



**LEADERSHIP SKILLS TOWARDS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SMES**



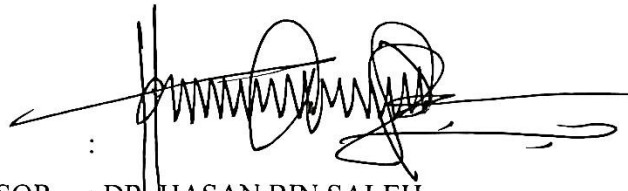
**FOO ZHI ZHEN**

**UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA**

I hereby acknowledge that this project paper has been accepted as part of fulfilment  
for the degree of BACHELOR TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT  
(TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION) WITH HONORS.

SIGNATURE

:



NAME OF SUPERVISOR : DR. HASAN BIN SALEH

DATE

: 18 JANUARY 2023

SIGNATURE

:

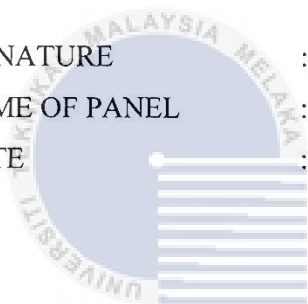


NAME OF PANEL : TS. DR. L. GANAGAMBEGAI

DATE

: 18 JANUARY 2023

**Ts. DR GANAGAMBEGAI LAXAMANAN**  
*Senior Lecturer*  
Faculty Of Technology Management and  
Technopreneurship  
University Technical Malaysia Melaka



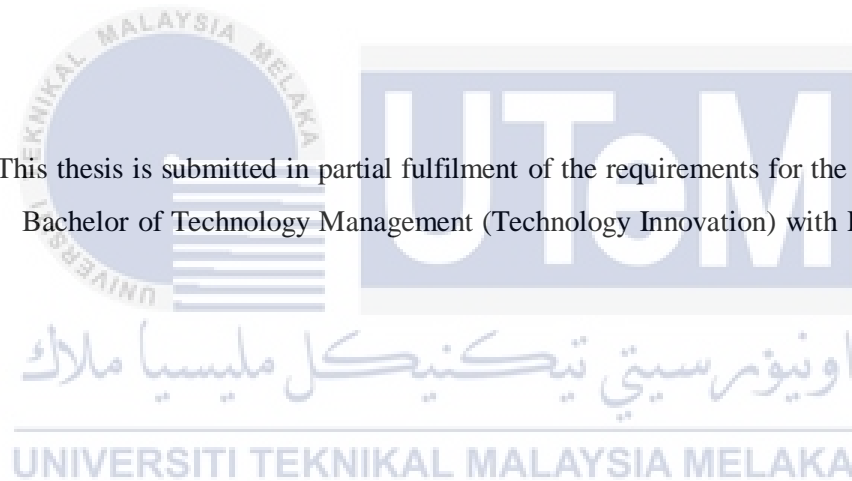
اونيورسيتي تيكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

# LEADERSHIP SKILLS TOWARDS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SMES

FOO ZHI ZHEN

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of  
Bachelor of Technology Management (Technology Innovation) with Honors



Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship  
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka

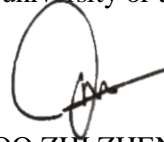
JANUARY 2023

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

I hereby declare that all of the work presented in this thesis, "LEADERSHIP SKILLS TOWARDS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SMES," is entirely my own original work and that no part of it has ever been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this institute or university or any other.

SIGNATURE

:



NAME

: FOO ZHI ZHEN

DATE

: 18 JANUARY 2023



اونيورسيتي تیکنیکل ملیسیا ملاک

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

## DEDICATION

I am incredibly appreciative of my family members for their consistent support, encouragement, and creating a love of studying in me throughout my education. Additionally, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to Dr. Hasan Bin Saleh, my lecturer and project supervisor for the final year, as well as to my fellow students for their tremendous assistance, counsel, and suggestions throughout the study process. Without their assistance, it would not have been feasible to do this research in such a short amount of time.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

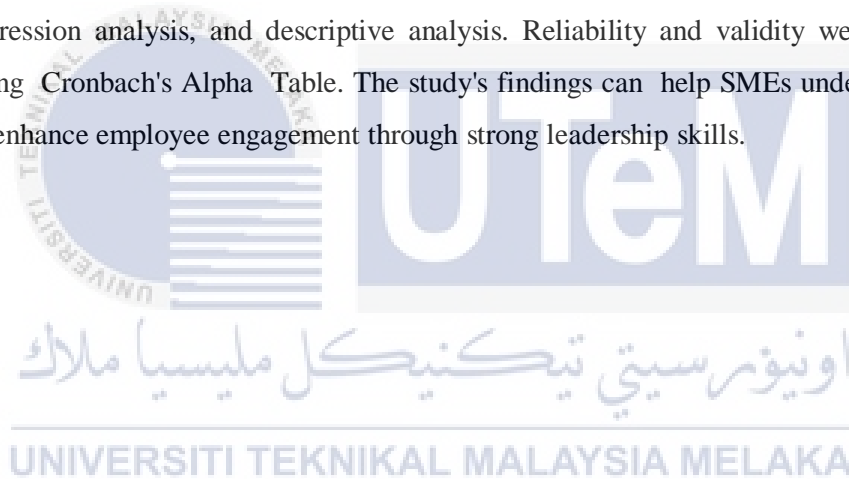
I am deeply grateful to God for granting me the health, strength, and opportunity to successfully complete this Final Year Project within the given time frame. My heartfelt thanks go to my parents for their unwavering support and patience throughout my degree. I also extend my sincere gratitude to my friends for their valuable advice and guidance throughout this research project. Their shared knowledge and insights were instrumental in helping me to complete this research project efficiently.

Secondly, i would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to my beloved supervisor, Dr. Hasan bin Saleh, for her guidance, teaching, monitoring, support, and invaluable contributions throughout this research project. He has been patient and supportive during the two semesters of the 2020/2021 academic session. Additionally, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and thanks to TS. DR. L. Ganagambegai, who served as a panel researcher, for sharing his extensive knowledge and experience in research methodology. His suggestions were immensely helpful in guiding me to conduct this research project successfully.

Lastly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all the respondents who took the time and effort to complete the questionnaires. Their valuable feedback was instrumental in the completion of this research. Without the support and participation of the respondents, it would have been impossible to gather the necessary data. I am deeply grateful and truly thankful to all of them for their contributions.

## ABSTRACT

This study's purpose is to find out how leadership skills affect employee engagement in small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The study focuses on three key leadership skills: communication skills, problem-solving skills, and mentoring skills. The conceptual framework proposed that these skills are key factors that influence employee engagement in SMEs. To test this concept, a measurement construct was developed using modified measurements from previous studies. A quantitative research method was used, and a structured questionnaire was distributed to employees of Mingu International Trading Sdn. Bhd. in Malim Jaya, Malacca, Malaysia. Convenience sampling was used to choose the sample, which had a size of 82. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS, including correlation techniques, regression analysis, and descriptive analysis. Reliability and validity were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha Table. The study's findings can help SMEs understand how to enhance employee engagement through strong leadership skills.



## ABSTRAK (BAHASA MALAYSIA VERSI)

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana kemahiran kepimpinan mempengaruhi penglibatan pekerja dalam perniagaan kecil dan sederhana (PKS). Kajian ini memberi tumpuan kepada tiga kemahiran kepimpinan utama: kemahiran komunikasi, kemahiran menyelesaikan masalah, dan kemahiran mentor. Rangka kerja konseptual mencadangkan bahawa kemahiran ini adalah faktor utama yang mempengaruhi penglibatan pekerja dalam PKS. Untuk menguji konsep ini, satu konstruk ukuran telah dibangunkan menggunakan ukuran yang diubah suai daripada kajian lepas. Kaedah kajian kuantitatif telah digunakan, dan soal selidik berstruktur telah diedarkan kepada pekerja Mingu International Trading Sdn. Bhd. di Malim Jaya, Melaka, Malaysia. Persampelan kemudahan digunakan untuk memilih sampel yang mempunyai saiz 82. Analisis data dijalankan menggunakan SPSS, termasuk teknik korelasi, analisis regresi, dan analisis deskriptif. Kebolehpercayaan dan kesahan dinilai menggunakan Jadual Alpha Cronbach. Penemuan kajian boleh membantu PKS memahami cara meningkatkan penglibatan pekerja melalui kemahiran kepimpinan yang kukuh.



## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ABSTRAK (BAHASA MALAYSIA VERSI)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1 Background of Study	9
1.2 Problem Statement	10
1.3 Research Questions	11
1.4 Research Objectives	11
1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study	12
1.6 Significant of the Study	12
1.7 Summary	12
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1.1 Communication Process	14
2.1.2 Feedback	15
2.1.3 Strategic Communication	15
2.2 Problem Solving	15
2.2.1 Defining the Problem	15
2.2.2 Generate Alternative Solutions	16
2.2.3 Selection and Implementation	16
2.3 Mentoring	16
2.4 Employee Engagement	17
2.5 Relationship between Leadership Skills and Employee Engagement	17
2.5.1 The Relationship between Communication and Employee Engagement	17
2.5.2 The Relationship between Problem Solving and Employee Engagement	17
2.5.3 The Relationship between Mentoring and Employee Engagement	18
2.6 Conceptual Framework	18
2.7 Hypotheses	18
2.8 Summary	19
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>20</b>

3.2 Methodological Choice	21
3.3 Research Strategy	21
3.4 Data Collection	21
3.4.1 Primary Data	22
3.4.2 Secondary Data	22
3.5 Data Analysis	22
3.6 Research Location	23
3.7 Research Population and Sample	24
3.7.1 Target Population	24
3.8 Research Instruments	25
3.8.1 Survey Questionnaire	25
3.9 Research Reliability and Validity	26
3.9.1 Reliability	26
3.9.2 Validity	26
3.10 Pilot Test	27
3.11 Summary	27
<b>CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS &amp; RESEARCH FINDINGS</b>	<b>28</b>
4.2 Content Validity	29
4.3 Reliability Analysis	29
4.4 Descriptive of the Study Sample	31
4.4.1 Gender	31
4.4.2 Age	32
4.4.3 Race	33
4.4.4 Highest Education Level	34
4.4.5 Salary Per Month	35
4.5 Descriptive of the Study Variables	36
4.6 Inter-Correlation between Variables	37
4.7 Regression Analysis	39
4.8 Results of hypotheses Testing	41
4.9 Summary of Chapter 4	41
<b>CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS &amp; CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>42</b>
5.1 Introduction	42
5.2 Discussions	42

5.2.1 Communication	42
5.2.2 Problem Solving	42
5.2.3 Mentoring	43
5.3 Recommendations	43
5.4 Conclusions	44
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>45</b>
Questionnaire (Survey)	45
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>53</b>



## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

In chapter 1, the study's overview will be covered. The problem statement will be stated and explained. Next, research questions will be followed with the objectives that need to be achieved by the research. In addition, the scope and limitations of study will be conducted to know whose and what method that will be used then. The significance of study also will be discussed to let the readers know how this research will help the future researchers and students. The final section of Chapter 1 will include a summary of this chapter.

### **1.1 Background of Study**

Leadership is a behaviour that develops the structure to the members, so they have the direction to complete their tasks. Good leadership can help the company to achieve their goals and make the members do their tasks comfortably. According to Rosari (2019), Leadership is not only a person, sit at the top of hierarchy, determine for a group of loyal followers, the pace, direction, and outcome of effort. There are five leadership styles that are main to use which are transformational leadership, authoritarian leadership, delegative leadership, participatory leadership, and transactional leadership.

The leadership style known as authoritarian leadership allows for the imposition of expectations and outcome definition. This style will sacrifice creativity so it will be used when the members are confused about their work. Participative leadership involves members to make decision making processes in order to make them feel engaged and motivated. Delegative leadership is the leadership style that focuses on delegating initiative to team members. The responsible members will lead this strategy to success but if they are not engaging in work, it will lead to less motivations and low morales (IMD, 2021).

In transactional leadership, the leader assigns rewards and penalties based on the goals, and the team members work hard to earn their rewards. Transformational leadership is the leadership style that motivates their followers with the company vision and encourages them to achieve it. Transformational leadership can decrease the employee turnover rate and employees always be motivated by the leader.

However, leaders also can deceive their employees and leaders always need to motivate them and get feedback (IMD, 2021).

Leadership skills are the abilities that the person can help to oversee the processes and guide their members or followers to achieve their goals. Leadership skills are the essential parts that enable executives to make thoughtful decisions for their goals and also can allocate the resources to reach those orders. There are some examples of leadership skills such as communication, problem solving and mentoring (McLaughlin, 2014).

SMEs also can be called in full name which is Small and Medium-sized Enterprises which can be defined as an organization with assets, revenues, or employees that are below a specific threshold. According to SME Corporation Malaysia, SMEs can define as firms that sales turnover does not exceed RM50 million, or number of full-time employees do not exceed 200. The Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOSM) also stated that there will be 1,151,339 SMEs in Malaysia (Estimated 2020).

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

The leader that obtains leadership skills can increase the organization's development. Leaders can use communication, problem solving, and mentoring this kind of leadership skills to increase their organization's growth.

Communication is a useful skill that leaders can interact with their employees at the workplace. A good communication can provide clear order or advice to the employee, so they don't need to infer the information's true meaning from the context or read between the lines. It will increase the progress of the project or work and create a good environment between leader and members. In contrast, the organization or team that lacks communication will encounter misunderstanding and conflict. This will make the project delayed and goals cannot be reached (Khan, 2021).

Next, a leader must learn problem solving to face organizational problems. A successful leader with problem solving skills can solve the organizational problems properly. They also can take advantage of opportunities in the marketplace. However, an employer or leader that cannot solve the problem will lead the company into the

darkness. The new problems will occur, and the old problems cannot be solved, and will become disasters (targetjobs, 2022).

Lastly, the mentoring skill is also important to the leader when managing the team or organization. Leaders can inspire, coach, and let their employees become better and able to solve problems by themselves. If the team or organization lacks mentoring, there will be poor knowledge, skills, creativity, and responsibility among the employees. The organization also will not become better because it is limited by the performance of the employees (Holliday, 2001).

In summary, leadership skills are very essential for the leaders and organization as it can make both aspects become better and efficient. They should acquire these skills so as not to be eliminated by the market.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The purpose research is to know effect of leadership skills towards employee engagement in SMEs. The research questions will be addressed below:

- I. How do the leaders keep their employees in contact?
- II. How do the leaders solve the organizational problem to engage employees?
- III. What can the leaders do to make their employees become better and engage?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

In order to fulfil the goals of the study, the research question will be conducted repeatedly in the research method. The research objective will be addressed below:

- I. To examine the communication skill towards employee engagement.
- II. To identify problem solving skills on engagement of employees.
- III. To determine the mentoring skills on employee engagement.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study will look at how leadership skills and SME employee engagement are related. The scope of research will be conducted by the SME employees that are located in Malacca as the sampling in the research. This research will collect volunteers of respondents by organization which working in the targeted SMEs to answer the questionnaires. The questionnaires will be using Google Form as the answering platform. It will take a week to collect the questionnaires in this research. The respondents in Malacca's SMEs are the suitable sampling for the research because they are close to researchers to collect the data and Malacca has many SMEs to conduct. This is more accurate and faster than sending the questionnaires to the SMEs that are located in other states or rural areas.

The philosophy of the research will conduct a positivist paradigm. The approach to theory development is a deductive approach. The research method that applies in the research is multiple methods. Primary data and secondary data are the two types of data. Surveys will be used as part of the research strategy, and a cross-sectional time frame will be used.

### **1.6 Significant of the Study**

For employees, employers, and researchers alike, this research will offer a fresh perspective on the link between leadership abilities and employee engagement. The employers can know how to use the leadership skills to lead their employees and also know how the employees engage in SMEs. Moreover, the analysis of this research also can provide valuable information to the future researchers that are willing to make research on leadership skills and employee engagement.

### **1.7 Summary**

In Chapter 1, the research introduces the definition of leadership, leadership skills, employee engagement, and the condition of SMEs in Malaysia. The primary goal of this study is to study about the leadership skills towards employee engagement in SMEs. Problem statements are also included in this chapter too.

For the scope and limitation, this research will conduct the questionnaire among the respondents that work in SMEs at Malacca and will use survey (Google

Form) as the method. The data will be collected using both primary and secondary data, and a multiple method will be used for the research.

For the significance of study, the employer knows how to use the skills to lead their employee to achieve the goals. They also can know how leadership skills can make an impact on employee engagement. The researchers also can do the follow-on research on this research to get valuable information.





## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The topic of literature reviews will be covered in chapter 2. We'll identify and describe the independent variables which is the leadership skills and dependent variable which is the employee engagement. The relationship between the independent and dependent variables will then be maintained after the conceptual framework has been established. In addition, the hypotheses of each independent variable will be conducted to know the significance with the dependent variable. The final section of Chapter 2 will include a summary of this chapter.

### **2.1 Communication**

Every communication has a sender, a message, and a recipient. Communication is the act of sharing information from one place, person, or group to another. According to Kristina L & Yesenia (2011), communication is a means of transmitting information and making oneself understood by another or other. Communication is a major challenge for managers because they are responsible for providing information, which results in efficient and effective performance in organizations. Communication involves transmission of verbal and non-verbal messages. It consists of a sender, receiver, and channel of communication (Munodawafa, 2008). These previous studies show that communication is the important skill that can provide information to the other.

