

Critical analysis of engagement level and job performance among the teaching workforce in Higher Education Institutions

Dr. Perna Chandel

Assistant Professor, School of Management, Bahra University, India

ABSTRACT

Education plays a crucial role in the economic and social development of a country. It plays a significant role to bring prosperity, unity and build a stronger nation. Like any other economic sector, the higher education sector is also driven by intense global competition and this change affects the overall nature. This has become a major challenge for institutions to retain and engage faculties. Present study address the challenge of disengagement among faculty members in higher education institutions and its relationship with job performance. The data for the survey was collected using questionnaire and the data was quantitatively analysed using Chi-square test. The analysis result indicate that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and job performance. It was reported that faculty members demonstrating high engagement levels will perform its job specific duties and responsibilities judiciously. Further, this paper presents the implications and suggestion for the enhancing employee engagement levels and job performance.

Keywords: Employee engagement, Employee disengagement, Job performance, Higher education institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Symbolized by the images of combat and marriage engagement is associated with the active participation and investment of an individual's complete self, not solely parts into role performance. In the context of the workplace, engagement takes on a more specific meaning. Within organizations these interactions manifest themselves in the contract of employment wherein employees pledge their services to their employer, commit themselves to their job, and undertake the obligations of employment. Employees anticipate and include roles within agencies by means of making an investment their energies into those roles. In-flip they look to be connected to and are absorbed within the roles they carry out. When they are emotionally and mentally engaged they take the corporation to greater heights. When they are emotionally and mentally engaged they take the organization to greater heights. Organizations have recently begun focusing on the level of engagement of their employees in an effort to understand the underlying factors of employee motivation and performance (Gallup, 2005). Engagement with one's work is important, given that work is a pervasive and influential part of an individual's well-being, affecting not only the quality of an individual's life but one's mental and physical health as well (Wrzesniewski, Rozin, & Bennett, 2002). Most people must work to earn a living, which makes work an obligation rather than a choice. However, despite this apparent loss of desire, individual experiences with work are pretty varied, stretching from work as a monotonous toil to work as a manifestation of individual's identity (Hulin, 2002). Level of employee engagement is a predictor of both individual and organizational performance. Employee engagement is majorly explored field in the company context whilst within the educational quarter, it has restricted research (Robinson et al., 2004). Organisations with engaged staff generally incline to have higher employee well-being, and lower turnover and sickness absence. Particularly higher education institutions, having engaged and motivated staff was seen as crucial in delivering high quality teaching and learning. Institutions must consider their faculty members as a valuable resource of the organization, but these employees face a daunting challenge. Disengaged employees and those who are actively, disengaged, become hindrance to individual success and hamper the likelihood of success for the overall institution. Student success is no longer the sole responsibility of the student. Success is influenced in large part by engaged school employees. According to the Cornerstone OnDemand and Ellucian report (2016) faculty members play a key role, as 80.5 percent of those surveyed agreed that faculty members have a significant impact on student success. But all employees contribute to that success, from student affairs staff (47.7 percent) to deans (35.9 percent) to support staff such as the registrar (33.6 percent). Higher education institutions must

be able to measure and track engagement, compare this information with historical data, and determine what actions should be taken to improve engagement.

Problem Statement

The purpose of education has advanced over time. Higher education is facing enormous hurdles. It has become a challenge to keep staff engaged, motivated and committed. As per Cornerstone and Ellucian's 2016 Employee Engagement and Retention in Higher Education survey, 39% of colleges and universities do not offer any form of employee engagement opportunities such as leadership development, coaching, or recognition programs and nearly half of respondents say employee engagement is neither tracked nor measured at their institutions. Due to such reasons student's development and organizational growth gets hampered. By improving employee engagement, you improve retention and provide students with the support they need to succeed in their lives

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Selvarani & Punitha(2015) expressed almost all organizations want to get competitive advantage through retention of human talent, engaging employees in their work no doubt is very difficult task but due to their engagement organizations move upward in the market.

Extant literature can be found in employee engagement. One of the prominent piece of work done on employee engagement is performed by William Kahn in 1990, pioneer and one of the first scholars to study engagement. Defined the term personal engagement as the *"harnessing of institutional members" selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance"*.

Luthans and Peterson (2002) inspired from the work of Kahn on employee engagement, gave a convergent theory on the empirical derivation of Gallup's employee engagement construct. They opined that emotionally engaged employee have a deep connection with others and to experience sensibility towards them. Likewise Towers Perrin (2003), suggested that engagement comprise of factors like rational and emotional attachment with work and the overall experience of work.

