HRD Practices- A Strategic Tool for Employee Engagement at Organized Retail Organizations

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Abstract
Employee Engagement can be discussed as the positive or negative attachment of the employee's emotional attachment to their job, colleagues, and organization which profoundly influences their willingness to learn & perform at work. To have a competent work force, every organization needs to have engaged employees at the top level as they have to perform a dynamic task. Especially in the Indian organized retail sector, it is very important to have engaged employees since the industry is growing very fast and also have the full potential to grow further. It is the challenge in front of the organization to have a strategic plan to have and develop employee engagement. Therefore the present study is to prove how exactly the sound HRD practices can act as a tool for Employee Engagement at selected retail organizations at the top level.
Keywords: Employee Engagement, Organized Retail, HRD Practices

Introduction

In many countries, employee engagement has emerged as a potential factor for organizational performance. Why because the organizations now have to perform their task globally, to get the competitive advantage they need to have better skills and human capital. But to retain qualitative and potential human resources, the organization needs to have benchmarking practices in the field of human resource development, especially for top-level managers. The company's success and survival are depended on its competent employees. Thus employee engagement determines the association of a person with the organization. Employee engagement has been perceived as a motivational factor towards an organization's objectives achievement. The good environment that is offered to the worker enables him to offer the best that the organization needs for its achievement of goals and objectives. And also Engaged employees are perceived to form part of an organization's brand, and an engaged, happy workforce can have a knock-on effect on customer retention, recruitment of key talent, and the ability to attract new customers in a world where a company's values are crucial to consumers.

Meaning of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the emotional attachment employees feel towards their place of work, job role, position within the company, colleagues, and culture, and the affect this attachment has on wellbeing and productivity.

From an employer's point-of-view, employee engagement is concerned with using new measures and initiatives to increase the positive emotional attachment felt and, therefore, productivity and overall business success. Employee engagement is seen by many to be an example of competitive advantage.

Concept of the Study

Figure 1

Discussion

The above figure explains the conceptual framework of the study. However the figure says that there is an interrelationship between employee engagement and HRD practices which includes Training and Development, Performance appraisal, Motivation, and labor Welfare Measures, Career Planning and Development and Employee job Satisfaction, further this conceptual acts as the base for selecting the factors related to the HRD practices, policies, procedures and rules of the selected retail organizations for collecting the primary data.

Review of Earlier Works

Dr. Swarnalatha, T.S Prasanna (2013) in one of the articles says that retailers are facing the problem of economic downturn because of some reasons like mass layoffs, widespread job insecurity, etc. and that resulting to lower employee engagement. The index scores of employee engagement of the retail industry are comparatively low in customer-facing positions. The study finally concludes that industry is at a high risk of lowest employee engagement when compared to other industries. Therefore certain measures should be taken to improve employee engagement.

Itam Urmila Jagadeeshwari, Dr.Singh Sapna (2012) in their study, they have measured the level of employee engagement in the organized retail sector at Hyderabad and also the study focused on variations of employee engagement with the change in key dimensions such as work and personal life, stress, and training. And the study identified that the employees can balance work and personal life at the maximum level. And also, the study says that the organization is also training the employees for required skill sets to perform their job, and also, it is identified that the male employees are more engaged than female employees in the sector.

Prof. Priyadarshni Nidan (2016) in their one of the study says that the organizations are going globally meanwhile they have to have a competitive edge by nurturing and retaining the new talents at the top level, which will help the organization in good and bad times and which will also affect the organization in its success and survival. The study also focused on the impact of employee engagement on employee productivity and the motivational level of employees. The study also stressed that retail sector providing more opportunities for job enhancement but retaining employee is one of the most challenging issues; the study recommends that if the organization have good strategies to engage its employees it will help them to perform better and ready to take more responsibility, energetic and inspiring.

Paluku Kazimoto (2016) in their article, they have studied employee engagement at the city of Uganda. The study focused on measuring employee engagement about organizational performance focusing on non -financial factors. The findings show that the d e-gree of retail employee engagement and the level of job satisfaction were very high in retailing enterprises in Wabulenzi - Luwero city. However, it was observed that in retailing organizations, employees were found it difficult to make equilibrium of work experience and house life with their employment. This study shows that despite the association between employee engagement and job satisfaction, there is no relationship between employee engagement and job assignment, which is an important key factor for organization performance. The results reveal that job assignment is critical for engaging employees to ensure organizations' longevity and profitability.

Research Gap

Even though studies on HRM in retailing have been conducted from various perspectives, the important aspects like Training and Development initiatives, Performance and Labor Welfare measures, Career Planning and development, Employee Satisfaction, and its effects on employee engagement have not been addressed. And no studies have been done in the Indian context. Therefore current research is an attempt to fill these gaps.

Statement of the Problem

Studies reviewed says that in the retailing industry, employee engagement is low when compared to other industries for many reasons like long working hours, less job security, and also high attrition rates. But still, it is proved in other Indian companies that engaged employees can improve the productivity of the company. Since the retailers need to concentrate on the tools to develop employee engagement, thereby productivity. Therefore the present study is attempted to prove the effects of human resource development practices of the organization the employee engagement. Given this to forecast the contribution of HRD practices on employee engagement, the following objectives have formulated.

