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Employee Engagement in The Right Direction in Academia: Strategies and Impact on Organizational Performance with Reference To Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Employee engagement is a key factor that influences organizational performance. Employee engagement has been noted as a major issue facing higher education institutions. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the determinants of employee engagement in higher education and investigate whether they align with the institution's long-term objectives. Also, this research investigates the most effective employee engagement practices in higher education.

Keyword: Employee Engagement, Organizational Performance.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of employee engagement is complex and has a big influence on the performance of a firm. It is crucial to know how to effectively direct and guide employee engagement projects in the proper direction in order to guarantee their efficacy and alignment with business objectives. Organizations may effectively channel their employee engagement activities with the aid of a number of techniques and best practices.

Workplace culture, employee retention, and organisational productivity are all directly impacted by employee engagement, which is a crucial component of human resource management. It symbolises the sentimental attachment that workers feel to their company, which boosts motivation and output [1]. Companies understand how important it is to maintain talented workers' motivation and engagement to accomplish desired results. The integration of various behavioural elements, including dedication, involvement, attachment, energy, discretionary effort, positive attitude, and psychological presence, that collectively transform employee potential into performance and favorably influence organisational success is commonly referred to as employee engagement.

Today, some of educational institutions sell degrees rather than abilities. Institutions that have a poor image due to students' absenteeism, previous mismanagement, inappropriate, misguided employee participation, low academic standards, low campus placement or negative student experiences may struggle to attract new students. To attract prospective students, educational institutions must engage in Employee engagement in the right direction and significant marketing initiatives. These institutions feel that they are engaged in legitimate marketing initiatives, but they are promoting which is not delivered by them, and it is a dishonest tactic. It will not work in the long run for the organization. The solution to this problem is employee engagement in the right direction.

What is Employee engagement, and Employee engagement in the right direction in higher educational institutions?

Employee Engagement:

According to *Quantum Workforce*, Employee engagement is a key indicator of a healthy and thriving workplace, where employees feel valued, involved, and connected to their roles and the company at large.

Glenn Elliott and Debra Corey (2018), Employee engagement is not a strategy, as it stems from an employee's emotional commitment to the organization, causing them to put in extra effort to ensure its success.

Employee engagement is the strength of the mental and emotional connection employees feel toward the organization that they work for, their team, and their work.

Employee engagement refers to the emotional commitment employees have toward their organization and its goals. Engaged employees tend to be more motivated, productive, and loyal. In today's competitive business environment, organizations that prioritize employee engagement often experience higher performance levels and better retention rates. Here, critical challenges for employers are to engage employees in the right direction, but are forced to engage them in some other activities, which are not the best fit for academics, because students' attendance is low.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Namrata Sandhu, Deeksha Guglani , Dilpreet (2018) Employee engagement is a strategic initiative that drives employee performance, achievement, and continuous improvement, resulting from the organization's interaction with people, driving business results.

Unadkat, Parita Krishnakant(2024) Employees play a crucial role in a company's activities, acting as controllers. They are divided into leaders and subordinates, with leaders managing their subordinates to achieve superior performance. Good employee performance is a growing trend in companies. Human resource management now focuses on employee engagement and involvement, which is the emotional commitment employees have towards the organization and its values. In today's business landscape, employee engagement is a pivotal determinant of an organization's performance.

Dr Bhabhatosh Sahu (2023) Aligning employees with the company's strategy is crucial for organizational success.

It fosters engagement, enhances contribution, and motivates employees. Prioritizing this alignment creates a cohesive workforce dedicated to achieving the company's vision.

Kasinathan S, Rajee M (2011) The level of commitment and participation a worker has with their company and its principles is known as employee engagement. An engaged worker understands the company environment and collaborates with coworkers to enhance job performance and benefits the organization

According to Woilba Employee engagement in education is crucial, despite challenges like workloads and policy changes. Strategies like supportive leadership, professional development, recognition, rewards, and technology use can enhance engagement.

Savita Singh et.al. (2023) supportive work environment, fair supervision, positive relationships, and adequate workspace increase faculty engagement. Management supports research, financial support, and conference costs, fostering a friendly work environment and promoting high-quality results.