#### **2.1.1 Communication Process**

Communication process is the flow of sender encoding message and decoding by the receiver and the receiver will proceed with feedback to the sender again. According to Kristina L & Yesenia (2011), communication process shows that the sender is a person, department, or unit of an organization or system who originated the message. Sender will send the information to the receiver and the receiver will decode the messages. Decoding is affected by the receiver's prior experience and frames of reference (Kristina L & Yesenia, 2011). This previous study also shows that the process of decoding the message is important because the receiver may interpret the wrong information.

### **2.1.2 Feedback**

The receiver will provide the feedback to the sender after they interpret the message, and this can make the sender know the understanding of the receiver to the meaning of the message that sender wants to deliver. According to Kristina L & Yesenia (2011), feedback is any information that individuals receive about their behaviour. Feedback can be information related to the productivity of groups in an organization, or the performance of a particular individual. Next, the sender will adjust or changes after receiving the feedback from the receiver.

### **2.1.3 Strategic Communication**

Strategic communication is an intentional process of presenting ideas in a clear, concise, and persuasive way (Kristina L & Yesenia, 2011). The leaders must present their thoughts and ideas to the members in an intentional effort so the communication can align with the organizational missions, strategies, and goals. Argenti et al. (2015) also stated that strategic communication as communication aligned with the company's overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning. A strategic communication leader can increase the efficiency of the work and reach the organization missions, visions, and strategies.

## **2.2 Problem Solving**

Problem solving is the act of defining a problem, determining the cause of the problem, generating, and implementing the solution. A leader must obtain the problem-solving skill so the leader can face the organizational problem and solve it. The problem-solving process can be categorized by defining problems, generating alternative solutions, evaluating, and selecting solutions, implementing, and following up solutions. According to Martinez (1998), problem solving is a ubiquitous feature of human functioning. Human beings are problem solvers who think and act within a grand complex of fuzzy and shifting goals and changing means to attain them.

### **2.2.1 Defining the Problem**

Leader needs to define the problems that are faced by the organization so can generate alternative solutions for the problems. The leader must determine the cause

of the problem and review how to process the current work. Leaders may define the problem by tools that can proceed the data because people cannot solve the problem without any data.

### **2.2.2 Generate Alternative Solutions**

After the leader defines the problems, the leader can generate alternative solutions for the problem. These alternative solutions are the potential option that can manage the problem and make the organization operate more effectively. According to D’Zurilla & Goldfried, (1971), leaders generating as many alternatives as possible, the probability of generating a variety of potentially effective solutions will increase. Better selection allows for identification, selection, and implementation of the most effective solution for the problem situation, facilitating the opportunity for maximizing positive outcomes and minimizing negative consequences. In contrast, deficits in generating alternatives would be expected to result in impaired problem-solving due to generation of a restricted selection of alternatives that may have been insufficient in producing truly effective solutions.

### **2.2.3 Selection and Implementation**

The leader can start to select the most effective solution that is generated. Leader needs to evaluate these solutions without any bias and evaluate their outcomes to ensure it is fit to the goals and standard. Next, the selected alternative solution can start to implement it. Leader can plan a pilot test for the selected solution and collect the feedback. Measuring and monitoring also need to be done so ease the leader to do the follow up solution. The better implementation of the solution can help the leader to solve organizational problems and take advantage of opportunities in the marketplace.

## **2.3 Mentoring**

The leader will inspire, coach, and lead their members to become better. Mentoring is important for leaders because it can generate confidence, inspire trust, and improve team development. A leader with good mentoring can make their members become more efficient, productive, and quality when they are involved in

the workplace. For the mentor, a mentoring relationship provides a 'crucial subordinate' who will put the superior's need ahead of self as a career move, accords him with greater legitimization in the organization and refreshes his interests, motivations, and skills. For the protege, mentoring brings job security and career advancement (Scandura et al., 1996).

## **2.4 Employee Engagement**

The idea of employee engagement describes how committed and enthusiastic people are to their work. This also will decide the efficiency and productivity of the company whether the employees are engaging or not. According to Shaw (2005), employee engagement has been defined as emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization. Employee engagement also can be simply as 'passion for work', a psychological state which is seen to encompass the three dimensions of engagement and captures the common theme running through all these definitions (Kahn 1990).

## **2.5 Relationship between Leadership Skills and Employee Engagement**

### **2.5.1 The Relationship between Communication and Employee Engagement**

The leader will communicate with their employees to ensure they feel engaged. Effective communication can highly increase employee engagement and decrease their turnover intention. When the employee feels engaged, the organization will grow better.

### **2.5.2 The Relationship between Problem Solving and Employee Engagement**

A leader who has developed problem-solving abilities can address an organisational issue. They will define the problem and create the solution to solve it. The employee will feel engaged while following the leader because the leader has the ability to face the challenges.

### 2.5.3 The Relationship between Mentoring and Employee Engagement

The leader that can mentor, coach, and lead employees also can make their employee feel engaged. The leader will inspire and coach them and make them become better. Employees will feel engaged and want to follow the leader.

### 2.6 Conceptual Framework

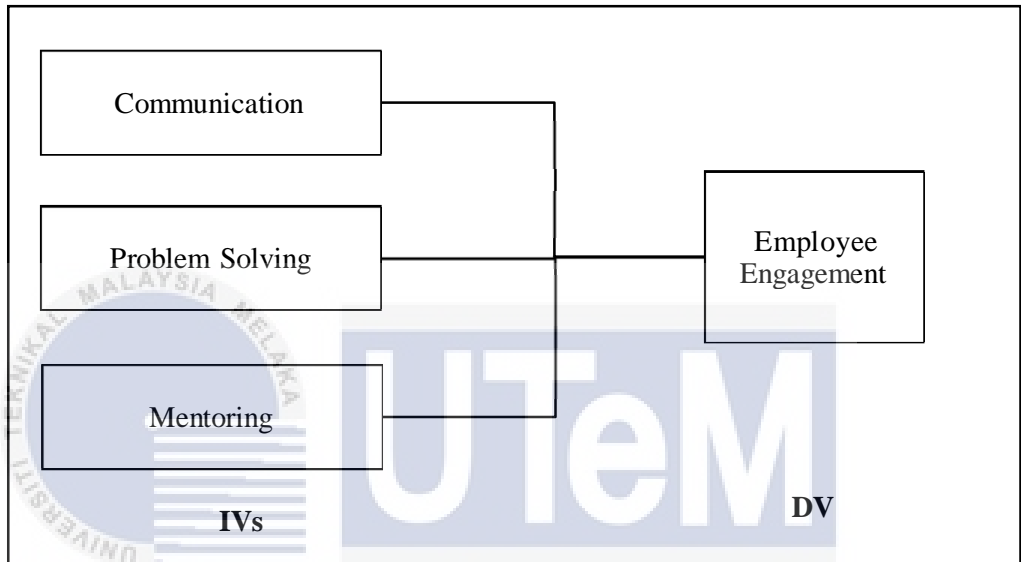


Figure 2.6: Theoretical Framework for Research

### 2.7 Hypotheses

H0: There is no significant relationship between communication and employee engagement.
H1: There is a significant relationship between communication and employee engagement.
H0: There is no significant relationship between problem solving and employee engagement.

H1: There is a significant relationship between problem solving and employee engagement.

H0: There is no significant relationship between mentoring and employee engagement.

H1: There is a significant relationship between mentoring and employee engagement.

## 2.8 Summary

The study's literature review for the three independent variables—communication, problem-solving, and mentorship—is presented in Chapter 2. Employee engagement, the dependent variable, is then similarly explained in this chapter.

To understand the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, it is also possible to explain the relationship between leadership abilities and employee engagement. The conceptual framework has also been presented to demonstrate the framework for further research.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In chapter 3, there will be a discussion of research design and strategy. Qualitative research also will be stated and explained. Next, data collection will be followed with the method that needs to be used by the research. In addition, data analysis will be conducted to know what approach will be used to analyse the data. Research location also will be discussed to let the readers know where the data will be collected and also with research population and sampling size for looking at the number of respondents. Research instruments, reliability, and validity also will be conducted. The final section of Chapter 3 will include a summary of this chapter.

