

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AMONG FOOD DELIVERY AND HOTEL SERVICE SECTOR

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Abstract

Employee engagement has swiftly become new paradigm in organizational studies over past few years. Having engaged employees has become crucial in present business scenario where organizations look to their employees to take initiatives, bring innovations and optimum solutions to their current needs. This study investigates both job and organizational engagement of employees from two different sectors in Tamil Nadu namely, food delivery services and Hotel. The purpose of the study is to define various concepts of employee engagement in modern organizations. The current cross sectional survey reinforces previous literature followed by discussions, limitations and conclusions.

Introduction

In the world of online food delivery and e-restaurants, the challenges that face the food industry are no longer simple and require special efforts to stay ahead in the game.

With online food delivery and takeaway market forecasted to grow at a CAGR of 15.25 percent till 2021, and an increasing number of customers preferring to ‘order-in’ their food, it is not surprising that a number of restaurants and delivery services have jumped onto the bandwagon. However, as the online food delivery channel grows popular, it also brings with it entry barriers for new players, and risk of cannibalization for the existing players. Online food delivery model has its own dynamics and presents a different set of challenges

‘People and how we manage them are becoming more important because many other sources of competitive success are less powerful than they once were.’ (Pfeffer, 1994).

With the rise in service sector industries all around the world, Human Resource managers need to step up to the role in this fast – paced world. Interactive service work has drawn a lot of debate because it is considered to be work ‘without technical or knowledge’ skills. On the contrary interactive service skills are needed for the smooth and effective running of an organisation. Employees who possess the right ‘people skills’ are bound to make a positive impression on the client which in turn encourages them to conduct more business. With the growth and rise in technology and world interconnectedness, the service sector employs a large number of people in most economically developed countries. There is a slow shift occurring from the ‘knowledge based

economy' to a 'service based economy'. The service sector encompasses financial services, service in restaurants and generally any kind of service that requires face to face contact with clients or customers.

It is worth mentioning that the service sector involves tangible and intangible services. To get the effectiveness of an intangible service like customer satisfaction, there is a need for efficient customer service which is an intangible service. The role of skills in the service industry has been up for debate recently and this has posed a lot of questions for managing people in the service sector. Frontline staffs are the first contact clients have with an organization and it is important that they are effective in handling face-to-face situations.

Bateson cited in Singh describes frontline service jobs as “a three-cornered tight.” in which the customer (demanding attention and service quality) and the organization (demanding efficiency and productivity) are at the two ends and the FLE is “caught-in-the-middle.” (Singh, 2000). Frontline services can be described as customer – facing roles. Inefficient frontline employees give the organization a bad impression.

What is the Service Sector?

The service sector can be described as the part of the economy that includes individuals and businesses that produce services rather than goods. The service sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the world economy. It includes education, finance, communications, health care, utilities, wholesale and retail trade, and transportation. Producing these services as a whole tend to require less natural capital and more human capital.

Korczynski list five attributes that make the service sector different from other sectors. These are intangibility, perishability, variability, simultaneous production and consumption, and inseparability. (Korczynski, 2002). Services provided cannot be seen but produce an end product. They usually last for a moment and cannot be separated. For example, a customer being satisfied with an employee is satisfied for that moment.

The service sector of an economy is also known as the tertiary sector and the service industry. Although the service sector comprises of both tangible and intangible services, it is thought to comprise only of intangible service and is now referred to as the “quaternary sector”. The quaternary sector encompasses knowledge based work. Kenessey places retail under the tertiary or service sector and activities such as insurance and real estate under quaternary services. (Kenessey, 2005). This is because they involve the use of pure service not necessarily resulting in an end product like the restaurants.

It can be rightly said that the service industry involves more contact with people than the other sectors of the economy for example the primary sector like manufacturing. The service industry involves the day to day dealing with customers and clients alike. With the huge role the service industry plays, it is necessary to for the organizations to know how to manage people to get efficient and orderly service.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the extent to which employee engagement (both job and organizational) relates to organizational commitment among selected hotel services and food delivery services in Tamil Nadu.
2. To ascertain the extent to which employee engagement (both job and organizational) relates to organizational citizenship behavior (towards individual and organization) among selected HOTEL services and food delivery services in Tamil Nadu.
3. To find out the level of employee engagement by demographic variables (age, gender, work experience and educational qualification).

