Impact of Employee Engagement and Job Performance in Automobile Sector: An Empirical Analysis

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to study the Impact of Employee Engagement on the Employee Job performance in Indian automobile sector. The primary data for the study was collected from a sample of 350 individuals working at various managerial and supervisory positions in the automobile industry. The sampling frame in the study was middle level managers working in the automobile sector of Punjab. The relationship between employee engagement and employee performance has been evaluated using structural equation model (SEM). Prior to conducting SEM confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been performed to validate the constructs. The study found a positive relation between employee engagement and job performance. The results unraveled that the increase in level of employee engagement results in more loyal employees as well as higher performance levels. Hence, it can be generalized that employee engagement has a significant positive impact on employee performance.

Key words: Employee engagement, Job performance, Automobile, Sector, India, Punjab

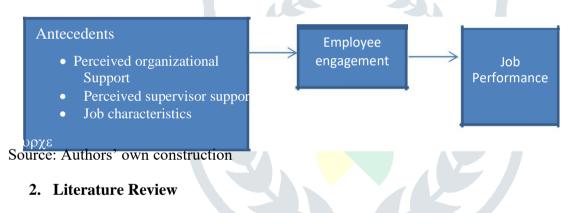
1. Introduction

Organizations in the tumultuous and rapidly changing business environment are continually identifying and searching for sustainable sources of strategic advantage. It is necessary for the organization to develop the ability to attract and retain competent talent which proactively contributes towards the super-ordinate goals of the organization. The paradigm shift from material resources to human resources is due to rapidly changing business, technological changes, crosscultural business operations, however it is necessary to mention that with growing demand of competent talent it is becoming tough for organizations to hire and retain proficient employees. Hence citing that organizations should develop strategies which facilitate to engage employees and thus retain them. Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) define engagement "as a positive, fulfilling, workrelated state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption." It can be understood from the given definitions that employee engagement is not a temporary but a stable phenomenon which is persistent and have a pervasive state. Engaged employees share an emotional bond with the organization and go beyond the line of their duty to achieve the super ordinate objectives of the organization. It is necessary that the organizations are provided with empirical data pertaining to engagement so that they can develop strategies for engaging and retaining employees. This research takes into account the Impact of employee engagement on the job performance of the employees in Indian automobile sector.

Automobile Industry is one of the rapidly growing industry in India. India is one of the top exporters in the auto industry with high growth expectations in the forthcoming years. For the automobile sector to emerge as a world leader and keep the growth driver consistent it is necessary that it must have competent workforce which plays an indispensable role in its progression. Highly versatile and proficient workforce shall help the organization to meet consumer expectations, facilitate creativity and innovation and provide expertise in areas which are in demand. The automobile industry of India employs about 19 million people who directly or indirectly serve the industry. It is apprised that by the year 2022 the auto industry will be in need of about 15 million employees more. Organizations realize that to sustain in this business environment it is necessary that they need to not satisfy their employees but keep them engaged. As it is the engaged employees which is emotionally, physically and cognitively involved in meeting the organizational objectives of the firm and evidently has similar values and goals towards the organization. Research also mentions that an engaged employee is more committed and leads to higher productivity vis-à-vis a satisfied employee. Also, employee engagement is an effective retention strategy which is beneficial for the individual and the organization in the long run. Kahn (1990) in his seminal work on employee engagement states that it is about harnessing organizational members to their work roles.

Thus, this research work attempts to study the existing levels of employee engagement in the automobile sector and its impact on Job performance. This can be illustrated with the help of figure I.

Figure 1 Conceptual Model for Drivers and Outcome of Employee Engagement



A literature review can be defined as a critical and evaluative piece of writing pertaining to the area under research. A robust literature review helps us to evaluate the relationship of the construct under study and its relationship with other constructs in the environment and how they can be articulated in the concerned field of study leading to identification of research lacunae in the topic under study.

