




# Examining the impact of the various dimensions of employees' engagement on commitment: Evidence from small and medium enterprises in Egypt



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**Orientation:** With the intense competition that many organisations are facing, they are looking for new ways to enhance employees' engagement and commitment.

**Research purpose:** This research examines the impact of emotional, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions of engagement on commitment.

**Motivation for the study:** This study was conducted in response to several calls by academics and practitioners to better understand the relationship between employees' engagement and commitment, specifically in the developing countries.

**Research approach/design and method:** This article is quantitative, using a self-administered questionnaire developed based on an extensive literature review with a sample of 226 employees working in Egyptian small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

**Main findings:** The findings showed that emotional engagement was the only dimension of employee engagement that had a positive influence on commitment. Also, there was an insignificant moderating impact of strategic implementation between engagement and commitment. Furthermore, in terms of gender differences, there was no difference regarding perceptions of engagement and commitment, but for work departments, the group of academics and sales had a different perception than other departments.

**Practical/managerial implications:** The study recommended that it is essential for Egyptian companies to adapt their strategies by which their engagement level could be measured, and monitored which will directly affect commitment.

**Contribution/value-add:** This article contributes in research that it is one of the few studies which examine the relationship between engagement and commitment inside a developing country like Egypt.

**Keywords:** employees' engagement; commitment; strategic implementation; Egypt; developing countries; SMEs.

## Introduction

The concept of 'employee engagement' has recently attracted the attention of many researchers in the field of organisation behaviour (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017; Saad, Gaber, & Labib, 2021; Sun & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). Saks (2006) stated that one way in which employees respond to their organisation's support is through their levels of engagement. The literature shows some positive outcomes of enhancing employees' engagement. For instance, it was found that engagement is related to a variety of individual and organisational level outcomes such as enhanced organisational commitment, identification, and job satisfaction (Saks, 2006), lower absenteeism, burnout, and turnover rates (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Van Rhenen, 2009), more creativity (Afsar, Cheema, & Javed, 2018), better individual performance (Kahn, 1990), and greater business unit performance (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002).

Because companies worldwide face high employee turnover, low job satisfaction, and increased levels of absenteeism, employee engagement is seen as a solution and a strategy to retain employees and increase organisational effectiveness (Bhatnagar, 2007; Reijseger et al., 2017). Moreover, at individual level, studies suggest that employee engagement also influences the level of happiness among employees (Othman et al., 2018; Stairs & Galpin 2010). Sufficient evidence is marked in the literature for the utility of employee engagement in increasing organisational performance and positive employee outcome (Reijseger et al., 2017; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

Business researchers viewed employee engagement as creating employee satisfaction to increase productivity (Ismail, Iqbal, & Nasr, 2019). Employee engagement provide a way for an organisation to survive, and to gain competitive advantage over their competitors (Smith & Bititci, 2017); hence, becoming a key path to organisational performance.

Jung and Yoon (2016) specified that employees' commitment (COM) is a result of being engaged which they described it as, the satisfying state of mind of employees that lead to their passion, enthusiasm, and commitment to their work. Furthermore, Turker (2009), Kim et al. (2010), Glavas and Kelley (2014) discussed that employees' commitment is important to an organisation, not only because employees would be retained, but also because when they are retained, they stay with a 'heart' to deliver and accomplish their work. The most important thing for the management to do is to acknowledge the importance of its employees and the significance of having them actively engaged and committed. Management should appreciate the fact that once an employee thinks through his or her job to be interesting, meaningful, and fair, he or she would be satisfied, and have a sense of accomplishment. This could be better enhanced by giving out positive feelings at work, and creating a healthy work environment that reflects on the organisation (Khodakarami & Dirani, 2019; Shoaib & Kohli, 2017).

Among the challenges that organisations face in relation to employees is the ability to increase their commitment to the company, and the work they perform. Consequently, organisations are either unable to retain good employees or lack commitment, thus productivity tends to be negatively affected. These days, employees have doubted the significance of their work and its meaning, which eventually decreases their engagement, hence commitment (Ferreira & Real De Oliveira, 2014). However, engagement research was mainly presented in developed western countries like the United States of America and certain European countries (Poon, 2013) with very few studies carried out in Middle Eastern Countries and particularly in Egypt (Albdour & Atarawneh, 2012). Therefore, in this current study the variable engagement is considered as a factor affecting commitment not the other way around, and to have more overview about it, this study used the engagement construct three dimensions. The first dimension is the cognitive engagement (CE), that is, to fully concentrate on delivering one's mission as expected; the second is the emotional engagement (EE), which indicates how the employees feel towards the company and its management (Purcell, 2010). Lastly, the behavioural engagement (BE); it refers to the actual presentation of the other two dimensions (Shuck & Reio, 2014).

