

A Study on Employee Engagement and Ethic of Friendship

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Abstract: *This abstract presents a comprehensive overview of the relationship between employee engagement and the ethic of friendship, highlighting the potential benefits and challenges associated with cultivating friendships in the workplace. Friendship in the workplace is characterized by mutual trust, support, and a sense of camaraderie between employees. When fostered effectively, it can have a profound impact on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Genuine friendships in the workplace can create a sense of belonging and encourage collaboration, leading to increased employee productivity, creativity, and loyalty. Additionally, workplace friendships have been linked to lower turnover rates and improved employee retention. Employee engagement and ethical practices are critical factors for fostering a positive work environment and enhancing organizational success. However, an often overlooked aspect is the role of friendship within the workplace and its influence on employee engagement and ethical behaviour.*

Keywords: Employee, Ethic, Engagement, Employee

I. INTRODUCTION

The whole world is encompassed with the era of Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization (LPG) and Information, Communication, Entertainment (ICE). Among the various Ms of Management namely men, material, machinery, money, markets, methods, modernization & maintenance, its globally proved that dealing with “Men” (Human factor) is the most difficult task. It is more so in the present technology driven era as today’s managers are expected to be “multi-skilled managers” & today’s workers are “knowledge workers”.

The failure of managers and supervisors to earn the trust and followership of the employees with whom they work is well documented in recent research about employee engagement. Without that employee commitment, organizations inevitably struggle to compete in the global marketplace and fail to achieve their potential. Although much has been discussed in the light of the findings of concerned scholars (HR Research Institute, 2019), disagreement nonetheless exists about the factors which make up employee engagement, as well as the most effective approach that can be taken to increase engagement and those factors. Though there has not been full agreement about the nature of employee engagement, it is widely accepted that the failure of organizations to engage employees has been a serious deterrent to achieving organization results (Clifton & Harter, 2019). The purposes of this paper are to offer insights into the precise nature of employee engagement and to identify the value of employers adopting the Ethic of Friendship – an ethical perspective that has begun to be written about more frequently in the management literature. We begin the paper by proposing an integrated and updated definition of employee engagement – identifying nine factors which contribute to its makeup. We suggest that each of these nine factors significantly impact employee engagement and warrant increased attention by organizational leaders.

We then address the Ethic of Friendship and its increasingly important role in today’s arms-length and transactional relationship between employers and employees. The paper then clarifies how the Ethic of Friendship addresses all nine of the factors which constitute employee engagement and explains how the Ethic of Friendship can increase the ability of organization leaders, managers, and supervisors to bridge the gap of distrust that often exists in the modern organization. After identifying five important contributions made by this paper, we conclude by encouraging leaders to adopt the Ethic of Friendship’s commitment to treating employees as valued partners and, by so doing, create a culture

in which employee engagement is likely to thrive. In the midst of this change, as Peter F. Drucker points out, there are five social and political certainties that will shape our business and societal strategy in the not-too-distant future viz.,

- (i) the collapsing birth rate in the developed world
- (ii) Shifts in distribution of disposable income
- (iii) Redefinition of organizational performance
- (iv) Global competitiveness and
- (v) The growing incongruence between economic and political reality.

The dawn of LPG and ICT revolution led to the emergence of mounting complexity with more people, systems and products entwined in a bewildering web of global networks. India being a nation tailored for a variety of players, rather than a single monopoly, is able to figure among the top players by virtue of the momentum of human capital and the capacity of bottom-up growth. It is truism that the 20th century belonged to West and Europe. However, as per the predictions of different international agencies, the 21st century is all set to belong to Asia, particularly India and China. As quoted by Bharat Ratna Abdul Kalam, by 2025 the whole world would start looking at India to surmount global problems, as by that time our nation would be endowed with highest number of qualified, competent technical and managerial young human resource as compared to any country in the whole world including China.

However, it is quite disheartening to note that as per the Human Development Index (HDI) of United Nations Development Program (UNDP), India being the second most populous country in the world, ranks 126, thus figuring way behind even a majority of the developing nations. The World Bank, WHO, IMF, UNICEF, etc., point out categorically on the way the different public sector organizations in India in general and local government agencies in particular, have been functioning, much to the dissatisfaction of their clientele across different dimensions.

