

Identification of Employee Engagement Practices: A Study with Reference to Automotive Units

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how employee engagement practices are perceived by both employers and employees within the Indian automobile industry. It investigates the measures implemented by organizations to enhance employee engagement with the company. To achieve the objectives, primary data was collected from a sample of 843 respondents employed across fifteen selected automobile companies in Gurugram, Manesar, and Bawal, key industrial regions in India, using a stratified random sampling method. The analysis involved various statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics and exploratory factor analysis. The results highlight a range of practices and strategies employed by both domestic and international companies to encourage voluntary employee participation in organizational growth.

Keywords: HR, Employee Engagement, Automotive units.

INTRODUCTION

According to Vipul Saxena and Rachana Srivastava (2015), engagement is defined as the level of commitment and involvement that an employee exhibits toward their employer and its core values. It reflects an individual's feelings about their job, colleagues, and the organization, which in turn influences their motivation to learn and perform effectively. Employee engagement directly impacts productivity, dedication, loyalty, and reduces turnover. Several studies have primarily focused on the overall impact of employee involvement on various innovation outcomes (Cinar, Trott, and Simms, 2019; Tremml, 2021; Yuriev, Boiral, and Talbot, 2021). Fletcher et al. (2020) observed that this research does not align with the concept of "doing engagement." By expanding the theoretical understanding of how to foster employee engagement specifically related to innovation initiatives, current literature suggests that barriers to innovation engagement—often considered static and comprehensive—can be better understood and addressed (Cinar, Trott, and Simms, 2019; Yuriev, Boiral, and Talbot, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the context of employee engagement, many researchers have examined its importance along with the factors that influence it across various industries. Nadeem et al. (2013) concluded that rewards and recognition are key antecedents of employee engagement. Conversely, Cwku et al. (2012) identified employee communication, support from supervisors, and organizational support as primary factors that contribute to employee engagement.

Employee Engagement & Innovative Initiatives

Kahn's (1990) idea of participation is frequently used in the literature that is now accessible to the public sector (e.g. Hameduddin and Lee 2021; Jin and McDonald 2017). According to this perspective, when people contribute to role performances, they "employ and express themselves 2028 S. KNOX AND C. MARIN-CADAVID physically, cognitively, and emotionally" (Kahn 1990, 694). Prior studies have mostly focused on identifying the factors that encourage and hinder employee engagement as well as the results of raising it (Fletcher et al. 2020).

Existing research (Dudau, Kominis, and Szocs 2018; Fernandez and Moldogaziev 2013) does not provide a clear explanation for the differences in how organizations respond to innovation efforts. Nonetheless, several studies suggest that there are a variety of supportive elements that may affect an employee's participation in the innovation process. Piening (2011) recognizes the critical role that managers have in fostering either a focus on innovative activities or the execution of normal operational behaviors. Likewise, several studies (e.g., Ancarani et al., 2021; Ravishankar, 2013) demonstrate how leaders may promote innovation by setting clear strategic goals and offering sufficient incentives.

Model of Commitment & Engagement

The research has resulted in the creation of an engagement model that aims to comprehend the psychological contract, the relationship between engagement, satisfaction, and commitment, as well as the relationship between the drivers and the results of engagement. This model expands upon previous research, including that of Kahn, W. A. (1990), Meyer, J.

P. and Allen, N. J. (1991), Mowday, R. T. et al. (1979), Swailes, S. (2002), May, D. et al. (2004), Jones, J. and Harter, J. (2005), and Truss, C. et al. (2006).

Three categories—organization, management and leadership, and working life—comprise the main motivators. Positive attitudes towards the organization, or organizational commitment, will be directly impacted by these drivers. They affect the psychological contract as well, namely on how fairness and trust are seen. These views contribute to the psychological circumstances of meaning, safety, and availability that are essential to the growth of engagement, along with the main drivers.

Factors Contributing to Employee Engagement

Many researchers have tried to identify factors leading to employee engagement and developed models to draw implications for managers. Their diagnosis aims to determine the drivers that will increase employee engagement levels. Finding meaning at work, where employees feel a sense of belonging, have the freedom to be who they are, and have the chance to make a difference, has the potential to be a beneficial way of bringing employers and employees closer together, according to a 2007 Penna research report.

Workers are drawn to companies where they may find purpose in their employment. Researchers from Penna (2007) have also developed a new model that they named the "Hierarchy of engagement," which is similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In the end, compensation and perks are necessities. After these demands are met, an employee looks for possibilities for growth, the chance to advance, and the inclusion of their leadership style into the model. After achieving all of the previously mentioned lower-level goals, the employee searches for a value-meaning alignment, which is demonstrated at work by a genuine sense of connection, a shared purpose, and a shared sense of meaning.

Research Gap

Over the past few years, there has been a rapid development in the Indian automobile industry as major global players have entered this sector in view of its untapped potential.

