

Affective Engagement, Gender Diversity and Employee Performance in the Tanzanian Textile Industry

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Abstract

Employee performance is increasingly recognized as one of the key variables in human resources management, and has been the subject of increasing interest and research by many scholars. Given the dynamic and volatile business environment, the survival of any business depends on the ability of its work force to perform well in order to achieve its goals. However, in some businesses the reality is not the same, where employees are not performing well due to several factors such as low levels of affective engagement and a lack of gender diversity, which are considered to be crucial factors that influence employee performance. The low employee performance observed in the textile industry in Tanzania can partly be explained by low levels of affective engagement, and yet this sector is key to the economic welfare of the country. Most of the reviewed studies have examined employee performance based on a single dimension. This study investigated the influence of affective engagement on employee performance considering the mediating effect of gender diversity. The study sample consisted of 618 employees from textile firms in four Tanzanian regions: Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Shinyanga, and Simuyu. Multistage sampling technique was employed, and descriptive and structural equation model were used for data analysis. This study established that affective engagement had a statistically significant, positive influence on employees' adaptive, contextual and task performance, while gender diversity had a partial mediating effect on the influence of affective engagement on contextual and task performance. The study provided several recommendations, including the suggestion that managers should promote an environment that fosters employees' positive emotions, energy, and enthusiasm towards their roles.

Keywords

Affective Engagement, Adaptive Performance, Contextual Performance, Task Performance, Gender Diversity

1. Introduction

The textile industry is one of the key industries in any economy because of its ability to address a country's economic needs, such as increased gross domestic product (GDP), foreign currency revenue generation and employment creation. In China, textile firms have been one of the largest exporters of textile products (Yoganandan & Jagannathan, 2013). In Indian, textile firms have been ranked second for the exportation of textile products worldwide (Sahoo, 2013). The situation in Tanzania is, however, different where the majority of textile firms exhibit low productivity and marginal economic contribution (Mwinuka & Maro, 2013).

One of the contributing factors is the presence of a dynamic and turbulent environment, which raises the need for flexible employees who can adapt or modify behavior to match the ever-changing environment. In this regard, employee performance becomes one of the key aspects for the survival and sustainability of businesses (Corner, 2003; Vorhies, 2003). Various scholars have studied, and provided varying definitions for, the concept of employee performance.

Al-Mehrzi and Singh (2016) conceptualize employee performance based on the level of successful execution of tasks and upon agreed standards, targets, and predetermined criteria. However, the existence of numerous definitions on employee performance within the literature results in a lack of clarity on the conceptualization of employee performance (Luo, Shi, Li, & Miao, 2008). Pradhan and Jena (2016) define employee performance in terms of adaptive, contextual and task performance. Pradhan and Jena's definition supports the one by Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, de Vet, and van der Beek (2013), who conceptualize employee performance in terms of execution of tasks, contextual performance, counterproductive work behavior, and adaptive performance. Execution of tasks mainly explains task performance, while counterproductive work behaviour is one of the contextual performance indicators.

Contextual performance consists of behaviors that are not explicitly explained as part of employees' duties, roles or positions (Zhu, Newman, Miao & Hooke, 2013), but nevertheless influence employee performance. Task performance refers to in-role performance and those official activities required and assigned to a specified job description (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). Adaptive performance refers to the ability of individuals to modify their behavior to suit the dynamic work situation (Hesketh & Neal, 1999). Employees tend to respond to and exhibit flexibility due to the changing working environment resulting from to uncertainties in business.

While employee performance can be influenced by many organizational factors, employee engagement is a critical factor (Macey, Schneider, Barbera, & Young, 2009). Prior empirical studies have established a positive relationship between work engagement and employee performance (Jagannathan, 2014; Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010). Likewise, other empirical studies report a positive relationship between employee engagement and employee performance (Halbesleben, 2010; Saks, 2006; Hallberg, Johansson, & Schaufeli, 2007; Lewicka, 2011; Mone & London, 2010).

Findings from Kaltainen and Hakanen (2020), and Park, Lim and Kang (2020) revealed that greater levels of employee engagement were associated with greater levels of adaptive performance, while Bilal, Shah, Yasir and Mateen (2019) found a positive relationship between work engagement and contextual performance.

