

A Study on the Level of Job Commitment between IT Sector Workers in Chennai

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ABSTRACT

Human resource management is the strategic and logical approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets-the people, who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the business objectives. Organizations that want to be dynamic and growth oriented should focus on consistently improving the highly engaged human resources by enhancing the capabilities and potentialities of the workforce. The study unearths the categories of employee engagement and the traits associated with the employees under each category. Percentage analysis and chi-square test was used to give a better idea about the state of affairs. Majority of the respondents were engaged in their job, exhibiting role clarity. Though very less number of employees in IT sector are actively disengaged, they pose a challenge to the growth and survival of the organization in the long run.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Engagement Drivers, HR issues in IT Sector

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement refers to the organization's ability to create an environment which is conducive to the partnership between the employer and the employee that leads to a win-win situation. Global studies highlight three basic aspects of employee engagement:-

- The employees and their own unique psychological make- up and experience
- The employers and their ability to create the conditions that promote employee engagement.
- Interaction between employees at all levels.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the present knowledge era, the industries in the IT sector throw a plethora of opportunities to job seekers. Gone are the days when opportunity to work in trendy offices was thrilling enough for employees to join a particular organization. Engineers no more join a particular organization just because it is very famous or is a tech giant. High salaries and titles are not the only reasons why people enjoy their jobs. In the high-technology industry, two-thirds of all workers believe they could find a better job in a classy office in less than 60 days if they only took the time to look. IT companies with its network and growing opportunities, has multifaceted work force with different demographical background. Employee turnover is one of the major problems in

the IT sector. In light of the above, it is proposed to study the level of employee engagement in the IT sector as engagement is the panacea for controlling turnover.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To identify the level of employee engagement in selected IT companies in Chennai.
- To analyze the drivers that influence the levels of employee engagement among IT sector employees working in selected IT companies in Chennai.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kahn (1990) introduced the concept of employee engagement as a standalone concept and conducted empirical research with 16 summer camp counselors and 16 employees of an architecture firm. This was the first empirical research carried out in the field on the topic of employee engagement. Kahn introduced the first definition of employee engagement, or personal engagement, as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles” Disengagement was also introduced by Kahn who defined it as “the uncoupling of selves from work roles” whereby employees set back and rather than express themselves they “defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally” in the work (Kahn, 1990). Kahn found that there were three psychological conditions which influenced both engagement and disengagement: meaningfulness, safety, and availability.

The Gallup Organization’s Q12 workplace audit looks at similar conditions of employee’s needs (safety); their understanding of what is expected and thought of them (safety); their fit to the organization (meaningfulness); and their opportunity for self-development (availability).

A recent report by Dale Carnegie Training (2014) shows that Indian employees are more engaged than their global counterparts. The report states that the number of fully engaged working professionals in the Indian workforce stands at 46% while the global average for the same is 34%. The survey conducted by Dale Carnegie Training centre, among more than 1200 executives, individual contributors, managers and chief officers across the country in 2014 found out the engagement levels and also the factors that influenced it.

Aon Hewitt (2015) defines engagement as the psychological state and behavioral outcomes that lead to better performance. The Aon Hewitt Engagement Model examines engagement outcomes as Say, Stay, and Strive. According to the model, engaged employees speak positively about the organization to coworkers, potential employees, and customers; have an intense sense of belonging and desire to be a part of the organization; and are motivated and exert effort towards success in their jobs and for the company.

5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

It was proposed to analyze

- The demographic dynamics of the employees in the IT sector
- The conditions of work prevailing in the IT sector

- The employee engagement drivers at different points of time

6. METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive study. Questionnaires were mailed to the participants during March 2015. The filled out questionnaires received till 30th June 2015 were tabulated and analyzed. Percentage analysis and chi-square test was applied to get the big picture about the factors that influenced the employees' engagement to the job and the organization.

7. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The observations made from the data collected were tabulated for meaningful deductions.

DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
GENDER		
Male	24	40
Female	36	60
Total	60	100
AGE		
20-30	18	30
31-40	33	55
Above 40	9	15
Total	60	100
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	42	70
Unmarried	18	30
Total	60	100
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION		
Under graduation	30	50
Post-Graduation	30	50
Total	60	100

TABLE NO 1

Table-1 represents the demographic profile of the employees working in IT companies in Chennai who responded to the questionnaire survey collected through email. As depicted in the table, male constituted around 40 per cent of the respondents. With respect to the distribution of the age, it was evident that 55 per cent of the respondents were in the age group between 31 years and 40 years. Out of 60 respondents, 50 per cent were undergraduates and 50 per cent were Post graduates.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS BASED ON THEIR WORKING TIME

