The Innovative Performance Management Framework for Fostering Employee Engagement for State-Owned Enterprises in the Agricultural Sector within Zimbabwe's a Turbulent Environment

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Abstract

This study focuses on developing an Innovative Performance Management framework for fostering EE (EE) in a turbulent business environment for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. Mixed methods, comprising interviews and structured questionnaires, were utilised using a multi case study strategy of the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), the Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB) and the Agricultural Marketing Authority (AMA). The research sample consisted of a total of 15 managers and executives as key informants for the qualitative data, who were selected using purposive sampling technique. The sample size for the survey was 245 employees, obtained after using Yamane's formula of sample size determination. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 for Windows. The main findings from the research are that innovative planning, innovative monitoring, innovative training and development, innovative rating and innovative rewarding have significant and positive effects on EE in terms of customer satisfaction, staff morale, labour harmony, presenteeism,

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profitability, retention and productivity. The practical contribution of this study is that the adoption of this framework in SOEs in the agricultural sector enhances their performance, thereby driving Zimbabwe's economic growth and achievement of Vision 2030.

Keywords: organisational performance, customer satisfaction, staff morale, labour harmony, presenteeism, profitability, retention, productivity

INTRODUCTION

In the current global business environment there has been many challenges, including globalisation, technological changes and economic uncertainty, that are overwhelming to learn and implement (Gao *et al.,* 2024; Tigedi *et al.,* 2024; Turner, 2024). This current operating business environment is described as turbulent and it has been compelling both private and public sector organisations to adapt to the fast-changing circumstances (Bawole and Langnel, 2023, Tigedi *et al.,* 2024; van der Walt, 2024). Korsakova (2020) and Motwani and Katatria (2024) propound that in this environment, organisations and managers face uncertainties and challenges in driving their employees to achieve organisational objectives. Within the contemporary, dynamic and turbulent economy of the 21st-century, workplaces present employers with unique challenges regarding engaging and satisfying employees (Gupta and Sharma, 2016; Deepalaksmi *et al.,* 2024). According to Khonjelwayo and Ellenson (2024), the differentiating factor for survival of all businesses in turbulent environment is to attract, engage, develop and retain the right talent. Govender and Bussin (2020) echoe the same sentiment by propounding that the key to a competitive advantage in today's organisations is the engagement and performance of their employees.

Patel (2023) defines an engaged employee as one who is fully absorbed by and enthusiastic about their work and therefore takes positive action to further an organisation's interests and reputation. Over the last couple of years, has been cited as key to an organisation's success (Martin, 2020. Patel, 2023). Martin (2020) postulates that organisations with engaged employees experience improved outcomes than those with low levels of EE. The strong evidence between EE and positive outcomes suggests that it is strategically imperative in the current unstable and uncertain environment to invest in EE to create a competitive advantage (Saks, 2019). Employee engagement has thus emerged as a crucial factor influencing organisational performance and success (Deepalakshmi *et al.,* 2024), suggesting the importance of fostering EE in a turbulent business environment.

SOEs in Zimbabwe are fundamental to the national economy for the role they play in socio-economic transformation, employment creation and economic growth (Mthombeni *et al.*, 2021), implying that they are crucial in driving the nation to achieve a middle-income economy by 2030. To achieve Vision 2030, the Zimbabwean government's main thrust is to drive the performance of SOEs in productive sectors of the economy and one of them is the agricultural sector, which happens to be the country's main economic driver (Ministry of Finance Report ,2025). SOEs in the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe are, however, operating in a turbulent business environment, causing challenges which threaten their performance. A turbulent business environment aggravates EE levels (Deo, 2018; Chiwawa, 2022; Boccoli *et al.,* 2023). The turbulent world is facing an EE crisis (*ibid.*).

