

Is Employee Involvement a Facilitator of Engagement? Promoting HRM Practices in Indian Healthcare Sector

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Abstract

The challenging and uncertain work environment has persuaded the managerial authorities to discover solutions to enhance engagement among the employees. Incorporation of employee involvement practices might be a novel concept in this context. Thus, the current study purposely comprehends and investigates the forms of involvement practices designed to enhance engagement in Indian healthcare sector; and to assess the association among different employee involvement practices identified. Inclusion of journal articles, book chapters, magazine articles, and newspaper articles as the secondary sources have elaborated the understanding of the present research. After employing exploratory factor analysis, six factors have been discovered incorporating employee involvement practices. Employers that entrust their staff or subordinates responsibility and decision-making authority build great relationships with them, which eventually motivates the workers to demonstrate high levels of engagement at work. Delegation and employee consultation can improve job-related knowledge and have the potential to cut training expenses. The outcomes of the present study will extend insights to various stakeholders who are concerned with the development of the healthcare organizations.

Keywords: Employee involvement, employee engagement, healthcare sector, exploratory factor analysis, India

Introduction

The creation and implementation of traditional human resources are insufficient in today's hectic workplace to retain outstanding workers. As employees from Generation X and Generation Y have become more integrated into the workplace, traditional tactics are becoming less successful in meeting the demands of these generations. Thus, it has turned out to be challenging to engage the workforce into accomplishing the tasks assigned with maximum efficiency (Gupta and Agrawal, 2023). To deal with the strain of poor employee engagement, which also encourages job switching, organizations must develop creative and

accommodating approaches. A novel concept that helps firms succeed in this setting is the incorporation of employee involvement practices.

Employee involvement, according to Strauss (2006), is the process whereby workers take control of their job and associated conditions by being included in work-related choices. Sharing decision-making authority over their work with their superiors is a part of this process. Existing theories and presumptions on employee involvement have a variety of complex features. Employee involvement may be both direct and indirect, and it can fulfill a variety of operational functions that lead to a combination of results. Employee engagement and involvement are interconnected because each of them either produces extraordinarily low or tremendously high output. Wilkinson et al. (2018) claim that employee engagement has changed from solely taking an indirect form to also taking a direct form. Employees may now take part in more task-related choices as a result.

As a rising economy, India's government is working to boost economic growth by fostering a favourable macroeconomic environment and developing infrastructure that would boost domestic output and increase economic efficiency (Gupta et al., 2022). India has been moving in the direction of financial independency since years for the benefit of the population (Agrawal and Gupta, 2022). Besides, the efforts have been multiplied since the emergence of COVID-19 (Gupta and Agrawal, 2021; Verma and Agrawal, 2022). Second, India will have a total population of 1352.6 million on May 1, 2023, making it the world's most populated nation. The bulk of India's population, according to Statista (2021), is between the ages of 15 and 64. These figures demonstrate that the majority of young people are either employed or prepared to start a career. With new talent reaching the markets, new employee involvement practices are required to engage the workforce into efficient production.

Although there is literature on the subject of the importance of involvement practices in an organization, additional research is required to clarify the connection between these practices and employee engagement (Khalid & Nawab, 2018; Temel et al., 2022). The majority of research has been conducted worldwide (Cogin et al., 2016; Ferdian et al.,

2020; Luturlean et al., 2020), and little has been done in India. Therefore, additional work has to be carried out in the Indian context to give the authors a solid structural foundation to build their research. This study offers the readers a variety of contributions because it is one of the few studies of the Indian origin that will have additional implications for managers in the healthcare industry (Verma and Agrawal, 2021; Verma and Agrawal, 2023). Through exploratory factor analysis, the detected variables are estimated and assigned to various factors. As a result, the study is intended to include the involvement practices affecting the levels of employee engagement in the healthcare industry in light of the aforementioned considerations.

Background and literature search

The significance of employee engagement for an organization's performance has been discussed widely in the past. Bonias et al. (2016) noted that clinical engagement is being promoted by Australian health commissions as a crucial component in improving the efficiency of healthcare systems. Clinical engagement, according to the study, is the mental, physical, and emotional commitment made by healthcare workers to their work. By improving their duties at workplace, it eventually improves the healthcare system. Therefore, it is important to pinpoint the causes of increased engagement (Blomme et al., 2015), and human resource management techniques are thought to be a key cause (Alola & Alafeshat, 2020; Hetaljani & Bayan, 2016). Employee motivation may be influenced by organizational engagement levels by the human resource function's policy and practice with regard to involvement practices. Employee motivation, employability, and talent can serve as sources of long-term competitive advantage. Thus, employee engagement and inclusion of people are acknowledged as management tools to shape employee attitudes and create competitive advantage (Uribe et al., 2020). The effect of including employees in decision-making on their performance while working for a nonprofit organization was also looked into by Johansen and Sowa (2019).

