



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Intent of Turnover –A Case of
Ethiopian Airlines**

By: Takele Dibekulu

**A Thesis Submitted to Addis Ababa University, School of Graduate Studies in
Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for Award of MA in Human Resource
Management**

Advisor: Solomon Markos (PhD)

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

DECLARATION

I, **TakeleDibekulu**, declare that the research project entitled, “**The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Intent of Turnover – A Case of Ethiopian Airlines**”, is my original work that is done under the guidance and advice of my advisor, **Solomon Markos (PhD)**.

This research project is done as partial fulfillment for Masters of Arts Degree in Human Resource Management (MAHRM).

This research has not been done before and all sources of materials used for the study have been appropriately acknowledged.

TakeleDibekulu

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that **TakeleDibekulu** has done the study on the topic, **“The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Intent of Turnover – A Case of Ethiopian Airlines”**.

This study is authentic and has not been done before by any other researcher on the same topic.

Advisor _____

Solomon Markos (PhD)



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By: TakeleDibekulu

Approval of the Board of Examiners

Advisor _____

June 2017

Solomon Markos (PhD) Date

Internal Examiner _____

June 2017

WorkuMekonen(PhD)

Date

External Examiner _____

June 2017

Berhanu B. (PhD)Date

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with the intention of identifying employee engagement factors, defining and understanding the level of engagement in the case organization, Ethiopian Airlines and identifying the effect of level of engagement to the turnover intention. The title is young in Ethiopia which should be further studied and explored in the future.

A theoretical foundation was compiled for the study based on the literature review from renowned Authors and journals in the area of employee engagement. The target population for this study was determined to be professional management and non-management staffs of Ethiopian Airlines located in Addis Ababa. The researcher used explanatory research design. The study used both primary data and secondary data. For this study simple random sampling technique was used and 353 professional employees of Ethiopian Airlines were selected as the sample of the study. The researcher used questionnaires as a tool for data collection and questionnaire were distributed to 385 employees where only 345 of the responses were found appropriate and valid for analysis. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics which included mean and standard deviation; one way ANOVA, reliability test, Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis were also used to analyse and present the data.

The summary of responses resulted in overall mean score of 4.6 which shows most of the staff i.e. 80.9% engaged, while the remaining 14.17% and 4.87% are engaged somewhat and disengaged respectively.

The One way ANOVA analysis indicates there are differences in the level of employee engagement between the different educational status, gender, experience and marital status. On the other hand, Pearson Correlation results showed that level of employee engagement is negatively related with turnover intention with a Pearson Correlation coefficient of $r = -.576$ which is significant at $p < 0.01$. Furthermore, the results of regression revealed that level of engagement has negative and significant effect on the turnover intention with a beta value of $\beta_1 = -.576$ ($p\text{-value} = 0.00$ which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, organizations should clearly identify factors which define the engagement level of the organization to increase employee engagement level so that they can ensure lower turnover intention.

Key words: *The Effect of Employee Engagement on the Intent of Turnover*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The general principles of employee engagement have been around for decades. Kahn (1990) was credited with conceptualizing the term personal engagement which he defines as the harnessing of organizational members to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances. According to Kahn, employee engagement is the energy or power that motivates employees to perform at a higher level, an amalgamation of commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership. It is an emotional state where employees feel passionate, energetic, and committed to their work. This translates into employees who give their hearts, spirits, minds, and hands to deliver a high level of performance to the organization.

Employee engagement is defined as “an individual employee cognitive, emotional, and behavioural state directed toward desired organizational outcomes” (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). Schaufeli (2002), present work engagement as contrastive concept to burnout, they define work engagement “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption”. They also state that engagement is not a momentary and specific state, but it is “a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behaviour”.

Employee engagement is defined as an individual involvement, satisfaction and enthusiasm for work (Harter *et al.*, 2002). The motivational aspect of engagement is well supported by more than four decades of research. In his book, *The Motivation to Work*, published in 1959, Frederick Herzberg originated some of the most lasting and well-researched theories about work motivation. The factors determining satisfaction in Herzberg’s work are similar to the elements of employee engagement. According to Herzberg, the true motivators at work include achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and personal growth. The same things that drive motivation and enhanced effort also increase employee loyalty and engagement to the organization. However, engagement goes beyond intrinsic motivation; leadership, organizational support, working environment, learning and development opportunities and communication plays important role in determining employee’s engagement to the organization. These are related to Kahn (1990) engagement model, tested by (Mayet

al.,2004). Meaningfulness can refer to how the organisation supports its employees through reward and recognition, and make them feel valued for their contribution to the company. Learning and Development opportunities allow for an employee to improve their skills and feel invested in, which leads to increased engagement levels.

Today in the world of globalization, organizations operate in a fierce competitive environment, where they face many challenges to remain competitive in the market. One of the major challenges that the organizations face is employee retention. Turnover rates in organizations are increasing and disengagement is one of the contributing factors. Engaged employees are less likely to leave their job. If an employee has no emotional commitment to their job, there is a greater chance that they will leave to pursue a job that offers higher remuneration or more flexible work conditions (Schaufeli& Bakker, 2004).

Workengagement according to Saks (2006), is associated with an individual's attitudes, intentions and behaviours. Therefore, engaged employees are likely to be more attached to their organization and would have a lower propensity to leave it (Schaufeli& Bakker, 2004). This view is supported by several researchers who found that work engagement is negatively related to turnover intention (Du Plooy&Roodt, 2010; Harter *et al.*, 2002).

According to Sirota (2005), "Morale is a direct consequence of being treated well by the company, and employees return the gift of good treatment with higher productivity, work quality and lower turnover. Turnover rates in organizations are increasing. In most studies, turnover intention is used instead of actual turnover because turnover intention is the critical antecedent of actual turnover (Rizwan, 2013). A growing awareness of shifts in the characteristics of the workforce is calling for organizations to be more focused in retaining skilled employees, keeping them fully engaged and embedding them in their jobs (Frank *et al.*, 2004).

Thus, this study focusses on identifying engagement drivers, their impact on the engagement of the employee and the relationship between engagement and turnover intention in Ethiopian Airlines.

1.1.1. History of Ethiopian Airlines

Ethiopian Airlines which is 100% owned by the government was established in 1945 as Ethiopian Air Lines Inc., a joint venture with American airline, TWA (Trans World Airlines). Ethiopian Airlines (Ethiopian) is the flag carrier of Ethiopia. During the past seventy years, Ethiopian has become one of the continent's leading carriers, unrivalled in Africa for efficiency and operational success, turning profits for almost all the years of its existence. Operating at the forefront of technology, the airline has become one of Ethiopia's major industries and a veritable institution in Africa. It commands a lion's share of the pan African network including the daily and double daily east-west flight across the continent. Ethiopian currently serves 93 international and 20 domestic destinations operating the newest and youngest fleet, <http://www.ethiopianairlines.com/corporate/company/about-us/history>.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

Employee turnover is a serious issue for many organizations and it is mainly related with employee engagement practices. Employees with low levels of work engagement are more likely to have a higher intention of leaving the organization, as well as actually leaving it (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001b). This is considered as an acute problem due to its detrimental effects on the organization especially when the high performing employees leave the organization. Moreover, excessive turnover is dangerous for the organizations, and it undermines the efficiency and productivity of the organization.

The top three challenges faced by organizations today are turnover, employee engagement and succession planning (SHRM, 2015). In 2013 and 2012, the Society of Human Resource Management identified employee engagement and succession planning topped the list of HR concerns. While they are still some of the top three challenges listed, it seems that growing concerns about turnover have finally overtaken them both followed by employee engagement. It shows growing concern of employee engagement practices and its contribution towards employee turnover (SHRM, 2015).

Recently, in the aviation management literature, it has been argued that elevating the levels of work engagement might be effective in reducing turnover intention (Chen *et al.*,2010). Other studies confirm that though aviation job is still very attractive and the competition for this job position is huge, the turnover rate in the airline industry is still high. Therefore, investigating in

employee engagement practices is essential to reduce the turnover rate in core competencies of the organization.

Research confirms that engagement lowers employees' intention to leave. The Corporate Leadership Council (2004) found that the most engaged employees are 87% less likely to leave their organization. The same study found that the 100 best places to work had an average voluntary turnover rate of 13% as compared with the average of 28.5% of other businesses in the same industries. Other large scale research has found that 12% of disengaged employees have no intention to leave, while that proportion rises to 66% in engaged employees. Similarly, over half of disengaged employees would consider leaving their current job for another opportunity, while only 25% of highly engaged employees would consider leaving. Saks (2006), claims that employee engagement is negatively related with turnover intention. Employee engagement is key factor in reducing employee intention to leave organizations.

The aviation industry has intense competition for the core skills like Pilots, A/C Technicians, A/C Engineers, Cabin Crew and Customer Service Agents etc. The attrition rates in Ethiopian Airlines in the last five years period was on average 409 (5.00%).

Table 1.1: Employee Turnover Rate

Employee Turnover Rate (2011/12-2015/16)			
Fiscal Year	No. of Employee	Total No. Turn Over	Turnover rate %
2011/12	6,557	300	4.58%
2012/13	7,039	410	5.82%
2013/14	8,066	385	4.77%
2014/15	8,977	400	4.46%
2015/16	10,227	550	5.38%
Average	8173	409	5.00%

Source: Ethiopian Airlines HR Turnover Analysis Report, 2016

Exit interview conducted in 2015/16 shows that 60% of resigned employees left Ethiopian Airlines for personal life and family reasons; while 30% left for reasons of personal growth and better opportunity for career development elsewhere. About 10% left due to disagreement with immediate or higher supervisor. The turnover rate in the near future is expected to continue as it is between 5%-6% based on the five years trend.

In Ethiopian Airlines there is an Engagement Office under Corporate Human Resource Management Division which is established to monitor employee engagement practices, identifying the engagement level of the staff, disengagement factors and work proactively to ensure employee commitment towards the organization. The management in Ethiopian Airlines conduct employee engagement survey periodically using the business process improvement system which is known to be Achieving Complete Excellence (ACE) to identify employee engagement level. Having said this, the study aims to examine the relationship that exists between employee engagement and intention to leave organization, identifying the level of employee engagement and engagement factors in Ethiopian Airlines. The study add to the existing knowledge of employee engagement by identifying the engagement factors, level of engagement, understanding turnover intention and associated signs of disengagement. The area of the study is young especially in Ethiopia so this study will be a base for future studies. Moreover, the study tries to strengthen the engagement practices in the case organization and share the good practices to other organizations to enable benchmark and adopt best practices.

In order to identify the research problems, the following research questions were covered:

- What are the main drivers of employee engagement in Ethiopian Airlines?
- What is the level of employee engagement in Ethiopian Airlines?
- What is the effect of employee engagement practices on employee intention to leave Ethiopian Airlines?

1.3. Research Objectives

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of the study is to investigate effect of employee engagement on turnover intention with as special emphasis in the case of Ethiopian Airlines.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

This research undertaking has three specific objectives which will be addressed later in the chapters.

- Identify the drivers of (factors leading to) employee engagement,
- To determine the level of employee engagement in Ethiopian Airlines,

- To investigate the effect of employee engagement on employee intent to turnover.

1.4. Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were developed for the purpose of this study.

H1: There is significant relationship between leadership exercise and level of employee engagement.

H2: There is significant relationship between communication practices in the organization and level of employee engagement.

H3: There is significant relationship between learning and development opportunities and level of employee engagement.

H4: There is significant relationship between organizational support and level of employee engagement.

H5: There is significant relationship between working environment and level of employee engagement.

H6: The effect of level of employee engagement is significant on turnover intention.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on identifying employee engagement factors, level of engagement and its impact with turnover intention in the case study organization, Ethiopian Airlines. In this study, questionnaire will be used to collect data from professional management and non-management staffs.

On the other hand, the paper examined only contribution of employee engagement to turnover intention in Ethiopian Airlines, thus, other causes of turnover were not covered in this study. On the other hand leadership, communication, organizational support, learning and development opportunities and working environment engagement factors are assessed. This study focuses on Ethiopian Airlines employees who are stationed in Addis Ababa Head Offices due to geographical and time limitation.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

Turnover intention is the result of many factors; however, this thesis is limited only to employee engagement factors on turnover intent. The study focuses only on professional staffs located at Head Office due to the literacy level required to understand and respond the questionnaire and geographical limitation.

