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EMERGING CONCEPT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKING

Asha Yadav

Management, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the emerging concept of Employee Engagement (EE) and its meaning for public sector undertakings. Generally, EE reflects a positive, fulfilling, affective motivational, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. In an attempt to understand whether the concept of EE is meaningful for public organisation research, this study examines its essence and foundation by reviewing the literature. Public sector organizations have undergone changes in recent years. Therefore, efforts are being taken to change the attitudes and perceptions of public sector employees as to their job and mission of service. Employee engagement has a great impact towards the efficient working of the employees and development of the organisation as whole. The study has revealed that the level of employee engagement in this organization is quite modest. An engaged employee is more committed to their organisation.

Keywords: *Employee Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Public Sector, India.*

I.   INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement has become a great deal of attention in the last decade in academic field.According to Compensation Trends Survey 2012, conducted by Deloitte Human Capital Advisory Services in the Indian market, employee engagement has been ranked as the third human resource challenge, first and second being retaining critical talent and hiring of skilled talent respectively. Engagement is a psychological state which can be understood as several related ideas, such as absorption, attachment, and/or enthusiasm. Operationally, the measures of engagement have been categorised into one or more of the four different categories; job satisfaction, organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, and job involvement.

Kahn (1990) defined the concept of work engagement 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 and in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively or emotionally during role performances. He described three psychological conditions necessary for engagement as psychological meaningfulness, psychological availability and psychological safety

Schaufeli et al. (2002) define engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption.

Frank et al. (2004) define engagement as the amount of discretionary effort exhibited by employees in their jobs.
Although EE is becoming a widely used concept in management thinking, its contribution to and implications for public sector organizations has rarely been explored. When searching for an effective public administrator while attempting to improve service in public sector organizations, the affective aspect of the employee–public organization relationship has rarely been taken into consideration.

In this study we focused on the meaning of Employee Engagement in the public sector, because we feel it has special bearing on citizens who interact with it. The enjoyment or self-satisfaction related with serving society and helping the needy becomes a motivating drive. Work-related values such as the employees' desire to help others, benefit society, or engage in meaningful public service (Frank & Lewis, 2004)

Objective
1. To study employee engagement in Indian Public sector undertakings.
2. To ascertain the effect of Employee Engagement to organizational commitment.
3. To find the level of employee engagement in Public Organisation.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

On the basis of their longitudinal survey among 201 telecom managers, *Schaufeli et al. (2009)* found that increases in job resources (that is, social support, autonomy, opportunities to learn and feedback) predict work engagement. A survey of 213 employees based on questionnaire at three of Taiwan's state-owned enterprises found that there is significant effect of work redesign on employees' commitment to their organizations.

In the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), *Maslach and Leiter* (1997) define engagement as the opposite end of a continuum between engagement and burnout. They argue that whereas engagement is characterized by vigor, involvement, and efficacy, these are direct opposites of the three burnout dimensions: exhaustion (vs. vigor), cynicism (vs. involvement), and ineffectiveness (vs. efficacy).

Saks (2006), With the use of a heterogeneous sample of 102 employees working in a variety of jobs and organizations, found both job engagement as well as organizational engagement to be significantly and positively correlated with a number of situational factors. These factorsincluded job characteristics, organizational support, supervisory support, rewards and recognition, procedural justice and distributive justice. After a regression analysis it was revealed that only 'organizational support' was a critical predictor of organizational engagement, while the critical predictors of job engagement were found to be 'organizational support' and 'job characteristics'

*Eran Vigoda-Gadot1, Liat Eldor1, and Lior M. Schohat(2012),*conducted a study based on an interactive sample of 593 employees and managers from both the private and public sectors in Israel. The results support several hypotheses. First, EE is an empirically different construct compared with other Employee-Organisational Relationship concepts. Second, EE is higher among public sector employees than private sector employees. Third, EE is higher among public managers than public employees. Research demonstrates that EE is negatively related to burnout.

Mamta, Sharma R. Baldev(2011), conducted research on "Study of Employee Engagement and its Predictors in an Indian Public Sector Undertaking". This article presents an assessment of the level of employee engagement among managers of a public sector undertaking in India. The studyhighlights the level of engagement and has identified the various predictors of organizational commitment, which was used as an important indicator of employee engagement. On the basis of primary data collected from 84 managerial employees on a number of parameters relating to employee engagement and its potential predictors. The study has found that the level of employee engagement in this organization is quite modest. Three factors, namely, pay, job content and objectivity are found to be the predictors of employee engagement.

