

## ABSTRACT

### An Investigation of the Influence of Leadership Engagement and the Perception of Leadership Engagement on Employee Engagement and Performance in an Organizational Setting: A Jamaican Case Study

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This case study employed qualitative research methods to pursue three major objectives: i) the elaboration of the concept of leadership engagement, ii) the exploration of the nature of the relationship between perceived leadership engagement and employee engagement, and iii) how these impacted employee performance in an organizational setting. A tiered approach was taken wherein participants at the employee and leadership level at four different geographical locations in a Jamaican financial institution were interviewed or involved in focus group discussions. Leadership engagement was found to be a significant influencer of employee engagement in organizations. Participants acknowledged a measure of reciprocity in how leadership engagement interacted with employee engagement. They acknowledged that leadership engagement's impact on employee engagement was more dominant than employee engagement's impact on leadership engagement. While leadership engagement was generally characterized by the customary features of employee engagement, additional drivers were indicated which were considered important to leaders but not necessarily so for employees. A significant finding was that performance outcomes were affected by engagement level at work irrespective of rank. The locations with better performance outcomes as measured by performance ratings assigned, were those with demonstrably higher leadership engagement and employee engagement assessments. Leadership engagement like employee engagement, was found to have a strong contagion effect. Areas which the researcher has assessed for further investigation included the concepts of positive and negative engagement, the objective of meaningfulness in the engagement equation vis a vis where should it be targeted, and the matter of engagement ambiguity.

Keywords: Hopelin Marvaree Hines; leadership engagement; employee engagement; performance outcomes; organizational setting; engagement ambiguity; Jamaica.