

การเสริมสร้างการดำเนินงานขององค์กร: กรณีศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนไทยแห่งหนึ่งในประเทศไทย

อติพล สุวรรณดี

มหาวิทยาลัยเกษมบัณฑิต 1761 ถนนพัฒนาการ เขตสวนหลวง กรุงเทพมหานคร 10250

Email: atipol.suw@kbu.ac.th

ติดต่อผู้เขียนบทความที่ อติพล สุวรรณดี มหาวิทยาลัยเกษมบัณฑิต 1761 ถนนพัฒนาการ เขตสวนหลวง กรุงเทพมหานคร 10250

Email: atipol.suw@kbu.ac.th

วันที่รับบทความ: 8 เมษายน 2562 วันที่แก้ไขบทความ: 30 พฤศจิกายน 2563 วันที่ตอบรับบทความ: 3 ธันวาคม 2563

บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อประเมินผลของการปรับปรุงกระบวนการด้านการพัฒนาองค์กร โดยการแทรกแซงด้านการพัฒนาองค์กรต่อ ผลการดำเนินงานขององค์กร ระบบการจัดการการดำเนินงานและความผูกพันของพนักงานต่อองค์กร **วิธีวิจัย** ดำเนินการศึกษาเฉพาะระดับภาควิชาในมหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนแห่งหนึ่งในประเทศไทย ขนาดกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการศึกษา คือ บุคลากรจากภาควิชาต่าง ๆ จำนวน 42 คน การออกแบบการวิจัยในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ใช้การประเมินตนเองและการสัมภาษณ์ เพื่อรวบรวมข้อมูลจากผู้ร่วมการวิจัย ใช้การวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพและเชิงปริมาณ **ผลการวิจัย** ผลการดำเนินงานขององค์กร ระบบการจัดการการดำเนินงานและความผูกพันของพนักงานต่อองค์กร เพิ่มขึ้นอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ ($p < 0.05$) ภายหลังการประยุกต์การปรับปรุงระบบการจัดการการดำเนินงานที่จัดทำขึ้นใหม่ **สรุป** การแทรกแซงโดยการพัฒนาองค์กร สามารถทำให้ผลการดำเนินงานขององค์กร ระบบการจัดการการดำเนินงานขององค์กร และความผูกพันของพนักงานต่อองค์กรสูงขึ้น

คำสำคัญ: ความผูกพันของพนักงานต่อองค์กร การจัดการการดำเนินงาน ผลการดำเนินงานขององค์กร



Strengthening Organizational Performance: A Case Study of a Thai Private University in Thailand

Atipol Suwandee

Kasem Bundit University, 1761 Pattanakarn Rd., Suanluang, Bangkok 10250

E-mail: atipol.suw@kbu.ac.th

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to **Atipol Suwandee**, Kasem Bundit University, 1761 Pattanakarn Rd., Suanluang, Bangkok 10250

E-mail: atipol.suw@kbu.ac.th

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ABSTRACT

PURPOSES: This research aimed to evaluate the effects of improved performance management system by means of organizational development intervention on organizational performance, performance management system and employee engagement. **METHODS:** The study was conducted at the departmental level in a private university in Thailand. The sample consisted of 42 staffs from various departments. The research design in this study was a self-completion questionnaire and interview to collect information from the participants. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. **RESULTS:** The organizational performance, performance management system, and employee engagement were enhanced significantly ($p < 0.05$) after implementing the newly improved performance management system. **CONCLUSIONS:** Effective organization development intervention could improve organizational performance, performance management system, and employee engagement.

Keywords: Employee engagement, performance management, organizational performance

Introduction

Higher education institutions in Thailand face three major new challenges: i) economic globalization: the complex integration of capital, technology, and information across national boundaries to create and integrated world market; ii) knowledge-based economic growth: the gained competitive edge from the possession of knowledge and innovation as opposed to the possession of the abundant natural resources and cheap labor; and iii) the information and communication revolution: the ease of information access and communication among people, institutions, and countries (Salmi, 2001). These challenges present new opportunities for Higher Education Institutions (e.g. continuing education for workforce to be equipped with necessary skills and knowledge for knowledge-based economy, borderless competition among higher education institutes in the world as the physical location is no longer importance to enter the competition) and a new form of competition in higher education such as online distance study program via state-of-the-art information technology, corporate university e.g. Toyota University, Motorola University.

