



Factors influencing employee engagement in Indian IT Firms: A systematic review of existing literature with reference to prominent employee engagement theory and models

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The main goal of this research is to analyze research conducted on leading IT firms, with a focus on how human resources systems can seamlessly integrate with new procedures to establish a holistic approach to fostering employee engagement. The study seeks to identify the various aspects of employee engagement concerning organizational performance within specific Indian Information Technology (IT) companies. Employee engagement is deemed pivotal in determining the prosperity and efficiency of organizations, especially in the dynamic and competitive landscape of the IT sector. By scrutinizing aspects like job contentment, dedication, drive, and participation, this research aims to offer valuable insights into how these elements influence organizational effectiveness within Indian IT firms.

Methodology/Approach: The research methodology employed in this study encompasses a sample of 468 executives, representative of three key functions in the Indian IT sector. A meticulously planned research design was implemented, integrating diverse data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, and other suitable techniques. The gathered data underwent thorough quantitative and qualitative analyses to extract meaningful insights. Moreover, pertinent theoretical frameworks, including the social exchange theory, were leveraged to establish a robust conceptual basis for the study. The research adhered to a systematic and rigorous approach, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of employee engagement and its influencers within the specific organizational milieu. Connections and relationships between various factors were evaluated using structural equation modeling.

Results: The findings of this study indicate that employee engagement is shaped by four organizational resources, each exerting unique influences. The study highlights three pivotal factors—trusts among co-workers, trust in supervisors, and organizational trust—as intermediary elements between organizational culture and employee engagement. Additionally, this research incorporates a comparative examination of employee engagement levels across five distinct IT companies.

Limitations: The research limitations of this study are rooted in its narrow scope, which concentrates solely on Top IT Companies in India. Consequently, the implications of this limitation imply that the findings and conclusions may not directly translate to companies operating in diverse sectors or industries. Hence, further research is warranted to investigate employee engagement within varied organizational contexts, such as Retail, Iron & Steel, Textiles, Jute, Sugar, Cement, Paper, Petrochemical, Automobile, and Banking & Insurance. This broader exploration is crucial for fostering a more holistic understanding of the subject.

Practical Implications: This implies that nurturing employee

engagement within the IT sector can significantly enhance HR practices within this field. Identifying sector-specific resources is anticipated to offer valuable insights for employees and organizational decision-makers, empowering them to make informed choices and implement suitable measures to foster engagement and enhance overall performance within the sector.

Social Implications: The results of this study offer valuable insights for decision-makers within the organization, underscoring the importance of organizational culture, interpersonal trust, and organizational trust, and how they impact employee engagement. Such insights can aid decision-makers in making well-informed choices and crafting successful strategies to improve employee engagement.

Importance of the study: The outcomes from this study will enrich the current understanding of employee engagement, offering valuable insights to both practitioners and researchers, fostering a deeper comprehension of this concept.

Keywords: Employee engagement, organizational performance, Indian IT firms, satisfaction at work, Job Demands-Resources model, dedication, drive, involvement, Work resources, corporate culture, faith in colleagues, faith in managers and in the organization, social exchange theory (SET), and job demands-resources (JD-R), well-known employee engagement models, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Kahn's Engagement Theory, Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model. This paper is classified as a research article, seeking to delve into and examine these crucial components thoroughly.

1. Introduction:

Psychologist William Kahn is credited with coining the term "employee engagement," defining it as the active involvement of organizational members in their work roles. Kahn proposed that engagement entails individuals utilizing and expressing themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while carrying out their responsibilities. Nearly three decades have elapsed since Kahn (1990), Yao, J., et al (2022), Ejibe, I., (2024) published his seminal paper on 'personal engagement' in the workplace, shedding light on how employees decide whether to invest themselves wholly and genuinely in their roles based on their workplace experiences. Scholars acknowledge the importance of employee engagement in driving innovation, efficiency, and cost savings in the fiercely competitive market environment (Parent and Lovelace, 2018), , Ejaz, S., et al (2023), Ly, B. (2024). According to Kahn (1990), individuals possess the capacity to engage at varying levels of their abilities in the workplace, with higher levels of engagement correlating with improved work performance. Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2018), Lesener, T., et al (2020). , Sarkar, S. (2023), Corbeanu, A., & Iliescu, D. (2023). , further underscore the pivotal role of employee engagement in ensuring organizational success. Since then, interest in engagement has surged, resulting in a plethora of definitions, measurements, conceptualizations, and theories related to engagement (Macey and Schneider, 2008), Ngwenya, B., & Pelsner, T. (2020). , Al Badi, F. M. et al (2023)

Organizations have been striving to boost their productivity by embracing advanced technology and refining their processes to maintain a competitive edge. Acknowledging the critical role of a motivated, skilled, and resourceful workforce in navigating business challenges and market conditions, organizational leaders have underscored the importance of employee engagement (Parent and Lovelace, 2018), Even, A. M., & Christiansen, B. (Eds.). (2023), Porath, U. (2023).