### **3.1 Research Design**

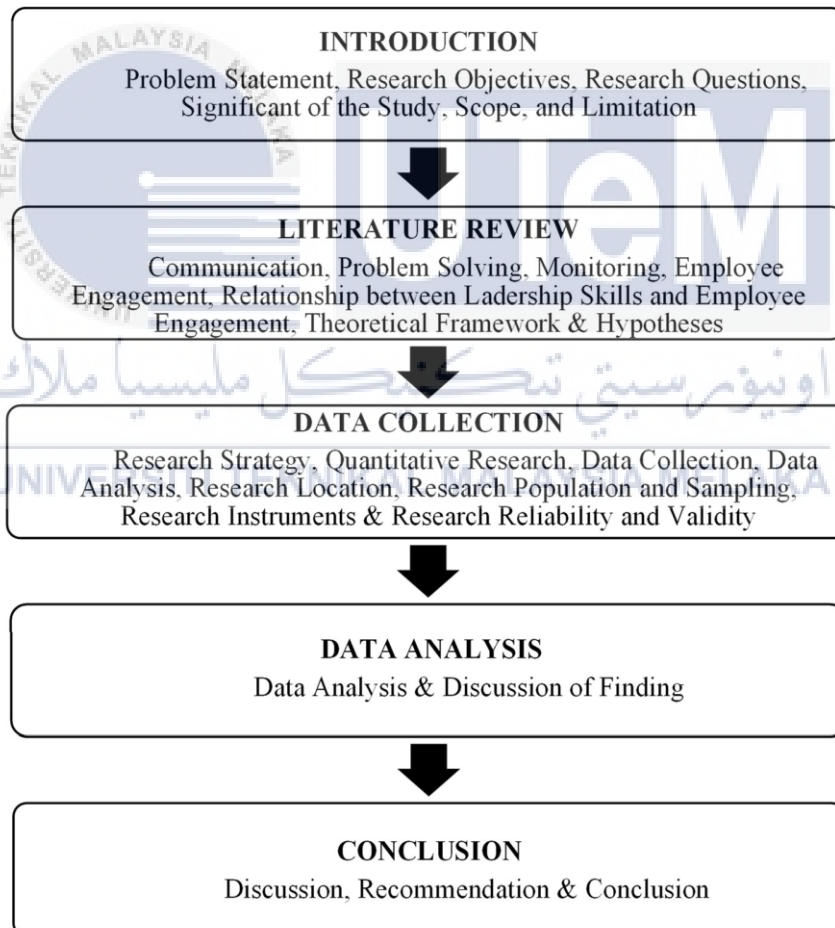


Figure 3.1: Research Design

### 3.2 Methodological Choice

It is also possible to establish a causal relationship between leadership skills and employee engagement in order to comprehend the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. To illustrate the framework for additional research, the conceptual framework has also been offered. Quantitative research examines relationships between variables which are measured numerically and analysed using a range of statistical and graphical techniques (Saunders et al., 2016). This study is associated with positivism philosophy and followed with a deduction approach. This quantitative research design will be using more than one data collection techniques for the study. The multi-method quantitative study is what this is known as. Deductive research approach usually begins with theory, hypotheses, then continues with collection and analysis. Lastly, confirmation or rejection will be decided.

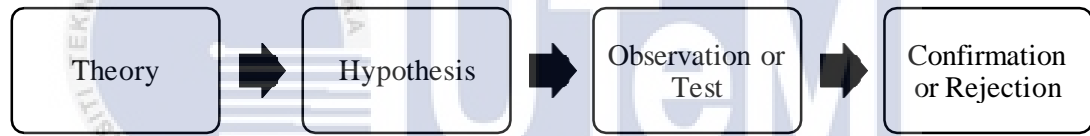


Figure 3.2: Deductive Approach

### 3.3 Research Strategy

In quantitative research, questionnaires will be used to conduct the survey strategy. Survey strategy is the popular strategy that is applied in management research, and it is suitable to respond to the "what," "who," and "where", and 'how' questions. This research will be using questionnaires for the survey strategy. This is because questionnaires allow collection on the large number of respondents that are easy to organize and analyse quantitatively (Saunders et al., 2016).

### 3.4 Data Collection

The methods for gathering information from the respondents in this study will combine both primary and secondary data. According to Kabir (2016), data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions,



test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. There are two types of data which are qualitative data and quantitative data. Qualitative data are mostly non-numerical and usually descriptive or nominal in nature while quantitative data is numerical in nature and can be mathematically computed (Kabir, 2016).

#### **3.4.1 Primary Data**

Primary data is the data that has been collected from first hand-experience (Kabir, 2016). Primary data ease the data collection that is specific to the problem under study and undoubtable for the quality of the data. The primary method of data gathering for the study will be questionnaires. A questionnaire is appropriate for gathering information from many responders. This questionnaire is a self-completed questionnaire which is usually completed by the respondents and are often referred to as surveys (Saunders et al., 2016). Next, this self-completed questionnaire will be distributed to respondents electronically usually using the Internet and they are accessing the questionnaire through the web using a hyperlink (Saunders et al., 2016). This research will conduct Google Form as the web questionnaires which respondents can access through Google Workspace.

#### **3.4.2 Secondary Data**

According to Kabir (2016), secondary data is the data collected from a source that has already been published in any form is called secondary data. The review of literature in any research is based on secondary data. Saunders et al. (2016) also stated the advantages of the secondary data which are permanence of data, feasible longitudinal studies, unobtrusive, and so on. This research conducts secondary data collection through internet articles and journals. The examples of online databases that the research using to collect secondary data are Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia, and various education websites.

#### **3.5 Data Analysis**

The process of analysing data to produce useful results that support a study is known as data analysis. The research will conduct the SPSS software as the tool to analyse and comprehend the data. Quantitative methods have been applied because it

is easier and faster and data analysing through questionnaires will use various techniques such as correlation techniques, regression analysis, descriptive analysis and more.

The results will be compiled based on statistical characteristics like mean, median, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation. These measures will be applied in descriptive analysis to get the results. Reliability analysis used to know the reliability of questions in each variable. Based on earlier theories, correlation analysis was employed to determine the connection between independent variables. Last but not least, regression analysis is a statistical technique used to examine data from dependent variables and other independent variables to determine their relationships. This method will decide if the relationship between variables is strongly significant or not significant at all.

### 3.6 Research Location



Figure 3.6: Mingu International Trading, Malim Jaya, Malacca, Malaysia.

This study uses quantitative research, and the data will be gathered using a questionnaire method. Malim Jaya, Malacca has been chosen as the research location and it will be the place that collects data from the SME employees in Mingu International Trading Sdn. Bhd. They will fill out the questionnaire with answers that are relevant to the study's topic.

### 3.7 Research Population and Sample

#### 3.7.1 Target Population

Population can be considered as a theoretical population, and it is the demographic for the study to describe the findings. The study's target population is the SMEs employees in Mingu International Trading, Malim Jaya, Malacca. The reason for selecting SMEs employees of Mingu International Trading was because this SME has enough employees to answer the questionnaires, and It is appropriate to collect data on the study's topic which is 'Leadership Skills towards Employee Engagement in SMEs'. SMEs is the company with a turnover does not exceed RM50 million or number of full-time employees do not exceed 200 (SME Corporation Malaysia). Thus, this selection of target population can know how the employee engagement of employees in SMEs can be fulfilled by the leadership skills that are used by the leaders or employers.

The sample size is the total number of participants who participated in the study. This study will use the Krejcie and Morgan technique, with a sample size of 86 respondents and a population size of 110. However, there are 4 respondents were considered not counted due to imprecise answers so the final number of respondents that answer the questionnaires is 82.

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Table 3.7: Krejcie and Morgan

### 3.8 Research Instruments

In research instruments, it is a use of an existing instrument and must be appropriately used with research hypotheses or questions, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual definitions. A measurement is a rule placed on an object or phenomenon that represents a quantity of an attribute.

#### 3.8.1 Survey Questionnaire

In order to give the participants in this study the chance to react to the questions, a survey format will be used as the research method, and Google Form has been selected as the questionnaire tool. A, B, C, D, and E are the sections that make up the questionnaire's five sections. Demographic data, including gender, age, race, education level and salary per month are shown in Section A, the opening section of the document.

The questions relevant to the dependent variable, employee engagement, will then appear in section B. The independent variables which are communication, problem-solving, and mentoring will come after Sections C, D, and E. For the scale, the likert scale will conduct and there will be 5 scales that measure the result of questions in section B, C, D, and E. There are 1 to 5 scales to be measured as figure below:

Statement

Academic detailing is a useful form of education that aligns providers' prescribing behavior with evidence-based practice.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Figure 3.8: Likert Scale

### 3.9 Research Reliability and Validity

#### 3.9.1 Reliability

Replication and consistency are referred to as reliability. A study is considered trustworthy if it can successfully replicate an earlier research design and produce the same results. (Saunders et al., 2016). Participants' error, participants' bias, researchers' error, and researchers' bias are a few threats that could have an impact on the reliability results. According to Saunders et al. (2016), Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the reliability of the variables. The range of the alpha coefficient is 0 to 1. It is considered acceptable when Cronbach's Alpha values are greater than 0.7 and lower than 0.8. If the results indicate that the value is greater than 0.9, it is thought to be excellent, and if it is greater than 0.8 but less than 0.9, it is thought to be good. In contrast, if the Cronbach's Alpha value is less than 0.7, it is deemed questionable, less than 0.6 is poor, and less than 0.5 is unacceptable.

