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Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Employee engagement.....	2
3. Drivers of Employee Engagement.....	2
3.1. Job Challenge	2
3.2. Autonomy	3
3.3. Variety	3
3.4. Feedback	3
3.5. Fit	3
3.6. Development opportunities.....	3
3.7. Rewards and recognition.....	3
4. Outcomes of Employee Engagement.....	4
5. Measuring engagement tools	4
5.1. Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA)	4
5.2. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)	4
5.3. Psychological Engagement Measure	4
5.4. Job Engagement and Organizational Engagement Scale	4
6. Employee Engagement and Motivation.....	5
6.1. Frederick Herzberg's Theory	5
7. Employee Value Proposition (EVP).....	5
7.1. Key Components of EVP.....	6
8. Employee Engagement during Covid-19.....	6
9. Conclusion	6
10. References.....	7

1. Introduction

Employee Engagement is an approach to the workplace that provides all employees with the right conditions to give their best every day. Employee Engagement is built on trust, integrity, mutual commitment, and communication between the company and its members. Nowadays, managers are concentrating severely on efficiency and productivity than at any other time before. Businesses are struggling to increase and improve their performance, and managers have faced many obstacles to succeed in putting their business ahead of their rivals. Sometimes the reason for that is the inability to retain the employees and keep them engaged (Sridevi & Markos, 2010).

This report aims to answer the question "What is employee engagement, and why is it important?". This paper will provide a definition for employee engagement and accentuate what drives the employees to stay committed and engaged. What is more, this report will give clarity on what are some of the instruments used for measuring employee engagement and will clarify the thin connection between employee engagement and motivation.

2. Employee engagement

Employee engagement is a critical concept, primarily when managers cannot rely on employees' job satisfaction to retain the company's most beneficial employees. It is a process where employees are getting personally involved in the success of the business. Employee engagement is an engaging concept – people get excited by it, they get involved in it, people are prone to invest extra time and effort to assist the company in achieving its goal, and they demonstrate a proactive approach to doing it. The employees are committed to their job and organization. Well engaged employees display that they are highly motivated to achieve and maintain a high level of performance. It is proven that an engaged workforce is much more productive and profitable simply because employees give more of what they have to offer to the organization and their work surroundings. It has been claimed that if employees are more engaged in the organization, they will be displaying superior financial performance and growth (Macey, et al., 2011).

3. Drivers of Employee Engagement

3.1. Job Challenge

This applies to having a heavy workload, wide scope of work, and increased responsibility for the job. Job challenge is inspiring and motivating because it provides an opportunity for personal development and achievement. To deal with the problems and challenges, these possible triggers foster an effective, problem-focused coping style. Job challenge promotes meaningfulness through individuals' feelings that much is expected of them. It has been consistently shown that increased expectations increase effort, consistency, persistence and productivity among individuals and groups (Truss, et al., 2014).

3.2. Autonomy

It refers to the opportunity of being free and independent. Employees are allowed to schedule and organize their job and establish the methods for doing it. Autonomy gives the employees a sense of ownership and control on work outcomes, which increases the meaning of work (Truss, et al., 2014).

3.3. Variety

A job with a wider variety enables employees to carry out different tasks and activities or require many other talents and abilities of the employee while working on the work tasks. Variety is meaningful because it will enable people to feel more helpful in completing their tasks by drawing on a wider range of experience, skills, and abilities (Truss, et al., 2014).

3.4. Feedback

It refers to workers receiving clear and unambiguous information about how effective is their performance. Feedback promotes the employees' psychological significance because it enables them to assess their development and progress towards achieving goals and makes them feel respected, valued, and supported in rewarding relationships (Truss, et al., 2014).

3.5. Fit

Fit describes the reconcilability between individuals and work environment (organisation, the job, supervisor, workgroup) arising from their well-matched characteristics. Fit attaches great importance to the employees within the organisation as it allows them to behave and act in a compatible way with how they perceive or want to perceive themselves. The roles requiring authority and status enable employees to feel appreciated and important and make them believe they have the strength to modify and change their work environment (Truss, et al., 2014).

