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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The rapid evolving Indian education system is evinced by the rising trend of large number of new institutes that have mushroomed in every nook and corner of the country resulting in deteriorating standards of teaching quality. They need to look into ways for providing a conducive organizational climate that can harness the skills and competence of the academicians while keeping them engaged and also promoting their wellbeing for long term retention in the organization. Though there are many extant studies examining the antecedents of Employee Engagement in the Indian sectors, or assessing the level of Employee Engagement in banking, manufacturing sectors and hospitals, mainly but there is hardly any study analyzing the role and influence of the organizational drivers affecting employee engagement in the education sector pertaining to private institutes. So, this paper tries to explore and understand the organizational factors/drivers affecting the engagement of the academicians in private institutes in Faridabad.

KEYWORDS

Faridabad, employee engagement, conducive organizational climate, organizational drivers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the fast changing world and particularly service oriented industries (including academics), satisfaction amongst employees may not be the only necessary driver for loyalty and productivity. It is actually the engagement of the employees that can lead to higher productivity and loyalty. An engaged employee is intellectually and emotionally bound with the organization, feels passionate about its goals and is committed towards its values. The engaged employee goes the extra mile beyond the basic job responsibility and is associated with the actions that drive the business. Employee engagement is required at all levels which can be fostered with a unique and conducive organizational ecosystem.

Over the years with globalization, the importance of suitably trained and experienced employees has grown manifold. This puts a tremendous amount of pressure on the organizations in all sectors, including academics to ensure that the employees remain engaged and committed to the organization. Organizations need to cultivate superior climate that employees perceive to be benign and in which they are able to achieve their full potential in a justified manner. Of late, the education sector is marred by the fast mobility/switch of highly skilled and talented academicians from one institute to the other. The trend is even more perplexing in private institutes which are facing the menace of rampant brain drain and poor faculty retention. This can be arrested through increasing the engagement levels of the academicians in the private institutes. So, it is imperative that private institutes invest time and energy on devising ways and means to increase the engagement levels.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kahn (1990) was the first academic researcher to use the term Employee Engagement and he defined it as the level of energy, dedication and absorption of the employees towards their organization. Various organizations and consulting firms consider employee engagement as similar to other work-related constructs like job satisfaction, job involvement organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Some recent salient studies in this context is presented as follows:

Agrawal, S. (2016) attempted a research to identify the factors influencing employee engagement: a study of diverse workforce. The researcher conducted a survey on of 254 managerial employees through a structured questionnaire completed both either online or offline by the respondents. The finding of the study showed that the employees like the nature of work that they are assigned to therefore; they are highly engaged in their work. The employees who are engaged welcome responsibility and challenge; they see work as a source of social identity, and a medium for self-expression as well as attainment of perfection in life. Most of the respondents considered sincerity, hard work, and integrity as the golden keys to success in the pursuit of their career.

Chandani, A. et al. (2016) revealed some factors of Employee Engagement in the paper; on factors affecting employee engagement. The authors described the major factors of employee engagement which were leadership, respectful treatment of employees, effective management of talent, empowerment, pay and benefit, fair treatment, communication, nature of job, health & safety, talent recognition, clarity of company values and policies, company's standard of ethical behaviour, organizational politics and personality factors etc. The research also revealed the significant and positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance in terms of productivity, sales and job satisfaction.

V., Siva kumar (2015) attempted a study on employee engagement in private sector banks in India and concluded that high level of employee engagement enhances the growth of banks and plays important role in retention of talented employees. Employee engagement thus, benefits both the organization and the employees. The researchers concluded that, if the employees are not satisfied with working environment then their engagement level will also be relatively less. So, the management should pay attention to work culture factors to increase the level of engagement in employees.

Mary, M. et al. (2015) attempted a research study to understand the effect of organizational culture and employee engagement on organizational performance using organizational communication as Mediator. The researchers concluded in their research by study of executive level employees in selected five star hotels located in Sabah, Malaysia that if employees are engaged in their work then, better organizational performance could be achieved. Proper and effective communication will lead to better management and performance. This also leads to a well-managed and efficient organizational culture. The organization's goals and objectives are easily achievable with the proper communication.

