



Employee engagement practices and organisation performance-A critical evaluation

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Abstract

Employee engagement has generated a great deal of attention among many human resource practitioners, business organisations and academic researchers across the globe. Predominantly, the lifeblood of a healthy healthcare organization is its blissful and well-engaged staff, Developing an effective health professionals engagement strategy is a challenge for HR professionals, especially with the healthcare industry experiencing a shortage of Health professionals. Engagement is achieved when employees envisage that their organization respects their work, their each job contributes to the organizational development and more prominently their personal ambitions of growth, rewards and pay requirements are met. The research paper covenants with the study of various aspects on Employee Engagement concepts, Phases, types, drivers of, few of the strategies adopted by the Hospital care organisations for engaging its employees. This study is based completely on secondary data, which is collected through referring journals, books, thesis health organisation websites and research articles.

Keywords: hospital organisation, employee engagement, employees

Introduction

Organizations have come to realize that in today's constantly changing competitive economic scenario, the most valuable resource that needs to be leveraged among other factors of production is human resource. This means not just attracting the human resource and retaining them but keeping them motivated and committed to achieving the organization goal. There has been increased attention shown with in the phenomena of job engagement and employee engagement, and its role in increasing employee performance. Consequently, for understanding work, organizations should utilize human resource initiatives and available psychological capital within the workplace for development and enhancement of employee Engagement.

Employee engagement is the emotional attachment employees feel towards their place of employment, job role, position within the organisation, colleagues and culture and it affect this attachment that has on wellbeing and productivity. Employee Engagement is a workplace approach resulting in the right conditions for all members of an organization to offer their best every day. Employee Engagement is based on trust, integrity, a two-way commitment and communication between an organization and its members. It is an approach that increases the chances of business success, contributing to organizational and individual Performance, productivity and well-being. From an employer's point of view, employee engagement is concerned with using new measures and initiatives to increase the positive emotional attachment felt and therefore productivity and overall business success. An engaged workforce produces better business results, does not hop jobs and more importantly, is an ambassador of the organization at all points of time.

Engaged employees are perceived to form a part of an organization's brand and an engaged, happy workforce can have a knock-on effect on consumer retention, recruitment

of key talents and the ability to attract potential consumers In a world, where an organisation's values are crucial to its the consumers. Employee engagement is the extent to which employees feel passionate about their jobs, are committed to the organization, and put discretionary effort into their work. Employee engagement is increasingly viewed as a component in measuring the health of an organization, along with the traditional measures of sales, profit, cash flow, and customer satisfaction and market share.

Review of Literature

Bhatla (2011) ^[1] has explained that the engagement is all about having a psychological commitment toward the assigned task, which is clearly reflected in his/her dedication towards the work.

Perrin (2003) ^[8] defines engagement "as willingness or enthusiasm that the employee holds to spend optional effort towards the job." The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee (Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004) ^[9]. In the views of Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) ^[9] employee engagement is closely related with feeling and perception of the employees and the key driver of the employee engagement are effective leadership by the top management, two-way communication among the workers of the organization, well designed human resource policies and organizational development of employees. Patrick (2011) has discussed that employee engagement activities significantly improve the overall performance of an organization. It is a technique for the successful functioning of the organization and improvement in performance of the employees Chandhok and Bhavet (2014) ^[2] perceived engagement as a passion and commitment of the willingness to devote oneself and expand one's discretionary effort to contribute towards

achieving the goals and objectives of the organization as a whole. Cattermole and Johnson (2014) observed out that employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to business, its values and goals.

