

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN AN INDIAN TIN MANUFACTURING ORGANIZATION: AN INVESTIGATION

Anita Singh, Timira Shukla

Institute of Management Studies, Ghaziabad,
INDIA.

anitasinghims@yahoo.com, timirashukla@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Employee engagement has become an important driver for strategy development. As competition intensified employers realized the significance of employee to sustain and grow in the knowledge economy. The driving need today is for business to continue to improve productivity in a global environment where continuous change is making it difficult to compete. This desire to do more is combined with the mandate to do so with less, and one of the only outlets left for making this happen is employees. However, given the employee contract as it has been redefined, it is not easy for employers to snap their fingers and simply get employees to do more. Thus, the employee engagement movement arrived as a way to solve this problem.

There is evidence to corroborate that engaged employees do more; therefore, to get more out of less, the logic would be that managers simply need to engage their people. Everyone seems to be on the path to getting their employees engaged. An engaged employee tends to be more self-motivated, reliable and have higher levels of organizational loyalty. The most important driver of engagement is a sense of feeling valued and involved. However achieving this is no mean feat; therefore an empirical study has been undertaken to identify the focus areas to increase the levels of employee engagement. The basic purpose of the study is to find out what variables are significant to create an engaged workforce. The study is exploratory in nature and the data has been collected from a tin manufacturing organization.

Keywords: Employee, Management, Engaged workforce, Manufacturing Organization.

INTRODUCTION

Employee Engagement practice is a broad term used by the human resources of an organization to actualize employees performance and their commitment to the vision of the organization. It is believed that Engagement is 'one step up' from commitment; it is clearly in the organization's interests to understand the drivers of engagement. It can be defined as the level of involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values. An organisation's capacity to manage employee engagement is also reflected in business success.

However, raising Engagement levels, and maintaining them, takes time, effort, commitment and investment – it is not for the half-hearted. It denotes positive attitude of the employee towards the 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.

Organizational effectiveness depends on more than simply maintaining a stable workforce; employees must perform assigned duties dependably and be willing to engage in activities that go beyond role requirements. Harter and Schmidt propose that employee engagement reflects a deeper level of involvement and enthusiasm from the employee than the terms “job satisfaction” or “organizational commitment” might imply.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Success of any organisation in the globalised economy can be achieved by building a talent-rich organisation that attracts, retains and engages employees. Engaged employees are willing and able to contribute to the success of the company and are, therefore, real assets to an organisation (Rama Devi, 2009). Engagement occurs when employees know what to expect, have the resources to complete their work, participate in opportunities for growth and feedback, and feel that they contribute significantly to the organization (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). When employees are engaged, they are emotionally connected to others and cognitively vigilant to the direction of the team (2002). 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. Engagement is most closely associated with the existing construction of job involvement (Brown 1996) and flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Some definitions assert that EE is something that is produced by aspects in the workplace (as suggested by the definitions by McCashland, 1999; Miles, 2001; Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, 2003), while others assert that it is something that the individual brings to the workplace (as suggested by Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002; Goddard, 1999). What perhaps can be generalised at the very least is that some researchers seem to follow Khan (1990) and assert that Employee Engagement is a combination of workplace contexts and aspects that are mediated differentially by people’s perceptions and experienced cognitively and emotionally.

Employee Engagement, Culture and Productivity

Lockwood (2007), states that employee engagement is a key business driver for organizational success. High levels of employee engagement within an organisation lead to retention of talent, foster customer loyalty and enhances organizational performance. It is also a key connect to customer satisfaction, company reputation and overall stakeholder value. Employee engagement can be influenced by many factors such as workplace culture, organizational communication and managerial styles, to trust and respect, and leadership and company reputation. Research suggests that a fully engaged workforce is more efficient, delivers higher levels of customer satisfaction, attains higher productivity levels, and ensures lower turnover rates, which all translated into improved overall performance (Buhler, 2006). Employee loyalty must be earned through a culture of respect and integrity, and learning and development (Lockwood, 2007).

Job involvement, Job satisfaction and Employee Engagement

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.

