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Effects of Employee Engagement on Employee Productivity in a Manufacturing Company in Lusaka: A case of Varun Beverage

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ABSTRACT
This research examined the influence of employee engagement on productivity at Varun Beverages, a prominent manufacturing company located in Lusaka, Zambia. Based on interpretivist philosophy, the study gathers insights from comprehensive interviews and focus group discussions held with employees from different departments.The study employed a qualitative methods approach. A descriptive sequential research design was implemented for this research.An in-depth explanation is presented in this qualitative study of the phenomenon under review and related literatures on employee engagement and its effect on employee productivity in the manufacturing industry, this study specifically considers Varun Beverages Limited Lusaka.A descriptive sequential research design was implemented for this research. Data collection involved 22 respondents using a self-administered interview guide. The data underwent thematic analysis to extract codes and prevalent themes. The coding resulted in categories that encompassed work culture, leadership style, employee development, and employee recognition.The research results reveal that the leadership style practiced by management has a considerable influence on employee motivation and engagement; most employees acknowledge the significance of leadership style, while a minority may view other factors as more important.Recommendation include recognition programs, conducive office layout, implement employee development programs and leaders should foster open communication and feedback on employee performance.

Key Words: work culture, recognition, development, leadership style, Varun Beverages

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement is the relationship to employee physical and mental health outcome, well-being, recognition (Zinta S. Byrne, 2022). The main determinant of the successful organisation performance is the employees, the critical element of the success of an organisation is employee engagement which is a driver of employee motivation and job satisfaction (Varma, 2018).This research is carried out to explore how employee engagement influences employee performance at Varun Beverage Limited a manufacturing company in Lusaka, Zambia, according to the information provided on the website Varun Beverage Limited an indian owned company was established in 2010 and the offices and plant are in Mungwi road industrial area Lusaka. It is manufacturing company that produces food such as Doritos, Lays and Cheetos and drinks such as Pepsi cola, mountain dew,Mirinda, Seven up and many other products. The company is owned by Pepsi and is one of the largest franchisee.

The company has about 350 to 360 employees that actively participate in the daily operation of the company.Employee engagement is a key factor that significantly affects productivity in various international contexts, highlighting the necessity for organizations to prioritize engagement strategies. Evidence suggests that engaged employees achieve higher productivity levels, which contributes to improved organizational performance and profitability (Matriano, 2025). This correlation is seen across different industries, with firms that foster employee engagement reporting productivity increases of 20% to 25% (McKinsey, 2023).The scheme by which employee engagement affects behaviour an employee performance still remains uncertain (A.Tembo, 2018)In Zambian organizations, leadership styles

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are crucial in determining the level of employee engagement. Mudenda's study reveals that participative and democratic leadership styles have a positive effect on employee commitment (Mudenda, 2025).

Manufacturing firms globally have become the most competitive due to the fact that it is the backbone of social and economic development. Companies are seeking ways that can help them improve performance through employee engagement irrespective of the size of the organisation. Managers in organisations need to understand employee engagement as this is a motivating tool for employees in a company hence employee engagement is very critical for any organisation and can not be ignored by management(Auer, P. (2025).

Employee engagement refers to the level of employee participation and commitment to the organisation, their job and their fellow employees. Furthermore, is an emotional dedication that workers have to their organisation (Wardiansyah, 2024). Kahnwas the first scholar to prose the notion of employee engagement and explains yoking employees to their work role, self-expression of people physically, emotionally and cognitively to their work lives. (indrawati, 2024) explain employee engagement to be a measure of the emotional and rational linkage that workers have with their organisation, their job and the people they work with. It provides a synopsis of how well employees feel connected to the company and get along with fellow employees. Allen's theory on engagement theory narrates the linkage between employee engagement and the performance of an employee, stating that the job performance of an employee tends to be higher when there is a greater employee engagement. According to a research by (Ahakwa et al., 2021) state that employee performance is often influenced by the level of employee engagement. Mostly, resource is vital in achieving organisational goal and resources can be: human, natural, scientific, technical and financial resources. Human resource is the most vital factor to the success of the organisation. It is the obligation of an organisation to monitor the performance of employee and employees are company assets and they contribute to the success of an organisation.

