

## Precursor to Employee Engagement AMID Knowledge Workers

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**Abstract:** The main objective of this study is to critically analyze the precursor to employee engagement. The research methodology used in this research is descriptive research. In primary data, responses are collected through well framed questionnaires and direct interaction with the employees to selected sample of 550 respondents of information technology organisations in Bengaluru City. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions based on employee engagement precursor. To reduce the dimension of this an exploratory factor analysis was carried out and 3 factors explaining 65.26% of the variance were derived. The 3 precursors identified as professional contentment (Cronbach's alpha 0.940) career development (Cronbach's alpha 0.836) and job enrichment (Cronbach's alpha 0.826). The current study adds to the research pointing at precursors to employee's engagement among knowledge researchers.

**Key words:** Employee engagement, professional contentment, career development, job enrichment, information technology, methodology

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### INTRODUCTION

Competition among organisations is ferocious and the strategies to stay on top have led to changes in the way we do business. As more and more of the contemporary organizations add competition to their vocabularies, many realized that they cannot succeed unless the people they employ agree to contribute to their mission and survival. Information Technology (IT) organisations operate in intensely competitive environment which is characterized by hastily changing technology, evolving industry standards, recurrent new product introductions, price and cost reductions.

Bengaluru is known as the 'Silicon Valley of India' or IT capital of India because of its role as the nation's leading information technology exporter. Indian technological organisations like Infosys, Wipro and IBM are headquartered in Bengaluru. Strategic human resource management practitioners as well as researchers have realized that the competitive advantage organizations anticipate to create and sustain are only possible through the commitment, ingenuity, abilities and novelty of the workforce they employ, making them the most prolific assets. These assets and their capabilities have been considered precious, exceptional, inimitable and non-substitutable.

Employee engagement is the degree to which employees are motivated to contribute to organizational

success and are willing to apply discretionary effort to accomplishing tasks important to the achievement of organizational goals. A highly engaged employee will consistently deliver ahead of expectations. As organizations globalize and become more reliant on technology in a virtual working environment there is a greater need to connect and engage with employees to provide them with an organizational identity. Employee engagement levels have a direct impact on an employee's performance and consequently on the company's bottom-line. Engaged employees use their talent and strengths effectively at research every day to deliver high levels of performance consistently. High level of employee engagement keenly correlates to individual, group and corporate performance in areas such as retention, turnover, productivity, customer service and loyalty.

**Literature review:** Experts put forward that the ability to engage employees, making them partakers of the business, dedicated to the organization will be one of the biggest organizational challenges in the next 10 years (Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014). There is a decline in employee engagement level globally. About 8% employees in India are engaged with their companies (Grover, 2013). It is estimated that >30% of those who go to researcher report even partial engagement with their

researcher (Chalofsky, 2010) and recent research has suggested significant engagement declines worldwide (Gebauer *et al.*, 2008), especially in the context of economic markets in both developed and emerging economies. Current estimates put the cost of disengaged employees in the United States between \$250 and \$300 billion a year. Globally, similar studies report that disengaged employees cost the German economy approximately \$263 billion, the Australian economy \$4.9 billion and the Asian economy \$2.5 billion annually (Meere, 2005).

Understanding the specific factors influencing the engagement levels of the Indian researcher force will be important to any Indian company looking to positively influence the productivity of its researcher force (White, 2008). Employee engagement factors identified through literature review among banking sector employees in India are career development, HR practices, researcher environment, communication and researcher life-balance (Venkatesh and Lissy, 2014). While gender is not a significant factor of engagement in western economies, large gaps in engagement levels between men and women are apparent in India, the Persian Gulf and South America. Though some of the subsequent researchers (Freeney and Fellenz, 2013; Menguc *et al.*, 2013; Wang and Eccles 2013) have recently worked on the antecedents of engagement yet more research is needed among knowledge researcher.

**Objectives of the study:** The study critically analysed the precursors of employee engagement among knowledge researchers in Bengaluru City, the beneath shown are the intentions of the study:

- To identify the precursors to employee engagement among knowledge researchers in Bengaluru City
- To explore the relationship between precursors to engagement and employee's position held in the organisation

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Primary data was collected based on the field survey through a questionnaire. The 5-point Likert scale self-structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The data was analyzed with the help of statistical tools and techniques. The sampling technique adopted was simple random sampling. A sample size of 550 IT employees who were employed in 10 multinational IT

organisations in Bengaluru was selected for the purpose of this research. Thus, present study is confined to precursors to employee engagement among knowledge researcher.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Analysis of data:** The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions based on employee engagement factors. Pilot study was conducted and Cronbach's alpha reliability was 0.957. To reduce the dimension, an exploratory factor analysis was carried out and 3 factors explaining 65.26% of the variance were derived. Following tables give the items belonging to different factors and the reliability coefficient of each of these factors (Table 1).

### **Employee engagement factors vs. position in the organization**

**Null hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in the averages of various employee engagement factors due to the position held in the organization.

**Alternative hypothesis:** There is significant difference in the averages of various employee engagement factors due to the position held in the organization.

Table 1 shows that is significantly affected by the position of the respondents in the organization whereas Table 2 and 3 are unaffected significantly due to the position held. Multiple comparison test by Tukey was performed for Table 4 and 5 was found that, the mean score of respondents with entry level occupation is significantly differing from that of medium level.

Following are the mean plots of various factors for different level of position held in the organization. We can see in Fig. 1 that middle level employees average scores for professional contentment is very less compare to other two levels.