Statement of the Problem

Employee engagement is the energy, passion or fire that employees have towards their work and the employer. The challenges today is not just retaining talented people but fully engaged them, capturing their minds and hearts at each stage of their work performance (Kaye & Jordan-Evans 2003). Hotel is not surprising that organizations of all sizes and types have invested substantially in policies and practices that foster engagement and commitment in their workforces. Employees who are engaged in their work and committed to their organizations give services crucial competitive advantages including higher productivity and lower employee turnover. Understanding the challenges of employee engagement enables the organizations to strategize on how to solve engagement and commitment problems to guarantee continued existence in this competitive environment.

Literature Review

For identifying the general antecedents of employee engagement, literatures as well as models developed by consulting organizations were reviewed. Since the employee engagement construct is still relative recent, both literature and consulting models are examined so as to gain insights and obtain contributions from practice, in addition to the theoretical data.

Kahn (1990) was the first researcher to suggest that engagement means the psychological presence of an employee while executing his organizational task. According to Kahn (1990) in employee engagement people expressed and engaged emotionally, cognitively and physically. The cognitive part of employee engagement is concerned with the thinking of employees about their organization, leaders and working conditions and the emotional part of engagement of employee is related to the feeling of employees about various engagement factors and employees' attitude towards their leaders and organizations (Kahn 1990). Kahn (1992) proposed that engagement leads to both individual outcomes (i.e. quality of people's

work and their own experiences of doing that work), as well as organizational-level outcomes (i.e. the growth and productivity of organizations).

According to Scarlett Surveys (2001) employee engagement is a measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, co-workers and organization that profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work. Schaufeli et al. (2002) define engagement "as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind".

Saks (2006) argues that "Commitment is a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and beliefs that sustain his activities and his own involvement. Robinson et al. (2004) states "engagement contains many of the elements of both commitment and OCB, but is by no means a perfect match with either". Besides, neither commitment nor OCB reflect sufficiently two aspects of engagement – its two-way nature, and the degree to which engaged employees are expected to have an element of business awareness. Organizations comprise individuals whose behavior range from the least possible contribution just to maintain an affiliation with the organization to others who go the extra mile discretionarily involving in extra role behavior for the benefit of the self and the organization. Discretionary behaviour at workplace is the organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as indicated by Robinson and Heyday (2004). Some of these behaviors include voluntarily helping peers, taking personal initiatives for the development of the team, volunteering innovation; not wasting time and performing extra duties without complaint. These behaviors are believed to be instrumental for the effective functioning of the organization (Organ 1983).

Research Methodology

The data for this study was collected from employees of two different sectors in Tamil Nadu namely, food delivery services and Hotel services. Research participants (N=132) was selected based on a convenient sampling process. Data was collected through online questionnaire from 100 employees each from both commercial food delivery services and Hotel Sector organizations in TamilNadu irrespective of their current position. The study analysed the 132 responses out of 150 responses collected, which were useful and complete and the rest 18 unfilled were left out. A three section online questionnaire was used for data collection. The first section of the questionnaire consisted of 5 items inquiring about demographic characteristics of respondents such as employees' gender, age, educational qualification, and work experience. The second section consisted of questions related to measure employee engagement (job and organisational). The third section consisted of questions related to measure organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour towards individual and organization.

Measures

Both job engagement and organization engagement was measured by two six-item scales used by Saks (2006). Items were written to assess participant's psychological presence in their job and organization. A sample item for job engagement is, I really "throw" myself into my job" and for organization engagement". Being a member of this organization is very captivating". The scale verified an internal consistency (alpha) reliability of 0.713 for organisational engagement and 0.696 for job engagement in the current study. Organisational commitment of the respondents was

measured using the six-item affective commitment scale by Rhoades et al. (2001). A sample item for commitment in this study is, “I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization”. The cronbach’s alpha value for organizational commitment scale was 0.884, which is highly reliable. Participants indicated their response on a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Organizational citizenship behavior directed to the individual (OCBI) and organization (OCBO) was each measured by four-items each from Lee and Allen (2002). Participants responded using a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) never to (5) always. A sample item from the OCBI scale is, “Give up time to help others who have work or non-work problems” and a sample item from the OCBO scale is, “Defend the organization when other employees criticize it”. The cronbach’s alpha value for OCBI scale was 0.796 and for OCBO scale was 0.790, which were highly reliable.

Hypotheses

H1: Job engagement will be positively related to organisational commitment among employees in food delivery services

H2: Job engagement will be positively related to organisational commitment among employees in Hotel Services.

H3: Organisational engagement is positively related to organisational commitment and Organisational citizenship behaviour among employees in food delivery services and Hotel Services.

H4: Job engagement will be positively related to organisational engagement among employees in food delivery services.

H5: Job engagement will be positively related to organisational engagement among employees in Hotel Services.

H6: There will be a significant positive relationship between demographic variables of the respondents and employee engagement among employees in food delivery services and Hotel Services.