1.7. Significance of the Study

Organization are facing higher turnover rate due to disengagement of employee. When business expands continuously with the favourable opportunities of internal and external environment, new employees tend to join companies very often which make the ratio of senior to junior staffs lower. The new comers are usually prone to leave the organization than the one who has already adapted to the organization culture, values and beliefs. It is the researcher's belief that identifying the main engagement factors in the organization will help the Airline in minimizing the turnover rates and increase employee engagement level.

The study also tried to identify the relationship between employee engagement and turnover intention in Ethiopian Airlines so that, other organizations can customize and use the recommendations that are given by the researcher which are relevant to their organization set up. The area of study is relatively young; this study may also add up its contribution to the existing body of knowledge on employee engagement and can be base for future research works on the topic.

1.8. Definitions of Terms

The following are definitions used thorough out the research paper.

➤ **Employee Engagement:**

Workengagement as a contrastive concept to burnout, they define work engagement “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. They also state that engagement is not a momentary and specific state, but it is “a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior” (Schaufeliet *al.*, 2002).

➤ **Employee Disengagement:**

The action or process of withdrawing from involvement in an activity, situation or group is known to be disengagement. Disengagement refers to a lack of enthusiasm and commitment to work or a workplace.

➤ **Employee Turnover**

Employee turnover refers to the number or percentage of workers who leave an organization and are replaced by new employees. In human resource terms, employee turnover is a measurement of how long your employees stay with your company and how often you have to replace them. Any time an employee leaves your company, for any reason, they are called a turnover or separation.

➤ **Turnover Intent**

Turnover intent refers to the voluntary intention of an employee to leave an organization.

1.9.Organization of the study

The paper organized in to five chapters. The first chapter provides general introduction information about employee engagement and its impact on turnover intention including; background, problem definition, research questions, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, paper organization.

The second chapter reviews different engagement related literatures of different authors. In this section, analysis of the existing engagement literature and discussion of the area of interest are presented. It contains definition of terms and concepts related with the employee engagement and turnover intention.

The third chapter discuss on the research methodologies and techniques to be used in conducting the research. This part presents the chosen methods, ways the information were gathered, how questionnaires were constructed and how the results are collected.

The fourth chapter is about data collection and analysis. Finally, the last chapter contains summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1.Introduction

This chapter presents theoretical review of literatures related to the emergence of engagement, concepts and operational definitions, and empirical review on the relationship between the dependent (turnover intention) and independent (employee engagement) variables and then the conceptual framework of the study is developed.

2.2.Theoretical Review

2.2.1. The Emergence of Engagement in the Business and Academia

It is not entirely clear when the term “engagement” was first used in relation to work, but generally the Gallup Organization is credited for coining the term somewhere in the 1990s. In their best-selling book *first, break all the rules*, Buckingham & Coffman (1999) summarized survey results that Gallup had obtained since 1988 on “strong work places” of over 100,000 employees. Employees’ perceptions of such workplaces were assessed with a “measuring stick” consisting of 12 questions. Later this tool became known as the Q12. The term engagement is only occasionally used in the book by Buckingham & Coffman (1999) that was basically about leadership, as is reflected by its subtitle ‘what the world's greatest managers do differently’.

Around the turn of the century, other major consulting firms followed suit. Obviously, the time was ripe and engagement was “in the air”. But why was that so? Why did companies suddenly become interested in work engagement after the turn of the century? Although it is difficult to come up with an unambiguous answer, it can be speculated that a set of changes that were and still are taking place in the world of work constitute the background for the emergence of engagement in business. Taken together, these changes boil down to what can be called a “psychologization” of the workplace. In other words, more than ever employees need psychological capabilities in order to thrive and to make organizations survive. For instance, organizational change requires adaptation, diversity requires perspective taking, teamwork requires assertiveness, working in vertical networks requires communication skills, job crafting requires personal initiative, boundarylessness requires self-control, and mental and emotional demands require resilience. The bottom line is that more than in the past the employee’s

psychological capabilities, including their motivation, are taxed. Instead of merely their bodies, employees in modern organizations bring their entire person to the workplace.

David Ulrich has put it in its best-selling book *Human resource champions*:

“Employee contribution becomes a critical business issue because in trying to produce more output with less employee input, companies have no choice but to try to engage not only the body, but also the mind and the soul of every employee”

Ulrich makes two points here. First, the organization’s human capital becomes increasingly important because more has to be done with fewer people. So, people matter more than they did in the past. Second, modern organizations need employees who are able and willing to invest in their jobs psychologically. And this is exactly what work engagement is all about. No wonder that companies became interested in engagement at a time of profound changes in the world of work.

Between 2000 and 2010 there was a sharp, yearly increase in the number of publications on work engagement or employee engagement. In fact, the first scholarly article on engagement at work was published by William Kahn as early as 1990 in the *Academy of Management Journal*, but it took another decade before the topic was picked up by others in academia due to the changes in the world of work that were discussed above and which took gradually place from the late 1990's onwards. Moreover, at the turn of the century the so-called positive psychology movement emerged. Or rather the science of positive psychology was proclaimed by a group of scholars working with Martin Seligman, at that time the President of the American Psychological Association.

Broadly speaking, positive psychology refers to the scientific study of optimal human functioning that aims to discover and promote the factors that allow individuals, organizations, and communities to thrive. Clearly, work engagement fits into this novel approach that has gained significant momentum in the past decade. So, the positive psychology movement created the fertile soil that made engagement research blossom in academia.

In conclusion, the emergence of engagement at the beginning of the 21st century has to do with two converging developments: (1) the growing importance of human capital and psychological involvement of employees in business, and (2) the increased scientific interest in positive psychological states.

2.2.2. Definitions of Employee Engagement

Everyday connotations of engagement refer to involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, absorption, focused effort, zeal, dedication, and energy. In a similar vein, the Merriam-Webster dictionary describes the state of being engaged as “emotional involvement or commitment” and as “being in gear”. Engagement at work is a desirable condition for employees as well as for the organization they work for. Employee engagement and work engagement are used interchangeably. Work engagement refers to the relationship of the employee with his or her work, whereas employee engagement may also include the relationship with the organization (Schaufeli, 2013).

Although the meaning of engagement at work may seem clear at first glance, a closer look into the literature reveals the indistinctness of the concept. As with many other psychological terms, work engagement is easy to recognize in practice yet difficult to define. In large part, as Macey and Schneider argued, the confusion about the meaning of engagement “can be attributed to the 'bottom-up' manner in which the engagement notion has quickly evolved within the practitioner community”. However, this bottom-up method that flourishes in business is not only at odds with the top-down academic approach that requires a clear and unambiguous definition of the term, but it also hampers the understanding of work engagement for practical purposes.

Engagement has been criticized for being no more than old wine in new bottles (Jeung, 2011). Consultancy firms have conceptualized engagement by combining and relabeling existing notions, such as commitment, satisfaction, involvement, motivation, and extra-role performance. The following four approaches are used to define engagement.

The Needs-Satisfying Approach, Kahn (1990) defined personal engagement as the “harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles: in engagement, people employ and express

themselves physically, cognitively, emotionally, and mentally during role performances”. He conceptualized engagement as the employment and expression of one's preferred self in task behaviors. Personal disengagement refers to “the uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances”. Thus, engagement means to be psychologically present when occupying and performing an organizational role.

The Burnout-Antithesis Approach, Rooted in occupational health psychology, this approach views work engagement as the positive antithesis of burnout. As a matter of fact, two schools of thought exist on this issue. According to Maslach&Leiter (1997) engagement and burnout are the positive and negative endpoints of a single continuum. More specifically, engagement is characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy, which are considered the direct opposites of the three burnout dimensions exhaustion, cynicism and lack of accomplishment, respectively. By implication that means that persons who are high on engagement are inevitably low on burnout, and vice versa. The second, alternative view considers work engagement as a distinct concept that is negatively related to burnout. Work engagement, in this view, is defined as a concept in its own right: “a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” Schaufeliet *al.*(2002), whereby vigor refers to high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties; dedication refers to being strongly involved in one’s work, and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge; and absorption refers to being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work.

The Satisfaction-Engagement Approach, According to the Gallup Organization: “The term employee engagement refers to an individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harteret *al.*, 2002). Thus, like the definitions of other consultancy firms, Gallup’s engagement concept seems to overlap with well-known traditional constructs such as job involvement and job satisfaction.

The Multidimensional Approach,Saks (2006), defined employee engagement as “a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components that are

associated with individual role performance”. This definition is quite similar to that of Kahn because it also focuses on role performance at work. The innovative aspect is that Saks distinguishes between “job engagement” (performing the work role) and “organizational engagement” (performing the role as a member of the organization). Although both are moderately related, they seem to have different antecedents and consequences. Despite its intuitive appeal, the multidimensional approach (i.e., the distinction between job and organizational engagement) has hardly been taken up by the research community.

Taken together, these four approaches each stress a different aspect of engagement: (1) its relation with role performance; (2) its positive nature in terms of employee well-being as opposed to burnout; (3) its relation with resourceful jobs; and (4) its relation with both the job as well as with the organization.

Probably the most important issue in defining engagement is “where to draw the line”. Or put differently, what elements to include and what elements to exclude from the definition of engagement. In their seminal overview Macey & Schneider (2008) proposed an exhaustive synthesis of all elements that have been employed to define engagement. Their conceptual framework for understanding employee engagement includes: (1) trait engagement (e.g., conscientiousness, trait positive affect, proactive personality); (2) state engagement (e.g., satisfaction, involvement, empowerment); and (3) behavioral engagement (e.g., extra-role behavior, proactivity, role expansion).

Consequently, as Saks has noted in his critique, for Macey and Schneider, “engagement” serves as an umbrella term for whatever one wants it to be. In contrast, Schaufeli & Bakker (2010) proposed a more restrictive model that considers work engagement as an experienced psychological state which mediates the impact of job resources and personal resources on organizational outcomes.

2.2.3. Drivers of Employee Engagement

It is evident that drivers of engagement can vary between organisations and they can be impacted by factors such as industry type, role and company culture. However, there are similarities to be

found amongst the various engagement models, and some common drivers' surface. In a distillation of the various models and studies, the following five key drivers repeatedly emerge:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Learning & Development
- Organisational Support
- Working Environment

Each of the five key drivers identified can be related to Kahn's engagement model, tested by (May *et al.*,2004). Meaningfulness can refer to how the organisation supports its employees through reward and recognition, and make them feel valued for their contribution to the company. Learning and Development opportunities allow for an employee to improve their skills and feel invested in, which leads to increased engagement levels. Safety refers to how safe employees feel at work and how safe it is for them to express their views openly without judgement. It also relates to having both a supportive line manager and interpersonal relationships. Availability relates to the job role and how available the employee is to do their job, and if they have good work-life balance. According to Kahn (1990) meaningfulness, safety and availability all lead to increased engagement levels.

2.2.3.1. Leadership

Leadership and Communication were highlighted as being key organisational drivers of engagement(Robinson *et al.*, 2004; Penna, 2007). Leaders that responded to feedback from employees and demonstrate a genuine commitment to the employees' well-being are important factors that influence employee engagement.

Employee engagement also related to how positive a view an employee held of their senior managers. When employees feel involved through a collaborative leadership style, their engagement levels tend to increase (Macey & Schneider, 2008).Saks (2006) argues that supervisors are crucial in building engagement amongst employees and that they can also be at the root of disengagement. Transforming an organization is difficult and change implementation is influenced by a variety of factors (Sirkinet *al.*,2005). Change management theorists frequently state that in order to have an effective change programme there is a vital need for strong

leadership. Kotter (1996) has noted the importance of leading change in preference to actually managing it.

When a company is planning to cease its operations, strong leadership appears to be at the forefront of maintaining employee engagement. Change leaders, according to Armstrong & Taylor (2014) must recognize where change is taking place, assess it and then enable the implementation of this change successfully into the organisation. Leaders in these scenarios are generally responsible for communicating the strategy and supporting employees around them to ensure it is implemented correctly. According to the CIPD (2014), this form of leadership is a key enabler as it provides the vision and the rationale for change.

H1: There is significant relationship between leadership exercise and level of employee engagement.