Meisinger, (2007) believes that high levels of employee satisfaction translate into increased employee engagement. Lau & May (1998), also agree that employee satisfaction is essential to implementing high performance work systems, which often contribute to a company's financial performance. Financial performance can only be sustained through employee satisfaction, innovation, productivity, product quality, and customer service. Employee satisfaction leads to is to customer satisfaction. Satisfied, loyal and productive employees add value. Employee satisfaction in tum results from high quality support services and policies that enable employees to deliver results (Lau & May, 1998).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The foregoing review elucidates the significance of employee engagement. It highlights the intrinsic link between employee engagement, customer loyalty, and profitability. As organizations globalize and become more dependent on technology in a virtual working environment, there is a greater need to connect and engage with employees to provide them with an organizational ‘identity.’A highly engaged employee will consistently deliver beyond expectations. Thus employee engagement is critical to any organization that seeks to retain valued employees. The basic purpose of the study is to find out variables which are significant to create an engaged workforce and also to identify the measures to be taken to create and maintain engaged workforce in a manufacturing organization.

Table 1. Parameters

Goal	Commitment to the goals of the organization.
The Job	Opportunity to learn and achieve
Decision Making	A sense of Empowerment and Participation
Communication	Internalizing communications and involved feedback
Training & Development	Developing self and others
The Company	Leadership driven HR
The Work Environment	Employment conditions, health, safety
Reward Recognition	Incentivizing workforce for performance
Internal/External Customer	Fulfilling the needs of the customer
Welfare	Benefits, facilities & services
Work Discipline	Working according to rules and procedures

METHODOLOGY

The study is exploratory and analytical in nature. It was conducted in a medium sized manufacturing concern with around 1685 employees working continuously round the clock. Data collection was done through a structured questionnaire consisting of 35 statements. The questionnaire was distributed among 645 employees of ‘U’ Level out of whom 601 were selected for the study after rejecting incomplete forms. These 35 questions were developed on the basis of 11 parameters defined on the basis of interactions with opinion leaders, employees and literature reviewed. The parameters as per table 1.

LIMITATIONS

The study cannot be generalized as the data have been collected from a single manufacturing organization. However it does provide direction for further research in this area. It is pertinent to mention that the findings cannot be ascribed to the other cadres in the organization as the information has been solicited only from Workers/Staff (U).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The table 2 given below gives demographic profile of the respondents. As employees were pre divided systematically according to their qualification, experience and nature of job so, it was lesser issue to divide them we followed the same pattern for our survey.

Table 2. Strength of Employees

As of 31st Mar 11	Male	Female	Total	Avg. Age	Jsr. Works	Jsr. Non Works	Outside Jsr.	Professional	Graduate	Non Graduate /ITI
Executives (E)	322	29	351	41	174	115	62	253	93	5
Supervisor (S)	265	25	290	46	184	91	15	20	210	60
Workers/ Staff (U)	876	60	936	44	693	225	18	1	209	726
Trainees	198	08	206	41	171	35	0	0	67	139
Total	1661	122	1783	43	1222	466	95	274	579	930

The data collected have been analysed using one-way ANOVA as the basic premise being tested is that all the respondents are simply random samples of the same population. It means that all the variables being tested have the same effect. The method is applicable as ANOVA (F-distribution) can include more than one independent variable.

The annexure 1 delineates the variables tested at 5% level of significance. As is evident employee engagement practices are influenced by multiple factors. This means that there is significant difference among the different levels in the category Workers/Staff (U) level working in the different departments of the organization at the same cadre. This has important implications for the management. As it has been assumed that there is no difference in salary structure and other elements, employee engagement occurs at the alignment of maximum job

satisfaction and maximum contribution. The top factors which foster engagement among employees are career development opportunities, and training. The other finding is that the more the opportunities they get to perform in their competence area higher is the contribution to the organization. To sum up it is observed that the congenial working environments leads to maximum employee contribution. The employees are highly motivated to take initiative when they are supported by their superiors and colleagues at work and organisation is open to ideas and suggestions given by them. Employees contribute most when they are provided with autonomy, open and transparent communication, involved in framing company plans and policies. People are more engaged when the organisation rewards the employee for outstanding performance by increased responsibilities and when they treat each other with mutual trust and respect.