According to a study by Industrial Psychology Consultants, Zimbabwe's national EE index has been averaging 72% for the past three years (Nguwi, 2022). SOEs in Zimbabwe have also suffered from low EE as indicated by high labour turnover, strikes and labour disputes (Tsvangirai and Chinyamurindi,

2019; Wushe and Shenje, 2019). This evidence indicates that there are low levels of engagement in Zimbabwean SOEs and also the fact that a turbulent business environment has devastating effects on the engagement of employees. This instability in the business environment may threaten the country's quest to achieve an upper middle-income economy by 2030, hence the need for a solution to solve engagement problems in Zimbabwean SOEs, particularly those in the agricultural sector which is the country's main economic driver.
The prospects for SOEs in agriculture to transform the Zimbabwean economy are hinged on the engagement of its employees to deliver in a turbulent environment (Khonjelwayo and Ellenson, 2024) . This study argues that managing performance innovatively fosters EE in SOEs in the agricultural sector operating within a turbulent business environment. The main objective of the study is, therefore, to develop an Innovative Performance Management Framework for fostering EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. The study is guided by the following research question;.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

INNOVATIVE PLANNING

Snell *et al.* (2013) put forward that employees need to know what the organisation is trying to achieve and what is expected from employees for effective performance management. Agustian *et al.* (2023) suggest that allowing employees to participate in the planning process is key in driving motivation and commitment. According to Rodgers and Hunter (1991), employees need to be made aware of the results that they will receive if they accomplish the set goals to promote increase in results and behaviour related to their performance expectations. According to Mueller- Hanson and Pukalos (2018), innovatively setting performance goals typically entails linking up goals instead of the traditional way of cascading goals. Instead of

cascading down, each unit and employee set their own goals by "linking up" to the organisation's objectives. This avoids having to wait for each level above to complete its cascade and each team and individual can set goals simultaneously. In view of the theoretical and empirical arguments in respect of this construct and in terms of its indicators, this study theorises that:
H_1: *Innovative planning positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

INNOVATIVE MONITORING

To be effective, monitoring should be practised whenever a supervisor needs to focus attention on any specific aspect of an employee's performance (Pukalos *et al.*, 2023). According to Aguinis (2019), for the feedback process to be effective, there is need for a two-way communication process between employees and managers, where employees can openly share ideas, feedback and concerns. It is paramount that managers take note of the tips of coaching during the monitoring phase, by agreeing on what you are talking about, ensure regular meetings, stick to the basic process,listen actively, provide constructive feedback and develop the 'ask, not tell' habit (Parsloe and Leedham, 2009; Aguinis, 2019).

According to Pukalos *et al.* (2019), the following are also ways of enhancing the performance monitoring process. The process should be informal and an ongoing habit that is embedded in the organisation's culture. Both managers and employees need to be trained to check in more frequently to clarify expectations and provide feedback, this needs to become part of their ongoing work and not a separate conversation. By training, it is important to move beyond simple skill building and, instead, provide guidance and structure that helps people practise and solidify these behaviours in the context of day-to-day work. The process should provide coaching in the moment or as soon as possible after an event and treat the event as a teachable moment. The goal is to promote learning and awareness of how to improve. To leverage a teachable moment, managers need not to spend a lot of time discussing what went wrong (Pukalos *et al.,* 2019). Instead, managers are encouraged to use the opportunity to discuss what could be done differently in future. Pukalos *et al.* (*ibid.*) also advocate that managers must focus on the process, instead of the outcome. In light of the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H_2*: Innovative monitoring positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

INNOVATIVE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Celestin (2024) argues that investing in employees' growth and career progression through offering them professional development opportunities is significant in driving EE. Wijga *et al.* (2025) also echoe the same sentiments where they argue that career advancement opportunities help employees enhance their skills, gain new knowledge and contribute more effectively to organisational goals, thereby increasing their sense of fulfilment and engagement. In essence, when employees are professionally developed, they are able to understand the systems design, enabling them to align system usability with perceived ease of use (Aguinis and Burgi-Tian, 2023).

