

EXPLORING THE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN TELECOM SECTOR

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Abstract A service employee who is engaged can be characterized as enthusiastic, energetic, motivated, and passionate about his or her work; whereas, a disengaged worker is one who is apathetic, robotic, depersonalized, estranged, and withdrawn from her or his job (Salanova et al., 2005). So, it's an attitude held by the employees towards the organization which ultimately improves performance of employee within the job. This paper focuses on the exploring the factorial dimensions which ultimately decide employee engagement in private telecom players in the state of J&K. Data have been collected from 150 employees working in major private telecom players in J&K through simple random sampling. The factorial dimensions that ground employee engagement are identified. Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation and their inter-relationship with each other have been studied using Pearson's product moment correlation. Regression analysis is used to check the impact of employee engagement on employee intention to stay in organization. Finding of the paper reports the five factorial dimensions of employee engagement namely: 'job characteristics', 'rewards and recognition', 'organizational justice', 'perceived organizational support', and 'job satisfaction'. Further, results indicate that employee engagement predicts the level of employee intention to stay in the organization.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Employee Intention to Stay, Factorial Dimensions, Telecom Industry

INTRODUCTION AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

In today's dynamic business environment, organizations are facing a highly competitive situation. Globalization and privatization have led to an extensive increase in competition among organizations. They are facing like rapid innovation, new technologies, economic uncertainties, fierce competition, and demanding customers and their expectations. Every organization wants to reap beneficial features over others and employee engagement is the unsurpassed tool for it. Employee engagement is the level of commitment, enthusiasm, and involvement an employee has towards his work which can be deliberately seen in his/her loyalty towards the work. In today's highly competitive configuration, organizations can achieve competitive advantage of workforce only when workforce reveals firm commitment towards their everyday jobs. Higher productivity, reliability, higher self-motivation, confidence to express new ideas, loyalty towards organization, reduced employee turnover, and lower absenteeism are some of the attributes of a wholly engaged employee, who in turn acts as valuable assets of an organization. Nowadays, telecom organizations are being a part of service industry, and thus,

the customer focus and customer service are the distinctive factors for the telecom companies. To satisfy their customers, they must have customer-oriented employees; so, employee engagement is very much crucial for longer sustainability. The telecom industry is highly competitive as its employees have many options and offerings are hard to differentiate. With the increased competition, telecom service providers find it difficult to engage and retain the existing employee. Intention to stay refers to the staff's conscious and deliberate willingness to stay with the organization (Cho et al., 2009). However, in the current market scenario, telecom firms have to adopt various policies to ensure that their employee are engaged and also have an intention to stay. A thorough investigation supported with the detailed discussion with the key stakeholders of private companies had suggested that employee engagement varies across the companies on the basis of companies HR policies, market share, market conditions, etc. Further, it is believed that by understanding the factors that enhance employee engagement, companies can create something unique that is difficult to be imitated by competitors. Once the factors are known, employers or managers are able to avoid unnecessary problems in satisfying employee's needs.

Against this backdrop, the present study aims at empirically analysing various factorial dimensions of employee engagement in telecom sector and its impact on employee intention to stay in an organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Factorial Dimensions of Employee Engagement

According to Wellins et al. (2005), drivers of engagement lead to create an engaged environment and workforce. In addition, they have a positive influence on employee behaviour and attitude. Boon et al. (2006) identified four Human Resources Management practices namely: teamwork, empowerment, reward, and communication. Their results show that these Human Resources Management Practices are positively related with job engagement of employees. A study conducted by Vazirani (2007) finds out some important drivers that make the employee engaged; these are: Career Development, Leadership, Empowerment, Pay and Benefits, Health and Safety, Communication, and Job Satisfaction. Denison reports that organizations in which employees were participative in decision-making practices at higher levels have showed more employee engagement and their financial performance relative to their opponents gradually increased. Shrutee K. Bhalera (2013) in her study reports that workplace culture & work-life balance policies & practices followed in industries are major drivers for employee engagement. According to the study conducted by Saks (2006) and Balain (2009), perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and organizational justice are various antecedents of employee engagement. Hafiz A Rashid et al. (2005) found that employee engagement inclination differs from department to department on employee to employee basis and employee's mindset towards employee engagement is also different. Sarangi and Srivastava (2012) have identified key dimensions of organizational culture and communication which can shape employee engagement in telecoms. Study conducted by Menguc et al. (2013) examines the main effect of resources (autonomy, feedback, and support) on engagement and how the interaction among resources impacts engagement.