In addition to challenges imposed by globalization, the Higher Education Institutions also face with public demands in that they act as a change agent in educating new generations for the betterment of the society. With such expectation, it requires that the higher education institutions need to change in response to social needs. Granados (2014) suggested that the higher education institutions need to improve the management system and initiate new teaching and learning approach that

promote critical and creative thinking while utilizing information technology to create and disseminate knowledge.

It is inevitably that higher education institutions need to respond to these challenges. They can not remain the traditional university as before and need to proactively consider the change in organization structure to enhance operational effectiveness to cope with these challenges. They must in search for the ways to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability to achieve favorable result in the areas of academic, research, and academic services.

To ensure the quality of education, universities are audited and assessed on the quality assurance aspect on a regular basis. In Thailand, there have been laws and regulations prescribed by Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation to assess the quality of education system, as follows: (1) Internal Education Quality Assurance System: Curriculum/Program of Studies Level, (2) Internal Education Quality Assurance System: Faculty Level and, (3) Internal Education Quality Assurance System: Institutional Level. For Internal Education Quality Assurance System: Institutional Level, there are 5 components of quality assurance for institutions as follows: (1) Graduate Production, (2) Research, (3) Academic Service, (4) Preservation of Arts and Culture, and (5) Administration and Management.

As Armstrong and Ward (2005) suggested that performance management has the potential to improve the performance of the organization and given that the university's management has demanded for the need to change the

performance management system, the research with the intervention on performance management system would be beneficial to the faculty members, staffs, and university as a whole.

With the alignment of performance management system, the university would be in a better position to achieve organizational performance in that the performance management system would (a) facilitate the organization in achieving its vision and business objectives, (b) be a prerequisite to develop performance culture in the organization, (c) align employees' performance goals with organization's goals, (d) ensure employees' clarity regarding performance expectation, (e) support the successful planning, and (f) reinforce linkage between pay and performance (Glendinning, 2002; Neary, 2002; Furnham, 2004; Graham, 2004; Buchner, 2007; Helm et al., 2007).

Objectives

1. To evaluate the effect of organization development intervention on organizational performance.
2. To evaluate the effect of organization development intervention on performance management system.
3. To evaluate the effect of organization development intervention on employee engagement.

Literature Review

Performance Management

Bates and Holton (1995) defined performance as "a multi-dimensional construct, the measurement of which varies depending on a variety of factors." Bernardin et al. (1995) defined performance as "the outcomes of work because they provide the strongest linkage to the strategic goals of the

organization, customer satisfaction, and economic contributions." Therefore, the comprehensive perspective of performance must embrace outcome and performance (Armstrong, 2009).

Performance management is an approach to managing and developing people for the purposes of developing performance of individual, team, and organization. It is a systematic process to improve the performance of organization (Armstrong, 2006) by developing the competence and capability of individuals (Lockett, 1992) and teams (Armstrong & Baron, 1998) through the process of directing and supporting (Walter, 1995). It is also concerned with the alignment of individual and team performance to the strategic goals of the organization (Aguinis & Pierce, 2008). Performance management was sometimes perceived to be the same with performance appraisal. However, there are significant differences between performance management and performance appraisal, although they share some similarity. Performance appraisal is in contrast to performance management in that it is once-a-year event which does not include strategic business consideration and on-going feedback to employee to improve performance. Whereas, performance management is more comprehensive in that a) it aligns individual objective with team and organization objectives, b) it is clearly defined the mutual expectation of roles and responsibilities, and c) it provides the opportunity to individual to develop and use his/her own abilities and skills (Armstrong, 2009).