According to Kahn (1990), individuals exhibit varying levels of engagement in the workplace, with higher levels of employee involvement correlating with enhanced performance. Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2018), Sjahrudin, H., et al (2024). argue that employee engagement is paramount for organizational success as it drives optimal performance. This perspective is echoed by Shantz et al. (2016),, Groenewald, C. A., et al who assert that employee engagement not only enhances output but also contributes to employees' well-being. When employees are fully engaged and invest their passion and commitment into their work, higher productivity and performance levels can be achieved (Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2018), resulting in improved employee welfare and increased business revenue. Conversely, lower levels of employee engagement are associated with higher turnover rates, burnout, and deterioration of employee relations (Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2018).

Buhlman and Lee (2019) discovered a positive correlation between enhanced employee engagement and improved hospital performance. The ongoing commitment of industries to promote employee engagement is

evident through global initiatives aimed at gauging engagement levels (Willis Towers Watson, 2018; Gallup, 2018; CEB Global, 2018)., Lim, W. M. (2023). These studies consistently uncover varying levels of employee engagement, with some individuals highly engaged, others disengaged, and a majority exhibiting low levels of engagement at work. Employee engagement has remained a significant hurdle that industries have endeavoured to overcome for decades.

While researchers have endeavoured to comprehend how to engage employees in diverse circumstances, top global managers have demonstrated that achieving employee engagement alongside robust business outcomes is feasible (Zenger and Folkman, 2017), Naqshbandi, M. M., et al (2024). Several researchers (Bakker et al., 2014; Makikangas et al., 2010; Nienaber, 2020), Naqshbandi, M. M et al (2024). highlight engagement as a potent tool for sustaining business competitiveness and fostering innovation (Christian et al., 2011), Sathyanarayana, S., et al (2024). Chin, S. T. S. (2024, January). Consequently, HR planners have concentrated on exploring strategies to enhance employee engagement within organizations , Truss et al., (2013), Iskandar, Y., et al (2023), Szczepanska-Woszczyna, K., & Bogaczyk, R. (2023, October).

1.1 Indian IT Sector:

Despite the tough market conditions, the industry continues to be a net hirer, adding 60K employees, taking the total employee base to 5.43 Mn (1.1% y-o-y growth). Europe, APAC, Manufacturing, Retail and Healthcare emerge as the key growth markets for the industry. The Indian Information Technology/Software sector has risen as a global leader, leaving an indelible mark on the country. It has been instrumental in establishing India as a favored investment hub for international stakeholders and has generated a considerable array of employment opportunities both domestically and abroad, notably in the USA, Europe, and various other regions. In the last decade, the industry has witnessed significant expansion in revenue, with its proportional contribution to India's GDP reaching around 7.5% in the fiscal year 2022-2023.

Even as India's technology industry surpasses \$250 billion in revenue, it is expected to grow at a slower pace of 3.8% to reach \$253.9 billion for the 2023-24 fiscal year ending March, 2024 as per to the Annual Strategic Review report by the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom). The year-on-year growth rate is touted to be 3.8% as compared to 8.1% growth to \$244.6 billion in FY23, as per the report released by the industry body on February 16. Nasscom had projected the growth to be 8.4% in the previous fiscal year from \$226 billion in FY22. The slowing of growth is driven by macroeconomic headwinds, uncertain geopolitical tensions and therefore cautious tech spending by clients leading to delays in deal closures. Over the past more than four quarters, technology companies, especially the software services exporters, which get around 57-58% of their revenue from outside India especially from markets like North America and Europe, are witnessing weakened or muted business owing to the economic slowdown in the western markets. The tech industry, the report noted, will be adding an incremental \$9.3 billion in revenue in FY24 across IT services, business process management, hardware, software products, and engineering services. This was at \$18.6 billion in FY23. Of the \$253.9 billion revenues, \$54.4 billion is estimated to be contributed from domestic market growing 5.9% while \$199 billion will be export business growing weaker at 3.3%.

