Findings of employee satisfaction and motivation survey at a local outlet of a renowned retail chain in India

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Abstract

This work studied the motivation and satisfaction levels of employees regarding their job, career advancement opportunities and training, job support, compensation, HR policies, and empowerment within the organization. The study was carried out on the employees employed at the local outlet of a renowned retail chain in India. The purpose of the study was to provide the management of this retail chain with insights into satisfaction and motivation levels, and the needs of its employees. Given that basic human behavior remains the same, the findings presented herein may be utilized by any organization or for similar studies.

Keywords: Employee motivation, Employee satisfaction, Employee engagement, Employee morale, Employee benefits.

Introduction

The fact that employees are satisfied with their employers and their jobs does not guarantee that they will contribute their best for the success of their organizations. High levels of employee satisfaction and happiness need not result in high levels of employee engagement and motivation. Satisfied employees lacking passion cannot contribute effectively. Highly motivated employees are seen to be much more productive, and creative, and are more likely to take ownership. Furthermore, such employees stay loyal to the organization for a longer duration, thereby contributing to reduced turnover numbers. Higher levels of motivation not only contribute towards improving organizational bottom lines but also helps improve team spirit and

camaraderie. Any organization where employees are driven and committed to achieving a common goal is more likely to succeed in the competitive world of business.

Davis et al. (1985) proposed that job satisfaction can be thought of as a combination of feelings, both positive and negative, that workers have towards their work. When a person joins a workplace, he or she has certain expectations from that job and the organization. The organization also has certain expectations from its employees. Successful meetings of these expectations from and towards the organization eventually mold an employee's satisfaction level.

Based on the work cited above and several other pieces of literature, job satisfaction can be described as the feeling of fulfillment that a person gets at work. Some common factors which influence job satisfaction levels are management style and culture, employee involvement, employee empowerment, and the degree of autonomy in decision making. Research has observed that happiness and satisfaction levels with one's job are positively correlated. However, research has also observed that increased job satisfaction levels among employees do not necessarily improve their motivation levels. Enhanced job satisfaction and performance levels are important objectives during job design. Some techniques used during job design to enhance satisfaction and performance levels include job rotation, job enlargement, and job enrichment.

Every organization, public or private, for-profit or not-for-profit, engages in the study of job satisfaction levels among its employees. Besides, in the ever-changing world, employee needs and requirements keep on changing. Organizations can keep employees' content in the workplace only if the organization can effectively negate levels of employee dissatisfaction. Dissatisfied employees cannot contribute to the success of any organization. Hence, maximum job satisfaction is essential in maximizing effective employee contributions to the success of an organization. The usual way to measure job satisfaction level is to ask employees to respond to rating scales on the various attributes related to their jobs.

Motivation can be defined as something which may be a desire, a want, a need, or even a drive that inspires an individual to act in a way that helps achieve a goal or an objective. Employee motivation, therefore, is generating that "something" that drives an employee in contributing effectively toward the success of their employers and/or organizations. Employee motivation can be formally defined as the commitment, energy levels, and creativity that an employee brings to his or her job. So far research has failed to establish a direct link between employee motivation

levels and their organization's growth. Even then a lack of motivation among employees will adversely affect organizational performance. Thus, improving motivation levels has become an important focus area for human resource departments. High motivation levels also play a crucial role in the long-term growth of any organization. Proper motivation can turn an employee into an invaluable asset and increase employee retention rates.

Panagiotakopoulos A (2013) in a study on employee motivation during the Greek financial crisis concluded that employee motivation can stimulate employee performance even under adverse economic and financial circumstances. Hence, every organization should strive and keep employee motivation levels as high as possible.

A sense of satisfaction and feeling motivated is subjective and will vary from one employee to another. What will satisfy or motivate one employee may not satisfy or motivate another. Employee satisfaction and motivation levels are usually driven by how valuable an employee perceives himself to be in his organization, employee training opportunities provided by the organization, and the employee relationships with his management.

Bijaya Kumar Sundaray (2011) in his study focused on the different factors which improve employee engagement and how companies can keep their employees engaged. The study found that there was an increase in organizational effectiveness regarding productivity, profitability, quality, customer satisfaction, employee retention, and job role adaptability when organizations implemented proper employee engagement strategies. A review of similar literature can help a researcher easily identify several factors which impact employee satisfaction and motivation. Also, a review of case studies published allows one to identify common strategies adopted by organizations in this regard.