Grew et al. (1995) has discussed that "Employee involvement seeks to increase members' input into

decisions that affect organization performance and employee well-being". Four factors that encourage worker or employee participation are power, information, knowledge, competence, and rewards. In the implementation stage, involvement will drive high-quality change and overcome opposition (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). This might result in the creation of a range of ideas and information that could lead to innovations that are practical and appropriate for the context, increase the possibility of change implementation, foster member commitment, and empower employees to engage and lead change efforts at work (Cummings & Molloy, 1977).

The many forms of employee involvement have been described by Khalid and Nawab (2018). They have talked about the several types of employee involvement practices including consultative, delegative, worker director, and worker union. They have discussed the impact of salary on the link between employee engagement and retention in six different businesses, including the healthcare sector. The importance of employee involvement variables and their inter-relationships have been examined by Temel et al. (2022). According to the research, there are nine aspects, including training, employee volunteering, informal rules, diversity and incentives among others.

Summarizing the literature instances, it is noted that various scholars have described employee involvement and related participation in different words. However, it is worthy of attention that their overall conclusion indicates towards the six main attributes described as primary financial involvement practices; secondary financial involvement practices; primary delegative involvement practices; secondary delegative involvement practices; primary consultative involvement practices and secondary consultative involvement practices.

Delegative practices are those HRM practices which assist an employee to be familiarize with the formal obligations of the management and become happily ready to be a part of the work delegated to him. Financial HRM practices are those which allow the employees to take monetary benefits for their participation in the organization. On the other hand, consultative involvement practices encourage the employees to extend their opinions towards the

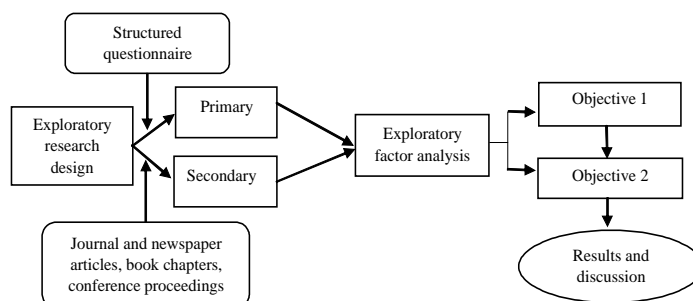
organizations' crucial decisions. The HRM practices that are majorly involved are termed as 'primary' while the others are referred to as 'secondary'.

Research Objectives and Methodology

The authors have formulated the objectives of the study after keen consideration of the existing literature and thorough thought-process and rationale. After searching for the gaps, it is noted that there are certain points that need to be addressed. Hence, the objectives of the research are as follows:

- (1) to identify and elaborate the types of employee involvement practices intended for participation in healthcare sector in India
- (2) to examine the association between the identified employee involvement practices in the healthcare organizations.

Figure 1. Research Methodology framework



Source: Authors' elaboration

Figure 1 represents the conceptual research methodology that defines the two objectives of the study. To attain these objectives, authors have followed an appropriate pathway. It takes into account both primary and secondary data. Journal articles, book chapters, magazine articles, and newspaper articles are all taken into consideration as references. The sample is drawn from the doctors working in the private hospitals in northern India, which is a significant medical hub for people nationwide. The information has been gathered from the doctors who are at least MBBS using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling.

After consultation with the experts and a thorough pilot survey, the data is collected using a self-administered and structured questionnaire. The authors then included 21 statements in the questionnaire after that. Responses to each statement have been gathered using a seven-point Likert scale. Only 460 of the 780 completed surveys were returned, out of the total 780 given. 399 responses, however, are listed as being sufficient and thorough. The needed sample size for the current investigation has been determined using KMO and Bartlett's test. Additionally, according to Gorsuch (1983), the total number of authorized and completed surveys is justified. On the other hand, mean values produced from the replies connected to the characteristics are used to identify the constructs. Finally, the data have been analyzed using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Therefore, EFA has been chosen to investigate the employee responses through data analysis using SPSS Statistics.

Results and Discussion

After framing the methodology precisely, the authors have proceeded towards the selection of strategy for analysis. This constitutes a significant section as identification of factors depends on the proper technique after going through rigorous literature search. EFA has been selected as an appropriate technique for identifying various types of employee involvement practices. It has been recognized as a tool for exploring the appropriate factors to study the relationship with an independent variable in a research study. EFA is used to examine the data obtained from the questionnaire. The correctness of the sample size is checked before to the use of EFA. KMO and Bartlett's test are used for the purpose.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Particulars	Values
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.721
Approx. Chi-Square	1781.814
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df
	204
	Sig.
	.000

Note. KMO and Bartlett's test is used for ensuring the sample accuracy.

