DETERMINING THE ANTECEDENTS OF FACULTY ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: The engagement of faculty is considered to have an enormous effect on the success of the student and the overall development of the society. The aim of the study is to determine antecedents which influence the engagement of faculty members working in educational institutions. In accordance with this aim, a cross-sectional survey design was applied to a sample of 360 faculties in the survey. The antecedents were identified and analysed using Factor analysis technique. Based on the outcome of the analysis, four antecedents were extracted, namely: Institutional Support, Institutional Orientation for Results, Supervisory Support and Teacher Self-Efficacy.

Keywords: Faculty engagement, Institutional Support, Institutional Orientation for Results, Supervisory Support and Teacher Self-Efficacy

I. INTRODUCTION

Retaining teachers in nations' education sector is a challenge for national, state, and local boards of education. Much of the focus on enhancing student attainment has shifted the focus from faculty, promoting student and learning centred strategies. Much of the innovation aimed at increasing student engagement and attainment is embedded in new technologies for learning and for instructional delivery. Yet just as realizing increases in student attainment requires leadership by educational institutions, so it requires leadership and engagement by teachers, individually and collectively. Faculty are central to ornamental quality and student fulfilment. Over the last many years there have been considerable changes in the structure of professional employment in higher education, with implications for fostering faculty engagement on a wide scale. So, too, sizeable adjustments in scholar demographics, styles of attendance, and modes of handing over preparation also have implications for engagement and attainment. Moreover, current policy pressures, and the institutional practices they incentivize create a task for faculties and universities to increase attainment and pleasant. Finally, the prevailing policy environment, wherein faculty are absent, ignored, creates further venture in assisting faculty engagement.

Background of the study

There is gripping indication that retention of quality faculty are important to successful institutions (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014; Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, & Wheeler, 2007; Kraft, Marinell, & Yee, 2016). Research reveals that teachers' daily preparation, instruction, and interactions with students in the classroom are critical to yielding student achievement gains (Chetty et al., 2014; Clotfelter et al., 2007; Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005). Using a positive psychological perspective which focused on the concept of teacher engagement, De Stercke,

Goyette, and Robertson (2015) proposed that teachers who were engaged in the work environment were more likely to remain in teaching for longer periods than teachers who were disengaged with the work environment. For engaging faculties in their work it is vital to explore various antecedents or factors which influence and improve their engagement levels.

Problem Statement

Higher education is encountering enormous hurdles. It has become a challenge to keep staff engaged, motivated and committed. Cornerstone and Ellucian's in 2016 conducted a survey titled "Employee Engagement and Retention in Higher Education survey" concluded that 39% of colleges and universities does not offer any type of employee engagement opportunities such as leadership development, coaching, recognition programs, approximately half of the participants said that employee engagement is neither tracked nor measured in their institutions. Due to these reasons student's development and organizational growth gets hampered. For avoiding this institutions must continuously investigate and explore institution specific factors of faculty engagement.

Objectives of the study

The present study was undertaken to determine and analyse various antecedents or factors influencing engagement amongst faculty members working Higher Educations Institutions.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Factors that affect engagement are diverse. While they some that depend on the prevailing culture within the organisation, there are also common threads for all individuals, and also individual factors that can significantly influence a person's relationship with colleagues and their organisation.

Table 1: Factors influencing employee engagement identified by various researchers

S.NO.	RESEARCHER	YEAR	FACTORS
1	Kahn	1990	Psychological conditions (meaningfulness, safety and availability).
2	Luthans and Peterson	2002	Mangers self-efficacy.
3	Robinson et al.	2004	Leadership, relationships at work, total reward, recognition, work life balance and work itself that leads to the engagement of the employees.
4	Alan M. Saks	2006	Job characteristics, organization and supervisor support, reward and recognition and lastly procedural justice
5	Xanthopoulou et al.	2007	Personal resources like employee self-efficacy and optimism.
6	Peacock	2008	Social events, bonus, Job security, Flexible working hours.
7	Ruyle	2009	Strategic Alignment, Trust in Senior Leadership, Immediate Manager Working Relationship, Peer Culture, Personal, Nature of my Career, Career Support, Nature of the job, Development Opportunities, Employee Recognition and Pay Fairness.
8	Bakker	2010	Protection of workers psychological health and safety
9	Jyotsna Bhatnagar	2010	Sense of justice and psychological contract
10	Duane Bray	2015	Permission to play, tailored purpose, social contract, bottom-up innovation.
11	Chandani	2016	Strong induction programs, rigorous training and development programme, certification programme and giving them a realistic job preview
12	Myung	2017	Supervisory Support, Perceived Organizational Support, and Learning Opportunities
13	T. Suhasini	2018	Family friendliness, Employee opinion, Transparency, Health and Safety, Emotional and Personal factors.

