



**Research Article**

**REAL – TIME ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION – THE HR PERSPECTIVE**

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**ABSTRACT**

Due to liberalization in Indian Economy the impact of restructuring, economic transaction to an open market and increased competition from internal and external sources has put tremendous pressure on human resource function of managing organization especially various aspect of talent management which peruses starts with resourcing the talent, action the talent by suitable for processes and system such as effective selection process, suitable in boarding, mentoring career planning and development and more over creating an ongoing engagement for the employees at large with the above back drop the present paper aims at conceptualising real time engagement evaluation with a special focus on HR perspective.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Today’s dynamic and complex Business Environment is characterized by diverse consumer demographics, complex strategies of competitors, workforce issues and many others. Nourishing in such a condition requires an organization to have dedicated and loyal employees. It is the engaged employees who ensures higher efficiency in organizations. Hence, the trend is towards designing innovative programmes.

Rapid growth and development in emerging-market countries such as India, China, and Brazil have dramatically changed the world's economic landscape over the past decade. In many cases, these fast-paced variations have come with growing troubles. For instance, some social sectors benefit more than others from economic growth in these countries, resulting in broadening income disparity. Moreover, Gallup's State of the Global Workplace report suggests another factor could be just as threatening to the pace of growth in emerging-market countries: low levels of employee engagement. Accumulated results for employees in 23 emerging markets surveyed in 2011 and 2012 reveal that about one in 10 employees are engaged at work -- nearly half the proportion found across 23 developed-market countries. Engagement results are even more troubling in one of the world's most populous emerging markets like India. (Crabtree, 2013) Employee Engagement is the extent to which employees feel passionate about their job, committed to their organization and more over put discretionary effort it’s to the work and the

organization. One of the strategic areas recognized in Global Human Capital trend study 2014 by Deloitte is “Attract and Engage”. Moreover, with generation Y at work, who looks at experience rather than mere engagement, employee engagement as a tool of human capital management becomes furthermore important.

Employee Engagement is different than satisfaction and happiness. It is emotional commitment for the workplace. Employee with high engagement level no longer work for a pay check or promotion. Instead they care about the task they undertake the work they do, they put forth discretionary efforts so that they contribute more to the organizational goals.

While psychological presence plays vital role for engagement it also involves two other critical components attention and absorption. Attention is nothing but Cognitive ability and the amount of time one spends thinking about a role. And absorption is being engrossed in a role and refers to the concentration of one’s focus on a particular role. To summarize it is a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption

It is an established fact that highly engaged employees produce higher results, stay in the organisation for long, are highly committed and loyal to the organisation. As per research, engaged employees contribute more and produces results than the lesser engaged employees. As per great places to work study also reflects that great places of work have higher employee engagement score and such workplaces/organisations produce higher profits and higher stakeholder returns in the long-term.

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Employee Engagement is the extent to which employees feel passionate about their job, committed to their organization and more over put discretionary effort into the work and the organization. One of the strategic areas identified in Global Human Capital trend study 2014 by Deloitte is “Altrnet and Engage” moreover with generation Y at work, who looks at experience rather than more engagement employee engagement as a tool of human capital management becomes furthermore important. Employee engagement has gained more importance in recent years as in a hyper-competitive business environment restless abound. Higher level of engagement assures higher productivity, higher customer satisfaction, increased sales, more profits, increased market share and lasting good will of business.

### **Meaning of Engagement**

As per academic literature (Kahn 1990) defined personal engagement as “the simultaneous employment and expression of a person’s “preferred self in task behaviours that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence, and active full role performances.

