

Workplace Productivity through Employee Workforce Engagement: A Review Study

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to analyze the relevant past data of various research papers based on employee engagement in various organizations especially focused on employee workforce engagement. The employee engagement strategy helps to create a workforce which effectively engages in the organization and also emotionally connect the employees with the organization. The purpose of employee engagement is not only to colleagues and clients of the organization, but also inspires the customer's satisfaction and service quality. The variables taken for the purpose of analysis are: Job satisfaction, Job involvement, job commitment, employee empowerment, etc. The study aims to explore how employee engagement is related to these variables in the organization. Engagement literature also presents a number of factors which influence employee engagement in the workplace and these factors have used to investigate which factors need to be improved in order to increase the employee engagement. The paper also analyzes various existing engagement theories and measuring methods to find out the existing levels of employee engagement within various organizations. The findings of the research will help to give specific recommendations in relation to improving employee engagement and pay attention to be a better workplace.

Keywords: Employee communication, Employee development, Supervisor support, Co-worker, Rewards & recognition, Work environment, Job satisfaction.

Introduction

Employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values (Ali Syed Smitha (2013). Engagement is a positive attitude of employee in creating value for the company. In engagement, people employ and express themselves in three ways physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. Employee engagement is the degree of employee commitment and level of participation in the organizational activity and value creation. It will be successful only when he is treated with respect and honor, given encouragement, support and resources he required and given an adequate freedom regarding their work. People who work for money, will become more productive by providing them some perks and benefit in forms of motivations. Some of the employee feels unsatisfied due to their unexpected career. These are the people who don't know how to use their knowledge, skills, talent, and creativity in the companies and become productive and goal oriented as well as creating value for the organizations.

As per the global studies, three basic aspects of employee engagement in an organization are:

- Employees own psychological makeup and their experience.
- Employers' ability creating the conditions to increase employee engagement.
- Employees interaction at all levels in the organization.

Employee engagement is the capacity of an organization related to its ability to managing and achieving high performance and superior business performance. The main advantage of employee engagement is as given below. An engaged employee:

- Stay longer with the company and work as an advocate, have higher contribution and participation in work.
- More motivated and perform his best.
- Energize the work environment.
- More loyal to the company and its competitive environment.
- Have trust in the organization and emotionally connected.
- Create a link between engagement and profitability and future growth.
- Committed towards organizational goals, objectives and strategies.

An engaged employee works with his colleagues for enhancing organizational growth as well as his own performance within his job. (Ali Syed Smitha (2013) and he will also consistently contribute beyond expectations to the respective organization. People vary in their engagement regarding their perceptions of the benefits that they receive from their role and performance. Psychological safety, supportive environment and interpersonal relationship involve a sense of return on investments of the self-in-role performances (Kahn, 1992). Maslach et al. (2001) also suggested that recognition and reward are important for employee engagement while the absence of it results in burnout. Also, the supportive environments give autonomy and allow members to work freely for any outcome. (Kahn, 1990). May et al. (2004) also had found that there exists a positive relationship of employees' psychological safety with a supportive environment.

Social support is most important for employee engagement (Maslach et al., 2001). In a study by Schaufeli and Baker (2004), It was found that the Job resources include the support from colleagues predicted engagement. Managers should make continued interactions with the employees to generate a supportive work environment as the employee engagement is a constant, long-term and continual process and need obligations organization wide (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

Employee engagement involves organization-wide and should be viewed as broad cultural and organizational strategy (Frank et al., 2004), it works as a chain of actions (Shaw, 2005) which need the participation of all employees in the company (Robinson et al., 2004), and also have clear and continuous interactions with its members (Kress, 2005). Effective team and a healthy co-worker relationship are required for enhanced engagement. The factors that play an important role in building effective and high performing teams are culture & climate, commitment, communication, leadership, ethics & values, talent and continuous improvement (Bhogle and Bhogle, 2011).

