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Research Article

THE RELATION BETWEEN JOB CHARACTERISTICS, PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to test a hypothesized model establishing job characteristics as an antecedent for perceived organizational support, and perceived organizational support direct impact towards employee engagement in the selected private sector banks. The sample consists of senior level employees working in selected private sector Banks, head office or corporate office in Tamilnadu, India. Based on 245 respondents, the hypotheses developed for the study was tested. The testing of hypotheses revealed that job characteristics create positive and significant impact on perceived organizational support. The direct impact of perceived organization support towards employee engagement was positive and significant. Leaders in the Banks are recommended to be enriched with more emphasis on offering managers with identifiable and significant tasks that have autonomy and decision making. Leaders should continuously focuses on perceived organizational support to managers to increase their engagement level in the workplace. The relationship between perceived organizational support and employee engagement has been rarely investigated, thus the result of the study will contribute additionally towards the existing literature.

Keywords: Job Characteristics, Perceived Organizational Support, Employee Engagement and Bank

1. Introduction

Employee engagement is a considerable point for organizational leaders since the effect of disengaged employees incorporates lower productivity,

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higher performance levels, higher turnover rates, and increased absenteeism (Chambel & Cesario, 2017). It is significant to recognize what can cause expanded employee engagement or elements that decrease engagement. Numerous studies have tended to antecedents of engagement

to address explicit areas that can be adjusted in the event that they can affect engagement (Breevaart et al., 2014).

The idea of engagement started to surface in the business and organizational literature around twenty years ago and began to acquire prominence in HRD research within the most recent decade (Rocco & Shuck, 2014). Engagement has been basically examined with regards to four categories: personal engagement, burnout/engagement, work engagement, and employee engagement. Taris, Schaufeli, and van Rhenen (2008) placed that work engagement appeared from burnout research as an endeavor to analyze employee "unwell-being" yet additionally "well-being". Dissimilar to the individuals who experience burnout, engaged employees are active and associated with their work exercises and feel they are fit for achieving those tasks. According to the researcher, one of the principal scholars to examine engagement characterized what he named personal engagement as the "harnessing of organization individuals' selves to their work roles; in engagement, individuals utilize and put themselves cognitively, physically, and emotionally through role performance". Conversely, personal disengagement alludes to the "uncoupling of selves from job roles," during which process people "defend and withdraw themselves cognitively, physically, or emotionally" while performing those tasks. In the human resource development literature, Wollard and Shuck (2010) characterized engagement as "an individual worker's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral state coordinated toward desired organizational results."

Perhaps the most widely referred to meaning of engagement is that given that who characterized engagement as "a fulfilling, positive, work-related perspective that is described by vigor, dedication, and absorption".

Vigor alludes to undeniable degrees of psychological and energy resilience while working, eagerness to put attempt in a task, and perseverance in difficult times. Dedication is depicted as having a feeling of importance, inspiration, enthusiasm, challenge, and pride, though absorption can be measured "flow" a condition of ideal experience – which is long term and is described by a "or persistent and pervasive state of mind" (Schaufeli, 2002).

This study discovers relevance in the wake of broad drives to upgrade employee engagement in private sector banks. For example, private sector banks like HDFC, ICICI and Axis Bank are redesigning their engagement practices through changing their process of performance management and appraisal systems, presenting training programmes tied up with foreign universities, enhancing their rewards programmes and setting up grievance portals. The research starts with the premise that an engaged workforce is vital for performance and productivity of an organization; the similar is relied upon to hold good for Indian private sector banks.

In this research, researcher concern is to perceived organizational support and recognizes the role of job characteristics in committing a workforce of representatives working private sector banks in India. Thus the main aim of the study was to examine the job characteristics of employee's relationship towards perceived organization support. Next, how employee perceived organizational support relates with employee engagement.

