

## **A STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT FACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN PRIVATE BANKING SECTOR**

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### **Abstract**

*Employee engagement has emerged as an important topic in the sphere of Human Resource Management. Highly engaged employees make a substantial contribution to their organization. Customer satisfaction, employee retention and productivity will be at risk, unless the employees are engaged. Unfortunately not all the employees are engaged in organizations. This disengagement will have a great impact on organizational performance. The purpose of this study is to understand whether a relationship exists between Employee Engagement factors and employee's organizational commitment. Committed and stable workforce builds competitive advantage of an organization. Sample of the study was comprised of 100 employees from private banking sector, in Bangalore. Pearson correlation and multiple regressions were applied to test the hypotheses. Results indicated that there exists a relationship between employee engagement factors and organizational commitment. Results also revealed that engagement factors influence organizational commitment of the bank employees.*

**Keywords:** *Employee Engagement, Organizational Commitment, HR Practices, Career Development.*

### **1. Introduction**

Engaged employees care about the future of the organization and are loyal to the organization. Engaged employees will stay with the organization, perform better and become committed to their organization. They form an emotional attachment with their organization, develop a positive attitude towards their organization and provide customer satisfaction. Effective employee engagement is the key for improved organizational performance. The concept of employee engagement was developed by Kahn (1990) in his ethnographic work on summer camp employees and also employees at an architecture firm. Engaged employees express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while performing in various roles. They act as the drivers of financial and market success ( Sarangi, 2012). Employee engagement is the driver which can help in obtaining quality outputs, improved performance, employee participation, increased motivation levels. Engaged employee thinks positively about organization, feels for the organization and proactive in achieving the organizational goals (Cook, 2008). Kahn (1990) defined employee engagement as the “harnessing of organization members selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”.

Schaufeli et al, (2002) defined engagement “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption”. According to Cook (2008), employee engagement is personified by passion and energy employees have, to give their best to the organization to serve the customer. Chiumento (2004) defined Employee engagement as a positive two way relationship between an employee and their organization. Engaged employees and organization will go an extra mile for each other because they see the mutual benefit of investing in their relationship. The Institute of Employment Studies defines Engagement as “ a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee works closely with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization”. (Bevan, Barber and Robinson, 1997). According to Robins, Judge and Sanghi (2009), organizational commitment is a job attitude. According to Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993), there are three separate dimensions to organizational commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

Affective Organizational commitment is the emotional bond of employees to their organization. Affectively committed employees have a sense of belonging and involvement in the organization's activities. They develop a desire to remain with the organization. (Meyer and Allen,1991). Continuance commitment is the perceived economic value of remaining with an organization compared to leaving it. Normative commitment is an obligation to remain with the organization for moral and ethical reasons. (Meyer, Allen and Smith ,1993). Affective commitment has been demonstrated to have the strongest positive correlation with generally desirable work behaviors. Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982), defined organizational commitment as an attitude in the form of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Individuals who are committed to their organization are less likely to leave their organization. Individuals who are committed to the organization perform better and are more productive. (Porter et al., 1974).

### **1.1. Significance of Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment**

According to Mr. Ajoyendra Mukherjee, Executive V-P and Global Head, HR, TCS, talent engagement has helped retention at TCS. Mr.Mukherjee believes that a person thinks of leaving an organization if the person feels that the job that he is doing is not challenging enough or he is not being taken care of in the organization (Sheth, 2012).

Engaged employee consistently demonstrates three general behaviors which improve organizational performance:

- 1) The employee advocates for the organization to co-workers, and refers potential employees and customers
- 2) The employee has an intense desire to be a member of the organization despite opportunities to work elsewhere
- 3) The employee exerts extra time, effort and initiative to contribute to the success of the business ( Baumruk and Gorman, 2006).

Organizations have realized the importance of engaging their employees to the organization and have identified the employee engagement practices which would facilitate the employee engagement. Engagement is linked to three essential forces in the organization - attrition, productivity and profitability. An engaged employee carry out what is expected of him, by being focused and brings success to the organization. Profitability is the result of actively engaged work force. Organizations are more keen to have committed and sincere employees who can perform their job efficiently with better role clarity (Simon, 2011).