Objectives of the Study

Following objectives are formulated based on the above Review of literature:

1. To study the several aspects of Employee Engagement.
2. To identify different drivers of Employee Engagement.
3. To suggest Employee Engagement Strategies for improving Organisation performance in the Hospital organisations.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on the secondary sources of data. For the preparation of this research paper, Journals, Research articles, newspapers and relevant healthcare organisation websites, PhD thesis have been accessed to make the study an effective one. The study attempts to look at the Employee engagement practices, Employee Engagement Strategies, Phases of Employee Engagement, and Consequence of Employee Engagement and also how it helps in improving productivity in Hospital Sector in this competitive era.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Phases of Employee Engagement

Engaged employees are not naturally born, but can be developed by organizational support and practices. Engagement is not an event; rather it is a process and needs to be managed in a systematic way. Employee engagement strategies enable people to be the best they can at work, recognizing that this can only happen if they feel respected, involved, heard, well led and valued by those they work for and with (Lockwood, 2007). Employee engagement is a long term process and goes through various phases describing the level of the engagement, involvement, attachment and belongingness between employee and employer. These phases of employee engagement make an endless cycle that every organisation aiming to achieve increased profitability must undertake.

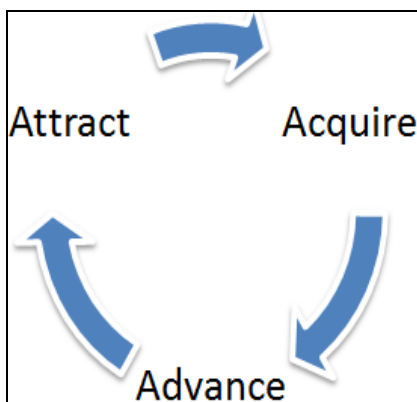


Fig 1: Employee Engagement Cycle

- **Attract:** The first phase of the employee engagement cycle is attracting the best talent from the industry. This phase involves creating a positive impression about the work culture and employee career as a potential employer. It is all about carefully creating an authentic,

genuine and crafted image as an employer. This is although an indirect yet the first impression that attracts a big pool of candidates to apply for the job vacancies in an organisation. The first phase is the most important phase of the employee engagement cycle. Besides attracting the talent from the outside, it is important to keep the existing employees attracted towards the organisation.

- **Acquire:** The acquire image involves more than one thing. It includes (a) the way the potential candidates are interacted while advertising a position; (b) keeping the promises that were made while hiring them and (c) providing the new joiners a right kind of work culture. When an organisation advertises a position, interested candidates apply. The way their applications are created, the reaction of the organisation and the manner in which they are approached speak a lot about the image and work culture of an organisation. Providing the right kind of culture also plays an important role in keeping them engaged. The whole idea is to prepare them to perform their best by giving them challenging tasks right from the beginning. It is like developing a habit or culture right from the time they decide to work with the organisation.
- **Advance:** Continuous moving the talent is the last but an unending phase. It not only involves promoting the employees to a higher designation along with salary increments but also growing them in other tangible and intangible ways. Job rotation can help them grow in experience, responsibility and belongingness but only when it is done right. Advancing the employees in every aspect is it monetary or non-monetary, is the key to retain people and develop their overall personality.

Ten C's of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the extent to which employees feel passionate about their jobs and are committed to the organization. This emotional commitment means engaged employees care about their work and their organisation. An employee is considered highly engaged if he is fully absorbed in his work or encouraged to perform his task beyond what typically is expected in his job role. These employees don't work just for a pay check, or just for the next promotion, but on behalf of the organization's goals.