The Objective of the Study

To study the difference in the contribution of independent variables (Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Motivation, and Labor Welfare measures, Career Planning and Development, Employee Job Satisfaction) in predicting the depending variable (Employee engagement) of employees of organized retail organizations.

The Hypothesis of the Study

H_0: There is no significant difference in the contribution of independent variables (T&D, Performance appraisal, motivation, and labor welfare measures, Career planning, and development, employee job satisfaction) in predicting the independent variable (employee engagement) at Managerial level.

Research Methodology

Type of Research

The present study is exploratory, descriptive, and analytical. The study is based on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate different constructs postulated.

Scope of the Study

Out of 27 districts in Karnataka, the study was conducted in 11 districts (Bengaluru, Mysore, Mandya, Mangalore, Udupi, Dharwad, Belgaum, Hubli, Shivamogga, Davanagee, and Hassan), where the selected, organized retailers have their stores. For the study, three segments of the organized retail industry like lifestyle, Food and Grocery, Electronics, and Home Appliances have been covered. In turn, the conceptual scope of the study is confined to human resource development practices like training and development, performance appraisal, motivation, and labor welfare measures, career planning, and development employee job satisfaction and employee engagement. However, the study is conducted for organized retailers who have different chains in different cities across the world. The study also covers the only top and middle-level managers like store heads and flour heads, supervisory staff, etc.

Data Sources

A self-instructed questionnaire was developed for the study to collect the required data from the top and middle-level managers of the organized retail organization at three segments. The secondary data is collected through published sources like Books, Journals, and also Company Websites, and other e-sources.

Sampling Technique

The sampling procedure followed in the present research study is that of Stratified simple random sampling. However, the study area is divided into three strata like the Lifestyle segment, Food, and Grocery Segment and Electronics and Home Appliances segment for the data collection purpose.

Sample Size

The sample size is 300 top and middle-level managers from organized retailing organizations. 100 from each segment.

Analytical Techniques

MS Excel and SPSS 21 was used for data analysis. Co-relation and regression analysis is used to prove the contribution of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Results and Discussions

For the analysis purpose the Training and development. Performance appraisal, Motivation, and labor welfare measures, Career planning and development, and employee job satisfaction have been studied separately, and finally, the effects of these predictor variables on criterion variables are exhibited below.

Testing of Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant difference in the contribution of independent variables (T&D, Performance appraisal, motivation, and labor welfare measures, Career planning, and development, employee job satisfaction) in predicting the independent variable (employee engagement) at Managerial level.

Table 1 Shows Regression Co-efficient of Contribution of HRD Practices on Employee Engagement (Model Summary)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.870a	.757	.753	.926

Table 2 Summary of ANOVA for Regression

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	782.158	5	156.432	182.462	.000b
Residual	251.200	293	.857		
Total	1033.358	298			

Discussion

The effect of Training and Development (X_1), Performance Appraisal (X_2), Motivation and Labor Welfare measures (X_3) and Career Planning and Development (X_4), Employee job Satisfaction (X_5) was found to be significant (F=182.462,p<0.01) on Employee engagement at managerial level employees at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that Training and Development (X_1), Performance Appraisal (X_2), Motivation and Labor Welfare measures (X_3) and Career Planning and Development (X_4), Employee job Satisfaction (X_5) are the significant Predictors of Employee engagement at managerial level employees in selected segments of organized retails.

Table 3 Summaries of Regression Coefficients for Employee Engagement

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-4.330	.822		-5.267	.000
Training and Development	.198	.032	.223	6.186	.000
Performance Appraisal	.038	.033	.037	1.144	.254
Motivation and Labor Welfare Measures	.839	.057	.492	14.637	.000
Career planning and Development	.144	.025	.200	5.776	.000
Employee Job Satisfaction	.205	.034	.210	6.038	.000
Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement					

Discussion

Results of the above table indicated that the effect of Training and Development (X_1) was found to be positive and significant on employee engagement of employees at managerial level (Regression co-efficient= 0.223, t=6.186, p<0.01) at 0.01 level of

significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that Training and Development (X_1) is a significant predictor of employee engagement of selected segments of organized retails.

The effect of Performance appraisal (X_2) was found to be positive and significant on employee engagement at managerial level (Regression co-efficient= .037, t = 1.144, p<0.01) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that performance appraisal (X_2) is a significant predictor of Employee engagement at managerial level.

The effect of Motivation and Labor Welfare measures (X_3) was found to be positive and significant on employee engagement at managerial level (Regression co-efficient=.492, t=1.144, p<0.01) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that Performance Appraisal (X_3) is a significant predictor of Employee Engagement of employees at the managerial level.

The effect of Career Planning and Development (X_4) was found to be positive and significant on employee engagement at managerial level (Regression co-efficient= 0.200, t=5.776, p<0.01) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that Career Planning and Development (X_4) is a significant predictor of employee engagement of employees at the managerial level.

