

Employee engagement and methods of measuring it



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There are so many measures which are developed to measure employee engagement. Engagement can be measured by the help of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale which comprises of three subdivisions: vigor, absorption and dedication (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; UWES; Schaufeli et al., 2002).

UWES consists of 17 items, which determine three dimensions of employee engagement namely vigour which consists of six items, dedication which consists of five items and finally absorption which consists of six items (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Two of these 17 items found to be very weak and hence Seppala et al (2008) have used a 15 item measurement. Even a shorter version of 9-item have also been used for measuring vigour, dedication and absorption being assessed by three items each. This UWES is certified in several countries like China (Yi-Wen & Yi-Qun, 2005), South Africa (Storm & Rothmann, 2003), Greece (Xanthoupou et al, 2007a), The Netherlands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) and Spain (Schaufeli et al, 2002).

An alternative instrument has been developed to assess work engagement known as Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Gonzalez-Roma, Schaufeli, Bakker & Lloret, 2006). This includes two elements: ranging from tiredness to vigor and the other from pessimism to dedication. The factorial legality of this instrument has been authenticated in the studies which are conducted in the United States (Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005), Germany (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Ebbinghaus, 2002) and Greece (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou & Kantas, 2003). Apart from these, Gallup Organisation provided a measure for employee engagement which is called Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA) (Little & Little, 2006). This was developed through different studies on work motivation, satisfaction, and team effectiveness and was mainly

designed for revealing two main categories that measure behavioural outcomes and its antecedents (Harter et al., 2002). This measure is a widely used one even within the academic literature (Bhatnagar, 2007).

Luthans and Peterson (2002) stated that Gallup provided employee engagement to be a significant predictor of productivity and retention; it would be advisable to provide a theoretical framework for further understanding, validation and testing of GWA. There are many other consultancies that declare to improve employee engagement in an organisation and all the major ones provide their own measurement tools that recognize employee engagement drivers (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). As an example, Mandala Consulting provided a measurement tool known as Benchmark of Engagement Quotient (BeQ) which recommended the four phase research process (<http://www.mandalaconsulting.co.za/Products-BEQ.htm>).

May et al (2004) discovered the determinants of three psychological employee engagement conditions namely safety, meaningfulness and availability and therefore developed an own measure which includes cognitive, emotional and physical engagement. Schaufeli et al (2002) declared that absorption is personified by being fully involved and deeply engaged in one's work. There seems to be a similarity in May et al.'s (2004) cognitive and UWES absorption which can be shown by a clear example. An item from UWES absorption is "Time flies when I am working" and an item from May et al.'s (2004) cognitive is "Time passes quickly when I perform my job". A similar overlap has been observed between UWES vigour and May et al.'s (2004) energy. There are several others who developed their own <https://assignbuster.com/employee-engagement-and-methods-of-measuring-it/>

measure of employee engagement and Saks (2006) can be considered as the one. His measure consisted of two six item scales which measures job and organisational engagement. An observation has been made and there seems to be a similarity between Saks (2006) job engagement items and Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) absorption items. Whereas, Saks (2006) organisation engagement items concentrate on how any organisation makes their employees feel engaged and energised in their work. An example illustrates one of these items: " Being a member of this organisation is exhilarating for me".

There is no point in measuring employee engagement if one cannot define the term in an appropriate way (Macey & Schneider, 2008). It has been declared that most employee engagement measures are a hotchpotch of items that represents one of these four different areas: organisational commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement and psychological empowerment. Macey and Schneider (2008) emphasized the importance of durability of engagement and advice that these measures should question how often one notices particular engagement feelings and how long they persist.

It can be noticed from the above findings that some measures depend on how employee engagement is defined, some have similar measuring items and some have totally complete measuring items. Even though UWES and GWA are the most common measuring tools in most of the research, there are still critiques and problems. Different kinds of measurement tools often results in different implications and consequences of employee engagement.

2. 7 CONSTRUCTS RELATED TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

Employee engagement has been defined in several ways and the concept became so familiar nowadays (Saks, 2006). But then, employee engagement may sometimes seem to have the fad appearance and sounds somewhat similar like organisational citizenship behaviour and organisational commitment (ibid). Employee engagement is above and beyond the word satisfaction and is being stated as “ a heightened emotional connection to a job and organisation that goes beyond satisfaction” (Gubman, 2004). On the other hand, Little and Little (2006) declared that employee engagement cite other important constructs but failed to explain their relationship with employee engagement. There is a lot of confusion that is raised due to different definitions by several authors. Some authors even defined the term on their own to differentiate from other constructs. As an example, Robinson et al (2004) described that employee engagement is a two way process by saying that organisations should feel responsible in engaging their employees so that employees engage in turn to offer the organisation.

Little and Little (2006) felt that it is very important to understand the similarities of other well known established constructs with employee engagement so that the real need to establish this construct can be decided. Even there are some similarities and overlaps with other constructs, employee engagement can be defined as a dissimilar concept which consists of behavioural, emotional and cognitive aspects (Saks, 2006). Therefore, it is always better give some highlights of the research on well known constructs. Organisational commitment, one of the well known constructs, was the major

attraction and main focus for research during 1990's and is identified as a multi dimensional construct which included its antecedents and consequences (Meyer et al., 2002). Mowday et al (1979) stated an example for commitment related behaviours as “ behaviours that exceed formal or normative expectations” which is almost too similar to employee engagement definition “ going the extra mile”. There is evidence which shows that engagement and commitment leads to the employee retention. One such is the definition that is given by Allen and Meyer (1996) for organisational commitment as “ a psychological link between the employee and his or her organisation that makes it less likely that the employee voluntarily leave the organisation”.