2. Statement of the Problem

Researchers have recognized a requirement for research focused on the organizational factors or elements inside the domain of managers that can develop the organizational effectiveness and employee's engagement (Whittington et al., 2017). Two such components are perceived organizational support and job characteristics. Previous studies have individually

analyzed perceived organizational support and job characteristics as individual antecedent engagement factors. However, the connection between perceived organizational support, job characteristics, and employee engagement, and how perceived organizational support and job characteristics associate to contribute to employee engagement, remains moderately neglected. Previous studies have explicitly analyzed the connection between work engagement and job characteristics (Albrecht et al., 2018) and engagement at work, with an absence of empirical work analyzing the connection between the employee engagement and job characteristics system suggested by Shuck (2011). Likewise, a literature review failed to distinguish any previous research that inspected the impact of perceived organizational support, as it influences perception of employees of the workplace, on the connection between engagement and job characteristics. This research tends to the practical problem of how representatives may build employee engagement in organizational support, job characteristics, and employee engagement and how perceived organizational support and job characteristics mutually contribute to engagement of employees.

The objective of the study was to more readily comprehend the connection between perceived organizational support, job characteristics, and employee engagement between employees working in chosen private sector banks in Salem, Tamilnadu, India. Better comprehension of this connection can help researchers, human resources professionals, and managers in identifying and improving strategies to develop engagement of employees, which, in turn, ought to contribute to accomplishing organizational goals, upgrading organizational competitiveness, and developing employee well-being.

3. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

a. Job Characteristics and Perceived Organizational Support

Job characteristics have been an important element in research on the precursors of engagement. The JCT (Job Characteristics Theory), created by Oldham and Hackman (1975), placed that the presence of certain job attributes can build perceived meaningfulness of employees' work, assist them understanding responsibility of their work results, and permit them to have great information on the outcome of their work. The "core" job characteristics are: (a) skill variety, (b) task significance, (c) task identity, (d) autonomy, and (e) feedback from job.

According to the researchers Hackman and Oldham (1975) that the first three job characteristics could have an important influence on an employees' experienced meaningfulness of work. Skill variety alludes to the degree to which a job requires an individual to be associated with wide range of activities and use various talents and skills, while identity of task is the degree to which a job needs "finishing of an entire work and recognizable part of work, which is executing a job from start to end with a clear result. Task significance alludes to the degree to which the job has sizably affects the existences of others (both inside and outside the association). The fourth core job characteristic, autonomy, could essentially improve an individual's feelings of personal obligation of their work results (Oldham & Hackman, 1975). Autonomy suggested to the "extent to which the job provides significant freedom, discretion, and liberty to the individual in arrangement the work and in choosing the techniques to be utilized in carrying it out". At last, job feedback, the degree to which the job gives clear and direct information about the viability of an individual's work, can directly affect their knowledge of the outcome of their work (Oldham & Hackman, 1975).

Evidence exists in the literature to recommend that an individual's engagement level is influenced by the attributes of their work. Kahn (1990) found that the meaningfulness state of engagement is fundamentally impacted by the characteristics of an individual's job, incorporating skill variety, challenging work, and clearly identified, autonomous and creative role. Meaningfulness is additionally molded by the proper positions that an individual stands firm on – positions that offer "attractive identities," status, self-image, and reputation (Kahn, 1990). Expanding on Kahn's (1990) engagement system, May et al. (2004) secured that job enhancement and work role fit were emphatically connected with psychological meaningfulness. Managers, the authors contended, could upgrade perception of employees of meaningfulness through effective job design.

Results from Saks' (2006) research also showed that job characteristics – depends on Oldham and Hackman's theory – considerably foresee job engagement. Saks (2006) prescribed that managers should attempt to distinguish and give benefits and resources that are considered significant for employees, which would "oblige them to respond in kind with more elevated levels of engagement". Meaningful work – "identified as work and other work place attributes that assist the maintenance or attainment of one or more components of meaning" – incorporate types of work that empower an individual to satisfy their potential, have a social effect, achieve their life objectives and values, and have a feeling of individual achievement (Fairlie, 2011). Organizations, therefore, ought to guarantee that chances for meaningful work are present and unmistakably associated to employees at all level.

