



## Role of Employee Leadership and Community Engagement Roles in Telecommunications Sector Growth in Somalia

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### Abstract

This descriptive cross-sectional study discussed the relationship between job crafting and community engagement in the telecommunications sector of Somalia. A total of 95 respondents were interviewed and data was analyzed by SPSS version 26. Job crafting, work engagement, work environment, HR policies, Regular Training facilities, and years of job experience directly influence the crafting of employees and the level of community engagement in telecommunication organizations. The average working experience of telecommunication staff was  $6.35 \pm 4.069$  years and there was a strong association between employee years of experience and monthly income ( $\chi^2 = 41.25$ ,  $df = 11$ ,  $\Gamma = .37$ ,  $\lambda = .41$ ,  $cOR = 1.58$ ; 95% CI = 1.655–2.56;  $P = 0.02$ ). There is an association between being treated fairly in this organization and policy practices ( $\chi^2 = 18.40$ ,  $DF = 5$ ,  $p = .05$ ). There is never pressure to finish their work on time and this aligned with the crafting of employees of the organization ( $\chi^2 = 16.80$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .02$ ). Majority of organization have no good retirement and insurance plans for current employees ( $\chi^2 = 16.45$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .001$ ). It has been found that an association exists between proactively working for community engagement and policy practices for employee training programs ( $\chi^2 = 19.75$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .05$ ). The majority of employees struggle with a shortage of quality training on engagement process ( $\chi^2 = 20.44$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .02$ ). Respondent seems unhappy about engagement process of the organizations ( $\chi^2 = 16.50$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ).

**Keywords:** *Crafting Employee; Engagement; Somalia; Telecommunication*

### Introduction

Without the telecommunication sector, including mobile connections, every day billions of people are not able to carry out their work and life with comfort in both developed and developing countries, Kruk *et al.* (2018). About 46% of Somalia's population (7.68 million cellular mobile connections) has access to mobile services, which is lower compared to other African countries (an average of 64% of African countries' population use mobile), Grijalva-Eternod *et al.* (2023). This statistic indicates rank 140th of Somalia within the group of 144 countries in terms of mobile phone penetration. The high cost of broad-brand connection, poor infrastructure, lack of power supply, and poor level of knowledge management are ongoing push factors for low access to mobile and internet use in Somalia. Around 495 million users will be under coverage (46% of Sub-Saharan Africa's population) of mobile services by 2025. Among them, 40% are

teenagers, and this group is a potential customer for the telecommunication sector in Africa. National economic growth and improving the quality of life of community people largely depend on digital technologies. Around 6000 million people have no access to electricity facilities and the green power regulatory environment has still not been adopted in the African continent, Mukumba and Chivanga (2023). Changing patterns of telecommunication technology, shortage of funding, and lack of skilled human resources are key issues to reaching the optimum mobile subscribers in Somalia and all are push factors to effective access to mobile communications in Somalia. Telecommunication employee level of job crafting, pattern of work engagement, and job sustainability motivated employees to increase customer engagement. There are many telecommunication devices, including telecom towers, routers, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), fibre optics, smart TV, smart radios, antennas, and smartphones, used in developed and developing countries (Meena & Geng, 2022). These devices have contributed to education, medicine, e-governance, and agricultural development. Employees' satisfaction and their efforts at community engagement increase the development of relevant sectors two to threefold. This study addressed these gaps in crafting employees and community engagement in the context of Somalia.

### **Methodology**

This was a cross-sectional descriptive study. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with respondents. Questionnaire variables were included in 6 sections of information addressing the feelings, perceptions, and opinions about the telecommunication sector, crafting employees, and community engagement. The study was conducted in two cities, Bosaso and Puntland, Somalia. The sample size was finalized using a standard formula (Fisher et al., 1991), which was determined around 95. A stratified random sampling technique was applied for drawing samples from potential respondents who were stratified by age. The staff list was collected from the HR department and samples were selected using a random sampling technique. For the community, the purposive method has been followed. There was a proportional representation of all age groups in the samples. A pre-designed questionnaire was used to collect data, which included structured and open-ended questions. The interview schedule was pretested, and the results were analyzed to determine reliability. The face validity of the questions was determined by a research expert. The study was conducted from November 2023 to December 2023.

