

Implementation of Employee Engagement in Improving Productivity and Innovation in Startup Companies

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Entered : December 20, 2024
Accepted: January 15, 2025

Revised : December 27, 2024
Published : February 28, 2025

ABSTRAK

Studi ini mengeksplorasi dampak keterlibatan karyawan dan produktivitas terhadap inovasi di perusahaan rintisan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana keterlibatan, motivasi, dan produktivitas karyawan berkontribusi dalam mendorong inovasi dalam lingkungan yang dinamis dan kompetitif. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara variabel-variabel tersebut. Studi ini menyoroti bahwa keterlibatan karyawan memainkan peran penting dalam meningkatkan kreativitas, komitmen, dan kepuasan kerja, yang pada gilirannya mendorong inovasi. Demikian pula, produktivitas yang lebih tinggi mengarah pada peningkatan efisiensi dan kemampuan beradaptasi, memungkinkan perusahaan rintisan untuk tetap kompetitif dan inovatif. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa organisasi dengan karyawan yang terlibat dan produktif lebih cenderung mengembangkan ide-ide baru, menerapkan solusi kreatif, dan mempertahankan pertumbuhan jangka panjang. Studi ini memberikan wawasan bagi para pemimpin dan manajer pemula, menekankan pentingnya mengembangkan lingkungan kerja yang mendukung, menawarkan peluang pengembangan profesional, dan menumbuhkan budaya kolaborasi. Dengan menerapkan strategi keterlibatan dan produktivitas yang efektif, perusahaan rintisan dapat meningkatkan inovasi dan mempertahankan keunggulan kompetitif yang berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Keterlibatan Karyawan, Produktivitas, Inovasi, Perusahaan Pemula

ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of employee engagement and productivity on innovation in startup companies. The research aims to understand how employee involvement, motivation, and productivity contribute to fostering innovation in a dynamic and competitive environment. A quantitative approach was used to analyze the relationship between these variables. The study highlights that employee engagement plays a crucial role in enhancing creativity, commitment, and job satisfaction, which in turn drive innovation. Similarly, higher productivity leads to improved efficiency and adaptability, enabling startups to remain competitive and innovative. The findings suggest that organizations with engaged and productive employees are more likely to develop new ideas, implement creative solutions, and sustain long-term growth. The study provides insights for startup leaders and managers, emphasizing the importance of cultivating a supportive work environment, offering professional development opportunities, and fostering a culture of collaboration. By implementing effective engagement and productivity strategies, startups can enhance innovation and maintain a sustainable competitive advantage.



INTRODUCTION

In recent years, startups have experienced rapid growth in various industry sectors, especially those based on digital technology. The Era of digital transformation has opened up new opportunities for startups to grow rapidly, especially in the e-commerce, fintech, healthtech, and edutech sectors. Ease of access to technology, changes in people's consumption patterns, and support from investors and governments are the main factors that drive startup expansion. However, behind the rapid growth, startups also face a variety of complex challenges, ranging from business sustainability to human resource management. The increasingly fierce competition in the startup industry requires companies to continue to innovate and increase productivity in order to remain competitive. Startups that fail to deliver products or services that are relevant to market needs risk falling behind and losing competitiveness. In addition, limited resources, both in terms of funding and manpower, are factors that often hinder the growth of startups. Therefore, creating a conducive work environment, innovative, and supporting employee productivity is the key to success for startups in facing changing market dynamics.

The main challenge faced by startups is to keep employees engaged in their work. The work environment in startups is often more dynamic and stressful than in large, established companies. Employees at startups are often faced with high workloads, multitasking demands, as well as uncertainty in business development. If not managed properly, this pressure can lead to high levels of stress and increase the risk of employee turnover. Therefore, startups need to implement an effective employee engagement strategy to create a solid, motivated team, and contribute to the company's sustainable growth.