Employee engagement is categorized into three dimensions: affective engagement, intellectual engagement, and social engagement (Soane, Bailey, Shantz, Rees, & Gatenby, 2012). According to Soane et al. (2012), affective engagement involves looking at the extent to which an individual is attached to their role and exhibits a positive attitude about his or her work. Intellectual engagement refers to how an individual gets exposed and absorbed while performing their work roles. Social engagement is the extent to which one shares common values with others. Despite the fact that there are different categories of employee engagement, affective engagement plays an important role in influencing employee performance. It focuses on employees' attitudes, attachment and commitment, not only to their work, but also to the organization at large.

Noah and Steve (2012) attest that employees who feel emotionally attached to their work are more likely to remain committed to their organization. Shuck, Reio and Rocco (2011) established a positive relationship between affective engagement and employee performance. In the same vein, Soane and colleagues (2012) argued that affective engagement positively influences the performance of employees. On the contrary, Ball, Trevino and Sims (1994) revealed no correlation between affective engagement and employee performance. Fadila and Saleh (2016) reported a negative relationship between affective engagement and employee performance, whereas Sharma, Kong and Kingshott (2016) posited that affective wellbeing can have positive and negative effects at the workplace. On the other hand, Tims, Bakker and Derks (2015) argued that employee engagement does not influence organizational citizenship behavior.

Regardless of the contradictory findings, the cited studies examine the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance in its totality. It is likely that affective engagement has differing influences on employee performance dimensions such as adaptive, contextual and task performance. Moreover, the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance may not be direct since other variables, including gender diversity, may intervene in such a relationship. For instance, prior empirical studies such as those by

Kyalo & Gachunga (2015), and Odhiambo, Gachoka and Rambo (2018) have argued that gender diversity has an influence on employee performance. On this basis, it is important to examine the influence of affective engagement on adaptive, contextual and task performance as individual dimensions of employee performance, while also considering the possible mediating effect of gender diversity.

2. Literature Review and Research Hypotheses

2.1. Theoretical Literature Review

Kahn's engagement theory has been applied by a myriad of researchers, some of whom have used the theory to explain the extent to which employee engagement predicts the performance of employees. For instance, Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010) applied Kahn's theory of employee engagement and found that emotional energy in workers connects workers with their organization, which ultimately improves task performance. Having adopted Kahn's theory, Christian et al. (2011) also found that job characteristics as antecedents of engagement significantly determines positive consequences, including workers' improved performance. The main premise of this theory is the assumption that employees become engaged when three psychological aspects are satisfied: psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability. In this study, therefore, Kahn's engagement theory was employed because it explained well the affective engagement - task performance relationship.

However, Kahn's engagement theory did not explain the link between affective engagement and contextual performance, or the one between affective engagement and adaptive performance. As a result, the Social Exchange Theory (SET) was used to explain the affective engagement - contextual performance and affective engagement - adaptive performance relationships. This theory is based on the premise that parties assess a relationship based on the costs and benefits associated with that relationship. The main assumption of the theory is that there should be a reciprocal interdependency between parties. In this relationship if employees perceive that they receive adequate socioeconomic resources from their employer, they choose to become more engaged, eventually leading to improved performance. This theory explains well the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions.

The contingency theory was used to examine the mediating role of gender diversity on the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions. The development of the contingency theory started in the 1950s to criticize the scientific management and human relations theories, and states that organizational diversity recognizes the reality that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to organizing in order to achieve effective outcomes (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1973). Contingency perspectives suggest that there is an interconnection between the organization and its environment, within and among subsystems (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1973). The theory's basic assumption is that for

an organization to perform well, the internal aspects of the business must match the wider external business environment. In this regard, the contingency theory emphasizes the importance of contextual factors in determining the effectiveness of a given structure (Birkinshaw, Nobel, & Ridderstråle, 2002).

The influence of affective engagement on employee performance is not a mere direct relationship; it can be influenced by several contingent factors such as gender diversity. Schwab, Werbel, Hofmann and Henriques (2015) argue that there is a contingent relationship between engagement and the performance of employees. Gender diversity may influence performance when men and women have different knowledge and sources of information. For example, Park (1996) reports that men and women must have different evaluative criteria in assessing alternatives to promote creativity and problem-solving skills.

Gender diversity mediates the association between employee engagement and employee performance dimensions, and is contingent not only on the number of women and men within an organization, but also on the diverse thinking and heterogeneity of the organization's employees. This implies that gender diversity may mediate the affective engagement - employee performance dimensions, but is contingent upon diverse thinking, divergent information and critical analysis for effective problem-solving. Following this argument, this study examined the mediation effect of gender diversity based on a contingency theory perspective.

