



Faculty Engagement at Higher Education Institutes: A Conceptual Framework

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Paper ID: 13A3U

Volume 13 Issue 3

Received 11 December 2021

Received in revised form 10

February 2022

Accepted 18 February 2022

Available online 24 March

2022

Keywords:

Employee engagement,
Faculty engagement,
HEI, Job satisfaction,
performance; Employee
resilience, Individual
optimism, Affective
commitment, Locus of
control, Pay, Social
support, Job security.

Abstract

This study establishes a framework for understanding, predicting, and controlling factors that affect faculty engagement in the Indian higher education sector. Having examined research on faculty engagement, this work offers a conceptual framework that practitioners can use to engage individuals and drive them toward long-term organizational progress. A framework for faculty engagement was designed as per the literature-based studies. Illustrating the linkages between employee resilience, individual optimism, affective commitment, locus of control, pay, social support, and job security, faculty engagement, as demonstrated in this research, are highly suited for usage in the Indian Higher education sector. From the suggested framework and propositions, it is possible to determine the impacts of relevant parameters, to be undertaken further. The study includes employee engagement variables into a framework that practitioners may use to discover solutions to engage and maintain skilled workers for the benefit of the HEI sector. This study gives an extensive framework that aids practitioners and academics in appreciating the underlying factors that influence faculty engagement in higher education institutes.

Disciplinary: Management (HRM, Organization Management & Behavior), Higher Education Administration.

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Cite This Article:

Nagoji, A., Mackasare, S. (2022). Faculty Engagement at Higher Education Institutes: A Conceptual Framework. *International Transaction Journal of Engineering, Management, & Applied Sciences & Technologies*, 13(3), 13A3U, 1-11. <http://TUENGR.COM/V13/13A3U.pdf> DOI: 10.14456/ITJEMAST.2022.63

1 Introduction

Engaged and dedicated employees are the pillars of a flourishing business organization. Success stories of any organization or institution have been scripted on the contribution made by committed employees. They play as a driving agent for economic and market success. For the

growth and survival of the other industries, educational institutions play a major role. Before moving to faculty engagement and higher education let's primarily give attention to employee engagement (EE) as it is base for the rest. Studies towards employee engagement sharpen when (Kahn, 1990) published his work about personnel engagement and disengagement at work, as organizations realized that employees are the core part of the organization. Employees that are engaged produce better results and have a constructive approach toward the organization and its ideals, which is crucial for its growth and progress (Robinson, 2004; Saks, 2006). Previously, studies and human resource (HR) practitioners and specialists have discovered that motivated employees are a valuable asset to any company (Lockwood, 2007). As per Mishra et al. (2014), employee engagement has turned into one of the most tricky issues in today's business as a result of the increased interest in it. Due to complexities and strict rules and standards, employee engagement will continue to be a primary concern for many businesses in the future.

An engaged and focused employee is more proactive and productive than a disengaged employee and makes a major contribution to team performance; committed team members are a source of functional efficiency; whereas an engaged workforce contributes to organizational competitiveness and better position. Employees who are engaged in their job are excited about what they do, devoted to the organization's objective and long term vision, and willing to go above and beyond their given responsibilities to achieve it (Hakanen et al., 2018; Mehrzi & Singh, 2016; Bakker, 2017; Lee et al., 2017). According to practitioner-based fact-finding, EE has been related to, on the one hand, increased return on shareholders' investment as well as increased revenue growth, and larger profit margins; on the other, reduced absenteeism and job stress, improved health, and overall well-being. (Saks, 2006; Saks, 2017; Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2008; Albrecht, 2010; Robertson-Smith & Markwick, 2009).

Employee engagement, according to Kaur (2017), is a distinct and exclusive concept from commitment, involvement, and satisfaction towards the job, and it includes three elements, physical: involving physical labor while working and showcasing a positive outlook, emotional: including an employee's ability to link personal 'self' and commitment to organizational goals, and cognitive: This contains the employee's knowledge, experience, and abilities.