Evidence of May et al. (2004) suggested that the emotional experiences and well-being are related to employee engagement. Little and Little (2006) recognized that the employee engagement demonstrates its relationship to resultant variables is important to every organization, such as productivity, safety, employee retention, and customer service. Shuck et al. (2011) studied the relationship between job fit, affective commitment, psychological climate, and employee engagement, and the dependent

variables, discretionary effort, and intention to turnover. Result of study found that job fit, affective commitment, and psychological climate were all significantly related to employee engagement, whereas employee engagement was significantly related to both discretionary effort and intention to turnover.

A study by Ram and Prabhaka (2011) confirmed the effect of Job Characteristics, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards, Perceived Supervisor Support, Perceptions of Procedural Justice, and Perceptions of Distributive Justice on employee engagement.

Employee Intention to Stay

Kirschenbaum and Weisberg (1990) defined staying intention as employees' intention to stay in the present employment relationship with their current employer on long-term basis. This is an inverse concept of turnover intention or intention to quit. While intention to leave considers the employee's intent on leaving, intention to stay in contrast refers to the staff's conscious and deliberate willingness to stay with the organization (Cho et al., 2009). Walker (2001) identified seven factors which can encourage the employee's staying intention: compensation and appreciation of the work performed; challenging work; opportunities to learn; positive relationships with colleagues; recognition of capabilities and performance contributions; good work-life balance; and good communication. Further Perryer et al. (2010) opined employees are more committed and likely to stay with the organization if they feel that the organization acted positively towards them and less likely to remain with the organization if they do not feel the positive act of the organization. Cho et al. (2009) proposed in their studies that if the employees have high organization commitment, it will motivate the employee to be more attached towards the organization thus increasing the employees' intention to stay. Further Cho et al. (2009) found that the increase of POS also increases the employees' intention to stay. AbuAIRub et al. (2009) investigated that nurses who reported more social support also reported more job satisfaction and more intention to stay. In addition to this, Saks (2006) concluded that work engagement is directly and positively related with employees' job satisfaction and has a negative relationship with employee turnover intentions. The more engaged employees are, the longer they would remain committed and such employees also stay longer with the organization (Ngobeni and Bezuidenhout, 2011). Towers Perrin Report (2003) found that 66% of highly engaged employees reported that they have no plans to leave compared to 36% of moderately engaged individuals and 12% of disengaged employees.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the main objectives of the study:

1. To identify various factorial dimensions of employee engagement.
2. To study the relationship between employee engagement and intention to stay in Telecom sector.

HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses framed for the present study are as follows:

H1: The various factors of employee engagement are significantly related with the overall employee engagement in telecom sector.

H2: There is significant positive impact of employee engagement on employee intention to stay in telecom sector.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology which includes the collection of data, the construction of questionnaire and the pre-test, the sampling size, and the framework of analysis.

Collection of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the telecom employees directly with the help of a questionnaire. Secondary data were collected from journals and websites.

Sample and Response Rate

Simple random sampling was used to select the employees from private telecom players in the state of J&K. A total of 200 questionnaire have been distributed and 150 completely filled questionnaires have been received from employees. Therefore, the response rate is 75%.

Construction of Questionnaire

The questionnaire used for the study consists of two parts. The first part relates to the demographic and other variables of the telecom employees and the second part comprises Employee Engagement Scale (EES). To find out the employee engagement, the researchers have developed their own scale on the bases of review of literature and the pilot study. In the process of constructing this scale, we examined various factorial dimensions of employee engagement and available scales. Initially, the 42 items were presented to a group of 15 employees. This was to evaluate whether employees found the items meaningful in the work environment and highlighted uncomfortable wording. Additionally, we considered evaluations from academics. Any required modifications were made accordingly. Response alternatives were given on a five-point rating scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The explanatory factor analyses of the EES revealed five factors (Note. KMO = .837; Barlett's test chi-square = 3346.658, df = 210, p = .000) total variance explained = 60%). The items are categorized into five factors, namely: job characteristics (4 items), rewards and recognitions (5 statements), organizational justice (9 items), perceived organizational support (3 statements), and job satisfaction (2 items). A four-item scale developed by Aurand et al. (2005) is adopted to measure employee intention to stay.