For training and development to be effective, Pukalos *et al.* (2019) suggest that managers need to assess and follow up training and development needs to assist employees in achieving their objectives. Aguinis (2023), argues that a continuous training need assessment helps to modify an employee's performance towards the positive side. Aguinis (2019) highlights that management need to understand and allow for individual differences in learning capacity, ability and interests so that the training programme is designed taking into consideration these factors. Another important factor highlighted by Aguinis (*ibid.*) is the need for management to implement training programmes that are results-oriented and not just design programmes just for the sake of training. For training to be effective, there should also be suitable incentives to motivate trainees to take the training seriously (Noe, 2017). Managers should also support the training programme to encourage subordinates to also take the training programme seriously (Aguinis, 2023).

Another important point to note is that training should be provided on a regular basis as need arises, for example, when there is a change in the job specifications (*ibid.*). This helps employees to quickly adapt to change. Furthermore, there is need to continually analyse jobs to specify the scope and necessary requirements of a job so that if there is a deficiency, training can be implemented right away (Noe, 2017). Other emerging concepts of innovative training and developing employees include training in technology and workshops on stress management. From the preceding discussion on innovative training and development, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H_3: *Innovative training and development positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

INNOVATIVE RATING

Micheli and Mura (2017) postulate that in today's rapidly changing business world, businesses need to know how to effectively measure performance. Performance measures should be valid, implying that the measures should exclude all irrelevant performance indicators and include all relevant performance facets that are not deficient and contaminated (Pukalos *et al.*, 2023). It is also important that supervisors and managers rate employees in a reliable way (Pukalos *et al.,* 2019). This means that the supervisors' appraisals should be consistent and free of error, for example, a same rating record for an employee should be given by two different supervisors. This helps in motivating employees to do their work diligently towards achieving the organisation's goals with full trust that they will be rated in utmost good faith. Mueller- Hansin and Pukalos (2018) also propose key evaluation strategies that can be used in today's turbulent business environment. These include eliminating written self-assessments, streamlining or eliminating ratings, reducing documentation requirements and changing annual reviews to an annual career conversation . From the discussion above. the following hypothesis is proposed.

$H_{4:}$ *Innovative rewarding positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

INNOVATIVE REWARDING

Aguinis (2023) highlights that reward programmes and recognition are essential in enhancing EE by reinforcing positive behaviours and achievements. This may suggest that compensation and incentive programmes may have a major influence on the employees' conceptions of their employment relationship in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. These programmes consist of financial and non-financial elements such as on-site day care, employee assistance programmes, bonuses, retirement plans, health insurance and company share, travel discounts and company picnics (Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014). Pukalos *et al.* (2023) acknowledge that rewards are a crucial element in engaging employees. This suggests the need for SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector to have innovative and proper reward systems so that employees are motivated to work in the organisation. In that regard, the following hypothesis is proposed.

$H_{5:}$ *Innovative rewarding positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

THE SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been accepted as the most and widely used theory in EE research (Shuck *et al.*, 2014). The SET was used as the basis for developing the study's research framework because it provided a theoretical basis for explaining the relationship between EE and improved performance of employees in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. When employees believe that their organisation cares about their engagement, they respond by giving their best to discharge their obligation to the organisations by fulfilling the organisation's expectations. In other words, if SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector manage performance innovatively, employees are engaged and this results in the achievement of the organisation's objectives. Thus, this study sought to discover specific innovative ways of managing performance in an effort to foster EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.