Wellins and Concelman in 2004 suggested that "Employee engagement is the illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance. This desired energy is an amalgamation of "commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership." they further added that it includes, "feelings and attitudes employees have towards their jobs and their organization.

According to Robinson (2006), employee engagement can be attained by creating a conducive organisational environment which has positive emotions like attachment, involvement and taking pride in work, which further results in improvised performance of the organisation, minimum employee turnover and good wellbeing.

Bijaya Kumar Sundaray (2011) explored different factors which lead to employee engagement and steps required by the company to make their workforce engaged. Proper attention on strategy formulation of engagement practices will ultimately enhance the effectiveness of the organization by increased productivity, more profits, improved quality, employee retention and much better customer satisfaction.

Lawler(1976) defined job performance as *"a record of the results when employees have practiced a job for a certain period, and is defined as quality and quantity accomplished by individuals or groups after fulfilling a task"*.

According to Goodman and Svyantek (1999), job performance consists of a task or in-role behaviour, and contextual or extra-role behaviour. The definition of task performance emphasizes the instrumentality of performance for organizational aims. It refers to those required outcomes and behaviours that directly serve the goals of the organization (Motowidlo and Van Scotter, 1994). It includes meeting company objectives, effective sales presentations and it varies between jobs within the same organization.

Podsakoff et al. (2000) defined Contextual or extra-role performance as *"discretionary behaviours on the part of an employee that are believed to directly promote the effective functioning of an organization without necessarily directly influencing an employee's productivity"*.

Borman and Motowidlo (1993) expressed that Contextual activities are common to many jobs and are less role-prescribed. It supports the organizational, social and psychological environment under which task performance occurs. Behaviours such as volunteering, helping, persevering are perhaps better foreseen by volitional variables related to individual differences in motivational characteristics and predisposition or person-organization fit.

From the above review of literature it can be inferred that organizations need to adopt a multi-faceted approach of engagement and enhance the job performance of the employees to achieve holistic success.

SIGNIFICANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The significance of the research was to explore and test the prevailing theory on employee engagement and job performance in ever evolving pattern of higher education institutions. The present study was undertaken to fulfill following objectives:

Assess the relationship between faculty engagement and job performance among teaching workforce employed in higher education institutions.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Based on the above stated objective, following hypothesis have been framed:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between faculty engagement and job performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was descriptive in nature implying natural observation of the characteristics of the research subject without influencing the variables. It is a cross sectional design where a sample is taken from the population at one point of time. Study consists of faculty members working in Himachal Pradesh higher education institutions. Higher Education Institutions namely universities and colleges can be broadly categorized into two types namely the government institutions which are and the private institutions. Hence, for the sake of feasibility and economy the scope of the study was narrowed down to three districts of Himachal Pradesh, viz Shimla, Solan and Kangra. Multi-stage sampling method was used for the choosing the final respondents. Data was collected by a well-structured questionnaire which were distributed to 400 faculties. Out of which only 360 questionnaires were returned (yielding response rate of 72%) and utilized for analysis of the study. Chi-square statistical test was employed for data analysis.

Research instrumentation

Job Performance is a two dimensional construct which was developed by Goodman & Svyantek in 1999. The two dimensions are Task Based Performance and Contextual Performance containing 8 items in each dimension and total of 16 items. Responses to the scale was given on a 5-point Likert scale with anchors marked as: 0 as strongly disagree, 1 as disagree, 2 as neither agree nor disagree, 3 as agree, 4 as strongly agree. The reliability for the job performance scale was estimated using Cronbach alpha coefficient. The scale was found to be a reliable measure of employee engagement of faculty members in the higher education area of Himachal Pradesh, India as Cranach's alpha was computed as 0.81 which is above the acceptable limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2009).

Table 1.1: Reliability Statistics of Job Performance

S. No.	Dimension	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
1.	Job Performance	16	0.81

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic variables comprise of Type of institution, Designation, Gender, Age and Marital status, The demographic profile of respondents is shown as under:

Table 6. 1 shows that the survey had 67.50% respondents (N=243) from private institutions and 32.50% respondents (N=117) from government institutions.