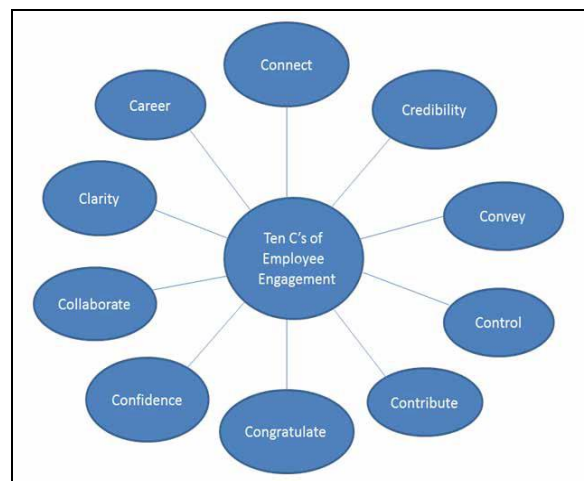


Fig 2: Ten C's of Employee Engagement

The Ten C's of Employee Engagement are

- **Connect:** Effective managers should value the employees and value their Contributions and should create a proper connect with the employees.
- **Career:** Working environment should provide proper opportunities for Professional growth and development of the employees.
- **Clarity:** Goals and vision of the organization should be properly conveyed.
- **Convey:** The managers should have proper two-way communication and provide feedback on the performance of the employees.
- **Congratulate:** The employees must be rewarded and recognized for their improved performances.
- **Contribute:** The employees feel happy and motivated if their works contributes in achieving the organizational goals.
- **Control:** Control is very important function of management. It is process to check whether organization is moving towards in the right direction in accomplishing its goals.
- **Collaborate:** When employees work in group and have trust and cooperation of their group members, they perform best.
- **Credibility:** Leaders should struggle to maintain organizational image and encourage the employees to participate in the growth of the organization.
- **Confidence:** Good leaders help to create confidence among the employees by developing high ethical and standards performance.

Group of Engaged Employees

Despite numerous researches and studies on employee engagement, HR practitioners are still unclear about identifying an engaged employee from a disengaged one. Three categories of people are found in every organization according to *Gallup (2004) viz.*

1. **Engaged Employees:** The engaged employees are those who work with full passion and are emotionally attached to the organization. They are innovative and provide new ideas and consistent performance to move the organization forward. They personalise the organisation's goals and objectives, and always work above and beyond their job requirements for the betterment of the organization.
2. **Not Engaged Employees:** Such employees do not put in their time, but not passion and energy into their work. These are the ones who do only what is asked of them. These employees can hold either a negative or positive attitude towards the organization. They like to receive only one instruction at a time and lack innovativeness they consider their job as a pay check, nothing more.
3. **Actively Disengaged Employees:** These employees are unhappy, resentful, and spread negativity within the organization. But, despite doing less than the minimum, these employees last longer in the firm by removing employees whom they perceive will attain higher positions soon and they are always provoking and convincing the other employees to leave their jobs and move out of the organization. However, these employees last longer in the organisation and remove the prospective employees whom they perceive will

attain higher position or move to the next job level in the near future. They do so, to get ahead in their jobs by removing the potential candidates.

Types of Employee Engagement

1. **Cognitive Engagement:** involves the extent to which employees focus on their work tasks. An actively engaged employee is rarely distracted by small interruptions at work.
2. **Emotional Engagement:** This consists of the here and now experience that the employees have while doing work. This involves their own feeling of the degree of involvement in the job.
3. **Physical Engagement:** The extent to which employee takes steps for his own development. A voluntary nomination for a training program can be one of the means of identifying physical engagement. It is said that engaged employees feel inspired by the work.

Employee Engagement drivers

In the present business scenario, employee engagement has become one of the most leading priorities for human resource practitioners and senior managers in any organization. Garber (2007) succinctly says that engagement is just like a muscle that continuously requires exercise to grow and develop. Few of the employee engagement drivers as identified by the Garber are

1. **Work/Job Role:** Employees must see a link between their role and the larger organization goal. Understanding this linkage provides an intrinsic motivation and increased engagement. Most employees will come to work on time without possessing a sense of belonging and will try and complete assigned tasks even without possessing that sense of achievement on completion of task. However, an employee that sees a clear linkage on how his/her role contributes to the organization will go the extra mile and help create organization wealth.
2. **Work Environment/Organization Culture:** The bond between an employee and the organization is cemented when the employee identifies with the culture of the organization. An employee is engaged and motivated to stretch beyond the call of duty if he/she finds the work environment enabling and supportive.
3. **Rewards and Recognition:** The bottom line is that people work to earn which helps fulfil ambitions. Equitable pay coupled with rewards and recognition programs enhances motivation and leads to commitment and engagement.
4. **Learning and Training Opportunities:** As Lawyer (2006) put it - "People Enjoy Learning." This is especially true in the case of today's millennial workforce that constantly looks at enhancing knowledge and skill. Skill and Knowledge enhancement is not just important for the employees but providing a learning culture is essential for organizations to remain relevant in the constantly changing business landscape.