As the null hypothesis is not rejected for certain variables (refer Annexure1) like S1 -Helping the organization in achieving its objective is a part of my personal goal,S2- I know what is expected of me at work,S7- I find my job more interesting and challenging when I can utilize more of my skill and knowledge, S11- I am able to learn about my job while working in the organization,S13- I get a chance to participate in the discussions about my training and development ,S14- It excites me to talk and hear good things about my organization outside , S21- My organization has forum to give publicity to understanding achievement,S27 - In my organization the quality of product is seen as very important factor, it can be concluded that they have the same impact across all the respondents.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the probability of employee engagement is directly proportional to when there is an alignment of job satisfaction and job contribution. For achieving sustainable employee engagement it is required by the management to identify the best methods to align employee's value goals, and aspirations with those of the organization. Engaged employees are not just committed, passionate and proud; they have a line of sight and their own future aligned with the organization mission and goal. They are enthused to use their talent and discretionary effort to make a difference in their employer's quest for sustainable business success.The findings have important implications for management as the data has been collected from a representative sample.

REFERENCES

- Brown, S.P (1996). "A Meta-Analysis and Review of Organizational Research on Job Involvement," *Psychological Bulletin*, 120, 235-55.
- Buhler, P, (2006). Engaging the Workforce: A critical initiative for all organizations. *Supervision*, 67(9), 18-20.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1975). *Beyond boredom and anxiety*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper and Row. ISBN 0-06-092043-2
- Goddard, R. G. (1999). In-time, out-time: A qualitative exploration of time use by managers in an organization. *Dissertation Abstracts International US: Univ Microfilms International*. 60 (6-A).
- Harter, J.K; Schmidt, F.L.; and Hayes, T.L. (2002). "Business- Unit-Level Relationship between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business outcomes: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87 (2), 268-79.
- Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L., & Keyes, C.L.M. (2003). Well-being in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes: A review of the Gallup studies, in Haidt, J.(Ed). *Flourishing: Positive psychology and the life well-lived*, 205-224.
- Kanungo, R.N. (1982). "Measurement of job and work involvement", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 67 pp.341-9.
- Kahn, W.A, (1990). Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692.
- Lau, RS.M. & May, B. E., (1998, Fall). A Win-Win Paradigm of Quality of Work Life and Business Performance. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*. 9,211-226.
- Lockwood, N. R. (2007). Leveraging Employee Engagements for Competitive Advantage: HRs Strategic Role. *HR Magazine*, 52(3) 1-11
- Lawler, E.E., Hall, D.T. (1970). "Relationships of job characteristics to job involvement, satisfaction and intrinsic motivation", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 54 pp.305-12..
- McCashland, C. R. (1999). Core Components of the service climate: Linkages to customer satisfaction and profitability. *Dissertation Abstracts International US: Univ Microfilms International*. 60(12-A), 89
- Meisinger, S. (2007). Job Satisfaction: A key to Engagement and Retention. *HR Magazine*. 52(10), 8.
- Miles, R. H. (2001). Beyond the age of Dilbert: Accelerating corporate transformations by rapidly engaging all employees. *Organizational Dynamics* 29(4), 313-321
- Rama Devi, V. 2009. Employee engagement is a two-way street. *Human Resource Management International Digest*, 17(2), 3-4.

APPENDIX

Annexure 1					
ANOVA					
Statement 1: Helping the organization in achieving its objective is a part of my personal goal.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.208	13	.401	.967	.483
Within Groups	243.288	587	.414		
Total	248.496	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 2: I know what is expected of me at work.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.095	13	.930	1.700	.057
Within Groups	321.349	587	.547		
Total	333.444	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 3: I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	67.655	13	5.204	4.450	.000
Within Groups	686.429	587	1.169		
Total	754.083	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 4: Every morning I look forward to a day at work.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.811	13	1.524	2.927	.000
Within Groups	305.669	587	.521		
Total	325.481	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 5: The company is very open to ideas and suggestions given by employees.					

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	31.165	13	2.397	2.523	.002
Within Groups	557.793	587	.950		
Total	588.958	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 6: My superiors/colleagues at work care about me as a person.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	38.559	13	2.966	3.291	.000
Within Groups	529.042	587	.901		
Total	567.601	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 7: I find my job more interesting and challenging when I can utilize more of my skill and knowledge.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.308	13	1.024	1.430	.140
Within Groups	420.259	587	.716		
Total	433.567	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 8: There is openness and transparency in company communication.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	24.620	13	1.894	1.748	.048
Within Groups	636.056	587	1.084		
Total	660.676	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 9: I am able to take decision in my area of work.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	41.127	13	3.164	3.051	.000
Within Groups	608.693	587	1.037		