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1. Affective Engagement and Contextual Performance

Affective engagement as one form of employee engagement improves the performance of employees. Opeyemi, Moses and Ebeguki (2019) argue that affective engagement enhances positive emotions, which tends to increase connection among employees. According to Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001), affectively engaged employees participate and ensure that organizational goals are well achieved. Yang (2012) asserts that affective engagement positively relates to organizational performance. When individuals experience positive emotions at work, they tend to remain in the organization for a long time and focus more on their jobs, which enables them to perform well (Tenney, Poole, & Diener, 2016).

Other scholars such as Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004) establish that affective engagement enhances the quality of services provided to customers. In the same vein, Cropanzano, Stein and Nadisic (2010) explain that employees' emotions tend to impact their job-related behavior and performance. Scholars such as Fisher (2010) argue that positive emotions lead to improved performance. In their study, Van Gelderen and Bik (2016) establish that affective engagement is positively associated with contextual or extra-role performance. Similarly, Ziegler, Schlett and Casel (2012) affirm that affective engagement positively influences contextual performance.

Employees with higher affective commitment tend to perform better. This is supported by several empirical studies such as that of Benjamin (2012), who es-

established that positive emotions translate into better employee performance. Similarly, [Thakre and Ruchita \(2016\)](#) posited that when employees experience positive emotions, they tend to exhibit extra effort and perform beyond the call of their specified duties. Other researchers such as [Khan, Jam and Ramay \(2010\)](#) reported a positive relationship between affective engagement and employee performance. [Keles and Findikli \(2016\)](#) assert that emotionally engaged employees tend to be higher performers at their workplaces. Studies by [Sharma, Kong, and Kingshott \(2016\)](#), and [Hosie, Sharma and Kingshott \(2019\)](#) report that negative emotions reduce performance, while positive emotions enhance individuals' contextual performance. Negative affective engagement reduces performance of individuals whereas positive affective engagement increases their contextual performance ([Hosie et al., 2019](#)). Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis was developed:

H₁: Affective engagement positively influences contextual performance.

2.2.2. Affective Engagement and Task Performance

Affective engagement was found to influence performance. According to [Rothbard \(2001\)](#), employees who experience positive emotions tend to exhibit better performance. [Sonnentag \(2003\)](#) also reports that engaged employees exhibit higher levels of emotional/affective attachment in their work. This is supported by [Kular, Gatenby, Soane and Truss \(2008\)](#), who contend that as individuals perform their tasks, they exert greater energy specifically in terms of their emotions. [Rich, Lepine and Crawford \(2010\)](#) assert that employees who are engaged tend to display strong task performance, which eventually enhances their emotional connection to their jobs. Furthermore, [Christian, Garza and Slaughter \(2011\)](#) conducted a meta-analytic study, which found a positive relationship between employee engagement and task performance. In their study, [Guo et al., \(2017\)](#) confirmed a positive relationship between work engagement and task performance.

Similarly, [Khan, Ziauddin, Jam and Ramey \(2010\)](#) assert that individuals exhibit work engagement whenever they are emotionally immersed, which in turn translates into employees' improved task performance. It is fair to say that positive emotions positively associate with high task performance. This has also been supported by [Almomani \(2018\)](#), who established that emotional/affective engagement positively influences employee performance. Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis was developed:

H₂: Affective engagement positively influences task performance.

2.2.3. Affective Engagement and Adaptive Performance

Adaptive performance involves the ability of an employee to modify their behavior to suit a dynamic working situation. [Pulakos, Donovan and Plamondon \(2000\)](#) explain adaptive performance as the ability of individual to modify their behaviors to suit the changing work situation, which encompasses behaviours such as problem-solving and learning new things. Affective engagement was

found to influence adaptive performance. Previous studies such as that of [Shuck, Reio, & Rocco \(2011\)](#) established that employees with positive emotions tend to be engaged while performing their roles, which eventually enhances their performance. Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis was developed:

H₃: Affective engagement positively influences adaptive performance.

2.2.4. Affective Engagement, Gender Diversity and Employee Performance Dimensions

The relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions may be influenced by other factors, including gender diversity, which refers to a good mix of male and female employees. For instance, [Onwuchekwa, Onwuzuligbo and Ifeanyi \(2019\)](#) reported a direct relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement. Likewise, other studies also established a positive relationship between gender diversity and employee performance ([El-said, 2012](#); [Khan, Sohail, Khan, Uddin, & Basit, 2019](#); [Rizwan, Khan, & Nadeem, 2016](#)). Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis was developed:

H₄: Gender diversity mediates the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions.