One of the things that require manager's attention in a company is work environment, even though work environment is neglected it has a direct effect on employees who conduct production processes (Ahmad Prayudi, 2023). A work environment improves performance when it focuses on employees, conversely a bad work environment tends to reduce employee's motivation (Imas Komariya, 2023). An employee can also be motivated by the work environment in which he operates. (Ahmad Prayudi 2023) Everything around an employee that affects him/her to carry out his duties is regarded as work environment, for instance having a conducive office, adequate work station and office.

leadership is the capability to influence, lead, inspire, and control subordinates to perform their duties enthusiastically towards achieving organisation goals. Employee performance is greatly affected by the type of leadership in an organisation (Kawimbe, 2024) and there are different types of leadership namely, Autocractic, democratic, transformational, Laissez faire, Charismatic. Leadership styles has significant influence in an organisation, employee resistance to change is greatly minimized by good leadership style. (Makasa, 2024).

Recognition is regarded as a non-monitory and great motivator that creates a positive work culture (Nur FatinNazierah Abu Bakar, 2017). Recognition is significant as it serves to hearten employee to be self-confident and to trust themselves in order to have great output in their role and to create loyalty to the company. Most organisation ignore the use recognition to motivate employee. Recognition is more effective when it comes to motivating employees because it has a long-lasting effect on employees and tends to make employee have a sense of belonging to the organisation (Sidney Kawimbe,2024). Recognition does not have a specific day but can be given to an employee anyday and anywhere as long as good performance has been noted by managers, this is done to underpin good performance and also pushes other peers who witness to work hard as well and consequently organisation performance improves.The workplace environment today is markedly different from what it was twenty years ago, and even from what it was just twenty minutes ago, as it is characterized by rapid changes and fierce competition. A notable 91% of millennials, born between 1977 and 1997, expect to remain in a position for less than three years. This trend highlights the urgent need for employers to implement strategies that keep their employees engaged, often through structured employee development programs. Employee loyalty is no longer a certainty.

The modern workforce has undergone various transformations in the economic landscape, leading to a growing expectation that employees

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will receive investment from their employers in exchange for their dedication. Employee development and growth are essential factors that affect engagement levels within organizations. Zhu et al. (2022) highlight that career advancement opportunities have a significant influence on the engagement of knowledge-based employees, with their emotional commitment acting as a mediating factor.

1.1 Reserch Problem

Employee engagement has emerged as a vital factor influencing organizational performance in today's workplace, particularly in competitive industries like manufacturing. Worldwide, companies with highly engaged employees report a 21% increase in profitability and a 17% boost in productivity compared to those with lower engagement levels (Gallup, 2020). In Sub-Saharan Africa, however, only 14% of employees are deemed actively engaged, with most being either disengaged or indifferent (Aon Hewitt, 2018). In Zambia, the manufacturing sector accounts for approximately 8.5% of the nation's GDP (ZamStats, 2023), yet it continues to encounter ongoing challenges related to workforce motivation, productivity, and retention.

Despite the growing acknowledgment of employee engagement as a strategic asset for improving productivity, there is limited understanding of how engagement specifically affects productivity in Zambian manufacturing firms, especially in urban industrial centers like Lusaka. Most current research in Zambia has concentrated on public institutions or service sectors, resulting in a knowledge gap regarding the relationship between engagement and productivity in private sector manufacturing contexts. Additionally, there is a scarcity of empirical data from Varun Beverages—a significant entity in the beverage manufacturing sub-sector—concerning how employee engagement initiatives lead to quantifiable productivity results.Thus, this investigation seeks to analyze the relationship between employee engagement and productivity at Varun Beverages in Lusaka, aiming to gain insights into the extent, nature, and impact of engagement practices on workforce performance.

1.2 Research Objectives

RO1: To establish the effect of the work environment on employee productivity

RO2: To explore the effect of leadership style on employee productivity

RO3: To assess the effect of employee recognition on employee productivity

1.3 Significance of the study

This research is critical gaining great insights on the effect that employee engagement has on the performance of employee at Varun Beverages limited and bridging the gap that exists between employee engagement and employee performance. This study will give profound comprehension on employee recognition, work life balance, work environment and the effect they have on employee performance. Improved employee engagement tends to motivate employees and improves their morale working which eventually boosts their performance. Information in this study will help management of Varun Beverages Limited in policy and decision making for the successful operation of the company. This study will also help Varun Beverages attract employee expertise, employee retention and establish a good corporate image as employees always want to work for an organisation with a strong work culture and one that values employee.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The current study used Qualitative method. Qualitative research prioritizes words above numbers in the data collection and analyzing data.The interpretivism approach is a qualitative research approach focused on grasping the subjective meanings from employees.Interpretivism acknowledges the existence of various perspectives shaped by individual experiences (Rogers, 2020).The study population consisted of employees from Varun Beverages. The respondents from the company were actively engaged in business operations. Therefore, they possessed adequate knowledge and experience regarding employee engagement and its impact on employee productivity. This population was selected with careful consideration and purpose.