A study by BlessingWhite (2006) shows that almost 60% of the employees of the surveyed population wish to grow by getting an opportunity and want to enhance the satisfaction level in their jobs. The manager must create a highly engaged workforce in an organization through aligning them with strategic efforts, empowerment, teamwork & collaboration, employee's growth, development, support and recognition. Development Dimensions International (DDI, 2005).

Employee engagement has a top ten attributes. The first three among them are: challenging work, participation in decision making and employee's well-being. Towers Perrin Report (2003). In a survey, conducted by the Institute of Employment Studies (IES), Great Britain over 10,000 employees, it was found that the key drivers of employee engagement are based on employee feeling and involvement (Robinson et al., 2004) which explains to what extent employee feels free to voice their ideas, to what level they have involvement in decision making and the support they need to employee health and well-being.

In a survey based on 2000 employee across the Great Britain, It was found that communication is the top priority for employee engagement (CIPD 2009). The report also indicates at the opportunity to express their view to top authorities and information regarding organizational activities what is going on is also very important. As per Beumruk and Gorman (2006), explained that engaged employees express three types of behaviors which could improve the organizational performance. These are: to give them freedom to advocate for the organization and coworkers, provide them membership in decision making and to provide them some time to take initiatives freely to contribute in the success of the organization.

The results of past studies indicate that Engagement is also positively related to customer satisfaction (Towers Perrin Talent Report, 2003; Coffman, 2000; Hewitt Associates, 2004; Heintzman and Marson, 2005; Ellis and Sorensen, 2007; Coffman and Gonzalez-Molina, 2002).

Research Objectives

- To understand the scope and importance of “employee engagement” in various organizations.
- To determine the factors enhancing employee engagement level in multiple organizations.
- To measure the influence of various factors on employee engagement.

Methodology: The study reviews the literatures of various past relevant research studies to find out the scope and importance of employee work engagement in the organizations on the basis some important variables, such as: Employee communication, Employee development, Supervisor’s support, Team & Co-worker Relationship, Rewards & recognition, Working conditions, Work-role fit, Career advancement, Job Satisfaction and Job performance.

Literature Review

Alvi Abdul et al. (2014), in his review study based on Khan’s model (1990, 1992) and theory in relation to employee engagement. The study considered five variables, namely: job satisfaction, job commitment, empowerment, job involvement and flow-the-state of most favorable experience. The findings of the study explain that employee engagement is different in comparison to the job satisfaction, job commitment, job empowerment and flow. He further expanded the employee engagement into three categories, namely physical, cognitive and emotional engagement. Rana S., et al. (2014), examined an empirical study on employee engagement based on the antecedents and outcomes. The model applied Dubin’s method.

The variables considered under this research are: job design, supervisor Co-worker relationship, workplace environment and HRD practices. The outcome of the study explains that employee engagement is mainly concerned to: job performance, turnover intention, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and it also explain that employee engagement is different in comparison to Job satisfaction, job commitment, job empowerment and flow. The research is mainly a proposed model of employee engagement based on psychological conditions and disengagement, based on physical, cognitive and emotional engagement. Anita J., (2014), had made a study on 383 respondents to determine the relationship between employee engagement and employee performances.

The variables considered in the study are: work environment, leadership, team & Co-worker, training & career development, compensation, organizational policies and workplace well-being. The findings of the study indicate that all the factors have an impact on employee engagement and were predictors. The factors which have high impact on employee engagement are a team and co-worker relationship. The other factors which effect the employee engagement is working environment, training and career development, leadership, workplace wellbeing, policies and procedures, leadership and compensation programmed. NegwayaE.,et al. (2013), in his study of the factors influencing staff engagement based on the case study of the hospital of 59 nursing staff.

The variables considered under the study are: opportunities for further development, promotion opportunities, supervisors’ relationships with colleagues, internal communication, relationship with colleagues, clearly defined goals and objectives, mission and vision, leadership styles and remuneration and benefits. The findings of the study explain improved resource provisions (100%), provisions for incentives (94%), better career advancement (62%), improved salaries and working conditions (72%), weekly meetings (38%). Muthuveloo R., et al. (2013), examined a study on the antecedents of ‘employee engagement’ in the manufacturing sector on 100 employees. The variables considered under the study are: employee communication, reward-recognition, employee development and extended employee care. The findings of the study indicate that antecedent of employee engagement plays a very important role on level of engagement.