Sarti (2014) examined the job resources' impacts on engagement in a long-term care context and found that learning opportunity, decision authority, co-worker and supervisor support, and financial rewards powerfully affected work engagement between caregivers. As per the researcher Crawford et al. (2014), job challenge, task variety, autonomy, feedback, recognition, and rewards as essential to upgrading perceived organizational support. At long last, Bakker and Tims (2014) referred to a few empirical studies that offer additional help for the connection between job characteristics and perceived organizational support. Thus it is understood that job characteristics may play an instrument role in developing perceived organization on the part of the employees to care about the organizations welfare and support the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. Thus it's hypothesized that job characteristics creates positive and significant impact on perceived organizational support.

b. Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Engagement

Studies have revealed that perceived organizational support influences representative perceptions of the organizational workplace and directly affects engagement (Saks, 2006; Rich et al., 2010; Rocco, Shuck, et al., 2011; Bhatnagar & Biswas, 2013; Rana et al., 2014; Shuck et al., 2014; Zhong et al., 2016). Similarly as with employee alignment, in allowing for perceived organizational support as a forerunner for engagement of employees, it is perception of individual employee of their remarkable collaboration with the organization and the workplace that is a determinant in whether they may build up a condition of engagement (Shuck, 2019).

In moving from a perception of employees of help to a condition of engagement, it is suggested that (1) cognitively engaged employees perceive that their offerings are esteemed, they are "upheld in their well-being and their work was considered reasonably" (Shuck et al., 2014); (2) emerging from a good cognitive appraisal of feelings of help from the organization (i.e., cognitive engagement), emotionally engaged employees will feel "associated with and a piece of the organization" (Shuck et al., 2014) and hence willing to contribute individual resources such

as knowledge, pride, ability, and skill (Reio & Shuck, 2011; Shuck et al., 2014) towards "profitable, organizationally aligned conduct" and (3) whenever representatives have made a positive cognitive appraisal (cognitive engagement) and chose to contribute individual resources (emotional engagement), behavioral engagement shows their readiness to "participate in discretionary effort" (Reio & Shuck, 2011) and their "goal to act" (Reio and Shuck, 2011) in coordinating their discretionary effort towards "recognized organizational goals that move the organization in a a positive way".

Perceived organizational support deliberates the general expectations of organization's members and acknowledgment of individual worth and their contribution to it in a perception of subjective way. "Reciprocity principle" and "Social exchange theory" have consistently been the theoretical premise of study on employee engagement and organizational support. The social exchange relationship's premise is that if an individual gives another person a help, he accepts that he will get a corresponding return from the other individual in the future. Likewise, if employees perceived the organizational support, then they will accept that the organization will satisfy its obligations of exchange later on and feel that they are required to reimburse the organization, so they will work hard in order to acquire the spiritual and material rewards, consequently realize social exchange. Zhang, W. and Liang, G.Q. (2015) clarified the guideline of reciprocity, only when employees perceive organizational support and minding from the organization that they will produce positive authoritative contribution and commitment and make active behavior or attitude changes so as to make attempt to accomplish organization objectives. Related study proposes that organizational support has an immediate positive prescient impact on job involvement of knowledge worker. The study on the negative conduct of the job involvement led by Wayne tracked down that perceived organizational support can considerably restrain the employees' negative behavior.

Employee engagement is portrayed by Bakker and Schaufeli (2004) as a perspective described by vigor (enthusiasm and mental resilience), dedication (meaningful, challenging and superior) and absorption (being completely submerged in work). As per Stinglhamber and Eisenberger (2011), Kurtessis et al. (2015), and Mehmet and Karatepe (2016) in the course of Organizational leaders value contribution of employee, Perceived Organizational Support, and exhibit caring perspectives toward their well-being as they pay attention to them, show concern for them, treat them with fairness, support them and most importantly, give ideal working conditions. Consequently, dependable with reciprocity norm and the SET, employees build up a commitment and obligation to contribute to the overall effectiveness of the organization (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009). This is probably going to be showed through advancement of positive behaviors and attitudes toward their organization prompting high employee engagement.