2.2.3.2. Communication

The CIPD (2014) commissioned a major nationwide survey of employee attitudes and engagement. The research was conducted by Kingston Business School using a sample of 2000 employee's from across Great Britain. In this report, communication was the top priority. The report singles out employees having the opportunity to feed their views and opinions upwards as the most important drivers of employee engagement. The report also identifies the importance of being kept informed about what's going on in the organisation. This outcome implies that employees want a sense of involvement and to some extent be in a partnership with their employer. Schaufeliet *al.*(2011), supports the theory of communication and reinforced the two-way communication channels between employees and managers as a key driver to engaging employees.

The feeling of being well informed about what is happening in the organisation and thinking that their managers are committed to the organisation was other important drivers CIPD (2014). The Institute of Employment carried out a survey among employees in the NHS and suggested that the drivers of employee engagement were “a sense of feeling valued and involved”, and “the extent to which employees feel able to voice their ideas”, along with “the opportunities employees have to develop their jobs” (Robinson *et al.*, 2004).

The study of Robinson *et al.*(2004), illustrated that two way communication; high quality line management, a development focus for employees and a commitment to employee wellbeing are

among the top drivers of employee engagement within organisations. He explains further that employee engagement requires a two way relationship between employer and employee that continuously needs to be developed in order to maintain levels of engagement. Allowing employees to have a voice is important when looking at engagement (Rees & French, 2010). This can be established by having effective communication channels that allow both upward and downward communication, which will help create a more open and trusting environment, resulting in higher levels of engagement (Attridge, 2009). A study by Purcell (2003) found a number of factors to be strongly associated with high levels of employee engagement. The most important factor highlighted in this study was related to an employees' involvement in their work. Communication was found to be a factor, as engagement levels were affected by the amount of information employees received about how the company was performing, and how they contributed to the company achieving its business objectives. Furthermore, employees having involvement in company decisions' affecting their job or work was also associated with high levels of engagement. To maintain trust during difficult periods such as layoffs, senior management must communicate effectively, provide rationale for the decisions they make, and treat employees in a dignified and respectful manner (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998; Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004).

H2: There is significant relationship between communication practices in the organization and level of employee engagement.

2.2.3.3. Learning and Development

Training and career development in organisations can lead to an employee having more positive emotions about their organisation. When an organization invests in its employees, it provides them with a sense of fulfilment as they are getting the opportunity to develop their skills. This leads to increased engagement and higher productivity levels. Though training and development can be costly and time consuming, if employees feel they are being invested in, it will help sustain their levels of engagement (Ahmadi, 2012). Wellins & Concelman (2005) support Ahmadi by stating that the employee's willingness to develop and learn promotes innovation and creativity in the workforce. Managers need to work with employees by finding out their strengths and areas for development, and provide opportunities for improving skills and capabilities.

When an organisation goes through significant change, the literature states that learning and development is central to employee engagement. People will be more engaged to the extent that their needs are met by their employer. As the Company in this study is closing, employees need time to think about their future employment, and therefore want to up skill to make them more employable in the future.

H3: There is significant relationship between learning and development opportunities and level of employee engagement.

2.2.3.4. Organisational Support

Employees who feel valued and believe that the organisation is concerned for their well-being are more likely to feel a sense of responsibility towards their employer, resulting in increased loyalty and commitment to the organisation (Lee & Peccei, 2007).

According to a study conducted by Hewitt (2011), recognition is a key driver of employee engagement. Employees who don't feel appreciated at work are also more likely to leave their jobs. Feeling valued and involved is the key to Robinson *et al.* (2004), model of engagement.

Employee voice can be defined as the ability for employees to have an input into organisational decisions (Lucas *et al.*, 2006). It has been argued that one of the key drivers of employee engagement is for employees to have the opportunity to feed their views upwards (Alfaset *al.* 2006). Researchers by Towers Perrin (2003) found employers are improving at giving employees the freedom to make decisions relating to their jobs.

Perceived organisational support was proven to have a positive influence on job and organisation engagement (Saks, 2006). Perceived organisational support refers to employees' beliefs that the organisation values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The level of support employees receive from the organisation influences their psychological safety and enables them to employ themselves without fear of negative consequences (Kahn, 1990). This displays that employees want to work in a safe environment where their employer cares about them both a personal and professional basis.

H4: There is significant relationship between organizational support and level of employee engagement.

2.2.3.5. Working Environment

Several studies have shown that a supportive working community is a major contributing factor to an employee's work life that affects engagement (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2001). He found, where there was effective internal co-operation within an organisation, employee engagement was present. A cooperative working environment where employees value teamwork was also identified as a driver of employee engagement in the Towers Perrin Talent Report 2003.

According to Lee & Peccei (2007), state that employees who feel valued and believe that the organisation is concerned for their well-being, are more likely to feel a sense of responsibility towards their employer. This results in higher levels of commitment to the organisation. Kahn (1990) stated that interpersonal relationships promote psychological safety if they provide support, trust, openness, flexibility and lack of threat. Findings of the study conducted by May *et al.* (2004), showed that the relationship between an employee and its supervisor is also an important factor affecting employee engagement confirmed that support from colleagues predicts engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Saks, 2006). Attridge (2009), states that the work environment is affected by factors such as relationships with colleagues and relationships with management. Kahn (1990) described psychological safety as a "feeling of being able to show oneself without fear of negative consequences to one's self image, status, or career". From these statements, it appears that working in a safe environment with supportive relationships is one of the key drivers of employee engagement.

According to Holbeche & Springett (2003), people's perceptions of their workplace are linked to their levels of engagement and, ultimately, their performance. They argue that employees actively seek meaning through their work and, unless organizations try to provide a sense of meaning, employees are likely to quit. They argue that high levels of engagement can only be achieved in workplaces where there is a shared sense of destiny amongst employees. Survivors generally find themselves with increased workloads and job responsibilities while frequently receiving few or no resources, training and support (Gandolfi, 2008). This states that survivors of downsizing companies are typically left with less resource but still expected to do the same amount of work.

H5: There is significant relationship between working environment and level of employee engagement.

2.2.4. Approaches to Employee Engagement

A number of theoretical perspectives have been proposed that each emphasize a different aspect, but that cannot be integrated into one overarching conceptual model. The following four approaches help to understand engagement.

2.2.4.1. The Needs Satisfying Approach

According to Kahn (1990) people draw upon themselves to varying degrees while performing work tasks and they can commit themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally in the various roles they perform. Or, they may choose to withdraw and disengage from their work roles and work tasks. Kahn's model was derived from a qualitative interview and observational study among counsellors from a summer camp for adolescents and architects, and it was first tested by May *et al.* (2004), in a field study, using questionnaires of employees from an insurance firm. Results of Kahn's study suggest that there are three psychological conditions that shape how people perform their roles i.e. meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Kahn's identification of the three psychological conditions now serves as a framework for the study of employee engagement. Specifically, he describes the state of meaningfulness as one in which workers feel worthwhile, useful, and valuable, and that they are making a difference and are appreciated for the work they do. Safety is described as an environment in which people feel an ability to act as what would be normal for the individual without fear of negative consequences. Safety is found in situations in which workers trust that they will not suffer because of their engagement to their work and where they perceive the climate to be one of openness and supportiveness. Availability is defined as the sense of having the personal physical, emotional, and psychological means with which to engage with their job tasks at any particular moment. Indeed, as predicted, particularly meaningfulness and to a lesser degree also safety and availability, were positively associated with engagement. They also found in agreement with Kahn's theorizing that job enrichment and role fit were positively related to meaningfulness, whereas rewarding co-worker and supportive supervisor relations were positively related to safety, and personal resources were positively related to availability. So basically, the Needs-Satisfying approach assumes that when the job is challenging and meaningful, the social environment at work is safe, and personal resources are available, the needs for meaningfulness, safety and availability are satisfied and thus engagement is likely to occur.

2.2.4.2. The Job Demands Resources Model

A host of studies on work engagement have used the Job-Demands Resources (JD-R) model as an explanatory framework. Particularly scholars who believe that engagement is the antithesis of burnout use the JD-R model because it conceptualizes burnout and engagement as two separate constructs that are integrated in an overarching conceptual model.

Essentially, the JD-R model assumes that work engagement results from the inherently motivating nature of resources, whereby two types of resources are distinguished; (1) job resources, which are defined as those aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate personal growth and development (e.g. performance feedback, job control, and social support from colleagues); (2) personal resources, which are defined as aspects of the self that are associated with resiliency and that refer to the ability to control and impact one's environment successfully (e.g., self-efficacy, optimism and emotional stability).

According to the JD-R model, resources energize employees, encourage their persistence, and make them focus on their efforts. Or put differently, resources foster engagement in terms of vigor (energy), dedication (persistence) and absorption (focus).

Furthermore, the JD-R model assumes that, in its turn, engagement produces positive outcomes such as job performance. So taken together, the JD-R model posits that work engagement mediates the relationship between job and personal resources on the one hand and positive outcomes on the other hand. This is called the motivational process.

But also another negative process operates, the so-called health impairment process, which is sparked by job demands, which are defined as those aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort (e.g., work overload, time pressure, role conflict, and red tape). When job demands are high, additional effort must be exerted to achieve the work goals and to prevent decreasing performance. This compensatory effort obviously comes with physical and psychological costs, such as fatigue and irritability. When recovery is inadequate or insufficient, employees may gradually exhaust their energy backup and might eventually burn out. In its turn, burnout may lead to negative outcomes such as depression, cardiovascular disease, or psychosomatic complaints (Melamed *et al.*, 2006).

Cross-links also exist between the motivational and the health-impairment processes. More specifically, poor resources may foster burnout, whereas job demands might increase work engagement. However, the latter is only true for the so-called challenge demands that have the

potential to promote mastery, personal growth, and future gains (e.g. time pressure, high workload and high job responsibility).

In contrast, hindrances that have the potential to thwart personal growth, learning and goal attainment (e.g. role conflict, red tape, and hassles) do not have an impact on work engagement. Using a meta-analysis based on 64 independent samples Crawford *et al.* (2010), found that demands were positively related to burnout, but that the relations between demands and engagement varied with the nature of the demand: hindrances related negatively and challenges related positively to engagement.

Meanwhile, abundant empirical evidence exists for the main assumption of the JD-R model; the presence of a motivational and a health impairment process. For instance Schaufeli *et al.* (2002), in press reviewed the results of 16 cross-sectional studies from seven countries and concluded that in all cases mediating effects of engagement and burnout were found, albeit those in four cases partial instead of full mediation was observed. That means that in addition to an indirect effect of demands and resources via engagement and burnout, also a direct effect on outcomes occurred. Finally, in 13 cases, significant crosslinks were found, particularly between poor job resources and burnout.

However, no causal inferences can be made from cross-sectional studies so that it cannot be ruled out that, for instance, high levels of engagement lead to more favorable perceptions of resources. So what about longitudinal evidence about the direction of causation? A three-year follow-up study among Finnish dentists Schaufeli *et al.* (2008b), supported both the motivational process and the health impairment process. It appeared that job resources influenced future work engagement, which, in its turn, predicted organizational commitment, whereas job demands predicted burnout over time, which, in its turn, predicted future depression. No reversed causation was observed that is, neither burnout nor engagement predicted job demands or job resources. In a similar study among Dutch managers, increases in job demands and decreases in job resources predicted burnout across a one-year period, whereas increases in resources predicted work engagement (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, burnout predicted future absence duration (an indicator of health impairment), whereas work engagement predicted future absence frequency (an indicator of employee motivation).

Another one year follow-up study among Australian university staff showed that job resources predicted psychological strain (negatively) and organizational commitment (positively), but failed to confirm the effect of job demands on strain (Bakker *et al.*, 2011). Again, no reversed causal effects were detected. In a final longitudinal study spanning 18 months

Schaufeli *et al.* (2009), found that personal resources (i.e., self-efficacy, optimism, and organization-based self-esteem) predicted later work engagement next to job resources (i.e., control, supervisory coaching, feedback, and opportunities for development).

In conclusion, job demands and resources have an impact over time on burnout and work engagement in ways as predicted by the JD-R model. That means that indications were found for the mediating role of work engagement and burnout in the motivational and health impairment processes, respectively.

Mounting empirical evidence suggests the dynamic nature of the motivational process of the JD-R model as far as job performance is concerned. That is, a feedback loop seems to exist that runs back from performance and engagement to job and personal resources (Schaufeli, 2010). This feedback loop is consistent with the notion of resource accumulation after successful performance. For instance, when an engaged employee accomplishes his or her work task successfully, this not only increases his or her level of self-efficacy (a belief that acts as a personal resource), but also leads to positive feedback from one's supervisor (a job resource). In a somewhat similar vein, in their three-wave study Weigelt *et al.* (2010), found evidence for the existence of a gain spiral between work engagement and both job resources (i.e. job control and social support) and personal resources (i.e. active coping). Hence, it seems that increases in work engagement lead to increases in resources, and vice versa.