Source: Author's compilation from various literatures

For effective faculty engagement, every institution must periodically review the factors contributing in engaging its workforce.

III.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was descriptive in nature implying natural observation of the characteristics of the research subject without influencing the variables. It is a cross sectional design where a sample is taken from the population at one point of time. Study consists of faculty members working in Himachal Pradesh higher education institutions. Higher Education Institutions namely universities and colleges can be broadly categorized into two types namely the government institutions which are and the private institutions. Multi-stage sampling method was used for the choosing the final respondents. Data was collected by a well-structured questionnaire which were distributed to 400 faculties. Out of which only 360 questionnaires were returned (yielding response rate of 72%) and utilized for analysis of the study. Factor analysis was applied for extraction of different antecedents of faculty engagement.

a.   Research instruments
To identify the various factors influencing employee engagement four factors were included in the scale developed by Sunaina Ahuja (2015) and Ralf Schwarzer, Gerdamarie S. Schmitz, & Gary T. Daytner (1999). To quantity teacher self-efficacy, four major areas were recognised: (a) job accomplishment, (b) skill development on the job, (c) social interaction with students, parents, and colleagues, and (d) coping with job stress. In every area teachers may hold different self–efficacy expectations. These major areas appear to be of vital importance for successful teaching.

A 42 item scale was used that explored the respondent's perception regarding self, current job and current organization. There was a mix of positive and negatively worded statements. Respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement for each statement on a five -point Likert scale ranging from 1 representing "strongly disagree" to 5 representing "strongly agree". The scale was found to be a reliable measure of employee engagement of faculty members in the higher education area of Himachal Pradesh, India as Cranach's alpha was computed as 0.91 for Institutional Support, 0.80 for Institutional Orientation for Results, 0.90 for Supervisory Support and 0.89 for Teacher Self-Efficacy which is above the acceptable limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2009).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSIIONS

a.   Demographic profile of the respondent faculty members

From the total sample of 360 faculty members the general profile of faculty members with regards to Type of Institution, 67.50% respondents (N=243) were from private institutions and 32.50% respondents (N=117) were from government institutions. Respondents were also asked to specify their designation and maximum number of faculties (N=246, Percentage=68.33) were assistant professors, 18.06% respondents (N=65) were professors and 13.61% respondents (N=49) were associate professors. In terms of Experience it can be observed that majority of faculties (N=111, Percentage=30.83) were having experience of less than 5 years followed by 5 to 10 years (N=100, Percentage=27.78) and 10 to 15 years (N=58, Percentage=16.11). In the sample 13.89% respondents (N=50) were having the experience of 15 to 20 years while 11.39% respondents (N=41) had the experience of more than 20 years. It was observed that majority of respondents (N=128, Percentage=35.56) are getting Salary of less than Rs. 30,000 followed by 52.83% respondents (N=93) who are getting a monthly salary between Rs. 30,001 to Rs. 50,000. There were 13.61% respondents (N=49) who reported monthly salary between Rs. 50,001 to Rs. 70,000. Out of the rest 25% respondents 10% respondents (N=36) are getting salary between Rs. 90,001 to 1,10,000, another 10% respondents are getting monthly salary of More than Rs. 1,10,000 and remaining 5% respondents (N=18) are getting salary between Rs. 70,001 to 90,000. In terms of age majority of faculties (N=172, Percentage=47.78) belong to the age group of 25 – 35 years followed by 26.39% respondents (N=95) who belong to the Age group of 35 to 45 years. 16.94% respondents (N=61) were from the age group of 45 to 55 years and rest respondents (N=32, Percentage=8.89) were from either the age group of up to 25 years or of more than 55 years. On the basis of Gender maximum numbers (N=227, Percentage=63.06) of respondents were male and rest 36.94% respondents (N=133) were female. Regarding the Marital Status of respondents, majority of respondents (N=240, Percentage=66.67) were married followed by unmarried respondents (N=114, Percentage=31.67). Very few respondents were divorced (N=6, Percentage=1.67). On Educational Qualification, majority (N=179, Percentage=49.72) were PhD holder

followed by 34.44% respondents (N=124) who were postgraduate. 7.50% respondents (N=27) were holding the post doctorate degree, 6.39% respondents (N=23) were M. Phil and only 1.94% respondents (N=7) were graduate.

b. Antecedents or factors influencing faculty engagement

To fulfil the study objective faculty members were asked to indicate and specify their level of agreement and disagreement towards various statements related to the parameters affecting their engagement level.

