Impact of Demographic Variables on Employee Engagement level in IT Sector

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ABSTRACT

In today’s milieu, organizations worldwide are focusing on achieving great benefits from minimal investments. The IT sector is the chief employer to a major chunk of working professionals of all developing and developed economies. But in the contemporary times, Long and nerve-racking working hours, cut throat antagonism, increasing computerization, heavy workload and tedious nature of work has deemed employee engagement a gigantic Issue in IT sector. This exploratory study examined the extent to which demographic variables such as, age, gender, marital status and tenure in organisation contributed to their engagement levels. The finding of the study will help to choose the correct engagement strategy according to the differential demography of an organisation. The results of the analysis have reflected no significant impact of any of the demographic variable on overall engagement level and hence HR managers can freely choose the engagement strategies without having to worry about the differences of demographic nature among their employees. The tool implemented to collect primary data is structured questionnaire and personal interviews with respondents. Secondary data was taken through various research journals, business magazines and websites. Out of 426 questionnaires circulated 404 completely filled responses were received, that were analysed to derive logical interpretation. The data was collected through employees of various IT and ITeS companies from the state of Rajasthan.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, IT sector, Salanova Engagement Scale, Age, Gender, Experience and Marital Status.

INTRODUCTION:

The concept of Employee Engagement has achieved greatest impetus in the recent years. In today’s super competitive world, the quality challenges volume in term of efficiency. In the present times the organisations centre their attention on keeping their employees happy and satisfied with widespread use of development strategies and employee oriented policy designs. In the present times, an employee is always on a hunt for better opportunity, if an employer doesn’t focus on holding on to the talent and keeping it happy and satisfied with his opportunities, it may lose its business, output, image and integrity. Employees are the foundation of every organization. Whether it’s a corporate body, a non-profit organization or employees are the nub of any industry. That is the reason why each and every organization nowadays is focusing on wellness strategies for their employees. Offering various employee welfare programs has an eventual endeavor towards creating a contented and satisfied workforce, which centers around generating self motivated and inspired employees with superior health, work-life equilibrium and career management skills, reduced absenteeism, augmented efficiency and production, and a sustainable up gradation of the quality. All the above listed factors lead to superior and proficient employees and in general an improved organization. The various demographic variables have a noteworthy impact on the attitude of employees towards acceptance and success of any engagement strategy functional in an organization. Demographic differences like age, gender, marital status, race, ethnicity, occupation, income level etc may put a strong impact on various aspects.
of an individual’s overall performance at his workplace. Hence it’s important to analyze the extent to which these factors affect the Employee Engagement level so that the employer can plan and implement appropriate engagement strategies. This research paper provides an account of the postulate that whether common demographic variables like age, gender, marital status and tenure in organisation have any specific impact on the employee engagement level.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Kahn (1990) was the first to suggest that employee engagement has positively impact on organisational level outcomes in various ways. Kahn elucidated his argument with the reason that employees want to work for various reasons rather than just getting paid for it. They will work to bring success for their organisation if given proper direction. Rothbard (2013) presented his research outcomes as stating that it was evident that Gender differences have been found to have strong connection with the level of engagement. The men experience enrichment from work rather from family, whereas women experience fatigue from work than family. While women experience enrichment from family to work, most of the men experience no involvement from family to work. Thus men are more engaged than women. On the contrary Gallup’s US research concluded that women tend to find more accomplishment in their jobs and are more engaged than men are in most of the countries (Johnson 2014). However, no clear difference was found between employee engagements levels of Thai men and women. (Buckingham 2001) reported that the duration an employee spends in an organisation is inversely proportional to his/her engagement. Likewise, researchers by Gallup organisation (2016), Brim (2002) and Truss et al (2006) recognized an opposite relationship between employee engagement, and the tenure in an organisation. According to Brim (2002) this phenomena indicates that for most of the employees, the first year on the job is their best and thereafter engagement and enthusiasm drops when it comes to work.

Wilson (2009) also concluded the same result of gender differences being insignificant when it comes to engagement. The results are also similar to that of Schaufeli et al. (2006) and Yildirim (2008). The result however contradicts with Sprang et al. (2007) who concluded that female employees face more burnout and hence are less engaged than their male counterparts.

A research by Gallup organisation (2017) also observed differences in engagement level of employees, between employees who were single and those who were married. Contradictory to the opinion in general, it was found that married employees tend to have a higher level of engagement than there single counterparts. Though for the present research results confirm non significant impact of marital status on engagement of employees.