Higher education is the ultimate component, and it necessitates close scrutiny and evaluation to predict future outcomes in a specific country. It is, in fact, an accolade for residents, as it brings knowledge and respect, as well as self-assurance and a career. Higher education, according to human capital theory, is a powerful device for developing science and technology competencies that are necessary for a good quality of living in a Knowledge-based economy around the world (Ding & Zeng, 2015). And to execute this, faculty play a very important role. It is necessary to comprehend the aspects that influence the growth of quality teachers.

The basis of a successful system is the high-quality teaching staff. A major criterion for an educational institution is to attract and retain quality and productive teaching resources (Sharma & Jyoti, 2006). The national education policy 2020 finds out gaps in the current state and suggests

reforms that can be undertaken to bring the highest quality, equity, and integrity from early years through higher education To generate outstanding teachers, one must first comprehend the aspects that are associated with it. In India, the number of business management and technical institutions are increasing rapidly. This emphasizes the scope for faculty engagement programs as these educational institutions produce a pool of graduates and postgraduates who can work in different industrial sectors across the world. Faculty members have different levels of engagement as a result of the various approaches used by these institutions, which influence their efficiency and output (Hagner and Schneebeck, 2000).

Faculty members at higher education institutes (HEI) face and interact with students who are from different cultural backgrounds. Now a day, the work pattern for faculties in HEI is not only the teaching and research but they have to perform many administration works and train young graduates to get ready for the industry. There is a lot of variation among academia and corporate engagement (Wefald, 2009). And few studies have sought to quantify it. In many studies, the meaning of employee engagement is considered to highlight faculty engagement (Wong & Heng, 2009; Demb et al., 2012; Friesen, 2013; Glass et al., 2011).

The goal of this paper is to look into the factors that affect faculty engagement in India's higher education industry. The general aim of this study is to present a conceptual model that researchers can utilize to bridge the gap between research studies and current managerial practices, particularly in the Indian setting, as well as to provide a framework for future faculty engagement research. Furthermore, the purpose of this research is to assist academic leaders in the Indian higher education sector to increase faculty engagement, which will have a favorable impact on institutional performance.

Although there have been studies on employee engagement conducted by researchers and consultants all over the world, there is an obvious call for a context-specific engagement metric customized to the job performed by faculty in HEI, and studies on the fit of institutional-oriented engagement models in educational contexts might be conducted. The goal of this study is to identify the factors that affect faculty engagement in India's higher education system.

2 Literature Review

Kahn (1990) discussed how individuals 'harnessed' themselves and their responsibilities at work by using their cognitive, physical, and emotional resources, which gave birth to a new area of research, and Kahn was dubbed the academic father of the EE movement (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014). Lockwood (2007) recognized the need to identify what motivates employees to stay engaged, especially in culturally diverse workplaces. Kahn (1990) focused on linking people to their jobs, with that link defined by the cognitive, emotional, and physical energy required for success. Employee engagement levels, according to Kahn, are influenced by psychological factors like safety, availability, and meaning (Baumruk, 2004).

Employee involvement and engagement is an excellent strategy for any organization, wishing to get a strategic advantage over its competitors. People are the only resource that

competitors cannot duplicate or imitate, and they are the most precious commodity if they are treated well. (Bakker, 2011) Employees who are completely invested in their jobs are fully attached to their work. They are filled with enthusiasm, committed to their job, and fully absorbed in their tasks. According to the findings, work and individual resources are the crucial indicators of engagement. When there are high job demands, these services become more important. Staffs who are engaged are more receptive to new information, more creative, and eager to go above and beyond. Furthermore, to stay committed, engaged employees change their work environment regularly. (Harter et al., 2002) described engagement depends upon each individual as it is once interest and passion towards work can be noticed through their involvement and excitement.