Table 1: Factor Loading of All Items

	Employee Engagement	Factor Loading	Eigen value	% of variance	Cumulative %	Communality
	Job Characteristics		9.272	28.951	28.951	
1.	My job permits me to decide myself how to go about doing the work.	.747				.638
2.	My job has a complete piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end.	.589				.533
3.	My job requires me to do many different things at work, using a variety of my skills and talents.	.609				.533
4.	My managers or co-workers let me know how well I am doing on my job.	.739				.629
	Rewards and Recognition		2.203	9.889	38.840	

	Employee Engagement	Factor Loading	Eigen value	% of variance	Cumulative %	Communality
5.	According to my performance in job, my pay raise.	.713				.596
6.	I feel secure in my job.	.722				.642
7.	My job offers me freedom and opportunities.	.746				.660
8.	I receive respect from the peers.	.676				.497
9.	My organization provides me training and development opportunities to perform my job well.	.654				.514
	Organizational Justice		1.690	9.889	47.033	
10.	The outcomes I receive reflect the effort I have put into my work.	.673				.619
11.	The outcomes I receive are appropriate for the work I have completed.	.720				.609
12.	My outcomes reflect what I have contributed to the organization.	.592				.498
13.	The outcomes of my work justify my performance.	.750				.581
14.	I am able to express my views and feelings during those procedures.	.793				.670
15.	I influence over the outcomes arrived by those procedures.	.826				.736
16.	Those procedures have been applied consistently.	.736				.657
17.	Those procedures have been based on accurate information.	.684				.581
18.	I have been able to appeal the outcomes arrived at by those procedures.	.688				.575
	Perceived organizational support		1.496	6.826	53.859	
19.	My organization really cares about my well-being.	.807				.620
20.	My organization is willing to help me if I need a special favour.	.758				.690
21.	Help is available from my organization when I have a problem.	.703				.649
	Job Satisfaction		1.365	6.754	60.614	
22.	All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	.777				.672
23.	In general, I like working here.	.765				.635

Note: KMO = .837; Bartlett's test chi-square = 3346.658, df = 210, p = .000; total variance explained = 60%

Table 2: The Alpha Coefficients of all the Factors

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha
Job characteristics	0.709
Organizational justice	0.875
Perceived Organization Support	0.799
Job satisfaction	0.890
Reward and recognition	0.805
Intention to stay	0.898
Overall Reliability	0.882

Framework of Analysis

The data collected with the help of questionnaire are analysed with the help of descriptive statistics like

mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's product moment correlation.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis is carried out in the following parts:

Application of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation

Pearson's product moment correlation is used to find out the inter-relationship among the various factors of employee engagement. The hypothesis framed for this purpose is "the various factors of employee engagement are significantly related with the overall employee engagement in telecoms industry".

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation**Correlations**

		MEANJC	MEANRR	MEANOJ	MEANPOS	MEANJS	MEANJE
MEANJC	Pearson Correlation	1	.520**	.406**	.337**	.432**	.394**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
MEANRR	Pearson Correlation	.520**	1	.381**	.377**	.491**	.233**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.004
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
MEANOJ	Pearson Correlation	.406**	.381**	1	.438**	.229**	.217**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.005	.008
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
MEANPOS	Pearson Correlation	.337**	.377**	.438**	1	.475**	.181*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.027
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
MEANJS	Pearson Correlation	.432**	.491**	.229**	.475**	1	.204*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.005	.000		.012
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
MEAN EE	Pearson Correlation	.394**	.233**	.217**	.181*	.204*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.004	.008	.027	.012	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

JC- Job characteristics, OJ- Organizational justice, RR- Rewards and recognition POS- Perceived organizational support, JS - Job satisfaction

From Table 3, it is clear that in case of employees working in telecom sector, all the employee engagement factors namely 'job characteristics', 'rewards and recognition', 'organizational justice', 'perceived organizational support', and 'job satisfaction' are significantly related at 5% level of significance with overall employee engagement. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that the various factors of employee engagement are significantly related with the overall employee engagement in telecom sector.

Prediction of Intention to Stay Using Employee Engagement

This section deals with the prediction of the variable employee intention to stay using employee engagement. Therefore, the present study focused on the cause-and-effect

relationship between employee engagement and intention to stay using regression. It was intended to study the strength of influence of employee engagement on employee intention to stay.

