Employee engagement practices in private hospitals: a cross sectional study in mayiladuthurai

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"EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PRIVATE HOSPITALS"
A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY IN MAYILADUTHURAI

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ABSTRACT

Employee Engagement has become a hot topic in the world of human resources management. Employee Engagement is a state of emotional and intellectual involvement that employees have in an organization. The private hospitals in India have become the happening industry. The corporate culture has attracted many billions from abroad also in the form of medical tourism. The HR practices in these hospitals have a bearing on these revenue generation activities. This study conducted in five major hospitals of Mayiladuthurai town was to find out the levels of employee engagement, the drivers of it, to analyze their impact and to offer suggestions to improve the same. A structured questionnaire with 27 statements was administered to various non-medical employees across the hospitals. Simple mean score calculations are used as a prelude to a more elaborative study in the future. The findings show the cross section of hospitals has ratings at par with current international standards on the drivers of engagement.

Key Words: Employee Engagement, Team work, Communication, Recognition, Work-Life Balance

INTRODUCTION

Employee Engagement:

Employee Engagement is a state of emotional and intellectual involvement that employees have in an organization [1].Engagement is much more than satisfaction. It is one of the HR interventions that are being used in many organizations to know the extent to which people value, enjoy, and believe in what they do.

Engaged employees are seen to be Productive members of an organization who are psychologically committed to their role in the Organization [3]. They are likely to stay longer in their organization, advocate its products and services and contribute to the overall success of an organization.

According to **Gallup consultancy**, the Engaged employees are those who "work with passion and feel profound connection to their company, drive innovation and move the organization forward".

Why the organizations need Engaged Employees:

The survey of various firms' says that,

- ❖ Engaged Employees generate 43% more revenue.(**Hay Group, 2004**)
- ❖ The Disengaged workers cost the UK 44 Bn a year. (**IES, 2003**) and the US $270Bn-$343Bn (**Gallup, 1999**) in lost productivity.
- ❖ Engaged Employees have 2.7 sick days per year, rather than the 6.2 disengaged employees take.(**Gallup**)
- ❖ 87% Engaged Employees are less likely to leave.(**Corporate Leadership Council, 2006**)
- ❖ 67% Engaged Employees advocate their organization. (**Gallup, 1999**).
- ❖ 59% of Engaged Employees says, "Work brings out their most creative ideas". (**Gallup, 1999**)

THE DRIVERS   OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

There are several drivers of employee engagement. Some of them are,

- ❖ Employee Empowerment
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Team work
- ❖ Training and Development
- ❖ Recognition
- ❖ Leadership Quality
- ❖ Decision making

❖ Work-life-balance

Employee Empowerment:

It is the authority to take decisions within one's area of operations without having to get approval from anyone else. It means giving the employees the authority to make decisions and providing them with financial resources to implement these decisions.

Communication:

Communication is the life-line of a modern industrial organization, especially one that is large, complex and having its units at distant geographical locations. An effective organization is one that has open and transparent communication channels which allow free flow of information, both horizontally as well as up-and-down the organizational hierarchy.

Team Work:

In an organization that values team work, employees are encouraged to work in teams. In such an organization, employees are actively involved in solving day-to-day problems of the organization and share responsibility to achieve the goals of their department.

Training and Development:

This variable refers to the provision of adequate facilities for training and overall development of the employees. Employees need training, from time to time, not only for efficient discharge of their current job responsibilities but also to prepare them to meet future challenges.

Recognition:

One of the important drivers of employee engagement is the practice of recognition and appreciation of employees who come up with creative ideas or those who are honest, sincere and hardworking. Regardless of whether recognition is accorded through monetary or non-monetary means, it is the **act** of recognition or appreciation that is valued by the employees

Leadership Quality:

The most important part of the role of a leader is not what he does Himself but what he causes other people to do. Senior managers are, therefore, Expected to motivate their subordinates to put in their best efforts in pursuance of the organizational goals. To be able to do so, they must be objective, impartial and

sympathetic in dealing with their employees, besides empowering them and providing timely feedback on how each of them is performing.

Decision-Making:

Behavioral science research and OD experiments have shown that employees willingly support and implement decisions to which they themselves happen to be a party. An organization that empower and supports people down-the-line to take independent decisions within the sphere of their job responsibilities can, through such actions, create employee engagement.