Maslach et al (2001) declared that engagement is being shaped by energy, efficacy and involvement whereas Kahn (1990) declared that a person can be engaged psychologically, emotionally and cognitively in a role. Kahn's (1990) definition of engagement mainly focuses on one's roles that they carry out whereas Robinson et al.'s (2004) employee engagement definition comprises one being optimistic towards values of an organisation. There are some other studies which define engagement in the form of commitment. An example of such is given by The Corporate Executive Board defining engagement as “ the extent to which an employee is committed to someone or something in his or her organisation” (Macey & Schneider, 2008). On the other hand, Saks (2006) completely disagrees with this and differentiates employee engagement from commitment by stating that commitment is one's attitude to an organisation whereas engagement is not an attitude but rather an extent to which an individual performs his/her job.

One of the related constructs to engagement is Job involvement which has been an interest to researchers being proposed as one of the types of job attitude (Reeve & Smith, 2001). It has been also described as the degree to which the performance of a person in his/her work affects his/her self-respect. Similar to that organisational commitment, some authors described engagement in the form of job involvement. Harter et al (2002) connect engagement with both involvement and satisfaction. Paullay et al (1994) as cited in Little and Little (2006) defined job involvement as “ the degree to which an employee is engaged in, preoccupied with and concerned with his/her job”. There are some contradictory arguments by some authors differentiating employee engagement from job involvement. Saks (2006) stated that job involvement is something where an individual involves and performs in their job roles whilst employee engagement is something which involves not only cognitions but also behaviours and emotions. Maslach et al (2001) stated that job involvement doesn't include energy and effectiveness components of employee engagement.

Another related construct of employee engagement is Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) which got several researches on it (Lee & Allen, 2002). OCB refers to the behaviours that an individual performs which is not mentioned in the job description but adds benefit to the organisation (Moorman & Blakely, 1995). Thus Organ (1990) as cited in Moorman & Blakely (1995) defined OCB as the behaviours that can be performed on the job which are informally recognized by the organisation's reward system but still be beneficial to the organisation. Macey and Schneider (2008) predicts that behaviours of OCB come under the issue of “ doing something extra”

which coincides with the “going the extra mile” definition of employee engagement. Little and Little (2006) found that OCB resulted from job satisfaction and organisational commitment and is comparable to engagement definitions of being willing to go for the extra mile. Similar to the contradictions to organisational commitment, Robinson et al (2004) stated that OCB is not a two way process although it consists some aspects of engagement and hence it is a perfect match by no means. The research conducted by Vazrani (2007) has noticed some important drivers for employee engagement and some of them are Career development, leadership, equal opportunity and treatment, pay and benefits, communication and cooperation. Hence the researcher provided the following hypotheses:

2. 7. 1 Employee Development, Rewards and Recognition and Employee Engagement:

H0 = There is no significance relationship between Employee Development, Rewards and recognition and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

H1 = There is significance relationship between Employee Development, Rewards and recognition and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

2. 7. 2 Organisational Leadership and Planning and Employee Engagement:

H0 = There is no significance relationship between Organisational Leadership and Planning and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

H1 = There is significance relationship between Organisational Leadership and Planning and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

2. 7. 3 Organisation Culture and Communications and Employee Engagement:

H0 = There is no significance relationship between Organisation Culture and Communications and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

H1 = There is significance relationship between Organisation Culture and Communications and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

2. 7. 4 Employee Job Role and Employee Engagement:

H0 = There is no significance relationship between Employee Job Role and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

H1 = There is significance relationship between Employee Job Role and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

2. 7. 5 Employee Work Environment and Employee Engagement:

H0 = There is no significance relationship between Employee Work Environment and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

H1 = There is significance relationship between Employee Work Environment and Employee Engagement in Creativemine.

2. 8 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK:

Based on the literature review and the research problem of this study, the following research framework has been established. This framework mainly focuses on the five engagement drivers that affect the employee engagement in Creativemine. The dependent variable in this study is

Employee Engagement, whereas the independent variables are employee

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development, rewards and recognition; organisational leadership and planning; organisation culture and communications; employee job role and employee work environment.

Employee Development, Rewards and Recognition

Organisational Leadership and Planning

Employee Engagement

Organisation Culture and Communications

Employee Job Role

Employee Work Environment

Figure 2. 1 Research Framework

2. 9 CONCLUSION:

To conclude, employee engagement has become a very well-known topic amongst researchers. It can be seen from the above literature that some researchers concluded that employee engagement is related to various constructs and can be defined in various ways relating each and every construct. It also plays a very critical role in the retention of employees. But, there is no such research or study that is being undertaken on the employee engagement in an Animated and Production Company like Creativemine. Hence there is a need for such an organisation to concentrate on employee engagement that is beneficial to the organisation's success. Finally, this chapter had provided literature review that is mainly focused on employee engagement, its importance and the drivers that promote it. The following chapter is focused on the methodology that is carried out throughout the

entire research and also the data collection methods and finally the analysis of the results.