The sample comprised 23 respondents who were successfully interviewed. According to Creswell (2014), the sample size refers to the number of respondents chosen from the population. Moreover, purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. These approaches allowed researchers, as pointed out by Gumbinger (2020), to examine the reasons behind various behaviours and experiences, highlighting the significance of qualitative research in developing a well-rounded perspective on human behaviour. In this study, semi-structured interviews

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were deployed as a tool for data collection. Semi-structured interviews are highly effective due to their flexibility, which ensures that essential topics are addressed. This approach facilitates in-depth sharing of participants' perspectives while enabling researchers to explore responses more thoroughly (Taherdoost, 2022). .Thematic analysis was also used to analyse the data. The data was conded using R= respondent and the serial number of respondents for example R1,R2,R3,R4. The common responces were later on organised according to the themes for each research objective.

Ethical principles were carefully observed throughout the study to ensure the protection and dignity of all participants. Informed consent was obtained from each respondent after they were fully briefed on the purpose, nature, and voluntary nature of the study. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and no identifiable information was collected or disclosed. The study upheld the principles of respect, integrity, and non-maleficence by ensuring that no participant was subjected to harm, coercion, or undue influence. Furthermore, ethical clearance was sought from the relevant institutional review board prior to data collection, and the research adhered to standard ethical guidelines for conducting research involving human respondents.

III. FINDINGS

3.1 Biographical Data of the Respondents

The demographic data pertaining to the respondents included their gender, age range, educational attainment, and position within the organization.

3.2 Gender

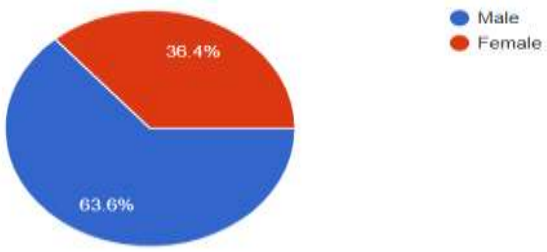

Figure 4.1 Gender

Figure 1 above shows the gender of respondents at Varun Beverages Limited which is male and female.

The chart above presents the gender of the respondents who participated in interviews at Varun Beverages Limited, with the objective of analyzing the influence of employee engagement on employee performance. A total of 22 respondents were interviewed, including 14 males and 8 females.

3.3 Age

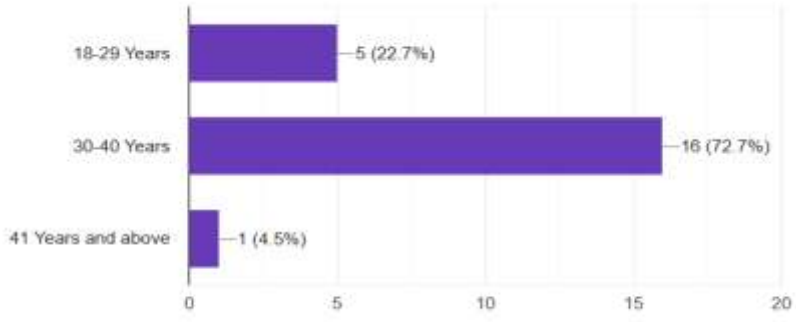

Figure 3.2 Age range

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The above illustration depicts the age demographics of respondents at Varun Beverages Limited. Out of the 22 employees surveyed, 5 fell within the 18-29 age bracket, 16 were in the 30-40 age range, and 1 was aged 41 years or older. This suggests that a significant portion of the workforce consists of younger employees.

Age range	18-29 Years	30-40 Years		Total
Employees	5	16	1	
Total	5	16	1	**22**

3.4 Level of education

The below ttable below shows the education level of employees at Varun Beverages.

Level of education	Diploma	Degree	Masters	PHD	Total
Employees	7	14	1	0	
Total	7	14	1	0	**22**

Figure 3.3 Educational level

The figure above represents the educational levels of employees at Varun Beverages Limited. It shows that there are 7 employees with Diplomas, 14 with Degrees, 1 with a Master's degree, and no employees holding a PhD. The data suggests that the predominant group among the employees consists of Degree holders.

