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**ROLE OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN IT COMPANIES: AN OVERVIEW**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Motivated and engaged employees tend to contribute more in terms of organizational productivity and support in maintaining a higher commitment level leading to the higher customer satisfaction and customer goal. Employees Engagement permeates across the employee-customer boundary, where revenue, corporate goodwill, brand image is also at stake. This paper makes an attempt to study the role of employee engagement in IT companies with the help of previous studies. This can be used to provide an overview and references on some of the conceptual and practical work undertaken in the area of the employee engagement practices.*

**KEYWORDS**

organisational culture, organisation commitment, organisational effectiveness, employee motivation, employee commitment, job satisfaction.

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**INTRODUCTION**

leisure in the job puts perfection in the work”

*Aristotle, the Greek philosopher,*

Employee Engagement is a significant factor which is influencing the organization to achieve its target. Emotional and psychological attachment of an employee in a work environment is closely associated with an organisation. There is no. of factors contributing toward Employee Engagement. The researchers have identified certain factors to study the role of Employee Engagement among the employees of IT companies. Engaged employees bring enduring state of fulfillment at workplace while feeling intrinsically motivated to exhibit positive feelings such as sharing, assisting, cooperating, and supporting, and thus create a holistic framework of the positive psychological, social, and organizational context of work.

Engaged employees are not naturally born, but can be developed by organizational support and practices. Engagement is not an event; rather it is a process and needs to be managed in a systematic way. Employee engagement strategies enable people to be the best they can at work, recognizing that this can only happen if they feel respected, involved, heard, well led and valued by those they work for and with (Lockwood, 2007). Engaged employees have a sense of personal attachment to their work and organization; they are motivated and able to give of their best to help it succeed – and from that flows a series of tangible benefits for organization and individual alike. In particular, engagement is two way: organizations must work to engage the employees.

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

Employee engagement is the degree to which an employee is cognitively and emotionally attached to his work and organization. It reflects in the level of identification and commitment and Employee has towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of the business context, and works as a team member to improve performance of the job for the benefits of the organization. Engaged employees are concerned about the future of the organization and are willing to invest discretionary efforts for the organization.

Institute of Employee Studies defines engagement as a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement which requires a two way relationship between employer and employee.

Institute for Employee Studies Defines “Engagement as a positive attitude held by the employees towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context and works with colleagues to improve to improve performance with in the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement which requires a two way relationship between employer and employees”.

Kahn (1990) is usually credited as the pioneer in the field of engagement (Avery et al. 2007; Stairs and Galpin, 2010). He developed the first grounded theory regarding personal engagement and disengagement at work. He concluded that to become highly engaged, employees need three psychological conditions in their work: psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability.

According to Kahn, engagement means to be psychologically as well as physically present when occupying and performing an organizational role. Most often employee engagement has been defined as emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization (Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006 and Shaw, 2005) or the amount of discretionary effort exhibited by employees in their job (Frank et al., 2004).

Although it is acknowledged and accepted that employee engagement is a multifaceted construct, as previously suggested by Kahn (1990), Truss et al. (2006) define employee engagement simply as ‘passion for work’, a psychological state which is seen to encompass the three dimensions of engagement discussed by Kahn (1990), and captures the common theme running through all these definitions.

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical driver of business success in today’s competitive marketplace. Further, employee engagement can be a deciding factor in organizational success. Not only does engagement have the potential to significantly affect employee retention, productivity and loyalty, it is also a key link to customer satisfaction, company reputation and overall stakeholder value. Thus, to gain a competitive edge, organizations are turning to HR to set the agenda for employee engagement and commitment

**COMPANY PROFILE OF IT COMPANIES**

India’s IT Services industry was born in Mumbai in 1967 with the establishment of the Tata Group in partnership with Burroughs. The first software export zone, SEEPZ – the precursor to the modern-day IT park – was established in Mumbai in 1973. More than 80 percent of the country’s software exports were from SEEPZ in the 1980s.

The Indian economy underwent major economic reforms in 1991, leading to a new era of globalization and international economic integration, and annual economic growth of over 6% from 1993–2002. The new administration under Atal Bihari Vajpayee (who was Prime Minister from 1998–2004) placed the development of Information Technology among its top five priorities and formed the Indian National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development. Bangalore is known as the Silicon Valley of India and the IT Capital of India. It is considered to be a global information technology hub and it is India's largest exporter both of IT overall and of software. Some of the top Indian IT service providers like Infosys, Wipro, Mind tree and Mphasis are headquartered in Bangalore. It is also the site of the national headquarters of many top international firms like Intel, Texas Instruments, Bosch, Yahoo, Labs, Google India, EA, Apple Inc., SanDisk, Harman, Dell, Ericsson, Sabre, Goldman Sachs, HP, Cognizant, Boeing, Wells Fargo, Sony, AT&T, Flipkart, Walmart, Juniper Networks Inc, Century Link, Aricent, Samsung, Oracle, LG, Adobe, JPMorgan, Genpact, Accenture, IBM, Qualcomm, Cisco, LBrand, PayPal, eBay, Quest, Broadcom, Cerner, EY, Amazon, LinkedIn, BT, and Continental, among others. Bangalore alone accounts for more than 35% of all IT companies present in India and contains close to 5,000 companies, making it India's largest IT contributor.

### SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This is 'Role of Employee Engagement on IT Companies; an overview'. The present study is confined to only Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) companies.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

In India, the recent decades have seen the emergence of global companies as a major industrial enterprise with enormous potential for earning foreign exchange. However, the current levels of productivity and quality of goods/ services are not adequate for sustaining an international advantage and this is mostly due to employee disengagement. This research work is an effort to identify the variables that comprise the role of employee engagement in IT Companies, measure these variables by appropriate scales, and identify the pitfalls, which if corrected, would ensure high employee engagement and organizational effectiveness in companies.

It is presumed that the results of the present study will be of great importance to companies, which seek to enhance the levels of engagement of employees' status. Further, the results of the investigation would throw new light on the components of employee engagement. The outcome of the study would also help organizations a great deal in formulating suitable programs and using appropriate methods to improve organizational performance.

### METHOD/ANALYSIS

The data collection was through the secondary data for the studies were collected from books, journals, magazines, newspaper, Internet, articles and website.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to study the theoretical background of employee engagement. To understand the certain independent factors which are influencing Employee Engagement and to identify the relationship between Employee Engagement with its outcome factors. To review the various literatures on employee engagement. To study the Influence of Employee Engagement on Organizational behavior.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is defined as "the extent to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization, how hard they work and how long they stay as a result of that commitment." Engaged employees more fully in their work is the most important issue facing organization D'Aprix (2006), engagement refers to "unleashing the full energy and talents of people in the work place."

Konrad, A.M. (2006), Employee engagement can be considered as cognitive, emotional and behavioral. Cognitive engagement refers to employees' beliefs about the company, its leaders and the workplace culture. The emotional aspect is how employees feel about the company, the leaders and their colleagues. The behavioral factor is the value-added component reflected in the amount of effort employees put into their work (e.g., brainpower, extra time and energy).

Definition of Employee Engagement to date, there is no single and generally accepted definition for the term employee engagement. This is evident if one looks at the definitions forwarded for the term by three well-known research organizations in human resource area, let alone individual researchers. Below are the definitions:

Saks, (2006). Employee engagement has become a topic of immense interest in the organizational literature in recent years. It is claimed that engagement can predict employee outcomes, success, and financial performance of organizations

Shaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002), who defined engagement as "a Positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and Absorption"

CBSR and Hewitt Associates, (2010) Engagement is the state of emotional and intellectual commitment to an organization. Employee Engagement is a measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization that profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work.

Zinger, (2011) the foundational nature of learning and continuous improvement cultures for engagement programs. The cycle is predicated upon cultures of learning and continuous improvement for two reasons. Cultures assume that something needs to be fixed. In the case of a learning culture. Individual seek to close a development gap in order to improve their performance. In a continuous improvement culture, to fix quality issues and improve efficiencies of work processes. Similar to improving performance and work processes.

Shuck, Rocco, and Albornoz (2010) explored the engagement construct from the employee's perspective and found that relationship development in the workplace, an employee's direct manager, and learning play a critical role in an engaged.

Perrin's Global Workforce Study (2003) uses the definition "employees' willingness and ability to help their company succeed, largely by providing discretionary effort on a sustainable basis." According to the study, engagement is affected by many factors which involve both emotional and rational factors relating to work and the overall work experience.

Gallup organization defines employee engagement as the involvement with and enthusiasm for work. Gallup as cited by Demovsek (2008) likens employee engagement to a positive employees' emotional attachment and employees' commitment.

Robinson et al. (2004) define employee engagement as "a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value. An engaged employee is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee."

M.Sandhya Sridevi (2010) states that ten points or strategies called "the ten tablets" were suggested to keep employees engaged. For managers, work of employee engagement starts at day one through effective recruitment and orientation program, the work of employee engagement begins from the top as it is unthinkable to have engaged people in the organizations where there are no engaged leadership. Managers should enhance two-way communication, ensure that employees have all the resources they need to do their job, give appropriate training to increase their knowledge and skill, establish reward mechanisms in which good job is rewarded through various financial and non-financial incentives, build a distinctive corporate culture that encourages hard work and keeps success stories alive, develop a strong performance management system which holds managers and employees

### OUTCOMES OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is an important employee performance and organization management topic. The importance of this topic is proven by its positive consequences for the organization and employees - 'Work engagement is a positive experience in itself' (Schaufeli et al., 2002, as referenced in Sonnentag, 2003). There

are numerous positive outcomes from building employee engagement, and both practitioners and academic literature seems to be more or less consistent regarding the benefits of employee engagement.