Swaminatahan (2018) reported the findings of their study on employees of IT sector of Chennai, that Age and gender do not have a strong impact on the engagement level of employees. Though it was found that as the tenure of an individual in an organisation increases the employee tends to show greater engagement indicator. It was found that tenure in the organisation and employee engagement has direct relationship with each other. Reissova et al. (2017) have suggested the engagement level of an employee is influenced highly by the age of the employees. It was reported that as the age of an employee increases their engagement level decreases considerably. On the other hand gender and marital status were found to be non significant when it comes to job and organisational engagement.

Sunita et al. (2015) performed a research on the IT employees of NCR region .The findings of their research reflect that Age, Gender, Marital status and Experience of an employee is irrelevant while finding out the consequence of any engagement strategy .The employees may be guided by other factors when it comes to engagement but demographic variables like age, gender, marital status, qualification and experience have non significant impact on engagement level of employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The respondents for the study were taken from the major IT companies of Rajasthan region, majorly from cities of Jaipur and Udaipur. The data was collected using structured questionnaire. The employee engagement level has been measured using UWES (Utrecht work engagement scale) Salanova et al (2001). The scale presents total engagement of an employee to be made of three constructs namely – Vigor, Dedication and Absorption .All the three contributing equally to the total engagement score.

The questionnaire had 21 questions .Out of which 17 questions were related to three constructs of engagement vigor (6), Dedication (5) & Absorption (6) and 4 questions related to demographic variables. Total 420 questionnaires were rotated out of which 406 responses were received and 402 were used for analysis. Convenience sampling technique was used for selecting samples. Mann – Whitney U test has been used to find
out the impact of gender and marital status. And Kruskal - Wallis test is used to find out the impact of age and tenure in the organisation on engagement level.

**HYPOTHESIS:**

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The Demographic profile of the sample is depicted below in Table 1.

| Table 1: Demographic profile of Sample |
|--------------------------------------|
| Sex | No. | Age group | No. | Marital Status | No. | Tenure of working | No. |
|-----|-----|-----------|-----|----------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| Female | 106 | 20 - 25 Years | 99 | Married | 286 | 1-3 Years | 85 |
| Male | 298 | 26 - 30 Years | 167 | Unmarried | 118 | 3-5 Years | 143 |
| **Total** | **404** | **31 – 35 Years** | **91** | **Total** | **404** | **5-7 years** | **104** |
| | | 36 - 40 Years | 47 | | | 7 - 10 years | 61 |
| | | **Total** | **404** | | | 10 years and more | 11 |

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**

**Impact of Gender on Employee Engagement Level:**
To test the effect of gender of an employee on employee engagement, Mann-Whitney U test has been used. The Mann-Whitney U test compares differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is ordinal or continuous, but non-normally distributed. The table 2- below highlights the impact of gender on the engagement scores of employees.

| Table 2: Gender Wise Comparison of Variables |
|---------------------------------------------|
| Variables | Sex | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean Rank | Mann-Whitney U | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) |
|------------|-----|---|------|----------------|------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Vigor | Male | 298 | 3.46 | 0.502 | 202.92 | 15668.50 | 0.903 |
| | Female | 106 | 3.44 | 0.469 | 201.32 | | |
| | Male | 298 | 3.67 | 0.575 | 197.95 | 14438.50 | 0.186 |
| | Female | 106 | 3.75 | 0.589 | 215.29 | | |
| Absorption | Male | 298 | 3.67 | 0.588 | 200.29 | 15134.00 | 0.521 |
| | Female | 106 | 3.71 | 0.585 | 208.73 | | |

After analyzing the P value for all the variables, it can be inferred that since the p > 0.05 for vigor, dedication and absorption, there is no significant impact of gender on the employee engagement level. Hence it can be inferred that males and females both respond equally in almost similar terms to any welfare program applied in the industry and also the engagement level of employee is not affected by their gender to a considerable extent.

**Impact of Marital Status on Employee Engagement Level:**
To test the impact of marital status on both dependent and independent variable Mann-Whitney U test has been used. The table 3, below highlights the impact of marital status on the constructs of engagement.

| Table 3: Comparison on the Basis of Marital Status |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| Group Statistics | Marital Status | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean Rank | Mann-Whitney U | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) |
|------------------|----------------|---|------|----------------|------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Vigor | Married | 286 | 3.48 | 0.462 | 205.74 | 15948.00 | 0.383 |
| | Unmarried | 118 | 3.38 | 0.557 | 194.65 | | |

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After analyzing the P value for all the variables of engagement it can be inferred that since the p > 0.05 for vigor, dedication and absorption, there is no significant impact of marital status on the employee engagement level. Hence it can be inferred that both married and unmarried employees respond equally to engagement strategies. Their level of engagement is not affected by their marital status to a considerable extent.