Work-Life Balance:

For a vast majority of human beings, work constitutes the central life interest **(CLI).** But work, though central, is only one of the several interests that human beings pursue in life. When the demands of work hamper the pursuit of other life interests, it is likely to create a crisis and the resultant stresses and strains among the employees. Through this variable, it is intended to find out whether (and, if so, to what extent) the organization is helping to maintain work-life balance for its employees.

Relevance of Employee Engagement:

For several years now, 'employee engagement' has been a hot topic in corporate circles. It's a buzz phrase that has captured the attention of workplace observers and HR managers, as well as the executive suite. And it's a topic that employers and employees alike think they understand, yet can't articulate very easily

In 2006, The Conference Board published "Employee Engagement, A Review of Current Research and Its Implications". According to this report, twelve major studies on employee engagement had been published over the prior four years by top research firms such as Gallup, Towers Perrin, Blessing White , the Corporate Leadership Council and others.

According to the report, employee engagement is a very big deal. There is clear and mounting evidence that high levels of employee engagement keenly correlates to individual, group and corporate performance in areas such as retention, turnover, productivity, customer service and loyalty. [4]

"They are supposed to speak positively about the organization to co-workers, potential employees and customers, demonstrate an intense desire to be part of the organization, and exert extra efforts and take on work that contributes to employer success."

The key ingredients of an engaged employee seem to be:

Tenure with the organization, **Display of** emotional involvement in what he does, **Doing more** than what is expected, and **Displaying pride** in the place he work

Importance of Employee's Engagement:

- ❖ To overcome fear of change, increase acceptance of new ideas, and create a climate for achievement.
- ❖ To enhance personal accountability and self-management skills.
- ❖ To discover practical tools for effective goal implementation and sustain growth.
- ❖ To determine applicable techniques for motivating yourself and others.
- ❖ To develop a "can do" attitude.

Need of Employee engagement:

- ❖ To create enthusiasm for their roles, their work and the origination and ensure they   are well integrated
- ❖ Engagement is about motivating employees to do their best.
- ❖ An engaged employee gives his/her company his/her 100 percent.
- ❖ Employees are a valuable asset that makes the business possible.
- ❖ Employee engagement who is intellectually and emotionally bound with the organization feels passionately about it. Goals and it committed towards its values.

Scope of Employee engagement:

- ❖ Employee engagement is a company wide programme to enhance employee involvement.
- ❖ It is a goal, which ensures growth.
- ❖ It is a technique and largely a work improvement too.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION:

Employee Engagement is the energy, passion or fire that employees have towards their work and the employer. The major reason for disengagement is absence of appreciation or 'positive stroke'. Knowing the current level of employee engagement in Private Hospitals, Mayiladuthurai town will also enable us to uncover actionable findings by identifying the prime "Drivers" of engagement practices. It also helps to seek the productive members of the organization those who are psychologically committed to their role in the organization and to know the motivation levels of the employee. Therefore, the topic had been selected as Employee engagement. Some times the intelligent, capable employees also disengage when they do not get support from their management for the good work they did or some times, they loose their confidence about Top management's credibility.

RESEARCH DESIGN

OBJECTIVES:

1. To ascertain the level of Employee Engagement.
2. To identify the drivers of Employee Engagement.
3. To analyze and recommend strategies for improvement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher has adopted descriptive research design for the purpose of this survey. The questionnaire was designed to cover 9 drivers related to employee engagement. The primary data was collected from the 200 employees conveniently selected from five private hospitals in Mayiladuthurai Town, through structured questionnaire. In this research, mean score calculation and Pearson chi-square is used for data analysis.