Nasscom report said that the net hiring for the technology industry stood at 60,000 for FY24, taking the total to 54.30 lakh employees.

a. Revenue Trend:

The Indian IT and IT enabled services industry has served as a steadfast catalyst for economic advancement, continuously propelling the nation's development. Here's an overview of the sector's performance, encompassing both export and domestic growth, over the last five years:
(In US\$ Billion)

Table 1: 5years Revenue Trends from year 2018 to 2023

Description	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Exports	136	147	152	178	194
Domestic	41	44	45	49	51
Total Revenue	177	191	196	227	245
YoY Growth %	5.98%	7.90%	2.09%	15.5%	7.9%

Source: NASSCOM, (E) = Estimate

b. Employment Generation:

The IT industry is the main employer and has fueled the expansion of a number of associated industries, including real estate, catering, transportation, security, and cleaning. With a growth of almost 290,000 workers, it is predicted that direct employment in the IT services and BPO/IT enabled services market will reach 5.4 million in the fiscal year 2022–2023 (estimated). It is noteworthy that around 36% of these workers are female.

One of the primary concerns emphasized in the plan revolves around ensuring the availability and development of a skilled workforce. Within Indian IT companies, employees holding the position of assistant manager and above are referred to as executives and Sr. Executives. These executives consist of individuals from engineering, management and administrative backgrounds. The primary objective of these IT companies' executives is to maintain an uninterrupted power supply. To achieve this objective, executives in the power sector work in three shifts per day, ensuring continuous power availability. Additionally, executives in the power sector are responsible for making informed decisions and executing technical tasks. Given the critical role played by executives in power companies, they were selected as the respondents for this study. Through interactions with executives from various power companies, a significant challenge that emerged was ensuring the engagement of these employees. Furthermore, there is a lack of comprehensive studies in India that have explored the concept of engagement and its contributing factors specifically within power companies. Thus, there is a significant opportunity to investigate the antecedents of employee engagement within the Indian IT sector.

Table 2: 5years Employment Trends from year 2018 to 2023

Description	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23(E)
Employment (In Millions)	4.1	4.36	4.47	5.1	5.4
Net Addition	200000	205000	138000	445000	290000

Source: NASSCOM, (E) = Estimate

1.2 Objective of the study:

It is well known that happy workers are more productive, which emphasizes how important it is for businesses to closely examine the variables that affect employee happiness. Job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and participation are the four main drivers that this study focuses on. It also proposes a methodology to evaluate the ways in which these factors affect employee and organizational performance. Furthermore, as this paper will address later, the existing literature emphasizes the dearth of scholarly research on employee engagement as well as the ambiguity surrounding its conception. In order to provide clarity, this study presents important definitions of employee engagement.

A key factor in determining the effectiveness and profitability of an organization is employee engagement, especially in the competitive and dynamic environment of Indian IT companies. The objective of this research is to examine and evaluate the aspects of employee engagement with respect to organizational effectiveness in a selection of Indian IT companies. By means of an extensive analysis of factors such as work satisfaction, dedication, motivation, and involvement, the research seeks to provide important understandings of the ways in which these components impact the success and general performance of IT companies in India. The research findings have the potential to be extremely beneficial tools for HR managers and organizational leaders in developing plans and programs that will increase employee engagement and improve the efficiency of their organizations.

In the field of management, engagement has unquestionably become a highly significant term in recent years (Crawford et al., 2014), Martinez-Horta, S., (2024). However, there hasn't been a thorough analysis that compiles and evaluates the engagement evidence up to this point. This is troubling since companies and legislators are becoming more interested in leveraging high performance through involvement. These days, a lot of consulting businesses provide services like employee engagement surveys, and there are well-known case studies that claim increased engagement is correlated with the profitability and competitiveness of the organization. But in the absence of a thorough analysis, it's still unclear if this counsel is reliable and appropriate.

In 'The New Rules of Engagement,' Mike Johnson predicts that in the next ten years, getting workers involved and coordinating their activities with the company will be a major organizational problem. Employee engagement has emerged as a managerial challenge and is now a crucial component of the HR agenda, some ten years later. Executives and HR specialists are paying attention to this important issue (Soldati, 2007). Furthermore, the importance of employee engagement for organizational performance is being increasingly recognized. Positive work environments with a focus on ethics, accountability, and diligence are thought to be built around engaged people (Levinson, 2007; Cleland et al., 2008). A conceptual model has been developed using the data. The majority of the material for this study was found online and by using databases of management journals including Scopus, Emerald, Elsevier, and Ebsco.