The majority of the academics highlighted that engaged resources are not only energetic but also contribute significantly to their work through innovative ideas, professional advancement, and adherence to high-level performance and output. Jagoda et al. (2013) found that planning, overseeing, and projecting productivity improvements can all benefit from a bottom-up strategy. Similarly, engaged employees will stay connected with the company for a longer duration and are more likely to come up with creative, fresh, and effective ways to boost the company's worth. As a result, a highly professional business emerges, with people flourishing and productivity that is both higher, comparatively before and sustained long time (Catteeuw et al., 2007). This study focuses on the key predictors of Employee Resilience, individual optimism, affective commitment, locus of control, pay, social support, and job security. As these variables very much affect faculty engagement in HEI.

Based on the detailed literature review and discussion, we make the following propositions regarding Employee Resilience, individual optimism, affective commitment, locus of control, pay, social support, and job security as independent variables and employee engagement dependent variables, the expected outcomes are job satisfaction and performance (Figure 1):

Proposition.1 Employee Resilience will create a higher level of employee engagement.

Proposition.2 Higher level of Individual optimism has a favorable impact on employee engagement

Proposition.3 Employees Affective commitment has a positive association with employee engagement

Proposition.4 Locus of control has a significant relationship with employee engagement

Proposition.5 Pay has a strong association with a higher level of employee engagement

Proposition.6 Social support has a favorable impact on employee engagement

Proposition.7 Job security has a positive relationship with employee engagement

Proposition.8 Higher level of employee engagement leads to greater job satisfaction

Proposition.9 There is a strong relationship between employee engagement and performance

3 Method

3.1 Proposed Faculty Engagement Framework

In the proposed framework (see Figure 1), faculty engagement is a dependent variable, and employee resilience, individual optimism, affective commitment, Locus of control, pay, social

support, job security, are independent variables. Employee engagement leads to long-term continuity, effectiveness, performance, profitability, and growth, as well as improved employee and client satisfaction (Silverthorne, 2001; Malik, 2013). As a result, there is a practical motivation to examine these components and come up with a clear definition and scope that can be used to assess faculty engagement and emphasize the significance of the engagement model.

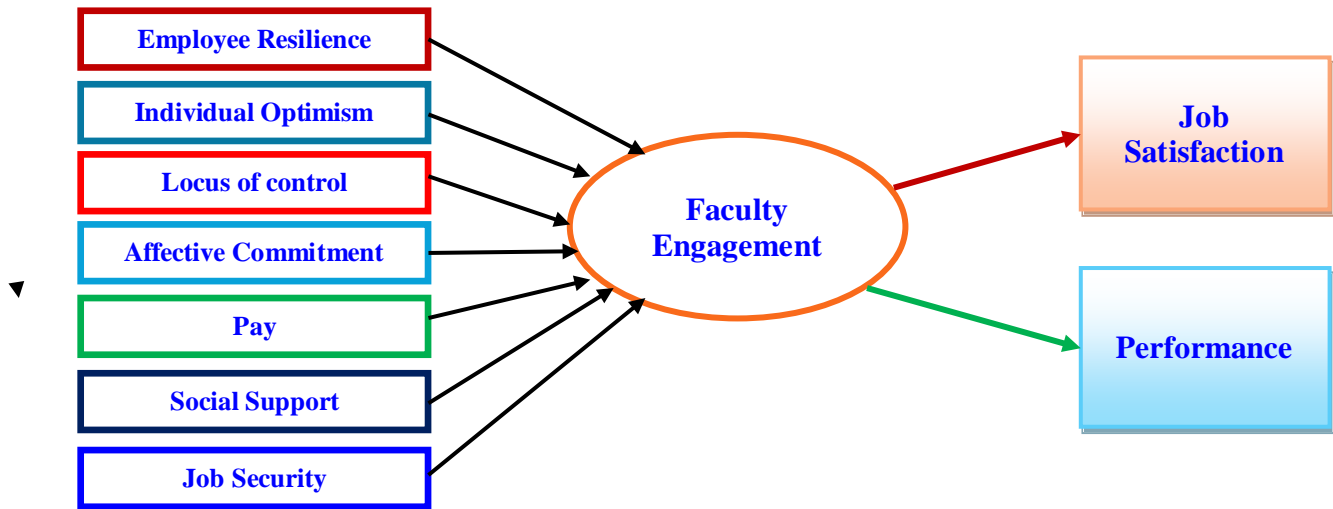


Figure 1: The Conceptual model.