2.2.4.3. The Affective Shift Model

It has been observed that work engagement waxes and wanes as a person moves through the working day, shifting from one task to another and being exposed to various kinds of events during the day (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2010). The affective shift model seeks to explain this dynamic nature of work engagement (Bledlow *et al.*, 2011). This model is based on the assumption that both positive and negative affect have important functions for work engagement.

The model proposes that a core mechanism underlying the emergence of high work engagement is a shift from negative to positive affect. Negative affect has motivating potential, meaning that it signals that things are not going well and that action should be taken. Subsequent effort then releases this motivating potential of negative affect and a shift towards a positive affective state occurs. Work engagement is most likely to result when this up-regulation of positive affect is accompanied by a simultaneous down-regulation of negative affect. So it is the dynamic

interplay of positive and negative affect at work that produces work engagement. Bledlow *et al.* (2011), followed a group of 55 German ICT professionals for two weeks and demonstrated that – as predicted by their affective shift model – moving from a situation in which negative events occur and negative mood is present to a situation in which high-positive mood is experienced, was associated with high work engagement.

2.2.4.4. Social Exchange Theory

In essence, as shown elsewhere in this volume, social exchange theory argues that relationships at work evolve over times into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as long as all parties involved abide by reciprocity or repayment rules. For example, when employees receive particular resources from their organization (e.g., a decent salary, recognition, and opportunities of development) they feel obliged to respond in kind and “repay” the organization. Following this lead, Saks (2006), argues that one way for individuals to repay their organization is through engagement. In other words, employees will engage themselves to varying degrees and in response to the resources they receive from their organization. In terms of Kahn (1990), definition of engagement, employees feel obliged to bring themselves more deeply into their role performances as repayment for the resources they receive from their organization.

Alternatively, when the organization fails to provide these resources, individuals are more likely to withdraw and disengage themselves from their roles, which eventually might result in burnout (Schaufeli, 2006).

As noted before, using his multi-dimensional approach Saks (2006), distinguishes between job engagement and organizational engagement. Not surprisingly, the relationships between organizational engagement on the one hand and perceived rewards and recognitions, perceived organizational and supervisor support, and procedural and distributive justice, on the other hand, are stronger than those with job engagement. Overall, however, these relationships are relatively weak, so that the current empirical support for the social exchange theory of work engagement is limited.

Recently, using a social exchange perspective Alfes *et al.* (2006), showed that the relationships between engagement and citizenship behavior as well as that between engagement and turnover intention was moderated by perceived organizational support and by the relationship with the supervisor. More specifically, when engaged employees felt supported by their organization and

when they had a good relation with their supervisor, they exhibited more citizenship behavior and less intention to quit.

2.2.5. Definitions Intention to Turnover

Employee turnover has been defined as a permanent movement of the employee beyond the boundary of the organization. Interest in the topic has gained momentum in the recent past among organizational psychologists, economists, and sociologists with different perspectives being adopted to study the phenomenon (Griffeth *et al.*, 2000).

Employee turnover intention on the other hand, is thoughts of quitting, intention to search for other employment, and intention to quit the current organization. It is an employee's voluntary intent to find a new job with another employer within the next year.

Employee turnover intention is a corrupt feeling of currently working employees to resign from the organization. Employee's turnover intention or intention to leave or quit is a depraved feeling or need of employee's to leave organization which are working in (Zahid, 2013).

Intention of employees' turnover is workers' feeling towards for better working environment. A turnover intention is a mental decision prevailing between an individual's approach with reference to a job to continue or leave the job. Turnover intentions are the instant connection to turnover behavior (Hussain, 2012).

2.3. Empirical Review

2.3.1. Relationship Between Employee Engagement and Turnover Intention

Several studies in the literature have noted a relationship between employee engagement and turnover intent. First, in a study of 22 companies across 5 business sectors, International Survey Research determined that there were several key drivers for turnover intent (an antecedent of actual turnover) including (the lack of): recognition and rewards, individual development, career advancement, empowerment, management leadership, respect for employees, retaining talented employees, supervisory issues, communication, and job security. These key drivers mirror several of the employee engagement factors as specified by Buckingham & Coffman (1999) (i.e., recognition, development, opportunity, encouragement, care, best friend, progress).

Second, the Towers Perrin Report (2003), addressed employee engagement and turnover and found that 66% of highly engaged employees reported that they have no plans to leave compared to 36% of moderately engaged individuals and 12% of disengaged employees. Furthermore, 2% of highly engaged employees reported they are actively looking for another job compared to 8% of moderately engaged and 23% of disengaged employees. The Segal Group Inc. (2006d), found an inverse relationship between employee engagement and turnover intent. Additionally, the Segal Group Inc. (2006b), found that disengaged employees have the highest turnover intentions (38%) compared to renegades (19%), enthusiasts (5%), and engaged employees (1%). Finally, Ellis and Sorensen (2007), described those employees who reported higher levels of engagement also reported lower levels of turnover intentions.

Engagement is a mode of work attitude. Employees with this attitude show lower intention to leave the organizations (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Engaged employees are likely to be more attached to their organisation and would have a lower propensity to leave it (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). This view is supported by several researchers who found that a work engagement is negatively or positively related to turnover intention (DuPlooy & Roodt, 2010; Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). In addition, a meta-analysis of 7939 business units in 36 companies by Harter et al. (2002), reported a significant positive relationship between work engagement and business outcomes such as customer satisfaction and loyalty, profitability, turnover and safety.

Most of items measuring intention to leave are negatively correlated to employee engagement. Item that measured the plan of the young bankers to look for other jobs in the next 12 months gained the highest score, i.e., 3.93. This item explained 39.3%, indicated strong relationship

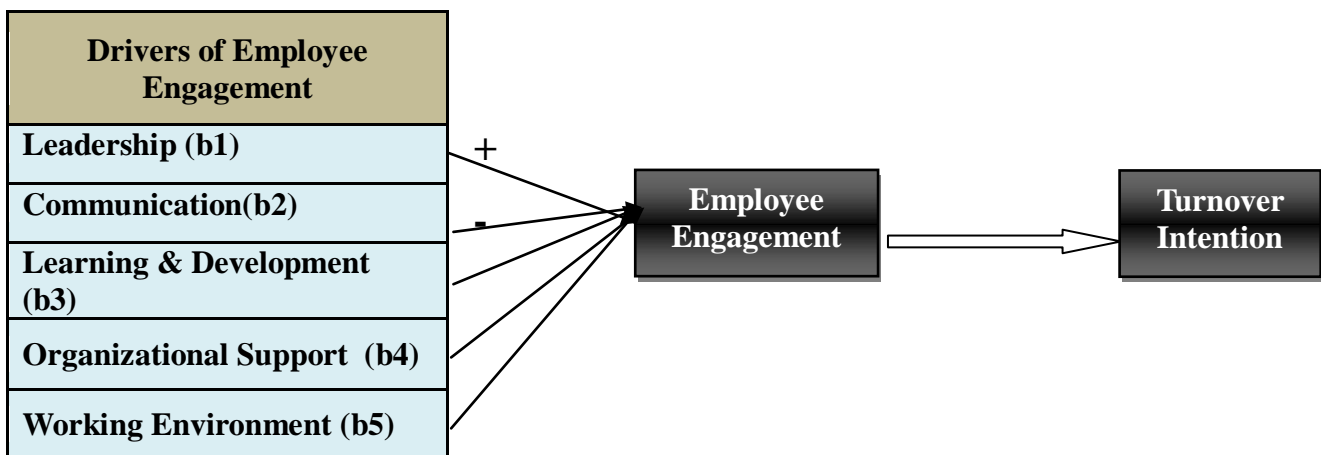
between intention to leave and employee engagement. Finally, multiple regression analysis was conducted. R-Squared value was at 0.11 which illustrated 11.2% of variance in employee engagement explained by the study model. From the ANOVA table generated, it showed that the model is significant with the value obtained at 0.000. Beta (β) under standardized coefficients showed a value of -0.334 which explained that intention to leave make less unique contribution to employee engagement. The negative sign however helped explained that intention to leave is negatively correlated to employee engagement (Hussain, et al., 2012).

H6: The effect of level of employee engagement is significant on turnover intention.

2.4. Conceptual Framework

Considering the above facts identified in the literature review, the below conceptual framework is formulated between factors or drivers of employee engagement, level of engagement and turnover intention.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of the study



$$Y1 = \alpha + b1x1 + b2x2 + b3x3 + b4x4 + b5x5 + e$$

$$Y2 = \alpha + bx + e$$

Source: Developed by researcher based on literature review

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description of the Study Area

This research focuses on assessing the relationship between turnover intention and employee engagement. It also tends to measure the level of employee engagement in Ethiopian Airlines and the possible cause of engagement. The factors of engagement include leadership, communication, learning and development, organizational support and communication.

3.2. Research Design

Research design refers to the steps that researchers follow to complete their study from start to end. It includes asking research questions based on theoretical orientation, selection of respondents, data collection and reporting of the results (Marvasti, 2004). In this research Explanatory research design was implemented to identify why and how employee engagement impacts employee attitude towards quitting the current employer in the case organization. Explanatory research seeks explanations of observed phenomena, problems, or behaviors. It attempts to “connect the dots” in research, by identifying causal factors and outcomes of the target phenomenon. In this research, explanatory research design will be used to identify the factors of employee engagement and cause of employee turnover intention with focus on employee engagement.

The researcher uses quantitative research design which is a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instrument, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2003).

3.3. Types and Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary data to conduct the study. Primary data is the data which is gathered for the purpose of the research specifically. To get the information, researcher had designed and distributed a set of questionnaire. A questionnaire consisting the independent variables and dependent variables have been conducted by extracting sources from few established questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to sampling amount of Professional Staff of those randomly selected Addis Ababa Head Office. The secondary data

used throughout the research includes Ethiopian Airlines Human Capital Management Strategy, HR Performance reports, published and unpublished information about the study area, books, journals, related articles and research works.

On the other hand, this study adopts a purely quantitative research approach. Quantitative method is study involving analysis of data and information that are descriptive in nature and qualified. A quantitative approach is one in which the researcher primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge, i.e., cause and effect relationship between known variables of interest or it employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistics data (Creswell, 2003).

3.4. Study Population

According to Babbie& Mouton (2006), the population for a study is that group usually of people about whom we want to draw conclusions. They further explain that it is difficult to study all the members of the population that interest us, and we can never make every possible observation of them.

Table 3.1: Total Number of Ethiopian Airlines Employee as of June 30, 2016

Profession	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Pilot	571	8	579	5.66%
Cabin Crew	58	1,670	1728	16.90%
MRO Technical Personnel	2,107	191	2298	22.47%
Marketing Personnel	965	609	1574	15.39%
AviationAcademy Staff (Instructor)	113	23	136	1.33%
Catering Staff	251	157	408	3.99%
Other Technical Staff	310	15	325	3.18%
IT Personnel	140	34	174	1.70%
Operation Support Staff	1107	160	1267	12.39%
Administration & General Support Staff	870	425	1295	12.66%
Manager& Above	296	60	356	3.48%
Secondement	69	2	71	0.69%
Unassigned	12	4	16	0.16%
Total	6,869	3,358	10,227	100%

Source: Ethiopian Airlines Headcount Analysis Report, 2016

The practical limitation; cost, time and other factors which are usually operative in the situation stand in the way of studying the total population.As per the report from Human resource

management department of Ethiopian Airlines, there are a total of 10,277 employees working for the organization as of June 30, 2016, as shown in the table below.

Table 3.2: Employee Number by Location & Gender as of June 30, 2016

Location	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Ethiopia-ADD	6,361	3,167	9,528	93.17%
Domestic-Ethiopia	147	13	160	1.56%
Outstation-international	361	178	539	5.27%
Total	6,869	3,358	10,227	100%

Source: Ethiopian Airlines Headcount Analysis Report, 2016

As of June 30, 2016, 93.17% of the work force located in Addis Ababa, the remaining 1.56% and 5.27% located in Ethiopia domestic stations and international offices respectively.

