

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Employee Engagement is paramount in an ever changing environment. It is about employees having discretionary effort in achieving organisations goals. Engaged Employee have oneness with the organisation and its goals, they feel valued and responsible for organization. So it is imperative to know what factors actually influence Engagement and also to know varying degrees of engagement among employees. This paper through extensive literature survey has brought out what are the components of employee engagement, most influencing factors of Employee Engagement and the degree to which engagement varies among employees. Descriptive method is adopted for the study. Both primary and secondary data is considered for the study.*

**KEYWORDS**

communication, employee commitment, employee engagement, motivation.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Employee engagement is a route to business success. An engaged workplace encourages commitment, energy and productivity from all those involved to help improve business performance. Employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to business goals and values. By involving them in business they are motivated to contribute to business success and at the same time improve their sense of well-being. It is a two-way street. Encourage employees to play their part by sharing their feedback, raising concerns and supporting the way to do business. So this paper with extensive literature survey tries to reveal factors most influencing and also to know degrees of engagement.

**1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. To understand the meaning of Employee Engagement.
2. To identify the factors influencing Employee Engagement.
3. To identify the categories of Employee Engagement.

**1.2. METHODOLOGY**

The study is descriptive in nature and secondary data is considered for the study. This paper is based upon review of literature and secondary data collected from various websites, journals, magazines, newspapers and reference books.

**1.3. LIMITATIONS**

Research was also limited to peer- reviewed business, organizational psychology, and management journals, online journals to identify the state of the employee engagement, factors and to study the different degrees of employee engagement with the help of review of literature.

**2. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

"Persistent positive state" (Macey & Schneider, 2008), Employee engagement was defined as an "individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work" (Harter et al., 2002), employee engagement as "a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components associated with individual role performance" . Saks (2005). This definition was inclusive of previous literature by introducing the idea that employee engagement was developed from cognitive (Kahn, 1990; Maslach et al., 2001), emotional (Harter et al., 2002; Kahn, 1990), and behavioral components (Harter et al., 2002; Maslach et al., 2001). "Employees who are mentally and emotionally invested in their work and in contributing to their employer's success" (Czarnowsky, 2008). "A persistent, positive affective-motivational state of fulfillment in employees characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure" (Maslach et al., 2001) People's attachment and detachment to their work roles varies (Goffman 1961). Maslach and Leiter (1997) and Maslach et al. (2001), who were of the view that engagement as the opposite to the three burnout dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism, and sense of inefficacy. Robinson et al., (2004) defined engagement as "a positive employee attitude towards the organization and its values, involving awareness of business context, and work to improve job and organizational effectiveness". Schaufeli et al, (2002) defined engagement as "a positive fulfilling, work related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption". Shuck & Wollard, (2010) distinctly defined employee engagement as "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural state directed toward desired organizational outcomes". Rurkkhum and Bartlett (2012) elucidated the relationship between employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in a study conducted in Thailand and found support for positive relationships between every component of OCB and engagement. David Macleod- Employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organisation's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organisational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being. "This is about how we create the conditions in which employees offer more of their capability and potential." Forbes: Kevin Kruse: Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals. This emotional commitment means engaged employees actually care about their work and their company. They don't work just for a pay check, or just for the next promotion, but work on behalf of the organization's goals. When employees care—when they are engaged—they use discretionary effort.

It is seen that Employee Engagement is having very importantly three constructs such as cognitive state which is Psychological processes involved in acquisition and understanding of knowledge, formation of beliefs and attitudes, decision making and problem solving. Emotional state is something that makes to have a strong feeling towards organization and its goals and Behavioural state which is being physically active and enthused to work. Finally having all these constructs is being considered as engaged, which results in discretionary effort in achieving organizational goals their by contributing to organizational effectiveness.

**3. FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

**Development Dimensions International (DDI, 2005):** Align efforts with strategy, Empower ,Promote and encourage teamwork and collaboration, Help people grow and develop, Provide support and recognition where appropriate. **D. Pradeep Kumar and G. Swetha (2011) :** Clarify: Be clear about the organizations strategic direction, what it means for your employees and how it impacts on what they do and how they do it . Communicate: Be creative in how the organization communicates, give people a voice, create an environment where people can ask questions, encourage team huddles, provide opportunities to talk to other functions, face-to-face communication, open door policies. **(Mani 2011)** predicted four drivers, namely employee welfare, empowerment, employee growth and interpersonal relationships. **(Seijit 2006)** identified the 10 Cs of Employee Engagement, namely Connect, Career, Clarity, Convey, Congratulate, Contribute, Control, Collaborate, Credibility & Confidence. **(Wallace et al 2006):** contributions, connections, growth and advancement. **Britt et al (2001):** predicted employee involvement and commitment as engagement drivers. **Hewitt (2004) :** Say, Stay and Strive., **IES (2005) :** Job satisfaction, feeling valued and involved, equal opportunity, health and safety, length of service, communication and co-operation, **Bhatla (2011):** Organisational culture and organisational communication ,**Xu**