Most of the local government agencies whose objective is to provide qualitative services in the respective fields, seem to have been suffering from lack of requisite intrapreneurial tendencies among their employees in rendering services to the mute millions of masses in the territories concerned. Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment is sine-qua-non for rendering qualitative services to the public, which is now relatively more educated, more knowledgeable, more commanding and demanding than ever before. The work culture, the method of addressing the task, the deployment of resources, the controlling mechanism and the like are being redefined even in respect of local government agencies. Till the recent past, the development of a region/territory/state/nation used to be identified with the quantity of goods and services produced. Contrary to this, at present the development is identified with the 'Quality of Life. Undisputedly, the 'quality of life' is mostly influenced by the quality of services rendered by the different government agencies which are supposed to work in the interest of public. Thus, it is high time that such local government agencies need to have highly motivated employees addressing their task in a conducive and congenial work environment amidst exemplary bondage of interpersonal relations among the employees. Such environment, if sufficiently 'the levels of Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment leading to organizational excellence. The whole world is encompassed with the era of Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization (LPG) and Information, Communication, Entertainment (ICE). Among the various Ms of Management namely men, material, machinery, money, markets, methods, modernization & maintenance, its globally proved that dealing with "Men" (Human factor) is the most difficult task. It is more so in the present technology driven era as today's managers are expected to be "multi-skilled managers" & today's workers are "knowledge workers".

The aforesaid scenario paved a way for cut-throat competition in every big organization world over. consequently employee attrition has become order of the day and employee retention has become a challenge. As the skilled Human Resource forms the back bone of any organization, the recently evolved and emerged concept Internationally. Employee Engagement' has is rapidly gaining popularity and its application in the workplace. While there is much interest in engagement, there is also much confusion. There is no consistency in definition, and engagement has been measured in many diverse ways. Engagement may be a global construct as it appears to be a combination of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and intention to stay. Indeed, some argue that engagement is a multidimensional construct, in that employees could be emotionally, cognitively or physically engaged.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing emphasis on employee engagement, there is a lack of understanding regarding the impact of friendships in the workplace and how they relate to employee engagement. While friendships are commonly formed among colleagues, their significance and ethical implications in the workplace remain understudied. The problem is further compounded by a scarcity of research exploring how organizational culture, policies, and managerial practices either support or hinder the development of friendships among employees.

This study aims to address this gap in knowledge by examining the relationship between employee engagement and the ethic of friendship within the workplace. By exploring the influence of friendships on employee engagement and vice versa, the study seeks to shed light on the potential benefits and the challenges associated with fostering a culture that values friendships at work. Additionally, the research will investigate the impact of organizational culture, policies, and leadership practices on both employee engagement and the formation of friendships. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for organizations and managers seeking to enhance employee engagement and create a supportive and inclusive work environment that fosters meaningful relationships among employees.

1.2 Objective of the Study

- This study is to offer insights into the precise nature of Employee Engagement and to identify the value of Employers are adopting the Ethic of Friendship
- To study about the employee engagement with in the company and the comfortness between the colleagues.
- To study about enhance Employees sense of wellbeing in the organization along the understanding of Employees.
- To study about the Employee engagement with understanding the attitudes of your Employees.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research methodology involves a systematic and structured approach to collect, analyze and interpret the data for the purpose of answering the questions or testing hypothesis.

Research Plan Data Source:

Data source: Primary

Research Approach: Survey method Research Instrument: Questionnaire Contact method: E-mails, Socialmedia.

Quantitative Approach: Conduct a survey using a structured questionnaire to collect numerical data on employee engagement, the ethic of friendship, and related variables. This approach allows for statistical analysis and identification of correlations.

Define the target population: Specify the characteristics and size of the population to which the findings will be generalized.

Determine the sampling method: Random sampling, stratified sampling, or convenience sampling, depending on the accessibility and representativeness of the population.

Methods of Data collection.

This study uses primary data.

