

Chapter 2

Employee Engagement as a Contemporary Issue in HRM

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ABSTRACT

For the past few years, employee engagement has become an important concern in the corporate world. Products and processes alone cannot help the organizations to survive in the market. They also need highly motivated and completely involved employees who are very passionate about their task and their organizational goals; in short, they need “engaged employees.” But, retaining the engaged employees requires a lot of effort and skill on the part of HR heads. Employee engagement cannot be considered as an easy intervention in improving the commitment towards job, motivation, or productivity. This chapter will throw light on how employee engagement can be increased. This chapter also tries to identify the main drivers of employee engagement, its various attributes together with new ways to measure it, how to handle disengaged employees, and new engagement practices in the corporate world. In this chapter, the modern employee engagement activities being practiced by the corporate world in the Indian context will be discussed.

WHAT IS ENGAGEMENT?

Gupta and Mikkilineni (2018) clearly explain that the engagement overlaps with the concepts of commitment and organizational behavior, but there are also differences. In particular, engagement is a two-way concept; organizations must work to engage the employee, who in turn has a choice about the level of engagement they offer to the employer.

So we can say that engagement is a positive attitude held by an employee towards the organization and its beliefs. M. and Agarwal (2017) says that fully engaged employee is aware of the nature of business, and works with peer group to improve their performance at the workplace for the accomplishment of the Organizational goals. Thus, an organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee.’

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An employee may experience 3 different levels of engagement. He could be engaged, not engaged or disengaged. Engaged employees are those who work with complete enthusiasm towards the organization's goals. An employee who is not fully engaged is one who is seen to be participating but not with passion and energy towards the organization's common objective. Disengaged employees are those who are not happy at their workplace and quit due to dissatisfaction.

Gupta and Mikkilineni (2018) also studied three different facets of Engagement, Intellectual engagement that refers to dedication towards performing better at one's job, affective engagement or feeling positive while performing one's job and lastly social engagement which is involved in discussions with others about enhancement of work.

WHAT IS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

Kular, et al (2008) defined Employee engagement as a workplace approach where an organization creates the conditions and situations in which the employees give their best each day and work more than their capability and potential which is really very difficult task. An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved and enthusiastic about his or her work. When I say sincerely that:

“I want to do this work”

“I am dedicated to the success of what I am doing”

“I love what I am doing”

“I care about the future of my company”

Then I am surely concerned about my organization and I am an engaged employee. But understanding engagement is very important and at the same time very complex challenge. There is no single or universally accepted definition of employee engagement.

We will begin with some commercial definitions for employee engagement and then move to some academic definitions.

Storey, et al (2008) studied some of the definitions given by the reputed organizations defined as follows:

Caterpillar Company Defines Engagement as

Extent of employees' commitment, work effort, and desire to stay in an organization.

Dell Inc. Defines Engagement as:

To survive in the competition today, the companies need to excel over the minds (rational commitment) and the hearts (emotional commitment) of employees in different unique ways that lead to extraordinary effort.

The Corporate Leadership Council Defines it as

The extent to which employees commit to any work in their organization, how hard they work to achieve the goal and how long they stay as a result of that commitment.

The Gallup Organization Simply States

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