4 Result

4.1 Individual Optimism

Optimism is the inclination to see things in a positive light, when a person is optimistic he or she expects positive outcomes from every situation (Myers, 2010). There are two major variants for optimism and its role in positive change: attribution or explanatory style and expectation style (Seligman, 1998). As per Carver & Scheier (2002), optimists expect a positive outcome in every situation, whereas pessimists expect negative outcomes, according to the expectation framework. Individuals with higher degrees of optimism have a more positive outlook on what will happen to them during the transformation process. Optimists always make themselves available for the tasks and they are psychologically strong because they expect a favorable outcome, and higher-level presence optimism is linked to increased cognitive engagement (Chen, 2015).

4.2 Employee Resilience

Due to growing global competitiveness employee resilience has been recognized as a crucial factor, as a result, research into how to foster and enhance employee resilience is growing. Client and employee needs, as well as evolving government rules and regulations, must all be addressed by businesses (King et al., 2016). The escalating performance demands of today's business demands cannot be met by normal performance. Organizations demand employees that are resilient and can flourish in the face of turmoil and sustain in the face of obstacles, uncertainty, and rapid change (Kotzé & Nel, 2013). When employees are capable to respond for change the organization can be survived and succeeded (Shin et al., 2012). Employee engagement and in-role performance may be improved as a result of an individual's resilience (Wang et al., 2014).

4.3 Locus of Control

Locus of control reflects the degree to which individuals perceive the relationship between their behaviour and the outcome of their behaviour. Rotter (1966) gave rise to the term "locus of control." There are two types, the internal locus of control and external locus of control. In addition, according to Spector (1982), individuals with an internal control locus can be self-directed, self-sufficient, and not affected in their work performance by leaders or others. On the other hand, people with an external locus of control would expect other people's support and fulfillment. People with a high internal locus of control are exhibit greater mental wellbeing and higher satisfaction towards work and life (Brown et al., 1996).

4.4 Affective Commitment

Allen & Meyer (1990) described the organizational commitment as a blend of three elements: normative, affective, and continuance commitment. Individuals' acceptance and attachment to the company is referred to as affective commitment. Affective orientation focuses on an individual's psychological link or identification with an object that has special value or significance to them and goes beyond calculated involvement (Mowday et al., 1982). The findings support those of Albdour & Altarawneh (2014) who discovered that affective commitment, is optimistically related to strong work and organizational engagement. According to Robinson (2004), affective commitment and engagement have a close relationship.

4.5 Pay

Employee retention is aided by pay, also known as remuneration because it drives individuals to work extra and give more attention to their work and personal development. Pay, bonuses, and other monetary incentives, as well as non-monetary benefits like extra vacation and discount programmes, make up an appealing compensation package. According to Kahn (1990), when employees in the organization are rewarded and recognised by their employer, they believe they are required to respond with greater devotion. Employee engagement stems from their anticipation of the rewards they will receive. Pay is one of the most important factors connected to positive workplace behaviours including work motivation and job satisfaction (Gelard & Rezaei, 2016). Recognition and compensation are important elements of employee engagement (Saks & Rotman, 2006).