3.5. Sample Design

According to (Gray2004), a sample is a group of objects, occurrences or individuals chosen from the main population for a study. The sample for this study was selected using simple random sampling method. Simple random sampling is the most widely used techniques in which all possible subsets of a population are given an equal probability of being selected.

Out of the total employee of Ethiopian Airlines, the study focusses on professional staffs that are located in Addis Ababa as the questionnaires need higher level of literacy of understanding and it will be difficult to access staffs out of Addis Ababa.

Table 3.3: Professional Employees Located in Addis Ababa as of June 30, 2016

Professional staffs	Employee Number	Percentage
Marketing Personnel	1414	46.84%
AviationAcademy Staff (Instructor)	136	4.50%
IT Personnel	174	5.76%
Administration & General Support Staff	1295	42.89%
Total	3,019	100%

Source: Ethiopian Airlines Headcount Analysis Report, 2016

Thus, from the two tables above the total populations for the study are 3019 as shown in the table below. The researcher used this technique to select sample of 353 from the total population of 3019. The sample size has been determined by applying the formula adopted from kreijcie and Morgan's (1970),

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}, \text{ where}$$

n - Required sample size

*e*² – error rate which is 0.05

N - The population size

$$N = 3019, \text{ therefore; } n = \frac{3019}{1 + 3019(0.05)^2} = 353$$

To ensure the accuracy of the sample size, Raosoft online sample calculation method was used and sample size of 341 was determined.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

For this research, questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questions in the questionnaire are closed-ended or structured in order to ease the process of analyzing the data from respondents. According to Nachmias (1997), a questionnaire consists of a list of questions that must be formulated, constructed and sequenced to produce the most constructive data in the most effective manner. According to Babbie & Mouton (2006), the use of questionnaires is advantageous because questionnaires are economical, speedy, there is no bias (as in interviews: interviewer bias), and the possibility of anonymity and privacy encourages candidates to be willing to respond on sensitive issues, and do so honestly. The questionnaire is preferred because it translates the research objectives into specific questions that will be asked to the respondents.

The research questionnaire used in this research has four parts. The first part assesses general demographic information about the participants on education background, work experience, marital status and gender. The second part is prepared to measure factors of employee engagement; the third part which is the main focus of this study is used to measure the level of engagement using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) of the adjusted 9 items scale. The response scale is scored on a seven-point Likert scale varying between poles of intensity, from 0 'never' to 6 'always' (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).

The fourth and the last part measures employee turnover intentions measured using Turnover Intention Scale (TIS) on a six-point Likert scale varying between poles of intensity, from 1 ‘strongly disagree’ to 6 ‘strongly agree’. An example of a statement from the TIS is ‘I intend to leave the organisation in the next 12 months’, (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001b).

3.7. Method of Data Analysis

It is unquestionable that after the collection of data there must be analysis, interpretation and presentation in order to give recommendation to the problem. The data were organized, analyzed and presented using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The collected data were summarized and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics of background information and study variable were summarized using mean distribution across different category.

Analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was employed to find out the difference in the study variables due to educational background, experience, gender and marital status differences. Then, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation technique was used to identify relationship that exist between factors of employee engagement, level of employee engagement and turnover intention. Regression analysis was also implemented to define the pattern of relationship between the predictor and dependent variables. To study the level of engagement, engagement factors were considered as predictor and level of engagement dependent variable. Then, level of engagement was used as predictor to the dependent variable, turnover intention.

3.8. Instrument Validity

Validity concerns the degree to which a question measures what it is intended to measure. To assure the validity of the study, the researcher discussed with the advisor and Ethiopian Airlines management staffs about the questionnaires before it is distributed. The questionnaires used were also standard questions tested many times for the main variables; level engagement and turnover intention.

Validity is concerned with how well the concepts are defined by the measure(s). It also refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration. However, an instrument cannot measure the attribute of interest if it is unpredictable, inconsistent, and inaccurate Leary(2004).

3.9. Instrument Reliability

According to (Khotari2004), reliability refers to consistency, where internal consistency involves correlating the responses to each question in the questionnaire with those other questions in the questionnaire.

Reliability test was conducted on the data to measure the internal consistency of scale with the samples. Findings from reliability test show that Cronbach's Alpha for factors of employee engagement and level of engagement items were 0.928 and 0.948 respectively which explained perfect level of variance explained by the internal consistency reliability of scale with the sample. As to the turnover intention the reliability assessment is done separately for 5 and the 3 items questions as the nature of questions are opposite which normally could not be analysed together. 0.643 and 0.749 reliability was found which shows good level of internal consistency.

The overall reliability analysis for the research was 0.904 which shows the existence of perfect internal consistency between the samples taken as shown in the table below.

Table 3.4: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics			
No	Item	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
2	Engagement factors	.928	16
1	Level of engagement	.943	9
3	Turnover Intention	.643	5
4	Turnover Intention	.749	3
5	Overall Reliability	.904	33

3.10. Ethical Considerations

There are certain ethical protocols that have been followed by the researcher. The first is soliciting explicit consent from the respondents. This ensures that their participation to the study is not out of their own volition. The researcher also ensured that the respondents were aware of the objectives of the research and their contribution to its completion. Before conducting this study, the researcher ensure that all participants were fully informed of what the study is about and requested for willingness to take part in the research. The other ethical measure exercised by researcher is treating the respondents with respect and courtesy (Leary,2004). This was done so that the respondents were at ease and more likely to give honest responses to the questionnaire.

There were also ethical measures that have been followed in the data analysis. To ensure the integrity of data, the researcher checked the accuracy of encoding of the survey responses. This was carried out to ensure that the statistics generated from the study are truthful and verifiable (Leary,2004). Permission to conduct the study was requested from Ethiopian Airlines.

The researcher respects the privacy of the participants. The information that was gathered from the research participant were analysed with its confidentiality. On the other hand, where the researcher uses the work of others, proper acknowledgement of their contributions was made.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1.Introduction

This section of the research presents the results of the study using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis tool on the data collected through questionnaire carried out to answer the basic research questions.

The sample size determined while designing the research methodology were 353. In order to get 353 sample sizes, a total of 385 questionnaires were distributed and 355 collected with the response rate of 92%. Out of the collected 355, 10 were void as they were not filled properly. Thus, the paper was analysed using 345 questionnaires which were collected and filled properly.

In this chapter, descriptive statistics of demographic information and the study variables are presented first, followed by one-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA), Pearson correlation among the variables in the study is also presented and linear regression analyses on dependent and independent factors.

4.2.Descriptive Statistics of Background Information

Under this section the selected demographic characteristics of the study respondents such as age, work experience, gender, educational level and marital status are presented.

As shown in the table above, 67% of the respondents were male and the remaining 33% were female out of the total 345 respondents which is fair presentation of both sex groups when we further analyse based on the total employee gender distribution. When we see marital status, most of the respondents, 65.2% are single where the remaining 34.8% are married. On the other hand, 13.3%, 29%, 16.8%, 14.5% and 26.4% of the respondents served the Airline less than one year, 1 Year to 3 Years, Between 3 Years to 5 Years, Between 5 Years to 10 Years and Greater than or equal to 10 Years respectively. When we further summarize experience, 51% of the total sample serves the Airline less than 5 years which shows relatively young workforce group.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics of Background Information

Background Information			
Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	231	67.0
	Female	114	33.0
	Total	345	100.0
Experience	Less than 1 Year	46	13.3
	Between 1 Year to 3 Years	100	29.0
	Between 3 Years to 5 Years	58	16.8
	Between 5 Years to 10 Years	91	26.4
	Greater than or equal to 10 Years	50	14.5
	Total	345	100.0
Marital Status	Single	225	65.2
	Married	120	34.8
	Total	345	100.0
Education	College Diploma/Certificate	18	5.2
	Bachelor Degree	299	86.7
	Second Degree (MA/MSc)	19	5.5
	Others	9	2.6
	Total	345	100.0

Source: Own Survey

When we summarize education background of the respondents, statistic showed that most of the respondents were university graduates with Bachelor Degree i.e. 86.7%, the remaining 5.2%, 5.5% and 2.6% are in College Diploma/Certificate, Second Degree (MA/MSc) and Others categories respectively.

4.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

4.3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Factors

The below tables present employee engagement factors categorized in to five major categories i.e. leadership, communication, learning and development, organizational support and working environment using mean score, percentage distribution and standard deviation over the 6 point Likert scale.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Factors – Leadership

Employee Engagement Factors - Leadership										
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Mean	SD
I am involve in in decision-making that affects my job	Number	10	29	18	96	142	50	345	4.39	1.22
	%	2.9	8.4	5.2	27.8	41.2	14.5	100		
I have a good working relationship with my immediate supervisor	Number	0	14	4	51	164	112	345	5.03	0.94
	%	0	4.1	1.2	14.8	47.5	32.5	100		
My manager care about my career, keep me informed, treat fairly, encourage me to perform well	Number	5	28	21	76	137	78	345	4.58	1.22
	%	1.4	8.1	6.1	22	39.7	22.6	100		
In my job I get feedback and my feedback has value	Number	3	13	16	82	128	103	345	4.82	1.08
	%	0.9	3.8	4.6	23.8	37.1	29.9	100		
Group Total									4.71	0.84

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.928

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Disagree Somewhat, 4- Agree Somewhat, 5- Agree 6- Strongly Agree

Source: Own Survey

As shown in the table above, the highest mean score from responses was 5.03 (agree), “I have a good working relationship with my immediate supervisor” among the leadership indicator which shows importance of leadership practices in the case organization and their existence currently. The researcher can generalize there exist friendly working relationship between the staff and the management. Leadership and Communication were highlighted as being key organisational drivers of engagement (Robinson *et al.*, 2004; Penna, 2007).

The research confirmed Leadership as major driver of engagement with group mean scores of 4.71 as measured out of Likert 6 level scales with standard deviation of 0.84. Leadership has the highest group mean score from the engagement factors which indicate there are good leadership practices in the organization and it has high impact to the engagement level of Ethiopian Airlines staff. According to (Saks 2006) supervisors are crucial in building engagement amongst employees and that they can also be at the root of disengagement. Further analysis indicates, 88.3% of the respondents agreed leadership as one factor which affect their engagement level while the remaining 11.7% disagree.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Factors –Communication

Employee Engagement Factors - Communication										
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Mean	SD
I have readily available information I need to do my job	Number	5	15	31	77	168	49	345	4.55	1.07
	%	1.4	4.3	9	22.3	48.7	14.2	100		
I am able to voice my ideas, my manager listen to these views, and value my contributions	Number	4	15	39	75	156	56	345	4.54	1.1
	%	0.9	4.3	11	21.7	45.2	16.2	100		
I am informed on what is going on in the organization	Number	6	24	36	98	147	34	345	4.33	1.12
	%	1.7	7	10	28.4	42.6	9.9	100		
Total									4.47	0.93

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.928

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Disagree Somewhat, 4- Agree Somewhat, 5- Agree 6- Strongly Agree

Source: Own Survey

The mean score for communication is 4.47 with standard deviation of 0.93 which shows most of Ethiopian Airline staffs agree to some level, the communication practices as their motivating factor to stay engaged to the organization. As shown in the table above, 83% of the respondents agreed communication practices in the Airline made them engaged by availing information need, updating organizational news and giving chance to voice their ideas; the rest 17% disagree existence of communication practices to their expectation. So we can say communication is important drivers of engagement in the case organization with above average group mean score.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Factors – Learning & Development

Employee Engagement Factors - Learning & Development										
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Mean	SD
I get equal access to training and development opportunities	Number	14	34	18	96	135	48	345	4.3	1.29
	%	4.1	9.9	5.2	27.8	39.1	13.9	100		
I am encouraged to develop new skills	Number	1	20	26	73	145	80	345	4.68	1.1
	%	0.3	5.8	7.5	21.2	42	23.2	100		
I have support on my continuing professional development	Number	7	30	28	112	116	52	345	4.32	1.21
	%	2	8.7	8.1	32.5	33.6	15.1	100		
Total									4.43	1.04

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.928

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Disagree Somewhat, 4- Agree Somewhat, 5- Agree 6- Strongly Agree

Source: Own Survey

Learning and development is also positive with group mean score of 4.43. The researcher review uncovers learning and development is given emphasis in the case organization and it is explicitly stated in the Human Capital Management Strategy of the Airline. The organization invests many