Through intrinsic interest of strengthening employee in their work, perceived organizational support would improve work engagement all the way through diverse mechanisms, specifically: (1) encouraging among employees the expectation and the conviction that their organization will furnish them with fundamental assistance, for example: emotional and material resources when required; (2) cultivate among employees the possible reward's expectation for higher performance; and (3) fulfilling their socio-emotional needs such as requirement for self-esteem, which are vital characteristics for high work engagement. Mehmet and Karatepe (2016) contend that as employees perceive organization support, they build up a feeling of strength, absorption and dedication in their work. The above mentioned regardless, limited researches have exactly explored the connection among work engagement and perceived organizational support. Hence, we can anticipate that to the degree an employee perceives

support from the organizational, employee engagement would be improved. Thus it is hypothesized that perceived organization support creates positive and significant impact on employee engagement.

4. Methodology

This study aims to test the relation between job characteristics and perceived organizational support, and perceived organization support and employee engagement. The population of the study consists of employee work in ICICI, HDFC, and Axis Bank at senior managerial level in head office or corporate office of Tamilnadu, India.

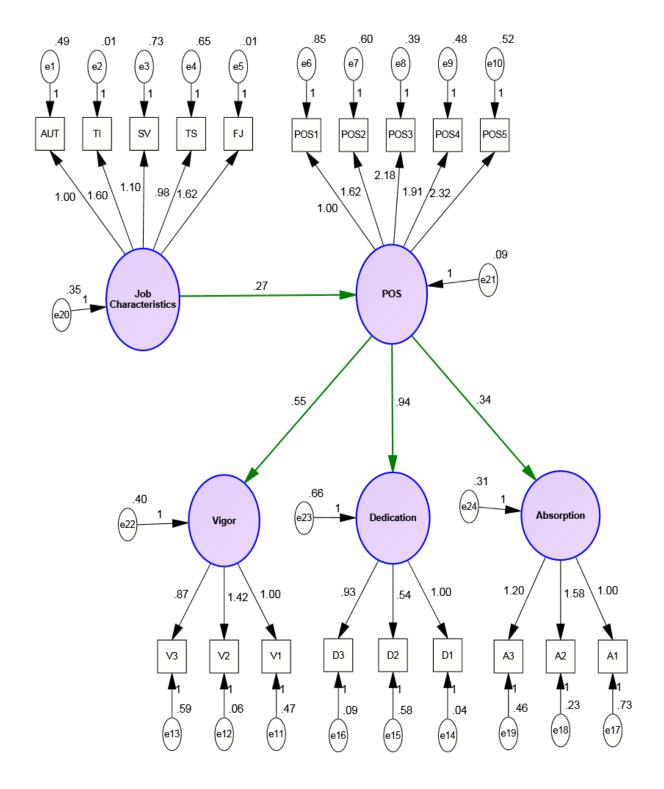
The contact details of the respective banks were obtained, and senior managers of these branches were sent an initial request through mail. A total of 302 questionnaires were distributed through mail, with the link of Google Form to the selected Banks. Out of which 245 online questionnaires were fully completed and considered for the final survey. The data was collected at a single point of time over a period of two months. The majority of respondents are male, and majority of the respondent's educational qualification was post graduate and in the age group of 35-45 years. Most of them have work experience for up to ten years with the present employer banks. In this study, the researcher adopted five point likert scaling technique with anchors (1 - Strongly Disagree and 5 - Strongly Agree) was used to seek the response from the managers.

The dimension job characteristic were measured by the five items from Hackman and Oldham (1980), which each item representing the core job characteristics (Autonomy, Task Identify, Skill Variety, Task Significance and Feedback from the job). The dimension perceived organizational support were measure with the short version of Rhoades er al., (2001). Finally the dimension employee engagement was measure from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) which was introduced by Schaufeli and Bakker in 2003 and measures vigor, dedication and absorption.