Concept of Employee Engagement

It is herculean to identify a universal definition for employee engagement; however, most of the definitions belonging to employee engagement define it as emotional and intellectual commitment towards the firm and the extent of discretionary efforts highlighted by the workforce in their jobs Richman, 2006. Kahn (1990, p. 694) defines personal engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances." On the contrary personal disengagement can be referred to as the decoupling of work role and the individual in physical and cognitive terms. Thus, it can be deduced that employee engagement is about having a positive psychological connection with their jobs and work roles and contributing towards organizational objectives. Rothbard (2001, p. 656) converges with Kahn (1990) and reaffirms that employee engagement is about developing a psychological connection with the job, however, also explains it further whilst focusing on two constructs namely attention and absorption wherein attention focuses on the cognitive availability of an individual in a role and the extent of time spent by him in a work role

whereas absorption explains about the extent of involvement and the intensity with which an individual focuses on the role. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defines engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption." Furthermore, it states that engagement is not a temporary state rather it is more assiduous affective-cognitive state which has a broad focus and does not restrict itself to a particular individual, behaviour or event. It is imminent to mention that all the studies conducted on employee engagement state that absorption towards work must occur and the employees must put in their physical as well as psychological resources to complete the job in hand. If absorption is absent or minimally exists it may give rise to the phenomena of disengagement.

Employee engagement models and theory

The model for employee engagement emerges from the study of Kahn (1990) in which the author undertakes a qualitative study studying the psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement. The study interviewed summer camp counselors and employees of an architectural organizations about their situation engagement or otherwise at work. It was identified that there are three cognitive conditions which were associated with engagement or disengagement namely meaningfulness, safety, and availability. In a simpler tone, it can be said that employees were more engaged if they found meaningfulness, safety, and availability across their roles or vice versa. May et al (2004) converges with the qualitative work of Kahn and suggests that meaningfulness, safety, and availability are closely correlated with the concept of engagement. Furthermore, the study also identified that job enrichment and role fit predict meaningfulness and perceived support from the supervisor were predictor of safety and availability of resources predicted psychological availability of the individual. The other model of engagement comes from the burnout literature which describes job engagement as the positive antithesis of burnout noting that burnout involves the erosion of engagement with one's job (Maslach et al., 2001). According to Maslach et al. (2001), six areas of work-life lead to burnout and engagement: workload, control, values, perceived fairness, social support, rewards and recognition and community and social support. The study states that job engagement has an association with sustainable workload, feelings of choice and control, appropriate recognition and reward, a supportive work community, fairness and justice, and meaningful and valued work. It cannot be denied that Kahn's(1990) and Maslach et al.'s (2001) model highlight those psychological conditions which are important for engagement and do not completely explain the reasons why individual shall react to these conditions.

Drivers of Employee Engagement

Job satisfaction: A formal definition for the three psychological constructs has been provided by Hackman and Oldham (1980) and experienced meaningfulness can be defined as "the degree to which the jobholder experiences the work as intrinsically meaningful and can present his or her value to other people and/or the external environment". For skill variety, employees will assume more meaningfulness if the task requires multitude of skills in comparison to regular or mundane roles in the organisation. (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Employees who are involved in the complete process experience more meaningfulness in job vis-à-vis if the employees are involved in a part of the work (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) in terms of task identity. It is through task identity that employees can feel motivated and assume a sense of belongingness. (Coelho & Augusto, 2010).

Perceived organizational support: Perceived organizational support (POS) is defined as the perception of the employees towards its organization and the manner in which it values its contribution and focuses on employee well-being. (Krishhan & Mary, 2012). The fundamentals of POS (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) lie in the organizational support theory and elaborates on the relation between employers and employees while describing the manner in which employees personify support in the firm. As per the theory it is evident, that employees assume that their firm has human like attributes and consider its treatment favourable or unfavourable for them and supposedly perceive on the basis of treatment provided whether the organization favors them or disfavours them. Thus, POS can be considered as the magnitude to

which the employees meet their socio-economic needs and the manner in which it responds to enhanced work efforts (Krishan & Mary, 2012).

