EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN MODERN ORGANIZATIONS:

A CASE STUDY OF AN IT COMPANY

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ABSTRACT

Modern organizations need energetic and dedicated employees: people who are engaged with their work. These organizations expect proactivity, initiative and responsibility for personal development from their employees. An "engaged employee" is one who is fully absorbed by and enthusiastic about their work and so takes positive action to further the organization's reputation and interests. The research work entitled Employee Engagement with special reference to Anthem Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd. is mainly conducted to get a clear idea about the employee commitment towards their job and the factors governing their full involvement in doing their work. Most research in the area has tended to focus on business outcomes without investigating underlying causes. As the impact of engagement on business has been positive and has been linked with higher profitability, practice has raced ahead of the underpinning research in pursuit of creating a more engaged and hence profitable workforce. An employee satisfaction survey among the employees of this organization is conducted in this research to identify the key areas that are affecting the overall level of engagement between employees and their work, which among these factors are hindering work, reducing effectiveness and which might generate unexpected costs in the near future. The idea is to critically examine them to see where the company and its employees might be finely tuned to generate higher levels of performance. The results would be extremely valuable from the point of view of the organization in streamlining its efforts towards certain areas, which need more attention than the others.

Key Words: Employee Engagement, Employee Satisfaction, Employee commitment, Profitable Workforce.

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is 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.

An organization's productivity is measured not in terms of employee satisfaction but in terms of employee engagement. Employees are said to be engaged when they show a positive attitude towards the organization and express a commitment to remain with the organization. It is the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of the business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization.

Thus employee engagement is a partnership between a company and its employee where everyone works together to achieve the business objectives of the company and fulfill their personal aspirations. It is therefore largely the organization's responsibility to create an environment and culture conducive to this partnership and a win-win equation.

1.1. CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEES

There are *three* different types of employees. They are engaged, not engaged, actively disengaged.

- **Engaged**- Engaged employees are builders. They want to know the desired expectations for their role so that they can meet and exceed them. They are naturally curious about their company and their place in it. They perform at consistently high levels. They want to use their talents and strengths at work every day. They work with passion and they drive innovation and move their organization forward.
- **Not Engaged**- Not engaged employees tend to concentrate in tasks rather than the goals and outcomes they are expected to accomplish. They want to be told what to do just so that they can do it and say they have finished. They focus on accomplishing tasks vs. achieving an outcome. Employees who are not engaged tend to feel their contributions are being overlooked and their potential is not being tapped.
- **Actively Disengaged** - The actively disengaged employees are the cave dwellers. They are consistently against 'virtually everything'. They are not just unhappy at work they are busy

acting out their unhappiness. They sow seeds of negativity at every opportunity. Everyday actively disengaged workers undermine what their engaged co-workers accomplish. The problems and tensions that are fostered by actively disengaged workers can cause great damage to an organization's functioning.

1.2. MEASURING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement can be revealed in several ways, including 'pulse' to annual surveys, tracking changes in the attrition rate, increase in the number of employee referrals and growth in productivity and business.

How to Measure Employee Engagement

Step 1- Listen

The employer must listen to his employees' and remember that this is a continuous process. The information employees supply will provide direction. This is the only way to identify their specific concerns. When leaders listen, employees respond by becoming more engaged. This results in increased productivity and employee retention.

Step2- Measure current level of employee engagement

Employee engagement survey let us know what level of engagement the employees are operating. Customizable employee survey will provide with a starting point towards the efforts to optimize employee engagement. This kind of survey is a diagnostic tool of choice in the battle for the hearts of employees.

Step3- Identify the problem areas

Identifying the problem areas helps to see which are the exact areas, which lead to disengaged employees.

Step4- Taking action to improve employee engagement by acting upon the problem areas

Nothing is more discouraging to employees than to be asked for their feedback and see no movement toward resolution of their issues. Even the smallest actions taken to address concerns will let the staff know how their input is valued. Feeling valued will boost morale, motivate and encourage future input. Taking action starts with listening to employees' feedback and a definitive action plan will need to be put in place finally.

1.3. INTRODUCTION TO THE ORGANISATION

Anthem Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd is a young and growing company in the field of software development, IT products & solutions and consultancy & advisory services. The Company is headquartered at Bhubaneswar in India, with offices in Bangalore and Abidjan, cote-d'Ivoire. Anthem Global has high expertise in Infrastructure management system.

