

# **What spurs up Employee Engagement: An Empirical study in Uttar Pradesh, India**

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## **Abstract**

The world has become a smaller place to play where competition has become the name of the game. All eyes are on the most crucial and essential resource of any organization i.e. human resource. There are only two most difficult things in an organization. One is to recruit and select employees and second is to sustain them in the company over a period of time. The latter being arguably the illusory thing witnessed with utmost rarity. With a blitzkrieg pace of the business, each organization tries to capitalize on any potential weakness of the opponent market player and perhaps the growing dissent and dissatisfaction among employees could make or break for any organization climbing up the ladder. Employees hence play a pivotal role in the dynamics of the organization and hence need to cultivate what is called a sense of organizational citizenship. Employee engagement - an extension of the latter concept is still an emerging area which has been a talking point over a last decade. This refers to the situation when employees consider themselves as part and parcel of the organization whereby mutual growth of employees is harnessed to leverage the success rate of the organization. Such an endeavor is possible only when employee engagement initiatives are given shape and direction. However, initiatives could only be prudent if the underlying parameters of the construct could be well analyzed. This research paper tries to gauge all determinants and variables which ultimately consolidate into a final construct of employee engagement. The study is specific to primary schools in Uttar Pradesh where an attempt is made to chalk out all possible influences responsible for a conspicuous lower level of employee engagement.

**Keywords: Employee Engagement, Organizational citizenship, Human Resource Management, Employee Engagement Initiatives**

## **1. Introduction:**

Times have gone by and one resource for a company which has been the most decisive factor leading to its success and goodwill is its human resource. Perhaps it is the only non-substitutable factor of production for

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any organization and the most tedious to handle as well. Human resource management is a skill sought after but possessed by none in its very essence since the very success of it depends upon infinite parameters and the very base of the parameters is very subtle and dynamic indeed. Therefore, it makes it imperative for a company to look after its employees like gold dust. They need to inculcate the feeling of belongingness among employees so that they could feel a sense of engagement with the organization. The engaged employee adds more value to his organization and leads the organization forward. The presence of employee engagement is a sign of good working atmosphere in an organization. In fact an employee's high engagement levels could make a difference for the organizations looking for turnaround against the rising tides of competition. The construct of employee engagement is a complex one and can be configured depending upon the nature of the company and its employees. Some attempts have been made to study the dynamics of the former concept but still not a lot has been done in Indian context. Hence, therein lies the originality and novelty of this paper where efforts have been put in to evolve and refine the existing framework of employee engagement in Indian context. Getting an idea of what works and what doesn't for employees in India would necessarily provide a base for further policy making intended to create a conducive working environment for one and all. Further, the research intends to find out what creates bottlenecks for the primary education industry when it comes to getting commitment from the employees (teaching and non-teaching alike). It however remains to be seen whether the results from such a survey could be applied with confidence to other industries as well.

## **2. Literature Review:**

Mount, Harter, Witt, and Barrick (2004) demarcated engagement as a state of high motivation internally.

Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004), further explained engagement as a favorable attitude and behavior of an employee towards its organization. An engaged employee is conscious of his responsibilities and works in tandem with others to add value to the organization. Their work also emphasizes that both the organizations and employees should cooperate with each other to develop such an understanding in the overall organization.

Schaufeli et al. (2002) define employee engagement as a state of mind which is intrinsically satisfying and is marked by utmost dedication and positive energy of the employees. Furthermore it is not a fleeting but rather a continuous state of behavior channelized towards the organization.

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) furthered the concept of employee engagement as an indicator of the level of involvement of the individual with the work.

Hewitt (2004) stressed upon employee engagement as the employees need to stay with the organization his or her desire to do well beyond the set established norms of the organization.

Wellins and Concelman (2004) emphasized that “Employee engagement is that push which motivates the employees to greater levels of performance. This is a blend of loyalty and commitment which an employee shows towards his organization.