To analyse the data present study employed Analysis to identify those factors that have major influence on the engagement levels of faculty members. Factor analysis was performed to reduce the number of large variables in terms of relatively few new categories. These new categories are termed as factors, which also indicate the percentage of variance explained. Result shows that the total variance explained are 52.226%. This is appropriate for factor analysis. The 52.226% variance was explained by the 4 extracted components. The results are presented in table 2 mentioned below:

Table 2: Extraction, Loadings and labelling of Faculty engagement factors

Factor Name	Statement	Loading
Factor 1 (Institutional Support)	I am satisfied with this institution as an employee.	0.695
	I am satisfied with my salary.	0.621
	I am satisfied with my present job.	0.521
	I would recommend this institution to my friends / colleagues as a great place to work.	0.698
	I have full faith that the institution takes right decisions pertaining to the employees.	0.515
	The institution provides good opportunities for career advancement.	0.525
	The institution provides facilities for employee training and development.	0.431
	I am satisfied with my status in the institutional hierarchy.	0.595
	Three years ahead I visualize myself working in the same institution.	0.612
	The institution regularly gives me opportunities to attend conferences, seminars and Faculty Development programs.	0.602
	The criteria for deciding pay raise / promotion is not clear.	0.518
	I get due recognition making me feel a valued member of this institution.	0.596
	I cannot see a relation between the pay raise / promotions awarded to employees and their performance.	0.633
	I am duly respected in the institution.	0.545
	Ever since I have joined this institution there is continuous upgradation in my knowledge and skills.	0.632
	My opinions matter in the institution.	0.512
Factor 2 (Institutional Orientation for Results)	Responsibilities of people working together are not clearly distinguished.	0.472
	Some of the tasks that I have to do are non-productive.	0.599
	I have to sacrifice quality of work for quantity of work.	0.623
	Adequate staff is not available to ensure quality of work.	0.618
	There is not enough role clarity in my job.	0.691
	No special recognition is given to employees who work beyond their job profiles, in the larger interest of the institution.	0.568
	I do not have much choice in deciding the nature of work I have to perform.	0.498

	Over here, my talent is not being utilized appropriately.	0.552
	I am not able to make regular improvements in the quality of my work.	0.578
Factor 3 (Supervisory Support)	My immediate superior guides me on improving performance.	0.489
	My immediate superior is a role model for me.	0.501
	My immediate superior makes efforts to help me develop myself.	0.566
	My immediate superior inspires me to accept challenging tasks.	0.625
	My immediate superior usually encourages me to take independent decisions.	0.618
	My immediate superior gives me regular feedback about my performance.	0.625
	I can freely approach my immediate superior to discuss any work related matter.	0.623
Factor 4 (Teacher Self Efficacy)	I am convinced that I am able to successfully teach all relevant subject content to even the most difficult students.	0.525
	I know that I can maintain a positive relationship with parents even when tensions arise.	0.595
	When I try really hard, I am able to reach even the most difficult students.	0.566
	I am convinced that, as time goes by, I will continue to become more and more capable of helping to address my students needs.	0.612
	Even if I get disrupted while teaching, I am confident that I can maintain my composure and continue to teach well.	0.623
	I am confident in my ability to be responsive to my students needs even if I am having a bad day.	0.598
	If I try hard enough, I know that I can exert a positive influence on both the personal and academic development of my students.	0.489
	I am convinced that I can develop creative ways to cope with system constraints (such as budget cuts and other administrative problems) and continue to teach well.	0.475
	I know that I can motivate my students to participate in innovative projects.	0.623
	I know that I can carry out innovative projects even when I am opposed by sceptical colleagues.	0.612

