Research Paper   **Management**

A Study to Analyse the Factors that Influence Employee Engagement

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ABSTRACT

More recently employee engagement has become an area of focus within organizations for the purpose of retention as a means of avoiding expensive employee replacement costs resulting from staff who voluntarily quit their jobs. According to SHRM (Society of Human Resource Management) the cost of replacing one $8 per hour employee can exceed $3,500, which gives companies a strong financial incentive to maintain their existing staff members through strong employee engagement practices.

Keywords : Ethical Leadership, Psychological Contract, Employee Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement, also called worker engagement, is a business management concept. An "engaged employee" is one who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about their work, and thus will act in a way that furthers their organization's interests. According to Scarlett Surveys, "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". Thus engagement is distinctively different from employee satisfaction, motivation and organizational culture. Employee engagement was described in the academic literature by Schmidt (1993). A modernized version of job satisfaction, Schmidt's influential definition of engagement was "an employee's involvement with, commitment to, and satisfaction with work. Employee engagement is a part of employee retention." This integrates the classic constructs of job satisfaction (Smith et al., 1969), and organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Harter and Schmidt's (2003) most recent meta-analysis can be useful for understanding the impact of engagement. The opposite of employee engagement is a zombie employee. A zombie employee is a disengaged employee that will stumble around the office, lower morale and cost the company money. Dynamics of work engagement among women in nontraditional sectors are different hence it is the need of the hour to analyze it.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Linkage research (e.g., Treacy) received significant attention in the business community because of correlations between employee engagement and desirable business outcomes such as retention of talent, customer service, individual performance, team performance, business unit productivity, and even enterprise-level financial performance (e.g., Rucci , 1998) using data from Sears). Some of this work has been published in a diversity context (e.g., McKay, Avery, Morris, 2007). Directions of causality were discussed by Schneider and colleagues in 2003.

Employee engagement is derived from studies of morale or a group's willingness to accomplish organizational objectives which began in the 1920s. The value of morale to organizations was matured by US Army researchers during WWII to predict unity of effort and attitudinal battle-readiness before combat. In the postwar mass production society that required unity of effort in execution, (group) morale scores were used as predictors of speed, quality and militancy. With the advent of the knowledge worker and emphasis on individual talent

management (stars), a term was needed to describe an individual's emotional attachment to the organization, fellow associates and the job. Thus the birth of the term "employee engagement" which is an individual emotional phenomenon whereas morale is a group emotional phenomenon of similar characteristics. In other words, employee engagement is the raw material of morale composed of 15 intrinsic and extrinsic attitudinal drivers.(e.g. Scarlett Surveys 2001). The variables selected for the study are taken from the work done by Denise Mortimer (HR Review 2010). The present study aims at investigating women employees serving in the government sector and to analyze how they perceive their occupation and their level of engagement.

The table below shows the top 10 engagement drivers.

Table NO 1: Top 10 Engagement Drivers

Top 10 Engagement drivers
1. Senior management interest in employee wellbeing
2. Opportunities to improve skills and capabilities
3. Organizations reputation for social responsibility
4. Input into decision making
5. Organization quickly resolves customer concerns
6. Setting high personal standards
7. Career advancement opportunities
8. Challenging work assignments that broaden skills
9. Good relationship with supervisor
10. Organization encourages innovative thinking

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To study the factors that influence work engagement among women employees of Kerala state government in Trivandrum district.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the concepts of employee engagement at work among the employees.
2. To study the influences of the various variables that causes work engagement.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no relationship between the identified variables and engagement among the employees.
2. There will be no difference in the engagement level irrespective of their marital status.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

On the basis of convenience sampling technique 10 Kerala state government departments were selected and from these

30 women employees were selected. The selected departments are Agriculture department, Animal husbandry, Archaeology Department, Civil Supplies, Dairy Development, Fisheries Department, Industrial Training, Kerala Police, Social Welfare, and State Central Library.

SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 30 women employees of which -15 married and 15 unmarried. With the help of a questionnaire responses were collected and using SPSS (12.0 version) analysis had been done.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study an attempt is made to examine the correlation between different variables and also to analyze its relationship with work engagement felt by the women employees. It is the people, who design the culture of an organization, and the culture is defined as an employee's perception of events, practices and procedure and the kinds of behaviour that gets rewarded supported and expected (Schneider, 1990). An organization's culture needs to support behaviors that enable employee engagement. An organization with a positive and enabling culture can help employees feel that they have some level of ownership over how the organization operates. A positive and enabling culture is positively linked to satisfaction with the organization, job satisfaction, work behaviour, performance, and a sense of belonging and discretionary behaviors (also known as 'organizational citizenship behaviors'. Below are some contributing factors that can make a difference. Corporate values, Ethical Leadership and the Psychological Contract, Organizational Citizenship, Help from friends, Communication. Employee engagement is about valuing the employee. "The above five factors are a good start". There is a whole range of other factors worth exploring to maximize engagement -such as the resources, professional and personal development, feedback, and task significance – all of these and more play a part on employee engagement. It is good business sense to invest in engagement as an integral part of working practice. Organizations who see the connection between engagement and company performance will gain the ultimate advantage.If there is no proper engagement felt by employees they will face stress and their job involvement comes down. Likewise married women are likely to be more disengaged than unmarried women.

FINDINGS

One of the objectives of the study is to analyze the relationship among the variables of the study. Table 2 depicts the correlation among the different variables of the study.

The results of the correlation analysis show a significant positive correlation between employee engagement and five independent variables; Corporate values, Ethical Leadership and the Psychological Contract, Organizational Citizenship, Help from friends, Communication. In summary, when the employees face work overload and when the work conditions are unsafe and when the employees face personal problems they will face higher levels of stress and thus their engagement level comes down.

The second hypothesis was work engagement felt among the employees will be the same irrespective of their marital status. Using one way ANOVA this was analyzed and it can be seen that the null hypothesis is rejected, the work engagement felt among the women employees is not the same based on their marital status. Unmarried women are relatively more engaged to their work. Table 3 depicts the Anova results. The parental status of the employees also has an effect on the study; the

employees who have children tend to be disengaged.

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

Employees identified these factors as their top 10 most important contributors to enhance work engagement.
1. Job security
2. Opportunities to Use Skills and Abilities
3. Organization's Financial Stability
4. Relationship with Immediate Supervisor
5. Compensation
6. Communication between Employees and Senior Management
7. Autonomy and independence
8. Management's Recognition of Employee Performance
9. Feeling Safe at Work
10. Overall Work Culture
11. Flexibility for Work-Life Balance
12. Relationships with Coworkers
13. Interpersonal relationship needs to be enhanced.
14. Learn to treat stress as a challenge.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary for maintain a good working environment life the engagement level of the employees need to go up. Employees are the asset of an organization and they need to be engaged to deliver their duties in an effective manner. With the help of this study a small attempt is done to analyze the relationship between employee and work engagement.

APPENDICES

TABLE NO2: SHOWING THE CORRELATION AMONG THE VARIABLES

		Corporate Values	EL and PC	Organizational Citizenship	Help from friends	Communication	Engagement
Corporate Values	Pearson Correlation	1	.073	.067	.067	.079	.067
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.702	.724	.724	.679	.724
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30
EL and PC	Pearson Correlation	.073	1	.308	.132	.189	.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.702		.097	.486	.317	.486
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30
Organizational Citizenship	Pearson Correlation	.067	.308	1	.222	.323	.222
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.724	.097		.239	.081	.239
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30
Help from friends	Pearson Correlation	.067	.132	.222	1	.631**	1.000**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.724	.486	.239		.000	.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30
Communication	Pearson Correlation	.079	.189	.323	.631**	1	.631**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.679	.317	.081	.000		.000
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30
Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.067	.132	.222	1.000**	.631**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.724	.486	.239	.000	.000	
	N	30	30	30	30	30	30

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TABLE NO3: SHOWING THE RESULT OF ONE-WAY ANOVA.

Employee Engagement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.362	1	2.362	16.800	.000
Within Groups	3.938	28	.141		
Total	6.300	29			

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