PERSONALITY FACTORS AS A DETERMINANT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN IT SECTOR – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT: Employee engagement is the key focus of both business entrepreneurs and academic researchers and is an issue of modern business environment. It is gaining popularity in corporate world across the globe. Today, organizations are targeting on employee engagement as an effective human resource practice to gain competitive advantage. Hence, employee engagement is very essential for effective utilization of human resources. All the researchers have suggested that employee engagement of the organization depends on the sincere commitment of the employees to the organization as well as the personal characteristics of the individuals. Organizations should pay more attention on the aspect employee engagement in the Indian scenario since its importance for the survival of organization is rarely explored. The effects of employee engagement over the performance and satisfaction of the employees is under evaluation. Hence the researcher has opted to expand the concept of employee engagement and its importance in improving organizational performance so as to add the knowledge related to employee engagement in academic literature and also to suggest the organizations and human resource managers to understand the importance of employee engagement and to develop effective strategies to engage the employees.

Key words: Employee engagement, Job Performance, Employee Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's organization and work environment is different because of many factors such as globalization, the growth of improved technology which creates new opportunities and challenges for employees every time. Organizational leaders must execute strategic, structural, financial, and operational changes to ensure their business to flourish, simultaneously reshaping their future success. Achieving organizational goals requires holistic thinking and integrated action. In order to achieve increased and sustainable business results, organizations need to execute strategic plan and engage employees. Researches on organizations and corporations have established that there may be a strong link between employee engagement, employee performance, and business outcomes. The key drivers of employee engagement include interpersonal communication, opportunities for employees to reinforce their views and the belief that managers are committed to the organization. There is a paucity of research regarding predictors of employee engagement and whether or not interventions, such as training managers on how to communicate effectively, could help to increase employee engagement. It is important for research to focus on individual employee differences and whether variables such as personality impacts employee engagement. Engagement is similar to, but should not be mistaken for: job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and intrinsic motivation. Understanding the attributes of individual employees regarding engagement practices is necessary for leaders. Yet, data aggregated at the individual level does not link engagement practices of the employee to larger company-wide success factors. Understanding the level of engagement of each employee is not the final solution. Organizations need energetic and dedicated employees who are engaged with their work. These organizations expect proactivity, initiative and responsibility for personal development from their employees. In studying workers' well-being, attention has traditionally been focused on the construct of employee productivity and job satisfaction, having a relatively passive experience of low-to-moderate activation. Recently, this type of well-being has been complemented by the more energized form referred to as job engagement. Engaged workers feel positively about their situation, but beyond mere satisfaction they are motivated to expend energy on a task. It is widely agreed that engagement arises from both personal and environmental sources. However, theoretical discussions and empirical investigations have so far emphasized one of those, mainly examining engagement as a response to characteristics of the job. More engaged and less engaged workers are likely to differ in certain traits as well as in the nature of their jobs, but few studies or models of possible personality contributors to job engagement have been published. The aspects of personality that are more activated and energized will be reflected in engagement.

2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research design in this study consist of exploratory research whereby different aspects with regard to personality traits and engagement in the IT sector have been extracted from literature review and tested on a sample size of employees working in IT firms in Chennai. Some of the top IT service companies have been considered for the research and the survey had been administered to those employees currently working in these firms. Researching these areas will help to understand what combination of personality traits of employees' impact on work engagement and also find out the extent to which personality traits have a relation to engagement. The results analysed in this study would help to get an indication of how personality traits impact engagement and if these can be considered during the hiring process to ensure better job-person fit. Based on the findings, a set of recommendations will be made so as to pinpoint how personality traits can be used to improve work engagement. So, the present study gains importance of its scope.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Employee engagement is the key focus of both business entrepreneurs and academic researchers and is an issue of modern business environment. It is gaining popularity in corporate world across the globe. Today, organizations are targeting on employee engagement as an effective human resource practice to gain competitive advantage. The IT industry is a Knowledge intensive labour industry and provides employment to all categories of IT skilled employees. Hence, employee engagement is very essential for effective utilization of human resources. All the researchers have suggested that employee engagement of the organization depends on the sincere commitment of the employees to the organization as well as the personal characteristics of the individuals. Organizations should pay more attention on the aspect employee engagement in the Indian scenario since its importance for the survival of organization is rarely explored. The effects of employee engagement over the performance and satisfaction of the employees is under evaluation. That is why, there is need to study more about employee engagement and its role in success of the organization. Hence the researcher has opted to expand the concept of employee engagement and its importance in improving organizational performance so as to add the knowledge related to employee engagement in academic literature and also to suggest the organizations and human resource managers to understand the importance of employee engagement and to develop effective strategies to engage the employees. It is very important for the organizations to enhance the level of engagement among the employees in order to improve organizational performance.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study is systematically designed in accordance with the following main objectives:
- To examine the personality factors determining the Employee Engagement in IT companies.
- To assess the socio demographic factors of the employees that has impact on employee engagement in IT companies.
- To determine the personality factors that influences Employee Engagement towards employee productivity and satisfaction in the IT companies.

