

Development of Employee Engagement Programme on the basis of Employee Satisfaction

Survey

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Introduction

Today's competitive world has posed many challenges to organizations in the form of diverse consumer demographics, complex strategies of competitors, changing customer base, workforce issues and many others. Sustaining in such a situation requires an organization to have committed and loyal employees. It is also necessary that these employees guarantee high levels of productivity. Managements have ensured that they have all the necessary programmes and initiatives to satisfy their employees. At the same time they are aware that satisfaction may not always result in productivity. Satisfied employees may just be working to meet the demands of the job. Such efforts do not lead to higher productivity. Research has shown that it is engaged employees ensures higher productivity in organizations. Hence, the trend is towards designing programmes to enhance the level of employee engagement through satisfied employees. Employees are said to be engaged when they show a positive attitude towards their organization and express a commitment to remain with the organization.

Defining employee engagement

There are many definitions to employee engagement. CIPD defines employee engagement as a combination of commitment to the organization and its values plus a willingness to help out

colleagues. This definition says that engagement is more than job satisfaction and is a complex concept than motivation.

Right Management (2006) defines true engagement as every person in the organization understanding and being committed to the success of the business strategy, and that this goes more than just simple job satisfaction and incorporates aspects of commitment, pride and advocacy about the organisation's products and brand.

Kahn defines employee engagement as the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles, in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. The cognitive aspect of employee engagement concerns respondents' beliefs about the organisation, its leaders and working conditions. The emotional aspect concerns how respondents feel about each of those three factors and whether they have positive or negative attitudes toward the organisation and its leaders. The physical aspect of employee engagement concerns the physical energies exerted by individuals to accomplish their roles.

To sum up, Truss defines employee engagement as 'passion for work', a psychological state which is seen to encompass the three dimensions of engagement discussed by Kahn.

Job satisfaction as a factor leading to employee engagement

Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which employees like their work. Based on perceptions, an employee develops a positive or negative attitude towards their job and environment. (Ellickson, M, 2002). The more a person's work environment fulfills his or her needs, values or personal characteristics, the greater the degree of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke & Henne, 1986).

Only a satisfied employee can become an engaged employee. Satisfied, loyal and productive employees create value. Employee's satisfaction in turn results primarily from high quality support services and policies that enable employees to deliver results to customers. Hence, it is necessary to match the job with the career goals of an employee so that he or she experiences satisfaction with the job.

Rationale of the study

Nowadays more and more organisations come forward with the mind to improve employee satisfaction level as it is the key to successful rising of employee morale and hence productivity it also helps in minimizing attrition rates. The study is for finding the level of employee satisfaction in the organization and developing an employee engagement programme to increase productivity.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the factors influencing employee satisfaction among employees in the company.
2. To develop an employee engagement programme for the organization.

Literature review

Employee engagement and job satisfaction and their inter-relationships have been researched extensively from the academic and practitioner's perspective. An attempt is made here to highlight a few of the studies to support the present study.

BlessingWhite (2011) have reported the engagement levels in India during the year 2010. According to the report 37% of the employees in India are engaged. Engagement levels in India

vary across organizations, organization size, gender, workplace structure and functions. Younger employees were less engaged as compared to older and married employees. Employees in healthcare and chemicals had maximum engagement levels and least in banking and financial services. Among the drivers of engagement, Indian managers identified three factors of job satisfaction such as career development opportunities and training (28%), more opportunities to do what one does best (21%) and more challenging work (15%) as the most important contributors.

The Towers Perrin (2003) study of engagement identified both emotions and nationality as core components. They found that emotional factors are linked to an individual's personal satisfaction and the sense of inspiration and affirmation they get from their work and from being part of their organization.

Harter et al (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of studies previously conducted by the Gallup Organisation. The study examined aggregated employee job satisfaction sentiments and employee engagement, with the latter variable referring to individual's involvement with as well as enthusiasm for work. Based on 7939 business units in 36 organisations, the results showed positive and substantive correlation between employee satisfaction, engagement and business unit outcomes of productivity, profit, employee turnover, employee accidents and customer satisfaction

Many studies aimed at identifying what contributes to satisfaction have revealed that situational context (eg. Supervisory support) as a cause of satisfaction and has argued that high – performance work practices and a positive working climate foster employee satisfaction (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Wright, Dunford & Snell, 2001).

Research methodology

The present study aims to know the influencing factors on employee satisfaction and developing an employee engagement and was done at UAE Exchange and Financial Services Ltd located in Cochin. The organization had 2500 permanent employees. For the purpose of the study 150 employees were selected using systematic sampling technique. A questionnaire was prepared with 30 statements on job satisfaction. This was pretested for its reliability and an alpha score of 0.76 was obtained. This questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the respondents through a survey. The data collected was subjected to correlation and regression analysis to satisfy the first objective of the study. Based on the results suitable suggestions are given to design employee engagement programmes.

Limitations

1. Some respondents were seen to be cautious in responding openly to the items in the questionnaire.
2. There were also constraints of limited time available.