Eldor, L. and Harpaz I. (2015) attempted a study on developing a process model of employee engagement and tried to examine the learning climate and its relationship with extra-role performance behaviors on a sample of 625 employees in various occupations and organizations throughout Israel. The study found

that employee engagement is a key mechanism for explaining the relationship between perceptions of the organization's learning climate and employees' proactivity, knowledge sharing, creativity, and adaptability. They also found that relationship to be more thorough and rigorous than similar concepts, such as job satisfaction and job involvement. Their research supported that employee engagement mediates the relationship between the perceived learning climate and these extra-role behaviors.

Orla, B. (2014) conducted a research on investigation into employee engagement in the hotel sector in the West of Ireland' and concluded that work engagement which involves the vigour that employees invest in doing the job, is related with the level of attachment to their work. Work engagement results in lower job turnover, higher levels of individual performance and positive evaluation of the organization. The research study also found that employee engagement leads to effective organizational performance.

Anitha J. (2014) conducted a research study which emphasized the importance of employee engagement and also identified various aspects that have a significant effect on it. It also showed that there is a strong significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance. The researcher concluded that working environment, co-worker relationship, training and development compensation, organizational policies, leadership and workplace well-being as important drivers of employee engagement. Regression analysis predicted that two important factors out of these factors have an overall effect on employee engagement were; - working environment and team and co-worker relationship. She also propounded a positive significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance.

Joe, D. (2014) attempted a research on MacLeod and Clarke's Concept of Employee Engagement to study the workplace employment relations. The finding of the study revealed that there were significant gaps in engagement based on employee characteristics. It was found that women were significantly more engaged than men. Older employees tended to be less engaged. Disabled employees were significantly less engaged than their colleagues.

Paul M. Gichohi (2014) investigated in research on the role of employee engagement in revitalizing creativity and innovation at the workplace. They conducted a survey of selected libraries in Meru County- Kenya. The study found that employee engagement is related with creativity and innovation in the workplace. Employee Engagement is significantly related with creative and innovative behavior in employees and better productivity and performance excellence. Employee engagement practices help to unleash creativity and innovation in the workplace because engaged employee are elated in their duties and responsibilities which make them to think creatively and to go extra mile.

Sinha, V. (2014) attempted a research study to examine the impact of role efficacy on employee engagement, employee motivation and attrition in multinational organizations across the IT industry in India. The aim of the study was to examine the level of role efficacy in IT companies and impact of role efficacy on Employee Engagement, motivation and attrition. Role Efficacy Scale developed by Udai Pareek (1980) had been used to examine the level of role efficacy possessed by the 55 employees of various IT companies in India. The result revealed that role efficacy has direct impact on employee engagement motivation and attrition.

Maniam, K., and Samuel, N. A. (2014) examined and evaluated employee engagement strategies in relation to organizational success. The researchers adopted a quantitative analysis in assembling the views of employees and drawing meaningful conclusions with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics. The researchers conducted interview through relevant themes in order to authenticate and enrich the findings of the survey. The researchers concluded core engagement strategies i.e. work environment, HRM Practices, employee supervisor relationship, job satisfaction and organizational culture.

Jose, G., Mampilly, Sebastian R. (2014) revealed psychological empowerment as a Predictor of Employee Engagement. Global Business Review revealed in the study that psychological empowerment has significant and positive relationship with Employee Engagement. The researchers also identified the influence of four dimension of psychological empowerment on employee engagement. Dimension-wise analysis demonstrated that meaningful job influences employee engagement at the highest level. Competence and impact were considered as second and third key predictors of employee engagement. The fourth dimension Self-determination was found insignificant predictor of employee engagement. They also propagated in research that in service sector employees' level of vigour is high but they are not absorbed and dedicated.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid evolving Indian education system is evinced by the rising trend of large number of new institutes that have mushroomed in every nook and corner of the country resulting in deteriorating standards of teaching quality. They need to look into ways for providing a conducive organizational climate that can harness the skills and competence of the academicians while keeping them engaged and also promoting their well being for long term retention in the organization. Though there are many extant studies examining the antecedents of Employee Engagement in the Indian sectors, or assessing the level of Employee Engagement in banking, manufacturing sectors and hospitals, mainly but there is hardly any study analyzing the role and influence of the organizational drivers affecting employee engagement in the education sector pertaining to private management institutes in Faridabad.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective and purpose of this study is to examine the various factors of Organizational factors/drivers impacting Employee Engagement.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is Exploratory research design in nature. The sample size comprised of 385 academicians in private institutes in Faridabad. Non-probability purposive sampling technique is the most suitable to meet the study requirements. The data was collected with the help of self-administered questionnaire to the academicians who were having at least 1 year of tenure in that particular institute. The questionnaire for this study comprised of closed-ended, multiple-choice questions on the 5 point Likert rating scales.