5. **Performance Management:** An effective performance management system contributes positively to employee engagement. Goal setting lies at the root of any performance management system. Clearly articulated goals, a fair and just means to judge performance and timely, rational feedback are critical elements in creating a bond between the employee and his/her organization.
6. **Leadership:** It is a well recorded fact that most resignations happen because the employee is not satisfied with his/her 'boss.' An organization that spends time and effort in grooming leaders who are aligned to its goals, culture and people invests well. New age industries have a young and dynamic workforce that looks for autonomy in decision making, increased responsibility and accountabilities.
7. **Loyalty:** Employees who are actively engaged in their work show more loyalty towards the organisation. The best part is that they need less focus and attention of managers to perform their task as they themselves feel accountable for their job responsibilities and results attained. However, it doesn't take much time for actively engaged employees to turn into disengaged employees if the organisation doesn't have a well-established reward system. Recognition is a basic necessity of individuals to remain steered up towards their job.
8. **Trust:** High levels of employee engagement can be fostered only when trust prevails in the organisation from both the sides. As they share strong emotional bond with the organisation, the latter should also show trust in their abilities. Employees must be given autonomy to perform their tasks their way. They should not be restricted to a specific rules and regulations and therefore, should be motivated to experiment to perform their task in a different and innovative manner.
9. **Regular feedback and Communication with Superiors:** Feedback is the key to giving employees a sense of where they're going, but many organizations are remarkably bad at giving it. In fact, employees feel like their supervisors are supportive are 67% more engaged

Suggestions

Employee Engagement Strategies in Hospitals

The employee engagement cannot be improved only by designing and implementing effective human resource strategies but their involvement and quality of output produced by them also depends on their relationships with their colleagues, subordinates and seniors. It is a basic need of human beings to belong and to be belonged. Such collaborations can be a major contributor to the success of an organisation. To achieve this, the Hospital organisations follow few effective employee engagement strategies *viz*,

1. **Unify the Experiences:** HR department can conduct an employee engagement survey in order to find the factors responsible for engaging and disengaging employees. Unify the common experiences and problems and design employee engagement strategies accordingly. Sharing of feedback in written is one way

of communicating the experiences and problems.

2. **Evolving Through Open Communication:** Open communication or face to face communication in the form of discussions can really help in bringing the various issues and identifying the main problems in the organisation. It is very essential to establish a proper communication where everyone can put their views and suggest a solution too. Most of the top organisations ask for suggestions and new ideas from their employees and then offer rewards on giving the best proposal.
3. **Enabling Conversation Fluidity:** Whichever way of communication you choose, ensure that it has required fluidity. There should not be any hindrance in the established method of communication. Not being able to provide feedback or share problems and experiences can lead to frustration and distress among employees. Therefore, ensure that there are no barriers to communication. This can also result in disengaging the engaged employees.
4. **Employee autonomy:** When employees are given the freedom associated with autonomy, job satisfaction rises. It's theorized that this increased level of job satisfaction in employees stems from a feeling of greater responsibility for the quality of their work. Autonomy has also been shown to increase motivation and happiness, along with increased employee engagement.
5. **Recognising the top performers:** Employees are engaged when they feel their work is valuable to the organisation and helps the organization achieve its long-term goals. Regularly showing employees that you recognize and appreciate their efforts is a simple gesture that goes a long way in making them feel valued. Reward top performers for their achievements with a cash prize, free day off, a gift card to their favourite lunch spot or a gift certificate. In addition, give employees a platform to acknowledge their peers; feeling respected and appreciated by their team members will help employees become more engaged.
6. **Better work-life balance:** Maintaining work-life balance helps employees reduce stress and prevent burnout, two major factors in disengagement at work. The best way to help employees maintain a balance between the personal and professional is to promote flexibility, having a generous Paid Time Off policy, and providing paid parental and caregiver leave are all ways to help employees manage the demands of work and life without stress and helps them in engaging with their jobs.