The effect of Employee job Satisfaction (X_5) was found to be positive and significant on employee engagement at managerial level (Regression co-efficient= 0.210, t=6.038, p<0.01) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that employee job satisfaction (X_4) is a significant predictor of employee engagement of employees at managerial level

The relative contribution of Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Motivation, and Labor Welfare measures and Career Planning and Development, Employee job Satisfaction on employee engagement of employees at managerial level are also presented in the following table.

Table 4 Relative contributions of independent variables on criterion variable (Employee Engagement)

Independent Variable	B	r	β x r	% of contribution
Training and Development	.223	.0.934	0.606	13.51%
Performance Appraisal	.037	0.787	0.387	1.4393%
Motivation and Labor Welfare Measures	.492	0.935	0.744	36.604%
Career planning and Development	.200	0.918	0.601	12.02%
Employee Job Satisfaction	.210	0.912	0.577	12.11%
Total				75.6833%

Discussion

The Total contribution of all the independent variables on Employee Engagement at managerial level found to be 75.68% in which, the contribution of Training and development (X_1)= 13.51%, Performance Appraisal (X_2)=1.4393%, Motivation and Labor Welfare Measures (X_3)=36.604%, and Career Planning and Development (X_4) is about 12.02%, and Employee Job Satisfaction (X_5) is about 12.11% Therefore it can be concluded that, The Motivation and Labor Welfare Measures $(X_3)$is the First Contributor/predictor followed by Training and development (X_1), Employee Job Satisfaction (X_5) and Performance Appraisal (X_2)on Employee Engagement of employees at selected segments of organized retailing at managerial level. However, the regression analysis has been done based on the opinion given by the respondent managerial staff in the study area. Hence based on the percentage contribution of the independent variables on the dependent variable, it can be concluded that employees at a managerial level have a good perception of motivation and labor welfare measures where as other variables have little contribution towards employee engagement. The regression equation developed for the contribution of predictor

variables (Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Motivation, and Labor Welfare Measures, Career Planning and Development, and Employee Job Satisfaction) in predicating the criterion variable (Employee Engagement) of employees at managerial level. i.e.,

$Y = 0.198+0.223(X_1)\ 0.038+0.037(X_2)\ 0.839+ 0.492(X_3)\ 0.144 + 0.200(X_4)\ 0.205+0.210(X_5)$

Y = Employee Engagement
X_1 = Training and Development
X_2 = Performance Appraisal
X_3 = Motivation and Labor Welfare Measures
X_4 = Career Planning and Development
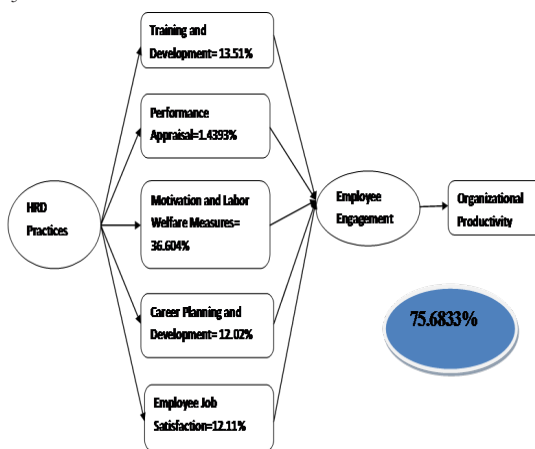X_5 = Employee Job Satisfaction

Chart: 1 Contribution of predictor variables on the criterion variable in percentage

Discussion

From the above chart, it can be clear that the independent variables have their contributions in predicting the dependent variable at a different percentage, the total percentage of contribution is 75.6833% remaining will be another factor which contributes to the employee engagement could not be identified by the present study. And suggested for further research.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study in three selected segments of the study area reported that many organizations like Shopper Stop, Lifestyle, Joy Allukas, Abharana are adopted by very sound HRD practices like training and development, performance appraisal, motivation, and labor welfare, employee job satisfaction which will effect on the employee engagement, in turn, supports to organizational growth and efficiency. At the same time, it is identified that the retail chains falling under the food and grocery segment like More, Big Bazaar, Food Bazaar have not adopted very sound HRD practices when compared to other segments, the reason behind this is the stumpy turnover of the organization. And also, the sample organizations selected for the study have different practices for two different levels of their employees. Hence forth the study outcomes suggested that the Indian Retail association has a major role to play, and they have to control the activity of organized retail organizations to bring efficiency in the sector. At the same time, the organizations also need to have their best and benchmarking practices to bring out the effectiveness and efficiency of both individuals and organizations as well. To evidence the statement above, chart 1 shows the contributions of different practices on employee engagement are very high. Therefore it suggested to the retail organizations that even though the retails have very sound HRD practices if they develop their practices further, it will lead to better employee engagement and thereby contributes to increased productivity of the organization. Henceforth it can be concluded that human resource development practices will perform a strategic role in creating engaged employees.

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