Limitation

1) The survey was carried out for a sample sized of 200 Non medicals only.
2) Findings and suggestion of this researcher are applicable only to Private Hospitals, Mayiladuthurai Town.
3) As an fact finding study advanced statistical analyses were not used.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPERTATION

Table 1 **Respondents**

S.No	Department	No of Respondents	%
1.	Administration	23	12
2.	Personnel	25	13
3.	Finance	24	12
4.	Maintenance	85	43
5.	Others	43	22
	Total	200	100

Table 2 **Mean score**

S.No	Drivers	Mean Score	Mean %	Overall Mean	SD
1.	Employee Engagement	9.1	76		
2.	Empowerment	6.1	68		
3.	Communication	5.8	65		
4.	Training & Development	7.3	61		
5.	Team work	6.2	68	5.75	2.22
6.	Decision Making	7.5	63		
7.	Recognition	3.7	63		
8.	Leadership Quality	3.9	66		
9.	Work Life Balance	2.2	37		

Table 3 Pearson chi square test

Drivers of Employee Engagement	Factors			Asymp.Sig	Relationship
		Value	df	(2-sided)	
Recognition	Praise for good work	.449(b)	1	0.503	Related
	Innovative ideas				
Team work	Effectiveness	8.239(a)	4	0.083	Related
	Constructive feedback				
	Seniors care				
Leadership Quality	Encouragement	.258(a)	2	0.879	Not Related
	Opinion seems to count				
Communication	Job is important	3.175(a)	4	0.529	Related
	Progress & growth				
	Transparent				
Training & Development	Future challenges	9.636(a)	6	0.141	Not Related
	Job requirement				
	Regular Feedback				
	Development				
Employee Engagement	To be proud	3.565(a)	3	0.312	Related
	Job interesting				
	Learnt mistakes				
	Best friend				

Table 4 The Status of "Employee Engagement"

S.No	Drivers	No. Of Items	Score Range	Mean Score	Mean Score as %
1	Employee Engagement	4	0-12	9.125	76.04
2	Team work	3	0-9	6.15	68.33
3	Employee Empowerment	3	0-9	6.09	67.67
4	Leadership	2	0-6	3.935	65.58
5	Communication	3	0-9	5.83	64.78
6	Recognition	2	0-6	3.765	62.75
7	Decision Making	4	0-12	7.52	62.67
8	Training & Development	4	0-12	7.3	60.83
9	Work-life Balance	2	0-6	2.2	36.67

FINDINGS:

❖ The Status of this study are presented in the summarized form in Table 4. The mean Scores of Team Work, Employee empowerment, Leadership, Communication level are statistically –speaking higher than the bench mark level of 69%[10] . However, these scores being quite high, the level of employee engagement in the organization should be a favorite concern for the hospitals management.

❖ The mean scores of Recognition, Decision Making, and Training & Development shows these values are pretty low than the international standard value 69%[10]. Certainly it will cause concern for the management, for future success.

❖ If one looks at the last driver of this table, one shall observe a lowest mean score compared to all other eight drivers . The mean score value of Work-life balance is only 36.67%.The respondents are unable to adjust their work with their family life. So they remain in frustration

SUGGESTIONS:

❖ For improving Work-Life Balance there should be more frequent social get-togethers for employees and their families. To help them cope with pressures, the employees need to be provided flexible working hours and facilities like crèches, gym, recreation, etc. The management needs to do more to help employees in meeting their personal, family and social commitments.

❖ Training should help not only to discharge current job   responsibilities but also prepare employees to meet future   challenges, with periodic evaluation.

❖ Decision-making needs to avoid bureaucratic delays. The management needs to encourage quick and independent decision-making down the line.

❖ Persons with creative ideas and those who are honest, hardworking and sincere need to be recognised and appreciated. Employees who do well need to be felicitated through public functions.

❖ There is a need to make the communication channels more open and transparent

CONCLUSION:

Out of 8 independent Drivers used in this study, only one (Work-life balance) emerged as the critical determinant of employee engagement. Together that variable explained 87.50 per cent of the variance in employee engagement. At the same time the

management may concentrate on Recognition, Decision Making, and Training & Development.

An organization comes into existence when group of people work together to achieve something for themselves and for others. It is not made up of bricks and mortar. It is not heap of inventories and machines. It is the people who have positive attitude towards the organization and its values.

Realizing the human factor, HRM assumes greater importance in every organization and Employee Engagement is an integral part of HRM. So the prime concern of modern management is to motivate the labor in such a way as to achieve the organizational goal.

Finally the researcher concludes that Employee Engagement is high in   Private Hospitals, Mayiladuthurai**.** If the company concentrates on work-life-balance, training program and performance feedback, it will surely increase the level of Employee Engagement in the company.

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