EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE STEEL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The study looks into the concept of employee engagement, identifies the most important factors that lead to employee engagement, and looks at the level of employee engagement in a large public enterprise in India with a focus on the city of Visakhapatnam.

Research Design/Methodology – A cross-sectional study, in which groups of people are interacted with once or over time, is used because the study is descriptive.

Findings – The findings of this study are unique in the literature because they show a new way to look at more possible mediators (like work-life balance, working relationships, recognition, rewards, and so on) to better understand their effects on worker engagement.

Originality– The study looks at what causes employees to be excited about their jobs and how engaged they are at a large public company in Visakhapatnam city.

Managerial Implications: The research findings can help organizations engage employees in better ways leading to higher levels of productivity and profitability while spending less time on wasteful activities and making effective use of resources.

Limitations: The present study focuses on employee engagement in public enterprises in Visakhapatnam city. Future studies in this relevant area can focus on other geographical sittings

Keywords – Employee engagement, work-life balance, employee productivity, and profitability

1. Introduction

Employees of a company are called "human resources." People are considered an organization's most valuable resource because they impact quality, output, and brand value. This is because an organization's success is determined by its employees' actions. Human resource systems and policies that attract, motivate, and retain employees are critical to a company's long-term competitive advantage (Barney, J).

Employee engagement refers to an employee's involvement and commitment to their company (Macey, W.H., & Schneider, B., 2008). In this sense, "engaged employees" are fully committed to their jobs and will act in the organization's best interests (Kahn, W.A,

1990). In other words, an engaged employee understands the business context and works with co-workers and supervisors to improve job performance. It is an employee's positive attitude towards their employer.

Employee engagement is linked to job involvement (Brown, 1996) and flow (Czarnowsky, 2008). Job involvement is the degree to which the job becomes central to the person's identity. Job involvement depends on both a person's needs and the job's ability to meet those needs. Job involvement arises from the job's ability to meet needs. Jobs are linked to one's self-image. Employee engagement is the way an employee harnesses themselves while working. It involves active emotion use. (May et al., 2004) contend that "deep job engagement precedes job identification".

Employee engagement is related to but distinct from organisational commitment and citizenship behaviour. (Robinson et al., 2004) define organisational commitment as a person's attitude and attachment to their organisation, while engagement is the degree of attention and involvement in their role. Individual employee cooperation and assistance to co-workers and the organisation is known as organisational citizenship. However, employee engagement focuses on the employee's emotional attachment to their job (Ibid). Job satisfaction was renamed employee engagement by some authors (Schmidt et al., 2002).

1.1 Employee engagement factors

As shown above, different researchers' consultants define employee engagement differently. These definitions do reveal some common elements of employee engagement. Employee engagement appears to be driven by involvement and commitment. People want to be part of something meaningful, and most employees want to be part of that (Towers-global report, 2007-2008).

Global studies have identified three essential components of employee engagement: emotional attachment, involvement, and commitment.

Emotional bonding

An emotional attachment to the job and the organisation. Employees' engagement can be improved by inspiring, empowering, and confident emotions. Public and private sector organisations can foster these emotions as part of their employee engagement strategy. This is achieved by improving employee-manager and co-worker relations.

Employees fear for their own safety and the future of their company during economic downturns, according to research. Their emotional bond is weakening. Employee engagement is boosted by dynamic drivers like pride recognition, which encourage personal work development and positive manager-employee relationships.

Involvement

Employee engagement requires involvement. Employees who are engaged think about their jobs as if very involved. It means they are trustworthy, loyal to the company, and engaged in their work. To be fully engaged in their work, employees must work in teams, learn continuously, and adapt. Employees who make decisions have a professional and personal stake in the company's success. Employees who are actively involved in different parts of the department and want to see the referred succeed lead to more productivity. For the organization's growth and sustainability. But it also helps employees learn new skills and become more prepared for future responsibilities. Participation will also boost worker morale. They know their input is vital to the company as they participate in decision-making.

Commitment

A person's commitment to an organisation. It demonstrates a person's devotion to their company. Employees who are committed to their jobs and the organisation are the most loyal. But commitment is a two-way street. The employee expects the organisation to be committed to them by meeting their needs. Thus, many organisations have realised the value of commitment in increasing productivity and decreasing turnover.

1.2 Employee engagement's value

Employee engagement is critical in today's competitive world. Globalisation, changing social demographics, and rising service expectations are driving the need for employee engagement and involvement across all functional areas. A dedicated employee engagement survey or a more general employee survey is now used by many progressive organisations to measure employee engagement.

Many studies show that happy employees are more productive and profitable. Employee engagement has recently gained popularity, attracting the attention of many businesses, including schools. Having a clear focus on the job allows employees to do better work, spend less time on unimportant tasks, and use resources more efficiently. That frees up funds for new improvements.