The results also indicate that employee development was most contributing factor in employee engagement in the study. Finally, the findings of the study explain that higher employee communication, higher reward-recognition, higher employee development, higher extended employee care results in higher employee engagement in the organization. Sebastiaan R. & Coen W. (2013), have examined the employee engagement based on employees’ psychological conditions through using a sample of 309 employees in various organizations of Namibia. The variables considered in the study are: rewards, Co-workers, resources, supervisor relations, job enrichment, self-consciousness, work-role fit, organizational support, psychological meaningfulness, psychological availability, psychological safety and employee engagement.

The findings of the study indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between work-role-fit and job enrichment while it showed that reward, co-worker relations, supervisor relations, resource and organizational support have a moderate relationship with employee engagement. Mona N. Moussa (2013), investigated the antecedent and consequences of high turnover over Saudi nationals Vs. Non-Saudi nationals over 104 employees in private sector companies focusing on healthcare and information technology industries in Saudi Arabia.

The variables considered under the study are: job engagement, organization engagement, job characteristics, supervisor and perceived organizational support (POS), reward & recognition, exchange ideology, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit. The finding of the study show that two antecedents, job characteristics and rewards- recognition has a significant relationship with engagement out of which job characteristics are positively correlated with employee engagement and reward recognition is positively correlated with organization engagement. The results of the study also indicate that there exists a positive relationship between employee engagement with the variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to leave the job and have a negative relation with intentions to quit.

It is evident from the research that Saudi nationals are less engaged with the job and organizations as they are less committed to their work those non-Saudis. Ala`a N. & Ahmad Puad (2013), theoretically examined the effect of antecedents on employee engagement and organizational performance in Food and Beverage (F&B) department of hotel industry in Jordan. The variables considered for the study are: employee communication, reward & recognition, employee development and extended employee care. The results of the research suggest that employee engagement for food and beverage (F&B) department is positively associated and employee development is most contributory factor among them.

Junghoon Lee (2012), in an empirical study over 700 hotel employees and managers examined the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement in various organizations. The variables considered for the study are: employee engagement, core self-evaluations, psychological climate, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intrinsic rewards and leader member exchange theory. The outcome of the study show that employees core self-evaluation, psychological climate, employee job satisfaction, intrinsic rewards, leader member exchange relationships and organizational commitment are positively related to employee engagement. Ali Abbaas&Ikhlal Ibrahim (2012), in his study on Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Engagement in Jordan, over 336 Frontline employees working in various banks of Jordan made many conclusions.

The variables considered for the study are: work-life balance, training & education, health & safety, human rights and work & diversity. The findings of the study suggest that one dimension of corporate social responsibility (CSR), namely, work-life balance is less adopted compared with other four dimensions, health&safety, human rights, training & education and workplace diversity. The findings of the research also show that there exists a positive relation between health & safety and organization engagement followed by others, such as training & education, workplace diversity, human rights and the research also indicate that scope of organization engagement in CSR practices is greater than job engagement.

Sarangi et al. (2012), examined the impact of organizational culture and communication on employee engagement by investigating a sample of 247 executives drawn from the Indian private banking sector. The variables considered in the study are: organizational culture, autonomy, external orientation, human resource orientation, improvement orientation, organizational communication, organizational integration, supervisory commitment, personal feedback, communication, corporate information, Media quality, subordinate communication. The findings of the study show that organizational culture and communication have positive predictors of employee engagement consisting of vigor, dedication and vigor. Simon L. Albrecht (2012) tested a model based on the effect of job, team and organizational level resources on employee engagement, extra role performance, employee well-being and commitment by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) over 3,437 employees of a large multi-national mining company.

The research was based on Job Demand Resources (JRD) model (Bakker and Demerit) by examining the organizational level factor such as team and job influence, employee engagement and well-being and other outcome variables such as employee extra role and commitment. The findings of the study indicate that the organizational culture was significantly associated with job & team resources, commitment, engagement and extra-role behavior. Team climate is significantly associated with job resources and engagement.

