A study on Employee Engagement of Staff level employees working in Manufacturing Industries.

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to find the antecedents that influence employee engagement, as the organizational Engagement deteriorated due to high turnover and related issues such as high absenteeism, low loyalty and productivity. Employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards his organization and its values. It is a measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization which profoundly influences their willingness to learn & perform at work. Employee engagement has a direct impact on the employee’s productivity. This exploratory research was conducted among employee working in manufacturing sector to test the relationship between the antecedents comprising of employee communication, employee development, reward and recognition and extended employee care. The data was gathered through structured questionnaire. The result indicates that there is a significant relationship between antecedents comprising of employee communication, employee development, reward and recognition and extended employee care. Among the antecedents, employee development forms the most significant contributor. This study was based on manufacturing companies in general; hence the attributes unique to a particular industry within manufacturing cannot be uncovered. The data for this research though structured questionnaire was collected directly from employees working in various manufacturing sector.

Key words: Employee engagement, Manufacturing, Communication, Commitment, Involvement.

Introduction:
Managers agree that modern business demands higher productivity and more efficiency, than in previous times. Companies are trying to increase their performance in order to place their company ahead of the competitors. At some point, satisfied employees, content with their work experience, was a good formula for success, as a satisfied employee, who wanted to stay with a company, contributed to the workforce stability and productivity. But those times have changed. Nowadays, the business environment is global and competitive and simply satisfied and stable employees are not enough to bring necessary business results. Satisfied employees may just meet the work demands, but this will not lead to higher performance. In order to compete effectively, employers need to go beyond satisfaction - employers must do their best to inspire their employees to apply their full potential and capabilities to their work, if they do not, part of the valuable employees’ resources remains unavailable for the company. Therefore, modern organizations expect their employees to be full of enthusiasm and show initiative at work, they want them to take responsibility for their own development, strive for high quality and performance, be energetic and dedicated to what they do – in other words companies want their employees be engaged. Employee engagement is the best tool in the company’s efforts to gain competitive advantages and stay competitive.
Though, the notion of engagement is relatively new, it is already a hot managerial topic and it is rare to find an HR or managerial related article that does not mention employee engagement. The relative novelty of the concept has caused a situation, where there is still no one clear and agreed definition of engagement. Engagement creates the prospect for employees to attach closely with their managers, co-workers and organization in general and the engaging environment is the environment where employees have positive attitude toward their job and are willing to do high-quality job.

The example of, Manufacturing Based Company was taken in the investigation to test engagement theories on the rarely investigated group of people. It was considered to be interesting to find out the present engagement level of administrative personnel and to find out factors that need to be improved. Firstly, we will see the current level of the employee engagement. Secondly, the questionnaire will map out the areas, which need improvement for further engagement building. Engagement literature presents a number of factors that influence employee engagement at work; these factors will be used to investigate which factors need to be improved in order to increase the employee engagement.

Areas of Engagement

Employees’ perceptions in all areas have an impact on the level of their overall engagement. Naturally, some organizations rate certain areas of their culture more favourably than others. High-scoring as well as low-scoring organizations need to identify what drives engagement for them, and what drives engagement for any organization likely changes over time. From a normative standpoint, some items tend to be among key drivers more frequently than others. For example, perceptions of recognition tend to drive engagement more frequently in organizations than perceptions of compensation. But we have found through this study that the higher employees rate a particular item, the less likely that item is to be a key driver of engagement for that company.

The most favourable areas of engagement for lower-performing organizations, trust with co-workers and job satisfaction, share a common theme: self-interest. These employees are thinking about themselves and their friends at work. In contrast, organizations with the highest levels of engagement scored most favourably in trust in senior leadership, feeling valued, and retention. These employees are thinking about the leadership team and their vision, the recognition of other employees’ contributions, and professional development opportunities. The common theme is organization-interest. These employees are thinking about how they can better the organization’s future.

Literature Review

Engagement at work was conceptualized by Kahn, (1990) as the ‘harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work roles. In engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. The second related construct to
engagement in organizational behavior is the notion of flow advanced by Csikszentmihalyi (1975, 1990). Csikszentmihalyi (1975) defines flow as the ‘holistic sensation’ that, people feel when they act with total involvement. Flow is the state in which there is little distinction between the self and environment. When individuals are in Flow State little conscious control is necessary for their actions. Employee engagement is thus the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their 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. Thus Employee engagement is a barometer that determines the association of a person with the organization.