1.3 Methodology

This study conducts a methodical analysis of the literature on employee engagement in an effort to provide clarification. As part of the study process, employees from particular Indian IT businesses will be directly polled, interviewed, or involved through other data collection methods. By gathering primary data and using the proper statistical tools for analysis, the study seeks to offer empirical evidence and quantitative insights into the aspects of employee engagement and their impact on organizational effectiveness. The review seeks to gather the most recent information and knowledge regarding employee engagement. The study specifically looks at how four key variables—job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and involvement—affect worker

1.4 The Evolution, Meaning, Definition of Employee Engagement:

The concept of employee engagement has undergone significant growth over time, evolving from a singular focus on job happiness to a multifaceted construct that includes employees' emotional commitment to and involvement in their work and company. The realization that employee engagement has a major impact on overall performance and organizational effectiveness has fueled this progress. This section explores the significant turning points in the development of employee engagement and highlights the advances in knowledge and research in this field.

Academic research is where the idea of employee engagement originated, despite being primarily seen as a practical matter at first. Although there has been a growing interest in employee engagement among academics from a variety of fields, including business, management, psychology, and organizational behavior (Xu and Thomas, 2011), there is still a lack of critical academic literature on the subject (Kular et al., 2008). It takes a lot of work and effort to define and define the extent of participation because every study examines it in its own particular setting. As a result, it is difficult to define and quantify employee engagement in a way that is widely accepted. Furthermore, there is evidence linking employee engagement to other well-researched variables like job participation, flow, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational commitment. It becomes essential to comprehend the employee engagement construct in further detail.

This essay presents several definitions of employee involvement in chronological sequence, organizing them in a logical and systematic way. Therefore, this list of definitions arranged chronologically helps to clarify how the idea has changed throughout time. Goffman (1961) adds to the body of literature on engagement by arguing that role theory has a significant influence on the idea of engagement. Engagement is described as "spontaneous involvement in the role" and "visible investment of attention and muscular effort" by Goffman (1961), as referenced in Wildermuth and Pauken (2008). The importance of employees actively participating in their work and organizations as a whole was emphasized by Katz and Kahn (1966).

While they did not explicitly use the term 'employee engagement,' their work recognized the necessity for engagement and its correlation with organizational effectiveness. William A. Kahn (1992) is recognized for his significant contributions to the understanding of employee engagement. He introduced the concept of "personal engagement," which involves the active involvement of individuals in their work roles. According to Kahn (1992), personal engagement is characterized by the integration of one's physical, cognitive, and emotional energies in the performance of job responsibilities. In other words, it entails employees harnessing their complete selves to their work, expressing themselves holistically during their role performances. Csikszentmihalyi (1982) proposed that when employees experience flow in their work, they are more likely to be highly engaged and satisfied with their jobs.

Flow occurs when the amount of effort of a work is suitable for an individual's ability, leading to a feeling of intense concentration, timelessness, and fulfillment. William Kahn introduced the concept of employee engagement in 1990. He wrote, "The harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (Kahn, 1990) in his seminal body of work. The idea that engagement is people's active and thorough participation in their work, taking into consideration their mental, emotional, and physical

elements, is emphasized by this quotation. (2002) "The psychological state of employees characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work," Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes.

This description highlights the enthusiastic, dedicated, and fully immersed workers who are actively and positively involved in their work, as well as their tasks and obligations. Employee engagement, according to Towers Perrin (2003), is "the extent to which employees put discretionary effort into their work, based on their levels of commitment, motivation, and satisfaction." This definition emphasizes that voluntary and discretionary contributions made by employees to their work go beyond the minimum needed effort. It is influenced by their degree of drive, commitment, and contentment, demonstrating a higher degree of devotion and engagement with their work duties.

Employee engagement, as described by the Gallup Organization (2006), is "those who are involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work and workplace." This definition emphasizes how employees actively participate in their work and show excitement and loyalty to the organization to which they belong. Along with actively participating in their work, engaged workers also show a good outlook and a strong dedication to their jobs and the workplace as a whole.

Saks (2006) defines employee engagement as a state of mind about work that is good and rewarding. This state of mind includes three important psychological conditions: availability, safety, and meaningfulness. This definition emphasizes the significance of having a contented and optimistic outlook on employee engagement. Three essential psychological conditions are present for it to be identified: finding purpose in one's work, feeling comfortable and secure in one's workplace, and having the mental capacity to participate completely. Macey and Schneider (2008) define employee engagement as a good and rewarding mental state that is associated with one's work and is typified by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Employees that are engaged have a good and rewarding attitude toward their work, and they show this by being highly energetic and enthusiastic.