3. Research Methods

This study adopted a cross-sectional design, where data were collected once at the same point in time. A cross-sectional survey research design was deemed appropriate for this study since it facilitates rapid and uniform data collection across many respondents at one time. [Wakahiu et al. \(2016\)](#) opine that a cross-sectional survey design enhances the consistency of the data collected. Hence, this design was employed to collect data from a sample of the population to estimate the relationship between the variables of interest in this study. Questionnaires were used as a tool for data collection. Based on the study variables the affective engagement questionnaires were adopted from [Soane et al. \(2012\)](#); [Rich et al. \(2010\)](#). Whereas employee's performance dimensions questionnaires were adopted from [Pradhan and Jena \(2016\)](#), while gender diversity questionnaires were adopted from [Onwuchekwa et al. \(2019\)](#).

The scope of the study was based on four regions in Tanzania: Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Shinyanga and Simiyu, which were chosen based on business density as was indicated by the National Bureau of Statistics ([National Bureau of Statistics \(NBS\), 2016](#)). Dar-es-Salaam has the highest business density (18,358 employees) of manufacturing firms including textile firms, and is considered to be a commercial city, while Mwanza and Shinyanga regions' economies are dominated by textile firms with a density of 15,630 and 11,250 employees, respectively. Moreover, Simiyu region was chosen because it represented regions with a relatively lower business density (10,540 employees), but whose economies were also dominated by the textile business ([NBS, 2016](#)).

The population of the study was 55,778 textile firm employees ([NBS, 2016](#)) and the sample size was 618 textile firm employees. However, of the 618 em-

ployees, 554 respondents fully filled in and returned the questionnaires. This yielded a response rate of 89.6%, which was considered adequate to proceed with the research study. Respondents were selected using probability sampling technique since this technique allows for the statistical generalization of research findings (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The current study specifically adopted a cluster sampling technique, where the selection of employees was based on the selected geographical regions (i.e., Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Shinyanga and Simiyu). After identifying an adequate sample size for each region, workplaces were randomly selected to obtain employees who served as questionnaire respondents. The Taro Yamane formula was used to calculate the sample size of the study:

$$n = N / \left(1 + N(e^2) \right)$$

$$n = N / \left(1 + N * e^2 \right),$$

where $N = 55,778$ and $e = 4\%$

$$n = 55778 / \left(1 + 55778 * 0.04^2 \right) = 618$$

where:

n is the sample size

N is the population of the study

e is sampling error

The sample size of Dar es Salaam region was 203 respondents, 173 respondents for Mwanza, 117 respondents for Shinyanga, and 125 respondents for Simiyu region. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) due to its ability to capture multiple dependent variables (i.e., adaptive, contextual, and task performance). The internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Construct reliability (CR) and convergent validity were also assessed using CR coefficients and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Cronbach's alpha coefficients for affective engagement, gender diversity and, adaptive, contextual and task performance were .943, .842, .823, .922, and .843, respectively.

4. Findings

4.1. Descriptive Results

The descriptive results revealed 54.5% of the respondents were male, while 45.5% of the respondents were female. With regard to marital status, 39.5% of the respondents were single, 47.5% were married, 10.5% were divorced, and 2.5% were widowed/widowers. With respect to age category, respondents aged 20 - 25 years old were 141 (25.5%), 86 respondents (15.5%) were 46 - 55 years old, 24 respondents (4.3%) were 56 - 60 years old, and those aged above 60 years were 16 (2.9%).

The majority of respondents (i.e., 286, or 51.6%) were aged between 26 and 45 years of age. Focusing on education levels, 18 respondents (3.2%) had no formal

schooling, 117 respondents (21.1%) were of primary school qualification, and 178 respondents (32.1%) had received an O-level certificate. Moreover, 50 respondents (9.0%) were A-level certificate holders, 81 (14.6%) held a degree/advanced diploma, and 3 respondents (.5%) had postgraduate qualifications. Thus, the descriptive findings demonstrated that the highest level of education for the majority of respondents was O-level education. **Table 1** presents a summary of the respondents' demographic characteristics.

For the sake of ranking the variables in this study, mean scores were used. Mean scores were categorized into low, moderate and high. According to [Oxford \(1990\)](#) and [Oxford and Burry-Stock \(1995\)](#), low mean scores range between 1 and 2.4, medium scores 2.5 - 3.4 and high mean scores range between 3.5 and 5.0. The mean scores for affective engagement ranged between 4.47 and 4.50, which indicated that the affective engagement items were highly ranked by the respondents. For specific items that were coded as AE, the mean scores were: AE1 = 4.48, AE2 = 4.47, AE3 = 4.47, and AE4 = 4.50. Although all items were highly ranked, AE4 was ranked the highest, followed by AE1. This indicated that respondents possessed positive feelings, and they were prouder of their work. In addition, despite being ranked highly, items AE2 and AE3 had the least mean scores.