However, the conceptualisation of employee engagement is different from commitment and involvement (Welch, 2011). On the one hand, job involvement is the level of satisfaction of needs and expectations that one drives from his or her work, and it stresses the cognitive and psychological identification with work. On the other hand, commitment is more related with attitudinal and affective aspects that stress the emotional

attachment based on shared values and interests with the organisation. In theoretical terms, although with a common root, the concepts are clearly distinct (Welch, 2011).

Lastly, this study is significantly worthy because of the lack in research about the relationship between Egyptian employees' engagement with commitment taking into consideration the gender and work department role in this relationship. Many researchers explain that employees' commitment is a result of being engaged (Jung & Yoon, 2016). In this research the studied variable engagement is tested as a factor affecting commitment, and to answering the calls of the past researchers about testing the variables on other countries specifically developing ones like the Egyptian small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Also, the demographic factors, motivating traits and attitudes that trigger and enhance employee engagement in commitment are not fully researched and still require groundbreaking research directions (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Zulfiqar, Sadaf, Popp, Vveinhardt, & Máté, 2019).

## Literature review

### A brief history about employees' engagement

Employee engagement at the present time is very essential where the positive emotional connections appear towards the work and towards the organisation's goals and its values (Al-dalalmeh et al., 2018; Anitha, 2014; Dajani, 2015). Without employee engagement in the workplace, companies cannot survive and compete long in the market (Zainol & Binti Othman, 2016) because engagement is a prior business driver for organisational success.

Historically, Kahn (1990) was the first to discuss the engagement concept as 'the harnessing of institutional members' selves to their job role'. In the engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance. Similarly, based on Kahn's definition Albdour and Altarawneh (2012) described it as a complete dedication by employees to their work.

Moreover, Kahn (1990) research also discussed three categories of psychological engagement conditions needed for employees to be properly engaged, and whose absence will have a negative effect on the personally disengage. Firstly, the meaningfulness is related to work elements that can motivate or demotivate engagement in the workplace (Kahn, 1990). Secondly, a feeling of safety is related to social elements, such as manager style and organisational rules that affect personal engagement or disengagement. The employee can express self-fear of negative consequences (Kahn, 1990). Thirdly, availability is a feeling of ownership of various resources, which is the physical, emotional, and psychological essential for role performance (Kahn, 1990).

Consequently, the purpose for the increasing importance of engagement lies in its positive consequences, results for both the worker and the organisation; therefore, Succeeding Khan's work, Saks (2006) added that engaged employees are those who feel obligated to perform in a certain way towards

their organisation because of its support, which motivates them to enhance their performance.

Rich, LePine and Crawford (2010) stated that as the employee engagement practices have an impact to raise the satisfaction level of employees, this will contribute to an improved organisational performance. The engaged employees or persons are usually the top performers, who are committed to make their maximum effort, and always ready to go the extra mile. In the engagement, people employ likewise express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance.

Unfortunately, many academics have mistaken the perception of employees' engagement with other employees' attitude or behaviour. Consequently, Luthans and Peterson (2002) claimed that employees' engagement should neither be perceived as other constructs like commitment or involvement, nor should it be perceived as an intrinsic motivation. Although the overabundance of terms defined can frequently cloud the direction of the argument, the fundamentals are the same, and consequences are all positively reflecting the organisation (Purcell, 2010).

### Employees' engagement dimensions

Kahn (1990) questioned from an employee's appraisal about the CE levels and how it affects employees; furthermore, whether their work is meaningful, safe (physically, emotionally, and psychologically), and if the levels of resources are sufficient to successfully finish their work. This interpretation of the work environment is used to determine the overall significance of a situation, and serves as the catalyst towards the intention to engage.

To better understand the CE, it reveals how employees appraise their work environment and how they work and develop their tasks. As demonstrated in previous studies, workers' appraisal shows us the levels of positive or negative engagement which in turn influences behaviour (Nimon, Zigarmi, Houson, Witt, & Diehl, 2011). Besides, a cognitively engaged employee is someone totally concentrated on their mission also delivering their tasks as expected if not better (Purcell, 2010). It is related to the beliefs that employees have about their organisations, management and working environment (Kular et al., 2008). Luthans and Peterson (2002) pointed out that such employees would be so fascinated by their work.

Purcell (2010) determined that this type of engagement by indicating that individuals who are cognitively engaged would even be directed to the means through which their own performance, as well as that of the organisation, could be boosted. It is associated to the feelings that affect employees' attitude, whether negative or positive, to the firm and its leaders (Kular et al., 2008). Employees' positive emotional experiences in their organisations, as well as their relations with others, would form meaningful connections with the company (Luthans & Peterson, 2002).