Soni Agrawal,(2015), 'predictor of employee engagement; a public sector unit experience,' conducted a study in a public-sector organisation with a sample of 102 managerial employees. Initially the data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire completed online by the respondents. Sak's(2006), two dimensional measure of employee engagement is used. The result shows that the predictors which influenced job and organisational engagement are different. The findings of the study states that the level of job engagement is slightly lower than that of organisational engagement. Only one factor, performance evaluation, out of the seven dimensions of organisational climate, emerged as the predictor of job engagement. Also measuring employee engagement with the help of organisational engagement is influenced by situational factors; work ethic, careerdevelopment and benefits. One more outcome of the research is as the results reinforced the importance of social exchange theory as there is a need to provide resources, benefit and support to employees that will oblige them to reciprocate in ways of higher level of engagement.

Piyali Ghosh, Alka Rai and Apsha Sinha, conducted a survey across 22 branches of 15 public sector banks in north India. an initial round of screening eliminated those employees who have been with their employer for less than a year, and the survey questionnaire was distributed to 284 bank employees of various public sector banks in India. Due to the increasing importance of human capital in this sector, employee engagement in banks has also emerged as a major issue to be considered by researchers. Therefore, this research was conducted to determine how the perception of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional) at workplace may influence work and OEs. results show that distributive, procedural and interactional justice are related to work and OEs. We may hence infer that the distribution of rewards, organizational policies and procedures, and interpersonal treatment by supervisors have their individual influence on employee engagement.

Richa Chaudhar, Santosh Rangnekar, MukeshBarua,conducted the study to analyse the impact of human resource development climate on employee engagement. The findings of the study provide support for the assumed hypothesis that HRD Climate will correlate positively and will significantly predict employee engagement. Thus in order to improve the engagement level of the employees, HR departments should attempt to improve the HRD Climate of their organizations specially the support from top management and line managers and through fair and successful implementation of the HRD mechanisms like career planning, performance appraisal, training, job rotation and potential appraisal as these two dimensions of HRD Climate were found to most significantly predict employee engagement as shown by the stepwise regression analysis. Fair performance appraisal and feedback should be provided to the employees fostering learning and growth of employees. Appreciating good performance helps boost up the confidence of employees and enhances their motivational level resulting in them giving their heart and soul to work resulting in enhanced engagement levels.

Swatee Sarangi, R. K. Srivastava, in their paper investigates the role and impact of organizational culture and communication on driving employee engagement. This study undertook the design of descriptive, analytical and predictive research. The sample of the study consisted of 195 employees at executive level drawn from selected nationalized banks in India. The findings of the study have practical implications for the banking sector. It has unravelled the dimensions of organizational culture and communication which need to be focused for enhancing vigor, dedication and absorption of employees in the banking sector. The holistic model will help banks and other service organizations in India and across the globe for enhancing engagement of their employees.

In India, Blessing White (2011) conducted a survey to determine employee engagement among employees. The results revealed that 37% were engaged in India and this level varied across India as "they also vary across organizations, organization size, gender, workplace structure, and functions. Younger employees are less engaged as compared to older and married employees. Employees in healthcare and chemicals had maximum engagement levels while banking and financial services had the least. In those surveys, managers of Indian firms showed three factors that determined employee engagement:
1. Career development activities and training 28%
2. More opportunities to do what one does best 21%
3. More challenging work 15%

Several other studies have found a positive association between organizational commitment and employee satisfaction with various non-monetary benefits provided by the organization.

Geetha Jose Sebastian Rupert Mampilly (2014), in their study attempted to predict employee engagement through psychological empowerment dimensions. The study is based on primary data collected from 101 employees working in three service organizations in central Kerala. Statistical techniques used to measure the significance and strength of relationship between psychological empowerment and its dimensions (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) and employee engagement. Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive association between psychological empowerment and employee engagement. Further analysis showed that all the dimensions of psychological empowerment, other than self-determination are predictors of employee engagement. This study further supports to the view that with higher psychological empowerment higher will be employee engagement in the Indian context.

III. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Although so much popularity of this concept but very less research has been made in public sector undertaking specially in India. Several literature reviews have revealed that employee engagement has been conceptualized in many different ways.

There is no single definition can comply with all situations and research has shown that employee engagement is modified and adapted in different form depending on the contexts of study. Employee behaviour is a product of organisation factor within which they operate. Different combinations of personality attributes and certain dimensions of the perceived organisational climate are likely to determine the level of employee engagement in any given organisation.

Public organizations need public servants who feel energetic and dedicated, are absorbed in their work for the public, and hence are physically and mentally engaged. Reducing the levels of burnout of public sector employees, especially among employees who provide service to citizens, may improve the level of responsiveness toward the citizens.

EE may serve as an indicator for hiring employees who are devoted, have initiative, and an affective relationship to public service. Employees who are strongly engaged with the organization are proactive, initiate changes, promote innovation, and invest efforts in improving the performance of their organization. Integrating the study of EE into the study of public administration will promote understanding about how employees function in the public sector and add to the knowledge in our discipline.

Study has shown that there is positive relationship between employee engagement with organisational commitment. Engaged employees are loyal and feel committed towards their organisation.

The level of engagement among the public sector employees are found to be high in comparison to the private sector organisation.

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