"The degree to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization, how hard they work, and how long they stay as a result of that commitment," stated Schmidt, Shaffer, and Ohlott (2008). It is suggested that employees that are engaged exhibit a strong commitment to their organization by their tenure, effort, and dedication. Their amount of dedication affects their work output, willingness to stick with the company, and effort level. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2008), "A positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption, and is associated with high levels of job satisfaction and performance." According to this concept, motivated workers have a positive and contented attitude toward their jobs. They are vigorous, displaying a great deal of zeal and energy. High levels of job satisfaction and performance are also linked to employee engagement, suggesting that it has a beneficial effect on both individual well-being and organizational outcomes.

According to Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2009), "A positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values, with an inclination to exert discretionary effort to support organizational goals." According to this concept, motivated workers have a favorable outlook on the company and its principles. According to Bakker and Leiter (2010), "A positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption." This concept, which emphasizes the positive and fulfilling mindset employees experience in relation to their work, is consistent with previous definitions of employee engagement. It draws attention to the qualities of vigor—high levels of zeal and energy—dedication, which shows a strong commitment and involvement, and absorption, which indicates total engagement and submersion in one's duties and responsibilities at work. All of these elements work together to promote an engaged mindset at work.

According to Blessing White (2011) "The extent to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization, how hard they work, and how long they stay as a result of that commitment." This definition emphasizes the link between employee commitment and engagement. It suggests that engaged employees demonstrate a strong commitment to something or someone within their organization, which influences their level of effort, productivity, and tenure. Their commitment drives them to work diligently and stay dedicated to their work and the organization. In another statement Gallup (2013): "Those who are involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work and workplace." According to this definition, engaged workers take an active role in their work and exhibit passion and a strong dedication to both the workplace as a whole and their particular job duties. They exhibit commitment to accomplishing company goals and go above and beyond the call of duty. According to Gallup, an engaged workforce is characterized by key factors such as involvement, excitement, and dedication, all of which are captured by the concept of employee engagement.

In the words of Saks (2015), "The harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role

performances." This claim emphasizes how motivated workers gradually become invested in their jobs. When carrying out their job duties, they make full use of their physical, mental, and emotional capabilities. According to Saks, employee engagement is a profound degree of connection, commitment, and active participation in the workplace. It is the integration and expression of one's entire self in the job position. According to Aon Hewitt (2017), "The state of emotional and intellectual involvement that motivates employees to do their best work through individual and collective commitment to their organization's goals and values." "An employee's sense of purpose, belonging, achievement, happiness, and vigor at work," according to Bersin, Delloite (2018). The 2019 Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) slogan is "The emotional and intellectual commitment of an employee to contribute to an organization's success." Conference Board (2020): "The degree to which employees are involved, committed, and enthusiastic about their work and the organization." According to Gartner (2021), "The heightened emotional and intellectual connection that an employee feels for their organization, which influences them to apply additional discretionary effort to their work." Gallup (2022): "A heightened state of involvement and enthusiasm that fuels discretionary effort, creates positive experiences, and helps drive business outcomes."

According to a description given by Newman and Harrison (2008), employee engagement consists of three primary behaviors: involvement, citizenship conduct, and job performance. Cook (2012) defines engagement as an employee's proactive attitude to achieving corporate goals for the benefit of coworkers, customers, and other stakeholders, as well as their positive cognitive perception and emotional connection.

1.5 Relevance:

According to Bakker et al. (2014), Bano, A et al (2024).there is a correlation between engagement and work performance, innovation, customer satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Therefore, companies in the public and private sectors ought to place a high priority on employee engagement. According to Bakker and Albrecht (2018), further study is necessary to improve and expand on the understanding of engagement that is already available. They also suggest that future research look into the ways in which diverse demographic groups operate in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, among other sectors (ibid). According to experts (Nienaber, 2020; Reijseger et al., 2017), engagement should also be considered as a holistic notion that includes employees' active involvement and motivation, which will improve organizational performance and outcomes. In a study on employee engagement among Indian professionals, Dale Carnegie India and NHRDN India (n.d.) found that the rates of engagement were 34% for global executives, 46% for Indian executives, and 34% for US executives. The survey also showed that while overall unhappiness was at 16%, staff satisfaction was reported to be at 31%. Furthermore, according to a different Willis Towers Watson research (n.d.), only 20% of workers were willing to interact with their companies, and two-thirds of respondents said senior management should be in charge of promoting worker engagement. In addition, 61 percent of workers said they thought employee wellness was more important than employee engagement. In public sector enterprises in the United Arab Emirates, Al Mehrzi and Singh (2016) created a theoretical model that connects organizational support, teamwork, leadership, and organizational culture to employee engagement.