Organizational commitment is believed to be critical to organizational effectiveness and has been studied intensely by various scholars. It is claimed that the concept organizational commitment developed in western contexts is valid across the nations. (Meyer et al., 2002). Organizational commitment is a global predictor of employee's intention to quit. (Campbell and Campbell, 2003). The present study examines the relationship between employee engagement factors, and affective organizational commitment. Employee engagement factors are identified based on the interaction with HR managers in the selected banks. Factors include - Career development, HR practices, Work environment, Communication and Work-Life –Balance. Study also attempts to understand whether the demographic factors such as age, gender and education, influence employees' organizational commitment.

### **1.2. Banking Sector**

Banking sector in India is witnessing tough competition and challenges due to the advancement in technology and changing regulations. India's Rs 77 trillion (US\$ 1.30 trillion)-banking industry is well at par with global standards and norms. The country has 87 scheduled commercial banks with deposits worth Rs.71.6 trillion (US\$ 1.21 trillion) as on 31 May, 2013. Of this, 26 are public sector banks, which control over 70 per cent of India's banking sector, 20 are private banks and 41 are foreign banks (Source - <http://www.ibef.org/industry/banking-india.aspx>). Management Consulting firm, BCG, has found that on an average of 12 per cent of the new employees in public banking sector, quit within one year. Smaller private banks suffer from attrition, the most. (Source – The Hindu, September 3, 2012). Retention becomes inevitable in this context and engaging workforce is the strategy that can be adopted. It is imperative to keep the workforce engaged and committed to their organization to augment customer satisfaction, improve productivity and to enhance organizational performance.

## 2. Review of Literature

Employee engagement is a key to employee retention.(Glen, 2006). Engaging employees, by giving them participation, autonomy and trust, is most crucial to meet the objectives of the organization. According to Swaminathan & Rajasekharan, (2010), employee engagement is the combination of job satisfaction, motivation and effectiveness. Employee engagement is an important area that an organization should focus, to be productive and to get effective and committed workforce. Hewitt Associates has worked with 2000 companies representing four million employees and identified key drivers of employee engagement – employee relations, total rewards, career opportunities, quality of work life, HR practices and the work itself. According to the authors, managers should focus in coaching & career support, recognition, accountability, involvement and communication to facilitate employee engagement (Sarangi, 2012). Highly engaged employees have a passion for their work and feel deep connection to their organization. Highly engaged employees are committed and focused and are two and half times more likely to be top performers than their lower engagement peers.(Harter, Schmidt and Hayes, 2002).

Markos and Sridevi (2010), in their study have mentioned about ten engagement strategies which they call as “tablets” which are believed to cure employee disengagement diseases. These strategies include effective recruitment, leadership commitment, two – way communication, opportunities for career development and advancement, allocation of appropriate resources, appropriate training, strong feedback system, incentives and recognition, strong work culture and focus of top performers. Disengaged employees may stay during an economic slowdown; however, when opportunities begin to emerge as the economy bounces back, disengaged employees will be the first to leave. (Whittington and Galpin, 2010). According to Bhattacharya and Mukherjee (2009), employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards his organization and its values. Authors pointed out that reward strategies play an important role in this arena, in inspiring, energizing, motivating and thus ‘engaging’ employees.

Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982), developed the affective organizational commitment concept and defined it as an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Affective commitment constitutes of three factors:

- a) Identification – a strong belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values.
- b) Involvement – A readiness to exert effort on behalf of the organization.
- c) Loyalty – A strong desire to remain as a member of the organization.

Guest (1987) has suggested that HRM policies are designed to maximize organizational integration, employee commitment, flexibility and quality of work. Benkhoff (1997) in his study about bank employees proposed a link between HRM characteristics such as integration, commitment, quality and flexibility and tried to relate it to outcome variables such as employee satisfaction, intention to stay and organizational performance. Commitment was found to be related to work satisfaction and intention to stay and was significantly related to organizational performance. Organizations should invest in the employees personal development, training towards enhancing their skills, involving them in job-design practices, organize certain official and non-official activities for contributing to the happiness and security of every employee to make them more productive and committed at the workplace (Bhattacharya and Mukherjee, 2009). Study conducted by Joo & Shim (2010) indicated that organizational learning culture, and demographic variables had a significant impact on organizational commitment for employees in the public sector of Korea.