THE CHAOS THEORY

According to Narh *et al.* (2016), the Chaos Theory refers to a systems behaviour that is irregular, unpredictable and complex, yet not random as there is hidden order in the chaos. Raisio and Lundström (2015) postulate that this chaos causes wicked problems in organisational leadership. The theory helps understand research studies where disorder and turbulence define the phenomenon under study. This study focuses on managing performance in a turbulent environment, hence the use of the theory to structure arguments relating to corporates experiencing turbulence and complexity. The Chaos Theory, therefore, helps to frame this study's foundational underpinning of the disorder brought on by turbulence to organisations and structures that innovative strategies to plan in such an environment can help minimise the effects, hence fostering an engaged workforce.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Prior research can be found on EE especially on its impact on organisational performance, antecedents of EE, and drivers of EE. Employee engagement is in the limelight today and examples of these research studies include, many others: Deepalakshmi *et al.* (2024); Patel (2023); Aguinis (2019); Wushe and Shenje (2019); Agbionu *et al.* (2018); Mueller-Hanson and Pukalos (2018); Maponga, (2018); Mone and London (2018); Shoko and Zinyemba (2014); Mone *et al.* (2011); Gebauer and Lowman (2009); Macey *et al.* (2009); Macey and Schneider (2008); Saks, (2006); Maslach and Leiter,1997) and Saks (2019) conducted a quantitative study among employees working in a variety of jobs in Canada on the antecedents and consequences of job engagement and organisational commitment. The results ndicate that perceived organisational support predicts both organisation and job engagement. In 2004, a quantitative study was conducted by Robinson *et al.* on the drivers of EE within the National Health Services in UK. The results obtained are that there are varying levels of engagement and that work experience and job characteristics are strong contributors of EE. A qualitative study by Rama Devi in 2009 reveals that engaged employees are more likely to stay within the organisation. A study by Anyalor *et al.* in 2018 focusses on how EE drives performance of lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions and the results show that there is a positive relationship. Many research articles and theses have tried to connect EE and organisational performance or commitment.

Various studies by the Gallup Consultancy have been extensively carried out in developed countries , for example the UK, North America and other countries outside Africa (Gallup

2024). Gallup studies, despite finding a positive correlation between EE and performance, have depicted that there are very low levels of EE in organisations (*ibid.*). These very low levels of engagement have even made this study worthwhile. This study, therefors aimed at bridging this gap by studying an organisation comprising a large workforce and, hence, may be representative of other organisations in Africa and the world at large.

Govender and Bussin (2020) investigate the performance management and EE in South Africa. The results suggest that a relationship exists between performance management and EE and that an increase in EE would result in improved performance and, subsequently, the organisation.
Mone *et al.* (2011) support a positive relationship between performance management mechanisms and EE, but no substantial research has been done on how these mechanisms can be practised innovatively to drive EE in turbulent environments.

This study, therefore, aims at bridging this gap by proposing an innovative performance management framework as a solution that may boost EE in organisations, particularly those SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. In addition, there has not been research on turbulence from a Zimbabwean EE perspective, creating a gap that this study seeks to fill. Turbulence, as a business environment phenomenon, requires deeper understanding, with several authors recommending more studies on it (Mintrom and O'Connor 2024; Ameen and Tarba, 2025). From the reviewed literatures, there appears to be dearth of works on innovative performance management as a predictor or driver of EE. Generally, previous literature on driving EE through managing performance in SOEs is inadequate. The concept of innovative ways of managing performance to drive EE, particularly in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector and in the context of a turbulent environment, has not been explored and this is a huge gap that needs to be filled in Zimbabwe. This study, therefore, tries to bridge that gap by exploring the subject and proposing an Innovative Performance Management framework for fostering EE in a turbulent business environment within SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The primary data for this study were gathered through questionnaires and interview guides. Both questionnaires and interview guides were selected for their compatibility with the research purpose for this study which was explanatory, descriptive and exploratory. The questionnaire and interview guide are both useful to address the complementary nature of the mixed methods adopted in this study. Both quantitative and qualitative data were merged to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem and this is known as the convergent parallel mixed methods (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). Firstly, two types of data sets are collected concurrently and, secondly, they are analysed independently using quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches (Creswell and Clark, 2018). In this case, data are collected and analysed concurrently and then information from the data is integrated in the presentation and interpretation of the overall results. The mixed-methods design of collecting and analysing data provides room for further probing and explanations on contradictions or in-congruent findings (Saunders *et al.*, 2016).