**Impact of Age on Employee Engagement Level:**
To test the impact of Age on engagement variables, Kruskal – Wallis test has been used. A significant Kruskal-Wallis test indicates that at least one sample stochastically dominates the other sample. The test does not identify where this stochastic dominance occurs or for how many pairs of groups stochastic dominance obtains. The table 4, below indicates the p value of the all the employee engagement variables.

| Variables | Marital Status | N  | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean Rank | Mann-Whitney U | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-----------|----------------|----|------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Dedication| Married        | 286| 3.74 | 0.542         | 211.08    | 14420.50       | 0.321                 |
|           | Unmarried      | 118| 3.57 | 0.647         | 181.71    |                |                       |
| Absorption| Married        | 286| 3.71 | 0.545         | 207.12    | 15552.00       | 0.213                 |
|           | Unmarried      | 118| 3.60 | 0.673         | 191.30    |                |                       |

On analyzing the above table it was evident that none of the dependent variables have p values lesser than 0.05, which indicates that there is no significant impact of age on any variable i.e. vigor, dedication or absorption. Hence it can be concluded that age has no impact on the engagement level of an employee. All the employees of irrespective of their age group will respond in the similar manner to Employee engagement strategies in case of a controlled set up (limiting all the above variables).

So, it can be inferred that age of an employee does not impact the engagement level of employees significantly or any change in the employee engagement level cannot be attributed to age or gender of an employees. Thus while designing the engagement strategies for employees a manager need not specifically pay attention to their age difference. In an undifferentiated manner same strategy can be targeted to any employee irrespective of their age group.

**Impact of Tenure in the Organisation on Employee Engagement Level:**
To test the impact of tenure in an organisation on dependent variable Kruskal – Wallis test has been used. The table-5 below indicates the p value of the all the employee engagement variables.
Table 5: Impact of Tenure in organisation on Employee Engagement level

| Variables      | N   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | Std. Error | Mean Rank | Kruskal Wallis test |
|----------------|-----|-------|----------------|------------|-----------|---------------------|
|                |     |       |                |            |           | Chi-square   df   Asymp . Sig. |
| Vigor          |     |       |                |            |           |                      |
| 1-3 Years      | 85  | 3.355 | 0.527          | 0.057      | 186.153   | 2.664       4    0.616 |
| 3-5 Years      | 143 | 3.487 | 0.477          | 0.040      | 206.937   |                      |
| 5-7 Years      | 104 | 3.490 | 0.458          | 0.045      | 209.875   |                      |
| 7-10 Years     | 61  | 3.459 | 0.524          | 0.067      | 205.770   |                      |
| 10 Years and More | 11 | 3.409 | 0.550          | 0.166      | 183.273   |                      |
| Dedication     |     |       |                |            |           |                      |
| 1-3 Years      | 85  | 3.605 | 0.638          | 0.069      | 191.547   | 3.888       4    0.421 |
| 3-5 Years      | 143 | 3.776 | 0.552          | 0.046      | 217.175   |                      |
| 5-7 Years      | 104 | 3.669 | 0.593          | 0.058      | 199.399   |                      |
| 7-10 Years     | 61  | 3.652 | 0.495          | 0.063      | 189.713   |                      |
| 10 Years and More | 11 | 3.673 | 0.700          | 0.211      | 196.591   |                      |
| Absorption     |     |       |                |            |           |                      |
| 1-3 Years      | 85  | 3.643 | 0.667          | 0.072      | 198.435   | 2.483       4    0.648 |
| 3-5 Years      | 143 | 3.731 | 0.525          | 0.044      | 210.493   |                      |
| 5-7 Years      | 104 | 3.659 | 0.608          | 0.060      | 199.966   |                      |
| 7-10 Years     | 61  | 3.626 | 0.560          | 0.072      | 188.303   |                      |
| 10 Years and More | 11 | 3.818 | 0.664          | 0.200      | 232.682   |                      |

On Analyzing the above table it was evident that none of the constructs of engagement i.e. vigor, dedication and absorption have p values < 0.05, which indicates that there is no significant impact of experience on any variable. Hence it can be concluded that experience has no impact on the engagement level of an employee. All the employees of irrespective of their experience will respond in the similar manner to Employee engagement strategies in case of a controlled set up (limiting all the other variables except experience of the employees).

FINDINGS:

1. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicate that the Age and tenure of an employee in an organisation, do not impact their Engagement level significantly. So it can be concluded that if an engagement strategy is applied in an organisation than its impact on the employees will not be subjective to their Age and experience. However there may be several other factors that may affect, how well any engagement tactics works on the employees.

2. On applying Mann Whitney U test on the sample to find out the extent to which the engagement level of the employees is affected due to their Gender or marital status, it was found that there is no significant impact of these two variables on the engagement level of the employee. Thus the efficiency of any employee engagement program is not dependent on their gender and marital status.

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