Little and Little (2006) have also attempted to simplify the framework of employee engagement. They have analysed various influences such as behaviour and attitude, relationship with similar influences and issues in its measurement and analysis.

Woodruffe (2006) has provided ways to engage employees. Some of these ways include advancement, autonomy, civilized treatment, employer commitment, environment etc..

Rothmann and Joubert (2007) specified that organizational support and growth prospects were sound indicators of employee engagement specific to the mining industry.

Towers Perrin (2003) pointed out that employee engagement is the output when one organization provides for a strategic and operational fit between itself and employees.

### **3. Research Objectives:**

- To apply a framework for Employee engagement in primary education industry in Uttar Pradesh, India.
- To study differences in levels of employee engagement across socio demographic and economic profiles.

### **4. Research Hypotheses:**

#### **Hypothesis 1:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between gender and Employee Engagement level of employees.

#### **Hypothesis 2:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between age and Employee Engagement level of employees.

#### **Hypothesis 3:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between educational qualification and Employee Engagement level of employees.

#### **Hypothesis 4:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between income levels and Employee Engagement level of employees.

#### **Hypothesis 5:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between nature of employment and Employee Engagement level of employees.

### **Hypothesis 6:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between distance travelled and Employee Engagement level of employees.

### **Hypothesis 7:**

H0: There is no significant relationship between performance appraisal faced and Employee Engagement level of employees.

## **5. Research Methodology:**

The research design is exploratory to start with and is later supported by conclusive research design. The sampling technique is convenient sampling technique and simple random sampling used to select a representative sample. The industry selected is education Industry in general and primary schools all over Uttar Pradesh in India in particular. The sampling units are drawn from primary schools in Uttar Pradesh, India. The sample size is 200 in total and the sampling frame is all teachers engaged in teaching in primary schools in Uttar Pradesh, India. The data is collected using questionnaire and questions are asked on parameters making up the index of employee engagement. The framework has been taken from UNC executive development studies and comprises ten questions on opportunities, recognition, expectations, appraisal, job clarity. The questions have been modified and contextualized as per the requirements of the education Industry and research. The index or simply the score was computed by unweighted aggregation method. The data is keyed in SPSS 20.0 and the above hypotheses were tested on a 5 % level of significance using one way ANOVA.

## **6. Discussions and Analysis:**

### **6.1 Demographic Profile:**

Representative sample consisted of males and females alike. Most of the respondents surveyed belonged in the age group beyond 40 years. The educational qualification of the respondents highlighted that only around 17 percent had completed their post-graduation . It further showed that most teachers had an annual salary ranging between 1 to 2 Lacs which is a very modest figure. Further, most had contractual payments and their terms with the organization were temporary. We also find that nearly 30 percent of the employees had high levels of employee engagement with the organization and rest shared a level of indifference with the organization. Most of the people surveyed were new in the organization and most also had undergone performance appraisal process in their organizations.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	100	50.0	50.0
	Female	100	50.0	100.0

	Total	200	100.0	
Age(in Years)	20-40	123	61.5	61.5
	More than 40	77	38.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	
Educational Qualification	Intermediate	32	16.0	16.0
	Graduation	134	67.0	83.0
	Post-Graduation	34	17.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	
Annual Compensation(in Rs)	1-2 Lacs	132	66.0	66.0
	2-3 Lacs	39	19.5	85.5
	Greater than 3 Lacs	29	14.5	100
	Total	200	100	
Nature of Employment	Contractual / Temporary	130	65.0	65.0
	Permanent	70	35.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	
Geographical distance	Near by	108	54	54
	Far off	92	46	100
	Total	200	100	
Employee Satisfaction Score	2.00	22	11.0	11.0
	3.00	27	13.5	24.5
	4.00	43	21.5	46.0
	5.00	16	8.0	54.0
	6.00	34	17.0	71.0
	7.00	30	15.0	86.0
	8.00	22	11.0	97.0
	9.00	6	3.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	
Performance Appraisal	Yes	108	54	54
	No	92	46	100
	Total	200	100	

