

CONCEPT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW**Dr. Kaushal Kishore Shukla**

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Abstract

Employee engagement is a management term used nowadays and this is considered as a psychological, physical, emotional and behavioral aspect of employees which is related to employees' workplace setup. Present paper is a literature survey in which researcher has endeavored to discuss the concept of employee engagement in a streamlined way. This paper also discusses various previous studies related to employee engagement, levels of employee engagement, dimensionality of employee engagement and antecedents & consequences of employee engagement with the help of relevant literature.

Key Words: *Employee Engagement, Organization, Emotion, Workplace, Job.*

Introduction

Term employee engagement is also addressed as work engagement or worker engagement. Employee engagement is a business management construct. Any employee who could be called an 'engaged employee' is one who is completely involved in his/her work, is enthusiastic about his/her work, and therefore, they will always work in the support and wellness of the organization. As per the Scarlett Surveys term employee engagement could be referred as a degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization which profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work. Therefore, engagement is typically differs from satisfaction, motivation, culture, climate and opinion. In the literature there is a lack of universal definition of employee engagement. According to Kahn (1990) employee engagement is the process of harnessing organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people utilize and demonstrate themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during performing their roles. Employee engagement is basically related to cognitive aspect of employees. Employees' cognitive aspect is concerns with their beliefs about the organization where they work, its working conditions and lards etc. Engagement emotional aspect is associated with employees' feeling about each of above mentioned factors and it also depicts that which type of attitude does employees have about organization and its leaders whether positive or negative. Employee engagement's physical aspect is related to the physical efforts tried by the employees to perform their roles in organizations. Therefore, according to Kahn (1990), employee engagement is the name of psychologically as well as physically presence when employees are occupying their workplaces and accomplishing their task.

In view of various scholars i.e., (Baumruk 2004, Frank et al 2004; Richman 2006 and Shaw 2005) employee engagement has been defined as intellectual and emotional loyalty to the organisation or the amount of flexible effort contributed by employees in their task. Employee engagement has also been acknowledged and accepted as a multi dimensional concept. According to Truss et al (2006), employee engagement is merely a 'passion for work', which is a psychological state and which has been included in the one of the three dimensions in the definition provided by Kahn (1990). Employee engagement is defined as the positive, moving psychological work related condition of mind that tends employees to actively articulate and devote themselves emotionally, cognitively, and physically in their work related task and performance (Catlette & Hadden, 2001; Rurkkhum, 2010). Among the researchers there are various views of explaining the concept of employee engagement (Harter et al., 2002; Maslach et al., 2001; May, Gilson, & Harter,

2004; Schaufeli et al., 2002;), and especially in human resources area literature depicts that employee engagement is considered as a psychological aspect that includes energy, enthusiasm, and engaged effort (Gruman & Saks, 2010; Macey & Schneider, 2008). In the same line various researchers correlates employee engagement with those individuals who are extremely eager and resilient in their job performance; love their jobs by their hearts, are very persistence and willingness to put much efforts in their jobs; express strong job involvement with feelings of significance, excitement, inspiration, enthusiasm, pride, passion and challenge from their work; and are fully concentrated and submerge themselves in their job without any time duration (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Literature review

For organizational effectiveness within the workplace settings, the intuition of engagement of employees is the 'Holy Grail' (Church, 2013). In their research Rani & Punitha (2015) demonstrates that in the present age of globalization in the entire world, organizations are putting much effort on their human workforce and resources and also trying their best to engage employees within the workplace settings in the best possible manner, because organizations are very much aware that employees who are perfectly engaged will do their job at their best level, which will results into much profit to the organization and also much extended organizational effectiveness (Chughtai & Lateef, 2015). In their study various researchers (i.e., Brunetto et al., 2012; Harter et al., 2002; Markos and Sridevi, 2010; Moreland, 2013; Yalabik et al., 2013) found that in literature of employee engagement, the construct of employee engagement is very much associated and linked with different human related behavioral and attitudinal issues i.e., career development, employee empowerment, performance management, talent management, some emotional factors, turnover intention, employee productivity and job satisfaction. In various studies it has been concluded that employees having high level of engagement enjoys more positive behavior towards the organizational outcome in an effective way and this reduces an uncomfortable area at the work place (De Clercq et al., 2014; Moreira, 2013). The issue of employee engagement at workplace is very much related to psychological aspect of an individual and it shows that happy employees are very much concerned with their work other than employees who are not much engaged at their workplaces (Albrecht, 2010; Anandhi & Perumal, 2013; Kular et al., 2008; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). In their study Andrew and Sofian (2012) claimed that in present age of 21st century, institutions are very much concentrating on their human resources and talent pool for best result at workplace settings with the help of engaging their human resources very effectively. Even though the concept of employee engagement is very much related to various individual behaviors at workplace, it is also understood that through this issue both (employers/employees) are harmonized with each other for achieving organizational objectives (Fleck & Inceoglu, 2010; González-Romá et al., 2006; Newman et al., 2010).