Five percent of the total FDI in the Indian economy went towards the automobile sector in 2019 (IBEF, 2020). This scenario requires the organizations involved in this industry to remain ahead of competition and optimize their performance to stay viable in the global market. Thus, the automobile sector must attach huge significance to organizational productivity, and therefore, to the development of a positive work attitude among its employees. The present study looks at the measures adopted by organizations to increase employee engagement towards the organization. The findings of this study will showcase a variety of practices and strategies that have been put to practical use by national and international companies to further the voluntary participation of employees in the growth of their organization. Since, there is an extreme scarcity of empirical studies related to employee engagement practices in the automobile sector, there is unfortunately little evidence to support any gaps in the adequacy of existing approaches in these organizations. However, the current study intends to bridge this knowledge gap by investigating what determines success from the viewpoint of employees as well as employers.

Research Questions

The literature in context to employee engagement raises certain questions, which the current manuscript attempts to answer:

1. What practices make employee engagement more effective?
2. What strategies do communication leaders use to engage their employees to increase profits?
3. What are the ten quick strategies that could be employed by the organization to enhance employee engagement in the organization?

Objective

The prime objective of this study is to identify various employee engagement practices adopted in automotive units.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the present study, primary data was collected through structured questionnaire comprising of questions related to effectiveness of employee engagement practices in light of objectives formulated for the study. More than 1500 questionnaires were distributed among 15 selected automobile companies located in Gurugram, Manesar and Bawal belt in India. The return response rate was 1126 questionnaire's out of 1500 distributed questionnaires, 843 responses were found to be adequate for performing analysis after discarding outliers and inadequacy of Data. The nature of study is descriptive by adopting stratified Random Sampling, further applying EFA to identify employee engagement practices. The Table-1 Listed below represents companies located at Gurugram, Manesar & Bawal region of India.

Table 1: Selected Automotive Companies from Gurugram, Manesar & Bawal

S.no.	Name of the Company
1	JTEKT India Limited (Formerly Sona Koyo Steering Systems Ltd.), Gurugram
2	Suzuki Motorcycle India, Gurugram
3	Hero Motors Ltd, Gurugram
4	Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, Gurugram
5	DELPHI Automotive Systems Pvt Ltd, Gurugram
6	Minda Industries Ltd, Manesar
7	Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt Ltd (HMSI), Manesar
8	Denso Haryana Pvt Ltd, Manesar
9	FCC Clutch India Pvt Ltd, Manesar
10	Mitsubishi Electric Automotive India Pvt Ltd, Manesar
11	Musashi Auto Parts India Pvt Ltd, Bawal
12	Fujitsu Ten Minda India Pvt Ltd, Bawal
13	Sankei Giken India Pvt. Ltd. Bawal
14	Rane NSK Steering Systems Limited., Bawal
15	Polyplastics Automotive India Pvt Ltd., Bawal

Data Analysis & Interpretation

The Current section presents and discusses analysis of data upon application of tools and techniques obtained, on the data collected from respondents. The data used for analysis was collected from respondents with the help of distribution of Structured questionnaire, drafted in line of the objective of the study, all the interpretations are made in accordance with Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The data in Table No 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study sample. Gender distribution indicates that the majority are male (77.1%), while females constitute only 22.9%, indicating a predominantly male workforce. Marital status reveals that most respondents are single (82.4%), with fewer being married (15.8%) or separated/divorced (1.8%). The age distribution shows that the largest group of employees falls in the 36–45 years age bracket, which is 45.6%, followed by 26–35 years, which is 21.9%, above 45 years, which is 17.9%, and 18–25 years, which is 14.6%. This indicates that the workforce is mainly mid-career professionals.

Table 2: Demographic Profiling of Respondents

Respondents	Demographics	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	650	77.1
	Female	193	22.9
Marital Status	Single	695	82.4
	Married	133	15.8
	Separated/Divorced	15	1.8
Age	18-25 Years	123	14.6
	26-35 Years	185	21.9
	36-45 Years	384	45.6
	Above 45 Years	151	17.9

Education	< TILL 10+2	464	55.0
	Graduation	260	30.8
	Post Graduation	85	10.1
	Above Post Graduation	34	4.0
Annual Remuneration	0-4 LPA	390	46.3
	4-8 LPA	232	27.5
	8-12 LPA	136	16.1
	> 12 LPA	85	10.1

Source: Primary Survey

KMO- KMO and Bartlett's Test

Before conducting the EFA, it was necessary to run a test of sphericity and then the measure of sampling adequacy in SPSS. The appropriate number of factors to be extracted involved using principal components analysis with varimax rotation as well as taking into account Eigenvalues (Hair et al., 2015). The main purposes of EFA were to investigate whether items did indeed load as they should for their respective constructs based on previous study findings. A four factor solution accounted for 61.586% of the cumulative variance (Table 4.15). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.845, which exceeded the benchmark value of 0.5, and also Bartlett's test of sphericity had a significant level of $\chi^2 = 10355.969$, $df = 231$, $p < .001$ (Table 4.13). More importantly, KMO values for all factors were more than the minimum threshold of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1974), meaning that proper sampling was done for factors.