## 4. Hypotheses

In view of the literature reviewed, following hypotheses were proposed:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between employee engagement factors and organizational commitment.  
H2: Employee engagement factors have significant influence on employees’ organizational commitment  
H3: Gender, age and education influence employee’s organizational commitment.

## 5. Methodology

### 5.1 Sampling and Study Area

Private banks functioning in Bangalore city were identified as the sampling frame. There are 27 private banks operating in Bangalore, comprising of a total of 154, including all their branches. (Source - [http://yellowpages.sulekha.com/bangalore/private-banks\\_listings\\_4.htm](http://yellowpages.sulekha.com/bangalore/private-banks_listings_4.htm)). 15 banks were randomly selected from these main banks, with a cumulative workforce of approximately 200 employees and 100 employees (excluding managers) from this workforce were randomly selected for the study. Confidentiality of the name of the institutions and respondents were assured by the research scholar.

## 5.2 Instrument

Structured Questionnaire was designed for this study to understand the perception of the respondents pertaining to employee engagement factors and organizational commitment. Independent variable identified for the study was employee engagement factors and the dependent variable identified was organizational commitment. Dimensions of Employee engagement factors were identified based on intense literature review and through the discussion with HR managers of the banks selected. Engagement dimensions included: Career development, HR practices, Work environment, Communication and Work-Life –Balance.

Questionnaire has two parts. Part I of the questionnaire sought the demographic details of the respondents, which include – age, marital status, designation, educational qualification, years of experience with the present company and overall years of experience. Part II was comprised of the statements for both independent and dependent variables. Total of 35 items were included in the questionnaire. Statements in the dimension ‘work environment’ was adopted from study conducted by Chew (2004), which was derived from several scales (Broadffoo and Ashkanasy 1994; Cammann , Fichman, Jenkins and Klesh, 1979; Smith, 1976). 6 items out of 7 were adopted for this study. For all other dimensions of Employee engagement factors, scale was developed by the researcher, based on the nature of the study. Cronbach’s Alpha for all the dimensions of employee engagement factors was above 0.60. Six statements of the dependent variable organizational commitment was adopted from organizational commitment questionnaire developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) which measures affective attachment to the organization. Scale was modified according to the nature of the present study and 7th statement was developed by research scholar. Both the variables were measured on 5 point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

**5.3 Survey Administration:** To some respondents, questionnaire was emailed and to some of the respondents, scheduling method was adopted. Emailed questionnaires were filled and returned within one week.

**5.4 Data Analysis and Results:** Entire data was analyzed in the software SPSS version 16.0.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Current Experience	100	1	9	3.24	1.646
Overall Experience	100	1	14	4.92	3.119
Career Development	100	3.00	4.60	3.81	0.31
HR practices	100	3.00	4.63	3.80	0.28
Work Environment	100	2.83	4.67	3.91	0.27
Communication	100	2.75	5.00	3.73	0.35
Work-Life -Balance	100	2.33	3.83	3.07	0.26
Employee Engagement	100	3.00	4.14	3.66	0.21
Organization commitment	100	3.00	5.00	3.92	0.36

Data presented in Table 1, reveals that of the various dimensions, the highest mean score was for the dimension work environment (3.91) among the dimensions of employee engagement factors. Mean score for organizational commitment was 3.92. The lowest mean score was for the dimension Work - Life- Balance which was 3.07. Table 2 indicates that all the dimensions of Employee engagement factors are related with organizational commitment. Since for all the dimensions, significant value is less than .01, the relation between various dimensions of

employee engagement factors with organizational commitment is found to be statistically significant. The positive correlation between Employee engagement factors and organization commitment is 0.829 or 82.9% . These results support hypothesis- H1.