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

Figure 3.9: Cronbach's Alpha Table (Saunders et al., 2016)

#### 3.9.2 Validity

According to Saunders et al. (2016), validity refers to the appropriateness of the measures used, accuracy of the analysis of the results and generalisability of the findings. The internal validity and external validity refer to two different types of validity. The degree to which your findings can be attributed to the intervention you are researching rather than to errors in your research design is known as internal validity. (Saunders et al., 2016). For external validity, it is the extent to which a study's

findings can be applied to different circumstances, persons, locations, and measurements. Testing, instrumentation, mortality, and maturation are a few threats that could have an impact on the validity results.

### **3.10 Pilot Test**

Pilot test is a small-scale version of a full-scale test or experiment. It is used to evaluate the feasibility, usability, and effectiveness of a new product, process, or program before it is fully implemented. The results of a pilot test can help identify any issues or problems that need to be addressed before the full launch. It also can help to refine and optimize the final product, process, or program. Pilot testing can be done in a variety of fields, such as education, healthcare, technology, and marketing. The pilot test will conduct 20 respondents to know the reliability of variables before starting the actual analysis.

### **3.11 Summary**

In Chapter 3, the research is introducing the research design, research strategy, and methodological choice that is chosen by the study. Next, the research comes out with the data collection part. To understand the sources that were used to collect the data, primary and secondary data are introduced.

This study will use SPSS as the data analysis tool to analyse the collected data. There are some techniques that are applied in this tool to analyse the data that is collected. Research location is Malim Jaya, Malacca, Malaysia.

For the research population and sample, the target population is SMEs employees in Malim Jaya, Malacca and the sample size is 86 questionnaires due to which 110 respondents have been chosen and final respondents that will conduct questionnaires is 82. Thus, survey format will be explained in the part of the research instrument. The details of the questionnaire had been described such as scale, section, etc. Pilot test also will be conducted to know the result before analysis. Last but not least, the research reliability and validity had come out with the definition, threats, and Cronbach's Alpha Table.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS & RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Pilot Test**

<b>Reliability Statistic</b>			
<b>Variables</b>	<b>N of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Employee Engagement	5	0.667	Dependent Variable
Communication	5	0.807	Independent Variables 1
Problem Solving	5	0.736	Independent Variables 2
Mentoring	5	0.823	Independent Variables 3
Overall	20	0.935	DV and IVs

Table 4.1: Pilot Test of Reliability

This pilot test is evaluating the relationship between employee engagement and various independent variables: problem solving, mentoring, and communication. The test's internal consistency is assessed using the Cronbach alpha values, and in this instance, all values are more than 0.6, indicating a high level of reliability. The study likely aims to explore if problem solving, mentoring, and communication are factors that contribute to employee engagement and if they are reliable indicators of it.

Next, the test's overall Cronbach alpha value is 0.935., which is considered to be very high, indicating a high level of internal consistency among all the items of the test. The test was administered to 20 respondents, which is a relatively small sample size, but as it is a pilot test, it is a good indication of how the test would perform on a larger sample. Overall, the high reliability of the test indicates that the results are likely to be reliable and generalizable to a larger population. The test results can be used to identify whether problem solving, mentoring, and communication have a substantial impact on employee engagement.



## 4.2 Content Validity

The degree to which a test accurately captures the entirety of the subject matter it aims to evaluate is known as content validity. Every aspect of content validation is covered on this page, including its history and definitions, methodology, the importance of content validity evidence in determining a test's reliability, and any current challenges facing open content validation. Content validity is important in the creation of any new tool because it provides evidence of tool effectiveness by examining how well the instrument measures the target structure (Anastasia, 1988). This enables the tool to draw meaningful and suitable conclusions and/or make decisions based on tool results for a specified evaluation goal (Messick, 1989; Moss, 1995).

The amount to which a test assesses the behaviour to be assessed is referred to as content validity in research methodology. The questionnaires were distributed by the researchers using a Google form. The two most important parts of the questionnaire are the sections on demographic data and dependent variables. Using the knowledge of people who are familiar with the construct under investigation, the content validity of this study is assessed. To determine the content validity of the research, ask subject-matter experts to evaluate a current test's content validity.

## 4.3 Reliability Analysis

Reliability Statistic			
Variables	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Remarks
Employee Engagement	5	0.809	Dependent Variable
Communication	5	0.838	Independent Variables 1
Problem Solving	5	0.863	Independent Variables 2
Mentoring	5	0.864	Independent Variables 3

Table 4.3: Reliability Analysis on Cronbach's Alpha



**Scale: EE**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.809	5

**Scale: C**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.838	5

**Scale: PS**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.863	5

**Scale: M**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.864	5

Cronbach's Alpha was used by the researcher to assess the reliability of internal consistency. A higher value indicates greater internal consistency and, consequently, a more reliable measure of the variables. The Cronbach's Alpha value ranges from 0 to 1. Table 4.3 shows that the Alpha values for all variables are above 0.8, indicating that all variables have high internal consistency and are therefore reliable measures. When Cronbach's Alpha shows that ranges 0.7 to 0.8 is acceptable level of reliability. The value over 0.8 will be consider good and excellent.

Based on Table 4.3, Mentoring (IV3) that with 5 items has the highest alpha value among other variables which is 0.864. It has the greatest reliability while the variables that recorded the lowest alpha value is Employee Engagement (DV) which recorded 0.809. Next, Problem Solving (IV2) has the second highest alpha value which is 0.863 and follow by Communication (IV1) which is 0.838.

In the reliability analysis which the variables are measured by Cronbach's Alpha value, researchers conclude that the scales and items in the questionnaires that are used and distributed are acceptable reliable. Next, descriptive of the study sample will be conducted and describe the characteristic of respondents which will include gender, age, race, education level, and salary per month. It is the method to summarize the data that collected from survey.

#### 4.4 Descriptive of the Study Sample

##### 4.4.1 Gender

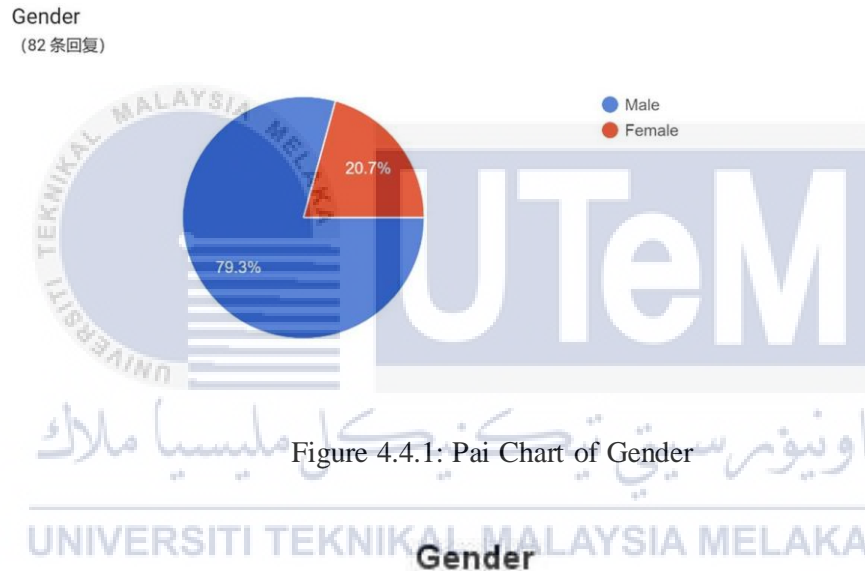


Table 4.4.1: Gender of respondents

Based on Table 4.4.1, it shows that the result of respondents that have been divided to male and female from survey. As shown in table above, the respondents are made up by 17 females and 65 males which represent 20.7% and 79.3% in the survey. This means the males are the majority gender in the company.