According to Anitha (2014), Burnett, J. R., & Lisk, T. C. (2021). , Pincus, J. D. (2023), Chopra, A., et al (2024), the working environment and the interpersonal ties between coworkers are the two main aspects that affect employee engagement. On the other hand, the idea of employee participation in Indian power firms has not been thoroughly studied. There is still disagreement over what constitutes engagement, even with large global investments made by corporations (Graber, 2015). According to Kang and Busser (2018), there aren't many studies examining how psychological aspects affect employee engagement, and engagement research often ignores CEOs. According to Delobbe et al. (2015), consistent organizational resources and employee engagement could go hand in hand. More study is advised by Cooper-Thomas et al. (2018) to determine which organizational resources—like affection—can forecast employee engagement. They also support investigating differences in work interactions in order to obtain fresh perspectives. Furthermore, several scholars have concurred that more research is necessary to determine the variables that affect job engagement (Albrecht, 2013). Meng and Berger (2019) have advocated for more thorough investigation to ascertain the influence of trust on worker engagement.

According to Nam and Kim (2016), trust should be the top priority for executives because it has a beneficial impact on both staff involvement and performance (Paliszkievicz, 2011; Liu and Wang, 2013), Ikemizu, M., et al (2024). The difficulty in defining trust indicators in businesses with varied cultural contexts is emphasized by the problem of establishing and implementing trust scales (Ferrin and Gillespie, 2010; Schoorman et al., 2007), Diko, T. K., & Saxena, S. (2023). A strong belief system is essential to maintaining happy relationships (Yuan et al., 2018). It is acknowledged as a source of competitive advantage for all stakeholders, both internal and external (Weber et al., 2017). Nonetheless, McLeary and Cruise (2015), Gede, D. U., & Huluka, A. T. (2024)., Alam, J. et al , (2023). bemoan the absence of strong instruments to assess trust in various organizational contexts. Furthermore, scholars have questioned what constitutes trust (Mayer et al.,

1995) and questioned the use of trust measures too little (McEvily and Tortoriello, 2011). Additionally, more research is required to investigate the concept of trust in non-Western contexts (Wasti et al., 2011), Chintaluri, M. G., et al (2023). Research has neglected to address the fundamental connection between trust and corporate culture (Ledbetter et al., 2016), Jiang, H., & Luo, Y. (2024). In addition, McLeary and Cruise (2015), Keane, A., et al (2024). stress the significance of reliable and technically sound metrics for evaluating trust in organizations and call for more study to examine the impact of organizational culture on trust in various contexts.

1.6. The Rise of Engagement Theory:

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the term "employee engagement" gained popularity as scholars began to recognize the shortcomings of concentrating only on work happiness. In this period, an alternative method that emphasized the unique psychological condition of involvement arose: engagement theory. This condition included having a clear goal in mind, being enthusiastic, and actively participating in one's task. In 1990, Kahn introduced the notion of "personal engagement," highlighting the importance of workplace availability, safety, and meaningfulness in promoting participation.