Subsequently, Rich et al. (2010) specified that in the EE process, the feelings and beliefs of workers impact and direct their energies towards task completion. Additionally, behavioural aspect is another part of employees' engagement (Kular et al., 2008). Behavioural engagement is defined as the physical display of the other two dimensions namely, cognitive, and EE (Shuck & Reio, 2014). Moreover, it can be explained as increased levels of effort focused towards achieving organisational goals (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Shuck & Wollard, 2010).

Furthermore, BE is the broadening of an employee's available resources, and is linked to increased individual effort. According to the Shuck and Reio (2014) BE can be explained as an increased level of effort exerted by employees. It is also the augmentation of an employee's existing resources that are obviously presented (Rich et al., 2010).

### The concept of employees' commitment

Organisational commitment has been heavily covered in the literature due to its significant role towards building and maintaining enduring relationships between employees and their organisations (Kim et al., 2010).

The concept 'organizational commitment' was first introduced by researchers of industrial and organisational psychology (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Early studies on organisational commitment aimed to assess employees' level of affective attachment to their employer (Becker, 1960). This was known as the attitudinal perspective on commitment which was conceptualised by Porter, Steers and Boulian (1974) as:

[A]n attachment to the organization, characterized by an intention to remain in it; an identification with the values and goals of the organization; and a willingness to exert extra effort on its behalf. (p. 604)

The second perspective on organisational commitment was made by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) and known as 'the calculation perspective on commitment'. According to this perspective, employees tend to continue their membership in their organisations based on calculated costs and benefits of leaving it. In 1990, Allen and Meyer have introduced the tri-dimensional perspective on organisational commitment which divided the concept of organisational commitment into three aspects: affective, continuance and normative. Considering what has preceded, Porter et al. (1974) defines organisational commitment as 'the strength of an individual identification with and involvement in a particular organization'. O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) conceptualise it as 'the degree to which an individual internalizes or adopts characteristics or perspectives of the organization'. Lastly Allen and Meyer (2000) consider it a psychological state that reduces an employee's likelihood of leaving his or her organisation.

Additionally, Mohamed and Anisa (2012) referred to employees' organisational commitment as their propensity to pertain elevated levels of 'hard work' on behalf of their

companies; the author too, indicated that those employees would be willing to accept their organisation's key values, ethics, and principles and share its goals and objectives. Employee organisational commitment is an employee's desire, and efforts to remain with the organisation and achieve the organisation's goals (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2012). (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2012). It is an indication of strength of an employee's connection to an organisation (Dajani, 2015).

Retaining organisational commitment is extremely vital because of its consequences and benefits to organisations (Zayas-Ortiz, Ortiz, Rosario, Marquez, & Colón Gruñeiro, 2015). Cagliyan, Attar and Derya (2017) identified organisational commitment as the level of employees' attachment to the organisation. It has three main factors: compliance with the goals and culture of the organisation, the ability to perform best to contribute in achieving the organisational goals, and wanting to maintain organisational membership. This confirms the notion of Zayas-Ortiz et al. (2015) that it contributes to boosting organisation's human capital. It is also important that organisations preserve their competent workers, and retain their commitment in order to attract other worthy employees (Zaitouni et al., 2011).

Lastly, Danlami (2011) proposed that employees' commitment is attainable when the working environment is supportive. Similarly, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) recommended that as employees become engaged in organisations' activities, they improve certain attitude and behaviour concerning their firms such as their commitment. As a result, the author concluded that hypotheses (1) Employees' engagement is positively impacting employees' commitment H1a: CE is positively impacting employees' commitment. H1b: EE is positively impacting employees' commitment. H1c: BE positively impacting employees' commitment.

## Gender perception of engagement and commitment

A general agreement among researchers and academics is that employees' positive ideas and conception of their jobs and increased level of engagement would heighten the level of their organisational commitment (Jung & Yoon, 2016). The reason behind that was clarified by Hakanen et al. (2006) who elaborated and described that engagement is the counter feeling of burnout which affects and lowers employees' belonging and commitment to their organisations. Additionally, scholars argued that Employee commitment is recognised to be one of the contributing factors to employee engagement. Unengaged employees choose to stay for many reasons that force them to such as money, career opportunities, security, stability, familiarity, comfortable working conditions, or the resistance in changing jobs. Being unengaged does not bring the lack of commitment but commit in the wrong things, and create an error of inaccurate engagement rate for the company (Rice, Marlow, & Masarech, 2012).

Boyd (2009) revealed that gender plays a role in the development of EE of employees. It was found that men

show greater levels of engagement particularly, when the company's performance, and goals are completely established as well as when they are delivered with guidelines through the long-term strategies. Women's EE level, alternatively, was related to what support their daily working activities such as flexibility to communicate with their family and the balancing between their work and family (Boyd, 2009). Moreover, empirical evidence shows that high level of employee engagement is likely to enhance organisational commitment (Gupta, 2017; Gupta & Sayeed, 2016). Although not underlining on any gender, Gupta (2017) discovered that engagement is a leading factor to influence organisational commitment because of their content feelings.