Armstrong (2009) stated that the element of performance management is agreement, measurement, feedback, positive reinforcement, and dialogue. It is concerned with the agreement of

expected outcome to measure with the actual delivered outcome. It is concerned with on-going dialogue about performance which involves feedback, reinforcement, and coaching. Decramer et al. (2012) advocated that performance management is a cyclical and continuous process with phase of planning, monitoring, evaluation and reward. The planning phase consists of the setting of performance goals and objectives. The monitoring phase refers to the progress monitoring and feedback toward the performance objectives. The evaluation phase refers to the stage where performance is evaluated.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has been received increasing interests from both academicians and practitioners due to its predictability of desired job performance (Bakker, 2009; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). It has also been regarded as one of the most important contributing factors toward the achievement of favorable organization outcomes and performances. Employee engagement has been defined by many scholars. Some of the definitions are “the extent to which employees are motivated to contribute to organizational success and a willingness to go beyond basic requirements to accomplish tasks and organizational goals” (Wiley, 2010), “the harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work role” (Kahn, 1990), “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), “an individual employee’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes” (Schuck & Wollard, 2010), “the individual’s involvement and satisfaction

with, as well as enthusiasm for their work” (Jones & Harter, 2005).

Employee engagement is very much debatable whether it is contributed to individually inherited trait or developed through the appropriate leadership style or working condition and atmosphere. Wiley (2010) stated that employee engagement is a result of effective leadership characterized by inspiration, respect, recognition, and motivation to the employees. Concelman (2005) advocated that career path which is clear and strong in career development influences engagement. Organizational support, rewards, and organizational justice also play a vital role to create employee engagement (Sahoo & Mishra, 2012). Baker et al. (2011) stated that job resources and personal resources facilitate engagement. There is a positive relationship between job resources and engagement and between personal resources and engagement. Job resources are the physical, social, and organizational aspect of the job which is functional and supports personal growth. Examples of job resources are autonomy, social support from peers, and skill variety. Job resources play an intrinsic motivational role in that it fulfills basic human needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence. It also plays an extrinsic role because of the social support from supervisors and colleagues, opportunity to learn and to develop. Personal resources, or psychological capital, refer to individual’s self-efficacy to take on and put effort to achieve the tasks, individual’s optimism, and individual’s resilience to attain success (Luthans et al., 2007). Job characteristics affect positively employee engagement psychologically. The challenging job (or,

job enrichment) which allows the individual to use different skills and provides the opportunity to make important contribution has the direct relationship with engagement (Maslach, et al., 2004).

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is often described in terms of how well the organization is financially performed (Morin & Audebrand, 2014). However, there are many facets to evaluate the organizational performance. Jenatabadi (2015) advocated that organization performance could be measured by how well the organization achieves its business objectives given the availability of organizational inputs and resources. Organizational performance could even be measured by how well the organization utilizes its inputs and resources. The utilization of organization input and resource is measured in terms of effectiveness – the extent to which the demands of customers are fulfilled, and efficiency – the extent to which the organization resources are economically utilized to achieve its objectives.

Malcom Baldrige Award Excellence Criteria is established for educational institutions The Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence presents (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2013) seven education criteria: Leadership; Strategic Planning; Faculty and Staff Focus; Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus; Process Management;

Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; and Organizational Performance Results. According to the study conducted by Lambinicio (2016), the performance of Higher Education Institution was measured by four indicators: (1) quality excellence, (2) relevance and responsiveness, (3) Access and Equity, and (4) Efficiency and Effectiveness. For quality excellence, it was measured by the criterion of recognized curricular programs, accreditation, faculty members with advance degrees, percentage of passers in licensure examination, number of faculty availed on scholarship program, and publication of research and development outputs. For relevance and responsiveness, it was measured by the criterion of graduates, the integration of ICT subjects, number of R&D programs, and number of extension programs undertaken. For access and equity, it was measured by the criterion of number of enrollments, number of students availed on the scholarship programs, financial and loan assistance, and study now pay later program. For efficiency and effectiveness, it was measured by the criterion of new curriculum developed, enriched curriculum, number of R&D projects with funding, number of extension project with funding, and number of linkages established.

The relationship among performance management system, employee engagement and organization performance can be illustrated in Figure 1.

