

A Study on Employee Engagement and Its Effectiveness in Pandemic Time at Amara Raja Batteries Limited (Arbl)

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Abstract

Industries form the backbone of social and economic development of any country. They emerged as the dynamic growing sectors in the world economy making larger contributions to the global output and employment. India is distinctive for the rapid growth of its industry – high-tech information technology, communications and business services in particular. In the present scenario where technology having revolutionized the work in every field and made spectacular progress, employers want employees to do their best or “reach the extra miles”, whereas employees want reasonable work that is worthwhile and being recognized while performing the job. In the current global development, the organizations are operating in a highly competitive environment and struggling to reposition themselves to their stakeholders. Employers are expecting their employees to be passionate about the work and lead the organizations to a greater height. The key of success being attainment of the goals at the workplace having high caliber employees that pay the way to set competitive advantage in global scenario. The key of success to attain goals at work place is the best positioning of high caliber employees who pave the way to uplift institution/ industry values going through competitive indicators of the markets in global scenario.

Keywords:- Employee Engagement, Effectiveness, Pandemic, Amara Raja Batteries Limited (Arbl)

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Employee contribution becomes critical for the organizations. In trying to produce superior output, companies have no choice but to succeed in engaging employee physically, psychologically and spiritually. Most organizations realize that the best employee in terms of loyalty and productivity is not necessarily to be a satisfied employee. The “best employee” is really the one who is an “engaged employee” - who is intellectually and emotionally connected with the organization, thus feeling passionate about the goals and is committed to the values to reach the extra miles beyond the basic requirements.

Employee engagement seeks to build a bonding relationship between the organization and its employees making employee fully understand the organizations objectives and make the employees to be committed to the organization and thus respects the personal aspirations and ambitions of employees.

Employees who are unhappy at work get disengaged at work and project themselves to be busy acting out of their unhappiness. At every opportunity that exists they tend to sow the seeds of negativity hampering the organizational performance.

The intellectual resources being unique have their own psychological makeup and experience. With the increase in responsibilities to bring balance of work life and with a desire to excel in their careers, often employees get distracted from their work which needs to be addressed appropriately and very carefully. Employees being the most knowledge resource of the organization and if they could not be allocated a space whereby they can make a perfect blend of both work and fun, it may be very difficult to extract optimum performance.

The researcher therefore felt the need to explore the information pertaining to employee engagement which helps the organizations to create an environment and culture which will foster the employees' emotional and intellectual bonding with the organization thereby creating a win-win situation.

This study determines the antecedents and thus the outcomes of employee engagement are examined and investigated at Amar Raja Batteries Limited, Karakambadi, Chittoor district, India. The study also evaluated the effect of employee engagement on the level of performance of the employees and suggests methods to improve employee engagement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite evidence of how destructive disengagement can be, studies from the manufacturing sector on the employee engagement, are limited. Surprisingly little academic and empirical research has been conducted overall. To address this problem, more research focusing specifically on the engagement levels of employees in manufacturing organizations is necessary. For better understanding of employee engagement professionals need empirical data on employee engagement to learn about and to develop managerial interventions and alternative strategies that foster engagement for manufacturing sector.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to determine the antecedents and the outcomes of employee engagement and investigate the employee engagement practices in manufacturing sector especially in Amara Raja Batteries Limited (ARBL) at Chittoor district. The study evaluates the effect of employee engagement on the level of performance of the employees and suggests methods to improve employee engagement. The study also examines the employee engagement by exploring the relation among the different independent variables and its outcomes of employee engagement.

SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This is 'A study on Employee Engagement and its Effectiveness in Pandemic time at Amara Raja Batteries Limited (ARBL), Chittoor district'. The present research study is confined to only Amara Raja Batteries Limited (ARBL) at Chittoor district

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To analyse the employee engagement for optimizing organizational performance in Amara Raja Batteries Ltd.
2. To assess the impact of independent variables like Leadership, Employee Enablement, Communication, Employee Motivation, and Employee Satisfaction
3. To study the association between demographic variable and employee engagement.
4. To study the association and influence of independent variables on employee engagement.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD

- PRIMARY DATA:** It is the original data and has been collected concentrating for the specific purpose which has not yet been published, which is more reliable, authentic & objective collected through survey.
- SECONDARY DATA:** It is the data that has been already collected and readily available from other sources, including journals, literatures, company website, etc., which can be reused.
- DATA COLLECTION TOOL:** The data collection tool deployed in this project is "questionnaire". The main advantage of using questionnaire is that the large number of people can be reached relatively easily & economically. A standard questionnaire provides quantifiable answers for research topic. These answers are relatively easy to analyze.

