engrossed in their work ( $M=3.95$ ). The perception of busting with energy each time was moderately high ( $M=3.84$ ).

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics on Work Engagement

Items	Mean	SD	Skewd -ness	Kurtosis	Cronbach Alpha
Feels busting with energy at work	3.84	.830	-.530	.360	.904
Feels strong and vigorous at work	3.97	.810	-.780	1.15	.899
Looks forward to going to work every morning	4.14	.890	-1.11	1.32	.897
Believes his/her job inspires him/her	4.19	.910	-1.21	1.43	.890
Is enthusiastic about his/her job	4.26	.870	-1.31	1.84	.889
Is proud of work he/she does	4.42	.780	-1.53	2.92	.894
Feels happy when working intensely	4.23	.940	-1.32	1.62	.898
Is often engrossed in his or her work	3.95	.940	-.980	1.08	.898
Thinks time often fly's when working	4.29	.870	-1.34	1.83	.901
<b>Composite Value</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>-1.22</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>.907</b>

The composite rating for Work engagement was high at 4.14. Indicating that the Managers rated themselves highly in Work engagement, demonstrating their high perception that they work with vigour, dedication and once at work they express their total commitment by being deeply engrossed in work such that time moves unnoticed. From the results the composite value of skewness was -1.22 and the kurtosis was 2.24. This indicated that the distribution was not normal, since the managers rating on Work engagement were inclined positively. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of work engagement ( $\alpha=.907$ ) confirmed that there was internal consistency of the variable.

### Model Summary of Effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement

The objective was to establish the effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement so as to test hypothesis  $H_0$  using a linear regression model. Table 3 is an illustration of the models,  $R^2$  changed from .036 in model I to .191 in model II. It shows that the predictor accounted for 19.1% variation in Work engagement.

Table 3 Model Summary of Effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement

Model	R	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	Std. S.E	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					$R^2$ Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
I	.189 <sup>a</sup>	.036	.024	5.3636	.036	2.978	4	320	.019	
II	.437 <sup>b</sup>	.191	.179	4.9202	.155	61.275	1	319	.000	1.885

a. Predictors: (Constant), Experience, Gender, Education, Age

b. Predictors: (Constant), Experience, Gender, Education, Age, Self-efficacy

c. Dependent Variable: Work engagement

Besides, the predictor in this regression model caused adjusted  $R^2$  to change from .024 to .179 giving rise to F change of 61.275 which was significant at ( $p<0.01$ ). Therefore, the control variables contributed little in the model, leaving Self-efficacy as the dominant predictor of Work Engagement.

Further, an Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test whether the regression model could significantly fit in the data. Table 4 shows F- ratio improved from 2.978 in model I to 15.086 in model II which was significant at ( $p<.01$ ) leading to rejection of the null hypothesis  $H_{0_{2a}}$  that Self-efficacy has no effect on Work engagement.

Table 4 ANOVA on Effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I	Regression	342.642	4	85.661	2.978	.019 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	9206.058	320	28.769		
	Total	9548.701	324			
II	Regression	1826.037	5	365.207	15.086	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	7722.664	319	24.209		
	Total	9548.701	324			

a. Dependent Variable: WEN

b. Predictors: (Constant), Experience, Gender, Education, Age

c. Predictors: (Constant), Experience, Gender, Education, Age, Self-efficacy

In addition, the standardized  $\beta$  coefficients for Self-efficacy variable was generated from the model and subjected to a t-test to establish whether it was making a significant contribution and to test hypothesis. Table 5 illustrates the estimates of  $\beta$  coefficient value for Self-efficacy was positive, implying it has a positive relationship with Work engagement. Similarly, the coefficients showed that Work engagement predicted in relation to the Self-efficacy was significant;  $\beta_1 = 0.397$  ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 5 Coefficients of the Effect of Self-efficacy on Work Engagement

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	32.530	1.641		19.82	.000		
Gender	-.407	.668	-.034	-.609	.543	.971	1.030
Age	1.459	.455	.224	3.206	.001	.620	1.613
Educ.	-.267	.340	-.044	-.786	.432	.981	1.019
Exper.	-.773	.454	-.118	-1.702	.090	.630	1.587
2 (Constant)	17.442	2.446		7.131	.000		
Gender	-.038	.615	-.003	-.061	.951	.965	1.036
Age	1.288	.418	.197	3.082	.002	.618	1.617
Educ.	-.082	.312	-.013	-.261	.794	.976	1.025
Exper.	-.663	.417	-.101	-1.592	.112	.629	1.589
Self-efficacy	.389	.050	.397	7.828	.000	.985	1.015

a. Dependent Variable: Work Engagement

Besides, the t-test was significant,  $t = 7.83$  meaning the effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement was seven times more than the effect attributed to standard error ( $\epsilon=0.05$ ). This meant that the null hypothesis (**Ho**) stating that there is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Work engagement was rejected. These findings imply that for each unit increase in Self-efficacy, there was 0.389 units increase in the level of Work engagement among the Managers. This implies that managers who believe in their capacity to control events within their environment are more likely to exhibit high levels of work engagement. Therefore, the **Ho** suggesting that there was no significant effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement was rejected, evidence was adduced suggesting that Self-efficacy had a statistically effect on Work engagement.