#### 4.4.2 Age

Race  
(82 条回复)

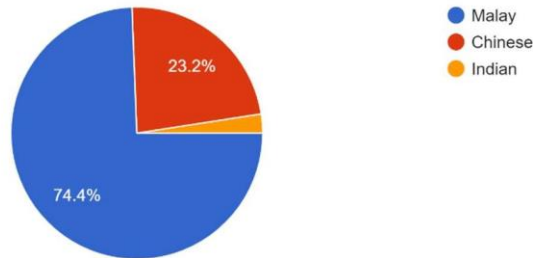


Table 4.4.2: Pai Chart of Age

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-21 years old	9	11.0	11.0	11.0
	22-25 years old	46	56.1	56.1	67.1
	26-30 years old	16	19.5	19.5	86.6
	31 years old and above	11	13.4	13.4	100.0
Total		82	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4.2: Age of respondents

Table 4.4.2 illustrates the breakdown of survey participants by age, which is divided into 4 categories: 18-21 years old, 22-25 years old, 26-30 years old, and 31 years old and above. The table shows that the respondents that most of the respondents are in the categories of 22-25 years old because it has the highest frequency among all the others that is 46 respondents (56.1%). Respondents who are in this age range are considered as young graduates which it is reasonable for them to conduct in this survey. The second highest frequency belongs to the 16 respondents (19.5%) who in the age range of 26-30 years old. Then, there are only 11 respondents (13.4%) from the age range of 31 years old and above. Finally, 9 respondent (11%) is from the age range of 18-21 years old and hence it represents the lowest frequency in overall.

### 4.4.3 Race

Race  
(82 条回复)

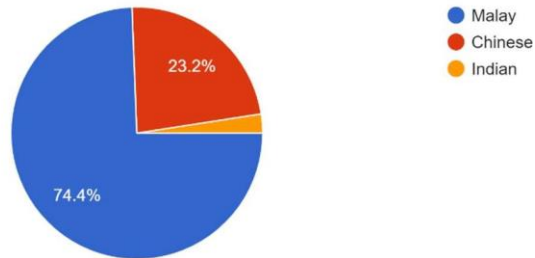


Figure 4.4.3: Pie Chart of Race

		Race			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Chinese	19	23.2	23.2	23.2
	Indian	2	2.4	2.4	25.6
	Malay	61	74.4	74.4	100.0
Total		82	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4.3: Race of respondents

Table 4.4.3 stated the race of respondents that acquired from the survey set. Based on Table 4.4.3, race of respondents had been distributed into 4 categories which are Chinese, Indian, Malay, and others. The majority of respondents are Malays which consists of the highest frequency that is 61 respondents (74.4%). Respondents who are Chinese represent the second highest frequency in the survey which is made up by 19 respondents (23.2%). There are 2 Indian respondents (2.4%) which make them to be the least frequent in company. However, the company does not have any races other than these races above.

#### 4.4.4 Highest Education Level

Highest Education Level  
(82 条回复)

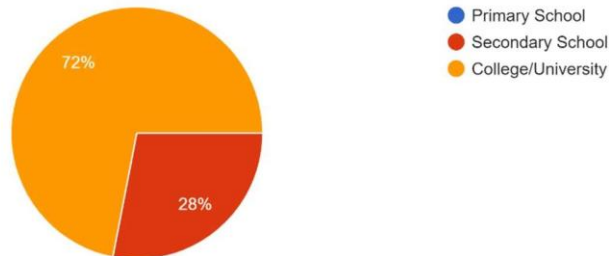


Figure 4.4.4: Pai Chart of Highest Education Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	College/University	59	72.0	72.0	72.0
	Secondary School	23	28.0	28.0	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4.4: Highest Education Level of respondents

This section consists of 3 education levels which are primary school, secondary school, and college or university. However, Table 4.4.4 shows that the company does not recruits any employee that is graduate from primary school. Most of the respondents are graduate from college or university which are 59 respondents (72%) and 23 respondents (28%) are graduates from secondary school. This mean the company is focus on recruiting the university level of employee and also take some people that graduate from SPM.

#### 4.4.5 Salary Per Month

Salary Per Month  
(82 条回复)

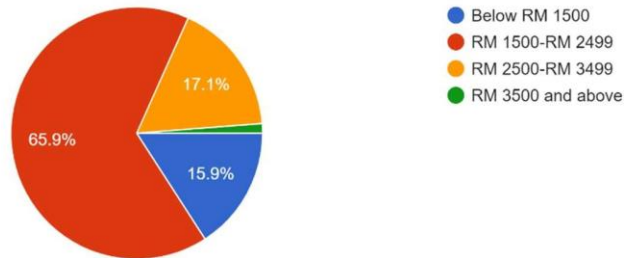


Figure 4.4.5: Pai Chart of Salary Per Month

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Below RM 1500	13	15.9	15.9	15.9
RM 1500-RM 2499	54	65.9	65.9	81.7
RM 2500-RM 3499	14	17.1	17.1	98.8
RM 3500 and abo	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4.5: Salary Per Month of respondents

Salary per month of respondents being presented and separated into 4 categories in table 4.4.5. The 4 categories are below RM1500, RM1500-RM2499, RM2500-RM3499 and RM3500 and above. From the table, it can be concluded that the majority of respondent earn income in the range of RM1500-RM2499 as there are 54 respondents (65.9%) are under this category. Furthermore, there are 14 respondents (17.1%) from the range of RM2500-RM3499 and there are 13 respondents (15.9%) that are earn salary below RM1500. The lowest percentage is 1.2% which made up by only one respondent who earn salary in the range of RM3500 and above per month.

#### 4.5 Descriptive of the Study Variables

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EE	82	1.00	4.60	3.9390	.80043
C	82	1.00	4.80	3.9683	.85286
PS	82	1.00	4.60	3.9317	.88008
M	82	1.00	4.60	3.9366	.89215
Valid N (listwise)	82				

Table 4.5: Descriptive Analysis of the Study Variables

Mean Level	Indication
High Level	3.34 to 5.00
Medium Level	1.67 to 3.33
Low Level	1.00 to 1.66

Table 4.5.1: Mean Level

Our questionnaires used the Likert scale method, which includes 5 points ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The mean level is divided into three categories based on the 5 points, as displayed in Table 4.5.1. Table 4.5 presents the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, and maximum values of all variables studied. All the variables presented high mean levels which are in the range of 3.93 to 3.96. Mean of employee engagement is 3.939 and for the independent variables that present communication, problem solving, and mentoring are 3.968, 3.931, and 3.936 respectively. Meanwhile, standard deviation of employee engagement, communication, problem solving, and mentoring was 0.800, 0.852, 0.880, and 0.892 respectively. Communication had the highest maximum value 4.80 while the others three had the same maximum value which was 4.60 and minimum value for all variables was 1.00. From this result, it can be found that communication record the highest mean value and shows that employee more engage when following the leaders that can communicate and encourage other to communicate.

#### 4.6 Inter-Correlation between Variables

		<b>Correlations</b>			
		EE	C	PS	M
EE	Pearson Correlation	1	.963**	.961**	.959**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	82	82	82	82
C	Pearson Correlation	.963**	1	.973**	.962**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	82	82	82	82
PS	Pearson Correlation	.961**	.973**	1	.957**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	82	82	82	82
M	Pearson Correlation	.959**	.962**	.957**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	82	82	82	82

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

Table 4.6: Inter-Correlation between Variables

Pearson's r	Indications
0.90 to 1.00	Very high correlation
0.70 to 0.89	High correlation
0.40 to 0.69	Moderate correlation
0.20 to 0.39	Low correlation
0.00 to 0.19	Very low correlation

Table 4.6.1: Strength of Relationship

Correlation analysis, which evaluates the relationship between variables, has a range between -1 and 1. Three categories can be used to categorise the relationship: a perfect negative linear relationship is represented by -1, a perfect positive relationship is represented by 1, and there is no relationship at all. A 2-tailed test of significance level at 0.01, which denotes a high level of significance, is also included in the



correlation analysis. Table 4.6.1 can be used to assess the strength of the association between the dependent variable and independent variables.

Table 4.6 shows that the correlation between all of the independent variables is higher than 0.90, indicating a very high correlation between the variables. All four independent variables have a positive relationship with employee engagement. Communication shows a particularly high correlation with employee engagement, with a correlation coefficient of 0.963, and a p-value of less than 0.01. Similarly, employee engagement is strongly correlated with problem-solving ( $r = 0.961$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and mentoring ( $r = 0.959$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, all of the independent variables show a very high correlation with each other, indicating that they are closely related and likely measure similar constructs. This strong correlation between independent variables should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results of any analyses that use these variables, as it may indicate that the effects of one variable may be confounded with the effects of another variable.

As displayed in Table 4.6, the relationship between communication and problem-solving is also very high with a correlation coefficient of 0.973 and a p-value of less than 0.01. Similarly, the relationship between communication and mentoring is very high with a correlation coefficient of 0.962 and a p-value of less than 0.01. The relationship between problem-solving and mentoring is also very high with a correlation coefficient of 0.957 and a p-value of less than 0.01. This suggests a strong positive relationship among the variables in the research, all of the independent variables are strongly correlated, this indicates that these variables are measuring similar concepts, which should be considered when interpreting the results of the analysis.