Khodakarami and Dirani (2019) suggested that both researchers and practitioners should take the factors of work areas and gender into account as they consider employee engagement. Accordingly, the author decided that hypotheses (2) will be different genders have different perceptions of employees' engagement dimensions and employees' commitment. 'H2a: Different genders have different perceptions of the dimensions of employees' engagement. H2b: Different genders have different perceptions of the employees' commitment'.

Accordingly, Glavas and Kelly (2014) pointed out that it is very critical to recognise employees' perceptions about their organisations' practices, because it will in return reflect on their attitudes, and behaviours at work along with their performance. Besides, organisations neglect the importance of their employees' well-being, humanity, and psychological condition which thus leads organisation to suffer from the increased level of absenteeism and inefficient productivity of their workforce. The most common causes of such employees' attitude are their lack of commitment and active disengagement of employees which lessen their enthusiasm to exert hard work for their companies. These would diminish workers' willingness to realise the benefits of their organisations and finally, losing good competent employees; organisations mostly blame employees themselves neglecting the fact that the workplace environment might have the greatest impact on workers' attitude. Companies do not declare or be aware of that (Ferreira & Real De Oliveira, 2014).

Therefore, to help organisations understand their employee's perception regarding this matter, hypotheses (3) will be different work department groups have different perceptions of the dimensions of employees' engagement and employees' commitment. 'H3a: Different work department groups have different perceptions of the dimensions of employees' engagement. H3b: Different work department groups have different perceptions of the employees' commitment'.

## The role of strategic implementation

Strategic implementation has been one of the most important research topics of discussion, and examination among researchers for long time (Engert & Baumgartner, 2016).

Researchers suggested that as management efficiently positions the strategies besides creating shared goals that are in harmony among all organisational levels, the organisation's priorities and strategic objectives are then understood and confirmed by all employees. Not only that, but also employees will be working tough towards committing their time and effort to achieve organisational objectives. Specifically, the organisation's workforce would be engaged with the work related to such strategies (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015) and then become more committed to its organisation's goals (Ho, Wu, & Wu 2014).

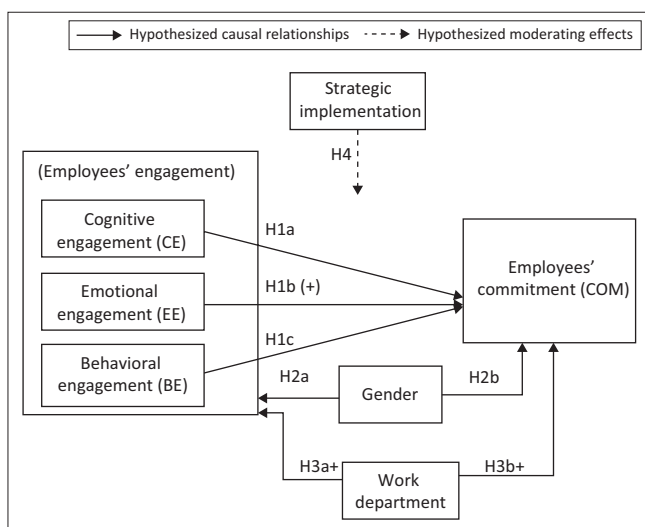
Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) described that:

[T]he more developed level of employee commitment, the better the business results. If worker engagement is indeed beyond commitment, the rewards should be even superior. The problem is getting unengaged persons in the engagement level which can harm the organization, as they do not really want to stay or add any value or work hard as engaged employees for the success of the company, adding to that, employees from every department should be put at the center of the strategy so companies can't do that with unengaged employees. (p. 11)

Moreover, while compensation for performance through salaries is a well-known, and preferred model in many organisations, other motivating approaches could be essential along with having an effective tactic and strategy for attracting employees to have a positive perception of the company, and become more engaged and committed to driving sustainable business success (Barrick et al., 2015). So, based on that we need to examine the moderating role of strategic implementation by hypothesis (4) Strategic implementation has a moderating role between employees' engagement and employees' commitment.

## The proposed conceptual model

Figure 1 shows the proposed conceptual model which presents the relationship between the three dimensions



Source: Saad, M.M., Gaber, H.R., & Labib, A.A. (2019). Explaining The Effect of Organizations' Practices on Employee's Engagement and Commitment in Egypt. AAST Msc Thesis

**FIGURE 1:** Conceptual model – The impact of employees' engagement on employees' commitment.

of employees' engagement on commitment. The conceptual model also proposes that the strategic implementation moderates this relationship. Furthermore, it proposes that employees' perceptions can vary based on their gender and the department they work in.