Gender diversity referred to the good mix of men and women. Mean scores ranged from 4.26 to 4.56. Respondents generally agreed on the questionnaire item that they felt valued by others regardless of their gender (mean score = 4.56), followed by the item on the organization focusing on a good mix of men and women (mean score = 4.38), and that men and women had equal opportunities for career development (Mean score = 4.35). In addition, the majority of respondents agreed that there was a good mix of both genders in job allocation (mean score = 4.33), that there was no difference in work performance between the two genders (mean score = 4.29), and that appointments to a managerial position were based on merit and not gender (mean score = 4.26).

Adaptive performance was coded into seven specific items: AP1 to AP7. AP5 and AP7 were dropped because the items did not meet the minimum coefficients of reliability. Mean scores for adaptive performance items ranged from 4.11 to 4.19, with item-specific mean scores being: AP1 = 4.17, AP2 = 4.16, AP3 = 4.15, AP4 = 4.19, and AP6 = 4.11. Despite the fact that all specific items of adaptive performance were at a high mean score range, AP4 led with a mean score of 4.19. This indicated that mutual understanding led to employees having viable solutions for work-related challenges occurring within the organization. The item with the least mean score was AP6 (mean score = 4.11), which inquired on employees' flexibility about their work. However, this does not undermine the fact that other items on adaptive performance were also important, since all items under this variable had high mean scores.

Task performance had six (6) items, coded as TP1, TP2, TP3, TP4, TP5, and TP6. Given the fact that TP6 did not meet the minimum coefficients for the

Table 1. Demographic characteristics.

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	302	54.5
Female	252	45.5
Total	554	100
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	219	39.5
Married	263	47.5
Divorced	58	10.5
Widowed	14	2.5
Total	554	100
AGE (YEARS)		
20 - 25	141	25.5
26 - 45	286	51.6
46 - 55	86	15.5
56 - 60	24	4.3
Above 60	16	2.9
Total	554	100
LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
No formal schooling	18	3.2
Primary school	117	21.1
O-level education	178	32.1
Vocational training/Technical training	107	19.3
A-level education	50	9.0
Degree/Advanced Diploma	81	14.6
Postgraduate qualification	3	.5
Total	554	100
YEARS OF SERVICE		
Less than a year	123	22.2
1 - 4 years	208	37.5
5 - 9 years	122	22.0
More than 9 years	100	18.1
Total	554	100

Source: Field data (2021).

reliability statistics, it was dropped. Thus, TP1, TP2, TP3, TP4, and TP5 were selected for the descriptive analysis. Mean scores for task performance were high and ranged from 4.23 to 4.57. Among the specific items on task performance, TP5 and TP2 led by both having mean scores of 4.57. These were followed by TP3 (mean score = 4.55), TP1 (mean score = 4.40), and TP4 with the least mean score of 4.23.

Contextual performance consisted of nine (9) items coded from CP1 to CP9. However, CP1, CP3, CP4 and CP6 were dropped because they did not meet the minimum coefficient for the reliability statistics. In this case, CP2, CP5, CP7, CP8 and CP9 were selected in the descriptive statistics. The mean score showed that all the selected items under contextual performance were highly ranked since they ranged between mean scores of 4.42 and 4.49. Specifically, the mean scores were: CP2 = 4.42, CP5 = 4.49, CP7 = 4.46, CP8 = 4.43, and CP9 = 4.49. Despite the fact that all items were highly ranked, CP5 and CP9 led by both having the highest mean score of 4.49, followed by CP7 and CP8, which both had a mean score of 4.46. The item with the least mean score was CP2, with a mean score of 4.43.

These results indicated that, under contextual performance, more respondents were of the opinion that they were performing well when they could effectively communicate to their colleagues for the purposes of problem-solving and decision-making. In addition, they preferred to praise co-workers for their work. However, this did not undermine the importance of other items within the contextual performance variable, which were also highly ranked by the respondents.

