Abstract

Employee Engagement (EE) is a popular construct in the academic and consultancy literature. EE draws its popularity from the causal linkages with the bottom line of the business as propounded by the consultancy firms. There is no universal definition of EE and numerous researchers define it differently. On joining the dots together the researcher could find some common interface of EE viz., EE being a synergy of energy, spirit at work, meaningful pursuit, alignment with the organization, attachment with the work role, and so on. So, the purpose of this research study was to study the construct of EE in consonance with the literature. Further, the researcher also wanted to have a detailed study of the antecedents and consequences of EE.

The antecedents or predictors of EE were identified through the literature review. Thereafter, a sequence of steps was followed to justify the outcomes. Largely, this study has been an exploratory study, where each predictor was tested for reliability and validity. The methodology which was followed in this study was firstly to have standardised scales (questionnaires) of the various antecedents and consequences identified, and then subsequently testing it on a sample population. Stratified random sampling was used for data collection. Three sectors were identified viz., Information Technology (IT), Banking, and Education sector. Strata in each sector were pre-defined, from IT and Banking sector the researcher considered four organizations each. From the Education sector the researcher considered various Colleges and Departments of the University of Delhi. Internet and personal survey was used as survey medium. From IT and Banking sectors, 120 responses were collected making it 30 each for every organization. From the Education sector also the researcher surveyed 120 respondents.

Data collected from 360 respondents were then compiled and assimilated for further analysis. Data cleaning was used and 28 responses were further removed to give a final set of 332 responses. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was then conducted on the antecedent constructs identified through literature review and 12 factors were extracted establishing the face validity. These factors were then subsequently tested again by conducting Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to establish the construct validity viz., convergent and discriminant validity of the factors. Only six antecedents namely Supportive Supervisory Relations (SSR), Rewarding Co-workers Relations
(RCWR), Spirituality and Alignment (SAA), Psychological Meaningfulness, Employee’s Job Resources (ER), and Physical and Emotional Engagement (PEE) could pass the tests of validity. The next step was to develop the EE Model, and eventually test the causal relationship of EE with the various consequences identified viz., In-Role Performance (IRP), Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), Job Involvement (JI), Job Satisfaction (JS), and Intention to Stay (ITS). On conducting the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), the first conceptualization was to test EE as a formative construct, i.e., the antecedents identified would form into the latent construct EE, however, owing to validity issues in formative constructs, a number of model respecification were conducted. The Mediation effect of SAA was established, i.e., SAA mediates the relationship of SSR and PM with EE. In totality EE was explained to the tune of 86% by its antecedent constructs, lending credibility to the overall findings. EE subsequently explained its consequences viz., IRP, OCB, JI, JS, and ITS to the extent of 24%, 18%, 56%, 59%, and 55% respectively at p<0.001. On investigating significant difference with respect to EE among the different sectors, it was found that IT and Banking sector differ with Education sector in a significant manner, portraying that employees in the Education sector are more engaged.

The results and the implications of the study are based on the assumption of the accuracy of the data as provided by the respondents of this research study. This study has clear implications for the managers of the IT and Banking sector as to how the level of engagement could be augmented among the employees. IT and Banking sectors would do well to look what Education sector does best; the recommendations of this study could be used to augment the engagement levels of the employees. The most significant finding of this study is the justification of Spirituality and Alignment (SAA) mediating the relationship of SSR and PM with EE, and it answers as to why organizations should go for cultivating the essence of spirituality among the employees. This research study also emphasises the role of Psychological Meaningfulness (PM) which must be experienced by employees and the very essential role of a supervisor to garner engagement among the employees.

This study would help the future researchers of EE to understand the construct of EE in a better way. The EE model so developed in this study would further help the organizations to know, understand, and devise mechanism to ward off the problems of burnout and lead its employees towards engagement.