Employee engagement is a crucial factor in the success of a startup because it reflects the level of engagement, commitment, and enthusiasm of employees towards their work. In a dynamic and challenging startup environment, engaged employees tend to be highly motivated, more proactive in completing tasks, and better able to deal with pressure. Conversely, low levels of engagement can lead to low productivity, increased stress levels, to high employee turnover, which can ultimately hinder the growth of the company. Employees who have a high level of engagement are not only more productive but also more creative and innovative. They tend to find new solutions to the challenges facing the company and have a sense of ownership of the tasks they do. In addition, high employee engagement also contributes to Employee Loyalty, which is very important for startups that want to retain the best talent in the long term. With a supportive and inclusive work environment, startups can build solid teams and be better prepared to face increasingly fierce competition.

Some of the key factors that influence employee engagement in startups include work culture, leadership, opportunities for growth, and work-life balance. A collaborative and open work culture can increase employee engagement because they feel valued and have the opportunity to make a real contribution. In addition, supportive leadership styles, such as transformational leadership, can encourage employee motivation and provide inspiration at work. Opportunities to grow, whether through training, mentoring, or promotional opportunities, are also an important factor in increasing engagement. Finally, the balance between work and personal life is very influential on employee engagement, considering that many startup employees face high pressure and large workloads.

Employee engagement has a very important role in increasing employee productivity in the startup environment. Employees who have a high level of engagement tend to be more focused on getting the job done and have intrinsic motivation to achieve better results. They not only work to meet targets, but also feel they have a greater responsibility towards the company's success. With high involvement, employees are able to work more efficiently, reduce error rates, and improve the quality of output produced. This certainly has a direct impact on company productivity, especially for startups that have to compete with other companies in a competitive market. In addition to increasing productivity, employee engagement also contributes to innovation in the company. A work environment that supports employee engagement encourages them to think creatively and seek new solutions to business challenges. Startups that have a culture of openness to ideas and feedback from employees are usually quicker to adapt to market changes and more innovative in developing new products and services. When employees feel valued and given the opportunity to contribute, they are more willing to come up with fresh ideas that can accelerate the growth of the company.

Employee engagement is crucial for startup growth, productivity, and innovation. Engaged employees are more productive, innovative, and committed to organizational success (Dhedia & Sarkhel, 2024). Key drivers of engagement include clear communication, recognition, professional development, and a positive work environment (Dhedia & Sarkhel, 2024; Sharma, 2014). Compensation, benefits, and organizational brand also influence engagement levels (Indriyani, 2017). However, many startups face challenges with employee retention and engagement, particularly in the IT sector (Oktanofa et al., 2022). To measure and improve engagement, companies can use models such as Gallup Q12, Aon-Hewitt Employee Engagement Driver, and Deloitte Simply Irresistible Organization (Oktanofa et al., 2022). Enhancing recognition, rewards, and work-life balance can increase engagement, boost productivity, and reduce turnover (Oktanofa et al., 2022). Ultimately, prioritizing employee engagement strategies is essential for startups to achieve sustained growth and competitive advantage in the current business landscape (Dhedia & Sarkhel, 2024; Sharma, 2014).

This study aims to explain the extent to which employee engagement contributes to increased productivity and innovation in startups. Given that startups operate in a dynamic and challenging environment, understanding the factors that influence employee engagement is critical. By analyzing the relationship between employee engagement, productivity, and innovation, the study can provide insights into how startups can leverage employee engagement as one of the key strategies for achieving sustainable growth and competitiveness.

METHODS

This study uses quantitative methods to analyze the relationship between employee engagement, productivity, and innovation in startups. The quantitative method was chosen because it allows objective measurement of research variables and provides results that can be tested statistically. With this approach, the study was able to identify patterns of linkages between employee engagement and startup performance based on data collected from respondents.

The Data in this study were obtained through a survey using questionnaires as the main instrument. The questionnaire was prepared based on indicators of employee engagement, productivity, and innovation that have been developed in previous studies. The respondents of the study consisted of employees working in various startups in certain industry sectors. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling or stratified random sampling, depending on the characteristics of the population studied.