Table 6. 1: Type of Institution of Respondents

Type of Institution	N	Percentage
Government	117	32.50
Private	243	67.50
Total	360	100

Table 6.2 shows that the majority of respondents (N=246, Percentage=68.33) were assistant professors, 18.06% respondents (N=65) were professors and rest 13.61% respondents (N=49) were associate professors.

Table 6.2: Designation of Respondents

Designation	N	Percentage
Professor	65	18.06
Associate Professor or equivalent	49	13.61
Assistant Professor or equivalent	246	68.33
Total	360	100

Following table 6.3 shows that maximum numbers (63.06) of respondents surveyed were male and rest 36.94% respondents were female.

Table 6.3: Gender of Respondents

Gender	N	Percentage
Male	227	63.06
Female	133	36.94
Total	360	100

Table 6.4 showcased that the survey had majority of respondents (47.78) belong to the age group of 25 – 35.

Table 6.4: Age of Respondents

Age	N	Percentage
Up to 25 Years	13	3.61
25 to 35 Years	172	47.78
35 to 45 Years	95	26.39
45 to 55 Years	61	16.94
More than 55 Years	19	5.28
Total	360	100

Table 6.5 represents the marital status of the respondents, maximum respondents (66.67) were married, and very few were divorcees.

Table 6.5: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	N	Percentage
Married	240	66.67
Unmarried	114	31.67
Divorced	6	1.67
Total	360	100

Assessing the relationship between employee engagement and job performance among teaching workforce employed in higher education institutions.

First objective of the study was to study the relationship between employee engagement and job performance among teaching workforce employed in higher education institutions. For this Employee Engagement was taken as an independent variable and Job Performance as a dependent variable. The table 6.2.1 illustrates the level of job performance of the faculty members based on the responses received. It was found that majority of the faculty members were average performers (mean= 50.47) and 48.33% (N=174) were found to be doing well in their job. None of the faculty showcased worst, bad or excellent performance. Overall faculty members were average performers.

Table 6.2.1: Level of Job Performance of faculty members

Response	N	Percentage
Worst Performance	0	0.00
Bad Performance	0	0.00
Average Performance	186	51.67
Good Performance	174	48.33
Excellent Performance	0	0.00
Total	360	100
Mean Score	50.47	
S.D.	5.08	
Result	Average Performance	

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and job performance.

To measure relationship between relationship between employee engagement and job performance chi-square test was applied. The table 6.2.2 illustrates the results of chi-square test.

Table 6.2.2: Chi-Square test results to measure Relationship between Employee Engagement and Job Performance

Job Performance	Level of Employee Engagement					Total	Chi-Square Value	*p-value
	Not at All Engaged	Slightly Engaged	Somewhat Engaged	Moderately Engaged	Highly Engaged			
Average Performance	13	22	63	52	36	186	35.665	0.000
Good Performance	4	6	35	50	79	174		
Total	17	28	98	102	115	360		

*Level of significance = 5%

The test results indicate that at 5% level of significance the value of chi-square (35.665) was found significant (p-value= 0.000; p<0.05) which leads to the rejection of null hypothesis **H₀₁**, therefore it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between engagement of faculty members employed in HEI's of Himachal Pradesh and job performance. Faculty members are performing well in their job and contextual performance. It is critical to retain high quality and qualified teachers to provide high quality education to students so it's necessary to keep faculty engaged which in return will elevate their performance as well as organizational performance. Result was supported by the findings of Frederickson (2001), it was expected that because engaged workers are more likely to experience more positive emotions than those less engaged (Bakker et al., 2008), such individuals would be able to accumulate a wealth of resources used to achieve work-related goals, and ultimately improve job performance.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

To meet the future challenges of the education sector, engaging employees and enhancing performance of its employees was found to be of paramount importance. The study was undertaken to examine the association between employee engagement and job performance in education sector. The study found a statistically significant relationship between employee engagement and job performance among teaching workforce employed in higher education institutions. It can be certainly concluded that high levels of employee engagement will lead to employee put extra efforts in their job and institution. Thus creating a motivated and sustainable workforce which will work together to achieve the common goals of the institutions as well as employees. Faculty play a pivotal role and success of student life and institution is influenced in large part by engaged faculty. The evidence presented in this article gives a clear message to employers that employee engagement is important for upliftment of student, institution and society, but is likely to be unsustainable unless it goes hand in hand with faculty objectives and challenges. Therefore, every

education institution must listen to their employee's grievances, periodically check engagement levels and further design an action plan to resolve the issues.

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