Table 4: Regression Model Summary - Intention to Stay

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.609 ^a	.370	.349	.641

a. Predictors: (Constant), MEANJS, MEANDJ, MEANJC, MEANPOS, MEANRR

Table 5: Results of ANOVA for Employee Engagement Model

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.852	5	6.970	16.943	.000 ^a
	Residual	59.242	144	.411		
	Total	94.093	149			

a. Predictors: (Constant), MEANJS, MEANDJ, MEANJC, MEANPOS, MEANRR
b. Dependent Variable: MEANITS

Table 6

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.821	.578		-1.420	.158
	MEANJC	.040	.132	.025	.299	.765
	MEANRR	.231	.099	.197	2.331	.021
	MEANRJ	.270	.124	.241	4.563	.032
	MEANPOS	.158	.123	.105	1.282	.202
	MEANJS	.450	.119	.316	5.547	.000
a. Dependent Variable: MEANITS						

From the regression output it was found that all the factors constituting employee engagement scale, i.e., 'job characteristics', 'rewards and recognition', 'organizational justice', 'perceived organizational support', and 'job satisfaction' (OJ, RR, POS, JC, and JS) influence the strength of employee intention to stay. From Table 4, it can be seen that about 37% of intention to stay can be explained by employee engagement when multiple determination coefficient ($R^2 = .370$) is considered. In other words, the independent variables' effect on intention to stay is 37%. This might explain the average score of intention to stay being low despite positive score of employee engagement factorial dimension. Potentially, other factors not measured in this study that made up another 68% of effect on retention intention might have stronger influence on such intention compared to OJ, RR, POS, JC, and JS combined. The beta coefficient of each variable indicates the relative importance of variables in the regression equation. The ANOVA, Table 5, generated in this test also shows a significant probability value ($p = 1/0.000$) and signifies that all the factorial dimensions of employee engagement, i.e., OJ, RR, POS, JC, and JS explain significantly intention to stay. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The results of the regression analysis indicate that the independent variable employee engagement have a significant impact in determining the staying intention level of the employees. The t-values in Table 6 imply that factorial dimension employee job satisfaction ($t/4$ 5.547) and organizational justice (4.563) are the most influential factors of employee engagement as they are statistically significant at 0.01 level of significance. The b values also suggest that (EE) factorial dimension organizational justice influences intention to stay up to 24% and job satisfaction has about 31% influence. This signifies the importance of organizational justice and employee satisfaction among

employees to boost engagement and hence their intention to stay within the organization. Desirable organizational justice system comprises both distributive justice (perceived fairness in reward allocation) and procedural justice (the procedures used in allocating rewards and fairness in treatment) procedural justice towards employees that will motivate the employee to engage in organization. Field studies of the U.S. employees have found that both distributive and procedural justice predict employee outcomes such as intent job satisfaction, evaluation of supervision, employee engagement, and organizational commitment (Folger and Konovsky, 1989; James, 1993; McFarlin and Sweeney, 1992; Sweeney and McFarlin, 1993; 1997). Further, organizational justice may be more strongly linked with job satisfaction and intent to stay (Folger and Konovsky, 1989; McFarlin and Sweeney 1992). A Study conducted by Fields et al. (2000) indicates that organizational justice which is an important factorial dimension of employee engagement has a larger effect on intention to stay. When employees feel unfairly treated, they respond both affectively (e.g., low commitment) and behaviourally (e.g., turnover) (Latham and Pinder, 2005). Further JS has been found to reduce turnover, absenteeism, and psychological distress as well as to increase employees' commitment to their work organizations (Lease, 1998 and Mueller, 1981). The paper thus elicits the key factorial dimensions of employee engagement on the current job which can be nurtured by the managers and employers to provide an amicable environment for the employees to become positively committed to their job. Hence, this study widens the scope of identifying measures that will enhance organization factors like OJ, RR, JC, and OS. Also, the company has to invest in building a harmonious environment that will enhance employee job satisfaction which will ultimately develop the engagement level and shape their intention to stay on the current job. The future scope of the study is quite wide from different perspectives. This study can be conducted by including other states of Indian. In-depth analysis on the specific factors identified may be carried out which can give rise to individual effect of each

factor on employee engagement and employee intention to stay. A comparative study may also be made between private and government telecom players in the state of J&K.

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