Total	649.820	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 10: Chance to give my opinion in company plans and policies give me sense of high involvement.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25.322	13	1.948	2.125	.012
Within Groups	538.139	587	.917		
Total	563.461	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 11: I am able to learn about my job while working in the organization					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.036	13	.695	1.387	.160
Within Groups	294.072	587	.501		
Total	303.108	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 12: My organization provides me training where there is a need for it.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	69.902	13	5.377	3.973	.000
Within Groups	794.544	587	1.354		
Total	864.446	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 13: I get a chance to participate in the discussions about my training and development.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25.383	13	1.953	1.696	.058
Within Groups	675.656	587	1.151		
Total	701.038	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 14: It excites me to talk and hear good things about my organization outside.					

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.711	13	1.132	2.191	.009
Within Groups	303.235	587	.517		
Total	317.947	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 15: I believe that the company's leaderships are doing what is required for society's growth.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	38.087	13	2.930	3.365	.000
Within Groups	511.061	587	.871		
Total	549.148	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 16: My organization provides me safe working condition.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	33.710	13	2.593	2.708	.001
Within Groups	562.131	587	.958		
Total	595.840	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 17: Timely action by management on work environment issues helps me in my jobs.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	46.025	13	3.540	3.785	.000
Within Groups	549.124	587	.935		
Total	595.148	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 18: In my organization inter departmental cooperation creates congenial working conditions.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	49.098	13	3.777	4.251	.000
Within Groups	521.568	587	.889		

Total	570.666	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 19: People in my company treat each other mutual trust and respect.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	60.171	13	4.629	6.094	.000
Within Groups	445.879	587	.760		
Total	506.050	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 20: I have a best friend at work.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.609	13	1.508	3.476	.000
Within Groups	254.727	587	.434		
Total	274.336	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 21: My organization has forum to give publicity to understanding achievement.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.139	13	1.241	1.642	.070
Within Groups	443.821	587	.756		
Total	459.960	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 22: In my organization outstanding performance is rewarded by increased responsibilities.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	46.372	13	3.567	3.164	.000
Within Groups	661.887	587	1.128		
Total	708.260	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 23: My organization enhances my performance by reviewing my progress objectivity.					

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	78.187	13	6.014	4.068	.000
Within Groups	867.913	587	1.479		
Total	946.100	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 24: At work there are persons who encourage my development.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.114	13	1.470	1.965	.021
Within Groups	439.262	587	.748		
Total	458.376	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 25: In the last six month, I have someone at work to talk to me about my progress.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	48.293	13	3.715	2.719	.001
Within Groups	801.864	587	1.366		
Total	850.156	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 26: I have received recognition/praise for doing good work.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	55.281	13	4.252	3.698	.000
Within Groups	674.942	587	1.150		
Total	730.223	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 27: In my organization the quality of product is seen as very important factor.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.299	13	.638	1.222	.259
Within Groups	306.599	587	.522		

Total	314.899	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	accepted				
Statement 28: There is a concrete plan for reducing defects and errors in our work.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39.684	13	3.053	2.968	.000
Within Groups	603.640	587	1.028		
Total	643.324	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 29: I am aware about the needs of our internal and external customer.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	29.593	13	2.276	2.460	.003
Within Groups	543.206	587	.925		
Total	572.799	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 30: My company is providing adequate housing facilities to me in township					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	139.287	13	10.714	6.952	.000
Within Groups	904.693	587	1.541		
Total	1043.980	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 31: Recreation avenues are available in township.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	136.302	13	10.485	6.255	.000
Within Groups	984.024	587	1.676		
Total	1120.326	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 32: Company provides proper medical care for my dependents and me.					

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	86.998	13	6.692	4.696	.000
Within Groups	836.569	587	1.425		
Total	923.567	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 33: In my organization there is sufficient awareness of standards and norms among the employees.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	59.104	13	4.546	4.138	.000
Within Groups	644.879	587	1.099		
Total	703.983	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 34: Existence of systems and procedures helps departmental functioning.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18.910	13	1.455	1.824	.036
Within Groups	468.155	587	.798		
Total	487.065	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				
Statement 35: If organization interest is harmed by any employee; sufficient steps are taken to discipline him.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	33.073	13	2.544	3.366	.000
Within Groups	443.619	587	.756		
Total	476.692	600			
Accepted/ Rejected	rejected				