**Table 2 – Pearson Correlation**

Pearson correlation: Employee Engagement vs. Org commitment			
		Employee Engagement	Organization commitment
Career Development	Pearson Correlation	.790**	.686**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	100	100
HR practices	Pearson Correlation	.870**	.728**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	100	100
Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	.740**	.640**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	100	100
Communication	Pearson Correlation	.648**	.512**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	100	100
Work-Life - Balance	Pearson Correlation	.592**	.442**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	100	100
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation		.829**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N		100

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

To test hypothesis - H2, multiple regression was performed. Table 3 depicts the summary of multiple regressions.

**Table 3 -Multiple Regression Results.**

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F value	Sig value
<b>Linear</b>	.833 <sup>a</sup>	.694	.678	.20318	42.697	.000*
<b>a.</b> Predictors: (Constant), Work-Life -Balance, Communication, Career development , Work environment , HR practices Dependent variable: Organization commitment						

In the model displayed in Table 3, dimensions of employee engagement factors, which include Career development, HR practices, Work environment, Communication and Work-Life-Balance, were treated as independent variables and organizational commitment was treated as dependent variable. The model summary describes the fit of goodness of model. R, correlation coefficient between factors promoting employee engagement and organizational commitment is .833 or 83.3% of linear relation is established. R square showed the ratio between changes occurred in dependent variable due to changes occurred in independent variables, that is, 694or 69%, since sig value is .000, the model is statistically significant at 5% level. Overall model support the hypothesis, H2. The coefficient table below – Table 4, depicts the significance of each dimension with respect to dependent variable and all are statistically significant. Among these five dimensions, HR Practices has. 288 of

standardized beta which indicates, HR practices is the most essential dimension in influencing the organizational commitment among the Employee engagement dimensions. Results supported hypothesis - H2.

**Table 4 - Coefficients**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model: Linear	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-1.140	.359		-3.174	.002*
Career development	.307	.093	.269	3.316	.001*
HR practices	.367	.112	.288	3.270	.002*
Work environment	.360	.095	.268	3.787	.000*
Communication	.140	.068	.136	2.041	.044*
Work-Life -Balance	.184	.087	.133	2.104	.038*

**a.** Dependent Variable: Organizational commitment \*5% level of sig.

One way ANOVA was performed to test hypothesis - H3. Results are summarized below.

- a) Gender vs organizational commitment - With regard to Organizational commitment, the mean score of male employees was 3.91, whereas female employees scored 3.94. Test results gave F value of 0.19, since the significance value is greater than 0.05, the mean differences of organizational commitment of male and female employees are not statistically significant. This implies that gender has no influence on employee’s organizational commitment.

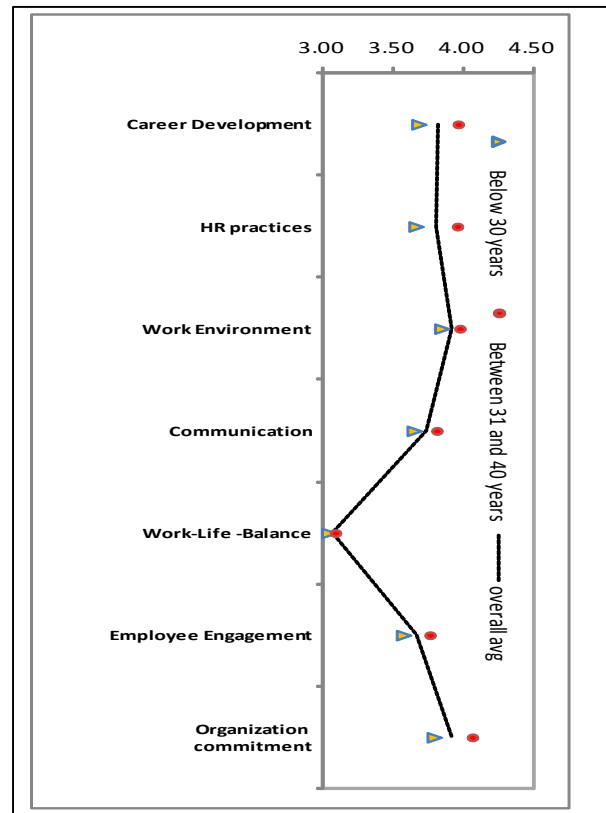
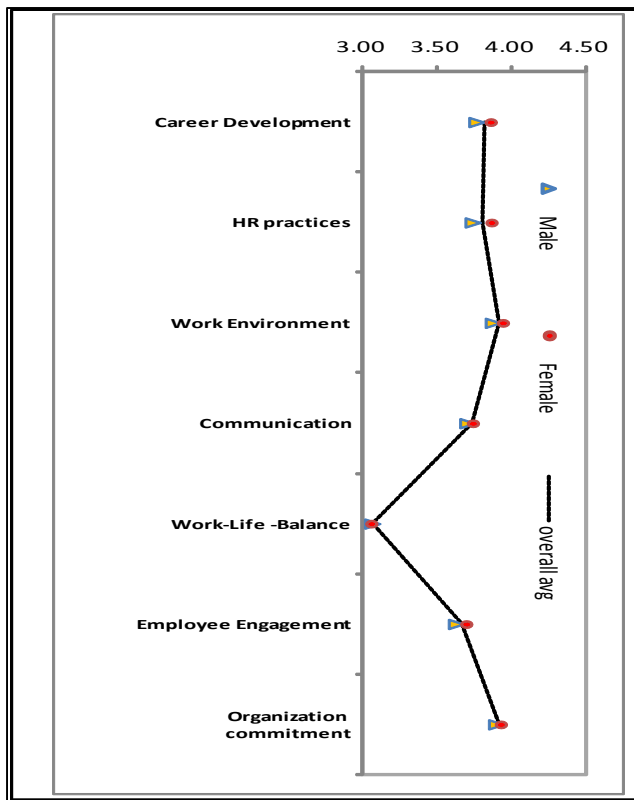