OBJECTIVE

To study the determinants of employee engagement in higher education and investigate whether they align with the institution's long-term objectives

Methodology

Data Collection method

Study Area –The study pertains to Colleges and universities of Madhya Pradesh

Study – The Present Study is both descriptive and analytical, based on primary and secondary Data.

Sample: 50 Faculty members

Sampling technique: Convenience sampling is used for research. A convenience sample includes the individuals who happen to be most accessible to the researcher.

Sources of Data: Primary data is collected from colleges and universities. The secondary data is collected from publications of the Government of India, Various books, periodicals, journals, newspapers and websites.

Method Of analysis

Gallup's Q12 framework is used in research papers. A **3 pointer scale** is used for surveys to measure respondents' attitudes, opinions, or behaviors. The scale can be used to

measure High, Moderate and Low agreement with a statement. Gallup's Q12 framework is a scientifically validated employee engagement survey designed to measure workplace satisfaction and motivation. It consists of 12 key determinants that assess various aspects of employee experience, including clarity of expectations, Resources and equipment, strength and utilization, Recognition and praise, leadership support, Professional development, opinion matter, Company's Mission & Purpose, Commitment to Quality Work, Strong Workplace Relationships, Performance Feedback and Encouragement for Development.

Q12 Details

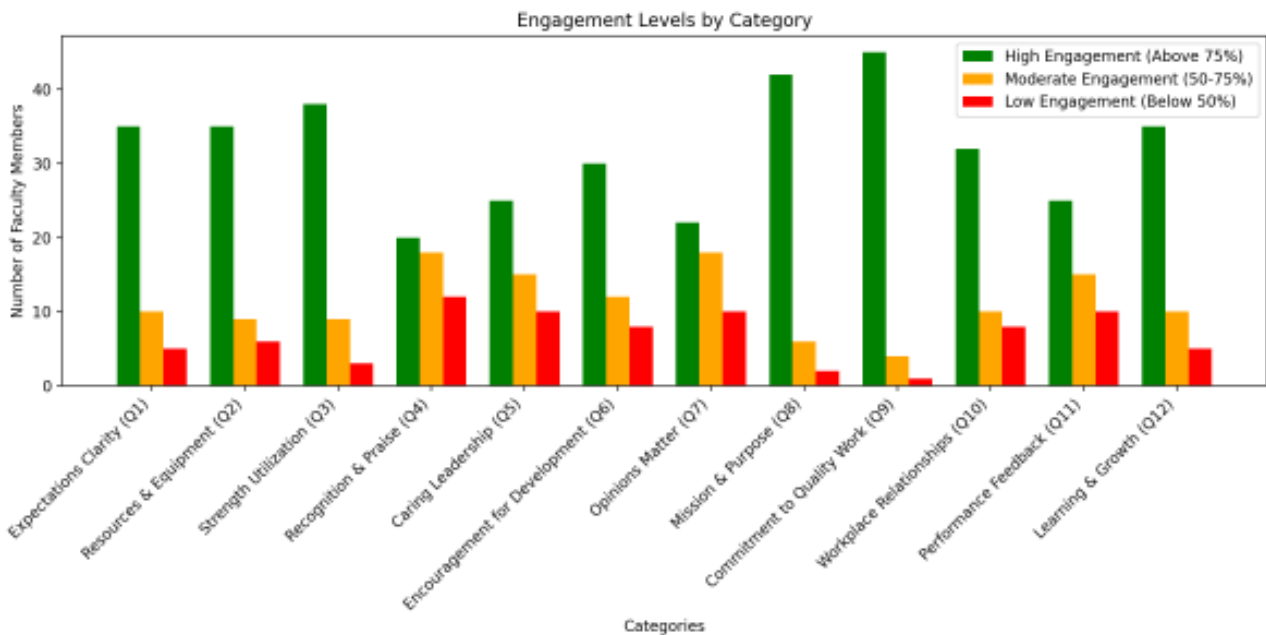
1. Expectations Clarity:
Do you clearly understand what is expected of you at work?
2. Resources & Equipment:
Do you have the tools and resources needed to perform your job effectively?
3. Strength Utilization:
Do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day at work?
4. Recognition & Praise:
Have you received recognition or praise for doing good work in the last week?
5. Caring Leadership:
Does your supervisor or someone at work seem to care about you as a person?
6. Encouragement for Development:
Is there someone at work who encourages your professional growth?
7. Opinions Matter:
Do your opinions seem to count in your workplace?
8. Company's Mission & Purpose:
Does the mission of your institution make you feel your job is important?
9. Commitment to Quality Work:
Do your colleagues strive to produce high-quality work?
10. Strong Workplace Relationships:
Do you have a best friend or close bond with colleagues at work?
11. Performance Feedback:
In the last six months, has someone at work discussed your progress with you?
12. Encouragement for Development:
Is there someone at work who encourages your professional growth?