- Employee engagement is linked to employee retention.
- Employees stay with companies for reasons like career advancement, strong leadership, and meaningful work.

- Employee engagement improves customer satisfaction, product quality, and innovation.
- Higher engagement leads to faster revenue growth.
- Several studies show that highly engaged employees benefit the company.
- Engaged employees stay with the company and contribute to its profitability.
- Engaged employees are passionate about the organization's strategies and goals.

It increases employee trust in the organisation, it fosters loyalty in a competitive environment, it fosters a high-energy work environment, thus increasing productivity; it enhances brand image and contributes greatly to business growth.

Literature review

But employee engagement is a new concept. Employee engagement theories date from the 1990s. W. Kahn, C. Maslach, J.K. Harter, D.R. Mey, A.M. Saks, R.j.Vance, M.Czarnowsky, W.Macey, C.Schufeli, and others were early contributors to the literature.

1.Kahn W. (1990) defined employee engagement. Engaged employees employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. The physical aspect of employee engagement refers to the energy expended to perform tasks. Psychological engagement, on the other hand, refers to mental focus on the job while performing a role in until early 2001, the only literature on employee engagement was by Kahn (Maslach et al., 2001). Individuals' involvement, satisfaction, and enthusiasm for work (Harter et al. 2002). These firms promote employee engagement to boost productivity and profits.

2.Saks, (2006) Employee engagement is defined as "a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components associated with individual role performance". According to the study, engaged employees are "mentally and emotionally invested in their work earned by contributing to their employer's success."

3.Towers Perrin, (2003) A global study classified core components of engagement into emotional and rational factors. The study found that emotional factors are linked to job satisfaction, inspiration, and pride in one's work and one's organisation. Pay, benefits, and rewards are rational factors. The study shows that meaningful work experiences can increase engagement. This study identified strong leadership, accountability, autonomy, control over one's environment, and development opportunities.

4.Kristen Ralph, (2009) found that seven workplace elements contribute to employee engagement. Latitude and responsibility, social atmosphere, knowledge access, leadership, challenging or varied work, safety, trust and support and respect.

5.Swaminathan, (2010) Job satisfaction, motivation, and effectiveness were found in one study. He concluded that a productive, loyal, and committed workforce requires employee engagement.

6.Sucheta Rawal (2010) In her research on employee engagement in India, discovered that recognition, respect, and opportunities for growth are essential elements of employee engagement. After basic needs are met, employees want to be recognised for their hard work, respected as individuals, and given opportunities to grow. Engaged employees are a must.

3. Research design

Identifying a problem is the first step. To examine the extent to which employee engagement and involvement can draw the attention of academician consultants and practising managers for enriching the existing literature and developing new theories for better results, the study concludes with suggested solutions. An extensive literature review identified the most appropriate drivers that influence employee engagement and involvement levels to make appropriate suggestions for the steel plant under study.

3.1Need for this study

Employee engagement has recently gained importance and has been researched by consulting firms. Academic research on employee engagement is lacking in many quarters. The study found that academics have done very little research on employee engagement and involvement. The current study was undertaken to fill a research gap on

employee engagement in industrial enterprises and steel plants in particular. As a large public enterprise in India, Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (hereinafter referred to as 'the steel plant'), the present study's primary purpose is to explore the concept of employee engagement, identify the most important drivers of engagement, and assess employee engagement levels.

3.2 Objectives

The main goal is to research employee engagement levels and the factors that influence employee engagement and involvement in the steel plant. For increased productivity, organisational performance, and profitability, this study suggests additional employee engagement and participation measures. For the steel industry and steel plant understudy in particular, this diagnostic study will be useful

The study's objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the relationship between respondents' age, education, and steel plant employee engagement.

2. To assess the impact of various engagement drivers on steel plant employee engagement.

3. To Use Ad hoc Tukey analysis to compare levels of employee engagement among executives, supervisors, and workers at the steel plant.

4. To Determine the most important influencing factors on employee engagement in this steel plant.

5. To Make appropriate suggestions to improve employee engagement.

3.3 Questionnaire creation

A detailed questionnaire is given to executives, supervisors, and employees. As one of the best and most practical approaches for eliciting respondents' opinions, the questionnaire has been carefully prepared.

To assess the magnitude and spread of employee engagement and involvement in the steel plant, up to 15 drivers have been identified from various research studies and other published information. These drivers include job involvement, farmer working relations,

teamwork/collaboration empowerment, recognition rewards, opportunities for learning at work, trust and respect, health, safety, and welfare job satisfaction, and leadership quality.