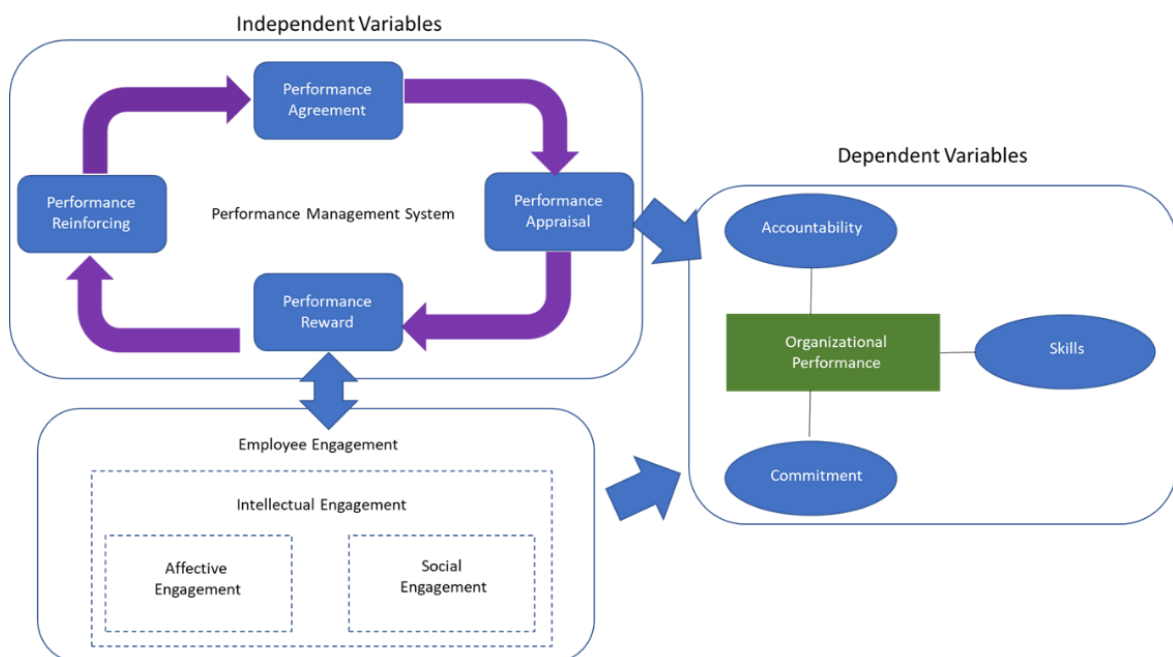


Figure 1 The Relationship among Performance Management System, Employee Engagement, and Organizational Performance.

Research Methods

The research in this study was designed to be in conformity with the Lewin's Planned Changed Model, General Model of Planned change, and Change Management for intervention activities. A private university in Thailand was the case study. The main characteristics were that there were many departments, the university was founded over 10 years and structure of organization was not changed for a long time.

This study involved employees from five departments of the university with the sample size selected purposively of 42 respondents. These five departments were Student Loan Department, Finance Department, Accounting Department, Student Assistant Service Center, and Internal Audit and Risk Management Department. The samples for interview

were 4 top executives, 5 managers, and 5 staffs from respective departments. The samples size for questionnaire totaled 42 respondents, of which 5 being managers and 37 being staffs from respective departments.

The data collected from the focus group was descriptive and non-numerical. The researcher analyzed and synthesized the content collected from the focus group participants. The data was categorized into related group of commonalities and was compared between Pre-ODI (Organization Development intervention) and Post-ODI. The data collected from section 1 of questionnaires (demographics section) was analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequency and percentage. The data collected from section 2 of questionnaires (perception section) was analyzed using basis statistics e.g., mean and standard deviation (SD). A

comparison of results between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI was analyzed using pair-samples t-test. The data collected from section 3 of questionnaires (suggestion section) was summarized, analyzed, and synthesized. The data was categorized into related group of commonalities and was compared between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI.

Results

The Findings of the Quantitative Analysis

Gender: Out of 42 respondents participated in the study, 35 respondents (83.33%) were female and 7 respondents (16.67%) were male. The result showed that female respondents represented the majority of the employee group in the participated departments.