Source: Calculated and compiled by the authors using SPSS

The value shown in Table 1 is more than 0.70. The result fits within the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) framework, which assesses sample adequacy (Kaiser, 1974). It is evident that the

sample size chosen for the investigation is appropriate. A logical statistical estimate is also guaranteed by Bartlett's test, which has a significance level of 0.05. Henceforth, it is advised to move on with EFA after collecting persuading statistical measurements.

Table 2. Matrix demonstrating variables with factors along with associated values

Factors	Variables			
F1(PFIP)	V1 (0.806)	V2 (0.936)	V3 (0.625)	V4(0.844)
F2(SFIP)	V5 (0.805)	V6 (0.714)	V7 (0.731)	V8(0.503)
F3(PDIP)	V9 (0.624)	V10 (0.651)	V11(0.724)	V12(0.638)
F4(SDIP)	V13 (0.714)	V14 (0.709)	V15(0.831)	
F5(PCIP)	V16 (0.838)	V17 (0.452)	V18 (0.801)	
F6(SCIP)	V19 (0.723)	V20 (0.618)	V21(0.727)	

Note. PFIP= primary financial involvement practices; SFIP= secondary financial involvement practices; PDIP= primary delegative involvement practices; SDIP= secondary delegative involvement practices; PCIP= primary consultative involvement practices; SCIP= secondary consultative involvement practices (Source: Calculated and compiled by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics 23)

The factor loadings produced with the use of Principal Components Analysis are tabulated in Table 2. Six factors—PFIP, SFIP, PDIP, SDIP, PCIP, and SCIP have

been allotted a total of 21 variables. Moreover, the majority of the variables show high loading values, most of which are greater than 0.70. To ascertain the internal consistency of the six factors Cronbach alpha is utilized (Santos, 1999). For all the parameters, the value is higher than 0.70. The statistical estimations are as follows: PFIP= 0.754; SFIP= 0.711; PDIP= 0.797; SDIP= 0.791; PCIP= 0.854; SCIP= 0.812. As a result, the consistency and dependability are verified.

Table 3. Correlation matrix demonstrating association between the types of participative practices

	PFIP	SFIP	PDIP	SDIP	PCIP	SCIP
PFIP	1					
SFIP	0.754	1				
PDIP	0.654	0.985	1			
SDIP	0.378	0.575	0.467	1		
PCIP	0.765	0.467	0.865	0.765	1	
SCIP	0.678	0.786	0.678	0.956	0.762	1

Note. PFIP, SFIP, PDIP, SDIP, PCIP and SCIP are the abbreviated versions of the six factors identified as the types of involvement practices

Source: Calculated and compiled by the authors using SPSS

The correlation coefficients used to gauge the strength of the connection between the participatory practices generated from component analysis are shown in Table 3. Each value points to the existence of a strong association between the variables.

Summarizing the above section, it can be stated that both the objectives are fulfilled through the analysis. In context with the first objective, discussion about the sample adequacy is followed by the factor loadings generated via principal component analysis which is a part of EFA. Hence, all the six factors are disclosed that constitute the types. Referring to the second objective, all the variables share a significant bond with each other. They are closely and positively related to each other.

Conclusion and Implications

The authors have determined the different forms of

participatory practices by factor analysis in association with the study's primary purpose. After achieving the first goal, the second goal was to look into the connections between those behaviours that the correlation analysis blatantly demonstrated. As a result, this study is an effort to realize that involvement-oriented practices have the potential to contribute towards a pool of HRM practices targeted at goal attainment through employee welfare. Implementing such procedures with an eye on staff retention and long-term engagement will increase growth possibilities and assist a healthcare organization to achieve a competitive edge. The findings suggest that employee involvement in management decisions is facilitated through financial involvement, consultation, and delegation in direct and indirect ways.

The current analysis has several implications for the concerned parties. Because of its importance in enhancing employee involvement practices that may have an influence on engagement, it provides essential information for HRM and development practitioners. It has been shown that employers who assign tasks to their staff members or subordinates develop close bonds with them. When this link is strengthened through mutual respect, commitment, and loyalty, the workers are eventually persuaded to exhibit high levels of involvement at work. Delegation and employee consultation can improve job-related knowledge and have the potential to cut training expenses. Employers should launch initiatives to educate employees on the purpose, importance, and use of employee involvement practices. The development of the workers' task-oriented knowledge and abilities would benefit from this.