The research sample comprised a total of 15 managers and executives as key informants for the qualitative data, who were selected using purposive sampling technique. For the quantitative study, the study's target population consisted of all entry and mid-level employees permanently working in the three selected SOEs within Zimbabwe's agricultural sector, that is, GMB, TIMB and AMA and there was a total of 633 during the time the study was conducted. The sample size for the survey was 245 permanent employees, obtained after using Yamane's formula of sample size determination, resulting in an impressive 86% response rate. The sampling techniques used to select the actual respondents for the survey were stratified representative sampling and simple random sampling. The collected quantitative data were captured to form a data set which was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 for Windows, whist qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis.

FINDINGS

DATA RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

A more commonly used measure of reliability is internal consistency that applies to the consistency among the variables in a summated scale (Hair *et al.*, 2018). The rationale for internal consistency is that the individual items or indicators of the scale should all be measuring the same construct and thus be highly intercorrelated (*ibid.*). The Cronbach Alpha statistic was used and the results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: *Reliability of the Innovative Performance Management questionnaire* (Processed data, 2024)

	Cronbach's Alpha	**N of Items**
Employee engagement	.893	7
Innovative planning	.947	6
Innovative monitoring	.952	6
Innovative training and development	.949	7
Innovative rating	.962	6
Innovative rewarding	.901	7

A variable is reliable if the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the variable is 0.7 or better (Dawadi *et al.*, 2021). Using that guiding principle, all the variables of the study were reliable as their

Cronbach Alpha statistics were above 0.70. Therefore, it was deemed that the questionnaire items measuring the same variable were actually consistently measuring the variable. This showed that the instrument was reliable for the study.

Structural Equation Model

The main objective of this study was to develop an Innovative Performance Management framework for fostering EE in a turbulent business environment for SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. This section presents the causal relationships between latent variables and the dependent variables.

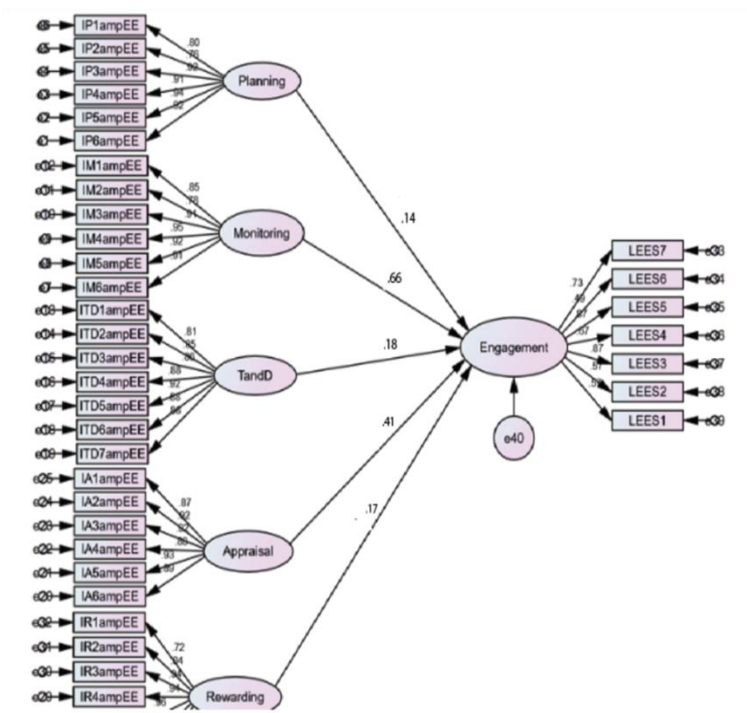

Figure 1: *The path diagram or the structural model* (Processed data, 2024)

As evident from the structural model or path diagram presented in Figure 1, all the five constructs making up innovative performance management positively impact EE.

SIGNIFICANT LEVELS FOR THE PATH ASSOCIATIONS

The significance levels for the path associations of the Innovative Performance Management framework are presented in Table 2 .