According to **Jim Schleckser (2017)** several organisations have successfully implemented Gallup's Q12 framework to enhance employee engagement and workplace satisfaction. Here are some examples: Q4, Q8, and Q11 were implemented by Wells Fargo. In the Ritz-Carlton, Q9, Q10, and Q12 were used. Southwest Airlines implemented Q5, Q6, and Q10, while Google applied Q2 and Q12.

Statistical Breakdown for 50 Faculty Members in Institutions of Bhopal

After conducting the survey, Faculty Members' responses can be categorised into **high engagement (75 % + positive responses)**, **moderate engagement (50-75%)**, and **low engagement (below 50%)**. Here's a breakdown:

Q12 Category	High Engagement (Above 75%)	Moderate Engagement (50-75%)	Low Engagement (Below 50%)
Expectations Clarity (Q1)	35 Faculty Members (70%)	10 Faculty Members (20%)	5 Faculty Members (10%)
Resources & Equipment (Q2)	35 Faculty Members (70%)	9 Faculty Members (18%)	6 Faculty Members (12%)
Strength Utilization (Q3)	38 Faculty Members (76%)	9 Faculty Members (18%)	3 Faculty Members (6%)
Recognition & Praise (Q4)	20 Faculty Members (40%)	18 Faculty Members (36%)	12 Faculty Members (24%)
Caring Leadership (Q5)	25 Faculty Members (50%)	15 Faculty Members (30%)	10 Faculty Members (20%)
Encouragement for Development (Q6)	30 Faculty Members (60%)	12 Faculty Members (24%)	8 Faculty Members (16%)
Opinions Matter (Q7)	22 Faculty Members (44%)	18 Faculty Members (36%)	10 Faculty Members (20%)
Mission & Purpose (Q8)	42 Faculty Members (84%)	6 Faculty Members (12%)	2 Faculty Members (4%)
Commitment to Quality Work (Q9)	45 Faculty Members (90%)	4 Faculty Members (8%)	1 Faculty Member (2%)
Workplace Relationships (Q10)	32 Faculty Members (64%)	10 Faculty Members (20%)	8 Faculty Members (16%)
Performance Feedback (Q11)	25 Faculty Members (50%)	15 Faculty Members (30%)	10 Faculty Members (20%)
Encouragement for Development (Q12)	35 Faculty Members (70%)	10 Faculty Members (20%)	5 Faculty Members (10%)



Analysis

Interpretation of Trends

Areas of Strength

Faculty Members **strongly align with institutional purpose (Q8) and commitment to quality work (Q9)**, suggesting a well-grounded mission and professional standards. **Expectations clarity (Q1) and strength utilization (Q3)** are fairly high, meaning Faculty Members generally understand their roles and apply their skills effectively.

Areas Needing Improvement

Recognition (Q4) is relatively low, suggesting that Faculty Members are underappreciated. Opinions matter (Q7) scores show that less than half feel their voices are valued—indicating potential communication gaps with leadership. Performance Feedback (Q11) and Caring Leadership (Q5) also have room for improvement, showing a need for stronger interaction between Faculty Members and administrators.

Tailored Recommendations for Faculty Members' Engagement

Strengthen Recognition & Praise (Q4)

Implement regular Faculty Members appreciation initiatives (e.g., monthly recognition, peer awards). Encourage leadership to publicly acknowledge contributions in meetings or newsletters

Overall Trends:

- The highest engagement is observed in **Commitment to Quality Work (90%)**, followed closely by **Mission & Purpose (84%)**, **Recognition & Praise (40%)**, **Opinions Matter (44%)**, and **Workplace Relationships (64%)** have relatively lower engagement compared to other categories.
- Moderate engagement remains fairly distributed across categories, with percentages ranging between **8%-36%**.
- Low engagement** is particularly notable in **Recognition & Praise (24%)**, **Opinions Matter (20%)**, and **Workplace Relationships (16%)**, suggesting that faculty members might feel undervalued or lack strong professional relationships.