Engagement is most closely associated with the existing construction of job involvement (Brown 1996) and flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Job involvement is defined as ‘the degree to which the job situation is central to the person and his or her identity (Lawler & Hall, 1970). Kanungo (1982) maintained that job involvement is a ‘Cognitive or belief state of Psychological identification. Job involvement is thought to depend on both need saliency and the potential of a job to satisfy these needs. Thus job involvement results form a cognitive judgment about the needs satisfying abilities of the job. Jobs in this view are tied to one’s self image. Engagement differs from job in as it is concerned more with how the individual employees his/her self during the performance of his/her job. Furthermore engagement entails the active use of emotions. Finally engagement may be thought of as an antecedent to job involvement in that individuals who experience deep engagement in their roles should come to identify with their jobs.

Managers create an environment that maximize the performance of employees and provide employees with a passion to work (Baumruk, Gorman, Gorman & Ingham, 2006; Lockwood, 2006), thereby influencing the level of employee engagement of the employee. Opportunities for growth also enhance the level of engagement of the employees. Employees tend to stay with organizations, which are “talent friendly” and progressive (Towers, 2006).Seijts and Crim (2006), while summarizing the existing literature on how leaders can ‘engage employees’ heads, hearts, and hands’ identified ten factors, named the ‘Ten C’s of Engagement’ – steps that the management may take to enhance the level of engagement of the employees. These may be enumerated as follows:

1. Connect: the extent to which management convey that it cares for and values the employees.
2. Career: the extent to which the management provides to the workers work that is ‘challenging and meaningful’ and fostering one’s career growth.
3. Clarity: the extent to which the goals, rules and the organizational operations are transparent and understood by the employee.
4. Convey: the extent to which the management communicates goals and provides feedback.
6. Contribute: the extent to which one’s contribution to the ‘success and future’ of the company is understood.
7. Control: the extent to which the management allows the worker to participate in decision making and drive initiatives.
9. Credibility: the extent to which the management demonstrates transparency and high ethical standards.
10. Confidence: the extent to which the organization demonstrates high ethical and performance standards, creating a sense of positive identification among the employees.

Methodology

The following section will cover an approach and a method used for the investigation of the current level of engagement of the administrative workers and the factors that need to be improved in order to increase engagement.
Human Resource Management

Research methods

It is relevant to use qualitative research when the prior knowledge about the area of interest is limited. Due to its modest insight, qualitative research tends to be flexible, with an emphasis on gaining insights. The process of research involves emerging questions and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data collection and analysis is often continuous, caused by limited prior understanding.

In order to measure the engagement level of employees and to find out the specific antecedents of engagement that need to be improved, the quantitative research, with questionnaires as the main source collecting data, was chosen. The choice has fallen on a quantitative research for several reasons. A couple of tools for measuring employee engagement have already been developed, which gives the opportunity to measure engagement with a help of the questionnaire. This questionnaire produces numerical data, which is a quantitative approach. Furthermore, existing researchers’ studies and theories suggest a number of factors influencing the engagement, so no prior research was needed for the purpose of this research.

Moreover, quantitative research provides results in the form of numbers, which is highly applicable for the purpose of this paper, as they can be compared with each other within the category of antecedents of engagement, and can point out the factors driving engagement, which need to be improved. These numbers are the basis for further analysis and recommendations.

Information gathering

The theoretical part of the paper is based on findings from the engagement literature and previous research on engagement. It consists of theoretical analysis of the existing engagement literature and discussing the area of interest.

The research is analytical and Tool used for data collection is Structured Questionnaire.

Primary Data-
A questionnaire was prepared and the primary data was collected through survey method.

Secondary Data-
The data is collected from Company records, Books, Magazines and Internet

Sample size-
A sample of 56 Staff level Employees have been considered for this study.

Limitation:
1. Area was restricted within the company.
2. The study on Employee engagement was done only for the staff members.

Research Objectives:

1) To study the employee engagement of staff level of employees working in manufacturing industries.
2) To help the management of the company to know about the actions to be taken to improve the level of engagement of employees.
3) To study the policies and practices implemented in the Organization.