Table 2: *Significance levels for the path associations* (Processed data, 2024)

			Estimate (SFL)	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Engagement	<---	Innovative Planning	.144	.037	1.007	***	Supported
Engagement	<---	Innovative Monitoring	.657	.045	10.757	***	Supported
Engagement	<---	Innovative T and D	.177	.043	3.845	0.003	Supported
Engagement	<---	Innovative Appraisal	.415	.043	8.014	***	Supported
Engagement	<---	Innovative Rewarding	.173	.044	3.590	***	Supported

The path associations of the Innovative Performance Management framework comprised of the following constructs: innovative planning, innovative monitoring, innovative training and development, innovative appraisal and innovative rewarding. The p- values for all the hypotheses were below 0.05, indicating that all hypotheses were supported by the empirical findings. The following are the descriptive statistics for the independent factors of the five constructs that constitute an innovative performance management process, in relation to their supported hypotheses.

Hypothesis H_1*: Innovative planning positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector*

Table 3: *Innovative planning construct* (Processed data, 2024)

INNOVATIVE PLANNING DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Using the organisation's strategy as part of goal setting	211	1.0	7.0	6.241	1.0953
Setting goal deadlines	211	1.0	7.0	6.474	1.1779
Communicating clear performance objectives	211	1.0	7.0	6.550	1.0113
Linking up unit and employee goals to organisational objectives	211	1.0	7.0	6.594	.9631
Involving employees in setting goals.	211	1.0	7.0	6.622	1.0210
Using job descriptions as the foundation for setting goals	211	1.0	7.0	6.695	.9563
INNOVATIVE PLANNING AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT COMPOSITE MEAN SCORE				6.53	1.0375

The findings reveal that respondents strongly agreed that all factors that make up innovative planning foster EE in SOEs in the agricultural sector. The implication for the findings is for management in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector to align individual goals of employees to organisational goals, thereby fostering an engaged workforce in a turbulent business environment. The preceding findings from both the survey and interviews are supported by a number of studies, including Pukalos *et al.* (2023); Guerra-Lopez (2022), Aguinis (2022) and Mone and London (2018). The qualitative data from key informants also complemented the quantitative findings, hence it can be inferred from the findings that all the selected factors that make up innovative planning are key to fostering EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.

Hypothesis H_{2}: *Innovative monitoring positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

Table 4: *Innovative monitoring construct* (Processed data, 2024)

INNOVATIVE MONITORING DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Ensuring that it is a joint responsibility and two-way communication process between employees and managers	211	1.0	7.0	6.261	1.1431
Giving periodic feedback about the day-to-day contributions and accomplishments of employees	211	1.0	7.0	6.349	1.2224
Inspiring employees by providing support and counselling where appropriate	211	1.0	7.0	6.534	1.0700
Asking for the employee's view about what could have been done differently	211	1.0	7.0	6.590	1.0125
Ensuring that monitoring is objective and impersonal	211	1.0	7.0	6.590	1.0004
Ensuring that monitoring is objective and impersonal	211	1.0	7.0	6.594	1.0926
COMPOSITE MEAN SCORE				6.49	1.09

From the research findings, it is evident that innovative monitoring, constituting the six items, have a positive impact on EE as indicated by the preceding descriptive results. Complementary comments from key informants also suggested the importance of implementing the suggested innovative ways of monitoring to foster EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. Aguinis (2019), Guerra-Lopez (2022) and Pukalos *et al.* (2023), among others, support the findings of this study. Therefore, managers for SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector need to adopt the results of the study to foster EE in their respective organisations.