1. Primary Data

Primary data can be collected through questionnaires, which are a popular method of data collection in surveys. Questionnaires are a set of standardized questions that are designed to collect information about a specific topic or research objective. They can be distributed online, through mail, or in-person, and can be completed anonymously or with the respondent's name attached. An advantage of using primary data is that researchers are collecting information for the specific purposes of their study. In essence, the questions the researchers ask are tailored to elicit the data that will help them with their study.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Employee Engagement:

The employee engagement, which refers to the level of commitment, involvement, and enthusiasm employees have towards their work and organization.

Ethic of Friendship:

The study can investigate the notion of the ethic of friendship within the context of the workplace. This explains about how the friendship is defined and understood in the workplace, and the ethical considerations associated with developing friendships at work.

Relationship between Employee Engagement and Friendship:

The study can examine the relationship between employee engagement and the presence or absence of friendships in the workplace

Organizational Culture and Policies:

Through this study, we can analyze the influence of organizational culture and policies on both employee engagement and the potential for friendships in the workplace

Employee Well-being and Performance:

The study can investigate the impact of employee engagement and the presence of friendships on employee well-being.

Managerial Implications:

The study can provide insights and recommendations for managers and leaders on how to foster employee engagement and create an environment that encourages the development of friendships among employees.

Statistical tools used for Analysis

- Reliability
- Chi Square
- Cor-relation
- Test for Normality

1.5 Limitation of the Study

- Generalizability: The findings of this study may be limited in their generalizability due to the specific context, industry, or organizational culture in which the research is conducted.
- Subjectivity and self-reporting bias: The study relies on self-reported data from employees regarding their friendships, engagement levels, and ethical behaviour
- Causality and directionality: Establishing a causal relationship between workplace friendships, employee engagement, and ethical behaviour can be challenging. It is possible that engaged and ethically inclined employees are more likely to form friendships in the workplace, rather than the friendships directly causing engagement or ethical behaviour.
- Measurement of friendship and engagement. Friendship can be subjective and multifaceted, making it difficult to establish consistent criteria for its measurement.
- Long-term effects: The study may focus on the short-term effects of workplace friendships on engagement and ethical behaviour.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

(Sharad Mohod, 2018) Employee engagement is very important for every industry including healthcare and hospital because it has a diversity of workforce and greater number of employees works in a single organization

(Dharmendra MEHTA, 2013) Motivated and engaged employees tend to contribute more in terms of organizational productivity and support in maintaining a higher commitment level leading to the higher customer satisfaction.

(Markwick, 2009) throw light on what engagement is and reveals that it is an important yet complex challenge, and there remains a great deal of scope for discussing the various approaches. (Jawarrani, 2011)k-life balance policies &

practices followed in industries in order to promote employee engagement in their organizations to increase their employees' productivity and retain them. Work-life balance is key driver of employees' satisfaction.

(Bhatla, 2011) focused on the need for such employees and how their presence can improve the progress and work efficiency of the organization as a whole.

(KumarSundaray, 2011) focused on various factors which lead to employee engagement and what should company do to make the employees engaged

(Khaire, 2017) Employee engagement strategies are one of the key research areas in the human resource domain of management. Engaged employees are found to be more productive, efficient, and effective.

(G Nalini, 2019) Modern organizations consider their employees to be full of enthusiasm, excitement and express initiative at work, they want them to take concern for their own development, try for high quality and performance, be stout and dedicated to what they do and in other words companies need their employees be engaged.

(K.kalpana, 2018) The study reveals that Employee Engagement is a comprehensive task and cannot be accomplished by the effective training programs also.

(Fernandez, 2007) displays the dissimilarity between job satisfaction, the well-known construct in management, and engagement competing that employee satisfaction is not the same as employee engagement and since managers cannot depend on employee satisfaction to retain the best and the brightest; employee engagement becomes a critical concept.

(Sridevi, 2010) have stated that employee engagement is a strong predictor of positive organizational performance and clearly shows the two-way relationship between employer and employee compared to the three earlier constructs: employee commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviour.

(Sundaray, 2011) writes that attention to engagement strategies will increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness in higher profits, productivity, customer satisfaction, quality, employee retention, and increased adaptability.

(Wollard, 2009) believe that employee engagement has earned considerable popularity in the past 20 years yet it is inconsistently defined and not well conceptualized.