Findings and discussion

The questionnaire used for the current study had the following factors under consideration:

Leadership and planning, Corporate culture and work ethics, Communication, Career development, Role, Recognition and reward, Teamwork and cooperation, Working conditions, Immediate supervisor, Training program and Benefits. The following section shows the findings of the objective, i.e., to identify the factors influencing employee satisfaction. Correlation and regression analysis was done on the data collected to get the results.

Table 1: Correlation between factors of employee satisfaction and overall job satisfaction.

Correlation	Job satisfaction
Job satisfaction	1.000
Leadership and planning	0.684**

Culture and ethics	0.746**
Communication	0.788**
Career	0.496**
Role	0.779**
Recognition and reward	0.813**
Team work	0.580**
Working condition	0.688**
Immediate supervisor	0.792**
Training programme	0.725**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The above Table 1 indicates the factors of employee satisfaction that are related with the overall employee satisfaction score. Correlation is high in case of Recognition and reward ($r = 0.813$, $p < 0.01$), Immediate supervisor ($r = 0.792$, $p < 0.01$), Communication ($r = 0.788$, $p < 0.01$), Role ($r = 0.779$, $p < 0.01$), Culture and ethics ($r = 0.746$, $p < 0.01$), Training programme ($r = 0.725$, $p < 0.01$), Working condition ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.01$), and Leadership and planning ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.01$). The correlation was low for Team work ($r = 0.580$, $p < 0.01$) and Career ($r = 0.496$, $p < 0.01$).

The above factors were subjected to regression analysis to identify the most influencing factors of employee satisfaction and the results are indicated in the table below.

Table 2: Table showing Regression between Factors of Employee satisfaction and Employee satisfaction score

Dependent variable: Employee satisfaction score

Independent variable Factors of Job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.997$)	B	t	Sig	F	Sig
Role	1.435	17.988	0.000	3840.331	0.000
Training programme	1.280	9.389	0.000		
Leadership and planning	1.181	24.035	0.000		
Culture and ethics	1.098	18.501	0.000		
Supervisor	1.018	13.674	0.000		
Recognition and reward	0.990	20.598	0.000		
Benefits	0.941	15.874	0.000		

Career	0.851	9.255	0.000		
Working conditions	0.729	14.318	0.000		
Team work	0.669	8.040	0.000		
Communication	0.507	6.017	0.000		

The above table 2 shows the important influencing factors of employee satisfaction. Role is the most important influencing factor of employee satisfaction ($B = 1.435$) followed by Training programme ($B = 1.280$), leadership and planning ($B = 1.181$), culture and ethics ($B = 1.098$), Supervisor ($B = 1.018$). The least influencing factor of job satisfaction was Communication ($B = 0.507$).

The respondents were highly satisfied with their work. They had the necessary materials and equipments to perform the job supported by adequate authority to make decisions related to the work. They took pride in contributing towards organizational goals through their efforts. On the other hand the management provided them with adequate training to help the respondents to effectively do their jobs. The management guided the respondents through clear cut objectives and well laid out policies which were implemented without any prejudice. The respondents had full trust on all managerial actions relating to work. The management on the other hand respected the initiatives taken by the respondents to ensure superior quality in providing service to clients and customers. The respondents were satisfied with the relationship they had with their immediate supervisor who were including the opinions of the respondents in taking decisions on work related issues. The fair treatment by the supervisors was a motivation to the respondents to provide superior customer service.

The respondents were moderately satisfied with benefits and recognition and reward schemes in the organization. This shows that the monetary compensation was not up to the satisfaction of the respondents. The training programme provided was to meet the current work needs and career

needs were not adequately met through these programmes. The working conditions were moderately satisfactory with realistic deadlines and adequate physical work conditions. Sometimes work pressure interfered with personal life thereby causing some dissatisfaction to the respondents. Respondents showed very low satisfaction with teamwork as it caused confusions at work thereby slowing down the pace of work. They also felt that communication between the top management and employees were not clear and information on strategies and activities were not transparent on all occasions.

Design of an employee engagement programme

The employee satisfaction level in the organization is satisfactory. The following points are suggested to the management to enhance employee commitment leading to employee engagement. These include:

- Communications activities
- Reward schemes
- Activities to build the culture of the organisation
- Team building activities

Communications activities:

- Communication forums to provide regular feedback to all people
- In-house magazines and On-line communications, including discussion boards and blogs
- Monthly updates on corporate goals and directions
- Regular employee opinion and satisfaction surveys
- Active soliciting of employee feedback

Reward schemes

- Compensation and benefit programmes

- Idea collection schemes linked to rewards for idea generation
- Long service and good performance awards

Activities to develop the culture of the organisation:

- Clear and humane HR policies
- Initiatives to maintain the quality of work life and a balance between personal/professional lives
- Demonstrating a commitment to respondents' well being

Team building activities:

- Small team recreational activities, such as family gatherings.
- Community outreach activities such as volunteering for social activities

Conclusion

Employee satisfaction is key to employee engagement. Engaged employees perform exceptionally well in their job. The study highlighted the most influencing factors of employee satisfaction in the organisation. A design for an employee engagement has been proposed to the management to enhance employee commitment.

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