Data analysis

The empirical part of this paper is based on the data collected through the survey. The aim of the survey is to apply engagement theories on the rarely investigated yet, but important part. The survey was intended to measure their engagement level and to find factors that need to be addressed in order to improve engagement.

The method of collecting this data was a self-administered questionnaire.
1. Working Environment of

**Interpretation:**
From the above chart it is interpret that majority of employees are Engaged with the working environment in the organization while the slight no. of percentage employees are not Engaged.

2. **LEADERSHIP - TOP MANAGEMENT**

**Interpretation:**
In the above chart the majority of engaged employees in the Leadership with the Top Management is towards the positive direction. It interprets that there are 93% and above that employees are engaged within the organization with the Top Management while the less number of percentage in the negative side.
3. LEADERSHIP- SENIOR TEAM

Interpretation:
In the above chart, the majority of employees in the Leadership with the Senior Team highly engaged. It interprets that there are 89% and above that employees are engaged within the organization with the Senior Team while the less number of percentage in the negative side which is near to 11%.

4. TEAM AND COWORKER RELATIONS-IMMEDIATE MANAGER/ SUPERVISOR

Interpretation:
From the above chart it can be interpreted that the engagement level of employees within the Team and Coworkers is highly engaged.
5. TEAM MEMBER

Interpretation:
In the above chart the majority of employees are highly engaged with the Team Members that is totally close to the 95% while there is slight number of percentage shows the disengagement level that is near to 5% only. The chart interprets that there is strong engagement level of Team Member within the organization.

6. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Interpretation: In the above chart of Career Development it interprets that the 80% and above employees are engaged with the career and development program.

7. COMPENSATION PROGRAM
**8. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Interpretation:**
From the above pie chart it is interpreted that majority of employees are engaged with policies & procedures of the organization.

**9. WORKPLACE WELL BEING**

**Interpretation:**
From the above chart it is interpreted that majority of employees are engaged with the current compensation program.

**COMPENSATION PROGRAM**
- <Mubea>’s employee retirement program is an important part of my retirement financial plan.
- Overall, <Mubea>’s employee benefit plan meets my needs.
- I feel that I am paid fairly for the work I do compared to others in similar positions at <Mubea>.
Interpretation:
In the above pie chart, shows the state of wellbeing of employees.

FINDINGS
The majority of employees are engaged in the working environment. The leadership of top management is situational which keeps them engaged. The leadership of senior team keeps them engaged by giving continuous task to work on. The relationship between the team members or immediate supervisor is open in the nature of the organization. It improves relation with in the team. The activities of career and development help to know what the employees are expected to do. The majority of employees feel compensation program is well organized for them. Employees feel that suggestions are considered and also queries are looked into. The majority of respondent employees are engaged to work as an employee in the organization. It shows their level of morale.

SUGGESTIONS
Right type of employees should be recruited & assigned the jobs on the basis of their qualification and skills. Employee should be encouraged by giving them proper salary hikes, incentives & gifts. Company should frame the policies & procedures which will state employees should respect their superiors, peers & subordinates. Strict provisions should be made for completion of work in the most appropriate and professionalism manner. HR should frame training programs & games so that the positive attitude of employees towards organization will develop. Importance of team work should be built amongst the employees, so that they will cooperate with each other at work place. Each and every employee should be aware about policies; vision- mission of the organization. There should be open communication between all the hierarchical levels of organization.

Conclusion
Engaged employees lead to increased productivity, retention, customer loyalty and profitability. Employee engagement is related to emotional experiences and wellbeing. Researchers have found that emotional factors are linked to an individual’s personal satisfaction and the sense of inspiration and affirmation they get from their work and from being part of their organization. However a considerable number of employees agree that their company is a good place to work, suggesting they are emotionally happy, whilst others argue emotions should not be allowed to flow free, and that employees are more productive when their emotions are managed.
Simply surveying for the current engagement level and then doing nothing with that information often leads to employees feeling that they aren’t being heard, which in turn can negatively impact morale and trust levels. Identifying and analyzing engagement levels and the drivers of success is the first step. The real challenge is in equipping your business to act and ensuring that change is embedded in culture so that workforce remains focused and aligned to the business strategy. An engaged workforce is the key to sustained competitive advantage and accelerated business performance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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