## Methodology

In this article, a quantitative research approach was adopted to collect and analyse the empirical data. The questionnaire method was used to collect data from employees who work in Egyptian SMEs. The questionnaire is a powerful tool for data collection in quantitative studies, where it has the advantage of collecting data from a large sample in a relatively short time (Malhotra, Nunan, & Birks, 2017). The data analysis was performed using SPSS v.26.

## Measures and reliability

To develop the questionnaire, the researchers depended on previously validated scales from the organisational studies literature. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part contained an introductory section that explained the aim of the research study; the second part contained a group of questions that aimed to capture the study's constructs. Finally, the last part contained a group of questions that aimed to capture the demographic information of the study's participants such as age, gender, years of experience and working department.

To measure cognitive, emotional and behavioural engagement, the researchers used 15 items adapted from Rich et al. (2010) and Shuck and Reio (2014). To measure employee commitment, the researchers used six items adapted from the work of Turker (2009); Kim et al. (2010); Glavas and Kelley (2014). Finally, to assess the strategy implementation, six statements were adapted from Barrick et al. (2015).

To assess the reliability of the study's constructs, the Cronbach's alpha of each of the study's constructs were investigated. The findings showed that all the study's constructs possess high reliability with Cronbach's alpha values that exceeded the threshold of 0.7 recommended by Nunnally (1994). The items of the survey together with the Cronbach's alpha are shown in Table 1.

## Sample and procedures

In this research study, the target population were employees who are working in SMEs in Egypt. To capture employees' perceptions, the researchers posted a link of the online

**TABLE 1:** Cronbach's alpha.

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
Employee' cognitive engagement	0.842	5
Employee' emotional engagement	0.914	5
Employee' behavioral engagement	0.924	5
Employee' commitment	0.892	6
Strategic implementation	0.938	6

questionnaire on several pages on LinkedIn to be able to reach the target population. Also, the questionnaire was distributed physically to some employees from SMEs in Cairo and Alexandria which are considered the largest Egyptian cities. Out of the 300 collected questionnaires, only 226 questionnaires were complete and valid for the analysis. The valid response rate was, therefore, 75.3%. Male respondents were 151 (66.8%) of the sample which are the dominant gender in contrast to 75 (33.2%) female respondents.

Further 36.7% of the sample were aged from 31 to 39 years' old, which represent the majority. On the other hand, 31.9% of the sample were aged from 20 to 30; 18.6% were aged from 40 to 50 and the lowest were 12.8% representing employees who are above 50 years old. Concerning the education level, most of the participants (38.9%) had a bachelor's degree followed by 37.2% who possessed a Master's degree. On the other hand, 13.3% of the participants possessed a doctoral degree. Finally, the rest of the participants (10.6%) had a high school diploma.

Regarding the participants' positions in their organisations, most of the participants were full-timers representing 90.3%, while the rest (9.7%) were part-timers. Also, most participants (16.8%) worked in Engineering department. This is followed by an equal number of participants (15%) who worked in management and educational departments. Furthermore, the rest of the participants worked in different departments such as sales (13.3%), operations (11.5%), marketing (8.4%), finance and accounting (7.5%), human resources (7.5%) and medical departments (5%).

For their experience, the majority (53.5%) had more than 10 years of experience, 19% had an experience from 2 to 4 years. Furthermore, 18.6% of employees had an experience from 6 to 10 years. Finally, 8.8% of the participants had an experience from 4 to 6 years.

**TABLE 2:** Correlation analysis.

Correlations	CE	EE	BE	COM
<b>CE</b>	1	0.643**	0.749**	0.588**
Pearson correlation	-	-	-	-
Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.001	0.001	0.001
N			226	
<b>EE</b>		1	0.693**	0.739**
Pearson correlation	0.643**			
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001		0.001	0.001
N			226	
<b>BE</b>			1	0.616**
Pearson correlation	0.749**	0.693**		
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.001		0.000
N			226	
<b>COM</b>				1
Pearson correlation	0.588**	0.739**	0.616**	
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.001	0.001	
N			226	

Source: Saad, M.M., Gaber, H.R., & Labib, A.A. (2019). Explaining The Effect of Organizations' Practices on Employee's Engagement and Commitment in Egypt. AAST Msc Thesis  
CE, cognitive engagement; EE, emotional engagement; BE, behavioral engagement; COM, commitment.

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

## Results/findings

### Correlation analysis

Through adopting a correlation analysis on the research's data, the findings showed that the emotional dimension (EE) of the engagement construct had the highest relationship with commitment (COM) with an  $r = (0.739)$ , which is a high positive relationship. Furthermore, the behavioural dimension (BE) of the engagement construct had a positive relationship with commitment with an  $r = (0.588)$ . Finally, the relationship between the cognitive dimension of engagement (CE) with commitment (COM) were moderate to high relationship with an  $r = (0.588)$ .