Million Birr for training and development and career growth and professional development of its staffs is always in the forefront. The summarized employee response also confirmed same where 82.8% of the respondents agreed there is learning and development opportunities in the case organization where the remaining, 2.1%, 8.1% & 6.9% strongly disagree, disagree and disagree to some level respectively. Though training and development can be costly and time consuming, if employees feel they are being invested in, it will help sustain their levels of engagement (Ahmadi, 2012). Wellins&Concelman (2005) support Ahmadi by stating that the employee's willingness to develop and learn promotes innovation and creativity in the workforce which in turn increase their attachment to their organization and creates sense of ownership.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Factors –Organizational Support

Employee Engagement Factors - Organizational Support										
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Mean	SD
My effort is recognized by the organization	Number	10	33	53	111	103	35	345	4.07	1.23
	%	2.9	9.6	15	32.2	29.9	10.1	100		
I feel the pay and benefits I receive are fair for my responsibility compared to other staff with similar qualification within and outside the organisation	Number	19	43	65	104	91	23	345	3.79	1.29
	%	5.5	13	19	30.1	26.4	6.7	100		
My work is motivating, challenging, and rewarding and helps me to strive more	Number	9	22	39	95	122	58	345	4.37	1.22
	%	2.6	6.4	11	27.5	35.4	16.8	100		
Total									4.08	1.05

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.928

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Disagree Somewhat, 4- Agree Somewhat, 5- Agree 6- Strongly Agree

Source: Own Survey

On the other note, 3.79 (agree somewhat) “I feel the pay and benefits I receive are fair for my responsibility compared to other staff with similar qualification within and outside the organisation” was the least mean score under organizational support engagement factor category. This indicates Ethiopian Airlines has to see salary and benefit packages in terms of internal and external equity and the responsibilities. Relatively, organizational support group mean score is less than all other engagement factor i.e. 4.08, 71.7% of the respondents feel the payment and benefit level is fair as compared internally and outside organization and their work is challenging and motivating; 3.6%, 9.5% & 15.2%, strongly disagree, disagree and disagree somewhat on the received support from the organization. This indicate Ethiopian Airlines has to do more on the organizational support related initiatives to ensure higher level of engagement so that it can reduce turnover intention of its staffs. When we further analyse organizational support

as explained above, pay and benefit score is in the disagree level which is an indication of labor market maturity in faster pace and there is an internal inequity though the organization strives to be best employer of choice in Africa as indicated in the Human Capital Management Strategy of the company.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Factors – Working Environment

Employee Engagement Factors - Working Environment										
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Mean	SD
In my organization there is harmonious and conducive working environment	Number	7	21	53	114	111	39	345	4.21	1.15
	%	2	6.1	15	33	32.2	11.3	100		
I work in a cooperative working environment where employees value teamwork	Number	2	17	37	71	134	84	345	4.65	1.14
	%	0.6	4.9	11	20.6	38.8	24.3	100		
My organization takes health and safety seriously, works to minimize accidents, injuries, violence and harassment	Number	11	14	25	53	120	122	345	4.81	1.28
	%	3.2	4.1	7.2	15.4	34.8	35.4	100		
Total									4.56	1.04

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.928

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Disagree Somewhat, 4- Agree Somewhat, 5- Agree 6- Strongly Agree

Source: Own Survey

On the other hand, group mean score for working environment is 4.56 closer to agree scale. This indicates working environment is the major engagement factor in Ethiopian Airlines for 81.9% of the respondents and it shows the existence of conducive working environment, attention is given to health and safety of the staff and team work as critical value for success in the case organization. According to Lee &Peccei(2007) employees who feel valued and believe that the organisation is concerned for their well-being, are more likely to feel sense of responsibility towards their employer. This results in higher levels of commitment to the organisation.

4.3.2. Descriptive Statistics of Level of Employee Engagement

Level of employee engagement in Ethiopian Airlines was measured using adjusted standardized 9 item questionnaires of Schaufeli and the result is presented here below. As shown in the table 4.7, after analysing the responses, the researcher was able to arrive at the overall engagement level of the case organization.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Level

Level of Employee Engagement											
Variable		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Mean	SD
At my work, I feel bursting with energy	Number	3	7	14	42	84	104	91	345	4.53	1.298
	%	0.9	2	4.1	12.2	24.3	30.1	26	100		
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	Number	2	12	22	26	67	99	117	345	4.63	1.408
	%	0.6	3.5	6.4	7.5	19.4	28.7	34	100		
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	Number	0	17	19	38	63	74	134	345	4.62	1.47
	%	0	4.9	5.5	11	18.3	21.4	39	100		
I am enthusiastic about my job	Number	0	15	22	29	59	98	122	345	4.65	1.419
	%	0	4.3	6.4	8.4	17.1	28.4	35	100		
My job inspires me	Number	13	10	12	43	55	103	109	345	4.5	1.565
	%	3.8	2.9	3.5	12.5	15.9	29.9	32	100		
I am proud on the work that I do	Number	4	12	17	16	67	102	127	345	4.74	1.405
	%	1.2	3.5	4.9	4.6	19.4	29.6	37	100		
I am immersed in my work	Number	3	16	18	30	72	92	114	345	4.56	1.46
	%	0.9	4.6	5.2	8.7	20.9	26.7	33	100		
I get carried away when I'm working	Number	3	11	22	24	72	108	105	345	4.59	1.391
	%	0.9	3.2	6.4	7	20.9	31.3	30	100		
I feel happy when I am working intensely	Number	6	16	16	30	67	90	120	345	4.57	1.518
	%	1.7	4.6	4.6	8.7	19.4	26.1	35	100		
Total Engagement Level										4.6	1.19

Cronbach Alpha - 0.943

Key: 0-Never, 1-Almost Never, 2- Rarely, 3-Sometimes, 4- Often, 5-Very Often, 6 –Always

Source: Own Survey

The summary of responses as shown in the table above results in an overall mean score of 4.6 which shows most of the staff in the case organization are engaged. On the further detail analysis made to determine the level of engagement all nine questions response were averaged out where, 80.9% of the staffs are engaged, while the remaining 14.17% and 4.87% are engaged somewhat and disengaged respectively. Respondents’ feedback on each 9 item of the questions were analysed in detail below.

- In the question, “at my work, I feel bursting with energy”, out of the total 345 respondents surveyed, the average mean score was 4.53 (very often). From the mean score we can conclude most of the staffs come to work with full energy and passion which is indication of engaged workforce. When we see the percentage distribution, 80.8% of the staffs are bursting with energy which include (often, very often and always responses). To the

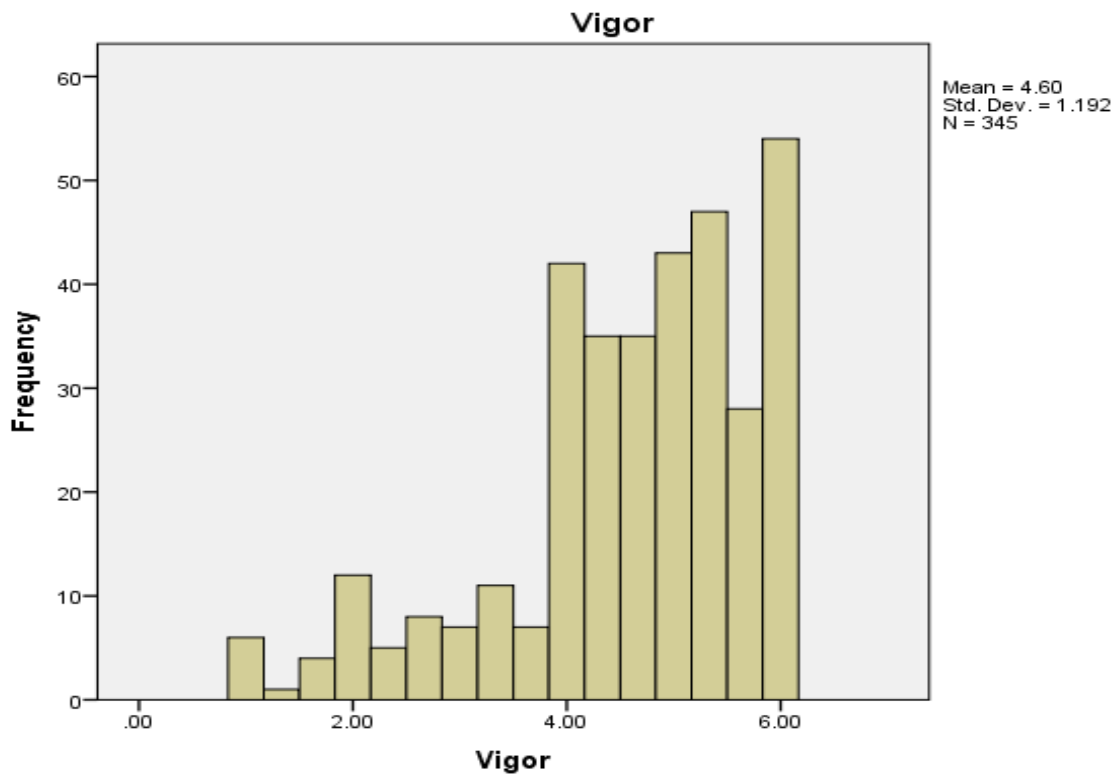
contrary, 2.9% (never, almost never) never feel the energy towards their work which is sign of disengagement. The remaining, 16.3% (rarely, sometimes) of the respondents are engaged somewhat.

- Similarly response for “in my job, I feel strong and vigorous”, question, positive reply was given by the respondents where 82% of the staffs replied often and above, which shows engagement with their Airline while the remaining 18% are disengaged at different level. The average mean score was also 4.63, so very often the staffs feel the strength in their work. This implies positive attachment to the employer and their job.
- Only 21.4% of the respondent for question, “when I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work”, are disengaged. The remaining 79.6% are engaged with an average mean score of 4.62. So we can generalize staffs very often would like to go to their work when they get up in the morning.
- In the questions, “I am enthusiastic about my job” and “my job inspires me” the replies shows 80.9% & 77.4% respectively are enthusiastic and inspired by their job with the mean score of 4.65 and 4.5 respectively. So very often they are inspired and enthusiastic about their job.
- The highest mean score from the collected questionnaire was 4.74, for “I am proud on the work that I do”, with the engagement rate of 85.8% and the rest 9.5% disengaged somewhat and 4.7% totally disengaged.
- The remaining three items i.e. “I am immersed in my work”, “I get carried away when I’m working” and “I feel happy when I am working intensely” engagement rates were 80.6%, 82.6%, 80.3% are very often engaged with the mean scores of 4.56, 4.59, 4.57 respectively. From the mean score and percentage distribution, we can say most of the staffs are absorbed by their work. This indicates their commitment and attachment towards their employer and their work. It is positive sign for organization like Ethiopian Airlines operating in dynamic, tight and competitive environment. It is obvious in the aviation business there is almost similar investment in infrastructure, fleet and systems, hence, the only competitive advantage is the human capital and employees are source of competitive advantage only if they are engaged to their employee.

4.3.2.1.Descriptive Statistics of Employee Engagement Dimensions

The figure below summarizes mean and standard deviation of employee engagement dimensions.