The development of delegative practices allows managers to shift part of their responsibilities to their employees. Greater idea generation is made possible by the consultative practices. When employees are consulted beforehand, they are less likely to protest to decisions being made on their behalf. As a result, it prevents conflicts inside the company and unites the management and workforce. Financial involvement practices can encourage workers to recognize their value and demand compensation for any extra work responsibilities. On the other hand, the management gains from the employees' sharing of the workload in exchange for a few extra benefits. The involvement practices highlighted are unmistakably geared at the potential for increased employee engagement in the healthcare industry. Increasing the sense of inclusion among employees leads to more engaged workers, who in turn have a positive impact on the well-being of the employees. For those working in an industry that directly treats the physical and psychological health for citizens of the country, this viewpoint is even more important.

The investors would be benefited from the findings of this study after analyzing that their profits can be amplified after

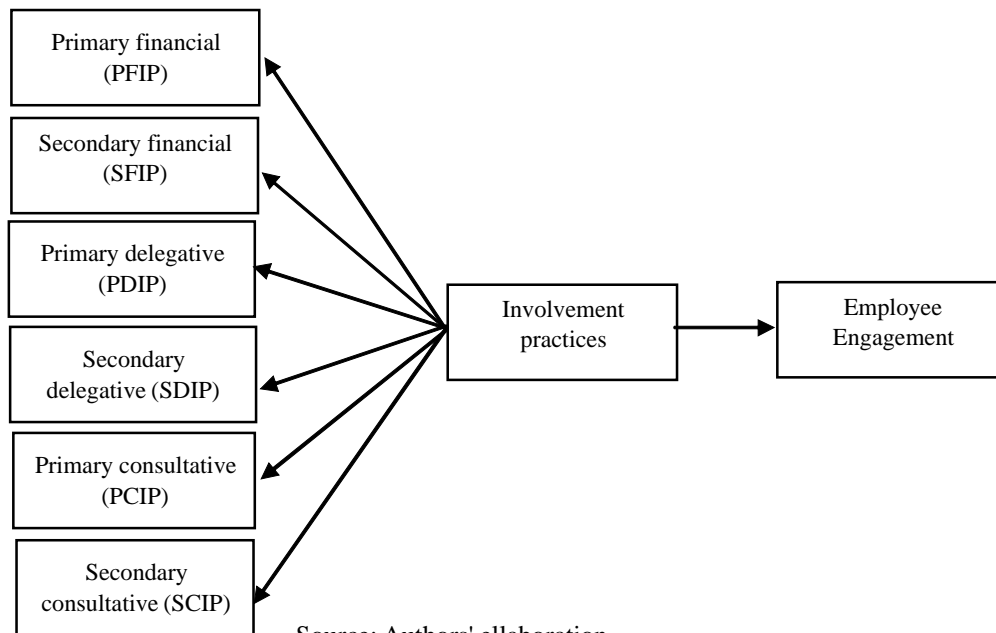
the inclusion of one or more representatives from the employees in the management decisions related to them. The managers of other developing nations whose governments are working harder to promote the growth of emerging economies, would also benefit from this study's clear perspective. Economic conditions can be improved by sharing information on the use of employee involvement strategies intended to increase engagement. The society, as a whole can take this study as an instance and implement the findings in other service industries where inclusion of employees in the decision making can make a difference.

Limitations

Twenty-one variables have been included by the authors for factor analysis. However, the addition of more variables may have improved the detail of the engagement-focused involvement practices. Due to the time constraints, both the sample size and the study area are restricted. Better outcomes may have been obtained with a broader coverage area. With additional categorization into direct and indirect, the involvement practices have been broken down primarily into three categories. Future research can perform a longitudinal study to conduct an empirical investigation of how these practices affect employee engagement. Furthermore, additional study may be done in-depth to determine the importance of each involvement practice.

Proposed model and scope for future research

Figure 1 has displayed the conceptual framework suggested by the authors after fulfilling both the objectives of the study. However, as a result of the attainment of objectives, a new prospective model came into light which is depicted in figure 2. The study has found the HRM practices related to the involvement of employees which are majorly targeted at engagement. This finding has the potential to enhance the prospects for the future research where the relationship between Involvement practices and employee engagement can be investigated.

Figure 2. Proposed model suggesting a guide for future research

Variables that precisely identify involvement practices are identified with the help of the opinions of experts and the results of a survey that was performed to get the opinions of employees in the healthcare industry. The option of conducting an industry-wise study and having a wider perspective is created by the inclusion of more sectors in the study. Researchers and academics may find it attention-worthy and be able to offer suggestions for future research. Other emerging nations with comparable financial and geographic structures can also implement it. Other HRM practices, such as those relating to pay and benefits, training and development, performance management, and job security, may be just as crucial for fostering engagement as involvement practices and hold tremendous promise for the future.

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