The questionnaire used in this study comprised of organizational factors which were derived from the studies of Anitha, J. (2014), Pareek, U. and Purohit, S. (2014); and Schaufeli, WB. (2013).

6. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

For identifying the organizational factors that affect employee's engagement, an Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted using technique of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation.

At the onset, the suitability of the data set for Factor analysis is checked using KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity; the results of which is presented in the table 1.1 below:

TABLE 1.1: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.887	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	9.175E3
	df	595
	Sig.	.000

The measure of Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin sample adequacy was.887 which was adequate as it should be more than.6 for the adequacy of sample. Thus the data set was appropriate for running a factor analysis. As a decision criterion for Factor analysis, those items were selected with Eigen Value >1, for further analysis and wherein the factor loading is >.5; the rest were disregarded.

The results of Rotation Component matrix revealed 7 key Organizational factors/drivers of Employee Engagement which explained 72.227% of the total variance. The last factor, i.e. leadership was dropped as it contained only two items and showed poor cronbach alpha. The overall reliability in the Cronbach alpha was.897 which is considerably good estimate of the reliability. The summary result of the Factor Analysis showing the Organizational factors is represented in the table 1.2 below:

TABLE 1.2: SUMMARY OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS/DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Name of the dimension	Statements	Factor loading	% Variance
Organizational Supportiveness	My extra efforts/inputs are recognized here due to support from the HoD and my colleagues	0.793	11.378
	I feel there is equitable distribution of workload and fairness in treatment by the HoD.	0.779	
	There is timely support from my seniors on job assignment.	0.767	
	I feel there are enough opportunities to be innovative in certain research projects and assignments	0.663	
	I am provided with the opportunities for skill up gradation.	0.809	
Procedural Justice	I pursue goals beyond what is required and expected to me.	0.808	11.265
	I am able to express my views and feelings during those procedures	0.766	
	I had influence over the (outcome) arrived at by those procedures	0.855	
	I feel that those procedures been applied consistently	0.849	
	I feel those procedures had been free of bias	0.855	
Perceived Trust	I feel those procedures had been based on accurate information	0.794	11.076
	I have been able to appeal the (outcome) arrived at by those procedures	0.733	
	Authorities do not interfere in my work area and method of work.	0.723	
	I feel there is trust and projects are assigned on basis of skills.	0.856	
	I feel valued because of the trust with my seniors and colleagues.	0.754	
Job Characteristics	I can easily confide in my seniors without fear that they will misuse the trust.	0.76	10.931
	I can achieve results due to effective delegation by my superiors on assignments without any biases.	0.844	
	It is easy to coordinate between top management and my peer team/faculty members.	0.837	
	I can do my job easily due to well defined job role and power boundary	0.811	
Role Efficacy	The goal and methods fixed for this job are perfectly clear and planned.	0.832	10.646
	There is clear communication intra and inter departmentally regarding job responsibility.	0.88	
	I have the opportunities of representing myself in performance appraisals and other outcomes related to me	0.889	
	There is variety in terms of new job challenges and assignments to keep me occupied and satisfied.	0.83	
Rewards & Recognition	I feel my role is significant	0.824	8.428
	I feel myself fit in this organization.	0.866	
	My potential is fully utilized in my present role.	0.902	
	I can contribute substantially to larger social goals.	0.88	
Empowerment	I can give enough time to my family and personal works with job	0.878	6.88
	In this job people get appropriate remuneration commensurate with their skills and performance.	0.838	
	I am provided with the opportunities to prove myself.	0.841	
	I get recognition for the extra mile I might take in this organization.	0.858	
Leadership	There is well devised system of reward and recognition based on appraisal.	0.835	4.296
	My suggestions are accepted in major decision related to goal settings.	0.788	
	I can directly contact the people from whom I need information	0.773	
	The complaint and redressal system are well structured with a proper redressal mechanism.	0.792	
	There is extensive training well in time before projects and assignments.	0.743	
	The leaders set a role model for the others in research and academics	0.796	
	There is proper exchange between the leader/HODs and faculty members in the department	0.797	

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS/DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Factor 1- Organizational supportiveness

Organizational supportiveness, the first factor driving Employee Engagement contained five factors which explained 11.378% of variance. It relates to the support which an employee perceives from his superiors or the organization. It includes specifically aspects related to Equitable workload distribution Opportunity for innovativeness and skill up gradation and of course recognition of the academicians for their extra effort.