Anthem concentrates on Infrastructure management services, Technology Solutions, Business consulting propositions to variety of geographically placed industries like Government, Private, educational & logistics. Time Tested Products and Services to Medical Systems, Logistics, Transportations and Education add to the first phase of venture of Anthem. Anthem Global has partnered with Techno Park Africa.

1.4. NEED FOR THE STUDY

This study helps in finding out the problem areas regarding employee satisfaction in the organisation. It also highlights the area they need to focus on in order to increase employee performance and satisfaction.

The research has been conducted to identify the key areas which are hindering work, reducing effectiveness and which might generate unexpected costs in the near future.

1.5. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of conducting this research are as follows;

Primary Objective
* Identify some of the key drivers of employee satisfaction.
* Examine the relationship between these drivers and employee's attitude towards the organization.
* Identifying organizational strengths and areas for improvement.

Secondary objective

In addition to the above mentioned primary objectives, this research paper also intends to serve a few other essential functions, which includes:
* Providing leaders and managers with information that will facilitate ongoing planning and Policy development activities.
* Providing employees with the opportunity to share their attitudes and opinions regarding the workplace
* To identify the key areas of focus in the Organization to generate higher levels of Performance.

1.6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research is conducted at the head office of Anthem Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd. situated in Bhubaneswar.

2.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Concept of Employee Engagement

An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work. In the book, *Getting Engaged: The New Workplace Loyalty*, author Tim Rutledge explains that truly engaged employees are attracted to, and inspired by, their work ("I want to do this"), committed ("I am dedicated to the success of what I am doing"), and fascinated ("I love what I am doing").Engaged employees care about the future of the company and are willing to invest the discretionary effort – exceeding duty's call – to see that the organization succeeds.

Today, there is widespread agreement among academics and practitioners that engaged employees are those who are emotionally connected to the organization and cognitively vigilant. How employees feel about their jobs, their supervisors, their peers, top management, and many other factors affects their individual productivity, and collectively the ability of the organization to achieve its objectives.

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. Employee engagement is the 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.

2.2.   Dimensions of Employee Engagement

The following processes are suggested as the dimensions of employee engagement for the survey:

- **ROLE CLARITY**

Most organizations have very weak role clarity. It is usually not clear for whom employees are really working and what their job duties and accountabilities really are. Without clarity of roles, people's thinking, actions, and accountabilities are much led.

- **MORALE**

    Morale is an intangible term used for the capacity of people to maintain belief in an institution or a goal, or even in oneself and others Morale will improve through employees being led and managed well, given regular performance feedback and recognition, a pleasant work environment, customer focus and a clear direction for their organization.

- **DIRECTION/STRATEGY**

    Business strategy is one of the most important things for a company. Some companies have a vision statement, a mission statement, followed by strategies to achieve the mission and implemental tactics to meet the strategy. The basic premise is that people understand what they are working towards and why. Focus and clarity are the keys.

- **CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

    Employees are provided with adequate training/development opportunities to improve their professional skills. The emergence of "career plateau" phenomenon, along with the flattening of the enterprise hierarchy, correlates with the idea and mechanism of career development.

- **COMMUNICATION**

    Leaders clarify their expectations about employees and provide feedback on their functioning in the organization. Good leaders establish processes and procedures that help people master important tasks and facilitate goal achievement. The good leaders work daily to improve the skills of their people and create small wins that help the team, unit, or organization perform at its best.

- **FAIRNESS**

    Engage the "middle." Pay special attention to building intrinsic motivation for people in the middle ranges — the large group that is only somewhat engaged. If you are able to move their intrinsic rewards to the high range, they will combine with the people who already highly engaged to form a large majority of highly engaged, energized people — the critical mass needed to support a culture of high engagement.

- **RESPECT**

    Employee engagement also affects the mindset of people. Engaged employees believe that they can make a difference in the organizations they work for and hence demand due respect. Confidence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities that people possess in both themselves and others – is a powerful predictor of behavior and subsequent performance.

- **FEED BACK**

Leaders should strive to maintain a company's reputation and demonstrate high ethical standards. People want to be proud of their jobs, their performance, and their organization. WestJet Airlines is among the most admired organizations in Canada. On September 26, 2005, WestJet launched the "Because We're Owners!" campaign. Why do WestJet employees care so much about their organization? Why do over 85 percent of them own shares in the company? Employees believe so strongly in what WestJet is trying to do and are so excited about its strong performance record that they commit their own money into shares.