### **Analysis of Data**

The collected quantitative data was edited, coded, and entered into the computer for analysis. The SPSS 26.0 version was used to analyze the collected data. Univariate logistic regression and independent association were determined. Significant univariate associations ( $p < 0.05$ ) were entered into a multivariate logistic regression to identify variables that were significant predictors of adherence to outcome variables. Data analysis includes frequency distribution, cross-tabulation, co-relation and association, and statistically significant tests between variables.

### **Results**

#### ***Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents***

The mean and median ages of respondents are 35.70 and 35 years and the standard deviation is 5.983 years, which indicates the homogeneity of the sampled population in terms of age. The majority of the telecommunication sector respondents are engaged in formal occupations, whereas community people are engaged in non-formal occupations. About 85% were males and 15% were females. This data indicates low participation of females in the formal occupation of Somalia. The average family size of the respondents is 6.8, which is very close to the African continent's average family size of 6.9 but much higher than global (5.0). About 40% had graduate and post-graduate degrees and 60% had SSC and HSC levels of education. The monthly household mean income is around 625\$ for telecommunication sector staff and community

level it is around 385\$. The income statistics of community people are below the national monthly household income of 500\$.

The average working experience of telecommunication staff was 6.35±4.069 years and there was a strong association between employee years of experience and monthly income ( $\chi^2 = 41.25$ ,  $df = 11$ ,  $\Gamma = .37$ ,  $\lambda = .41$   $cOR = 1.58$ ; 95%  $CI = 1.655-2.56$ ;  $P = 0.02$ ).

**Table 1: Multiples analysis of Opinion of the respondents on crafting of employees**

Issues	Opinion of the employees					Significance of test
	Moderately disagree	Undecided	Moderately agree	Strongly agree	95% CI	
Everybody is treated fairly in this organization	25%	5%	55%	15%	1.580-2.552	$\chi^2 = 18.40$ , $DF = 5$ , $p = .05$
Employee performance evaluations are fair and appropriate.	28%	2%	60%	10%	1.065-1.862	$\chi^2 = 14.75$ , $DF = 4$ , $p = .09$
There is never a pressure to finish my work on time	18%	4%	73%	5%	1.007-1.920	$\chi^2 = 16.80$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .02$
I am satisfied with the organization's benefit packages	12%	8%	55%	30%	1.450-2.058	$\chi^2 = 17.30$ , $DF = 4$ , $p = .06$
I am satisfied with the reward/ incentive schemes for good performances	30%	15%	40%	15%	2.060-2.860	$\chi^2 = 21.70$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .03$
The Organization has good Retirement and Insurance Plans	35%	30%	30%	5%	1.005-1.650	$\chi^2 = 16.45$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .001$
The organization provides as much training as I need to perform my job well.	20%	12%	53%	15%	1.240-2.080	$\chi^2 = 13.35$ , $DF = 4$ , $p = .07$
I trust if I do a good job my Company will consider me for a promotion.	26%	14%	40%	20%	1.750-1.950	$\chi^2 = 15.55$ , $DF = 5$ , $p = .06$
My Job does make good use of my Skills and abilities.	30%	15%	50%	5%	1.020-1.540	$\chi^2 = 15.22$ , $DF = 5$ , $p = .05$
My manager is actively interested in my professional development and advancement.	18%	6%	56%	20%	1.450-2.058	$\chi^2 = 16.55$ , $DF = 4$ , $p = .06$

**Crafting employees and the community engagement**

The researchers have sought the opinions of the employees on how their formal job aligns with their strengths, values, and interests in the organization. About 70% of employees said the organization treated everyone fairly, 25% of the respondents disagreed with this statement and 5% did not have any comments about the statement. Synthesis data found an association between being treated fairly in this organization and policy practices ( $\chi^2 = 18.40$ ,  $DF = 5$ ,  $p = .05$ ). The majority (78%) opined that there is never pressure to finish their work on time and this aligned with the crafting of employees of the organization ( $\chi^2 = 16.80$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .02$ ). However, about 65% of the employees agreed that organization has no good retirement and insurance plans for current employees ( $\chi^2 = 16.45$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Around half (55%) of employees try to

make appropriate use of their Skills and abilities in their daily tasks ( $\chi^2 = 15.22$ ,  $DF = 5$ ,  $p = .05$ ). Table 1 data and statistical analysis reveal that crafting of employees, work environment, and organizational policies was significantly associated with increased employee wellbeing, which is consistent with high community engagement.