4.6 Social Support

Another part of employee involvement that stresses directly the interpersonal harmony aspect is social support or team and peer group relationships. As per Kahn (1990), employee engagement is enhanced by positive and trustworthy interpersonal relationships, as well as a supportive staff. In working place peer group supports not just for executing the job but also boosts employees' self-esteem and morale (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). In the same manner, May et al. (2004) found that one of the components of commitment, meaningfulness, is influenced by workplace relationships, employees who have good interpersonal relationships with co-workers can

have greater interest and involvement in their jobs. Also (Kindermann, 1993) discovered that, despite large differences in individual memberships, continuity in the motivational framework of peer groups boosted each individual's degree of participation in working place. According to Locke & Taylor (1991), employees who have healthy associations with their co-workers are highly engaged at work.

4.7 Job Security

Demerouti et al. (2001) explained that one of the most critical components of work resources is job security, which has a considerable effect on employee performance in an organisation. Employee job security is another crucial factor that contributes to employee loyalty to the company. People are highly engaged in their work when their jobs are stable in the workplace (Ahmed et al., 2017). Every practitioner on the globe is concerned about a company's long-term sustainability in a competitive market environment. As a result, corporate leaders are taking into account a variety of elements that influence employee success. Employee job security permits them to concentrate on their responsibilities because they are not concerned about losing their jobs. Job security is a key determinant of greater employee productivity and satisfaction with their jobs (Majumder, 2012). As a result, policymakers and professionals in the developed world are forced to take into account the problem of job security at work to ensure high levels of EE.

4.8 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is once comprehensive perception and attitude towards his or her job. Job satisfaction, according to Balzar et al. (1997), is a feeling that employees have towards their work pattern and their expectations for work. This means that the organization's culture adds value to the workers' job satisfaction. Many empirical studies highlighted that employee engagement leads to job satisfaction of the employee. Al-Tit & Hunitie (2015) found relationships significantly correlated with employee engagement, which in turn predicts job satisfaction. Vokić & Hernaus (2015) showed that job satisfaction is a crucial indicator of work engagement.

When both partners follow the exchange norms, according to SET, the consequence is a more trusting and loyal relationship as well as shared obligations (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). As a result, highly engaged people are more likely to have trusted connections with their employers and, as a result, are more likely to have more favorable views and intentions toward the company.

4.9 Employee Performance

Employee Engagement can direct to improved performance (Demerouti et al., 2010). Many pieces of research have concluded that there is an encouraging correlation between engagement and individual performance (Halbesleben, 2010). According to research, targeting improving employee engagement is a key method to upgrade employee performance. Employee engagement enhances task performance job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and productivity (Christian et al., 2011; Rich et al., 2010; Richman, 2006).

5 Discussion

Faculty engagement is a strong indicator of improved student learning, which is what all educational institutions strive for. Many of the studies on faculty engagement are focused on either individual factors or organizational factors but the present study is covering individual factors and organizational factors which are affecting faculty engagement. This study will be extremely beneficial to university and academic institution faculties, authorities, and regulatory agencies.. This study will also cover best faculty engagement practices, which will contribute to developing the level of faculty engagement in colleges and universities.

More research can be done to map Indian academic members' perspectives of their diverse career options and make recommendations to colleges on the subject. Researchers may undertake research in government, private, and public institutions to learn more about the differences in faculty engagement and the factors that influence it. Because literature is scarce in this field, knowing the elements of teacher involvement and the variables that influence them in detail will be beneficial to the education sector.

6 Conclusion

This paper emphasizes a conceptual framework of faculty engagement in HEI of India, exhibiting the relationship between pay, social support, job security, locus of control, Employee resilience, individual optimism, and affective commitment as these are independent variables in the study. Based on the review, it is clear that employee engagement is an essential requirement for organizational success and growth. However, studies on faculty engagement in management colleges are scant in the Indian context. The model of faculty engagement in this study is based on a systematic literature review and it will help to solve the current problems of private management educational institutions in the Indian higher education sector. In addition, empirical research on the proposed framework of faculty engagement must be conducted to decide its validity. The study's managerial implications will assist institutions and governing bodies in enhancing engagement levels among faculty members in the institutions.

7 Availability of Data and Material

All information is included in this study.

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