5. METHODOLOGY

Population of the study consists of the employees of IT based companies in Chennai. The research study takes up 700 employees as sample respondents from IT based companies involved in IT consulting and services, Application Development and maintenance, IT Outsourcing, Hardware, Networking, System Security & Integration, Business Process Outsourcing etc. considering as sample companies from the IT industry in this study. A non – probability sampling technique where the researcher uses his judgment to select from among the population of the employees whom he feels will give him the desired or accurate information is the judgmental sampling technique. Since the researcher targets a particular group of people whose background expertise relates to the objective of the study, this technique is adopted for sampling. Judgmental Sampling involves the choice of subjects who are well equipped with the information that will be relevant to the researchers focus. In other words the selection of the sample reflects the purpose or the objective of the investigation. In the process of study the objectives are pre-determined. The methodology has been designed to fulfil the objectives for the study. The sampling frame of the population comprises of 20 major IT companies at Chennai including 1750 IT employees. Form the finite population of 1750 employees working under different cadres in the selected 20 IT Companies in Chennai, the study includes a sample of 1000 employees as respondents. The sample is obtained with the help of judgmental sampling based on the conditions that the employees of the selected IT companies are considered on conditions. The sample size is adjusted and determined as 720 respondents to obtain more and clear information. Out of 720 responses 20 responses were eliminated due to incomplete responses. Therefore 700 sample response were selected as the final sample size for analysis.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

KMO and Bartlett's Test for personality factors

The dimensionality of personality factors of employees was examined using factor analysis based on thirty individual statements and the reliability of the subsequent factor structures was then tested for internal consistency of the grouping of the items. All the statements of the personality factors of employees are loaded on the thirty factors. The total variance accounted for, by all the five factors with Eigen value greater than 1 is 87.587percent and the remaining variance is explained by other variables. Among the five factors, the first factor accounts for around 30.103percent of variance which is the prime criteria considered in personality factors of employees.

Table - 1: Rotated Component Matrix of personality factors of employees

Rotated Component Matrix[a]	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Imagination	.974	-.031	.017	.002	-.011
Anxiety	.973	-.018	-.018	-.032	.001
Activity level	.970	-.021	.006	-.001	-.016
Cooperation	.961	-.037	.001	-.010	-.015
Friendliness	.961	-.041	-.030	.014	.002
Self-conscious	.959	-.038	-.011	-.012	-.023
Trust	.953	-.051	-.007	-.034	-.048
Adventurousness	.948	-.041	-.032	-.002	-.002
Self-efficacy	.928	.007	.036	-.012	.021
Striving for achievement	.860	-.032	-.013	-.075	.001
Intellectual	-.044	.927	.277	.179	.115

Cautiousness	-.042	.927	.279	.177	.114
Morality	-.055	.924	.265	.185	.115
Depression	-.040	.923	.268	.180	.110
Modesty	-.046	.923	.272	.186	.122
Artistic interests	-.066	.897	.237	.225	.124
Emotionality	.014	.282	.872	.030	.282
Altruism	.014	.287	.861	.045	.280
Sympathy	.005	.288	.859	.024	.271
Liberalism	-.005	.289	.858	.018	.298
Cheerfulness	-.024	.265	.788	.413	.001
Dutifulness	-.025	.262	.786	.416	.000
Orderliness	-.043	.240	.199	.861	.094
Excitement seeking	-.034	.259	.230	.841	.086
Self-disciplined	-.028	.459	.011	.611	.311
Anger	-.020	.480	.029	.592	.316
Immoderation	-.046	.097	.437	.129	.762
Gregariousness	-.021	.122	.485	.080	.755
Vulnerability	.006	.434	.234	.309	.605
Assertiveness	-.001	.433	.230	.297	.603
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.					