Some of the factors which impact employee satisfaction and motivation, found in books, online/offline articles, and research publications, are as follows:
- Workplace environment
- On the job support and responsibilities
- Opportunities for career advancements
- A desire for monetary gains
- An inherent desire to be empowered
- Recognition at the workplace and in society.

Some common techniques employed by organizations for improving job satisfaction and motivation are:

- An increase in modern-day connectivity and opportunities to work 24x7 have empowered organizations to give employees greater control of their own time within and outside the workplace thereby facilitating employees to maintain a better work-life balance.

- Companies often have a clear vision statement. This vision presents a definite long-term goal for all its stakeholders. Employees get motivated with this vision as everyone wants to know that their efforts are driving towards something and having a clear vision helps in this regard.

- Individuals who can shape their roles and work according to their strengths demonstrate greater job satisfaction. Hence, organizations often allow employees to define their roles within a team and/or within their job descriptions.

- Management keeps reiterating to the employees that their work is very critical for the organization and arranging periodic training for the employees so that they can perform better.

- Companies take care to train employees in such a way that those in supervisory roles realize that their supervision should not degrade into micromanagement.

- Companies aim for smaller but more frequent targets. Large targets for employees may seem unrealistic to the employees and thus have a detrimental impact on their motivation levels.

- Recognition and reward, beyond financial remuneration, are a must. Employees must be made aware that they and their work are valued, and their contributions appreciated. Recognizing good work inspires employees to do even better.

- Organizations strive toward maintaining clear communication and transparency among the decision-makers and employees. Disinformation and/or lack of information can be extremely detrimental to employee motivation. Hence, a transparent approach to keeping employees informed is given great importance.

- Collaboration and teamwork among employees are not only important for an organization's success but also help in increasing innovation and the workplace environment.

Objectives of the study

Following are the primary objectives of this study

- To determine levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, motivation, and morale in the target store
- To determine the success or effectiveness of existing employment benefits.

Research Methodology

A convenience sample of all the employees from the retail outlet was selected. No attempt was made to contact employees of the same retail house in other parts of the country. Primary data were collected via questionnaires consisting of several open and close-ended questions. The questions were designed based on standard questionnaires and adopted only after the company's HR approved the questions. For questions on employee benefits, a three-point rating scale was used. For all other questions, a five-point rating scale was used.

The collected data was then represented and analyzed using simple statistical tools like bar graphs, pie charts, and histograms.

Data Representation and Findings

The primary data collected and analyzed is presented under the following heads

- Findings on **Employee Engagement**
- Findings on **Employee Satisfaction**
- Findings on **Employee Motivation**
- Findings on **Employee Morale**
- Findings on **Employee Benefits**

Findings on Employee Engagement

The following questions were posed for this attribute.

Q1: The mission/purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important

Q2: My job is challenging and exciting

Q3: My job allows me to grow and develop new skills

Q4: You're proud to work for this company

Q5: I feel inspired to do my best at work every day

Table 1 represents the data collected on questions related to employee engagement in percentage terms for better analysis.

	Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q5**	**Average**
Strongly agree	57.78	44.44	48.89	44.44	64.44	52.00
Agree	40.00	44.44	40.00	46.67	24.44	39.11
Neutral	2.22	11.11	8.89	8.89	11.11	8.44
Disagree	0.00	0.00	2.22	0.00	0.00	0.44
Strongly Disagree	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total						100.00

Table 1: Employee Engagement Findings

The organization is doing a great job regarding employee engagement. All the questions received positive responses from more than 90 percent of the respondents. Almost 98 percent of the employees believed that they are important to the organization and perhaps that is the reason for feeling inspired to give their best at work.

Findings on Employee Satisfaction

The following questions were posed for this attribute.

Q6: How likely are you to look for another Job outside this company?

Q7: How confident are you about contributing to the organizational goals?

Q8: How clear are you about your responsibilities?

Q9: How satisfied are you with the work culture?

Q10: How much do you feel connected with your colleague?

Table 2 represents the data collected on questions related to employee satisfaction in percentage terms for better analysis.

	Q6	**Q7**	**Q8**	**Q9**	**Q10**	**Average**
Extremely	11.1	44.4	68.9	26.7	22.2	34.67
Mostly	22.2	40	22.2	42.2	42.2	33.78
Neutral	31.1	11.1	6.67	26.7	17.8	18.67
Moderately	8.89	4.44	2.22	4.44	15.6	7.11
Not At All	26.7	0	0	0	2.22	5.78
Total						100

Table 2: Employee Satisfaction Findings

For the retail outlet chosen in this study, employees generally expressed satisfaction on most of the parameters identified as contributing factors to employee satisfaction. Satisfaction levels were highest in terms of the perceptions regarding effective contribution to organizational goals and an understanding of their job roles and responsibilities.