Communication and Employee Engagement: Organizational communication can be defined as the "sending and receiving of messages among interrelated individuals within a particular environment or setting to achieve individual and common goals".

Employee Job Performance as outcome of Employee Engagement: Researchers have proved that engagement as a construct has a strong relationship with job performance. It is highlighted that engagement is a condition in which the resources in terms of human resources exceed the demands of the job that is employees are ready to go an extra mile to meet the super-ordinate objectives of the organization, thus allowing the employees to perform in unique ways with full passion especially when the demands of the job are comparatively high. (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007). Employees who are engaged usually tend to invest unique resources as well as utilize their talent in creative ways to accomplish the task in hand. This fundamental was further support by other researchers who consistently focused on the premise that engagement, self-efficacy and task resources tend to create enhanced performance over a period of time. Thus, it can be deduced that engagement has a positive relationship with job performance and this is a derivation which converges with other studies of engagement. Research also cites that if an employee has positive linkage with an organization and exhibits person-organization fit then they will have high obligation to perform well in the organization. Also, the fit between the individual and the job shall also lead to emergence of intrinsic motivation so that they can perform well, however, if the employee lacks intrinsic motivation to perform in the organization, he may think that he does not derive required benefits from the organization and might not use his complete potential to perform at the job. Also, it is stated that employees which are proactively supported by their supervisors and peers tend to have higher level of engagement and thus have an exemplary job performance in the organization. Research studies have shown that employee engagement has a positive impact on organizational performance indicators like employee satisfaction, productivity, employee turnover and organizational commitment and safety. However, it is necessary to mention that literature also posits that there is a reverse relationship amongst organizational performance and employee engagement which means that if the organizational performance is higher it automatically invokes positive attitudes amongst the workers (Balain & Sparrow 2009) On the contrary it is mentioned by many researchers that engagement is an individual construct which influences the employees primarily and then the combined effort of engaged employees has a positive influence on the organization at large. On similar lines in this research study the researcher intends to study the impact of employee engagement and its relative impact on the employee job performance. Apart, from this it can be deduced that engaged workers have positive emotions at the work place and are psychologically and physically healthy and thus can use their skills and capabilities to achieve desired results. (Frederickson, 2001).

3. Research Methodology

Purpose – The purpose of the research study is to study the impact of employee engagement on the job performance of the employees in Indian automobile sector.

Research design- For the purpose of this study the *conclusive research design* is used as it intends to describe the characteristics of the employee and furthermore establishes the cause and effect relationship by identifying antecedents and outcome of employee engagement.

Data collection- In the present study primary data has been collected from four wheeler automobile industry in Punjab. The employees working at various middle level and supervisory level in the industry has been contacted for data collection. The primary data collection has been done though administering a structured questionnaire which involved identification of reliable and valid scale to measure the constructs in the hypothesized model.

*Sampling and procedure-*In this case the sampling frame is middle level and supervisory level managers working in the automobile sector in Punjab. For the purpose of this research the researcher

distributed 500 questionnaires, Out of which 100 questionnaires were not fully filled hence, discarded, fifty were wrongly filled, so the final analysis was carried out with for 350 valid responses from individuals working at managerial and supervisory positions in the automobile industry.

The respondents for the study were selected using non-probability judgmental sampling. Also credible journals and articles were pursued and analyzed to identify the research gaps and understand the current level of research in the field of employee engagement.

A detailed description of the scales adopted for measurement is provided in the section under constructs of the study. For the purpose of this research structural equation modelling (SEM) has been utilized. In order to ensure the validity, the items in the study were used from the measures developed by previous studies. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure all variables.