Source: Primary data

As a result of factor analysis, four factors got extracted in the rotated component matrix. Factor identification was based on the fact that items having highest correlation with a factor would define its conceptual meaning. After identification of the number of factors and the variables associated with each factor, the next step was to name the factors based on the variables that loaded maximum. To determine the minimum loading necessary to include in its principle factor, Hair et al. (1995) gave rule of thumb stating that variables with a loading of greater than 0.40 are considered significant. Those items with factor loading less than 0.40 have been removed. In present study factor loading ranged from 0.431 to 0.691. Reliability coefficient cronbach's alpha was computed for all the four factors and was above the minimum acceptable limit of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2009). Table 5.4.3 summarizes the statements of the scale, their loadings on the corresponding factors and factor names. A brief description of the identified factors is given below:

Factor 1: Institutional Support

This factor was responsible for 15.84% variance of total variance. Sixteen variables are grouped in this factor which is related to the institutional support. These statements were a combination of positively and negatively worded statements. The diverse range of statements focused on value of faculty member in an institution, opportunities for professional development and career growth, participation in decision making, respect and

recognition, organizational justice and overall satisfaction with the institution. As per to Rothmann (2010) employee engagement is best predicted by organisational support and growth opportunities.

Factor 2: Institutional Orientation for Results

This factor explained 14.12% variance of total variance. Nine variables are grouped in factor 2 which are indicating the variables related to the Institutional Orientation for Results. These statements gauged the respondent's agreement or disagreement with institutions support in quality enhancement.

Factor 3: Supervisory Support

This factor was responsible for 11.34% variance of total variance. Seven variables are grouped in factor 3 related to the Supervisory Support. These statements explains the supervisory help and guidance for their subordinates, providing feedback on their performance, delegating equal and appropriate levels of responsibility without discrimination, being a role model and assisting staff in tough times. Arti Chandani (2016) explained that employees show more engagement towards the organisation when they see themselves getting praised by their immediate managers, they have the leadership's attention (for example, one-on-one conversations).

Factor 4: Teacher Self-Efficacy

This factor is explaining 10.91% variance of total variance. Ten variables are grouped in factor 4 related to Teacher Self-Efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy include four areas: job accomplishment, skill development on the job, social interaction with students, parents, and colleagues, and coping with job stress. For each of these four domains teachers may hold different self–efficacy expectations. These areas are important for successful teaching.

Table 3: Influence of employee engagement factors

S.NO.	FACTOR	MEAN	S.D.
1	Institutional Support	55.62	10.54
2	Institutional Orientation for Results	30.81	5.11
3	Supervisory Support	24.05	3.95
4	Teacher Self Efficacy	35.64	4.44

Source: Primary data

After factor analysis, the four identified factors were evaluated on the basis of mean and standard deviation to analyse the influence of each factor on the engagement level amongst the faculty members. The results displayed in the above displayed table 3 which revealed that the mean score for the factor 'Institutional Support' was 55.62 and standard deviation as 10.54 was highest indicating that the faculty members' were most influenced by this factor as compared to all other factors. Studies have found that employees with high organizational support suffer less stress at work and are more inclined to return to work sooner after injury (Shaw et al., 2013). A 2016 Gallup report of 2016 found that 90% of employees valued "career growth and development opportunities". Additionally, high organizational support positively relates to performance (Kurtessis et al., 2015). Followed by 'Teacher Self-Efficacy' with mean score as 35.64 and standard deviation as 4.44 was second most influencing factor for faculties. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (in press) defined teacher efficacy as a teacher's "judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated." The 'Supervisory Support' (mean= 24.05; S.D= 3.95) was found to be the fourth influencing factor. Higher Education Institution of Himachal Pradesh must look for ways to build a cordial relationship between supervisor and employee as they play a vital role in shaping organizational culture.

V.   CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study was undertaken to determine antecedents which iJfluence the engagement of faculty members working in educational institutions. The study identified four antecedents namely: Institutional Support, Institutional Orientation for Results, Supervisory Support and Teacher Self-Efficacy. Amongst these four extracted factor, faculty members were most influenced by 'Institutional Support'. It can be concluded that employees possessing high organizational support suffer a lesser amount of stress at their job role and are more apt to return to work. Faculty have a critical role in the success of student life and institution, which is largely influenced by engaged faculties. The evidence presented in this article gives a clear message to employers that employee engagement is important for upliftment of student, institution and society. Therefore, every education institution must listen to

their underling's grievances, periodically check engagement levels and further design an action plan to resolve the issues.

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