Age: Out of 42 respondents participated in the study, 3 respondents (7.14%) were in the age group of 20 - 25 years old, 9 respondents (21.43%) were in the age group of 26 – 30 years old, 3 respondents (7.14%) were in the age group of 31 - 35 years old, 3 respondents (7.14%) were in the age group of 36 – 40 years old, 7 respondents (16.67%) were in the age group of 41 – 45 years old, and

17 respondents (28.57%) were in the age group of 46 years old and above.

Educational Level: Out of 42 respondents participated in the study, 7 respondents (16.67%) earned Diploma Degree, 29 respondents (69.05%) earned Bachelor Degree, and 6 respondents (14.29%) earned Master Degree and above.

Length of Service: Out of 42 respondents participated in the study, 7 respondents (16.67%) were attached to the university for less than 5 years, 8 respondents (19.05%) for 5 - 10 years, 10 respondents (23.81%) for 10 - 15 years, and 17 respondents (40.48%) for more than 15 years.

Analysis of Hypotheses

H1: Organizational performance of the university increases after strengthening the performance management system through the organization development intervention at the departmental level.

The result of analysis of hypothesis 1 in terms of organizational performance is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Organization Performance: the paired samples test analysis of hypothesis 1

Organization Performance		\bar{x}	t	Sig. (1-tail)
Pair 1	Commitment			
	Pre ODI	3.02	5.620	0.006
	Post ODI	4.31		
Pair 2	Skills			
	Pre ODI	3.07	4.371	0.011
	Post ODI	4.48		
Pair 3	Accountability			
	Pre ODI	3.72	2.110	0.063
	Post ODI	4.48		

For pair 1, namely commitment between Pre and Post ODI, commitment increased after strengthening the performance management system through organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.006$.

For pair 2, namely skills between Pre and Post ODI skills increased after strengthening performance management system through the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.011$.

For pair 3, namely accountability between Pre and Post ODI, accountability was not different after strengthening the performance management system through the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was not significant at $p = 0.063$.

H2: Performance Management System increases after the organization development intervention at the departmental level.

The results of analysis of hypothesis 2, in terms of performance management system are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Performance Management System: the paired samples test analysis of hypothesis 2

Performance Management System		\bar{x}	t	Sig. (1-tail)
Pair 1	Performance Agreement			
	Pre ODI	4.26	2.134	0.019
	Post ODI	4.36		
Pair 2	Performance Appraisal			
	Pre ODI	3.99	2.799	0.004
	Post ODI	4.11		
Pair 3	Performance Rewards			
	Pre ODI	3.38	2.377	0.011
	Post ODI	3.55		
Pair 4	Performance Reinforcing			
	Pre ODI	3.97	4.179	0.000
	Post ODI	4.19		

For pair 1, namely performance agreement between Pre and Post ODI, performance agreement increased after the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.019$.

For pair 2, namely performance appraisal between Pre and Post ODI, performance appraisal increased after the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.004$.

For pair 3, namely performance rewards between Pre and Post ODI, performance rewards increased after the organization development intervention at

the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.011$.

For pair 4, namely performance reinforcing between Pre and Post ODI, performance reinforcement increased after the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.000$.

H3: Employee engagement increases after the organization development intervention at the departmental level.

The results of analysis of hypothesis 3 in terms of employee engagement are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Employee Engagement: the paired samples test analysis of hypothesis 3

Employee Engagement		\bar{x}	t	Sig. (1-tail)
Pair 1	Intellectual Engagement			
	Pre ODI	4.30	2.557	0.007
	Post ODI	4.53		
Pair 2	Social Engagement			
	Pre ODI	4.06	1.815	0.039
	Post ODI	4.23		
Pair 3	Affective Engagement			
	Pre ODI	4.11	1.815	0.039
	Post ODI	4.30		

For pair 1, namely intellectual engagement between Pre and Post ODI, the intellectual engagement increased after the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.007$.

For pair 2, namely social engagement between Pre and Post ODI, the social engagement increased after the organization

development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.039$.

For pair 3, namely affective engagement between Pre and Post ODI, the affective engagement increased after the organization development intervention at the departmental level. This finding was significant at $p = 0.039$.