Findings on Employee Motivation

Responses to the following questions were captured for this attribute.

Q11: I am motivated to go the extra mile at work

Q12: Does your level of motivation affect your work?

Q13: Do you feel your views and opinions are taken into account when a decision is made?

Q14: Do you look forward to going to work on Monday?

Q15: The recognition I receive from my direct manager motivates me to do my best

Table 3 represents the data collected on questions related to employee motivation in percentage terms for better analysis.
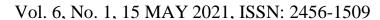
	Q11	**Q12**	**Q13**	**Q14**	**Q15**	**Average**
Strongly agree	37.78	31.11	31.11	40	40	36
Agree	42.22	46.67	46.67	33.33	51.11	44
Neutral	15.56	15.56	20	15.56	8.89	15.11
Disagree	4.44	2.22	2.22	8.89	0	3.56
Strongly Disagree	0	4.44	0	2.22	0	1.33
Total						100

Table 3: Employee Motivation Findings

Overall, three-quarters of the employees sampled responded favorably to questions related to employee engagement. The responses were anonymous and so the possibility of a biased finding is very low.

Over 90 percent of the employees responded favorably when asked about the recognition from supervisors acting as a motivating factor.

Not surprisingly, of all the questions when compared with one another, the question on whether employees looked forward to going to work on Monday received the least number of positive responses.

Findings on Employee Morale

Responses to the following questions were captured for this attribute.

Q16: How would you rate the work environment?

Q17: How well are you paid for the work you do?

Q18: Rate your engagement at work.

Q19: How would you rate your working hours?

Q20: How would you rate your leave policies?

Table 4 represents the data collected on questions related to employee morale in percentage terms for better analysis.

	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Average
Very Good	33.33	22.22	42.22	31.11	26.67	31.11
Good	55.56	46.67	48.89	42.22	42.22	47.11
Fair	11.11	26.67	8.89	24.44	22.22	18.67
Poor	0	4.44	0	2.22	6.67	2.67
Very Poor	0	0	0	0	2.22	0.44
Total						100

Table 4: Employee Morale Findings

From the above table, remunerations and leave policies lag the other contributing factors regarding employee morale. However, the feeling of engagement, as is evident from the findings in table 1, is exceptionally high in this specific retail outlet.

Findings on Employee Benefits

The answers obtained from the following questions helped analyze the above attribute.

Q21: Are you satisfied with the health plan coverage we offer?

Q22: Are other members of your family enrolled in our company's health plan?
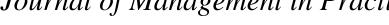
Q23: Do have a clear understanding of the benefits packages offered by your organization

Q24: Are you satisfied with your organization's meal allowances and allocations?

Q25: Are you satisfied with your organization's vacation policy?

Table 5 represents the data collected on questions related to employee morale in percentage terms for better analysis.

	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Average
Yes	51.11	48.89	62.22	44.44	53.33	52
Neutral	33.33	26.67	26.67	42.22	33.33	32.44
No	15.56	24.44	11.11	13.33	13.33	15.56
Total						100

Table 5: Employee Benefits Findings

Employee benefits are a subjective matter. 52 percent of all respondents said that they were satisfied with the employee benefits.

In summary, given the specific choice of the retail outlet, most of the employees responded positively to the questions posed on employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction, and morale.

Conclusions

Employees working in the retail outlet showed high levels of engagement. They were willing to give their best at work every day. They seem to find enough opportunities for growth and development in their workplace and were proud to be associated with the organization. The organization studied herein also seems to have done a good job in terms of describing job roles and responsibilities clearly to have a positive influence on employee satisfaction.

In the introductory part, one of the strategies adopted by companies to keep employee motivation high was to train those in supervisory roles to acknowledge the good work of subordinates and not to convert supervision into micromanagement. The findings related to the question of recognition from direct managers regarding employee engagement seem to suggest that the company in this context was doing well with over 90 percent of the employees responding positively.

From the study, it is seen that the company can do better in terms of employee benefits and employee morale. When the questions posed to the employees are considered relatively, salary, health benefits/insurance, and leave policy drag down the overall survey findings.

However, from this study, it is difficult to conclude that the drag-down factors are more or less important while studying employee motivation and satisfaction. Hence, a further study to rank the questions posed to employees herein can be carried out. Such a study in conjunction with the current study will be better to gauge the effectiveness of the company in implementing measures to enhance the motivation and satisfaction levels of its employees.

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