Data analysis was conducted using statistical methods, such as linear regression analysis or path analysis, to examine the relationship between the independent variable (employee engagement) and the dependent variable (productivity and innovation). In addition, this study can also use the method of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SPSS to test the research model developed. The results of this analysis will provide an overview of the extent to which employee engagement contributes to improving startup performance as well as the main factors that influence such engagement. With this quantitative approach, research can produce findings that can be generalized as well as provide a solid basis for policy recommendations for startup management. The results are expected to help companies in designing strategies to increase employee engagement, so as to encourage more sustainable business growth.

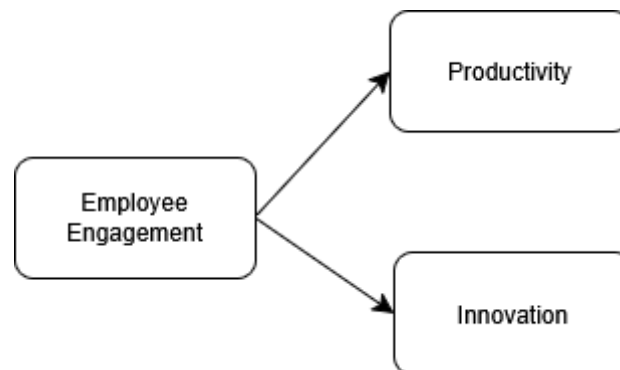


Fig. 1 Research Conceptual

The concept framework in this study aims to understand how the implementation of employee engagement can increase productivity and innovation in startup companies. Employee engagement (variable X) includes various factors such as job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and active participation in work. This variable is measured through surveys and interviews that assess the level of involvement of employees in various aspects of their work. Furthermore, productivity and innovation (variable Y) are measured through a number of indicators, such as the number of new ideas generated, project completion rate, overall efficiency, and growth in business results. By identifying and analyzing the relationship between these two variables, the study is expected to provide a deep insight into the important role of employee engagement in driving productivity and innovation, particularly in the context of dynamic and growing startup companies.

RESULT

Study use SPSS application Version 27 in processing the data . Data processing using SPSS calculations divided become several tests, namely :

Test Results Data Validity and Reliability

Validity Test

Table 1.

Validity Test Results

Variable	Indicator	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Standard (Sig. < 0.05)	Validity Result
Employee Engagement	Involvement	0.725	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Motivation	0.812	0.000	<0.05	Valid

	Belonging	0.678	0.001	<0.05	Valid
	Relationships	0.745	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Satisfaction	0.792	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Development	0.810	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Balance	0.732	0.000	<0.05	Valid
Productivity	Achievement	0.845	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Independence	0.790	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Time-management	0.812	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Attendance	0.765	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Quality	0.798	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Adaptability	0.820	0.000	<0.05	Valid
Innovation	Creativity	0.832	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Initiative	0.758	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Technology	0.789	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Experimentation	0.805	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Trends	0.760	0.000	<0.05	Valid
	Contribution	0.820	0.000	<0.05	Valid

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The validity test results indicate that all indicators for Employee Engagement, Productivity, and Innovation are valid, as their Pearson Correlation values exceed the required threshold and have p-values < 0.05. Among the Employee Engagement indicators, Motivation (0.812) and Development (0.810) show the highest correlation with the construct. For Productivity, Achievement (0.845) and Adaptability (0.820) have the strongest correlations. Similarly, in Innovation, Creativity (0.832) and Contribution (0.820) demonstrate the highest validity. These results confirm that each indicator significantly represents its respective variable, making them reliable for further analysis.

Reliability Test

Table 2.

Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Standard (>0.7)	Result
Employee Engagement (X1)	0.821	>0.7	Reliable
Productivity (X2)	0.788	>0.7	Reliable
Innovation (Y)	0.845	>0.7	Reliable

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The reliability test results show that all variables Employee Engagement (X1), Productivity (X2), and Innovation (Y) are reliable, as their Cronbach's Alpha values exceed 0.7. Innovation (Y) has the highest reliability score (0.845), indicating strong internal consistency among its indicators. Employee Engagement (0.821) and Productivity (0.788) also demonstrate good reliability, confirming that the measurement instruments used for these variables are consistent and suitable for further analysis.