### Multiple regression analysis

The multiple regression analysis results indicated that, there is a positive relationship with strong relationship ( $R = 0.757$ ), and  $R^2$  shows that the independent variables can predict the change in the dependent variable by 57.3%. Also, the adjusted  $R^2$  is 56.7% which means that the dependent variable is suitable with the sample size of the study. Furthermore, the results from the ANOVA table also, were statistically significant at ( $p = 0.001$ ), which is less than 0.05, so we reject null hypothesis  $H_0$ , also accept the  $H_1$ , this indicating that this regression result is statistically significant.

The findings of investigating the impact of employee engagement on commitment showed that not all the dimensions of employee engagement were able to explain the change of employees' commitment. For instance, CE had

**TABLE 3a:** Multiple regression analysis.

Model summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.757†	0.573	0.567	0.610

†, Predictors: (Constant), CE, EE, BE.

**TABLE 3b:** Multiple regression analysis.

ANOVA†						
S.No	Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	110.750	3	36.917	99.340	0.000‡
	Residual	82.500	222	0.372	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>193.250</b>	<b>225</b>	-	-	-

†, Dependent variable: COM.

‡, Predictors: (Constant), CE, EE, BE.

**TABLE 3c:** Multiple regression analysis.

Coefficients†						
S.No	Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.281	0.230	-	1.223	0.222
	CE	0.157	0.085	0.127	1.852	0.065
	EE	0.562	0.062	0.570	9.052	0.000
	BE	0.143	0.083	0.126	1.728	0.085

Source: Saad, M.M., Gaber, H.R., & Labib, A.A. (2019). Explaining The Effect of Organizations' Practices on Employee's Engagement and Commitment in Egypt. AAST Msc Thesis

CE, cognitive engagement; EE, emotional engagement; BE, behavioral engagement; COM, commitment.

†, Dependent Variable: COM.

TABLE 4a: Independent *t*-test analysis.

Your gender	N	Group statistics		
		Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
<b>COM</b>				
Male	151	3.69	0.909	0.074
Female	75	3.57	0.962	0.111
<b>CE</b>				
Male	151	4.00	0.767	0.062
Female	75	3.95	0.710	0.082
<b>EE</b>				
Male	151	3.87	0.903	0.074
Female	75	3.74	1.008	0.116
<b>BE</b>				
Male	151	4.18	0.828	0.067
Female	75	3.97	0.774	0.089

TABLE 4b: Independent *t*-test analysis.

	Independent samples test								
	Levene's test for equality of variances		<i>t</i> -test for equality of means						
	F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% Confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
<b>COM</b>									
Equal variances assumed	1.021	0.313	0.924	224	0.357	0.121	0.131	-0.137	0.379
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	0.906	140.649	0.366	0.121	0.133	-0.143	0.385
<b>CE</b>									
Equal variances assumed	0.051	0.822	0.441	224	0.659	0.047	0.106	-0.162	0.255
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	0.453	158.494	0.651	0.047	0.103	-0.157	0.250
<b>EE</b>									
Equal variances assumed	1.401	0.238	1.022	224	0.308	0.136	0.133	-0.126	0.397
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	0.985	134.326	0.327	0.136	0.138	-0.137	0.408
<b>BE</b>									
Equal variances assumed	0.183	0.669	1.817	224	0.071	0.208	0.115	-0.018	0.434
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	1.859	157.101	0.065	0.208	0.112	-0.013	0.429

CE, cognitive engagement; EE, emotional engagement; BE behavioral engagement; COM, commitment.

no significant impact on COM as its  $p = 0.065$  which is greater than (0.05). Similarly, BE had no significant impact on COM as its  $p = 0.085$  which is greater than (0.05). The only dimension which had a significant impact on COM is EE as its  $p = 0.001$  which is less than 0.05 with  $B = 0.562$ . Therefore, based on such analysis, the H1b is accepted and (H1a and H1c are rejected).

Lastly the multiple regression equation is as follows:  
 $COM = 0.281 + 0.157 CE + 0.562 EE + 0.143 BE$ .

### Independent t-test analysis

Hypotheses 2a and b: Different genders have different perceptions of employees' engagement dimensions and employees' commitment. (H2 is rejected).

The test results show that both men and women did not have different perceptions of employees' engagement and commitment that were statistically insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, hypotheses 2a and b are rejected; also null hypothesis H0 is accepted.

### One-way ANOVA analysis

Hypotheses 3a and b: Different work department groups have different perceptions of the dimensions of employees' engagement and employees' commitment. (H3 is accepted).

The findings show that there is a significant difference between work department groups with employees' engagement and commitment as the CE is significant at  $p = 0.009$  which is less than 0.05; EE is significant at  $p = 0.013$  which is less than 0.05; BE is significant at  $p = 0.013$  which is less than 0.05. Finally COM is significant at  $p = 0.006$  which is less than 0.05.