Constructs under study:

- Job Characteristics: For the job characteristics construct the researcher has borrowed items from the job characteristics model proposed by Hackman and Oldham (1980) and primarily the five item scale measures skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback.
- **Perceived Organizational Support:** The construct of perceived organizational support was measured through an abridged version of the perceived organizational support scale.
- **Perceived Supervisor Support**: Rhoades et. al (2001) SPOS was the source for a four-item scale which was used to measure perceived supervisor support (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001).
- Internal Communication: The construct of internal communication was measured with the help of an instrument named Dennis (1974) internal communication climate survey.
- **Employee Engagement:** Employee engagement is measured through a scale adopted from from Rich, LePine, & Crawford, 2010 and measures three aspects of engagement namely physical engagement, emotional engagement and cognitive engagement.
- □ **Employee Job Performance:** Employee job performance is measured through a 5-item scale which is adapted from Williams & Anderson, 1991. and measures the extent of output of the employee vis-à-vis the provided benchmark (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Individual job performance has a considerable impact on the organisational performance.
- **Employee Satisfaction:** The construct of employee satisfaction was measured with the help of 11-point scale provided by Macdonald & MacIntyre 1997.

4. Data analysis and Interpretation

In the research study structural equation model (SEM) has been carried out in order to evaluate the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance. But prior, to conducting SEM confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been performed to validate the constructs.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

In the study the primary data is collected from the employees with respect to evaluate the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance. In order to analyze the validity of the factors w.r.t. conversion as well as discriminant validity, the confirmatory factor analysis is applied. The convergent validity can be tested with the help of composite reliability statistic as well as averages variance extracted measure. The composite reliability statistic of each factor is expected to be greater than 0.7 and average variance extracted should be greater than 0.5. The composite reliability statistic also represents the level of internal consistency reliability for the factor and average variance extracted represents the variance in the variables which can be explained by the extracted factors. For discriminant validity, the average variance extracted of each factor should be greater than its average shared variance as well as maximum shared variance (Hair et al 1992). Table 1 represents the convergent and discriminant validity by way of composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), maximum shared variance (MSV) and average shared variance (ASV)

Table 1: Validity analysis

	CR	AVE	NSM	MaxR(H)	Internal Communication	Perceived Org support	Perceived Supervisor	Job Characteristics	Employee Engagement	Employee Performance
Internal										
Communication	0.906	0.618	0.256	0.921	0.786					
Perceived Org										
Support		0.577	0.256	0.958	0.506	0.760				
Perceived Supervisor										
Support	0.880	0.648	0.234	0.968	0.484	0.317	0.805			
Job Characteristics	0.903	0.610	0.218	0.976	0.365	0.324	0.278	0.781		
Employee										
Engagement	0.777	0.538	0.353	0.978	0.445	0.411	0.425	0.467	0.734	
Employee										
Performance	0.910	0.671	0.353	0.986	0.342	0.362	0.303	0.371	0.594	0.819



Source : Authors' own construction

The results of the construct validity indicated that the CR for all the constructs was more than 0.70. Similarly, The AVE for all the constructs was also found to be more than 0.50.

Additionally, the results showed that CR> AVE. Thus, individual constructs were found to be valid, reliable and ensured the presence of convergent validity. While assessing discriminant validity the results showed that MSV > ASV. Further, both MSV & ASV < AVE thus, ensuring the presence of discriminant validity. Thereafter, having checked the convergent and the discriminant validity of the measurement model, the fitness of the measurement model was tested. In order to ascertain whether the model fits the data, goodness of fit and badness of fit estimates of the model were verified using AMOS. The goodness of fit was represented by CMIN/ DF (the closer to degree of freedom the better it is considered) CFI (> 0.95), GFI (> 0.90) and TLI (>0.90) values and badness of fit indices was shown by RMSEA (≤ 0.05) (Hair et al., 2010). Finally, the model yielded good model fit. The model fit indices are depicted in the table below 2-

Table 2: Model fit indices

Statistical Fitness Index	CMIN/DF	RMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI Delta1	TLI rho2	CFI	RMSEA
Default Model	1.900	.056	.799	781	.840	.912	.917	.048

Source: Authors' own construction

The results as shown in table 2 indicate that the measurement model is also statistically fit and the results can be generalized. The results of CFA analysis on the measurement model is shown in Figure II as well:

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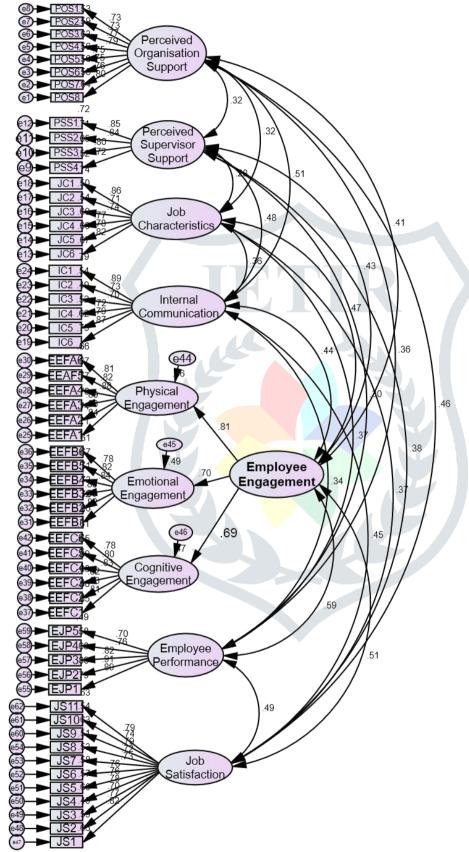
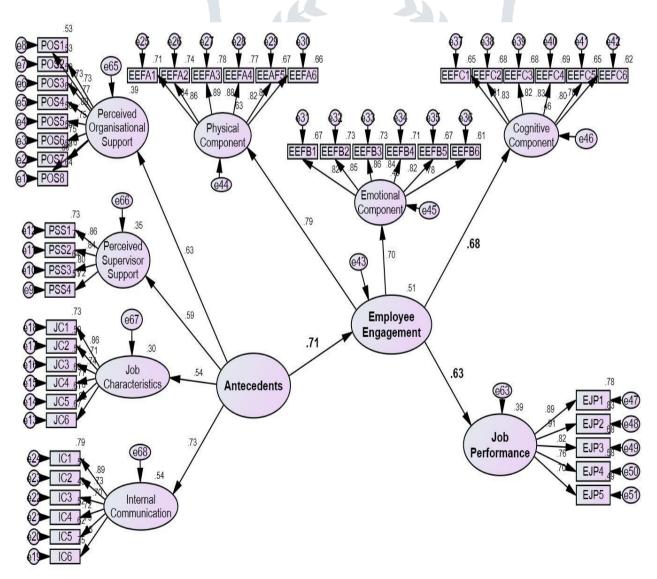


Figure 2: CFA of Employee performance and Employee engagement.

The results of CFA analysis on the measurement model found that the standardized construct loading, unstandardized construct loading, standard error, critical ratio and the probability value of each statement included in the measurement model. The unstandardized construct loading the first statement of the construct is assumed to be 1 and other statements have comparative loadings. The standardized construct loading of each statement represents the correlation between the statement and the construct, it is expected that all the standardized construct loading of all the statements should be greater than 0 .7. The results indicate that the probability value of all the selected statements in the measurement model is found to be less than 5 level of significance hence with 95 % confidence level it can be concluded that all the statements are significantly represents their respective constructs.

Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Structural equation modeling was conducted to examine the impact of Impact of employee engagement on the job performance of the employees in Indian automobile sector. In the structural model employee engagement was denoted as exogenous constructs which was related to four endogenous constructs such as Perceived organizational support, Job characteristics, Internal communication and Perceived superior support were taken as endogenous constructs. The superiority of relationship between the independent and the dependent variables were accessed by the values of path coefficients or the β value. The figure of SEM for Employee engagement and Job performance is as follows:



Thereafter, having checked the hypothesis of the study with the aid of the path coefficient value the fitness of the structural model was accessed. In order to ascertain whether the model fits the data, goodness of fit and badness of fit estimates of the model were verified using AMOS. The goodness of fit was represented by CMIN/ DF (the closer to degree of freedom the better it is considered) CFI (> 0.95), GFI (> 0.90) and TLI (>0.90) values and badness of fit indices was shown by RMSEA (≤ 0.05) (Hair et al., 2010).