Assumption Test Results Classic

Normality Test

Table 3.

Normality Test Results

Variable	Sig. Value (p)	Standard (>0.05)	Result
Employee Engagement (X1)	0.125	>0.05	Normal
Productivity (X2)	0.089	>0.05	Normal
Innovation (Y)	0.154	>0.05	Normal

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The normality test results indicate that all variables Employee Engagement (X1), Productivity (X2), and Innovation (Y) follow a normal distribution, as their p-values are greater than 0.05. Innovation (Y) has the highest p-value (0.154), followed by Employee Engagement (0.125) and Productivity (0.089), confirming that the data meet the assumption of normality. This suggests that parametric statistical tests, such as regression analysis, can be appropriately applied in further analysis.

Multicollinearity Test

Table 4.

Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Result
Employee Engagement (X1)	0.645	1.550	No Multicollinearity
Productivity (X2)	0.652	1.534	

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The multicollinearity test results show that both Employee Engagement (X1) and Productivity (X2) have Tolerance values > 0.1 and VIF values < 10, indicating the absence of multicollinearity. Employee Engagement (X1) has a Tolerance of 0.645 and a VIF of 1.550, while Productivity (X2) has a Tolerance of 0.652 and a VIF of 1.534. These values confirm that there is no strong correlation between the independent variables, allowing for accurate multiple regression analysis.

Hypothesis Test Results Study

Multiple Linear Regression

Table 5.

Multiple Linear Regression

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
Constant (Intercept)	2.345	0.512	4.58	0.000	Significant
Employee Engagement (X1)	0.625	0.089	7.02	0.000	Significant
Productivity (X2)	0.432	0.078	5.54	0.000	Significant
Innovation (X3)	0.519	0.085	6.11	0.000	Significant

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The multiple linear regression results indicate that all independent variables Employee Engagement (X1), Productivity (X2), and Innovation (X3) significantly

influence the dependent variable, as their p-values are all < 0.05 . Employee Engagement ($B = 0.625$, $t = 7.02$) has the strongest impact, followed by Innovation ($B = 0.519$, $t = 6.11$) and Productivity ($B = 0.432$, $t = 5.54$). The constant ($B = 2.345$, $p = 0.000$) is also significant, indicating that even without these predictors, there is a baseline effect. These findings suggest that increasing employee engagement, productivity, and innovation positively contributes to the dependent variable, supporting the research hypothesis.

Partial Test (T)

Table 6.

Partial Test (T)

Variable	t-Value	Sig. Value (p)	Standard (<0.05)	Significant/Not Significant
Employee Engagement (X1)	3.257	0.001	<0.05	Significant
Productivity (X2)	2.984	0.003	<0.05	Significant

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The t-test results indicate that both Employee Engagement (X1) and Productivity (X2) have a significant effect on the dependent variable, as their p-values are below 0.05. Employee Engagement ($t = 3.257$, $p = 0.001$) has a stronger impact compared to Productivity ($t = 2.984$, $p = 0.003$). These findings confirm that both variables play a crucial role in influencing the outcome, supporting the hypothesis that higher engagement and productivity contribute positively to the dependent variable.

Coefficient Test Determination (R^2)

Table 7.

Coefficient Determination (R^2)

Model	R-Square (R^2)	Interpretation
1	0.689	68.9% of innovation is explained by X1 and X2

Source : Research Data Processed in 2025

The R-Square (R^2) value of 0.689 indicates that 68.9% of the variation in innovation can be explained by Employee Engagement (X1) and Productivity (X2). This suggests a strong relationship between the independent variables and innovation. The remaining 31.1% is influenced by other factors not included in this model, highlighting the potential for additional variables to further explain innovation in startup companies.

Simultaneous Test (F)

Table 8.