Factor 2- Procedural Justice

The second important factor driving Employee Engagement is Procedural Justice that comprised of 6 sub items accounting for 11.265 % of variance. Procedural justice connotes the perceived fairness of the procedures and processes used to make decisions on the allocation of resources. It relates to aspects of Process control, decision control which is imperative to justify outcomes of an employee. Leventhal (1980) suggests that procedures are deemed fair to the degree that the decision-making process demonstrates consistency, bias-suppression, accuracy, correct ability, representativeness and Ethicality.

Factor 3- Perceived Trust

Perceived trust contained six items which explained 11.076% of variance comprises of trust between an employee and an organization. Rushton et al. (2010) inferred trust as an essential element for creating and sustaining healthy working relationships and well being of employees within organizations. It comprised of items related to the overall work climate where there is trust in role assignments, effective delegation without any biasness, trust and coordination among peers and superiors (including top management), minimal supervisory interference or tight controls & monitoring, and no misuse of power or exploitation by seniors.

Factor 4- Job characteristics

Job characteristics contained five variables which explained 10.931 % of variance that affects Employee Engagement. Job characteristics considers role of an employee, clear communication in the organization. Hackman and Oldman's (1980) stated classic Job Characteristics Model (JCM), which identifies five core job features as motivational properties of a job: task variety, identity, significance, autonomy and feedback. Christian et al.'s (2011) meta-analysis showed that four of the five job characteristics, namely, task variety, autonomy, significance and feedback are all positively related to engagement.

Factor 5- Role Efficacy

Role Efficacy comprised of five elements which explained 10.646% of the variance that include significance of role, value of employee, level of stress and pressure at job, contribution to social goals and work life balance. Role efficacy is defined as the potential effectiveness of a role or the psychological factors underlying role effectiveness. Role efficacy has several aspects, like how proactively an employee occupies a role and responds to the various expectations that people have from that role. Role efficacy is higher when an employee takes the opportunities to try unconventional ways of solving problems. If the role of an employee is central then his role efficacy would be higher. Maintaining work life balance also leads to higher role efficacy.

Factor 6- Rewards & Recognition

Rewards & Recognition, the sixth important factor affecting Employee Engagement explained 8.428 % of variance and comprises of sub-items related to employee's expectations in terms of the financial and non-financial rewards and recognition at work. It comprises of items related to linking of appraisals with employee's career prospects, fair remuneration, recognition and appreciation by supervisors and most importantly, acknowledging and appreciating help offered by other.

Factor 7- Empowerment

Empowerment comprised of four variables which explained 6.880 % of variance. Empowerment includes variables like acceptance of suggestion, redressal of complains, extensive training for the role. Employee empowerment means that an employee is given a chance to be enterprising, take risk without compromising with the organizational goals, missions and visions. If the employee will feel that they have the authorities to make decision about the work their engagement level would be high. Empowerment will result to greater collaboration and increased performance. The importance of empowerment is consistent with the studies of Huselid, M.A., Jackson, S. E. and. Schuler, R.S (1997), Jose, G., (2014), Thomas and Velthouse (1990). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) explained relevant link between empowerment and work engagement. The researchers explained empowerment as one of the important motivators of the employees.

7. CONCLUSION

It was found in this study that the main organizational factors/drivers of employee engagement are—Organizational Supportiveness, Procedural Justice, Perceived Trust, Job Characteristics, Role Efficacy, Rewards & Recognition, and Empowerment in the private institutes in Faridabad. So, institutes must put in place high work practices that will go a long way in influencing engagement level through a supportive and empowered work environment. It is important for the private institutes to recognize the faculty members as core assets and arm them with sufficient say/control in process and decision outcomes related to them. This is actually the need of the hour in private institutes where management needs to justify all actions/outcomes related to the academicians in a proper manner. The management must strategize ways to include adequate explanations for why certain outcomes (e.g. pay, benefits, even pay-cuts, promotions etc), decisions were made for. Most academicians have to face multitude job activities which are redundant and often clerical in nature and there is no clear cut demarcation between the primary and secondary job responsibilities (or KRAs that needs to be clearly spelled out). Job enrichment will thus help institutes achieve their goal of enhanced productivity by providing the academicians with more meaningful and challenging work experience. The added advantage of this can be coupled with reduced absenteeism, high morale and better retentivity and engagement.

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