			Standardize d Estimate	Estimate e	S.E.	C.R.	Р	R Square
Employee Engagement	< -	Antecedent	0.714	.950	.12	7.688	**	51%
Cognitive	<	Employee Engagement	.680	.823	.08	9.836	**	46%
Component Job	- <	Employee			4 .08		**	
Satisfaction	-	Engagement	.625	.826	5	9.712	*	39%
Physical Component	< -	Employee Engagement	.792	1.000	D			62%
Emotional	<	Employee	JĽ		.08	10.03	**	
Component	-	Engagement	.701	.896	9	2	*	49%
Perceived Organisational Support	< -	Antecedents	.627	1.000				39%
Perceived Supervisor Support	< -	Antecedents	.593	.996	.13 0	7.679	** *	35%
Job	<	Antecedents	5.45	0.01	.12	7 222	**	20.7%
Characteristics Internal	-		.545	.881	0	7.332	*	29.7%
Communicatio N	< -	Antecedents	.734	1.309	.15 1	8.646	** *	53.9%

Table 3: CFA analysis on measurement model

Source: Authors' own construction

The results indicate that the probability value in the cause and effect relationship between precedent and job engagement, employee engagement and job satisfaction is found to be less than 5 percent level of significance. Hence with 95 percent confidence level significant impact of precedent on employee engagement, employee engagement on the job performance can be concluded from the results. The results also indicate that standardized construct loading of all the cause and effect relationship is found to be positive. This indicates that all the precedents have a positive impact on level of employee engagement will be high. In addition to this the results also indicate that the high level of employee engagement leads to high job satisfaction. The goodness of fit indices of the above shown SEM model are estimated and reported in table.

Table 4: Model fit indices

Statistical	CMIN/DF	RMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Fitness					Delta1	rho2		
Index								

Default	1.939	.064	.824	.806	.865	.926	.929	.049
Model								



Source: Authors own construction

The results indicate that the model is having significant fitness model indices Hence the results of the structural model can be generalized.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of employee engagement on the job performance of the employees in Indian auto mobile sector. Past studies have proved that engagement as a construct has a strong relationship with job performance. It can be said from the studies conducted that engagement has a positive relationship with job performance. Also, it is stated that employees which are proactively supported by their supervisors and peers tend to have higher level of engagement and thus have an exemplary job performance in the organisation. The review reveals that the construct of employee engagement has been discussed in detail in academicians as well as practitioner literature, but most of the studies conducted in the area were in Western context and does not focus on a specific sector and its needs. The researcher through his research tries to address the mentioned research lacunae and provide answer to the questions specifically pertaining to the automobile sector in Punjab region of India. The above study has revealed that employee engagement has a positive impact on organizational performance indicators like employee satisfaction, productivity, reduced employee turnover, loyalty and work commitment. Most of the research studies which focus on developing a relationship between employee engagement and job performance are explaining the same point that there is a positive relationship that exists between employee engagement and job performance. The results of the study disclosed the fact that there is a positive relation between employee engagement and job performance. The results of model showed a positive link between employee engagement and job performance. With the increase in level of employee engagement the workers tend to be more loyal towards their work and as a result their performance increase. There is no doubt that satisfied employees provide more positive outcomes vis-à-vis dissatisfied employees. Engaged employees are more satisfied because they intend to work together, work beyond expectations and who put themselves into the manager's shoes so that they can work more efficiently and give them better services thus enhancing organizational productivity. (Koys, 2003). The outcome of employee engagement in organisation that employee is more productive, profitable and healthier and do not have a turnover intention whilst engaging in a discretionary effort leading to satisfied employees (Wagner & Harter, 2006). The results showed that the probability value in the cause and effect relationship between employee engagement and job satisfaction is found to be less than 5 percent level of significance. The results also indicate that standardized construct loading of all the cause and effect relationship is found to be positive. This indicates that all the precedents have a positive impact on level of employee engagement. Thus, employee performance is the outcome of a strong employee engagement strategy of the firm.

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