3.4 Sample design

VSP currently employs around 18,000 people in various functional areas such as production maintenance, finance, pharma, marketing, human resource management, etc. Because there are multiple characters and levels of employees, it is desirable to classify them. For this study, employees are classified as executive, supervisory, or worker.

The executive cadre includes policymakers and strategists. Managers and Deputy Managers are included in the Executive Director category. The supervisory cadre includes assistant managers, junior managers, junior officers, and charge men who directly supervise employees in all functional areas. The rest of the employees are workers.

Because employees at the steel plant have various titles and characteristics, nearly 2.5 percent of the total workforce was chosen as a sample for this study, which equals 450 former supervisors and employees. Regardless of the number of employees in each category, only a fixed number of respondents are chosen from each cadre. This method is used in this study to avoid a character's views dominating other reviews based on numbers. Aside from a trendy questionnaire, personal interviews were conducted with top and middle management at the steel plant.

3.5 Research and statistical tools

A questionnaire was used to collect data. The survey is based on 15 factors that make employees happy at work. They were chosen after a thorough literature review and comparison to previous employee engagement models like CIPD and Robinson.

It was used to analyse data. The SPSS statistical package was used. The 5-point Likert scale was used to assess executive, supervisory, and worker engagement. The scores for each driver were used to determine employee engagement at three levels. Factor analysis is used to remove redundancy or duplication from a set of correlated variables. For example, the validity and reliability of each driver's factor have been

determined using statistical tools like Cronbach's Alpha and KMO. The results will show the steel plant's progress. Further research examines the relationship between employee engagement and income, experience, and marital status. It has also been used to compare executive, supervisor, and worker concentration. It's called a variance analysis (ANOVA). A Tukey HSD analysis was also performed to determine the differences' direction. All 15 drivers had significant ANOVA results.

Results and discussions

There are positive effects on employee engagement from 15 dimensions including job nature, workplace culture, trust and respect, collaboration and teamwork. However, this study is important because it connects the two.

To better understand how work-life balance, relationships, recognition, and rewards affect employee engagement, more research is needed. This study did so by pointing the way for future research.

The study's key findings are:

1.   The study found that 48% of steel plant employees are very engaged, 28% are partially engaged, and 24% are not. If you dig deeper into the data, you'll find that 2/3 of executives, 2/3 of supervisors, and 1/6 of employees are "highly engaged." A fifth of executives, a fourth of supervisors, and a third of employees are "partially engaged."

2.   It's interesting to learn that disengaged employees make up up to 24% of the total workforce. This means nearly a quarter of the steel plant's employees are not working hard, which is unacceptable. The study found that 15% of executives, 11% of supervisors, and 45.5 % of employees dislike their jobs. It's not good for workers. The organisation must fix around 50% of unengaged workers as a matter of urgency. Also, comparing percentages reveals a wide range of jobs at the steel plant.

3.   Three cadres of respondents said they were engaged at work, and 15 percent said they were disengaged. The best score was for teamwork. These drivers appear to be well-liked by respondents.

4.   The study also found that the working environment received the lowest score. Then came worker empowerment, recognition, and rewards.

5.   Steel plant employees are pleased with their jobs, learning opportunities, leadership, and work-life balance. They dislike the working environment, empowerment, relationships, and rewards. The company should investigate why employees are dissatisfied, how they can improve their performance, and what they want to see happen as a result.

6.   Individual driver domain analysis identifies areas for improvement in this steel plant. Employees are generally pleased with their jobs and the support they receive. The employees are happy with their jobs, and we support the methods provided for effective and efficient job performance. Positive work environment, role satisfaction and role perception were the driver's major factors. It helps to increase employee engagement. A positive work environment requires superior support.

7.   The mean-based analysis of the driver of supervision and support shows a positive relationship between the supervisor and the employees. So far, this steel plant has provided a communication-friendly environment despite being in the public sector, the positive response to areas like probability and access to reach the boss shows that a proactive environment has been established. Supervisor motivation, coaching, and support are identified as important factors for employee engagement. These are considered necessary for an employee's job performance. All of these aspects relate to employee supervision.

8.   In terms of work-life balance, which is a key driver of employee engagement, the responses are positive. This driver's major factors were identified as work home interface, home support, spouse support, and organisational support. This driver's correlation analysis shows both positive and negative correlations. As a public sector organisation, the steel plant must provide more non-statutory welfare measures to create a healthy work-life balance and increase employee engagement.

9.   The low scores of work allocation areas are found to be concerning. Positive work environment, positive work relations, and superior positive relations are identified as factors. The police stop correlation analysis shows employee awareness of the department's activities.

10.   Employee development and engagement may be directly proportional to opportunities for growth and development. This

indicates employee satisfaction with the steel plant's career growth and development systems. Career development systems and career policy were identified. The driver shows the high correlation between various items used to assess employee perceptions of career advancement and employee engagement. This driver can help the steel plant improve career development and employee engagement.