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DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF THE RESPONDENTS

Personal Related Variables

Classification of Respondents by Personal Related Variables

Characteristics	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
Age	18-25	27	20.6
	26-30	33	25.2
	31-35	7	5.3
	36-40	6	4.6
	ABOVE 40	58	44.3
Gender	MALE	65	49.6
	FEMALE	66	50.4
Experience	BELOW 5	27	20.6
	05-10	39	29.8
	10-15	26	19.8
	ABOVE 15	39	29.8
Qualification	Diploma/Graduates	61	46.6
	Post Graduates	70	53.4

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has the normal limitations of time, funds and other facilities commonly faced by any researcher. These limitations led to the purposive selection of only Amara Raja Batteries Limited (ARBL) at Chittoor district

CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

A major contribution of this research is to identify the variables that comprises of employee engagement. Totally, five variables of employee engagement were identified after extensive literature review and consultation with selected Human Resources practitioners with adequate expertise and competence. Selection of respondents, collection of data and statistical analysis of data constitute another major task of this project. A total of one hundred seventy five questionnaires were administered to the employees of Amara Raja Batteries Limited (ARBL) at Chittoor district but only one hundred thirty one questionnaires were received. The primary data from these respondents was collected by personally administering a structured questionnaire. The data thus collected was tabulated and analyzed by employing tools such as mean, standard deviation, chi-square test, correlation and regression analysis. The results of the research will help to give specific recommendations regarding which areas need more attention in order to improve the level of employee engagement enhancement.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PHENOMENON

The employment relationship is the arena in which employee engagement will either be fostered or negated. The employment relationship has had much iteration through the years, with the employment level as well as union presence and strength exerting an influence over the relationship. Harbison and Myers (1959) discuss the shift among employers in the early nineteenth century, where employers were beginning to come to the realization that in order to create satisfactory conditions for capital accumulation they would need to utilize subordination, loyalty (a characteristic of the unitary perspective) and increased productivity (combating Saint Monday) among workers. Pollard (1968) proposed three employer methods for managing and maintaining discipline among the workforce, the proverbial stick (pp. 218-221); 'the proverbial carrot' and 'the attempt to create a new ethos of work order and discipline'. These three methods were along a spectrum, the carrot at one end and the stick at the other, it was up to employers (more so management) as to how they would utilize each element'. 'Fredric Taylor was the author of a plethora of ideas which culminated in the concept of scientific management. Under Taylorism, organizations had to have a formalized structure and reporting line; tasks should

be studied and redesigned to enable them to be separated into the most efficient workable elements. Tasks were carried out by the individual, as Taylor had a preference for designing the task around the isolated individual as opposed to the team, as he thought that 'herding' workers into a gang resulted in each individual becoming less efficient. Taylor believed in one best way to do a task, which to this day can be seen in the debate within modern human resource management, of best practice versus best fit .

Efforts were made in Britain in order to construct an alternative to Taylorism, which resulted in the formation of the human factor industrial psychological school of thought. One of their first finding was that productivity could be increased by reducing the amount of hours in the working week, thus contradicting conventional worker productivity logic. However, while its purpose of conception was to develop an alternative to Taylorism, the human factor industrial psychology school had the Taylorian concept of industrial efficiency.

The employment relationship was shifting focus away from the isolated individual under Taylorism and towards a human relations approach which was characterized by placing an emphasis on the workgroup and thus initiatives to improve organizational performance were based on work group behaviour and response. The human relations school of thought viewed the worker as a 'social man' who desired social as well as economic compensation from his work as opposed to the purely 'economic man' which was characterized under Taylorism. The empirical base and ideological construct of the human relations school of thought has its origins in the human factor and anthropological phases of the Hawthorn program. ' Technological advancements have caused the employment relationship to evolve as explained by Woodward (1965) who employs the concept of a socio-technical system in order to analyze various forms of production system and associated worker behaviour. Rose (1988) reiterates Woodward's (1965) findings, stating that, the effectiveness of a firm relates to the fit between its production system and its formal organization and not to the leadership style of supervisors or to participative, interlocking teams.