Almost all major consultancy firms state that there is a connection between employee engagement and profitability increase through higher productivity, increased sales, customer satisfaction and employee retention (Bakker and Leiter, 2010). In academic circles, positive consequences on work engagement are also associated with customer satisfaction, productivity, profit, employee turnover (Harter et al., 2002), positive work attitudes, individual health, extra-role behaviors and performance (Schaufeli and Salanova, 2007). This section will present the current thinking

### ASPECTS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Three basic aspects of employee engagement according to studies are given below:

- The employees and their own unique psychological make-up and experience
- The employers and their ability to create the conditions that promote employee engagement
- Interaction between employees at all levels.

Thus it is largely the organization's responsibility to create an environment and culture conducive to this partnership, and a win-win equation.

Categories of Employee Engagement According to the Gallup the Consulting organization there are there are different types of people:

**Engaged**--"Engaged" employees are builders. They want to know the desired expectations for their role so they can meet and exceed them. They're naturally curious about their company and their place in it. They perform at consistently high levels. They want to use their talents and strengths at work every day. They work with passion and they drive innovation and move their organization forward

**Not Engaged**---Not-engaged employees tend to concentrate on tasks rather than the goals and outcomes they are expected to accomplish. They want to be told what to do just so they can do it and say they have finished. They focus on accomplishing tasks vs. achieving an outcome. Employees who are not-engaged tend to feel their contributions are being overlooked, and their potential is not being tapped. They often feel this way because they don't have productive relationships with their managers or with their coworkers.

**Actively Disengaged**--The "actively disengaged" employees are the "cave dwellers." They're "Consistently against Virtually Everything." They're not just unhappy at work; they're busy acting out their unhappiness. They sow seeds of negativity at every opportunity. Every day, actively disengaged workers undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish. As workers increasingly rely on each other to generate products and services, the problems and tensions that are fostered by actively disengaged workers can cause great damage to an organization's functioning.

An organization's capacity to manage employee engagement is closely related to its ability to achieve high performance levels and superior business results. Some of the advantages of Engaged employees are given below:

- Engaged employees will stay with the company, be an advocate of the company and its products and services, and contribute to bottom line business success.
- They will normally perform better and are more motivated.
- There is a significant link between employee engagement and profitability
- They form an emotional connection with the company. This impacts their attitude towards the company's clients, and thereby improves customer satisfaction and service levels
- It builds passion, commitment and alignment with the organization's strategies and goals
- Increases employees' trust in the organization
- Creates a sense of loyalty in a competitive environment
- Provides a high-energy working environment
- Boosts business growth
- Makes the employees effective brand ambassadors for the company A highly engaged employee will consistently deliver beyond expectations.

### FINDINGS

There is an association between certain demographic factors with the Employee Engagement. The Individual factors do not vary with the demographic factors viz. age, gender, marital status, position and experience of the respondents. There are significant effects of individual factors viz. Job, Growth and Development, Discretionary Efforts, Role Clarity, Emotional Energy, Learning Behavior and Person - Organization fit on Employee Engagement.

It is evident that all the components of employee engagement have a positive and significant relationship with Organizational behavior. However, the strength of the relationship between some of the employee engagement components like Work Environment, Leadership Style, Compensation and Benefits, Co-employees Support and Quality of work life with Organizational Effectiveness were found to be low. It is apparent from the findings that there is a significant role of Employee Engagement on overall activities of company performance.

### CONCLUSION

Companies should ascertain engagement levels of their employees for all the three dimensions in order to identify gaps and take pertinent measures to bridge them. The research revealed that organizational culture comprises of factors like autonomy, interdepartmental cooperation, external orientation, human resource orientation and improvement orientation, of which external orientation and interdepartmental cooperation are more significant predictors of employee engagement. The study reflected that factors as organizational integration, supervisory communication, personal feedback, subordinate communication, corporate information, communication climate, co-worker communication and media quality are important in defining organizational communication and predicting employee engagement. Among all the dimensions of organizational communication, supervisory communication, corporate information, co-worker information and media quality have been found to be more significant predictors of organizational communication in all Companies.

It is concluded that the literature reviewed is more or less consistent in its view of employee engagement, in that the nature of engagement as a two-way interaction between employee and employer is emphasized as is the growing importance and relevance of engagement to organisational outcomes. However, it must be noted that these conclusions are drawn within the context of the type of literature available on the subject. Many of the authors in this field are either researching organisational experience and/or are responsible for the implementation of management consultancy solutions and therefore cannot be considered as strictly independent. There tends to be limited consideration of the costs of driving up employee engagement, although considerable attention is given to quantifying the benefits.

Increasing employee engagement is highly dependent on leadership and establishing two-way communication where people's work and views are valued and respected. There are thus ways in which any organisation can work towards better employee engagement without incurring high costs as long as there is the organisational determination to focus on this issue. Even in the absence of robust impact data, the principle of employee engagement is to be endorsed in terms of good practice in people management and the softer benefits this confers to organisations.

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