11.   Job involvement has a strong link to employee engagement. While holding departmental meetings to review progress, measure progress toward goals, and provide Technical Support network access are non-committal responses, our employee participation, meetings former employee, autonomy knowledge support, and training support are not. As shown above, the steel plant needed to focus on these areas.

12.   Good teamwork and collaboration among employees found the driver of working relations. The driver is now reduced to three components: supportive work environment, gender positive environment, and superior equitability treatment. The correlation analysis shows that the organisation has helped foster healthy relationships. The nature of working relations between employees and supervisors is critical to any organization's work environment. It is suggested that the steel plant pay special attention to this area and improve organisational working links.

13.   The driver of teamwork collaboration has the highest mean score. Work-ready, training, and work efficacy are the components identified as drivers by factor analysis. A closer look at the correlation analysis shows that the organisation has successfully built employee confidence by implementing competent systems.

14.   Aligning personal beliefs with organisational goals and the importance of employees' tasks to the department have average mean scores. We've broken it down into four parts: positive work environment, decision making, employee economy and organisational leadership. The driver has a strong influence on employee engagement, as shown by the correlation analysis. The above study shows the organisation should take action. Delegating power increases employees' sense of empowerment.

15.   The motivator of rewards, Average score for the driver's various items. Show that the majority of employees are happy with the company's rewards and recognition. Employee career development, organisational career development, and reward and motivation are the drivers. Employees are highly motivated when publicly recognised for their achievements. Engagement. As part of this, the steel plant may organise special events to honour outstanding performers.

16.   The driver of workplace learning opportunities has a high average mean score and positive responses from all cadres. Organisational training effort, training, opportunity organisations, knowledge orientation, and training facility are factored. On the other hand, the correlation analysis for this driver reveals some negative responses regarding the training department and its importance to employees.

17.   The driver of health, safety, and welfare has also received an excellent mean score from all characters. Employee maintenance, safety measures, safety assurance systems, and safety management comprise the driver. The correlation analysis shows a positive correlation between the driver's items.

18.   The weighted average score shows that respondents are generally happy with their jobs. Job security and fair work assignment make workers happier. They feel more at ease when they know their goals and responsibilities. Also job satisfaction. This indicates a pleasant workplace. Work satisfaction, commitment to the organisation, and pride in work were identified. In the correlation analysis, work achievement and job satisfaction are linked.

19.   Trust and respect are average. Employees are clearly trusted and respected fairly. The findings show that senior managers provide effective leadership that promotes a productive work environment. Employee, organisational, citizenship, and corporate loyalty are the three components. The retained item strongly correlates with work value perception.

20.   The driver of leadership quality is communication, commerce, and influence. Employee engagement is influenced by involvement and support. It's a plus.

Suggestions

1.   In particular, the study found that workers' engagement must be improved. Also, as the steel plant gains the prestigious NAVARATNA status, the steel plant

authorities should make every effort to improve employee engagement levels across all categories.

2.   Most steel plant employees are unhappy with their workplace, empowerment, relationships, and reward systems. As a result, the steel plant should improve its employee engagement environment.

3.   In order to be happy at work, employees must enjoy their jobs, be able to manage their workloads and see a future in their careers.

4.   Delegating power may empower workers at this steel mill. In order to improve the assignment, the steel plant must recognise the importance of empowerment in an organisation.

5.   Trust, respect, and leadership must improve at this steel plant. Top management and senior managers must lead in a productive manner.

6.   Newcomers are more engaged, especially among executives. The steel plant's management should focus on developing young executives who will be the organization's future builders.

7.   Frequent employee engagement surveys are required to understand employee needs, issues, and values.

Study limitations

Despite all efforts to provide adequate data and analysis, this study has some limitations. This study's rules are:

1.   Only HR policies, strategies, and other data are used in any employee engagement and involvement study. The researcher could not cover variables from different functional areas because they are outside the scope of this study.

2.   Secondary data was collected from the steel plant under the research and various research studies in India and abroad published papers in both hard and soft form. There are some variations in the data collected from different sources when using the required data. Slight variations in data are ignored when computing data under the same category. However, the research and analysis of the results are believed to be unaffected.

3.   In recent years, the global steel industry has been experiencing unprecedented recession. A possible impact of recessionary trends on employee engagement is not addressed in this study.

Conclusion:

Making employees engaged in any organisation is not an easy task. It is the role of the HR manager to retain the talent in the organisation. It is becoming a nightmare for HR managers to control talent flight from organisation to organisation. At the Visakhapatnam steel plant, the HR department has to make positive efforts to retain talent by providing work-life balance, working relations, pay by performance, health and safety facilities etc. and involve employees in the decision-making process.

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