## 6.2 Correlation Analysis

The following table shows degree of correlation between various socio economic variables and employee satisfaction score. The table shows that there is a strong and positive correlation at 5 percent level of significance between each of the profiles such as Gender, Age, Education, Annual Compensation, Performance Appraisal, Geographical Location and Employee satisfaction score. The Pearson correlation test was applied on the data and the coefficient in each case was found to be greater than 0.5 suggesting that the degree of association is indeed a strong one.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis**

		Employee Satisfaction
Gender	Pearson Correlation	<b>.633**</b>

	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Age(in Years)	Pearson Correlation	<b>.555**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Education	Pearson Correlation	<b>.534**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Annual Compensation	Pearson Correlation	<b>.514**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Nature of Employment	Pearson Correlation	<b>.547**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Geographical Location	Pearson Correlation	<b>.877**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Performance Appraisal	Pearson Correlation	<b>.867**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	200
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	<b>1.000</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	200

### 6.3 One Way ANOVA

The following table shows the results of the one way ANOVA test conducted on the data. The test is conducted to find whether the employee engagement scores vary across each of the socio economic profiles. The results indicate that the value of test statistic in each of the case is less than 0.05 suggesting that the null hypothesis 1-7 should be rejected. The scores vary among males and females, across different age groups, among education groups, among various income groups, nature of employment, and geographical location indicating the need for the organizations to look into it for policy prioritizing aiming to enhance the congeniality of the working atmosphere with the ultimate objective to achieve a better employee engagement.

**Table 2: One Way ANOVA**

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age(in Years)	Between Groups	21.56	7	3.08	18.884	0.00
	Within Groups	31.315	192	0.163		

	Total	52.875	199			
Gender	Between Groups	23.387	7	3.341	24.207	0.00
	Within Groups	26.362	191	0.138		
	Total	49.749	198			
Education	Between Groups	55.407	7	7.915	17.992	0.00
	Within Groups	84.468	192	0.44		
	Total	139.875	199			
Annual Compensation	Between Groups	31.621	7	4.517	12.541	0.00
	Within Groups	69.159	192	0.36		
	Total	100.78	199			
Nature of Employment	Between Groups	18.472	7	2.639	16.329	0.00
	Within Groups	31.028	192	0.162		
	Total	49.5	199			
Geographical Location	Between Groups	49.68	7	7.097	.	.
	Within Groups	0	192	0		
	Total	49.68	199			
Performance Appraisal	Between Groups	46.048	7	6.578	347.714	0.00
	Within Groups	3.632	192	0.019		
	Total	49.68	199			

Test Statistic is significant at the 0.05 level.

### Findings:

- Males seemed to be more engaged with the employees
- Employees in the age group 20-40 seemed far more passionate about the work and possessed higher levels of employee engagement scores.
- Most teachers had graduation as their final qualification and only a few possessed post graduate degrees.
- Most teachers surveyed were comparatively new in their teaching assignments and length of service for which they served was not large
- Most had a modest salary and lacked the motivation and a sense of belonging to the organization.
- The teachers that actually travelled farther distances for reaching their respective organizations seemed to be more engaged with the employees
- It shows that most that had undergone a performance appraisal also showed higher engagement levels with the organization.

### Conclusion:

In times where the employees are motivated to develop organizational citizenship and a sense of belongingness, it becomes necessary to pinpoint the target group which needs more attention as compared to others. It becomes equally important to tailor the employee engagement initiatives as per the needs and demands of the employees for they play a centrifugal force in creating synergies. This research paper highlights that there exists significant differences across gender, age, income, performance appraisal nature of employment, education. Due care however should be taken while generalizing the results of the same industry to any other industry since the context making up the employee engagement across industries is different.

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