The relationship between Self-efficacy and Work engagement was evaluated. The predictor accounted for 19.1% variation in Work Engagement. Othman *et al.*, (2014) who found no effect of Self-efficacy on Work engagement among nurses in a Malaysian sample. Referring to a study conducted by Caesens and Stinglhamber (2014), it is shown that the more people have high level of self-efficacy, the more absorptive they are to the job and they will put more efforts and energy to do an optimal work. Employees who are engaged, have energetic connection and are effective in doing their work activities and have high level of mental resistant.

Jungert, Koestner, Houlfort, Schattke, (2013) in their research found that work autonomy in every significant connection resulted positively. Consequently, supported work autonomy will play an important role in encouraging positive result as motivation and self-efficacy. Work autonomy in the work place related to individual result and also organizational. Employees with work autonomy show bigger work satisfaction; become more creative and has lower turnover will emotional exhaustion. A study done by Zhang, Jex, Peng, Wang, (2016) reveal that work autonomy makes employee feel free to decide a free from control or external hurdles. Consequently, work autonomy can be taken as an important work resource which promotes work engagement. Employees with high work autonomy can decide how and when to do the job assigned, have chances to use personal judgments in doing the job so that they will have more responsibility on the result of their work.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement was investigated among managers in state agencies. The findings showed Self-efficacy had a strong positive relationship with Work engagement. The more the managers believed in their abilities and capabilities, the more they invest themselves in work. The predicting role of self-efficacy in work



engagement highlights the significance of development of directed towards development and enhancement of self-efficacy belief at work. Intensified employees' beliefs in their abilities to have expertise in their job may result in higher level of work engagement. Well-established approaches prevail to enhance self-efficacy through its main sources, such as mastery experience, social persuasion and vicarious experience, all of which have extensively demonstrated their effectiveness in organizational context.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There is a positive direct effect of self-efficacy towards work engagement. Management should broaden jobs' assimilation, improve intrinsic interest through failed activities from the past, assess employees' contribution by evaluative feedback on employees' performance, and also induce energetic and affective connection towards employees' working activities, and also have high level of mental resistant. By having bigger number of employees with high self-efficacy employees will enter in every efforts and energy to reach optimal work, have similar perspectives, become important determinants of work engagement, and will promote employees to be more engaged in the mastery of work experience. In other words, employees think that work engagement contributes towards employees' excellent physical and mental health. Moreover, work engagement has beneficial consequences to employees' welfare.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study had limitations which could be corrected in future research. First, the sample was drawn from State Corporation's middle-level managerial staff only. This could affect the generalizability of these findings to larger working populations which constitutes both managerial and none managerial workers, besides the mainstream civil service and the private sector was not included in this study. Secondly, the use of single –source respondents in cross-sectional designs often cause common method biases since the respondents providing the measure of the predictor and criterion are the same persons. Although questionnaires used in the study have been validated in past researches, generally, self-report is an inherent weakness in estimating an individuals' behaviour, although it is still regarded as more accurate.

Lastly, cross-sectional survey designs have validity limitations. Cozby, (2009) observed that non-experimental research suffers two significant threats to validity. First, is the influence of extraneous variables (these are variables not considered in the research design); they are likely to be responsible for the observed relationships in the data. Secondly, measures taken at the same point of time are not sufficiently ideal to infer direction of causality. These weaknesses

can be mitigated by undertaking a cross-sectional longitudinal study. Despite these limitations, this study will certainly serve as a reference point in related future researches in Kenya.

## SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES

A relationship between self-efficacy and work engagement has been established in this study as the case in past research findings, however future studies need to identify more clearly the causality of the relationships between the variables included in the present study and to explore further these relationships in different organizational contexts other than the private organizations. Further research is recommended on the mainstream public service and the private sector as well as a comparative study on private and public sector employees and managers. It is also recommended that relationships between other variables as predictors, mediators and moderators of positive work behaviours need to be explored further.

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