- **TEAM WORK**

Studies show that, when employees work in teams and have the trust and cooperation of their team members, they outperform individuals and teams which lack good relationships. Great leaders are team builders; they create an environment that fosters trust and collaboration. Surveys indicate that being cared about by colleagues is a strong predictor of employee engagement. Thus, a continuous challenge for leaders is to rally individuals to collaborate on organizational, departmental, and group goals, while excluding individuals pursuing their self-interest.

- **PERFORMANCE REWARD SYSTEM**

From the organization's viewpoint, our data confirm the impact of the intrinsic rewards on employee self-management. For example, people with high reward levels show greater concentration and are rated as more effective by their bosses. But the benefits extend beyond self-management. The intrinsic rewards are strong predictors of retention. We find that employees with high levels of intrinsic rewards also become informal recruiters and marketers for their organization. They recommend the organization to friends as a place to work and recommend its products and services to potential customers. The intrinsic rewards are also a relatively healthy and sustainable source of motivation for employees.

- **PERSONAL EXPRESSION**

To ensure managers are effective in their role, it is essential that they themselves are engaged, that they are empowered to support their team members' professional development and that they are successful in coordinating their teams' efforts to align with their companies' objectives. People want to know that their input matters and that they are contributing to the organization's success in a meaningful way.

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- **WORK PLACE/ RESOURCES**

Committing to a meaningful purpose, choosing the best way of fulfilling that purpose, making sure that one is performing work activities competently and making sure that one is making progress to achieving the purpose; each of these steps requires workers to make a judgment — about the meaningfulness of their purpose, the degree of choice they have for doing things the right way, the competence of their performance, and the actual progress being made toward fulfilling the purpose. These four judgments are the key factors in workers' assessments of the value and effectiveness of their efforts — and the contribution they are making. When positive, each of these judgments is accompanied by a positive emotional charge. These positive charges are the intrinsic rewards that employees get from work. They are the reinforcements that keep employees actively self-managing and engaged in their work.

- **WORK ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE**

An effective work environment is vital to the success of small businesses and large corporations alike. When problems remain unsolved and rules never get implemented, the result can be an unproductive staff and a stale work environment.
Organizational culture is an idea in the field of Organizational studies and management which describes the psychology, attitudes, experiences, beliefs and values (personal and cultural values) of an organization.

3.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN:

- **Exploratory Research**

We will augment our knowledge of Anthem Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd. by interviewing the various executives in a focused group discussion.. Based on a thorough inventory of Anthem Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd internal processes a questionnaire (Annexure 1) was developed.

- **Descriptive Research**

The responses of the employees would be further used for statistically analysis to bring out the salient features of data and points out to the week or strong spots for further investigations.

3.3. SAMPLE DESIGN

The sample population comprises of all the employees working in Anthem Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd. Corporate office. Total 25 employees responded to the questionnaire, which would be further used for the analysis.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION

The methodology used for the collection of data has been divided into two groups:

3.4.1. Primary Data

In this project the primary data was collected through questionnaire method. A structured questionnaire was administered and employees were asked to fill it. A total of 25 employees responded to the questionnaire.

The interview method was also considered as in it the interviewer and the interviewee can interact face to face.

Questionnaire

The survey was designed to measure the level of agreement employees had with respect to 39 questionnaire items with two open ended questions, which represented potential factors that influence employee's perception about employee engagement. Based on previous research and current literature, questionnaire items were framed to capture some, but not all information with respect to the following factors:

- Role Clarity
- Understanding of Organizational visions, missions and goals
- Morale
- Development
- Fairness
- Respect
- Feed Back
- Team Work
- Work environment and culture
- Communication
- Performance reward system
- Personal Expression/Innovation
- Working Conditions/ Availability of resources
- Welfare programs and activities

Scale Used:- Likert- type Scaling technique was used for the analysis approach wherein a particular item is evaluated on the basis of how well it discriminates by adopting favorable or unfavorable attitude towards the given object. The respondent responded in any of the following ways: -

- Strongly Agree
- Agree

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- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3.4.2. Secondary Data

Some data for this study was also collected from the internet Company website written documents (magazines) that guided in taking steps further in the study. The data collected was more for reference.