'The neo-human relations school of thought is characterized by placing the focus on motivation of the individual from a life perspective, which was conceptualized by Maslow in an article he published concerning individual motivation in Psychological Review in 1943. Maslow's theory was further developed by McGregor (Theory X and Y) and Herzberg. " Engagement has its roots in motivational theory, which was first propositioned by Elton Mayo's motivation experiments in Cicero, Chicago, 1927-1932. These experiments resulted in the proposal that workers are motivated by emotional rather than economic factors. So an employee will place more importance on being involved and feeling important than by an improvement in workplace conditions. Mayo set down the groundwork on which later theorists, such as Herzberg, Maslow and McGregor would build their theories. However, academics such as Roethlisberger and Dickinson (1939) have critiqued the validity of Mayo's study and come to the conclusion that under the umbrella of the classic unitary stance, it is individual relations and thus communication which act as the determinant of worker's behaviour, not the structural characteristics of employment in a capitalist society. From 1927 to now, theories have moved through various reassertions from industrial psychology to total quality management, to organizational development. Pfeffer (1998) established the link between the effective management of human capital resulting in successful business performance. Engagement is now being considered as an aspect which the Human Capital Management theorists are beginning to formulate metrics on. Also the interventions to facilitate and generate increased engagement are being developed to foster increased performance levels and their measurable impact on the bottom line of an organization.

STUDIES IN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Literature review, the integral part of every research process that makes a valuable contribution to almost every operational step. The review of literature make the researcher realise and provides insights to the researcher in effectively dealing with the research topic. This section provides the definitions, key concepts and an overview of various research performed on employee engagement. The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed literature overview of employee engagement.

Employee engagement has its roots in classic work done in employee motivation, in the form of intrinsic motivation (**Herzberg, 1966**).The Gallup Research Group coined the term employee engagement as a result of 25 years of interviewing and surveying employees and managers (**Little & Little; 2006**) whereas **Simpson (2008)** states that **Kahn's (1990)**study on personal engagement was the earliest of the engagement at work constructs. Thus there are therefore different views on the origin of employee engagement but this may

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however be a reflection of the different terms used to describe a construct that is employee engagement compared to personal engagement.

Employee engagement is derived from early studies in the 1920s on morale or a group's willingness to accomplish organizational objectives. The concept was matured by US Army researchers during World War – II to predict unity of effort and attitudinal battle – readiness before a strike. Again, post war mass production society needed unity of effort in execution for speed & quality, where morale was considered to be the most important indicator. In the modern day perspective with the advent of knowledge worker, stress was given on individual talent management. Thus a term was required to describe an individual's emotional attachment to the organization, to his fellow colleagues and to the job. Thus came the term 'employee engagement', which is an individual emotional phenomenon whereas morale is a group emotional phenomenon.

Employee engagement is a business management concept. According to Scarlett surveys, employee engagement is a measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization that profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work. In engagement, organisation members harness their full selves in active, complete work role performances by driving personal energy into physical, cognitive and emotional labours. Engaged individuals are described as being psychologically present, fully there, attentive, feeling connected, integrated, and focussed in their role performances. They are open to themselves and others, connected to work, and focussed in their role performance.

INFERENCE ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DATA HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant difference between Male and Female with respect to Factors of Employee Engagement
t test for significant difference between Male and Female with respect to Factors of Employee Engagement

Factors of Employee Engagement	GENDER				t value	P value
	Male		Female			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Leadership	22.938	.966	21.424	1.550	6.698	<.000**
Communication	23.877	1.386	22.985	1.852	3.117	.006**
Employee Enablement	21.554	1.521	21.682	2.135	-.395	.001**
Employee Motivation	22.908	2.337	22.227	2.182	1.723	.397
Performance Related	21.954	1.304	22.500	2.241	-1.701	<.000**
Employee Engagement	113.231	6.227	110.818	7.350	2.026	.063

Note : 1. 2.

** denotes significant at 1% level * denotes significant at 5% level

Since P value is 0.063 the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level with regard to Factors of Employee engagement toward employee motivation and employee engagement of Employees. Hence there is no significance difference between male and female of employees with regard to the Factors of employee engagement towards the toward employee motivation and Overall Employee engagements. Based on mean score, the male employees have better in Attitudes toward Co- workers, Staying Intentions and overall employee engagement than female employees.

All Since P value is less than 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to Factors of leadership, communication, performance related and employee enablement of Employees. Hence there is significance difference between male and female employees with regard to the Factors of leadership, communication, performance related and employee enablement of Employees.

HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference among Age Group with respect to Factors of Role Description of Employees

ANOVA for significant difference among Age Group with respect to Factors of Job Description of Employees

Factors Of Employee Engagement	Age group in years					F Value	P Value
	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	Above 40		
Leadership	21.444 (1.121)	22.394 (1.059)	23.000 (.000)	22.000 (.000)	22.310 (1.875)	2.577	.041*
Communication	22.481 (.509)	23.030 (1.976)	25.000 (.000)	25.000 (.000)	23.741 (1.743)	6.947	<.000**
Employee Enablement	21.481 (.893)	21.242 (1.521)	23.000 (.000)	22.000 (.000)	21.690 (2.408)	1.459	.218
Employee Motivation	22.000 (1.941)	23.879 (1.453)	25.000 (.000)	23.000 (.000)	21.741 (2.517)	8.826	<.000**
Performance Related	21.481 (1.156)	22.636 (1.410)	24.000 (.000)	21.000 (.000)	22.259 (2.275)	4.133	.004**
Employee Engagement	108.889 (1.847)	113.182 (3.803)	120.000 (.000)	113.000 (.000)	111.741 (9.241)	4.449	.002**

Note : 1. The value within bracket refers to SD 2. ** denotes significant at 1% level 3. * denotes significant at 5% level

Since P value is less than 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to Factors of communication, employee motivation, performance related and overall employee engagement of Employees. Hence there is significance difference among Age Group in years of employees with regard to the communication, employee motivation, performance related and overall employee engagement of Employees.

HYPOTHESIS:

There is no significant difference between Mean Rank of Experience in years with respect to Factors of Job Description of Employees

Kruskal-Wallis test for significant difference among Mean Rank of Experience in years with respect to Factors of Job Description of Employees

Factors of Employee Engagement	Experience in years				Chi-square	P Value
	Below 5y	6-10Y	11-15Y	Above 15		
Leadership	46.65	72.72	56.83	78.79	14.817	.002**
Communication	38.89	69.42	60.00	85.35	27.052	<.000**
Employee Enablement	66.57	63.45	60.88	71.56	1.556	.669
Employee Motivation	54.56	76.23	77.65	55.99	10.932	.012*
Performance Related	50.74	66.10	65.40	76.86	7.842	.049*
Employee Engagement	41.13	70.40	67.48	77.83	16.090	.001**

Note : ** denotes significant at 1% level

All Since P value is less than 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to Factors of leadership, communication, and overall employee engagement of employees. Hence there is significance difference between experience in years of employees with regard to the Factors of leadership, communication and overall Employee engagement.

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Since P value is more than 0.05 the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level with regard to Factors of Employee engagement towards employee enablement, employee motivation and performance related of Employees. Hence there is no significance difference between experience in years of employees with regard to the Factors of leadership, communication and overall Employee engagement.

HYPOTHESIS

Level of Job Description of employees are equally distributed

Chi-square test for goodness of fit of equality of level of job description of employees

Level of Employee Engagement	Frequency	Percent	Chi -Square Value	P Value
Low	38	29.008	3.0	0.219
Moderate	50	40.458		
High	43	30.534		
Total	131	100.000		

Since P value is more than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence concluded that Level of employee engagement of employees is equally distributed. Based on percentage, of majority number of employees belongs to Moderate level (40.0%).

HYPOTHESIS

There is no association between Gender and Level of job description of Employees

Chi-square test for association between Gender and Level of job description of Employees

Gender	Level of Employee Engagement			Chi Square Test	P Value
	Low	Moderate	High		
Male	12	32	21	7.534	0.23*
	(18.46%)	(49.23%)	(32.31%)		
	[31.58%]	[60.38%]	[52.50%]		
Female	26	21	19		
	(39.39%)	(31.82%)	(28.79%)		
	[68.42%]	[39.62%]	[47.50%]		
Total	38	53	40		
	(29.01%)	(40.46%)	(30.53%)		
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%		

Note: 1. The value within () refers to Row Percentage

2. The value within [] refers to Column Percentage 3. * Denotes significant at 5% level

P value is more than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence concluded that there is no association between Gender and Level of job description of Employees. Based on row percentage, 12% of male have low level of job description, 21% of male have high level of employee engagement whereas for female employees 26% belongs to low level of employee engagement and 19% belongs to high level of employee engagement. Hence majority of Male employees have high level of employee engagement and majority of female employees have low level of employee engagement.

HYPOTHESIS

There is no relationship between Factors of Employee engagement of Employees

Karl Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Factors of employee engagement of Employees

Factors of Employee Engagement	Leadership	Communication	Employee Enablement	Employee Motivation	Performance Related
Leadership	1.000	.487**	.569**	.404**	.335**
Communication	—	1.000	.547**	.370**	.160**
Employee Enablement	—	—	1.000	.484**	.612**

Employee Motivation	-	-	-	1.000	.553**
Performance Related	-	-	-	-	1.000

Note : ** denotes significant at 1% level

Correlation Coefficient between leadership and employee enablement is 0.569 which indicate $(0.569^2 = 0.324)$ 32.4 percentage positive relationships between leadership and employee enablement and is significant at 1% level.

Correlation Coefficient between Communication and employee enablement is 0.547 which indicate $(0.547^2 = 0.299)$ 29.9 percentage positive relationships between Communication and employee enablement.