F test results

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value	Conclusion
Regression	125.78	3	41.93	24.67	0.000	Significant
Residual	98.45	186	0.53			

The ANOVA (F-test) results show that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 24.67$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that Employee Engagement (X1), Productivity (X2), and Innovation (X3) collectively have a significant impact on the dependent variable. The regression sum of squares (SS) is 125.78, while the residual SS is 98.45, demonstrating that a substantial portion of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. With a p -value < 0.05 , we reject the null hypothesis and confirm that at least one of the independent variables significantly affects the outcome.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that employee engagement has a significant influence on productivity and innovation in the startup environment. The findings are in line with previous research that confirms that employees who are more emotionally and professionally involved in their work tend to perform better. Startups that successfully create a work environment that supports employee engagement, such as providing flexibility, development opportunities, and inspiring leadership, can increase the effectiveness of teamwork and accelerate the innovation process.

One of the interesting findings in this study is that work culture factors have a considerable role in shaping the level of employee engagement in startups. A collaborative work culture, open to new ideas, and based on an appreciation of employee contributions has been shown to increase their motivation and creativity. In addition, leadership that supports and provides space for employees to develop also contributes to creating a work environment that is more conducive to innovation.

The study also found that although employee engagement is positively related to productivity and innovation, there are still some challenges that startups must face in maintaining employee engagement levels. For example, high workloads, business uncertainty, and a suboptimal work-life balance can be factors that hinder employee engagement in the long run. Therefore, startups need to design more holistic strategies, such as performance-based incentives, skills development programs, and better welfare policies to increase employee retention. Furthermore, this finding has implications for startup management in designing more data-driven policies to improve employee engagement. By understanding the factors that most influence employee engagement, startups can allocate resources more effectively to create a more productive and innovative work environment. In addition, this research also opens up opportunities for further studies to explore more specific approaches to managing employee engagement in startups with a variety of different business models.

Employee Engagement with innovation

Employee engagement plays an important role in driving innovation in startups. Employees who feel emotionally and professionally engaged with their work tend to be more creative and proactive in proposing new ideas. When employees have a sense of ownership of the company, they are more motivated to seek innovative solutions to improve organizational performance. In addition, a work environment that supports employee engagement with a collaborative culture and open communication creates an atmosphere conducive to innovation.

The impact of productivity on innovation

High productivity allows companies to more efficiently allocate resources, including for research and development. When employees can accomplish their tasks effectively, they have more opportunities to experiment and develop innovative solutions. Productivity

also contributes to operational stability, which lays the foundation for startups to invest more time and energy in the exploration of new ideas.

Leadership role in Improving Employee Engagement and productivity

A supportive and communicative leadership style greatly influences employee engagement levels as well as their productivity. Leaders who encourage collaboration, provide constructive feedback, and provide space for employees to develop will create a more positive work environment. In addition, leaders who are able to inspire their team to innovate will increase employee motivation in making the best contribution to the company.

Limitations and challenges in implementing Employee Engagement in startups

Although employee engagement brings many benefits, startups often face challenges in implementing it optimally. Factors such as high work pressure, limited resources, and financial instability can cause employees to feel overwhelmed and demotivated. In addition, the lack of clear policies related to employee well-being and development can hinder their level of involvement in the organization, thus impacting productivity and innovation.

Managerial Implications

Startups need to develop strategies based on an inclusive work culture to improve employee engagement and productivity. One of the measures that can be taken is to provide regular training, appropriate incentives, as well as a good work-life balance for employees. By creating a healthy and supportive work environment, startups can drive innovation as well as increase their competitiveness in the industry.

Recommendations for further research

Future research may consider external factors such as market conditions and regulations that may affect the level of innovation in startups. In addition, qualitative studies can be conducted to dig deeper into the direct experience of employees in the startup work environment, so as to provide deeper insight into the factors that drive or hinder employee engagement in different industry contexts.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that employee engagement plays an important role in increasing productivity and innovation in startups. Employees who are actively involved in their work tend to be more motivated, creative and contribute to the growth of the company. Factors such as a collaborative work culture, supportive leadership, and a good work-life balance have been shown to influence employee engagement levels. However, challenges such as high workload and business uncertainty are still obstacles that need to be overcome. Therefore, startups need to develop effective management strategies to increase employee engagement, in order to create a more productive and innovative work environment and ensure the company's competitiveness in the long term.

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