Source: Output generated from SPSS 20

The statements are converted into 5factors using factor analysis. Out of thirty statements, five statements contribute more towards personality factors of employees . The statements are (1) Imagination,(2) Intellectual, (3) Emotionality, (4) Orderliness and (5) Immoderation.

The result determines the fact that almost all the attributes under personality factors of employees towards Employee engagement adopted by IT companies considered for the study are important and the most influencing factors are identified as 'Imagination, Intellectual, Emotionality, Orderliness and Immoderation' of the respondents. The employees opinion towards personality factors and their impact towards employee engagement is perceived more significant through five traits among their all other statements of opinion. Hence among all other attributes under personality factors towards employee engagement the above said statements are statistically significant and thus identified as the most influencing variable.

KMO and Bartlett's Test for personality factors and job performance
The dimensionality of job performance of the employees was examined using factor analysis based on ten individual statements and the reliability of the subsequent factor structures was then tested for internal consistency of the grouping of the items. All the statements of the job performance of the employees are loaded on the ten factors. The total variance accounted for, by all the three factors with Eigen value greater than 1 is 95.390percent and the remaining variance is explained by other variables. Among the three factors, the first factor accounts for around 35.931percent of variance which is the prime criteria considered in job performance of the employees .

Table -2: Rotated Component Matrix of job performance of the employees

Rotated Component Matrix[a]	Component		
	1	2	3
Complete assigned Duties	.971	-.058	-.014
Deliver quality output	.963	-.045	.000
Perform tasks expected	.935	-.046	.008
Deliver better output	.916	-.006	-.033
Personality factors influence my performance	-.053	.946	.310
Fulfill responsibilities specified	-.048	.946	.310
Engage in activities	-.050	.944	.314
Meet performance Requirements	-.016	.313	.946
Achieve pre-determined work standards	-.002	.299	.944
Do error free work	-.013	.315	.944
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.			

Source: Output generated from SPSS 20

The statements are converted into 3 factors using factor analysis. Out of ten statements, three statements contribute more towards job performance of the employees . The statements are (1) Complete assigned Duties, (2) Personality factors influence my performance, (3) Meet performance Requirements.

The result determines the fact that almost all the attributes under employee opinion towards Employee Engagement with respect to Job performance adopted by IT companies considered for the study are important and the most influencing factors identified are 'Complete assigned Duties, Personality factors influence my performance and Meet performance Requirements' of the respondents. The employees opinion towards Employee Engagement with the statement on that personality factors do affect the performance in work is perceived more significant among their all other statements of opinion. Hence among all other attributes under Employee Engagement with respect to Job performance, the above said statements are statistically significant and thus identified as the most influencing variable.

7. SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

Employees need to know how their behaviour affects them. For instance, the employees are required to confront with their own behaviour patterns and the expectations of the clients. To address this problem, organizations may adopt interpersonal communications strategies and tools like Johari window which would help them to know others and others to know them. Thereby increases the level of engagement among the employees. Employees' ability to manage adverse situations was very low and they lacked physical, emotional and spiritual perception about personal and professional life. It's an important aspect to be noted that employees have a tendency to carry distress and fear about the manager, skirmishes in the company and disturbances in the family, which moves them away from focusing on the work and struggle in identifying pertinent solutions. This may be avoided by involving family get together or contest that will motivate the employees to be engaged with the company.

The study reveal that employees who hold projects that offer high levels of autonomy, job diversity, significance and feedback are more highly engaged and, in consequence, receive higher performance ratings from their supervisors. The research highlights that an employee who receives effective motivation, support, inspiration, and training from the supervisors are likely to experience work as more challenging, involving, and satisfying, and, consequently, to become highly engaged with the job. The drivers of Employee Engagement include personality factors. From the study, Openness to Experience has become a prior personality trait because of the rapidly changing nature of current working life. Employees who adapt themselves to the changes can be more engaged to their job. The other trait Agreeableness helps the employees to resolve conflicts and work in peace motivating their performance in the organization. Therefore agreeable employees can be more engaged to their job because they can save their energy and flow it to their work roles. The level of engagement determines whether employees are productive and stay with the organization or quit and perhaps join the competitors. The research confirms that a positive work environment, in which employees feel valued, respected and supported, is necessary to develop engagement, innovation and accomplishment.

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