3.5. Limitations

- Since the whole population of employees is not considered in sampling and only a segment is considered, there is a probability of biasness.

- Some employees have attempted to fill the questionnaires as an act of formality.

- All the present employees did not fill in the questionnaires.

4.   DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis of the information provided by the employees is done on the basis of following dimensions.

Table – 5.1:- Comprehensive Table –

Sl. No.	Parameter	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std Deviation
1	Morale	16 %	48 %	32 %	4 %	2.76	0.779
2	Feedback	28 %	60 %	12 %	0 %	3.16	0.624
3	Fairness	24 %	56 %	20 %	0 %	3.04	0.676
4	Teamwork	40 %	44 %	8 %	8 %	3.16	0.898
5	Direction	20 %	48 %	32 %	0 %	2.88	0.726
6	Role Clarity	20 %	60 %	20 %	0 %	3.00	0.645
7	Reward System	24 %	68 %	8 %	0 %	3.16	0.554
8	Working Condition And Resources	12 %	64 %	16 %	8 %	2.80	0.764

9	Communication	8 %	68 %	12 %	12 %	2.72	0.792
10	Development	4 %	56 %	24 %	16%	2.48	0.823
11	Work Environment And Culture	16 %	68 %	16 %	0 %	3.00	0.577
12	Respect	12 %	60 %	20 %	8 %	2.76	0.779
13	Personal Expression /Innovation	4 %	64 %	20 %	12 %	2.60	0.764
14	Welfare Programs And Activities	8 %	60 %	20 %	12 %	2.60	0.886

Source: Collected and Compiled Data

- About 48% of the employees who have responded to the questionnaire agree that morale is high in the organisation and around 16% of the employees strongly agree to it. Employees' morale is high to work in this organization but a few employees do not find their future with this company.

- The mean of the parameter feedback has come out to be 3.16 which mean that most of the employees agree that feedback system of the organization is good. About 60% of the employees agree to it that they receive useful and constructive feedback that helps them improve their performance and that they receive the praise and recognition they deserve, while 17% of the employees are not satisfied with the feedback system of the organization.

- The mean of the parameter fairness has come out to be 3.04 which mean that most of the employees agree to it that they are treated fairly in the organization. Around 56% of the employees agree to it that organization's promotion policies and employee performance evaluation are fair, they are treated fairly by their superiors and there is no favouritism. Around 24% of employees strongly agree about it. A very small percentage of employees feel that their manager does not treat them fairly and there is an issue of favouritism.

- The mean of the parameter teamwork has come out to be 3.16 and also we can see from the above table that around 84% of the employees agree, some of them strongly agree, to

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it that team work is encouraged and practiced in the organization and there is strong feeling of teamwork and cooperation in the organization.

- The mean of the parameter direction has come out to be 2.88 which mean employees are well aware and have understanding of mission and goals of the organization. Around 48% of the employees agree to it and 20% of the employees strongly agree about it.

- The mean of the parameter role has come out to be 3 that mean most of the employees agree that they have clarity about their role. Around 60% of the employees agree about it while 20% disagree about it.

- The mean of the parameter Reward system is 3.16 which mean most of the employees agree that they are paid fairly and they also find their salary competitive enough with other similar kind of job profile but many employees are unaware of their benefit plan. Around 68% of the employees agree to it while a very small percentage (8%) of employees disagrees about it.

- The mean of the parameter Workplace/ Resources has come out to be 2.80 which mean employees are satisfied with the workplace and the resources provided. Around 64% of the employees agree to it that they have the resources to do their job well and they find the work place to be very safe and comfortable.
- The mean of the parameter communication is 2.72 which means that information sharing system of the organization is strong. The managers in AGTSL do a good job of sharing information and most of the employees agree with it. The information system in the organization is very strong.

- The mean of the parameter development is 2.48 which means many employees do not find their professional growth in this organization. One reason for this could be that they find their work not to be challenging and stimulating.

- The mean of the parameter work environment and culture has come out to be 3 which means most of the employees agree or strongly agree that the environment and culture of the organization is very friendly. Around 84% of the employees strongly agree or agree to it that the work life balance is maintained in their life and that they don't any difficulty in satisfying both job and family responsibilities together. The company's expectation with its employees is also reasonable according to the employees and work environment does not cause stress in their life.