Hypothesis $H_{3:}$ *Innovative training and development fosters employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.*

Table 5: *Innovative training and development construct* (Processed data, 2024)

INNOVATIVE TRAINING and DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Ensuring that training programmes are related to the requirements of the job	211	1.0	7.0	6.458	.9874
Regular training as need arises	211	1.0	7.0	6.546	.9413
Training in technology	211	1.0	7.0	6.635	.9791
Training in stress management	211	1.0	7.0	6.245	1.0740
Employee involvement in determining training needs	211	1.0	7.0	6.297	1.0279
Incorporating employees' Personal Development Plan	211	1.0	7.0	6.386	1.0415
Multi-skilling of employees	211	1.0	7.0	6.651	1.0251
COMPOSITE MEAN SCORE				6.46	1.02

The research findings, for both the quantitative and qualitative analysis of innovative training and development construct, constituting all the seven items, indicate that they all have a positive impact on EE in times of turbulence. The findings show the importance of innovative training and development process in enhancing EE. These findings are in line with the the SET which posits that employees reciprocate with discretionary effort when they feel that they are valued and that their contribution is also valued (Shuck *et al.*, 2014). According to the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) Theory of EE, employee development can be a job resource that supports employee growth and development and it can be an extrinsic motivator as it provides employees with the tools and resources (knowledge, skills and competencies) required for work (Dajani, 2015). Therefore, this study suggests that managers for SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector need to implement the seven measures to foster EE in their respective organisations.

Hypothesis $H_{4:}$ *Innovative rating has a positive effect on employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector*

Table 6: *Innovative rating construct* (Processed data, 2024)

INNOVATIVE RATINGDESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Focusing on specific behaviour and performance of the incumbent	211	1.0	7.0	6.255	1.0572
Being supportive and minimise comparisons to others	211	1.0	7.0	6.502	1.0516
Clarifying and agreeing on the criteria for measuring success	211	1.0	7.0	6.522	.9799
Emphasising only those functions under the control of the employee	211	1.0	7.0	6.542	.9833
Incorporating peer reviews in the appraisal system	211	1.0	7.0	6.534	1.0395
Providing consistent free of error appraisals	211	1.0	7.0	6.614	1.0100
COMPOSITE MEAN SCORE				6.50	1.02

Research findings established an average or mean value of 6.50 which, according to the 7-point Likert scale, indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the notion that innovative rating fosters EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. The summary statistics of the construct of innovative rating suggests that to enhance EE in a turbulent environment, SOEs should conduct their rating innovatively by adhering to ways that encourage employee attachment to their jobs. This was supported by the positive results of the study pertaining to the six items that the study adopted from literature as key to conducting or to making up innovative rating during turbulent times and the complementary comments echoed by key informants that all resonated with the quantitative findings.

Hypothesis H_5: *Innovative rewarding positively impacts employee engagement in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector*

Table 7: *Innovative rewarding construct* (Processed data, 2024)

INNOVATIVE REWARDING DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Linking salary to my performance	211	1.0	7.0	6.185	1.2812
Rewarding me accordingly whenever the organisation performs well	211	1.0	7.0	6.431	1.1109
Fairly paying me in comparison with the market rates	211	1.0	7.0	6.518	1.0437
Creating an acceptable and fair reward system	211	1.0	7.0	6.550	1.0113
Adjusting rewards in relation to the changing trends	211	1.0	7.0	6.598	1.0196
Analysing what is valued by employees and reward them accordingly	211	1.0	7.0	6.556	1.1225
Rewarding employees with more cash than benefits	211	1.0	7.0	6.406	1.4974
COMPOSITE MEAN SCORE				6.46	1.16

Research findings established an average or mean value of 6.46, indicating that, according to the 7-point Likert scale, the majority of the responses strongly agreed with the notion that innovative rewarding fosters EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. Qualitative views from key informants also resonated with the quantitative findings. From research findings, it is evident that innovative rewarding, constituting the seven items have a positive impact on EE as indicated by the preceding descriptive results. The results from the Structural Equation model and that of the descriptive statistics complemented by the qualitative findings, have resulted in the development of the Innovative Performance Management framework illustrated in Figure 2.