Key Observations:

- Strength Utilization (76%)** is encouraging, indicating that most faculty feel their talents are being used effectively.
- Encouragement for Development (60%)** suggests that faculty members are fairly supported in their growth, but there's room for improvement.
- Performance Feedback (50%)** and **Caring Leadership (50%)** indicate that half the faculty

feel adequately recognized, while the other half may need more constructive guidance.

Potential Areas for Improvement:

- **Recognition & Praise (40%)** has the lowest engagement—suggesting that faculty might not be receiving adequate appreciation for their contributions.
- **Opinions Matter (44%)** and **Workplace Relationships (64%)** could benefit from initiatives to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment.
- Strengthening leadership and feedback processes could enhance faculty motivation and performance.

Strategies for Employee Engagement in the right direction

Employee engagement is crucial for organizational performance, contributing to higher productivity, improved customer satisfaction, reduced turnover rates, greater innovation, and financial growth. Strategies include effective leadership, professional development, recognition, work-life balance, and employee feedback. However, challenges such as resistance to change, ineffective leadership, and limited resources can hinder engagement. Institutional leaders face challenges such as communication gaps, a lack of recognition, limited growth opportunities, and workplace culture issues. To address these, leaders should provide transparent, inclusive communication, tailored recognition programs, clear career progression, professional development, and a positive work environment. Additionally, addressing student absenteeism is essential for institutional effectiveness.

According to ex-journey website, Investing in employees is crucial for business success. By prioritizing Employee Understanding, organizations can improve performance, retention, and customer experiences. The framework focuses on three pillars: culture, insight, and empathy. Culture fosters a supportive environment, while insight uses modern tools and data-driven strategies to understand employee needs and actions.

Challenges for Institutional leaders for employee engagement in right direction

Leaders face challenges in promoting employee engagement, including communication gaps, lack of recognition, limited growth opportunities, workplace culture issues, and employee well-being. Addressing these issues requires transparent, inclusive communication, tailored recognition programs, clear career progression, professional development, fostering a positive work environment, and

prioritizing employee well-being through supportive policies and work-life balance initiatives.

Student absenteeism is a significant issue for educational leaders, especially in some private institutions. Low student attendance often leads to faculty reassignment to unrelated tasks, impacting motivation, job satisfaction, and institutional effectiveness. To address this, institutions must strike a balance between faculty engagement, aligning with skills and expertise, and addressing broader challenges like student absenteeism. Strategic interventions like student engagement programs and faculty development initiatives can help.

Suggestion: The government should make a system of strict biometric attendance system for the students, which is directly connected to the University and Government Concern Departments. If the students get low attendance based on biometric attendance, students can be debarred from the Examination with a warning. If done two or three years in a row, Debarred from the complete Course. In order to increase their skills and abilities, students must attend the classes as per norms given by Government. Faculties must encourage, motivate students to attend classes. Today, some of educational institutions sell degrees rather than abilities. Institutions that have a poor image due to students' absenteeism, previous mismanagement, inappropriate, misguided employee participation, low academic standards, low campus placement or negative student experiences may struggle to attract new students. To attract prospective students, educational institutions must engage in Employee engagement in the right direction and significant marketing initiatives. These institutions feel that they are engaged in legitimate marketing initiatives, but they are promoting which is not delivered by them, and it is a dishonest tactic. It will not work in the long run for the organization. The solution to this problem is employee engagement in the right direction

CONCLUSION

For the success of the organization, there are two crucial components very important First, Employee should be engaged, and Employee engagement in the proper direction is the two components of a successful organization. Organizations could maintain a competitive edge, boost productivity, and cultivate a pleasant workplace culture by investing in engagement techniques. Adopting successful engagement strategies will support the long-term viability of the company. A complete strategy that supports a happy work environment, allows workers to give their best work,

and is in line with engagement drivers is necessary to steer employee engagement in the correct direction. Organizations may develop a highly engaged workforce that propels long-term growth and success by putting the above tactics and best practices into effect. Technology, HR procedures, and leadership will all remain crucial in creating a productive and happy workplace.

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