3.5 Position in the organisation

The below figure shows the positions of employees at Varun Beverages.

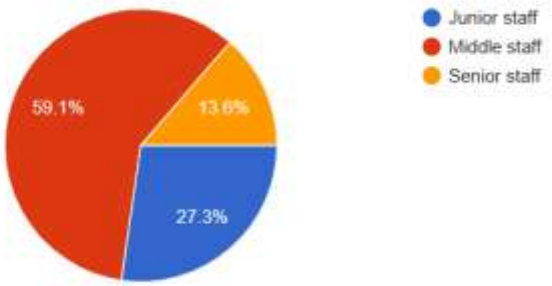

Figure 3.4 Position in the organization

The figure above represents the positions held by employees. The results indicate that out of 22 employees, 13 (59.1%) are in middle-level positions, 6 (27.3%) are in junior-level roles, and 3 (13.6%) are in senior-level positions. This data demonstrates that the majority of employees are in middle-level positions.

3.6 Effect of work environment on employee productivity at Varun Beverages Limited

The first research objective aimed to investigate the impact of the work environment on employee performance. The variables considered include resource availability, office layout, and workplace culture. To analyze the influence of these variables on employee performance, the findings were presented in themes.

Theme 1: Physical Workspace Design and Productivity

Employees consistently reported that the physical design of the workspace had a direct influence on their productivity. Many noted that well-organized office layouts contributed to smoother operations and improved collaboration. Good lighting and noise management were also considered crucial for maintaining focus. An open-plan office encouraged communication but also posed challenges related to noise and distractions.

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One respondent R1, had this to say: "The lighting in our section is bright and natural, and that really helps me stay alert during my shift."

Another one R7 explained that: "Sometimes the noise from machines in the nearby section is too much, and I lose concentration while doing reports."

Furthermore, R12 had this to say: "The current layout allows us to reach our colleagues easily, which speeds up communication during busy hours."

Theme 2: Resource Availability and Operational Efficiency

Resource availability emerged as a central determinant of how effectively employees could complete their tasks. Participants expressed that adequate tools, stationery, machines, and internet connectivity enhanced their productivity. In contrast, delays due to unavailable or shared equipment negatively impacted performance, leading to stress and frustration.

Verbatim from the respondents:

R13 explained that: "When everything I need is available at my workstation, I'm more focused and complete my tasks faster."

FGD: "We often have to wait to use the shared printer, and that slows down our work, especially during end-of-month reporting."

FGD: "Sometimes, even basic items like pens or files are not provided in time, and that creates unnecessary delays."

Theme 3: Workplace Culture and Psychological Comfort

Workplace culture was highlighted as an essential part of the work environment, affecting not just productivity but also job satisfaction and emotional well-being. Supportive leadership, teamwork, and recognition were found to boost morale, whereas toxic interpersonal relations and lack of recognition demotivated staff.

Verbatims from respondents

"When our supervisor appreciates our work during briefings, it motivates me to do even more."(FGD)

"I feel productive when my team works well together and supports each other during peak hours." R14

"There's a lot of favoritism in some departments, and it kills the team spirit. You feel like your efforts don't matter." R12

Theme 4: Environmental Factors and Employee Well-being

Environmental elements such as air quality, temperature, and cleanliness were mentioned as contributors to both physical comfort and mental alertness. Poor ventilation or cluttered spaces were linked to fatigue, stress, and reduced attention, while a well-maintained environment promoted well-being and sustained productivity throughout the day.

Verbatims from the respondents:

R17 "Sometimes it gets very hot in our area, and without fans, it becomes unbearable to focus."

R12 "When the workplace is clean and tidy, I feel more organized and less stressed."

R19 "There's too much dust around the storage area, and it affects my sinuses—I can't concentrate properly."

Theme 5: Employee Perceptions of Environmental Influence on Productivity

Most employees affirmed that their surroundings influenced how well they worked. Some compared their productivity in favorable environments to times when conditions were poor, pointing to noticeable differences. The perception that management was not prioritizing the work environment also contributed to employee dissatisfaction.