4.2. Inferential Results

The findings of this study focused on both direct and indirect relationships of the variables. The direct relationship was on the influence of affective engagement on employee performance dimensions (i.e., adaptive, contextual and task performance). The indirect relationship was on the mediation effect of gender diversity on the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions. This study hypothesized that affective engagement would positively influence employee performance dimensions. In this case, there were three hypotheses coded as H₁, H₂, and H₃. Hypothesis H₁ hypothesized that affective engagement would positively influence adaptive performance, H₂ hypothesized that affective engagement would positively influence contextual performance, and H₃ hypothesized that affective engagement would positively influence task performance. Findings of this study revealed that affective engagement had a positive influence on adaptive, contextual performance and task performance, hence H₁, H₂, and H₃ were all accepted.

Specifically, affective engagement had a statistically significant positive influence on adaptive performance, with a regression weight of .186 and a *p*-value of .001. Affective engagement also had a statistically significant positive influence on contextual performance (regression weight = .486; *p*-value = .001) and

task performance (regression weight = .559; p -value = .045). **Appendix 1** and **Figure 1** present summarized details on the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions. The model fit indices for the structural equation model were all within the recommended values, which indicated that the model fit the data well. These indices included CMIN/df (=1.848), GFI (=0.997), adjusted GFI (=0.983), CFI (=0.999), and RMSEA (=0.039). These model fit indices values are not seen in the figures because they are separately produced by AMOS software.

With regards to the mediation effect, five conditions were supposed to be observed. These conditions included the significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable; the independent variable and the mediator and, the mediator and the dependent variable. Further to this, the regression weights in the direct relationship should decrease when the mediator is introduced in the model. If the direct relationship remains statistically significant after the mediator is introduced in the model, then the mediation is said to be partial, and when it is insignificant, the mediation effect is said to be full.

The results revealed a partial mediation effect of gender diversity on the relationship between affective engagement and contextual performance, and on the relationship between affective engagement and task performance. There was no mediation effect of gender diversity on the relationship between affective engagement and adaptive performance because there was a statistically non-significant relationship between gender diversity and adaptive performance, demonstrating that the Baron and Kenny (1983) conditions were not met. **Table 2** provides details on Baron and Kenny's (1983) conditions assessment regarding the mediation of gender diversity on the association between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions.

Figure 2 presents the diagrammatic relationship between affective engagement, gender diversity and employee performance dimensions. The analysis of model fit indices showed that the model fit the data well since all indices were

Table 2. Baron and Kenny (1983)' conditions assessment with regard to the mediation effect of gender diversity.

Relationship	Direct Relationship		Indirect Relationship	
	Regression Weight	Significance Level	Regression Weight	Significance Level
APT and AET	.186	.001	.170	.020
CPT and AET	.486	.001	.382	.001
TPT and AET	.559	.001	.311	.001
GDT and GDT	N/A	N/A	N/A	.001
APT and GDT	N/A	N/A	N/A	.780
CPT and GDT	N/A	N/A	N/A	.001
TPT and GDT	N/A	N/A	N/A	.001

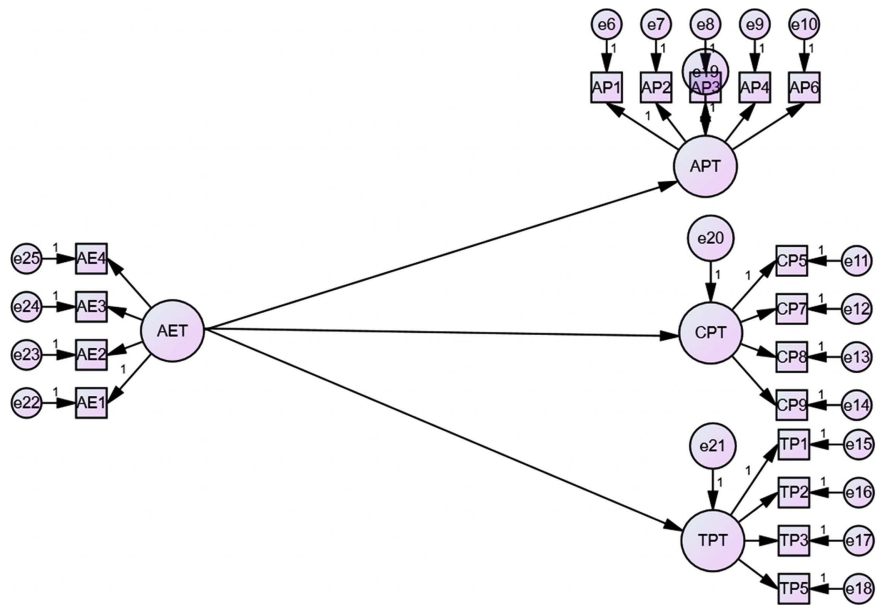


Figure 1. Direct relationship between affective engagament and employee performance dimensions.