The Findings of the Qualitative Analysis

Performance Management System in terms of Performance Agreement.

Heads of Departments were not aware or had little information regarding the vision, mission, and strategic plan of the organization. They were not clearly communicated regarding the goals of the organization. With respect to department goals, only two Heads of Departments established the departmental goals in terms of mission since the beginning of their appointment to the position but did not update the mission statement since then. Post-ODI, all Heads of Departments revealed that they clearly understood the goals of organization, department, and works. They said that they now understood and well aware of visions, missions, and strategies of organization. They clearly reflected the mission of their respective departments and work roles.

Performance Management System in terms of Performance Appraisal.

At pre-ODI, four Heads of Departments provided feedback to their subordinates sometimes, while one Head of Department did not give feedback to her subordinates at all. At post ODI, all five Heads of Departments expressed that they were confident to give feedback to subordinates in their departments. Three Heads of Departments stated they did not

think of it as feedback given, it was just like a usual dialogue.

Performance Management System in terms of Performance Rewards.

At pre-ODI, only one Head of Department provided rewards to subordinates, while four Heads of Departments did not provide rewards to subordinates. At post-ODI, all five Heads of Departments expressed that they understood the implications of rewards giving and they would start to give rewards even for small matter.

Performance Management System in terms of Performance Reinforcing.

At Pre-ODI, only one Head of Department provided in-house training to subordinates, while the four Heads of Departments did not provide in-house training to subordinates. At post-ODI, all five Heads of Department indicated that they started to have some form of in-house training to increase the effectiveness and efficiency.

Employee Engagement.

At pre-ODI, two Head of Department were neutral, while three Heads of Departments perceived their subordinates' need for improvement in terms of enthusiasm.

At post-ODI, all five Heads of Department indicated some kind of improvement in enthusiasm of subordinates.

Organizational Performance.

At pre-ODI, all five Heads of Departments perceived that there were rooms to improve the overall performance of their respective departments. At post-ODI, all five Heads of Departments indicated that they were more satisfied with how their respective departments performed.

Conclusions and Discussions

This research demonstrated that organization development intervention could strengthen organization performance, performance management system, and employee engagement.

The performance management system, namely engagement performance management system, could be used as organization development intervention tool to enhance the employee engagement, performance management system, and organizational performance of the universities in Thailand.

The engagement performance management system is determined to minimize the problems of current performance management practice. It is intended to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of current performance management practice by encouraging meaningful discussion between supervisors and subordinates, increasing positive perception of employees toward the performance management practice, and most importantly improving employee performance and employee engagement.

Moreover, the engagement performance management system emphasizes the alignment of organization goals, department goals, and individual

goals. Effective department goals and individual goals must be the goals that department and individual took ownership and aligned with organizational goals. The engagement performance management system is also concentrated on the frequent feedback and regular support from supervisors. The engagement performance management system is also designed to increase the relationship between employee and management so that the relationship gap was bridged.

Recommendations

For policy formulation purposes, the following was recommended:

Firstly, organization development intervention by means of implementing performance management system e.g., engagement performance management system to minimize the problems of performance management practices.

Secondly, encouraging effective discussion between supervisors and subordinates to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of performance management practices. This policy could increase the employee engagement in management and efficient performance management system.

Thirdly, the engagement performance management system could be established by the alignment of organization goals, departmental goals, and the individual goals. For this reason, the engagement performance system should be designed to facilitate closer relationship between employees and management

Finally, for further research, it would be helpful for the organization to conduct further study to help strengthening the performance management system and, hence,

organizational performance. In the performance agreement aspect, the study might consider studying further about key performance indicators (KPI) of each department. In terms of performance appraisal, the study might study further about specific performance measures and performance competencies dimensions for the employees. In terms of performance rewards, the study should look into the impacts of rewards and recognition programs which would work best for the organization.

Further, it is also recommended that the organization might conduct further study in the area of leadership, especially the practicing of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985). To facilitate the engage performance management, the organization might study how the organization could become a learning organization. According to Senge (2014), learning organization should possess five dimensions as follows: (1) system thinking, (2) personal mastery, (3) mental model, (4) shared vision, and (5) team learning.

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