Because of the significant difference of CE, EE, BE and COM with the work department groups, we need to understand which of the tested group had a significant difference from the rest of groups. Therefore, a post hoc Bonferroni multiple comparison was used. We found out that CE with the work department group of Academic or teacher and sales is significant at  $p = 0.035$  which is less than 0.05. We also discovered that BE with the work department group of

TABLE 5a: ANOVA test.

One-Way ANOVA Analysis	ANOVA				
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
<b>CE</b>					
Between groups	11.115	8	1.389	2.632	0.009
Within groups	114.541	217	0.528	-	-
Total	125.656	225	-	-	-
<b>EE</b>					
Between groups	16.692	8	2.087	2.491	0.013
Within groups	181.788	217	0.838	-	-
Total	198.481	225	-	-	-
<b>BE</b>					
Between groups	12.588	8	1.574	2.495	0.013
Within groups	136.860	217	0.631	-	-
Total	149.449	225	-	-	-
<b>COM</b>					
Between groups	18.021	8	2.253	2.790	0.006
Within groups	175.229	217	0.808	-	-
Total	193.250	225	-	-	-

TABLE 5b: ANOVA test.

Dependent variable	Multiple comparisons				
	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	99% confidence interval	
				Lower bound	Upper bound
<b>Bonferroni</b>					
<b>CE</b>					
Academic or Teacher	-	-	-	-	-
Sales	0.608	0.182	0.035	-0.06	1.28
<b>BE</b>					
Academic or Teacher	-	-	-	-	-
Sales	0.701	0.199	0.019	-0.03	1.44
<b>COM</b>					
Academic or Teacher	-	-	-	-	-
Sales	0.772	0.225	0.026	-0.06	1.60

CE, cognitive engagement; EE, emotional engagement; BE, behavioral engagement; COM, commitment

Academic or teacher and sales is significant at  $p = 0.019$  which is less than 0.05. Finally, COM with the work department group of Academic or teacher and sales is significant at  $p = 0.026$  which is less than 0.05, but EE was insignificant in all of them.

### Moderation analysis

Hypothesis 4: Strategic implementation has a moderating role between employees' engagement and employees' commitment (H4 is rejected). The result of the test found that the model  $R = 0.782$  which is strong positive relationship; the independent variables can predict the change in the dependent variable by around  $R^2 = 61.1\%$ , and the model is significant at  $p = 0.001$  which is less than 0.05. The result of the Coefficients table that shows the moderating effect is insignificant because it has a  $p = 0.322$  which is greater than 0.05. For that reason, hypothesis 4 is rejected and null hypothesis H0 is accepted.

## Discussion

The findings of this article underscore the importance of employee engagement and its role in enhancing employee

commitment. Our findings are in line with some of the recent published work in the area of human resources management. For instance, Gupta (2017) supported the proposed influence of engagement on commitment towards the organisation. Likewise, we support such findings as well, because we found that engagement is a predictor of commitment by 57.3% with all the dimensions contributing to such impact and EE having the highest influence on commitment with  $B = 0.562$  at  $p = 0.001$ . Researchers as Hakanen et al. (2006); Saks (2006); Halbesleben (2010) also found a strong link between engagement and commitment. The main reason for our findings was also due to what Ferreira and Real De Oliveira (2014) discussed that in the developing countries, organisations abandon their employees' well-being and psychological state.

The observance of the demographic differences on the way employees viewed both engagement and commitment found that in terms of gender differences men besides women did not have different perceptions of employees' engagement and commitment that were statistically insignificant. This is in line with Chalofsky (2010), who found that an engaged employee, whether male or female, will interact positively with customer. However this was not in line with Gamil (2016) research, as he explained that in terms of gender differences men had higher EE to their jobs than women, as well as Boyd (2009) findings indicated the opposite that women had a higher EE than men. In addition to; our findings postulated that (work position) both had no impact on the way employees perceive engagement or commitment, so it contradicts what Saks (2006) and Boyd (2009) analyses results that females' viewpoint of commitment that it would be directed towards customers than male.

Lastly, it was surprising that the testing of the moderating effect of strategic implementation on the relation between engagement and commitment resulted in insignificant moderating impact on this relation where no change was detected upon adding the interacting between the independent variable

## Contributions and implications

This article contributes practically and theoretically that it is one of the few studies which examine the previously discussed relationship inside Egyptian SME's. Besides, it examined the dimensions of employees' engagement effect on an important behavioural construct which is commitment. This study investigated the impact of the three acknowledged dimensions of engagement rather than investigating the impact on the overall employees' engagement.

Lastly focusing on each engagement type separately provided valuable knowledge regarding key factors that contribute to enriching each construct in relationship to employees' commitment. Engagement is studied as a factor affecting commitment not the vice versa. It analyses the perception of the employees who are working in SMEs in terms of gender and work position. It tests the moderating role of strategic implementation between employees' engagement and commitment in the Egyptian context.