(Reio, 2011) have pointed out that employee engagement strategies are widely used in practice. However, the construct remains underdeveloped in the human resource management. (HRM) literature.

(Matthews, 2016) in a paper, has highlighted the limitations of approaches in a large number of organizations and propose a series of strategic choices that organizations should make to help ensure their future approach is more efficient and effective.

(Abhram, 2012) states that satisfied employees may just be working to meet the demands of their jobs somehow. Such efforts do not result in higher productivity.

(Parker, 2013) have written that employee engagement has become a dominant part of the literature on human resource management (HRM).

(Gopinath, 2016) have studied employee retention and engagement strategies in the Indian BPO companies and found that the attrition rates in BPO industries are very high, reflecting upon ineffective employee engagement strategies.

(Bhuvanaiah, 2014) writes that while employee engagement is a well-researched concept, it lacks a definite conceptual understanding and a generally accepted definition.

III. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The Majority (56.4%) of the respondents are aged between 25-30.
- The Majority (65.5%) of the respondents in the organization are male.
- The majority (32.8%) of the respondents are agree with the statement that the ethic of friendship in workplace emphasizes in providing incentives to improve performance.
- The majority (41.5%) of respondents are adopting the ethic of friendship are likely to encouraging teamwork.
- The majority (31.9%) of the respondents are neutral with the employee engagement are followed by their company.
- The majority (33.9%) of the respondents feels neutral that the sense of friendship at work are to be satisfied with their job and organization.

- The majority (43.7%) of the respondents adopt the ethic of friendship in their company.
- The majority (47.1%) respondents tells that the comfortness between colleagues can be measured through satisfaction survey.
- The majority (34.5%) respondents agree that the comfortness has no impact on organizational culture.
- The majority (45.4%) of respondents feels that, Increased innovation and creativity are the value of employee engagement for a company.
- The majority (32.8%) respondents feel neutral that the comfortness with the employee b/w colleagues work along.
- The majority (49.9%), of respondents feels that the overall Satisfaction and happiness of employees plays the important role in employee wellbeing.
- The majority (37.6%), of respondents (10-15) feel that sense of well being for employees are considered in their company.
- The majority (52.5), of employees feels frequent that their organization understand Employees needs and Preferences
- The majority (39%) of respondents agree that the employees with positive attitude will have higher level of job satisfaction.
- The majority (35.9%), of respondents feel that its moderate in understanding the attitude of employee in the organization.
- Cronbach's Alpha based on the Employee Engagement and the ethic of friendship value is .503 where the given data is not reliable.
- It is inferred that the P value is $0.330 > 0.05$. Hence Null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. There is no significant relationship between Age of the Responder and comfortness between the employees.
- It is inferred that the P value is $0.460 > 0.05$. Hence Null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. There is no significant relationship between educational qualification of the Responder and positive attitude of employee in organization.
- It is inferred that the R value is $0.677 > 0.05$. Hence Null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. There is no significant relationship between Age of the Responder and comfortness between the employees.
- It is inferred that the R value is $0.640 > 0.05$. Hence Null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. There is no significant relationship between educational qualification of the Responder and positive attitude of employee in organization.
- Significance value is .000 it's is less than 0.05. So, the data is not normally distributed.
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IV. SUGGESTIONS

- The Organization should focus little bit in improving employee performance. Ethic of friendship among employee is must so that the teamwork and the performance increases instantly.
- Sense of friendship at work place for employee reduces absenteeism.
- Happiness for the employee in organization is most important.
- There should be comfortness with the colleagues at work environment.
- The Organization should focus on employee wellbeing.
- The employees with positive attitude will have higher level of job satisfaction the company should focus on that. Employees should adopt the ethic of friendship in their company.
- The comfortness between colleagues can be measured through satisfaction survey. The organization must always should make arrangements to satisfy their needs

V. CONCLUSION

Employee engagement and cultivating a culture of friendship in the workplace leads to motivated employees, improved collaboration, and overall well-being. Investing in these areas creates a positive work environment and contributes to organizational success. Employee engagement and the ethic of friendship play crucial roles in creating a positive and productive work environment. Investing in employee engagement and the ethic of friendship is not only beneficial for employees but also for the overall health and prosperity of the organization.

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