H7: Job engagement will be positively related to organisational citizenship behavior (towards individual and organisation) among employees in food delivery services

H8: Job engagement will be positively related to organisational citizenship behavior (towards individual and organisation) among employees in Hotel Services

Analysis and Results

Descriptive statistics are given in Table 1 which consists of the mean and standard deviation values of job engagement, organizational engagement, organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behavior (towards individual and organisation) in two important industries in Tamil Nadu

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

INDUSTRY		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Food delivery services	Organisation Engagement	100	3.5051	.43063
	Job Engagement	100	3.2970	.63754
	Org Commitment	100	3.7879	.65669
	OCB Individual	100	3.8788	.68814
	OCB Organisation	100	3.7576	.61389
	Valid N (listwise)			
HOTEL services	Organisation Engagement	100	3.4293	.76240
	Job Engagement	100	3.2242	.73045
	Org Commitment	100	3.2904	.91348
	OCB Individual	100	4.0126	.87654
	OCB Organisation	100	3.3876	.88729
	Valid N (listwise)			

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviations for the four variables under study which are organisation engagement, job engagement and organisational commitment. The table indicates that organisational engagement is the highest among employees working in food delivery services (mean= 3.5051, std. deviation= 0.43063) than in hotel services. Also job engagement is more among food delivery services employees (mean= 3.2970, std. deviation= 0.63754). The organizational commitment among the employees in food delivery services is comparatively higher (mean= 3.7879, std. deviation= 0.65669) than employees in hotel services. Hotel can be identified from the table that even though OCB towards organisation (mean= 3.7576, std. deviation=.61389) is greater among food delivery services sector employees, OCB towards individual is quite alarmingly high among hotel sector employees (mean= 4.0126, std. deviation= 0.70820).

Hypotheses Testing

The hypothesis sought to investigate the extent to which job and organisational engagement is related with organisational commitment. The hypothesis was investigated using Pearson correlation coefficient. Summary of the results are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Correlation between Employee Engagement and Organisation Commitment

Name of the Industry			Organisation Engagement	Job Engagement	Org Commitment
Food delivery services	Organisation Engagement	Pearson	1	.032	.370**
		Correlation			
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.800	.002
		N	100	100	100
	Job Engagement	Pearson	.032	1	.314*
		Correlation			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.800		.010
		N	100	100	100
	Org Commitment	Pearson	.370**	.314*	1
		Correlation			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.010	
		N	100	100	100

		N	100	100	100
Hotel Services	Organisation Engagement	Pearson	1	.460**	.737**
		Correlation			
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
		N	100	100	100
	Job Engagement	Pearson	.460**	1	.194
		Correlation			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.119
		N	100	100	100
	Org Commitment	Pearson	.737**	.194	1
		Correlation			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.119	
		N	100	100	100

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

From Table 2 above, in case of employees from food delivery services sector, there is significant positive relationship between job engagement and organisational commitment [$r=.314^*$, $p<0.05$]. Hence we accept H_1 . There is a significant positive relationship between organisational engagement and organisational commitment [$r=.370^{**}$, $p<0.05$]. Hence we accept H_3 . There is a no significant correlation between job engagement and organizational engagements [$r=0.032$, p is not less than .05]. Hence we reject the hypothesis H_4 .

In case of employees from hotel sector, there is highly positive significant relationship between organisational engagement and organisational commitment [$r=.737^{**}$, $p<0.05$]. Hence we accept H_3 . There is no significant relationship between job engagement and organisational commitment [$r=-.194$, $p<0.05$]. Hence we reject H_2 . There is a significant positive correlation between job and organization engagements [$r=.460^{**}$, $p<0.05$]. Hence we accept H_5

Table 3: Correlation between Employee Engagement and Organisation Citizenship Behavior

Industry			OCB Individual	OCB Organisation	Organisation Engagement	Job Engagement
Food delivery services	OCB Individual	Pearson	1	.426**	.366**	-.180
		Correlation				
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.003	.149
		N	100	100	100	100
	OCB Organisation	Pearson	.426**	1	.495**	-.163
		Correlation				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.191
		N	100	100	100	100
	Organisation Engagement	Pearson	.366**	.495**	1	.032
		Correlation				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000		.800

		N	100	100	100	100
	Job Engagement	Pearson Correlation	-.180	-.163	.032	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.149	.191	.800	
		N	100	100	100	100
Hotel Services	OCB Individual	Pearson Correlation	1	.348**	.275*	.148
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.004	.026	.235
		N	100	100	100	100
	OCB Organisation	Pearson Correlation	.348**	1	.607**	.402**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.004		.000	.001
		N	100	100	100	100
	Organisation Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.275*	.607**	1	.460**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.000		.000
		N	100	100	100	100
	Job Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.148	.402**	.460**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.235	.001	.000	
		N	100	100	100	100