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.845
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	10355.969
	df	231
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Primary Survey

Table 4: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	of Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	of Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	of Cumulative %
1	6.568	29.853	29.853	6.568	29.853	29.853	4.530	20.590	20.590
2	2.536	11.528	41.381	2.536	11.528	41.381	3.382	15.375	35.965
3	2.284	10.384	51.765	2.284	10.384	51.765	3.120	14.183	50.148
4	2.161	9.820	61.586	2.161	9.820	61.586	2.516	11.437	61.586
5	1.476	6.709	68.294						
6	.992	4.507	72.802						
7	.700	3.181	75.982						
8	.638	2.898	78.880						
9	.615	2.797	81.677						
10	.515	2.341	84.018						
11	.445	2.025	86.043						
12	.428	1.948	87.990						
13	.360	1.637	89.627						
14	.340	1.546	91.174						
15	.324	1.474	92.647						
16	.292	1.328	93.975						
17	.284	1.289	95.264						
18	.242	1.099	96.363						
19	.228	1.034	97.397						
20	.214	.975	98.372						
21	.184	.834	99.206						

22 .175 .794 100.000

Source: Primary Survey Reliability of Data

To measure the scale reliabilities through identified factors, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated. All factors indicated reliability value above than 0.70. Nunnally (1978) stated that Cronbach's alpha coefficient must be above than 0.70. Later, Hair et al., (2015, P. 125) had suggested 0.60 as minimum value for alpha coefficient for reliability which could be employed in exploratory research. In this scale, the value of alpha coefficient ranged between 0.690 to 0.802 which indicated acceptability and reliability of the scales. Validity is the extent to which a scale or set of measures accurately represents the concept of interest.

Conceptual validity or face validity is the most popularly employed measurement scale validity. Further, Hair et al., (2015) also opine that Convergent the degree to which two measures of the same concept are correlated and discriminant validity, are the two forms of assessing the measures or items validity. The loadings of various items ranged from 0.641 to 0.897 which was showing higher value than the minimum acceptable value (>0.50). Results from factor analysis along with the percentage of total variance for each factor and Calculated

Labeling of Factors: Employee Engagement Practices

In factor labelling procedure, items that indicate the similar meaning within factors were considered. These are work life balance, growth & development, communication, and safety & security. The factors or bunches of items were different from each other in meaning or in term of employee engagement response. The table 5 below represents results obtained after application of EFA- Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table 5: Results of EFA

Factor with items	Factor Loading	Reliability (Cronbach α)	AVE
Work life balance		0.901	0.628
EPS7	0.801		
EPS9	0.797		
EPS6	0.792		
EPS8	0.785		
EPS11	0.76		
EPS10	0.739		
EPS12	0.687		
Growth & development		0.864	0.702
EPS19	0.825		
EPS21	0.787		
EPS22	0.736		
EPS13	0.723		
EPS17	0.659		
Communication		0.854	0.632
EPS16	0.897		
EPS18	0.848		
EPS20	0.777		
EPS15	0.724		
Safety & security		0.780	0.610
EPS2	0.862		
EPS1	0.853		
EPS5	0.718		
EPS3	0.641		

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis, Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Source: Primary Survey Major Findings

In line to the objective of the study, the researcher aimed to examine various employee engagement practices adopted by 15 selected automotive units located in Gurugram-Manesar- Bawal Industrial belt. As depicted in results presented above, it was found that employee engagement Practices followed by organizations are for work life Balances Growth & Development, communications, and Safety & Security aspect of employees.

Work Life Balance (WLB): The significant elements for work life balance were sense of belongingness, stress release programs and Autonomy.

Growth & Development (G & D): The results depict significant elements of growth and development practices comprising of opportunities to undertake challenging role, learning of new skills, fair Reward & Pay management system and transparent appraisal system.

Communication: The set of Communication Practices comprise of Significant aspects of communication such as clarity on role and job, guidance & mentoring, relationship among members and peers with fair and adequate policy on feedback.

Safety & Security (S & S): The practice of employee engagement on safety and security was significant on safe environment to employees, welfare measures taken to improve quality of life of employees. The most significant aspect under this practice was identified as measures to ensure sense of job security and stability among employees.

CONCLUSION

Employee Engagement comprises of set of Practices or activities by the organization at the workplace offering conducive work environment for the employees. Post consideration of relevance and significance of employee engagement the study aimed to examine perceived effectiveness of Employee Engagement practices with a special reference to the Automobile sector of Gurugram-Manesar-Bawal Industrial belt. The findings of the current study are aligned with the convention of notion that Organization practicing employee engagement practices result in better performance, increased employee productivity and low absenteeism at work. (Duncan, Nd; Kular, Gatesby, Ras, Soanne & Truss 2008; lockwood, 2007; Markos & Sridevi 2010). Employee engagement and organizational performance results are tightly related, according to the literature. Employers that foster employee engagement see decreases in staff attrition and leaver intent, as well as increases in output, profitability, expansion, and customer satisfaction. Conversely, organizations that have disgruntled workers lose out on opportunities for improvement, squander time and talent, have less dedication from staff, deal with a higher rate of employee absenteeism, have lower customer service, lower productivity, and lower operating and net profit margins

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