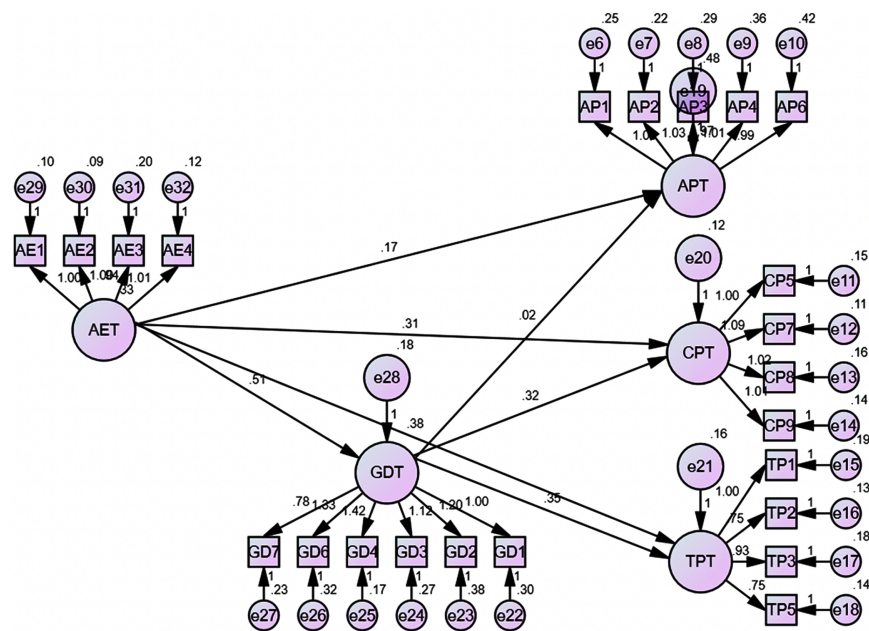


Figure 2. Indirect relationship between affective engagament and employee performance dimensions.

within the recommended values. Specifically, these included CMIN/df (=3.917), GFI (=0.938), Adjusted GFI (=0.915), CFI (=0.960), and RMSEA (=0.060).

5. Discussion

5.1. Discussion of Findings

The results are supported by prior studies such as that of Park, Lim, Kim and

Kang (2020), who reported that work engagement had a significant, positive influence on adaptive performance. Additionally, Kaltiainen and Hakanen (2020) also argued that an increase in work engagement is associated with improved task and adaptive performance. Findings from Bilal et al. (2019) are also congruent with the findings from the current study, and the authors reported that employee engagement positively influenced contextual performance. Likewise, Yin (2018) reported that job engagement positively influenced task performance. The findings of this study also mirror those of Kumari and Afroz (2014), who reported that affective commitment positively influenced employee performance since employees were satisfied with their jobs. Furthermore, in their study, Alb-dour and Altarawneh (2014) established a positive influence of job engagement on a high level of affective and continuous commitment.

Focusing on affective engagement, Soane et al. (2012) and Shuck and Reio (2013) argue that affective engagement positively influences employee performance. Shuck and Reio (2013) assert that employees' positive emotions influence task completion. This argument is in line with Soane et al. (2012), who contend that emotions positively influence employee performance. Moreover, this is supported by Noah and Steve (2012), who attest that emotionally attached employees are committed to their organization, resulting in better performance of employees.

Nevertheless, there are other prior studies that have argued for a negative influence of emotional engagement on the performance of employees (Fadila & Salleh, 2016; Tims et al., 2015). Tims et al. (2015) reported that work engagement does not influence organizational citizenship behavior. However, the findings of the aforementioned empirical studies (i.e., Fadila & Salleh, 2016; Tims et al., 2015) differ from the results of this study in that they did not focus on the three dimensions of employee performance, but instead focused on employee performance in its totality.

Regarding the theories, this study's findings are in line with Kahn's theory and the Social Exchange Theory. Kahn's theory, among other things, argues that when employees are able to assign psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability, they tend to be satisfied and committed to their work. This premise is in line with the findings of this study, which revealed a statistically significant, positive influence of affective engagement on task performance. The findings are also in line with the Social Exchange Theory, which states that the reactions of employees are influenced by the actions of their employers. Hence, the current study's findings demonstrated that emotionally engaged employees had better contextual and task performance.