PARTICULARS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
WORKING HOURS		
Less than 8 hours	28	47
8 hours	22	37
More than 8 hours	10	16
PRESENCE OF BREAK IN BETWEEN WORK		
Yes	31	52
No	29	48

TABLE NO 2

Table-2 is the summary of the observations pertaining to working hours per day, and the duration of breaks. From the table, it is evident that 37 percent of the respondents worked for 8 hours a day. With regard to the presence of breaks between works, 52 per cent of respondents agreed that they had enough breaks.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS BASED ON THE CAREER STAGE

CAREER STAGE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS		PERCENTAGE	PERCENTAGE
	ASPIRED BY INCOME/ FOREIGN TRIPS	ASPIRED BY THE POSITIVE WORK PLACE AMBIENCE	ASPIRED BY INCOME	ASPIRED BY THE POSITIVE WORK PLACE AMBIENCE
Early Career Stage	25	5	42	8
Mid-Career Stage	7	23	12	33
Total	65	35	54	46

TABLE NO 3

Among other things identified, employees in the IT companies have different aspirations at different stages of their career. According to the experience levels, the aspirations are varied. In the early career stage (0-3 years of experience), the young professionals are aspired by income; they perceive the best job as the one that offers a huge amount of money. Foreign trips (mostly to the US) is next in priority. However, this becomes increasingly irrelevant with most of the work now done offshore and client-interaction being facilitated by conference calls.

During the mid-career stage (more than five years of experience), employees aspire for a job with higher level of responsibility. At this juncture, the organization's culture in terms of leadership of supervisors (boss), performance appraisal system, top management competence, company's vision & mission and so on. Thus, it is evident that employees in their mid-career are the target audience for employee engagement initiatives.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS BASED ON THEIR LEVEL OF JOB ENGAGEMENT

PARTICULARS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Engaged Employees	28	47
Not Engaged employees	24	40
Actively disengaged employees	8	13
Total	60	100

TABLE NO 4

Questions on the understanding of the role expectations, task focus rather than goal focus and unhappiness at work were included in the questionnaire to categorize the employees in the IT sector according to the level of job engagement:

Engaged" employees are the builders in the sense that they take every effort to understand their role expectations and strive to achieve optimality. They are 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. 47% of the respondents were engaged.

Not-engaged employees tend to concentrate on tasks rather than the goals and outcomes they are expected to accomplish. They focus on accomplishing tasks and achieving an outcome. Employees who are *not-engaged* tend to feel their contributions are being overlooked, and their potential is not being tapped. They often feel this way because they don't have productive relationships with their managers or with their coworkers. 40 % of the respondents displayed the above characteristics and were therefore decided to be not engaged.

The "*actively disengaged*" employees are the employees who are consistently against virtually everything. This category of employees are not only unhappy but also keep sowing negativity among their peers at every opportunity. Every day, actively disengaged workers undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish and work their way out to bring down employee morale. Only 13 % of the respondents were actively disengaged but this sends warning signals that if they are not converted into engaged employees through organizational development interventions, they will sink the organization in due course.

8. OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

- In the early career stage (0-3 years of experience), the young professionals are aspired by income and workers in the mid-career stage are aspired by the work ambience. An effective recognition and reward system that promotes employee engagement is to be made available to recognize the actions that are truly worthy of recognition. Effective recognition always involves verbal or written acknowledgement from the employee's manager in addition to any physical reward supplied.
- Frequent feedback focusing on what the employee is doing well and what needs improvement to be ensured. There is a significant relationship between the level of engagement and the satisfaction with regard to frequency of feedback.

- Engaged employees thrive in an environment that reinforces their most deeply held values and beliefs. Employees are most successful in an organization in which their personal values are in sync with the organization's stated values and guiding principles.
- Demonstrated respect, trust, and emotional intelligence on the part of the employee's direct supervisor goes a long way in creating contented and actively engaged employees.

9. CONCLUSION

The employees have different aspirations at different times of their career. During the initial years, they have good salary and foreign assignments. Next on the list is working on cutting edge technology. More seasoned professionals look for learning opportunities. So employees tend to move to those organizations which provide them with means to fulfill their aspirations. Engaged employees need to work, not just with nice people, but with coworkers who are equivalently engaged. Coworkers who demonstrate integrity, team work, a passion for quality and serving customers, and who are passionate about what they do at work, make ideal coworkers in a workplace that fosters employee engagement. Managers must ensure that works assigned to employees are both meaningful and challenging as meaningless work is often associated with apathy and detachment from ones' work.

10. REFERENCES

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