Figure 1 –Employee engagement and organizational commitment Vs Gender and Age.

b) Age vs. organizational commitment - The mean score of age group was 3.80 for below 30 years and 4.07 for 31 to 40 yrs . ANOVA results gave F value of 16.40, since the significance value  $p < 0.05$ , the mean differences of organizational commitment based on age group is statistically significant. This implies that age of the employees influences their organizational commitment.

c) Educational qualification vs. organizational commitment – With regard to organizational commitment, the mean score of graduate respondents was 3.7083 and post graduate respondents was 4.08. The F value is 36.793, found to be significant at 0.05. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the mean differences of organizational commitment based on age group are statistically significant. This implies that educational qualification influences the employee's organizational commitment.

## 6. Discussion

Results indicated that employee engagement factors have a significant relationship with organizational commitment. It was also evident based on multiple regression, that employee engagement practices influence employee's organizational commitment. Correlation between employee engagement practices and organizational commitment was found to be .829. Correlation between all the dimensions of employee engagement factors and organizational commitment was significant. Output of Multiple regression indicated the goodness of fit of the model. Correlation efficient R was .833. R square (.694) indicated that 69 percentage of variation occurred on dependent variable organizational commitment due to the changes in employee engagement dimensions. Thus hypotheses H1 and H2 were strongly supported. ANOVA results indicated that gender doesn't influence their organizational commitment. However, age and educational qualification are found to have influence on their organizational commitment. Multiple regression indicated that HR practices has .288 beta value, which implies that this dimension is the most essential variable that influences organizational commitment. Work-Life –Balance (WLB) practices was found have the lowest mean score, Table 1 depicts this fact. This indicates that management should improve the WLB practices in order to engage their employees and to build their commitment to the organization.

## 7. Conclusion

Prudent practices of engaging employees should be implemented in the organization in order to enhance their commitment to the organization. Engaged employee would go an extra mile to perform and are more committed to their organization. Engaged employees are highly productive, can enhance customer satisfaction and augment organizational efficiency. It is imperative for the HR officials to identify right engagement factors and implement effective strategies to engage their employees for the endurance of the organization's competitive advantage. Employees are the assets of any organization and organizations should adopt impeccable measures to engage their key performers to build a committed work force.

### 7.1 Limitations

Study was confined to employees working in private banks. Perception of employees in other sector can vary from sector to sector. Employee engagement factors identified for this study were Career development, HR practices, Work environment, Communication and Work-Life -Balance practices. More factors such as leadership, rewards, support from management, support from supervisor etc can be incorporated as engagement dimensions in future studies.

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