According to him, engagement means to be physically as well as psychologically present while inhabiting and executing an organizational role. (Kasekenda & Kahn, 2016)

While psychological presence plays vital role for engagement it also involves two other critical components attention and absorption. Attention is nothing but Cognitive ability and the amount of time one spends thinking about a role. To summarize it is a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption. (Oshilim & Akpesiri, 2015). Employee engagement is derived from studies of morale or a group's inclination to accomplish organizational aims which began in the 1920s. (Harilal, 2014)

In today’s dynamic, competitive and complex business environment, organizations have realized that to stay relevant they need highly engaged employees. A report by Dale Carnegie Training shows that Indian employees are more engaged than their global counterparts. The report states that the number of fully involved working professionals in the Indian workforce stands at 46% while the global average for the same is 34% and that of the US is at 30%. The survey conducted by Dale Carnegie Training in conjunction with NHRDN, surveyed more than 1200 executives, individual contributors, managers and chief officers across the country in 2014.

The primary objective of the survey was not only to find out the engagement levels but also to identify what influenced it. The key factors were:

- The relationship with the immediate Supervisor
- Belief in Senior Leadership
- Pride in the Organization

The report also recognizes the level of higher education as a parameter that directly influences employee engagement. The India study revealed that the average level of education in India presently is much higher than those joining in the US study, which may have been a reason why India’s data was better. Here are some of the key observations from the report:

- Larger companies, those with more than 100,000 employees had more actively engaged employees

compared with smaller companies with an employee strength of 100 to 501

- 76% of those working a long tenure of 15 and more years were highly engaged
- 71% of employees with an annual income of over 1 crore were highly engaged
- 15% in the income range of 1.5 to 3 lakhs per annum were most disengaged. (Deodhar, 2015)

### **Types of Engagement**

#### **Engaged**

Sustain the level of engagement in the long-term. Identify and groups ability to influence and motivate others.

#### **Almost Engaged**

They are highly employable, more open to suggestions from other firms than the engaged.

#### **Hamsters**

Are more tenured individuals who may distinguish themselves as contributing strongly but are in effect “spinning their wheels” – going nowhere, contributing little to the achievement of the organization. They are very satisfied with their position and are less likely to resign. (Swathi, 2012)

#### **Crash & Burn**

Disillusioned and potentially exhausted, these employees are top producers but are growing bitter due to a lack of personal satisfaction. They may leave but are more likely to stop working hard. (Swathi, 2012)

#### **The Disengaged**

Most disengaged employees didn’t start out as bad apples, but over the years they are so. Mostly sceptical of any organizational initiative or communication, they are more likely to indulge in contagious negativity. If left alone, people in this group are likely to continue collecting a pay check but contribute minimally. (Swathi, 2012)

#### **Predictors**

There are number of factors which predict job and organizational engagement such as

- Perceived organizational support
- Perceived supervisors support
- Records and recognitions
- Procedural justice
- Distributive justice
- Organization Commitment

In fact, Luthans and Peterson (2002, p. 377) state that Gallup has empirically resolute employee engagement to be an important predictor of desirable organizational outcomes such as customer satisfaction, retention, productivity and profitability. (Bhatnagar, 2007) Engaged employee with an organization provide a competitive advantage to organizations as delineated in Resource based view of the firm.

The resource-based view posits that human and organizational resources, more than physical, technical and financial resources can provide firm with sustained competitive advantage Engaged employee are passionate about their work and led by intrinsic motivation. An engaged employee has intimal and intellectual commitment

**Drivers Employee Engagement**

Some of the below aspects of the organisational elements contribute towards higher employee engagement:

1. Trust
2. Respect
3. Fairness
4. Leadership behaviour
5. Consistency of Management thought and action
6. Job Role: Challenges
7. Learning and Growth
8. Rewards and recognitions
9. Perceived organizational support
10. Records and recognitions
11. Procedural justice
12. Distributive justice

Due to hyperactive competitive business environment organizations are adapting both organic and inorganic growth route which brings in transitions in the said organization. The below mentioned diagram highlights the engagement drivers during the transitions across the sectors:

**Outcomes of Employee Engagement**

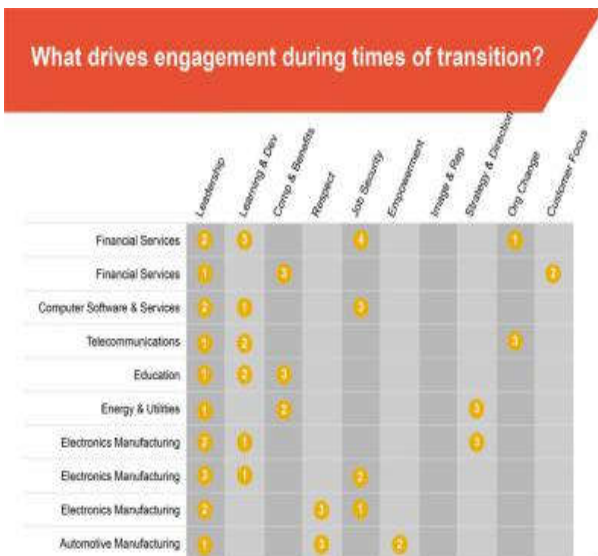
1. Higher Productivity,
2. Higher Customer Satisfaction,
3. Increased Sales,
4. More Profits,
5. Increased Market Share
6. Good Will of Business.
7. Increased Employee Retention

**Evaluating Employee Engagement**

Of all the workplace factors related to engagement, the three most influential are:

1. Utilization of skill and abilities to the maximum extent possible.
2. Perception that there is a connection between one’s work and the company’s objectives.
3. Trust that innovation is encouraged.

Many different matrices are used to quantify employee engagement. Yet the most frequently used tools for estimating employee engagement are questionnaires and surveys.



The Gallup Q12, a survey comprising 12 questions, is one of the most widely used tools. Because it asks the same questions of all participants, it is easy for a company to benchmark its results against the results from another company or an entire industry.

Once the measurements have been taken, the management team can analyse the data. They may look first at the overall engagement composite scores, which present average replies across all employees as well as within diverse work units, departments, or divisions. They may also be interested in the replies to individual survey questions, which can help them find specific strengths and weaknesses associated to engagement

**Phases Related to the Measurement of Employee Engagement**

Programs for measuring and improving employee engagement consist of four phases:

**Pre-Survey Activities**

It involves three steps such as:

- a. secure support from the senior management team.
- b. to develop a rollout strategy specifying dissemination of survey results.
- c. create a communication strategy explaining why the program is being initiated.

**Survey Development & Execution**

The next step is to either develop a survey or select a consistent one, such as the Gallup Q12. Effective employee engagement surveys have four key characteristics.

- i. Short
- ii. Reliable
- iii. Limited flexibility.
- iv. Actionable

**Review of Results & Action Planning**

- a. Sharing of results with the employees
- b. Present the result in simple way
- c. Brainstorm about all possible actions on two – three major items of disengagement.

**Taking Action**

**Organizations that can Improve Employee Engagement Succeed in Four Areas**

**Communication:** Engagement initiatives have clear ground rules, like mutual respect and open dialogue, and they gain impetus by rejoicing success stories.

**Accountability:** Single owner for engagement initiatives.

**Alignment:** Senior management supports to execution team (HR).

**Measurement:** Engagement levels to be measured at least twice a year.

In some cases, organizations may see an initial improvement in employee engagement scores level out over time. The suggestions can be to have informal discussion over tea and coffee and note the observations for formal purpose, to conduct workshop related to factors of disengagement and take feedback from employees. To conduct more number of open

house, town hall meetings to have a first-hand information about engagement level.

### **Organizational Implications**

Each organization must create a favourable working environment where people feel free to contribute to the maximum level possible. The following are the few tried and trusted ways and means to create more engaged work force.