## Conclusion and recommendations

Building on this research's findings as well as on the reviewed literature, the study recommended that it is necessary for Egyptian SMEs to adapt, modify their strategies and tactics by which their employees' engagement level could be measured, and monitored particularly the EE that was found to have the greatest influence on employees' commitment. Cleveland, Byrne and Cavanagh (2015) stressed that organisations should treat their employees not as tangible assets; employees are not 'static'. They, in the current settings, are expected to be engaged in their working environment (Deeb, Alananzeh, & Tarhini, 2019). One simple way to measure this is by asking employees 'how they feel towards the company, also its management' with open hearts and minds. Managements could hold periodical meetings with all employees to understand what problems they are facing or worried about. This would be a main, and vital source for collecting information by which workplace environment could be enhanced.

Egyptian managers could also create a 'friendly' working environment by monthly employees' gathering over lunch, and celebrations of employees' occasions would enhance social connections inside the company. Organisations should not blame employees themselves neglecting the fact that the workplace environment might have the greatest impact on workers' attitude and they would neglect the importance of their employees' conditions. Therefore, they suffer and thus lead to high turnover problem to the organisation (Ferreira & Real De Oliveira, 2014).

Employees' commitment is important to any organisation, not only because employees would be retained, but also because when they are retained, they stay with a 'heart' to deliver and accomplish tasks. The most important thing for the management to do is to acknowledge the importance of its employees and the significance of having them actively engaged and committed. Management should appreciate the fact that once an employee considers his or her job to be interesting, meaningful, and fair, he or she would be satisfied and have a sense of accomplishment. Saridakis et al. (2013) confirmed that workers who are satisfied with their jobs are expected to show more positive feelings, beliefs, and actions towards their jobs, and also be more committed to the organisation than those who are lacking satisfaction.

Egyptian managers should differentiate between engagement, and commitment terminologies in addition to their implementation at work inside the organisation. Employee commitment is seen to be one of the contributing factors to employee engagement. One of the reasons, that many studies mistakenly confuse commitment with engagement, is that the engaged employees stay because they like their jobs; however, unengaged employees intend to remain as well. Unengaged employees choose to stay for many reasons such as money, career opportunities, security, stability, familiarity, comfortable working conditions or even the delay and the resistance in changing jobs. Being unengaged does not bring the lack of commitment but commit in the

TABLE 6a: Moderation analysis.

Model summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.782†	0.611	0.606	0.582

†, Predictors: (Constant), Multiplication, CenSI, CentEng.

TABLE 6b: Moderation analysis.

ANOVA†						
S.No	Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	118.161	3	39.387	116.447	0.000‡
	Residual	75.089	222	0.338	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>193.250</b>	<b>225</b>	-	-	-

†, Dependent variable: COM.

‡, Predictors: (Constant), multiplication, CenSI, CentEng.

TABLE 6c: Moderation analysis.

Coefficients†						
S.No	Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.660	0.044	-	84.031	0.000
	CenSI	0.301	0.046	0.322	6.516	0.000
	CentEng	0.687	0.064	0.551	10.782	0.000
	Multiplication	-0.052	0.052	-0.043	-0.993	0.322

COM, commitment.

†, Dependent variable: COM.

wrong things, and contribute to the inaccurate engagement rate for the company (Rice et al., 2012). The danger of including unengaged employees in the engagement level can harm the organisation, as they do not really want to stay, contribute, and work hard for the success of the company.

Furthermore, regarding future Commitment was looked upon in its holistic form, although its question covers its three dimensions, additionally future research could be recommended to examine it through each of its separate constructs. It is advised to test the opposite direction of influence between engagement and commitment to understand the reciprocal nature between them and in different context as well. The research covered only the employees working in Egyptian SMEs. It is advised to include other companies and organisations to cover the entire industry, which will increase the sample size, and also help in developing a comparison between the sectors. It could also be tested on different contexts and be compared to Egypt and Kuwait findings. Also, a comparison between industry players could be positioned as well. It is also advised for researchers to cover other industries' employees, especially service providers' employees.

Commitment and engagement are advised to be measured over a longer period through a longitudinal research timeframe to detect changes in employees' perspectives about these concepts. This research data was collected through quantitative approach. Hence, a further research could be supported through a qualitative methodology interviewing top management, and then compare the results with those of employees. Strategic implementation was tested as a moderator; it is suggested for future

research to examine its direct impact on engagement and commitment.

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### Competing interests

The authors have declared that no competing interest exists.

### Authors' contributions

This article was written by a team of researchers from the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport. Dr Mohamed Mostafa Saad had a key role in data collection, data analysis and writing the first draft of the article. Dr Hazem Gaber and Prof. Ashraf Labib had key roles in revising the article and responding to reviewers' comments.

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This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

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### Disclaimer

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