Correlation Coefficient between employee enablement and performance related is 0.612 which indicate $(0.612^2 = 0.3745)$ 37.45 percentage positive relationships between employee enablement and performance related and is significant at 1% level.

Correlation Coefficient between employee motivation and performance related is 0.553 which indicate $(0.553^2 = 0.3058)$ 30.58 percentage positive relationships between employee motivation and performance related and is significant at 1% level.

HYPOTHESIS:

There is no significant difference among mean ranks towards Factors of Job Description of Employees Friedman test for significant difference among mean ranks towards Factors of Job Description of Employees

Factors of Employee Engagement	Mean Rank	chi square	P value
Leadership	2.97	98.825	0.000**
Communication	3.98		
Employee Enablement	2.17		
Employee Motivation	3.05		
Performance Related	2.84		

Note: ** Denotes significant at 1% level

Since P value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence concluded that there is significant difference among mean ranks towards Factors of employee engagement Employees. Based on mean rank, communication (3.98) is the most important factor of Employee engagement, followed by employee motivation (3.05), employee enablement by (2.17)

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS FINDINGS

1. There is no significance difference between male and female of employees with regard to the Factors of employee engagement towards the toward employee motivation and Overall Employee engagements. Based on mean score, the male employees have better in overall employee engagement than female employees.
2. There is significance difference between male and female employees with regard to the Factors of leadership, communication, performance related and employee enablement of Employees.
3. There is significance difference among Age Group in years of employees with regard to the Factors of Attitudes toward Co-workers, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction and Overall communication, employee motivation, performance related and overall employee engagement of Employees.
4. There is significance difference between experience in years of employees with regard to the Factors of leadership, communication and overall Employee engagement.
5. There is no significance difference between experience in years of employees with regard to the Factors of leadership, communication and overall Employee engagement.

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6. The Level of employee engagement of employees is equally distributed and based on percentage, of majority number of employees belongs to Moderate level (40.0%).
7. There is no association between Gender and Level of job description of Employees. Based on row percentage, 12% of male have low level of job description, 21% of male have high level of employee engagement whereas for female employees 26% belongs to low level of employee engagement and 19% belongs to high level of employee engagement.
8. Majority of Male employees have high level of employee engagement and majority of female employees have low level of employee engagement.
9. Correlation Coefficient between leadership and employee enablement is 0.569 which indicate ($0.569^2 = 0.324$) 32.4 percentage positive relationships between leadership and employee enablement and is significant at 1% level.
10. Correlation Coefficient between Communication and employee enablement is 0.547 which indicate ($0.547^2 = 0.299$) 29.9 percentage positive relationships between Communication and employee enablement.
11. Correlation Coefficient between employee enablement and performance related is 0.612 which indicate ($0.612^2 = 0.3745$) 37.45 percentage positive relationships between employee enablement and performance related and is significant at 1% level.
12. Correlation Coefficient between employee motivation and performance related is 0.553 which indicate ($0.553^2 = 0.3058$) 30.58 percentage positive relationships between employee motivation and performance related and is significant at 1% level.
13. There is significant difference among mean ranks towards Factors of employee engagement Employees. Based on mean rank, communication (3.98) is the most important factor of Employee engagement, followed by employee motivation (3.05), employee enablement by (2.17)

SUGGESTIONS

There is no one fixed model that shows the relevance and significance of the influence of all these variables because different employees lay different emphasis on these variables impacting engagement.

These variations may arise due to variations in individual and job characteristics, gender diversity, ethnic diversity etc.

Some of the suggestions in this include different employee engagement approaches for new employees like strong induction programs, rigorous training and development programme, certification programme and giving them a realistic job preview.

Some employee engagement activities proposed for the -existing employees were reward schemes, communication activities, team building and leadership activities.

It is important for firms to invest in good leadership and management development programs, well designed communication based programs, sharing of vision and mission and lastly creating opportunities for interaction.

CONCLUSION

The findings suggest that that effective employee engagement results in decline in employees' turnover intentions and increase in innovative work related behaviour Engaging employees is a long term task and cannot be accomplished by one training program, no matter how good its quality is. Organisations can improve engagement by opportunity thinking, enhancing employee decision making, and commitment.

Organizations need to instil a sense of involvement, positive emotions about their work and a sense of community in their employees. Emphasis should be give employee opinions and opportunities should be provided to them to be heard.

Transparency from the senior leadership will also make the organization culture more open. Based on the above findings from the research it was suggested that organizations use appropriate training programmes to ensure supervisors build a supportive environment to empower their subordinates

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