Verbatims from the respondents

"I don't think management understands how much a bad chair or poor lighting can affect how we work." R6

"We always say that a good environment is half the work done. If I feel comfortable, I definitely perform better." FGD

The findings of the first research objective demonstrate that the work environment at Varun Beverages Limited significantly influences employee productivity. Elements such as physical workspace design, resource availability, and workplace culture emerged as critical factors that either enhance or hinder performance. Employees consistently emphasized the importance of adequate lighting, a quiet and well-organized layout, sufficient tools and materials, and a supportive cultural climate in fostering productivity. Furthermore, environmental comfort and perceptions of managerial concern for employee well-being played a vital role in shaping motivation and output. These insights suggest that improving the physical and psychosocial aspects of the work environment is not only beneficial but

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essential for maximizing employee performance and sustaining organizational effectiveness.

3.7 Explore the effect of leadership on employee productivity

The second research objective sought to examine how leadership style influences employee productivity. The variables considered include methods of communication, the leadership styles of managers, the degree to which leadership styles encourage innovation, employee contributions, and the practice of leaders making decisions independently.Below are **t**hematically organized qualitative findings with four verbatim quotes for each theme.

Theme 1: Communication Style and Clarity

The majority of participants emphasized that the way leaders communicate including tone, frequency, openness, and feedback, has a direct influence on how productive they are. Clear, consistent, and two-way communication was perceived to enhance motivation and task clarity, while poor communication often led to confusion and demotivation.

Responses from the Verbatims:

"When my manager gives clear instructions and follows up, I feel more confident and complete my work faster." R1

"Sometimes I don't even know what is expected of me because the communication is last-minute and vague." R10

"I appreciate it when our team leader listens to our concerns — it makes me feel valued and I work harder." R6

"Good communication helps avoid mistakes. When leaders are silent or unclear, it affects our output." FGD

Theme 2: Leadership Style and Employee Motivation

Participants reported that leadership style, whether democratic, transformational, autocratic, or laissez-faire, significantly affects their level of engagement and productivity. Supportive and participative leaders were associated with higher productivity, while authoritarian or indifferent leaders had the opposite effect.

Verbatim from the focus group discussions revealed the following :

FGD: "Our supervisor is approachable and treats us like part of the team, so we all go the extra mile."

FGD: "When decisions are imposed without discussion, I just do the bare minimum. I don't feel involved."

FGD: "Some managers are too distant. You only hear from them when something goes wrong it's demoralizing."

Theme 3: Encouragement of Innovation and Initiative

Respondents described how leadership that supports new ideas and allows autonomy positively impacts productivity. Leaders who encourage innovation not only build employee confidence but also improve processes and outcomes. In contrast, restrictive leadership stifles creativity and reduces enthusiasm.

Verbatims from respondents:

"My manager always encourages me to try new approaches — that freedom makes me more productive."R3

"We are often told to 'just follow the procedure' even when we know better ways to do things."FGD

"Innovation is welcome in our department, and it keeps the work exciting and rewarding." FGD

"If leaders are open to ideas, it makes us feel trusted and motivated to contribute more." FGD

Theme 4: Employee Participation and Decision-Making

Many participants noted that being involved in decision-making processes boosted their sense of ownership and productivity. When leadership made all decisions independently without employee input, it led to low morale and a feeling of disconnection from organizational goals.

Verbatims from the respondents:

"When our opinions are taken into account, I feel like I'm truly part of the company." R5

"Most of the time, decisions are made without consulting us … it feels like we're just machines." R7

"We perform better when leadership gives us room to suggest solutions or participate in planning." R9

"Inclusive decision-making boosts productivity because we understand the 'why' behind the tasks." FGD

From the findings,it can be inferred that leadership plays a critical role in shaping employee productivity at Varun Beverages Limited. The responses from the respondents highlighted that effective communication from leaders enhances task clarity, motivation, and efficiency. Leadership styles that are supportive, inclusive, and

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participatory were associated with higher employee engagement and output, while autocratic or distant leadership approaches tended to demotivate staff. Furthermore, when leaders encouraged innovation and involved employees in decision-making, it fostered a sense of ownership and creativity, ultimately boosting productivity.

3.8 Assess the effect of employee recognition on employee productivity

The third research objective aimed to examine the impact of employee recognition on productivity levels among employees. The variables considered include insufficient acknowledgment, proper recognition of contributions, formal recognition programs, and absence of recognition. A pie chart displaying various options was utilized to evaluate these factors. Employees provided responses to the statements based on their work experience at Varun Beverages and how employee recognition influences their performance.