3.6. Development opportunities

These are planned efforts to facilitate employee acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities that improve employees' ability to meet job requirements and customer and client demands. These opportunities make work meaningful because they provide pathways for employee growth and fulfilment and prepare employees for more significant job challenges (Truss, et al., 2014).

3.7. Rewards and recognition

The employee receives formal pay, benefits, and bonuses as compensation for their excellent work. What is more, the employees also may receive informal praise and appreciation from the managers, co-workers, or customers approving their work. Rewards and recognition promote meaningfulness because they represent both direct and indirect returns of the personal investment of time and energy in one's work role (Truss, et al., 2014).

4. Outcomes of Employee Engagement

There is a relation between business outcomes and employee engagement. Though, engagement is an individual-level concept, it should first influence individual performance in order to drive to business outcomes. Employee engagement is characterized as optimistic work-related experience, rewarding and state of mind related to positive and health work influence. The Engaged employees are loyal to the organisation and it is unlikely to leave their jobs. Therefore, these employees more likely to build trust-based and reliable relationship with their company, and they would have positive view and approach to the organisation (Saks, 2006).

5. Measuring engagement tools

5.1. Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA)

The relationship between employee satisfaction-engagement and various outcomes such as profit, employee turnover, customer satisfaction, productivity, and employee safety were examined using Gallup Q12. Employee engagement was described as "employee's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work." It was created a 12-item questionnaire with a five-point scale varying from "strongly agree" to strongly disagree. Gallup's approach focuses on looking at engagement from the practitioner's perspective rather than an individual level construct (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019).

5.2. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

The Utrecht work engagement scale's purpose is to evaluate the relation between burnout and engagement and the Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey – cynicism, professional effectiveness, and exhaustion. The engagement is considered the inverse of burnout. This means the low results of cynicism and exhaustion and the high results of effectiveness could mean engagement. The UWES research contains 17 items by which is measured the three fundamental aspects of work engagement – absorption (endorsing concentration in people's work), dedication (pride, enthusiasm, inspiration), and vigour (effort, energy, resilience) (Seppala, et al., 2009).

5.3. Psychological Engagement Measure

The psychological engagement measure investigated and empirically tested the original theoretical model developed by Kahn. Work enrichment, work-role fit, co-worker relations were numerous hypothesized predictors of meaningfulness. Supervisory relations, co-worker relations, and behavioural norms were established as the determinants of psychological safety. Finally, as determinants of psychological availability have been hypothesized resources, self-consciousness, and outside activities. To measure the cognitive, physical, and emotional dimensions of engagement, a 13-item questionnaire was created (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019).

5.4. Job Engagement and Organizational Engagement Scale

Another tool to measure employee engagement, Organizational and job engagement, were considered as two dimensions of engagement to be measured. Initially, two six-item scales were established to assess and measure the job and employ engagement I the organization on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to agree strongly.

Due to its low factor loading and high elevated cross-factor loading, one item of job engagement was removed. Finally, an 11-item tool was used to measure the engagement of 102 employees working in various jobs in Canada. (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019)

6. Employee Engagement and Motivation

Employees that are managed well and provided with good quality jobs will be happier, healthier, and more fulfilled. Also, they will be more likely to drive productivity, innovation, and better products/services. These mutual gains of motivation and people management lie at the core of employee engagement (Cipd.co.uk, 2019).