## 4.7 Regression Analysis

### Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.973 <sup>a</sup>	.946	.944	.18954

a. Predictors: (Constant), M, PS, C

Table 4.7.1: Model Summary

### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.093	3	16.364	455.499	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	2.802	78	.036		
	Total	51.895	81			

a. Dependent Variable: EE

b. Predictors: (Constant), M, PS, C

Table 4.7.2: ANOVA

### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	.386	.100	..	3.847	.000
	C	.299	.120	.318	2.481	.015
	PS	.299	.110	.329	2.726	.008
	M	.303	.092	.338	3.284	.002

a. Dependent Variable: EE

Table 4.7.3: Coefficients

A multiple regression analysis must be carried out to look at the correlation between the dependent and independent variables in order to test the hypotheses. A dependent variable can be predicted using multiple regression analysis, a statistical technique, using one or more independent variables. The individual and combined impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable can be examined using this method. Knowing which independent variables have the biggest effects on the dependent variable and how much of the variance in the dependent variable can be attributed to the independent variables will be revealed as a result. R Square in model

summary displayed how strong the impact of independent variables is towards dependent variable. According to Minitab (2019), it states that the higher the R Square value is, the more suitable of regression model to be applied for data. The employee engagement was tested with the communication, problem solving, and mentoring using multiple regression. The overall model was significant,  $F(45550) = 455.499$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , it counted 94.6% variability in support for employee engagement.

Table 4.7.3 shows the Beta values for each independent variable, which indicate the strength of the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. Beta values can range from 0 to 1 or 0 to -1. The closer the value is to 1 or -1, the stronger the effect of that independent variable. As shown in table 4.7.2, among all the independent variables, mentoring has the greatest impact on employee engagement as its beta value is 0.32, which is closest to 1. Additionally, t-value is used to determine how many standard errors the coefficient is away from zero. A t-value greater than 2 or less than -2 is considered statistically significant. The t-value for the mentoring variable is 3.284 which is greater than 2, indicating that the effect of mentoring on employee engagement is statistically significant.

The table above shows that the t-value of problem-solving and communication is also greater than 2, with values of 2.726 and 2.481 respectively. The column "sig" in the table represents the probability value (p) which indicate whether the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable is significant. A p-value less than 0.05 is considered a statistically significant relationship, while a p-value greater than 0.05 is considered an insignificant relationship. According to table 4.7.3, the independent variables in the table 4.7.3 show positive relationship with dependent variables which the record the significant p-value 0.015, 0.008, and 0.002 which all are smaller than 0.05.

#### 4.8 Results of hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Regression Analysis (p-value)	Results
<b>IV1: Communication</b>		
There is a significant relationship between communication and employee engagement.	0.015 (p < 0.05)	Accepted
<b>IV2: Problem Solving</b>		
There is a significant relationship between problem solving and employee engagement.	0.008 (p < 0.05)	Accepted
<b>IV3: Mentoring</b>		
There is a significant relationship between mentoring and employee engagement.	0.002 (p < 0.05)	Accepted

Table 4.8: Summary of Hypothese Testing

#### 4.9 Summary of Chapter 4

In conclusion, Chapter 4 summarises the findings of the data analysis carried out using the SPSS programme. A pilot test was performed before the analysis began in order to uncover and address any potential problems with the research design, data collection tools, and methods that would have an impact on the general calibre of the data gathered and the validity of the conclusions. To investigate the relationship between political skills and employee engagement, the data was evaluated using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, inter-correlation analysis, and regression analysis. Additionally, it judged whether or not this relationship was constructive. The analysis's findings were noted and displayed.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter will present a summary of the findings from the analysis conducted in chapter 4, providing readers with an understanding of the reasoning behind the researcher's conclusions and decisions. Next, recommendations also present in this chapter which can deliver another topic that relevant to this topic so this can be the further investigate for the future researchers. Lastly, chapter 5 also will close up with the conclusions which personal opinion will stated to answer the problems present in chapter 1 and 2.

### **5.2 Discussions**

#### **5.2.1 Communication**

The analysis in chapter 4 showed that there is a significant relationship between communication and employee engagement. When the leaders always keep contact with their employees, they will became more engage to the work and organization. The reason why communication can engage employee because a communicated team can decrease the mistakes and misundersatnding while in the work. The result also shown that most of the employees were satisfied with a leader that always communicate with them and they willing to working together with the leader.

#### **5.2.2 Problem Solving**

The analysis in chapter 4 showed that there is a significant relationship between problem solving and employee engagement. A leader that can solve the organizational problem can make their employee engage to the organization. The reason why problem solving can engage employees because a leader that can solve problem can make sure their organization does not fall in a big problem and avoiding the loss in profits. Employees will feel valued and satisfied when solving together with leader. If the leader unable to solve the problems, most of the employees stated that will leave the organization.

### **5.2.3 Mentoring**

The analysis in chapter 4 showed that there is a significant relationship between mentoring and employee engagement. When the leader can mentor their employees, they will become more experienced and inspired which can make them more engage to organization. The reason is the leader will share his knowledge and experience to the employee, this will benefit the employees and keep improve their performance in the organization. From the result shown in chapter 4, the employee stated that the leader that was no care to them will make them feel disppointed and not engage to the work.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

First and foremost, leadership skills are the very useful skills in the organozation or workplace. There are many skills that can help the leader to guide or lead their employees or team members so can make them more engage to the organization. The key leadership skills investigated in this research are communication, problem solving and mentoring. These skills are important to the leader because the implementation of this skills can decrease the mistake of employees and guide them into the right path in their career. Most of the organizations are lack of contacts and creativities so they are struggled to solve the problem when it was occurred. When a leader does not have the creativity to implement solution to the problem, this will make employees not engage to the organization. This research shown that these three leadership skills can become the example factors that leader can learn to make their employees enage to the organization.

However, this research only focusing on several variables that will affect employee engagement. There will be other more variables that may also affect the employee engagement in SMEs sector. Therefore, this research might not can fully fullfil all the leaders in SMEs due to the lack of other possible variables or leadership skills in the research. Nevertheless, future researchers can focus on other leadership skills that will affect the engagement of the employees in SMEs sector. The target organization of this research was Mingu International Trading which they are focusing on import construction raw materials. This also become the limitation of this research because the results might be differed if the target fields are different with this business.

The future researchers can also choose another field of SMEs sector so can proceed a same or different analysis results to this research.

Lastly, this research also only focusses on Malacca, Malaysia. This also become the limitation to the readers that want to research on other Malaysia's states or overbroad countries. The recommendation for future researchers is they can try to choose the SMEs that are located on other states or countries other than Malacca. This is because there is different culture in different area so the result might be the same or different.

#### **5.4 Conclusions**

As a conclusion, the purpose of this research was to investigate leadership skills towards employee engagement in SMEs. Dependent variable in this research was employee engagement while independent variables were communication, problem solving, and mentoring. The questionnaire for the research was collected from 82 respondents that from Malacca SME which was Mingu International Trading through online.

The research findings indicate that communication, problem-solving, and mentoring skills have a significant relationship with employee engagement. The data was collected and analyzed using the SPSS.

However, there were still some limitations while conducting the research. The other variables that do not stated in research might affect the result of the analysis. The different area of culture or thinking also can be the limitation of this research. Therefore, it is better if these limitations can be solved in the further study by the future researchers. The data and analysis presented in chapter 4 can aid Small and Medium Enterprises in identifying factors that influence employee engagement.

## APPENDICES

### Questionnaire (Survey)

The questionnaire is divided into 5 sections, designated as A, B, C, D, and E. Section A consists of multiple-choice questions, while sections B, C, D, and E include Likert scale items, rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree". Soal selidik dibahagikan kepada 5 bahagian, ditetapkan sebagai A, B, C, D, dan E. Bahagian A terdiri daripada soalan aneka pilihan, manakala bahagian B, C, D, dan E termasuk item skala Likert, dinilai pada skala dari 1 hingga 5, dengan 1 mewakili "sangat tidak setuju" dan 5 mewakili "sangat setuju".

1	2	3	4	5
<b>Strongly Disagree</b> <i>Sangat Tidak Setuju</i>	<b>Disagree</b> <i>Tidak Setuju</i>	<b>Neutral</b> <i>Neutral</i>	<b>Agree</b> <i>Setuju</i>	<b>Strongly Agree</b> <i>Sangat Setuju</i>



**Section A: Demographic Information****Bahagian A: Maklumat Demografi**

Please tick ✓ on the box that prepared.

Sila tandakan ✓ pada kotak yang disediakan.