Theme 1: Impact of Recognition on Motivation and Output

Employees emphasized that receiving recognitionwhether verbal, written, or symbolic, positively influenced their motivation and work output. Recognition helped them feel valued, resulting in greater enthusiasm and commitment to achieving team and organizational goals.

Verbatim from the respondents:

"Whenever my supervisor appreciates my efforts, I feel encouraged to give even more. It's like fuel for my day." R11

"Recognition boosts my energy. Just a simple 'well done' after a long shift makes me feel my work is not in vain." R4

"I once received a thank-you note from my manager, and it meant a lot. I kept it at my desk, and it kept me going through tough days." R7

"If no one notices your hard work, you begin to wonder why you should go the extra mile. Recognition gives a purpose to our efforts."R4

Theme 2: Negative Impact of Lack of Acknowledgment

Participants described how the absence of recognition or failure by leaders to acknowledge their contributions diminished their sense of worth. This often led to low morale, detachment from work, and a sense of being taken for granted.

Verbatim from the respondents:

"It feels like no one cares about the effort we put in. You work hard, and there's just silence—no feedback, no appreciation."R4

"Sometimes we work overtime or step in for others, but nobody even says thank you. It's disheartening and makes you question your role."FGD

"Lack of feedback or recognition makes me feel invisible in the company, like I'm just another number and not a person."R3

Theme 3: Effectiveness of Formal Recognition Programs

Employees widely agreed that structured recognition initiatives such as "employee of the month" awards and performance bonuses had a significant positive effect. These programs not only increased productivity but also contributed to a sense of fairness, healthy competition, and organizational belonging.

Verbatims from the respondents:

"Winning the employee of the month award made me feel seen and appreciated—it gave me a new sense of purpose in my job."FGD

"These formal awards show that the company values performance, and it inspires others to do better too. It builds a competitive but positive atmosphere." FGD

"Recognition programs help us know what's expected and keep us focused. They show that excellence is noticed and celebrated."FGD

Theme 4: Recognition and Employee Commitment

Consistent recognition was closely tied to employees' emotional commitment to their work and the organization. When recognition was part of everyday leadership practices, employees felt loyal, engaged, and willing to stay and grow with the company.

Verbatim from the respondents:

"When I'm recognized, I feel more loyal to the company and want to stay longer. It makes me feel like I belong here."R10

"It's not just about money, sometimes, hearing that you did a good job makes you more committed. Words matter."R15

"Recognition makes me feel that my role matters. I know that I'm contributing to something bigger than just my daily tasks."FGD

"The more they appreciate us, the more I feel I owe it to them to do my best. It creates a cycle of respect and effort."R7

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The findings reveal that employee recognition is a powerful driver of productivity at Varun Beverages Limited. Recognition, whether informal or through structured programs, significantly enhances employee morale, motivation, and sense of purpose. When leaders take the time to acknowledge contributions, whether through a simple thank-you, public praise, or formal rewards, employees feel seen and valued, which translates into higher levels of commitment and output. Conversely, the absence of acknowledgment leads to emotional disengagement and reduced productivity. These insights strongly suggest that embedding consistent recognition practices within the organizational culture is essential for sustaining a motivated and high-performing workforce.

IV. DISCUSSION

This section discusses the key findings of the study in relation to existing literature and the research objectives, which focused on assessing factors that influence employee productivity at Varun Beverages Limited. The three objectives explored the effect of the work environment, leadership, and employee recognition on employee productivity. The findings revealed that these factors play a significant role in shaping how employees perform their duties, with both physical and psychosocial workplace conditions influencing motivation, efficiency, and commitment. The discussion draws on participants' experiences and perceptions to provide a nuanced understanding of how each factor contributes to or hinders productivity. The insights are interpreted in light of relevant theoretical frameworks and empirical studies to highlight areas of alignment, contrast, and implication for practice.

The configuration of office environments is an essential element in establishing a supportive work atmosphere. The movement towards open-plan offices is intended to encourage teamwork; however, it often fails to address the demand for focused work areas (Al Horr, 2023). A comprehensive approach that features both collaborative spaces and private offices can support various working styles and tasks. By equipping employees with choices that align with their specific needs, organizations can elevate morale and efficiency. The role of color psychology should not be underestimated in the creation of workplace environments. Colors can elicit a range of emotional responses that impact creativity and motivation levels (Charaba, 2025). For example, colors like blue are known to foster tranquility while enhancing focus. Thus, a thoughtfully crafted workspace that incorporates suitable lighting and a strategic layout can enhance employee performance.