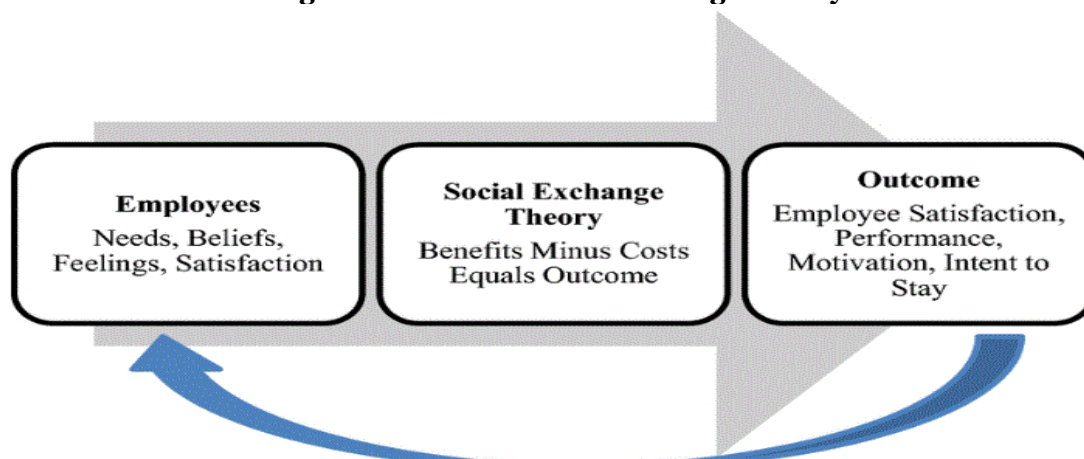
1. Social Exchange Theory

The Social Exchange Theory explains how people choose the social contacts that are most beneficial to them. According to this hypothesis, people look for societal circumstances that would enhance their views and minimize any negative effects on them personally. People will evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of encounters and choose those that are advantageous to them (Miller, 2015), Al Rawashdeh, A. Z., et al (2021), Edelman, C. M. et al There is a workplace application for this notion. An employee may be unhappy with their work environment if they are not getting anything out of their relationships with coworkers. As such, it is imperative to guarantee that workers are content with their working environment.

The workplace has changed from being a location we go to being a set of objectives, goals, and challenges that staff members must overcome. The term "telework" will be used to refer to work done remotely from a traditional office. The advancements in technology have made this feasible. According to Doyle (2019), telework is a flexible work arrangement wherein work is done remotely, frequently from the employee's home.

As a result, this mentality may tend toward a short-term orientation centered on instant, assured rewards, which could result in the emergence of socially unacceptable behaviors linked to As such, this kind of thinking could tend toward a short-term orientation that is centered on instant, assured rewards, which could lead to socially unacceptable actions linked to the Dark Triad. But even as we acknowledge the existence of costs and rewards, we voice skepticism regarding the Neo-Classical Economics assumption that people are inherently rational and calculative agents.

Figure-1 Model of Social Exchange Theory



Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/social-exchange-theory-angela-measles-even>

1.7 Prominent models of the employee engagement:

There exist numerous theories and models pertaining to employee engagement, along with a multitude of successfully tested initiatives. The specific characteristics of a business play a crucial role in determining the most appropriate model. For instance, the employee engagement needs and strategies for a large manufacturing enterprise might differ from those of a small FinTech start-up.

Nonetheless, the fundamental ideas of employee engagement are still the same and are based on the following pillars:

- *The Capacity to Engage*: This includes elements like education, training, chances for personal development, teamwork among coworkers, and management assistance.
- *An Incentive to Participate*: Consists of components such as independence, deference, acknowledgment, and gratitude, offering staff members significant grounds to become involved in their job.
- *Freedom to Engage*: Includes pride in one's work, job satisfaction, and the freedom to be inventive and creative.
- *Alignment*: Denotes a harmonic relationship between the person and the company, where staff members understand and support the mission and vision of the latter.

Distinguished frameworks for employee engagement are those created by AON-Hewitt, Maslow, and Kahn. Let's examine each framework's details in more detail.

1. Maslow's model

Maslow's model is a widely recognized idea in the business world that is frequently covered in different business courses and has had a big impact on staff management procedures. In a word, Abraham Maslow first presented his theory of needs in a 1943 work titled "A Theory of Human Motivation." This theory of psychological motivation is based on a five-tier model that outlines human requirements.

The theory states that the pursuit of five basic needs—physical, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization (fulfillment)—is what drives motivation. An employee's level of motivation is closely correlated with how well these demands are addressed.

The hypothesis highlights that people are unable to fully engage or be happy in their roles if these demands are not met. Fundamentally, workers need to feel safe in their jobs, have a stable job, and be paid a living wage. Employees also look for a sense of gratitude, belonging, and camaraderie. Additionally, there is a need for creativity, the freedom to explore novel ideas, and advancement both personally and professionally.

Figure-2 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Applied to Employee Engagement



The hierarchy is significant because it emphasizes that no need is more important than any other; in order for employees to be motivated to work to the best of their abilities, their needs at all levels must be met.