Gender

Jantina

☐ Male

Lelaki

☐ Female

Perempuan

Age

Usia

☐ 18-21 years old

18-21 tahun

☐ 22-25 years old

22-25 tahun

☐ 26-30 years old

26-30 tahun

☐ 31 years old and above

31 tahun dan keatas

Race

Bangsa

☐ Malay

Melayu

☐ Indian

India

☐ Chinese

Cina

☐ Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Lain-lain

Highest Education Level

Peringkat Pendidikan Tertinggi

☐ Primary School

Sekolah Rendah

☐ Secondary School

Sekolah Menengah

☐ College/University

Kolej/Universiti

☐ Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Lain-Lain

Salary Per Month

Gaji Sebulan

☐ Below RM 1500

RM1500 kebawah

☐ RM 1500-RM 2499

RM 1500-RM 2499

☐ RM 2500-RM 3499

RM 2500-RM 3499

☐ RM 3500 and above

RM3500 dan keatas

**Section B: Employee****Engagement****Bahagian B: Penglibatan****Pekerja**

Please circle the number in the table.

Strongly  
Disagree  
Sangat  
Tidak  
SetujuDisagree  
Tidak  
SetujuNeutral  
NeutralAgree  
SetujuStrongly  
Agree  
Sangat  
Setuju

Sila bulatkan nombor dalam jadual.						
1	I am proud of working for organization. <i>Saya bangga bekerja untuk organisasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am satisfied with my compensation and benefits. <i>Saya berpuas hati dengan pampasan dan faedah saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
3	Organization's culture delivers a comfortable, supportive work environment for me. <i>Budaya organisasi memberikan persekitaran kerja yang selesa dan menyokong saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
4	My work makes me feel challenge and aid my development. <i>Kerja saya membuatkan saya berasa mencabar dan membantu perkembangan saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
5	I enjoy working with my team members and leader. <i>Saya seronok bekerja dengan ahli pasukan dan ketua saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Section C:</b> <b>Communication</b> <i>Bahagian C: Komunikasi</i>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b> <i>Sangat Tidak Setuju</i>	<b>Disagree</b> <i>Tidak Setuju</i>	<b>Neutral</b> <i>Neutral</i>	<b>Agree</b> <i>Setuju</i>	<b>Strongly Agree</b> <i>Sangat Setuju</i>

		<i>Tidak Setuju</i>				<i>Setuju</i>
1	I feel happy when my leader provides clear order to the team. <i>Saya berasa gembira apabila ketua saya memberikan susunan yang jelas kepada pasukan.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2	My mistake decreases when I follow my leader's order. <i>Kesilapan saya berkurangan apabila saya mengikut arahan ketua saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
3	I prefer the team that is always in communication. <i>Saya lebih suka pasukan yang sentiasa berkomunikasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
4	Misunderstanding rarely occur because leader always on communicated. <i>Salah faham jarang berlaku kerana pemimpin sentiasa berkomunikasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel comfortable that able to communicate with leader. <i>Saya berasa selesa kerana dapat berkomunikasi dengan pemimpin.</i>	1	2	3	4	5

Section D: Problem Solving <i>Bahagian D: Penyelesaian Masalah</i>		Strongly Disagree <i>Sangat Tidak Setuju</i>	Disagree <i>Tidak Setuju</i>	Neutral <i>Neutral</i>	Agree <i>Setuju</i>	Strongly Agree <i>Sangat Setuju</i>
1	I am more willing to follow with the leader that can solve organizational problems. <i>Saya lebih rela mengikut dengan pemimpin yang boleh menyelesaikan masalah organisasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2	I feel valued when solve the problem together with leader. <i>Saya rasa dihargai apabila menyelesaikan masalah bersama-sama dengan pemimpin.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
3	I feel impressed that my leader can solve the problem quickly. <i>Saya berasa kagum bahawa ketua saya dapat menyelesaikan masalah dengan cepat.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
4	I will leave if the leader unable to solve any organizational problems. <i>Saya akan pergi jika pemimpin tidak dapat menyelesaikan masalah organisasi.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
5	I can seek my future career when working	1	2	3	4	5

	with leader that have ability to solve problem. <i>Saya boleh mencari kerjaya masa depan saya apabila bekerja dengan pemimpin yang mempunyai keupayaan untuk menyelesaikan masalah.</i>					
<b>Section E: Mentoring</b> <b>Bahagian E: Pementoran</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b> <b>Sangat Tidak Setuju</b>	<b>Disagree</b> <b>Tidak Setuju</b>	<b>Neutral</b> <b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b> <b>Setuju</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b> <b>Sangat Setuju</b>
1	Suggestions that provide by leader benefit me endlessly. <i>Cadangan yang diberikan oleh pemimpin memberi banyak manfaat kepada saya.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2	I feel inspired when my leader shares his experiences on work. <i>Saya berasa terinspirasi apabila ketua saya berkongsi pengalamannya tentang kerja.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am happy that my leader always guides me in workplace to make things better. <i>Saya gembira kerana ketua saya sentiasa membimbing saya di tempat kerja untuk menjadikan keadaan</i>	1	2	3	4	5

	<i>lebih baik.</i>					
4	<p>Leader that no care on their members will make me feel disappointed.</p> <p><i>Pemimpin yang tidak mengambil berat terhadap ahli mereka akan membuatkan saya berasa kecewa.</i></p>	1	2	3	4	5
5	<p>I have improvement on working when my leader provide training and coaching to members.</p> <p><i>Saya mempunyai peningkatan dalam bekerja apabila ketua saya memberikan atihan dan bimbingan kepada ahli.</i></p>	1	2	3	4	5

اونيورسيتي تيكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

## REFERENCES

1. Argenti, P. A., Howell, R. A., & Beck, K. A. (2015). *Top 10 strategy - marketing.mitsmr.com*. MIT SLOAN MANAGEMENT REVIEW. Retrieved May 25, 2022, from <http://marketing.mitsmr.com/PDF/STR0715-Top-10-Strategy.pdf>
2. Anastasia, A. (1988). *Psychological testing* (6th ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing.
3. *Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal - DOSM*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2022, from <https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/>
4. D'Zurilla, T. J., & Goldfried, M. R. (1971). Problem solving and behavior modification. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 78(1), 107–126. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0031360>
5. Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
6. Holliday, M. (2001). *Coaching, Mentoring and Managing*, Second Edition: Breakthrough Strategies to Solve Performance Problems and Build Winning Teams. In Google Books. Red Wheel/Weiser. <https://books.google.com.my/books?hl=zhCN&lr=&id=w91EDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP6&dq=Leaders+can+inspire>
7. Kabir, S. M. (2016, July). *Methods of data collection*. 201-275. ISBN: 978-984-33-9565-8
8. Kahn, W.A. (1990) 'Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work', *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol 33, pp692-724.
9. Khan, H. (2021, April 19). *The Causes & Effects of Poor Communication in the Workplace*. Simpplr. <https://www.simpplr.com/blog/2021/causes-effects-poor-communication-workplace/>
10. Kristina L, G., & Yesenia, S. (2011). *Workplace Communication - University of Hawai'i*. University of Hawai'i. Retrieved May 25, 2022, from <https://dspace.lib.hawaii.edu/bitstream/10790/2998/3/guo.k-2011-0021.pdf>



11. Martinez, M. E. (1998). *What is Problem Solving?* - JSTOR. JSTOR.  
Retrieved May 25, 2022, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20439287>
12. McLaughlin, E. (2014, June 17). *What is leadership skills?* - definition from *whatis.com*. SearchCIO. Retrieved May 25, 2022, from  
<https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/leadership-skills>
13. Messick, S. (1989). Validity. In R. L. Linn (Ed.), *Educational measurement* (3rd ed., pp. 13–103). New York: American Council on Education.
14. Moss, P. A. (1995). Themes and variations in validity theory. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 14, 5–13.
15. Munodawafa, D. (2008). Communication: Concepts, practice, and challenges. *Health Education Research*, 23(3), 369–370.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyn024>
16. Rosari, R. (2019). Leadership definitions applications for lecturers' leadership development. *Journal of Leadership in Organizations*, 1(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.22146/jlo.42965>
17. Scandura, T. A., Tejada, M. J., Werther, W. B., & Lankau, M. J. (1996). Perspectives on mentoring. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 17(3), 50–56. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437739610117019>
18. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2016). *Research methods for business students*. Pearson Education.
19. Shaw, K. (2005) 'An engagement strategy process for communicators', *Strategic Communication Management*, Vol 9, No 3, pp26-29.
20. *SME definitions*. SME Corporation Malaysia. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2022, from <https://www.smecorp.gov.my/index.php/en/policies/2020-02-11-08-01-24/sme-definition>
21. target jobs. (2022). *Problem solving: the mark of an independent employee*. Targetjobs.co.uk. <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/skills-for-getting-a-job/problem-solving-mark-independent-employee>
22. *The 5 leadership styles you can use & how to implement each in 2022*. IMD business school. (2022). Retrieved April 24, 2022, from  
<https://www.imd.org/imd-reflections/reflection-page/leadership-styles/>