6.1. Frederick Herzberg's Theory

Herzberg argues that money-related motivators are not the most important ones when an organization motivates employees. He is the creator of the Two Factor Motivation Theory. The two factors are Motivation (non-financial approach) and Hygiene. According to Herzberg, Motivation factors encourage people to work harder by allowing them to take more responsibilities at work, giving them fulfilling, challenging, and rewarding jobs and tasks. Also, recognizing the employee's accomplishments would motivate them to work harder. Hygiene factors are related to fair pay, appropriate working conditions, adequate management guidance, relevant work policies. The absence of any of the Hygiene factors would demotivate employees to do their job the best way they can (Alshmemri, et al., 2017)

Example:

The supermarket company Sainsbury's has implemented several segments that are accountable for employee satisfaction such as colleague discount card, annual – bonus scheme, flexible pension schemes, paid holiday entitlement that grows as employees' career does, interest-free loan for purchasing travel card. Sainsbury has implemented the Employee Assistance Programme, which provides care for the wellbeing of the workers. It is free of charge of confidential service for the employees who need counselling (regarding mental health), legal advice, or debt advice. (Sainsburys.co.uk, 2020) The company invests in its employees' careers by offering training development and mentoring. (Sainsburys.co.uk, 2020)

Reflecting on Herzberg's Theory, it could be said that the organization Sainsbury's successfully has combined both Motivation and Hygiene factors by incorporating different schemes and tools to motivate its employees to maintain excellent performance and challenge and encourage them to grow within the organization.

7. Employee Value Proposition (EVP)

Employee Value Proposition is a series of associations and offerings provided by an organization in exchange for the skills, talent, capabilities, and experiences an employee brings and the performance that an employee delivers to the organization. It is an employee-centred approach that is aligned to existing, integrated workforce planning strategies as it has been informed by existing employees and the external target audience (Pawar & Charak , 2015)

Good EVP is an essential part of the recruitment process, as it shows the potential candidate why they should apply for a job with an organization and whether it will be beneficial for them. It is a useful instrument for retaining valuable employees, and organizations with solid EVP's usually see higher retention percentages among their most valuable employees (Goswami, 2015).

7.1. Key Components of EVP

Financial Reward – It refers to employee's expectations from the overall evaluation and payment system. It includes all the financial offerings, such as wages/salaries, bonuses, and stock options.

Employment benefits – It refers to health insurance, retirement benefits, paid leaves, etc.

Career Development – It refers to the attractiveness of career paths that the job offers (for example, technical training, leadership training, promotion opportunities, and many others).

Work environment – It is associated with factors that form a positive work environment, such as flexible working hours, communication systems, work-life balance, and others.

Company culture – Associates with the factors that form excellent company culture, such as positive relationships between team members across hierarchies, trust and collaboration, team communication and support, etc. (Pawar & Charak, 2014)

8. Employee Engagement during Covid-19

Nowadays, companies continuously develop new, innovative, and evolutive methods and techniques to engage their employees through this difficult and challenging time. Many engagement activities had to be restructured due to the pandemic situation. There are numerous examples of that, such as online /virtual learning & development, online team-building events, online seminars, virtual team-meetings, online-only job applying and job interviews, online job training, and new skill training, online appreciation meetings. Employees struggling with stressful experiences during the pandemic are provided with counselling via video conversation with a specialist. It appears that the new work from home system is very beneficial for the organizations and as well for the employees as it keeps them engaged and productive during the pandemic (Risley, 2020).

9. Conclusion

The importance of Employee Engagement is expressed in the fact that when the employees are well engaged, the organization will move positively and display a higher level of performance. Finding the right Engagement Drivers and applying them correctly would automatically encourage them to be more committed and engaged in their jobs. Assessing employee engagement is happening with different instruments for measuring the engagement – often surveys and questionnaires. Another link to Employee engagement is the Employee Value proposition (EVP). EVP is significant for the company as it shows to the potential candidates whether they should apply for

the job or not. What is more, a solid EVP would be another stimulus for already employed workers to be more engaged and committed to their job, and they will not be tempted to leave the organization. Well-designed EVP is a statement that the company is ready to provide to the employees reciprocally on what they have received from them in the form of talent, skills, knowledge, etc. Consequently, it could be concluded that Employee Engagement is an integral key in HR.

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