Consequences of Employee Engagement on Organisation performance in the Hospital Sector

Employee engagement is an important HR variable for the majority of Hospital organisations. It helps enable the organisation to deliver a superior performance and to gain a competitive advantage. Engaged employees make additional effort, learn more, and faster, and are more creative. Gallup Incorporation, an American analytics and advisory organisation. In their report published in 2019 punctuates

the fact that those teams who score in the top 20% in engagement realize a 41% reduction in absenteeism and 59% less turnover below mentioned are some relevancies of employee engagement that are proved to be effective.

1. **Improved Productivity and Patient's care:** Employee engagement leads to better productivity among the employees. When employees are engaged to their job they give their best at the working place. Disengaged employees normally lead to obstruct the productivity as the employees resist for the co-operation, coordination and support for the other organisation members.
2. **Better Profitability:** Productivity and profitability are directly co-related. When Productivity increases among the employees, then it results in greater profitability. Engaged Employees are more productive and ultimate result of this comes in overall profitability.
3. **Decreasing Absenteeism:** Employees who are engaged are more dedicated to their jobs and give their best at work. Those employees, who are disengaged, are more susceptible for absenteeism. They are the people who run away from work and take lot of leave. Taking leave from the organization makes a big loss for the organisation and achieving deadline becomes a challenge. The attempt should be made for making employees engaged. Engaged employee will result in less absenteeism and more profit for the organisation.
4. **Better Quality Services:** For facing competition in this market scenario, the service quality needs to be taken at top priority. Engaged employees focus on quality as they are more dedicated towards their work. Quality Product helps in getting competitive advantage for the firm and a better brand image.
5. **Healthier Industrial Relations:** Work environment in an organization is built up by the relations they share in the organisation. The better relations they have, the better the co-ordination among them. Engaged employee are positive towards organization and they spread more positivity in the organization. Engaged employees are more co-operative with others and this helps to develop good relations in an organization.
6. **Reducing Attrition Rate:** When employees are engaged then they will be happier with the organization and changes of leaving current organization will be less. Lower attrition rate helps to save cost of the organisation as well as also helps to build a good image in the market. More talented people will be looking forward for joining the organization. This will help to get good employees for the organisation and for better performance of the same.
7. **Better patient Satisfaction:** Ultimate aim of the organization these days is customer satisfaction. Only happy or engaged employees can make customers also happy. The attempts should be made for creating more engaged employees which will result in better customer satisfaction.
8. **Innovation for the organization:** Employee engagement is also one of the means of creating

innovation and innovation indirectly can provide a means of engagement. Today innovation is required for the Hospitals to survive in the competitive world. Organizations are today focusing on innovations and they are trying to motivate employees to proceed further in this area. Employees can be innovative in their approach if they are engaged. Disengaged employees have so much negative attitude that they cannot innovate or bring something new for the organization.

Conclusion

Today, the most critical problem faced by Hospitals are inadequate and non-availability of Skilled, qualified, efficient, and experienced Talents. Health professionals are working under acute stress due to the serious conditions of their patients, various, epidemic and pandemic situation in the economy. Health professionals essentially require to be acquired from a proper source/channels, engaged these workforce in a scientific manner, through adequate working conditions and training and development to meet the professional skills necessary to perform their daily tasks, compensated fairly to retain them for a longer duration and also to have a competitive advantage for the origination. These engagement leads to increased productivity, loyalty, commitment towards the job as well as organisation. Engagement of employee is not only about attracting, acquiring and retaining the best talent but also deals in advancing their experience and personality. Thus, it is evident that better human resource management practices towards employee engagement in the hospital sector involves increased Healthier Industrial Relations, Better patient Satisfaction and Decreasing absenteeism in the Health sector workplace.

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