Figure 2 shows that the mean of the second factor career development is maximum for employees at entry level and minimum for employees at executive level.

Figure 2 representing the mean score of the third factor job enrichment for various positions held by the respondent of the study shows that the average is more for executive level respondents.

Comparing the second and third pictures we can conclude that career development is of primary importance for the entry level people and least important

Table 1: Professional contentment

Questions	Item No.
Our culture promotes balance between work and family life	EE11
The organization cares for my security and health	EE13
I am satisfied with the stress relief programs conducted in my organization	EE12
There is an atmosphere of trust in this organization	EE10
The workplace climate is emotionally positive, comfortable and relaxed	EE6
I think that the management shares enough job-related information with the personnel in my organization	EE8
The actions of our senior leaders support the organization's mission and values	EE7
My salary and benefits are at par with the industry standards	EE4
I feel that I fit in at my organization	EE15
I receive regular recognition and praise on my performance at work	EE19

Table 2: Career development

Questions	Item No.
I am aware of the promotion opportunities in my organization	EE18
I have received the training I need to do my job well	EE16
I have a clearly established career path in my organization	EE20
I have the materials and equipment to do my work efficiently	EE17
I enjoy working with my co-workers	EE9
I get a sense of personal accomplishment from my work	EE14

Table 3: Job enrichment

Questions	Item No.
I receive feedback about my performance at work	EE3
I decide myself how and when to perform my job	EE2
I perceive my job as meaningful	EE1
I get a high level of social support from my immediate supervisor	EE5

Table 4: Reliability scores (Cronbach's alpha) for different factors

Factor No.	Factor name	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	Professional contentment	10	0.940
2	Career development	6	0.836
3	Job enrichment	4	0.826

Table 5: Position held organization

Factors	Position held in the organization	Mean	F-statistic	p-values
1	Entry level	3.782	5.353	0.005
	Medium level	3.534		
	Executive level	3.720		
	Total	3.648		
2	Entry level	3.741	2.720	0.067
	Medium level	3.594		
	Executive level	3.586		
	Total	3.654		
3	Entry level	3.792	0.274	0.760
	Medium level	3.805		
	Executive level	3.900		
	Total	3.806		

for executive level since they have already attained that position whereas job enrichment matters a lot for the executives and for entry level people it is too early to think about that (Fig. 3).

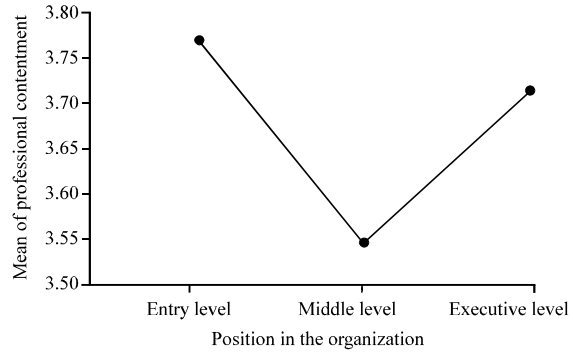


Fig. 1: Employ average score

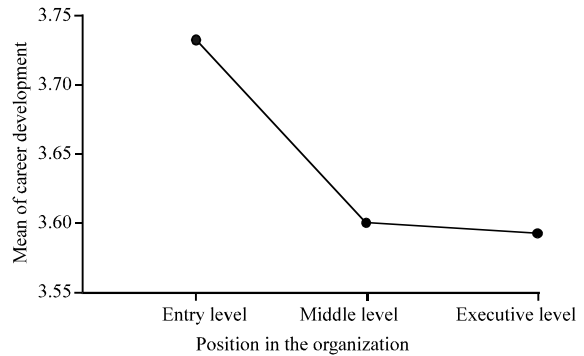


Fig. 2: Mean score of third factor

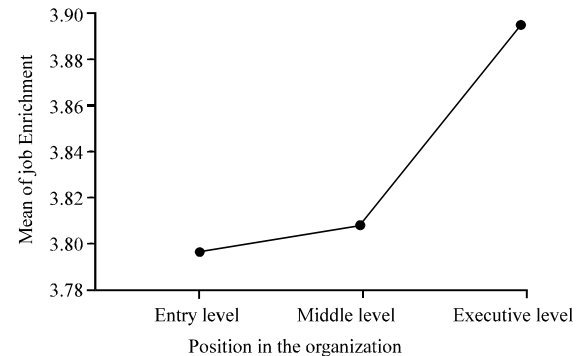


Fig. 3: Job enrichment matters

### CONCLUSION

Employee engagement is a partnership between a company and its employees where everyone researchers collectively to achieve the business objectives of the company and the aspirations of the employees. It is therefore, largely the organization's liability to create an environment and culture favourable to this partnership and a win-win equation. Employee engagement is a gauge that determines the association of a person with the

organization. Employee engagement is habitually the most noteworthy differentiator between competing IT organizations as revenues are directly proportional to number of engaged workforce in the organization. The present study identified professional contentment, career development and job enrichment as the 3 precursors to employee engagement among knowledge researchers. The managers can impel employee engagement among its workforce by focusing on these precursors. The study identified that career development is of prime importance for the entry level employees and least important for executive level. HR managers can motivate entry level employees by providing career development opportunities in the workplace, so that, entry level employees will no longer consider their present organisation as a stepping stone. The organisations can improve their attrition rate and employee satisfaction among entry level employees by focussing on career development. Top executives have given more importance to job enrichment than professional contentment or career development. It is important to enrich executive-level employees so that they will be satisfied, productive and less likely to seek a job elsewhere.

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