Intertwining Employ Agility and Employee Engagement: A Review

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Abstract—*The current era of dynamism comprises of fluctuating business environment where nascent challenges in the form of acquisition, optimization and retention of human resource are being faced bu the business entities. Resource is one of a kind, and is that resource which endows the organizations with a sustainable competitive environment. The paper talks about the concept of Employ agility and its relationship with Employee Engagement (EE).Employee engagement is actually the level of enthusiasm and dedication an employee feels toward his or her job. The challenges faced by the management in keeping the employees satisfied and involved require the management to work towards employee engagement activities.*

Organizations require a certain degree of flexibility while dealing with the changing pressures of the environment. Agility is the term used to describe this approach of a company that it acquires to adapt itself to the emerging of new competitors, shifts in the market conditions, introduction of new technologies, etc. Agility can be used as a tool for approaches like agile organizational strategy, agile supply chains, agile information systems, agile work systems, workforce agility, etc. To make EE a success, the employers should transform with time to retain the requisite talent. The term Employagility combines the skills required by the employees paving the way for effective Employee Engagement. Employagility is the awareness and ability of the organizations and employees to respond to changes quickly and thereby continue to add value. The employee engagement is a human resource management aspect that is pervasively impacting performance of all organizations in the 21st century. The efficiency of the practice of Employee Engagement depends largely on the way Employagility is practiced in an organization. This paper attempts to contribute an approach which HR managers could consider as a value adding proposition to be embedded in their practices, placing the onus on employees to self-evaluate, reflect and record winning attitudes.

Keywords*: Employagility, Employee Engagement, Agility, Business Agility.*

1 Introduction

As the organizations are expanding and flourishing, the need for Employee Engagement is becoming critical in this age of liberalization, privatization and globalization . The arrangement of Employee Engagement strategizes the growth of an organization and of every individual who is a part of that organization.. EEshould rather be understood as an approach to the modern avenue of conversation in an organization instead of considering it as a product or a technology. As of today, organizations are focusing on technology for improving employee relationships such as HR system, Salary disbursal system, HRIS, Performance Management, electronic mail for improving communication, training and development program etc. The above ,mentioned technologies have fostered efficiency instead of relationships. Lack of adoption of employee centered values leads to these technologies resulting in low employee morale and negativity. EE is an approach that escalates the chances of business success, contributing to the performance of the individual and the organization, productivity and well-being. It can be measured. It varies from poor to great. It can be nurtured and dramatically increased. In order to remain attractive to the stakeholders and to face the competition in the market, employees of any organization need to be more agile and , in particular, their qualities which machines and computers lack will have to stand out. Some of these enlisted as compassion, institution, creativity, judgement of character at heart, ability of interpreting the data. Agile professionals are the only ones to remain significant in the new services sector.Employagility is the sum of the capabilities of the employers to change with time to retain the necessary talent in the future, talent here meaning varied skills of the present workforce. This approach aptly requires experimenting with new types of flexible labour relations, appropriate remuneration for existing and new employees.

No organization can operate successfully without efficient employees. Major industry experts have viewed lack of flexibility of employees as a factor for stressed employee relations. Tim Sackett, president ofHRU Technical Resources, said he believes that, "Most organizations are stuck in the 1980s version of performance management, directly impacting their ability to offer employees flexibility in how and when they do their job."Employees want 'schedule flexibility,'" Sackett said, "but if you manage performance by counting the minutes an employee has their butt in their seat, you have no way to offer this."The dynamism in the market

requires the workplace to allow flexibility in terms of technology giving way to "work from home" Practices. Employagility and the various dimensions of agility thus act as an interface to strengthening employee relations and boosting employee relationship management.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Employee Engagement

With dynamism in the diversity of the workforce, work becoming a part of the global scenario, and the changes in the manner in which work is delegated and decentralized, there is a rising need for a proactive response from the organization to ensure Employee engagement, which can be an important tool in maintaining and retainingemployees who are committed and productive (Parkes & Langford, 2008). Lockwood (2007) states that "employee engagement strategies enable people to be the best they can at work, recognizing that this can only happen if they feel respected, involved, heard, well led, and valued by those they work for and with". The challenge of managing a diverse workforce is posed in front of organizations. They need to face this challenge by providing supportive employee policies and programmes that increase the level the Employee Engagement (Myers & Dreachslin, 2007).