The culture within a workplace significantly influences the environment in which employees function, affecting their motivation, commitment, and overall effectiveness. As noted by Nzuva (2022), organizational culture plays a crucial role in determining essential elements of workforce productivity, such as employee motivation and the effectiveness of leadership. A constructive workplace culture creates a setting where employees feel appreciated and involved, which in turn leads to improved performance outcomes. In contrast, a detrimental or toxic culture can hinder creativity and initiative, leading to reduced productivity. Research conducted by Owusu (2022) emphasizes that particular cultural traits like mission orientation, involvement, adaptability, and consistency can have a substantial effect on productivity levels. In his examination of the local government sector in Ghana, he discovered a strong link between these cultural factors and employee performance.

The findings of the research indicate that the communication style of a leader is pivotal in determining employee productivity and efficiency at Varun Beverages Limited. With respondents acknowledging its significance, it is clear that effective communication promotes clarity, motivation, and engagement among the workforce. In contrast, some respondents expressed disagreement, some were uncertain, implying that although the majority of employees appreciate the value of communication, some may view other elements as more impactful. Research underscores that transparent, assertive, and empathetic communication improves workplace dynamics, resulting in greater job satisfaction, enhanced collaboration, and heightened efficiency. Leaders at Varun Beverages should effectively convey expectations, offer constructive feedback, and engage in active listening foster an environment conducive to productivity. On the other hand, ineffective communication can lead to misunderstandings, lowered morale, and reduced efficiency.

The findings of the research suggest that the recognition provided by leaders is essential for enhancing employee productivity at Varun Beverages Limited. . Research highlights that leader recognition and acknowledgment contribute to increased motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction. Employees who feel appreciated and

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listened to are likely to demonstrate enhanced commitment, creativity, and efficiency. On the other hand, environments where leaders neglect to recognize contributions frequently suffer from diminished morale, disengagement, and lower productivity.

The absence of recognition in the workplace considerably hinders employee productivity, resulting in disengagement and a decline in morale. Employees naturally seek acknowledgment for their contributions; when this need is not fulfilled, their motivation diminishes. Research shows that some employees would put forth more effort if they believed their work was sufficiently recognized (Bullock, 2025). This figure emphasizes the vital importance of acknowledgment in cultivating a productive workforce. In its absence, employees are more prone to disengage from their duties, leading to reduced overall productivity levels. Furthermore, the lack of recognition can contribute to higher turnover rates. Joanna Carter (2025) observes that employees who feel unappreciated are twice as likely to contemplate leaving their positions within a year.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

The findings underscore the critical role that leadership communication and style play in shaping employee performance and engagement. Leaders who communicate effectively, promote transparency, and foster open dialogue create an environment where employees feel confident and motivated. When communication is clear and leadership is inclusive and supportive—marked by recognizing employee contributions and involving staff in decision-making—organizations tend to benefit from higher productivity, greater job satisfaction, and reduced turnover.

Additionally, the results highlight the importance of career advancement opportunities in enhancing employee satisfaction and organizational success. Companies that invest in structured professional development, mentorship programs, and transparent promotion pathways tend to retain talent more effectively and foster a positive work culture. For Varun Beverages Limited, reinforcing such initiatives could ensure that employees feel valued, motivated, and more connected to the organization's goals and future growth.

5.2 Recommendation

Workplace Environment & Ergonomics

- Design office spaces with comfort and efficiency in mind, using ergonomic furniture and adaptable seating.
- Incorporate both natural and high-quality artificial lighting to reduce eye strain.
- Balance collaborative open spaces with quiet zones to minimize distractions.

Leadership & Communication

- Foster a culture of open, transparent communication through regular feedback and inclusive dialogue.
- Train managers in active listening and encourage clear goal-setting to reduce workplace ambiguity.
- Promote visionary leadership that inspires and motivates staff across all levels.

Employee Recognition & Motivation

- Implement structured recognition programs, including peer-to-peer awards and milestone celebrations.
- Use a mix of financial (bonuses, promotions) and non-financial (extra leave, public praise) incentives.
- Address barriers to recognition such as poor communication flow or rigid hierarchies.
- Continuously assess recognition strategies through employee feedback and performance metrics.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

The authors affirm that there are no conflicts of interest.

About the Authors

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