- The mean of the parameter Respect has come out to be 2.76 which mean most of the employees agree that they are treated with respect by their managers and co-workers in the organization. Around 72% of employees agree to it that they get respect from their colleagues adequately but few of them also have the complaint that their manager does not listen to them sometimes.

- The mean of the parameter personal expression/innovation is 2.6 which means some employees have a problem in opposing the views of their seniors. Some employees also feel that new ideas and views are not much appreciated in this company but their work and talent is valued at AGTSL. But most of the employees (64 %) agree to it that they can freely express their views and opinions and they can disagree with their supervisor without any fear, while around 28% of the employees disagree to it.

- The mean of the parameter welfare programs and activities has come out to be 2.6 which mean that many employees are not satisfied with the welfare programs and activities conducted in the organisation. Around 16% of employees disagree to it that they are satisfied with the company's welfare programs, recreational activities and people's programs and around 16% of employees strongly disagree to it.

5. MAIN FINDINGS:

➢ Most of AGTSL's employees believe they work for a great company, contrary to the fact that many don't find their future with this company.

➢ The Company in itself generates high levels of satisfaction, is socially responsible, and is strongly aligned to personal values.

➢ Most of the employees have clarity about their roles.

➢ Employees are well aware of the organization's vision & mission.

➢ Employees' morale is high to work in this organization but a few employees do not find their future with this company.

➢ Many employees do not find their professional growth in this organization. One reason for this could be that they find their work not to be challenging and stimulating.

➢ The managers in AGTSL do a good job of sharing information.

➢ The information system in the organization is very strong.

➢ Employees find that the policies of the company are fair enough but there is an issue of favoritism and the actual process is not that fair enough.

➢ Employees get respect from their colleagues adequately but few of them also has the complaint that their manager does not listen to them sometimes.

➢ Many employees also feel that new ideas and views are not much appreciated in this company but their work and talent is valued at AGTSL. This shows that employees do not have very great views about their manager.

➢ Approx. 62% employees agree that the feedback about their performance is adequate enough while 38 % feel that they are not given adequate feedback. On the other side, 81% employees accept that whatever feedback is provided to them is constructive.

➢ Teamwork is very much encouraged in this company and that most of the employees accept this.

➢ Employees are very much satisfied with the salary structure of this organization and they also find it competitive enough with other similar king of job profile but many employees are unaware of their benefit plan.

➢ Employees are very much satisfied with the workplace, its environment, and security.

➢ Employees accept that the work life balance is maintained in their life and that they don't have any difficulty in satisfying both job and family responsibilities.

➢ Most of the employees are not satisfied with the extra welfare programs and activities being conducted in the organization and they want it to be improved.

➢ Currently, the following activities are conducted:
1. Lucky draws at festivals
2. Sweets distribution
3. Picnics with families
4. Birthday cards via emails
5. Training sessions like stress management training, work/life balance training etc.

6. CONCLUSION

On the basis of analysis, we can conclude that employees at AGTSL are satisfied with the organization's policies, workplace, resources information sharing system, work environment and culture, teamwork but there are certain dissatisfaction factors. They are:-

- Employees at AGTSL do not find any career advancement prospects.
- Employees are not recognized for their efforts.
- Employees are bored with their job
- Employees think that they can better pay elsewhere.
- Managers and subordinate have poor relationship
- A culture of fairness/ equality among co-workers is not there
- Employees feel that there are fewer developmental opportunities.

7. SUGGESTIONS

The HR department can focus on improving the following:

- The company could start measuring employees' passion about work and the work environment by issuing an employee satisfaction survey on a regular basis.
- .Identify What Employees Like -gather compliments through employee satisfaction surveys in addition to their concerns.
- Use Training to Increase Confidence - Managers should not cut training budgets to save costs as they should understand that as a result the service delivery and morale could suffer.
- Help Employees See the Big Picture - Employees want to feel that they are contributing and making a difference.
- Recognize Employee Contributions - Recognition from a supervisor of at least two ranks above an employee makes a meaningful, engaging difference in employee morale and employee loyalty.
- Build a Supportive Environment - Employees may need help with coping skills, problem-solving skills, tactics for handling difficult situations, or expressing their personal feelings.
- Conduct welfare activities and programs like department get together, birthday/anniversary celebration, fun activities like quizzes etc.
- Employee Benefit Packages - A key motivator for employees to work hard and remain dedicated are good benefit programs.

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