5. **Results and Discussion**

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to assess the research model developed for the study. The research model consists of three dimensions. The dimensions are job characteristics (5 Individual Statements), Perceived Organizational Support (5 Individual Statements). The dimension employee engagement consists of three dimensions, and consists of 9 individual statements. The model fit indices of the research model are Chi-square divided by the degree of freedom = 1.864, CFI = 0.978, GFI = 0.955, TLI = 0.971, SRMR = 0.033 and RMSEA = 0.047. The indices show that research model fits well with the data. The Cronbacks Value lies above 0.80 for all the construct, Average Variance extracted were above .60, and there is absence of discriminate validity. Thus, reliability and validity are achieved in this study.

a. Graphical Display of the Research Model



b. Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesized Relationship	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	Р	
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Hypothesized Relationship			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	Р
Perceived Organizational Support	<	Job Characteristics	.269	.066	4.059	.000
Vigor	<	Perceived Organizational Support	.553	.189	2.925	.003
Dedication	<	Perceived Organizational Support	.944	.249	3.786	.000
Absorption	<	Perceived Organizational Support	.338	.152	2.220	.026

There is a substantial and statistically significant path coefficient (.269) between job characteristics and perceived organizational support to support the hypotheses that job characteristics creates positive and significant relationship. The predictive relationship between perceived organizational support with vigor (.553), dedication (.944) and absorption (.338) were positive and significant at (0.05) level to support the hypotheses that there is significant relationship between perceived organizational support and employee engagement.

6. Recommendation and Conclusion

The result of hypotheses established that job characteristics positively influence perceived organizational support, and perceived organizational support positively influences employee engagement. Based on the result, it is clear that job characteristics makes managers jobs and task more appealing and challenging. Thus, it's recommended to rotate and redefine jobs, so that managers can utilize their skills, and their work becomes less repetitive and monotonous.

In the bank, it's recommended that majority of the things can be decentralized. This can be done by delegating tasks to the next lower grade managers or employees in the Bank, which will encourage autonomy and personal responsibility. Job characteristics offer an opportunity for the managers to encourage and structure teamwork more effectively within the organization. Creating teams will clearly define team members to be dedicated to the particular job they perform; managers also become more engaged and committed. Knowledge sharing is a powerful impulse for progress. The job characteristics and perceived organizational support is a great tool for encouraging employees to exchange ideas and opinions among themselves.

The top level management in the Bank should adopt procedures and human resource practices that will increase the manager's perceptions of positive organizational support. Perception towards organizational support can be achieved through fostering fairness among policies decision, creating a pathway always to maintain and open channels of communication with their top level authorities, assuring managers that their jobs are secure, offering valuable training based on the need based identification which promotes managers personal growth or reducing continual work overloads.

Perceived organizational support influences employee engagement by providing support received from deciding authorities. Therefore it is recommended that top level decision makers to be supportive to their managers, for instance by having regular interactions, resolving their quires and job responsibilities, and finally providing emotional resources they needed.

In specific, senior managers in corporate office or head office engagement will result in productivity, financial performance, and sales. Engaged managers are less likely to leave the bank. When competent manager leaves the bank will reduces corporate revenue, thus perceived organizational support plays a vital role. When managers realize their sense of belonging they will be fully engaged with their work. Thus it is recommended that right job characteristics and perceived organizational support increases level of employee engagement.

7. Recommendation for further Research

The sample consists of senior level managers in corporate office or head office in selected private sector Banks. Considering both private and public sector Bank may contribute to a richer understanding of the research phenomenon. To measure the level of perceived organizational support, in this study only job characteristic were considered as antecedents. Some other factors may also contribute towards perceived organizational support. Thus, other antecedents may be considered to measure perceived organizational support. In this study only perceived organizational support direct effect was considered to measure the level of employee engagement. Joint effect of antecedents may be considered to measure employee engagement. Other cadre of managers working in branches also can be included in future research.

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