The job resources, such as coaching, role, autonomy, career development and autonomy were significantly associated with engagement and engagement was directly associated with culture & climate, commitment, job resources, extra-role performance and extra-role behavior. The overall structure of the model was satisfactory and fit as explained. The overall findings of the research depict that being engaged and motivated, employees were committed and performing well. An organization should create a supportive and fair cultural environment, which align organizational goals with employee's personal goals. Solomon M. & M. Sandhya S. (2010), in his study based on employee engagement, considered the five variables, these are: strategic effort, empowerment, encouraging teamwork & collaboration, help people to grow & develop and employee support & recognition.

In this article, the ten tablets were suggested to increase employee engagement. These are: start it from day one (effective recruitment & orientation program), start it from the top (leader's commitment through mission, vision and values) communication, resources, training, reward system, corporate culture, performance management system (PMS), and focus on top performing employee and maintain business. Shuck Brad M., et al. (2010), in a study on employee engagement, tried to explore employee engagement in relation to Human Resource Development (HRD) based on Yin's case study design method. The variables considered in the study are: understanding of expectations at work, general feelings about work, resources at work, hiring practices and the use of skills or talents at work, manager and Co-workers. The findings of the study show that the important things from the HRD perspective are workshop relationship, the manager's role in shaping organizational culture and employee learning in the workplace.

Alan M. Saks (2006), in an empirical study on antecedent and consequences of employee engagement over 102 employees of an average age of 34 years and out of which 60% were female, was working with a variety of jobs and organizations. The variables considered in the study are: job engagement, organization engagement, job characteristics, job satisfaction, perceived organizational support (POS), supervisor support, rewards & recognition, procedural justice, distributive Justice, organizational commitment and intention to quit.

The results of the study primarily indicate that there is a significant difference between job and organization engagement, secondly, the research predicts numbers of factor relating to job and organization engagement. Thirdly, the outcome of the study indicates that job and the organization engagement are related to behaviors, intentions, and attitude. Like the other similar studies, the findings of the study indicate that employee engagement partially exists between antecedent and consequence variables. Finally, the findings of the study explain that the employee engagement could be understood in term of Social Engagement Theory (SET).

Findings & Conclusions

The table 1 is based on the findings of 15 most relevant studies relating to employee engagement. Most of them are survey based and applied models based. One study is content method based; one of them is partially content based method. Organization Engagement (OE) and Job Engagement (JE) are two different things under the engagement in an organization. Some of the study shows that Employee engagement is different terminology as compared Job Engagement that is related to the Job satisfaction, job commitment, job empowerment and job workflow. Job characteristics predict job engagement; and procedural justice predicts organization engagement.

The researchers also explain the job demand and individual characteristics work as moderators in job design, supervisor and co-worker relationships, and work environment and employee engagement. Job resources of supervisory coaching, career development, role alignment and autonomy, were positively associated with the engagement. The engagement is directly and significantly associated with employee extra-role performance and organizational commitment and indirectly, significantly associated with organizational culture, team climate and job resources (Simon L. Albrecht 2012).

The finding of various studies show that employee engagement is positively related to Employee communication, Employee development, Supervisor's support, Team & Co-worker Relationship, Rewards & recognition, Working conditions, Work-role fit, Career advancement, Job Satisfaction and Job performance and also positively related to other variables that are: job performance, organization citizenship behavior (OCB), tools & resource provisions, incentives/improved salaries, weekly meetings, employee core self-evaluations, employee psychological climate, organizational commitment, leadership/leader member exchange theory, perceived organizational support(POS)/manager's support, employee communication, extended employee care, CSR practices, training programs, compensation program, organizational policies, job enrichment, organizational support, culture of engagement, job characteristics and turnover intention (inversely).

Evident from the findings that employees' engagement are closely linked with employee emotions and perceptions about the organization and value associated which provide them the freedom and autonomy toward the work that result in their enhanced performance.

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