Levels of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has various levels and according to their engagement levels, employees could be categorized into three Employees, according to their engagement levels, are categorized into three categories in any organization (Coffman, 2000). First type is engaged workforce. This type of employees put their best efforts towards their job and also their workplace, but in real circumstances it is very difficult to find these types of employees because they are very less in numbers and unfortunately this category of employees is rarely found in organizational settings (Keating & Heslin, 2015; Sanford & Coffman, 2002). Some researchers like (Sanford & Coffman, 2002) are agreed with the study conclusions of Coffman's work that mostly of the employees are not engaged in their job and they have been categorized under the disengaged domain, which is second type and this type of employees productivity is less, they only raise the cost of the organization and every organization does not want to recruit or retain them at all (Karsan, 2007).

The third category is actively disengaged employees. These type of employee are always not good to their jobs and they try to manipulate other employees from their work (Coffman, 2000), and they are also known as cave dwellers (Vazirani, 2007).

Dimensionality of Employee Engagement

The concept of employees' engagement at work place is based on three dimensions i.e., (1) vigor, (2) dedication and (3) absorption

Vigor

Vigor is associated with any employees' physical energy, mentally pliability, and continuous attempt towards their own job (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Nature of the job in the work place plays an important role in augmenting engagement levels among employees, and it has been observed that employees who are engaged perform better than the other employees (Kahn, 1990).

Dedication

Employees' dedication is defined as their commitment and participation in their jobs at the workplace (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Kelman (1958) claimed that dedicated employees put their all emotional and physical attempt seriously to their work assigned to them and because of dedication it is considered that emotionally and physically attached employees are much effectively and productively behave in their organizations.

Absorption

Absorption refers to the sense of employees' indifference from workplace environment (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). This dimension is associated with concentration and cognition (Kahn, 1990; Rothbard, 2001) and it focuses on employees work role behavior.

Antecedents and Consequences of Employee Engagement

Engaging employees in the work setting is a very challenging task. Studies of Alfes et al., (2013) demonstrates that employees' engagement level is influenced by various factors and these factors very much related to those employees who are disengaged rather than who are more engaged (Boon & Kalshoven, 2014). Concept of employee engagement is very much related to employees' performance (Abu Bakar, 2013), however this phenomenon is also different but very much related to psychological wellbeing (Robertson & Flint-Taylor, 2009). In employee engagement psychological meaningfulness includes a sense of return on investments of the self-in-role performances (Kahn, 1992). In his work Kahn (1990, 1992), explained that psychological meaningfulness can be acquired by the work features that provide challenging work, variety, permits the use of various skills, self judgment, and the chance to contribute significantly. This can be best understood by Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model which includes five main job features i.e., autonomy, feedback, task identity, task significance and skill variety. According to Kahn (1990) individual differs in their work engagement as a purpose of their perceptions of the advantages they receive from a role. In addition, a sense of return on investments could be received from external rewards and recognition in concern with meaningful work.

Conclusion

Concept of employee engagement is one of the major issues in management area and which has been discussed by the scholars and experts previously and also research is going on this issue. Present paper has discussed the concept of employee engagement has concluded that this concept is related to employees' psychological, physical and behavioral aspect at workplace. This concept has also been discussed by various scholars and this is proved by the literature in this area. Employee engagement has also various levels and it also holds its antecedents and consequences. Much work

could be done taking this topic because it is a multidimensional concept and a lot could be done by other researchers and scholars in the field of HR and human behavior.

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