2.2 The conceptual definition of Agility

Agility has classically been defined as simply the ability to change direction rapidly (Bloomfield, Ackland, & Elliot, 1994; Clarke, 1959; Mathews, 1973), but also the ability to change direction rapidly and accurately (Barrow & McGee, 1971; Johnson & Nelson, 1969). A comprehensive definition of agility would recognize the physical demands (strength and conditioning), cognitive processes (motor learning) and technical skills (biomechanics) involved in agility performance. An extensive definition developed by Ganguly et al. as "an effective integration of response ability and knowledge management in order to rapidly, efficiently and accurately adapt to any unexpected (or unpredictable) change in both proactive and reactive business / customer needs and opportunities without compromising with the cost or the quality of the product / process". The handling of change as a fundamental prerequisite for agility is confirmed by Conboy, who named creation of change, proaction in advance of change, reaction to change, and learning from change as components of agility.

2.3 Employee engagement and agility

Better control over work can be exercised and work-goals be achieved efficiently and effectively, if the employees have the freedom to use flexibility (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014). Hence, by carrying forward the findings of Bal and Lange (2015) who found that the availability of flexible work optionswill be useful in providing the resources to counterfoil implicit stress

occurring from balancing work life and private life and so these offerings can motivate the employees to invest more energy in their jobs. We therefore hypothesize that the agility and flexibility in work options positively relate to EE.

3 Theoretical Framework

The entire research project is based on the theoretical framework. It explains the relationships between independent, dependent and mediating variables which are explained in light of theories and relevant studies in literature. A platform is also offered in the form of this framework to create measurement tools (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

Modeling defines the act of defining this organizational phenomenon. In this theoretical framework, EEand Employagility are the phenomena that arebeing focused uponandare considered to be the interdependent variables. A theoretical framework is presented in Figure 1.
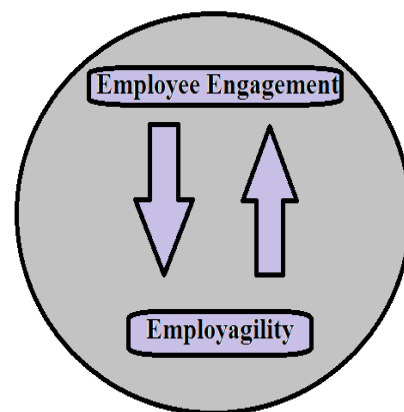

Fig.1: Theoretical Framework showing Employagility as intertwined with EE

3.1 Employee Engagement intertwined with Employagility

Agile businesses being developed is not as important as the development of employagility in business organizations. While technology does play a crucial role , what ultimately determines success or failure is not advanced tools, big data analytics or streamlined automation. It's our good old fashioned employee engagement.

The following five factors depict the interrelationships that exist between these two concepts:

3.1.1 Visibility increases due to Employee Engagement: With employagility, the most insidious threat that enterprises face isn't necessarily aggressive competitive or sluggish customer demand; it's when silos erupt in the workplace and turn information flows into bureaucratic bottlenecks. Employee engagement prevents this nightmare by making visibility a pragmatic necessity instead of an optional gesture. That is, instead of coercing, compelling or convincing employees to

share knowledge, they are self-motivated to do so because it's the only way that success happens; not just for others, but for themselves.

3.1.2 Customer Experience is driven by Employee Engagement: With business agility, investment success is not just about satisfying sponsors anymore; it's primarily about impressing and inspiring customers. Employee engagement ensures that enterprises focus clearly and continuously on who their customers are, what they want today, and what they'll expect in the future.

3.1.3 Rapid changes are supported by Employee Engagement: With business agility, waiting for all of the facts and figures to come in before making decisions isn't an option. Employee engagement helps enterprises turn uncertainty from a weakness into a strength by making iterating, anticipating and adapting core competencies and competitive advantages.

3.1.4 Employee engagement unleashes innovation: With employagility, innovation is everyone's role because constant improvement isn't an add-on: it's the framework through which work happens. Employee engagement shifts innovation from an activity that happens from time-to-time and under certain conditions, to an approach that organically flows out of the activity and performance of work itself.

3.1.5 Efficiency boosted through Employee Engagement: With employagility, performance (or lack thereof) isn't a function of speed: it's a matter of results. Employee engagement connects velocity with output by increasing efficiency. Individuals and teams are empowered and positioned to make better decisions and get more done in less time; not because they're racing against the clock, but because they're working smarter. Speed becomes a beneficial by-product, not a frenetic and chaotic end unto itself.

4 Conclusion and Implications

A comprehensive model is depicted in this paper based on the theoretical framework to understand the concept of Employagility and Employee Engagement as interrelated variables.We can thus conclude that Employee engagement isn't new, and with varying degrees of success, enterprises have been trying to generate and cultivate it for decades; especially in fields and markets where the demand for talented people outstrips supply. But with employagility now setting the tone and tempo, employee engagement is even more vital. Supporting rapid change, driving customer experience, unleashing innovation, increasing visibility, and boosting efficiency: these are not passing fads. Fostering employagility and engagement are likely going to be an important part of savvy organizations key strategies for a long time to come.

We seek to employ an empirical study based on this theoretical framework in the private sector, preferably banking and education.

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