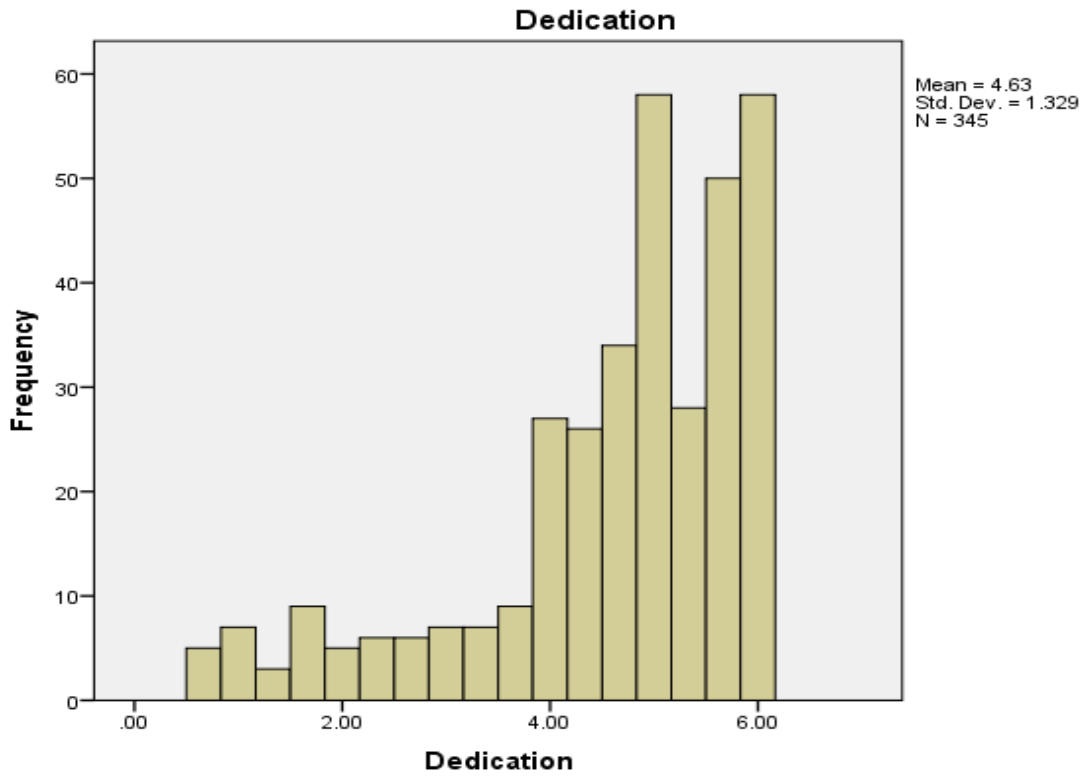
Figure 4.1: Employee Engagement Dimension - Vigor



Source: Own Survey

Vigor was analysed using three questions i.e. in my work, I feel bursting with energy; At my job, I feel strong and vigorous and when I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work based on UWES. The group mean score for vigor dimension as show in the figure is 4.6 with SD of 1.192 which is high score. This implies the staffs in Ethiopian Airlines have much energy, strength and stamina when working.

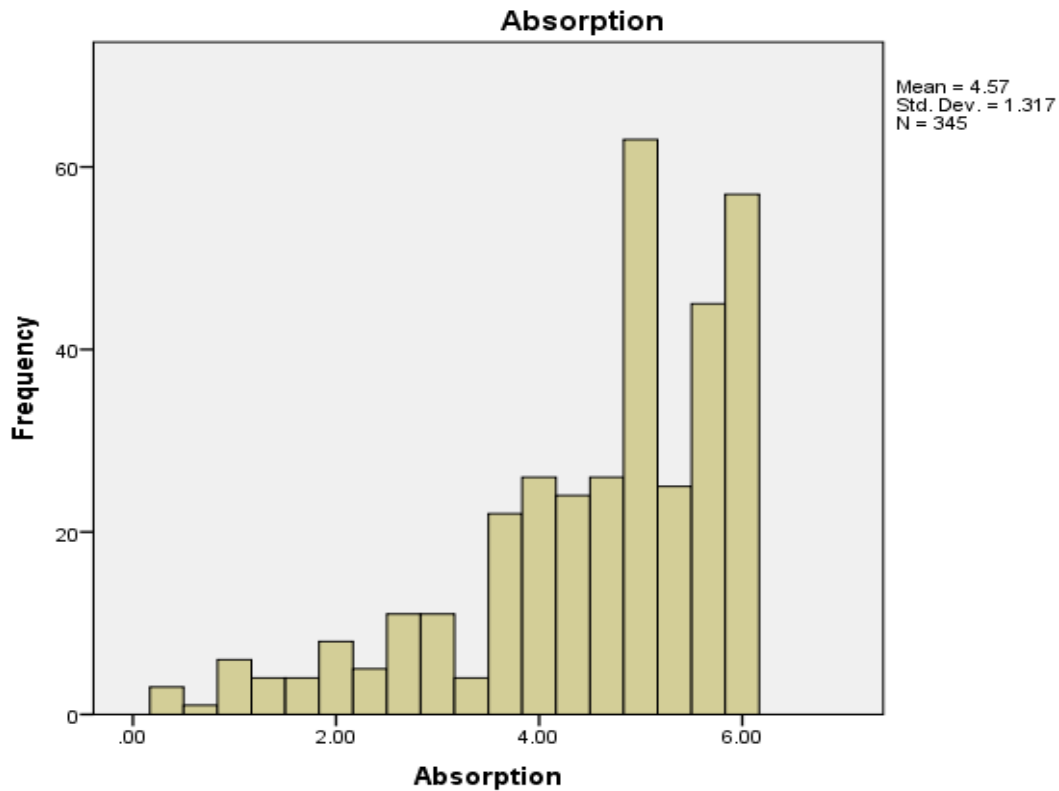
Figure 4.2: Employee Engagement Dimension - Dedication



Source: Own Survey

I am enthusiastic about my job, my job inspires me and I am proud on the work what I do are the UWES test scales to measure dedication. Accordingly, dedications mean score was measured for the case organization and result was 4.63 with SD of 1.329 which indicate high staff dedication. Thus, we can say in the case organization the staffs strongly identify themselves with their work because its experience is meaningful, inspiring, and challenging. Besides, they usually feel enthusiastic and proud about their work. It is also the highest contributor for the case organization from the three dimensions of engagement.

Figure 4.3: Employee Engagement Dimension - Absorption



Source: Own Survey

The last dimension of employee engagement is absorption measure by; “I am immersed in my job”, “I get carried away when I am working” and “I feel happy when I am working intensely”. The average mean score is fairly similar with other dimension of engagement i.e. 4.57 with 1.317 SD. The highest mean score indicates employees in Ethiopian Airlines usually are happily engrossed in their work, they feel immersed by their work and have difficulties detaching from it because it carries them away. As a consequence, everything else around is forgotten and time seems to fly.

4.3.3. Descriptive Statistics of Turnover Intention

The independent variable of this study is turnover intention. Turnover intention was assessed using eight items standard questionnaire and the survey result is presented in the table below. The questionnaires are categorized in to two as the natures of the questions are opposite. Accordingly, it is analysed independently and mean is calculated separately. The group mean score of the first group containing 5 questions is 2.656 which indicate most of the staff wants to stay with Ethiopian Airlines.

On the same note the average mean score for the rest three questions were 4.425 which are positive sign of need to stay with the organization, feeling of obligation to the support received and fear of losing valuable experience if they leave. Further the first 5 questions which are indicators of turnover intention are analysed to further understand their relationship with the level of employee engagement.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics of Turnover Intention

Variable		Turnover Intention							Total	Mean	Group Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5	6					
*I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months.	Number	95	93	51	49	26	31	345	2.74	2.656	1.6	
	%	28	27	15	14.2	7.5	9	100				
*If I have my own way, I will not be working for this organization one year from now	Number	118	93	57	36	35	6	345	2.41		1.399	
	%	34	27	17	10.4	10.1	1.7	100				
*There are other comparable jobs available	Number	83	50	61	76	58	17	345	3.08		1.56	
	%	24	15	18	22	16.8	4.9	100				
*I am attracted to opportunities somewhere else	Number	109	79	69	59	23	6	345	2.5		1.35	
	%	32	23	20	17.1	6.7	1.7	100				
*I believe that I could easily find an equal or better job	Number	118	73	50	61	32	11	345	2.56		1.49	
	%	34	21	15	17.7	9.3	3.2	100				
**I feel that I might lose valuable experience if I leave this organization	Number	21	17	29	101	102	75	345	4.37	1.37		
	%	6.1	4.9	8.4	29.3	29.6	21.7	100				
**I feel that I owe the organization because it has supported me	Number	9	27	26	85	141	57	345	4.43	4.425	1.23	
	%	2.6	7.8	7.5	24.6	40.9	16.5	100				
**I feel obligated to stay in this organization	Number	12	29	24	84	108	88	345	4.48	1.35		
	%	3.5	8.4	7	24.3	31.3	25.5	100				
Total Turnover Intention									3.319	0.48		

* Cronbach's Alpha - 0.643, ** Cronbach's Alpha - 0.749

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Disagree Somewhat, 4- Agree Somewhat, 5- Agree 6- Strongly Agree

Source: Own Survey

- In the questions, ‘I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months’, the replies shows 69.3% doesn't have a plan to leave their employer in the near future while the remaining 30.7% are on their way to find another job. The mean score i.e 2.74 indicates most of the employee disagree to some level leaving their organization. However, 30.7%

of the respondents planned to search for a new job it is not small number so Ethiopian Airlines has to identify the cause to solve it before it is aggravated.

- If I have my own way, I will not be working for this organization one year from now are the lowest mean score i.e. 2.41. 77.7% of the respondents do not want to leave the organization even if they get options. Lowest mean score indicates lower turnover intention, mostly attributed to organization engagement practices as confirmed by the correlation and regression analysis hereafter. The remaining 22.3% may leave if they get their own way.
- The remaining three items i.e., “There are other comparable jobs available”, “I am attracted to opportunities somewhere else”, “I believe that I could easily find an equal or better job” mean scores are 3.08, 2.5, 2.56 respectively. The respondents believe their current job is better than other jobs in the market so they are not attracted somewhere else. When we further analyse the percentage distribution, 43.7% of the staffs believe there are other comparable jobs in the market while 56.3% disagree. On the other hand, only 25.5% of the staffs are replied they are attracted to opportunities somewhere else while 74.5% are comfortable with their current job. The last item which is I believe I could easily find another job, 30.2% agreed. The remaining 69.8% believes their current job is better.

4.2.6. Hypothesis Testing

4.2.6.1. Relationship Between Employee Engagement Factor & Level of Engagement

Employee engagement factor is considered as an antecedent between the level of engagement and turnover intention. In order to identify the relationship that exists between employee engagement factors and level of engagement, hypothesis testing was made and results presented herewith.

Table 4.9: Coefficients^a Level of Engagement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.637	0.256		2.489	0.013
	Leadership	-0.167	0.072	-0.117	-2.333	0.02
	Communication	0.231	0.078	0.181	2.966	0.003
	Learning and Development	0.144	0.064	0.125	2.236	0.026
	Organizational Support	0.462	0.063	0.406	7.384	0
	Working Environment	0.262	0.062	0.228	4.203	0

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement Level

Source: Own Survey

$Y_1 = \alpha + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5 + e$, the regression formula for employee engagement factor impact on the level of engagement.

H1: There is significant relationship between leadership exercise and level of employee engagement.

The results of regression as presented in table below revealed that leadership practice has negative and significant effect on level of engagement with a beta value of $\beta_1 = -0.117$ (p-value = 0.020 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the researcher rejects the hypothesis and it is accepted that for each unit increase in leadership practices, there is 0.117 unit decrease in level of employee engagement.

H2: There is significant relationship between communication practices in the organization and level of employee engagement.

Beta (β) under standardized coefficients showed a value of .181 for communication with (p-value = 0.003 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$) which explained that there exists positive and significant relationship between communication and level of engagement. So the researcher accepted the hypothesis. Communication with 18.1% distribution is identified to be the third contributors.

H3: There is significant relationship between learning and development opportunities and level of employee engagement.

Beta (β) under standardized coefficients showed a value of .125 for learning and development with (p-value = 0.026 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$) which explained that there exists positive and

significant relationship between learning and development opportunities and level of engagement. So the researcher accepted the hypothesis and confirmed learning and development as factors of employee engagement. Learning and development opportunities are fourth contributor with 12.5% ratio.

H4: There is significant relationship between organizational support and level of employee engagement.

The results of regression revealed that organizational support practice has positive and significant effect on level of engagement with a beta value of $\beta_1 = .406$ (p -value = 0.00 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the researcher accepts the hypothesis and it is accepted that for each unit increase in organizational support practices, there is 0.406 unit increase in the level of employee engagement. Organizational support is also identified to be the highest contributor. Organizational support is also identified to be the highest contributor for the level of engagement in the case organization with 40.6% beta value.

H5: There is significant relationship between working environment and level of employee engagement.

The results of regression revealed that working environment has positive and significant effect on level of engagement with a beta value of $\beta_1 = .228$ (p -value = 0.00 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the researcher accepts the hypothesis and it is accepted that for each unit increase in working environment improvements, there is 0.228 unit increase in the level of employee engagement. Working environment is considered to be the second highest contributor of the level of engagement in the case organization with 22.8% contribution among the five contributing factors

4.3.4. Analysis of Variance (One way ANOVA)

A one-way ANOVA was also conducted in this study to examine means difference that exist between the different educational status, gender, experience and marital status on the dependent and independent variable (employee engagement and turnover intention).