and Thomas Cooper(2010): state that leadership is a key antecedent of engagement. Leadership research shows that certain leadership behaviours have clear association with engagement constructs such as motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, proactive behaviours and organizational citizenship behavior. Trust in leader, support from the leader, and creating a blame-free environment are considered as components of psychological safety, a condition proposed by Kahn, which leads to employee engagement. Judge and Piccolo (2004), Lee (2005), Erkutlu (2008), Griffin et al (2010) provide evidence for association between positive leader behaviours and follower attitude and behaviours linked with engagement. A few other studies have attempted to provide direct evidence of association between leadership and employee engagement (Xu and Thomas Cooper, 2010). Atwater and Brett (2006, as cited in Xu and Thomas Cooper (2010) identifies three leadership behaviours, namely employee development, consideration and performance-orientation. Metcalfe and Metcalfe (2008): present positive correlation between leadership scales and engagement constructs such as job and organizational commitment, motivation and job satisfaction. Papalexandris and Galanki (2009) identify two factors which are positively linked with engagement, namely, management and mentoring behaviours such as imparting confidence to followers, power sharing, communication, providing role clarification and articulation of vision which could be characterized as inspirational, visionary, decisive and team-oriented. More importantly, their study found only certain leader behaviours are associated with engagement, especially those enhance follower performance and which enable followers to relate with organizational goals. May et al (2004), Saks (2006), Bakker et al (2007) show that higher levels of engagement are observed for employees with their supervisors exhibiting more relationship-related behaviours). Towers Watson (2009) : Rational – how well the employee understands roles/responsibilities, Emotional- how much passion employee can bring to work, Motivational- how willing is the employee to invest discretionary effort to perform their role. Bijaya Kumar Sundaray (2011) : There are some critical factors which lead to employee engagement. These factors are common to all organisations, regardless of sector. These factors create a feeling of valued and involved among the employees. But the components of feeling valued and involved and the relative strength of each factor are likely to vary depending on the organisation. The factors which influence employee engagement are: Recruitment , Job Designing , Career Development Opportunities, Leadership, Empowerment , Equal Opportunities and Fair Treatment, Training and Development, Performance Management, Compensation, Health and Safety, Job Satisfaction Communication, Family Friendliness, Ms. J. Josephine Virginia Sharmila (2013): Commitment, Motivation, Loyalty, Trust

It is found that communication is most influencing factor of Employee Engagement. A manager must be able to tell their employees what is expected of them, sympathise with their situation, and publicly recognise individual and team performances. In short, communicating as much as possible about as much as possible. Employees will not be able to help their company to embrace change proactively if they are not made aware of the situation, or the chosen course of action. Next factor is aligning employee efforts with organisational goals i.e., to be clear about the organizations strategic direction, what it means for employees and how it impacts on what they do and how they do it ,providing role clarification like how well the employee understands his/her roles/responsibilities etc

#### 4. CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

**Gallup:** Actively Disengaged: This is the first category of people who are unhappy and they spread unhappiness in the organisation. They are the disease centres in the company and spread the negative word, provoking and convincing people to leave their jobs. However they are the ones who stay the longest and removing the perceived people competition is their thought of getting to the top or next level in the job. The Three Types of Employees Contrast this with actively disengaged employees, who are more or less out to damage your company. Not only are they unhappy at work, but they are intent on acting out their unhappiness. They monopolize managers' time and drive away customers. Whatever engaged employees do -- such as solve problems, innovate, and create new customers -- actively disengaged employees will work to undermine.

**Engaged:** The second category of people are those who are can be identified with words like passion, alignment and innovation; which means that they are passionate, connected to the company and are innovative. They contribute new ideas and turn ideas into reality. These employees are positive in their outlook and they spread positivity. They are proactive; can anticipate the future market conditions are prepare well in advance. Engaged workers stand apart from their not-engaged and actively disengaged counterparts because of the discretionary effort they consistently bring to their roles. These employees willingly go the extra mile, work with passion, and feel a profound connection to their company. They are the people who will drive innovation and move your business forward.

**Not Engaged:** The third type of employees is the large majority present in organisations almost 50% in number. These do what is told only and they like only one instruction at a time. They put in time but not energy and passion. They may be either positive or negative in their outlook and opinion about the organisation. They are not proactive and fail to anticipate what might be required next or what the next step is? They wait for instruction from their superiors. Not-engaged employees offer perhaps the greatest untapped opportunity for businesses to improve their performance and profitability. Not-engaged workers can be difficult to spot. They are not overtly hostile or disruptive and likely do just enough to fulfill their job requirements. They sleepwalk through their day, uninspired and lacking motivation. They have little or no concern about customers, productivity, profitability, safety, or quality. They are thinking about lunch or their next break and have essentially "checked out."

It is seen that engagement degree varies from highly engaged to disengaged. Employees fall into three levels based on their engagement. Highly engaged employees are human assets of the company and has discretionary effort in achieving organizational goals and not only the organizations but also employees also are advantageous of being engaged like safety, wellbeing etc ,Not engaged employees on the other hand are in the mid way where in, if they are continued with same level of engagement there is a possibility of being disengaged , so organization must try to increase the level of engagement from being not engaged to highly engaged and last category of employees are those are disengaged who are harmful to the organization ,not only they are disengaged but also spread it to other employees.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

So, Employee engagement is an employee's commitment to, involvement with, emotional attachment to, and satisfaction with their work and organization. Employee engagement benefits everyone involved in the business by creating an informed, involved and productive workplace that helps propel business towards its goals. Employee engagement starts with managers showing a clear and collective commitment to making employee engagement part of business culture. This means communicating information on business plans, performance and seeking views and ideas from employees on how to improve business. Engagement differs from employee opinion or satisfaction, which traditionally measures employee perceptions of various aspects of the workplace and employee "happiness" on the job. Employee opinion and satisfaction aren't necessarily linked to any tangible benefit and outcome for an organization.

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