**Table 2: Multiples analysis of opinion of the community respondents on community engagement**

Issues	Opinion of the community respondents				95% CI	Significance of test
	Moderately disagree	Undecided	Moderately agree	Strongly agree		
Somalia Telecommunication sector employees well trained for community engagement	15%	25%	35%	25%	1.580-2.552	$\chi^2 = 15.55$ , $DF = 5$ , $p = .06$
Somalia Telecommunication sector employees proactively work for community engagement	35%	15%	35%	15%	1.550-1.920	$\chi^2 = 19.75$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .05$
High workloads do not allow them for more in community engagement	10%	5%	20%	65%	2.750-3.620	$\chi^2 = 21.50$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .02$
Employees have good knowledge of the community engagement system	25%	15%	40%	20%	1.550-2.050	$\chi^2 = 15.22$ , $DF = 4$ , $p = .07$
The organization provides training to employees on the community engagement system	30%	25%	40%	5%	2.065-2.865	$\chi^2 = 20.44$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .02$
I'm very happy with Somalia Telecommunication sector employees' community engagement activities	40%	20%	30%	10%	1.550-2.0450	$\chi^2 = 16.50$ , $DF = 6$ , $p = .05$

About 40% of the community people disagreed with the statement that Somalia's Telecommunication sector employees are well-trained for community engagement and 60% of respondents agreed with it. 50% of respondents opined that employees proactively work for community engagement and 50% disagreed with it. It has been found that an association between proactively working for community engagement and policy practices for employee training programs ( $\chi^2 = 19.75$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .05$ ). The majority (85%) opined that push factors to engage the community people ( $\chi^2 = 21.50$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .02$ ). However, about 55% of the respondents believe that employees do not quality training on engagement process ( $\chi^2 = 20.44$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .02$ ). Questions has been asked by us on how much they are happy to Somalia Telecommunication sector employees' community engagement activities. Around 60% of respondents are unhappy and 40% are happy ( $\chi^2 = 16.50$ ,  $DF = 6$ ,  $p = .05$ ) (Table 2).

**Discussion**

This study aimed to gain an understanding of Somalia's telecommunication sector crafting of employees and the level of community engagement by their services. In the service sector, effective community engagement refers to engaging stakeholders aiming to achieve long-term and sustainable outcomes addressing economic growth Hoque and Sorwar (2015). The telecommunication sector become a vital field

for education, health, communication, and government services. Crafting employees and community engagement in African countries is not well practiced across the different organizations Ariani (2023). The telecommunication sector is rising and community engagement mostly depends on organizations skilled human resources. Employee role in business development and community engagement and the relationship between job crafting strongly influence positive economic growth through the telecommunication sector (Akbar *et al.*, 2022). Organizational policies and, job crafting engagement increase the telecommunication role in improving the quality of community people, who directly impact economic growth in both developed and developing countries (Manzanares *et al.*, 2024). This study finds that crafting and engagement are influenced by some factors, including organizations' policies, working environment, workloads, training facilities, and financial benefits. Our study findings are similar to the study conducted by Letona-Ibañez *et al.* (2021) and they showed a strong relationship with the variables that were mentioned. Community people's socioeconomic status and level of digitalization also contributing factors for faster community engagement. This study data reveals that community people are below the national monthly household income and this is a push factor for effective community engagement in the Somalia context (Abdel Hadi, Bakker & Häusser, 2021). The average working experience of telecommunication staff was poor ( $6.35 \pm 4.069$  years) and in other developing countries this is around 11 years. The reason for short experience is high employee turnover and poor staff satisfaction. This study's findings were closely familiar with a study conducted by Bakker and Oerlemans (2019). The majority of employees are dissatisfied with practicing policy equally with office employees. Most of the employees complain about Retirement and Insurance Plans that negatively impact effective community engagement and staff have less commitment to organizations like the telecommunication sector. Carlson *et al.* (2023) study concluded that organizational policy and good practice increase the ownership of staff towards organization development. Community people opined that telecommunication sector employees need regular training to effectively manage office tasks and proactively manage the community engagement system in the telecommunication sector (Liu *et al.*, 2024). This study suggests proactively working for community engagement and policy practices for employee training programs and respondents expressed their unhappiness about employees' community engagement activities in Somalia's Telecommunication sector. Effective training sessions, good HR practices, and a knowledge management system may improve this unhealthy environment.

## **Conclusion**

Job crafting and community engagement are becoming popular at both the individual and organizational levels. Telecommunication organizations could make it easier for their staff through good HR practices.

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## **Conflict of Interest:**

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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