Table 4.10: Analysis of Variance (One-way ANOVA)

ANOVA Table						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender * Turnover Intention	Between Groups	3.164	22	0.144	0.633	0.9
	Within Groups	73.167	322	0.227		
	Total	76.33	344			
Education * Turnover Intention	Between Groups	6.602	22	0.3	1.478	0.079
	Within Groups	65.352	322	0.203		
	Total	71.954	344			
Experience * Turnover Intention	Between Groups	36.353	22	1.652	0.988	0.479
	Within Groups	538.645	322	1.673		
	Total	574.997	344			
Marital status * Turnover Intention	Between Groups	2.787	22	0.127	0.54	0.957
	Within Groups	75.474	322	0.234		
	Total	78.261	344			
Gender * Employee Engagement Level	Between Groups	16.473	43	.383	1.926	.001
	Within Groups	59.858	301	.199		
	Total	76.330	344			
Education * Employee Engagement Level	Between Groups	20.166	43	.469	2.726	.000
	Within Groups	51.787	301	.172		
	Total	71.954	344			
Experience * Employee Engagement Level	Between Groups	108.183	43	2.516	1.622	.011
	Within Groups	466.814	301	1.551		
	Total	574.997	344			
Marital status * Employee Engagement Level	Between Groups	18.713	43	.435	2.200	.000
	Within Groups	59.548	301	.198		
	Total	78.261	344			

Source: Own Survey

The one-way ANOVA was used to compare two or more means and investigate whether there are any reliable differences among them (Pallant, 2011). This dependent variable was employee engagement and due to that, the one-way ANOVA was conducted only on the dependent.

One-way ANOVA is a set of analytical procedures which is based on comparison of two estimates. The first estimate derives from differences of score within each group and the second estimates derives from differences in group means which is considered as the replica of group differences including errors. If no differences were found in the two estimates, it can be concluded that the entire group means come from the same sampling distribution (Pallant, 2011). As it is shown on the table above one-way ANOVA, the data shows there is significant difference on employee engagement level as a result of marital status, education background, experience and gender; education($F(43, 301) = 2.726, p < .05$), Marital status ($F(43, 301) = 2.2, p < .05$), gender ($F(43, 301) = 1.62, p < .05$) and experience ($F(43, 301) = 1.926, p < .05$) were significant. Conversely, mean difference for turnover intention due to the above factors were not significant i.e. education ($F(22, 322) = 1.478, p < .05$), Marital status ($F(22, 322) = 0.54, p < .05$), gender ($F(22, 322) = 0.633, p < .05$) and experience ($F(22, 322) = 0.988, p < .05$). This implies that level of employee engagement is significantly different across the different demography of the respondent.

4.3.5. Correlation Analysis

Correlations analysis is a method used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables.

Table 4.11: Correlation Analysis Result

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Engagement Factor (1)	Pearson Correlatio n	1							
Leadership (2)		.783**	1						
Communication (3)		.870**	.697**	1					
Learning & Development (4)		.853**	.554**	.684**	1				
Organizational Support (5)		.836**	.498**	.621**	.682**	1			
Working Environment (6)		.831**	.491**	.653**	.642**	.686**	1		
Engagement Level (7)		.702**	.392**	.586**	.608**	.702**	.648**	1	
Turnover Intention (8)		-.563**	-.346**	-.488**	-.443**	-.549**	-.528**	-.576**	1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Source: Own Survey

Since two variables used were continuous variables, Pearson Correlations (r) was found to be appropriate (Pallant 2011) to test the hypothesis and identify the relationship that exists

between the dependent and independent variables. The results were summarized and presented in the table above. Pearson Correlation results showed that level of employee engagement as well as engagement factors are negatively related with turnover intention with a Pearson Correlation coefficient of $r = -.576$ and $-.563$ respectively which are significant at $p < 0.01$. When correlation is further analysed between employee engagement factor and level of engagement, there exist positive relationship with a Pearson Correlation coefficients of $r = .392, .586, .608, .702, .648$ for leadership, communication, learning and development and organizational support respectively significant at $p < 0.01$. Item that measure organizational support gained the highest score. This item explained 70.2%, very strong positive relationship between organizational support practices and level of employee engagement.

4.3.6. Regression Analysis

4.3.6.1. Level of Employee Engagement with Turnover Intention

The main objective of this study is to identify the impact of level of engagement on turnover intention.

Table 4.12: Model Summary Turnover Intention

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.576 ^a	0.332	0.33	0.7806

Predictors: (Constant), Employee Engagement Level

Source: Own Survey

Table 4.13: ANOVA^a Turnover Intention

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	103.725	1	103.725	170.228	.000 ^b
	Residual	209.001	343	0.609		
	Total	312.726	344			

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Emp Engagement Level

Source: Own Survey

Based on the output of the study, adjusted R-Square value was at 0.33 which indicates 33% of variance in the turnover intention is due to the level of employee engagement. From the ANOVA table generated, it showed that the model is significant with the value obtained at

0.000. Further hypothesis was analysed to identify the relationship and magnitude of relationship between the levels of engagement (predictor) to the turnover intention (dependent variable).

Table 4.14: Coefficients^aTurnover Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	4.772	0.168		28.49	0
	-0.46	0.035	-0.576	-13.047	0

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

Source: Own Survey

H6: The effect of level of employee engagement is significant on turnover intention.

$$Y_2 = \alpha + \beta x + e$$

The results of regression revealed that level of engagement has negative and significant effect on the turnover intention with a beta value of $\beta_1 = -.576$ (p-value = 0.00 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the researcher accepts the hypothesis and it is accepted that for each unit increase in the level of engagement, there is 0.576 unit decrease in the turnover intention.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

The results of the analysis indicate that employee engagement is instrumental in reducing staff turnover. Organizations should clearly identify factor which defines the engagement level of the organization. In the case organization leadership, communication, learning and development, organizational support and working environment is identified to be the determinant factors for the staff engagement level.

The current literature review examined a proposed relationship between the antecedent, employee engagement factors, and the outcome variable, turnover intent, mediated by employee engagement factor. The study of the relationship helps to fill a gap in the literature as employee engagement is a fairly new term and has not been linked to both turnover intention and factors of engagement.

The results from the study indicated that intention to leave is negatively correlated with employee engagement, proved by the beta (β) standardized coefficient value. It was also identified the impact of five engagement factors (leadership, communication, learning and development, organizational support and working environment) on the level of engagement and it was confirmed all has positive relationship with the level of engagement and organizational support was with the highest impact. Thus, organization should work to ensure availability of engagement factors which as a result there will be high level of engagement so that they can ensure lower turnover intention.

As indicated in the detail analysis there is high level of engagement in the case organization with the overall mean score of 4.599 and lower turnover intentions with 2.656 mean score. The findings supported the hypothesis that decrease in the intention to leave in the Airline is as a result of higher level of employee engagement towards their Airline.

5.2. Recommendations

5.2.1. Theoretical and Research Recommendations

Static correlation analyses of the relationship between employee engagement and turnover intention is young phenomenon. Thereis much yet to discover with regards to the relationship

between employee engagement factors, level of engagement and turnover intent. Future research can be done to identify impacts of factors employee engagement on turnover intention by taking level of engagement as mediating factor by modifying the conceptual model. Future researches shall also consider other engagement factor in addition to what are included in this research. It is also the researcher belief to amend turnover intention question by taking only the first five items shown below as the remaining three items indicates level of engagement.

- I am planning to search for a new job during
- There are other comparable jobs available the next 12 months.
- If I have my own way, I will not be working for this organization one year from now
- I am attracted to opportunities somewhere else
- I believe that I could easily find an equal or better job

The respondents has faced a problem as the questions were difficult to understand, thus, it is the researcher belief to convert the question to Amharic questions and involve more group from non-professionals and staffs located outside the head office to be able to see other factors impact on the level of engagement.

5.2.2. Practical Recommendations

Organizations need to recognize engagement as an important part of organizational responsibilities towards the employee as its impact is high. The Airline, in addition to the current engagement practices, should work on different engagement initiatives to drive employee engagement towards their Airline. Ethiopian Airlines has Engagement office; however, it is not strengthened and active. The organization has to support the Section to work on different engagement initiatives so that the Airline can have dedicated and engaged workforce at all times. Currently there is no employee engagement survey conducted at corporate level though there are efforts here and there being made at Section level. It is paramount to conduct engagement survey at least semi-annually to identify employee engagement level and underlying causes to be able proactively respond.

On the other, hand the Airline strategy is to recruit young and inexperienced candidates with the right attitude and train them to fit to the organizational demand. This means more staffs are injected to the system every year where some naturally resign. Thus, different engagement

approach is needed for different generations. The system has to accommodate all group demand without dramatically shifting the corporate culture, values and beliefs. On the same note, there are different professions working under the same umbrella, so tailored engagement approaches to different profession is required.

The research findings show that organizational support as one of the most critical factors, where pay and benefits were identified to be areas for improvement. The organization has to continue the effort to benchmark and survey the pay and benefit package to ensure engagement of staffs as it was high concern area for many of the respondents and considered to be one factor to look other opportunities.

The engagement practices in the organization are standalone mainly with focus on leadership practices and communication. It should go in alignment with learning and development practices, employee reward, safety, health and security of the staffs and performance management practices.

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND TURNOVER INTENTION

This research is conducted as part of the fulfilment of Masters of Arts Degree in Human Resource Management at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce. To ensure the success of the research I would like to seek your support and cooperation in answering the questionnaire by providing your honest and most accurate response to the questions.

The information that you gave in this questionnaire will be used for academic purpose and will be kept confidential. The findings from this questionnaire will be reported only in aggregate level and anonymity of individuals that respond to this questionnaire is guaranteed.

This research focuses on assessing the relationship that exists between employee engagement and turnover intention in Ethiopian Airlines.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!

Note:

- Please don't write your name
- Please cross X on your choice on the space provided

Part One: Demographic information

1. Age _____
2. Gender Male Female
3. Highest Level of education
College Diploma/Certificate Bachelor Degree
Second Degree (MA/MSc) Others _____
4. How many years do you work in Ethiopian Airlines?
x<1 Year 1<x<3 Years
<x<5 Years 5<x<10 Years
>= 10 Years
5. Marital status
A. Single Married Divorced Widowed

No	Part Two - Drivers of engagement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><i>The following are drivers of engagement. Please read carefully and decide their relative worth to you to stay engaged at your work and indicate the magnitude by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how you feel.</i></p>							
1	Leadership						
1.1	I am involve in in decision-making that affects my job						
1.2	I have a good working relationship with my immediate supervisor						
1.3	My manager care about my career, keep me informed, treat fairly, encourage me to perform well						
1.4	In my job I get feedback and my feedback has value						
2	Communication						
2.1	I have readily available information I need to do my job						
2.2	I am able to voice my ideas, my manager listen to these views, and value my contributions						
2.3	I am informed on what is going on in the organization						
3	Learning & Development						
3.1	I get equal access to training and development opportunities						
3.2	I am encouraged to develop new skills						
3.3	I have support on my continuing professional development						
4	Organizational Support						
4.1	My effort is recognized by the organization						
4.2	I feel the pay and benefits I receive are fair for my responsibility compared to other staff with similar qualification within and outside the organisation						
4.3	My work is motivating, challenging, and rewarding and helps me to strive more						
5	Working Environment						
5.1	In my organization there is harmonious and conducive working environment						
5.2	I work in a cooperative working environment where employees value teamwork						
5.3	My organization takes health and safety seriously, works to minimize accidents, injuries, violence and harassment						

No	Part three: Items to measure employee engagement	Never	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

The following 9 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.

1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy							
2	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous							
3	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work							
4	I am enthusiastic about my job							
5	My job inspires me							
6	I am proud on the work that I do							
7	I am immersed in my work							
8	I get carried away when I'm working							
9	I feel happy when I am working intensely							

The following 8 statements determine your intention to leave your current company. Please read each statement carefully and decide your level of agreement/disagreement.

No	Part Four- Items to measure intention to leave	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months.						
2	If I have my own way, I will not be working for this organization one year from now.						
3	There are other comparable jobs available.						
4	I am attracted to opportunities somewhere else.						
5	I believe that I could easily find an equal or better job.						
6	I feel that I might lose valuable experience if I leave this organization.						
7	I feel that I owe the organization because it has supported me.						
8	I feel obligated to stay in this organization.						