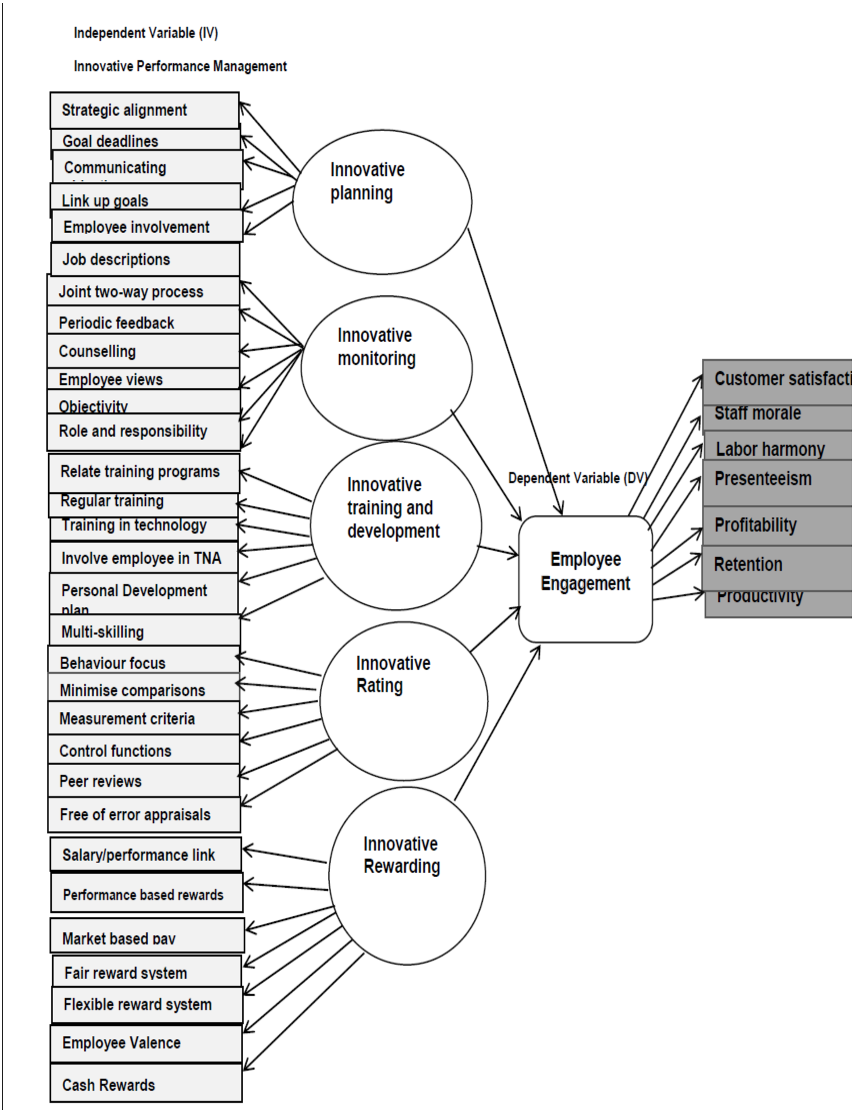

Figure 2: *The Innovative Performance Management Framework* (Processed data, 2024)

INNOVATIVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The framework in Figure 2 highlights the relationship between innovative performance management (independent variables) and EE indicators (dependent variables) in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. It suggests that interventions such as innovative planning, innovative monitoring, innovative training and development, innovative rating and innovative rewarding, significantly impact EE indicators such as customer satisfaction, staff morale, labour harmony, presenteeism, profitability, retention and productivity. The framework rigorously analyses these relationships, incorporating contemporary insights from various studies and empirical information from respondents to underscore how performance management could be innovatively practised to foster EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study developed an innovative performance management framework for fostering EE in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector. The results indicate that innovative planning, innovative monitoring, innovative training and development, innovative rating and innovative rewarding, substantially and favourably impact all selected EE indicators, emphasising their contribution to driving the performance of SOEs in the agricultural sector. The study hence recommends the adoption of the framework in SOEs in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector to foster EE during turbulent times This study may assist policy makers and practitioners as they develop policies, guidelines, systems and interventions pertaining to fostering EE. Future research studies may focus on empirically validating and refining the framework across other sectors and contexts.

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