### **Strategies**

#### **What would Cause real time Engagement Strategies?**

- i. Flexible work Arrangement – Flexi Time for Incurred work like balance work from home – empowers and motivation (Work from Home, Tele Commuting).
- ii. Using Technology to see and discuss work progress.
- iii. Creating more meaningful work / challenging job.
- iv. Providing more Career opportunities.
- v. Involving Employee in CSR Projects.
- vi. Adopt Inside out approach.
- vii. Effective Internal Communication.
- viii. Freedom to work in own way.
- ix. Employee Engagement formats to vary each year
- x. Employee Engagement tools must be customized for different Industry and age and educational level
- xi. Employee feedback regarding the formats should play a major role
- xii. Continuous and constructive dialogue
- xiii. Role Model by Managers
- xiv. Feedback and expectations sharing
- xv. Appreciation: regular basis and spontaneously

#### **Organisational support to facilitate the above:**

1. Values and culture
2. Actualisation of values
3. Handling of difficult situations
4. Visibility of top leaders
5. Interaction with employees
6. Clarifying business strategy, plans and achievements
7. Hearing voice of the people
8. Open to ideas of the team
9. Culture – collaboration and team work
10. Openness and transparency

### **Critical Analysis**

As with many emerging-market countries, a range of structural problems has cropped up to complicate India's prospects for long-term growth -- but key among them is the productivity of its labour force. Increasing efficiency needs addressing the country's huge gaps in access to prospect with more reasonable investments in elementary and secondary education for millions of poverty-stricken Indians.

According to a study by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, India's "rapid economic expansion has boosted corporate profits and employee incomes, but has also sparked a surge in workplace stress"; and stress has been known to impact employee engagement and productivity levels. This makes it clear that nowadays, organizations must take inventive initiatives to increase engagement. Ensuring correct work allocation with realistic timelines, encouraging work life balance, promoting employee wellness and implementing a positive work culture are just some of the things organizations can do to increase employee

motivation. This aspect will be even more front and centre as the talent war heats up. Some of the critical statistics related to employee engagement and retentions manifest the importance of employee engagement in corporate.

### **2016 Employee Engagement/Retention Statistics**

- 32.6% of American workers are engaged (Gallup)
- 24% of employees worldwide are "actively disengaged" (Gallup)
- 29% of millennials are engaged at work, 16% are actively disengaged, 55% are not engaged (Gallup)
- 35% of female employees are engaged compared to 29% of men (Gallup)
- 41% of women managers are engaged compared to 35% of male managers (Gallup)
- 29% of full-time state and local government employees are engaged at work (Gallup)

### **Evaluating Employee Engagement – HR Perspective**

Forward looking HR leaders must connect the employees via social media strategy which connects the digital employees faster than anything else. Use gamification, Social media playbooks by HR leaders could create an engaged workforce in an innovative way and ultimately create immense business value in 2020. Although the media likes to stereotype the 'millennial' generation, the fact is all generations are engaging with technology in a way we have never seen before. With so many day-to-day activities being driven through technological platforms, it has become a way of life to be promptly informed and engaged with. With other design methods such as ethical gamification, it is probable to drive the type of behaviours and engagement that will ensure success for the individual and the organisation. With people analytics and new technologies disrupting traditional HR processes and procedures, employee experience is becoming the new trend. As customer experience has become more established, it makes sense that Employee Experience is the next step in that journey. Employee Experience is much broader term than Employee Engagement and is futuristic in nature, another important parameter of stakeholder satisfaction matrix. HR professionals use wide variety of technical solutions for different aspects of the employee experience which are of interest to HR, ranging from engagement, recruitment and selection, performance management and talent management to name a few. A 'systems-thinking' approach is needed from the start so HR views the organisation as a multifaceted human-centred system considering how all the divergent components of the system impact upon and change each other.

### **CONCLUSION**

Employee Engagement is the extent to which employee commitment, both emotional and intellectual, exists in relation to achieving the work, mission, and vision of the organization. Engagement be a heightened level of ownership where each employee wants to do whatever they can for the benefit of their internal and external customers, and for the success of the organization. Looking at the potential outcome of employee engagement such as: Increase market share, Increased sales & Increased product & productivity it is required that all the organisation must engage them in real time employee engagement and constantly evaluate the outcomes to know the efficacy of the deployed strategies.

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