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

From Table 3 shown below, in case of employees from food delivery services sector, there is no significant relationship between job engagement and OCBI [$r = -.180$, p is not less than .05] and , there is no significant relationship between job engagement and OCBO [$r = -.149$, p is not less than .05]. Hence we reject H_7 . There is a significant positive relationship between organisational engagement and OCBI [$r = .366^{**}$, $p < 0.05$]. Also there is a significant positive relationship between organisational engagement and OCBO [$r = .495^{**}$, $p < 0.05$]. Hence we accept H_3 .

In case of employees from hotel sector, there is positive significant relationship between organisational engagement and OCBI [$r = .275^*$, $p < 0.05$] and there is highly positive significant relationship between organisational engagement and OCBO [$r = .607^{**}$, $p < 0.05$]. Hence we accept H_3 . There is positive relationship between job engagement and OCBI [$r = .148$, p is not less than .05] and there is highly significant positive relationship between job engagement and OCBO [$r = .402^{**}$, $p < 0.05$]. Hence we accept H_8 .

Table 4: Influence of Age on Employee Engagement

ANOVA					
Employee Engagement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	4.519	4	1.130	4.483	.002
Within Groups	32.004	127	.252		
Total	36.523	131			

Table 5: Influence of Work Experience on Employee Engagement

ANOVA					
Employee Engagement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	.868	4	.293	1.052	.372
Within Groups	35.644	127			
Total	36.523	131			

Table 6: Influence of Educational Qualification on Employee Engagement

ANOVA					
Employee Engagement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	3.165	4	1.055	4.048	.009
Within Groups	33.358	128	.261		
Total	36.523	131			

Interpretation

The one-way ANOVA was carried to find out if there is any influence on employee engagement by age, work experience and educational qualifications of the respondents and it is shown in Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6 respectively. From the tables mentioned above, it can be known that the demographic characteristics of the employees such as age (*since* $p=.002$, $p<0.05$) and educational qualification (*since* $p=.009$, $p<0.05$) has significant influence on the level of employee engagement among both hotel and food delivery services sector employees. But hotel was known that work experience has no influence on the level of employee engagement among employees in hotel services and food delivery services.

Discussion

The study adopted a survey method to study employee engagement and organizational commitment. The data analysis was done using SPSS (21Version). The responses to this study were made up 88% of respondents comprising of the senior management, middle management and juniors. 60.6% of the respondents were male with 39.39% the respondents being female. The hypothesis that there will be a positive significant relationship between employee engagement (job and organisation) and organizational commitment was supported by the analysis shown in Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to analysis the correlation between the study variables such as organisational commitment, job engagement and organisational engagement. This finding implies that employees who are given the necessary resources by their organizations to perform their tasks effectively tend to respond favourably to the organizations they are committed to. This finding is consistent with results from a study conducted by Saks (2006) when he established that engagement of employees mediated the relationships between the antecedents and job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intentions to the job, and organizational citizenship behaviour. Descriptive analysis of employee engagement and organisational commitment in food delivery services and hotel sector was indicated in Table 1. The Value of

mean and SD describe that majority of the employees are properly engaged in their work and moderately committed. The findings of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational commitment

The One-way ANOVA analysis is used to determine there exist any significant and insignificant difference among the means of two or more independent groups. Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6 show one – way ANOVA and show analysis results of variance of demographic variables with employee engagement. Independent sample Test was used to find the influence of gender on employee engagement (Shown in Appendix-A). Results described that all demographic variables do show significant variation with employee engagement. Age, gender and educational qualification of the respondents“ shows significant influence on the level of employee engagement but work experience have no influence for their level of engagement towards either their job or their organization.

Conclusion

We can conclude that the importance of employee engagement in the organizational setting is undeniable. Prudent practices of engaging employees should be implemented in the organizations in order to enhance their commitment to the organization. Employees are the assets of any organization and organizations should adopt impeccable measures to engage their key performers to build a committed work force. Looking at the potential of online food delivery space, e-commerce giants have entered the market. For example, Uber and Amazon have launched UberEATS and Amazon Restaurants respectively. Not to mention, the old players such as Pizza Hut, Starbucks and McDonald’s are pepping up the competition too. They have financial and operations resources to meet the market demand and keep the competition at bay. So, smaller and independent food delivery setups struggle to retain their position in the market. While the future of online food delivery space looks bright, players need to overcome these unique hindrances to survive the competition.

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