Study findings also revealed that gender diversity partially mediated the influence of affective engagement on contextual and task performance. Prior empirical studies examined the influence of gender diversity on employee performance (Elsaid, 2012; Khan et al., 2019; Rizwan et al., 2016). On the other hand, Onwuchekwa, Onwuzuligbo and Ifeanyi (2019) examined the relationship be-

tween gender diversity and employee engagement. However, this study extended its investigation to the mediating effect of gender diversity on the relationship between affective engagement and individual employee performance dimensions, thereby adding more knowledge on the application of affective engagement and gender diversity towards the promotion of individual employee performance dimensions.

5.2. Recommendations

Affective engagement had an influence on adaptive, contextual and task performance. By affectively engaging their employees, managers could successfully promote employees' adaptive, contextual and task performance. Hence, managers should promote the work environment, such that employees feel positively about their work, enthusiastic and energetic towards their work. Gender diversity was found to have a partial mediating effect on the influence of affective engagement on contextual and task performance, but not adaptive performance.

In this case, organizations are encouraged to promote gender diversity in order to promote better contextual and task performance. Managers should ensure that there is a good mix of men and women at the workplace, that managerial appointment positions are based on merit rather than gender, and that there is a mix of genders in job allocation. In addition, equal opportunities for men and women in their career development should be encouraged, as well as ensuring that a gender quota policy on recruitment and retention is instituted and implemented.

It was revealed that gender diversity had different mediation effects on the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions. However, the current study did not investigate possible reasons for such differences due to methodological limitations such as the use of quantitative methods. It is, therefore, recommended that a qualitative study be carried out to explore the link between affective engagement, gender diversity and individual employee performance dimensions. Furthermore, this study focused on textile firms only, hence similar studies can be conducted to examine whether these findings extend to other economic sectors with different characteristics from those of the textile sector.

5.3. Limitations of the Study

The study did not categorize its findings across different business sizes, including micro, small, medium and large businesses. It is possible that affective engagement have different influences on employee performance dimensions across different business sizes. Although this limitation does not change the existing findings, it does focus on providing more results on the influence of affective engagement on employee performance. Future studies should study the effect of affective engagement on employee performance dimensions based on the categories of business sizes (i.e., micro, small, medium and large).

Additionally, gender diversity was found to have different mediation effects on the relationship between affective engagement and employee performance dimensions. However, this study was not able to explore the reasons for such different influence due to its methodological limitation. That is, the use of a quantitative method did not allow the researcher to explore deeper the root cause of such differences.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of affective engagement on employee performance dimensions, considering the mediation effect of gender diversity. The findings revealed that affective engagement had a statistically significant, positive influence on adaptive, contextual and task performance. In this regard, employee engagement aspects such as information sharing on employees' goals and work attitudes can create an environment that fosters positive feelings among employees. Moreover, more positive feelings, energy and enthusiasm exhibited by employees towards their work can foster better adaptive, contextual and task performance.

The study also examined the mediating effect of gender diversity on the association between employee engagement and employee performance dimensions. Gender diversity partially mediated the influence of affective engagement on contextual performance and task performance. In this regard, a good mix between men and women, equal opportunities for managerial positions, an optimal mix of the genders in job allocation, equal opportunities in career development, and a gender quota policy within the organization can all provide an environment for affective engagement to exert a positive influence on employee performance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix: Direct Relationship between Affective Engagement and Employee Performance Dimensions

Table A1. Regression weights (Group number 1—Default model).

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	<i>p</i> -value
APT ← AET	.186	.057	3.257	.001
CPT ← AET	.486	.039	12.588	***
TPT ← AET	.559	.045	12.505	***
AP1 ← APT	1.000			
AP2 ← APT	1.034	.047	21.857	***
AP3 ← APT	.970	.048	20.205	***
AP4 ← APT	1.007	.052	19.350	***
AP6 ← APT	.990	.054	18.455	***
CP5 ← CPT	1.000			
CP7 ← CPT	1.078	.054	19.914	***
CP8 ← CPT	.992	.056	17.796	***
CP9 ← CPT	1.006	.054	18.629	***
TP1 ← TPT	1.000			
TP2 ← TPT	.767	.046	16.817	***
TP3 ← TPT	.943	.055	17.028	***
TP5 ← TPT	.765	.046	16.492	***
AE1 ← AET	1.000			
AE2 ← AET	.994	.036	27.516	***
AE3 ← AET	.936	.042	22.058	***
AE4 ← AET	1.006	.038	26.499	***

***: *p*-value < .001.