2. The Kahn Model

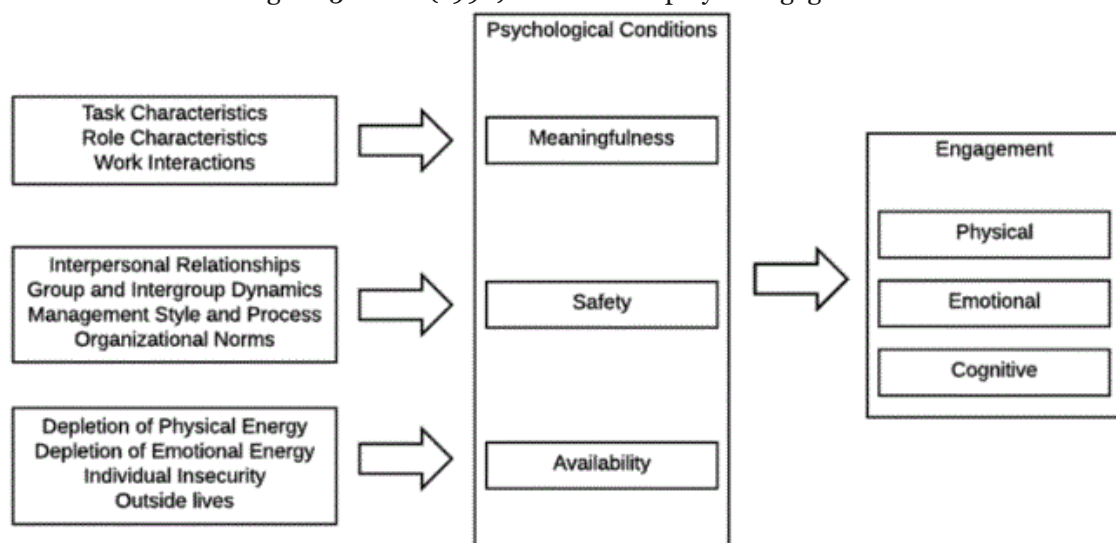
The three main components of employee engagement—physical, cognitive, and emotional were outlined in a model proposed by organizational psychologist and early pioneer in the field of employee engagement research William Kahn.

In his article "Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work," Kahn describes how he conducted research on two different types of workers: summer camp counselors and employees of an architecture business. This study examined the work environments that promoted or inhibited employee engagement.

Within his model, Kahn identified three psychological conditions conducive to engagement:

- a) **Meaningfulness:** Examines whether employees perceive their work as meaningful.
- b) **Safety:** Explores whether employees feel secure expressing opinions at work without fearing negative repercussions.
- c) **Availability:** Measures an employee's sense of mental and physical capacity to give their all in the given situation.

Figure-3: Kahn (1990) Model of Employee Engagement



Source: <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Kahn-1990-Model-of-Employee-Engagement>

Contrary to prevalent business assumptions at the time, Kahn asserted that employee engagement was a function of both their sentiments and their thoughts about their work. He emphasized that involvement stems from genuine emotions rather than only cerebral worries. According to Kahn, the engagement concept emerged from the idea that individuals may choose legitimately how much of their true selves they choose to expose and exhibit in their work.

Kahn emphasized the negative effects of disengagement, highlighting situations in which employees want to stay employed but don't put any mental or emotional effort into their work. According to Kahn's theory, workers work harder when they feel reliable enough to be authentic in their duties.

3. The AON-Hewitt engagement model:

The AON-Hewitt engagement model considers a variety of elements that are necessary to attain peak productivity and performance. These elements include emotions, goals, behaviors, and logical thought processes. The six drivers of employee engagement that reflect the domains where employers have the greatest control and the three resulting outcomes form the framework of the model.

Table-3: Primary Dimensions or Factors Influencing Employee Engagement: Aon Hewitt Survey 2011

Dimensions of Engagement	Asia Specific	Europe	Latin America	North America	Global
Pay	31%	41%	33%	—	—
Recognition	37%	40%	56%	34%	40%
Career Opportunity	62%	60%	60%	64%	61%
HR Practices	30%	49%	—	—	34%
Organization Reputation	—	—	—	46%	34%
Brand Alignment	41%	48%	36%	42%	44%
Managing Performance	—	—	—	60%	—
Valuing people	—	—	—	27%	—

Source: Aon Hewitt Consulting (2011), "Trends in Global employee engagement"

The six drivers are categorized as follows:

1. **Fundamentals:** Covering remuneration, benefits, job stability, workplace atmosphere, and work-life equilibrium.
2. **Work:** Including assignments, successes, empowerment, independence, and teamwork.
3. **Practices of the company:** These include staffing, talent management, communication, diversity and inclusion, and the supply of supporting infrastructure.
4. **Brand:** Including the employee value proposition, reputation, and corporate social responsibility.
5. **Leadership:** Emphasizing the guidance and accessibility offered by company leaders.
6. **Performance:** Including learning and growth, awards and recognition, people management, career possibilities, and performance management.

Engagement can lead to the following results, depending on how well these drivers work:

- **Say:** Workers giving favorable feedback about the company to coworkers, prospective hires, and clients.
- **Remain:** Workers who feel like they belong and who are reluctant to leave the company.
- **Strive:** Motivating staff members to put in effort and aim for achievement at work.

4. The Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Engagement:

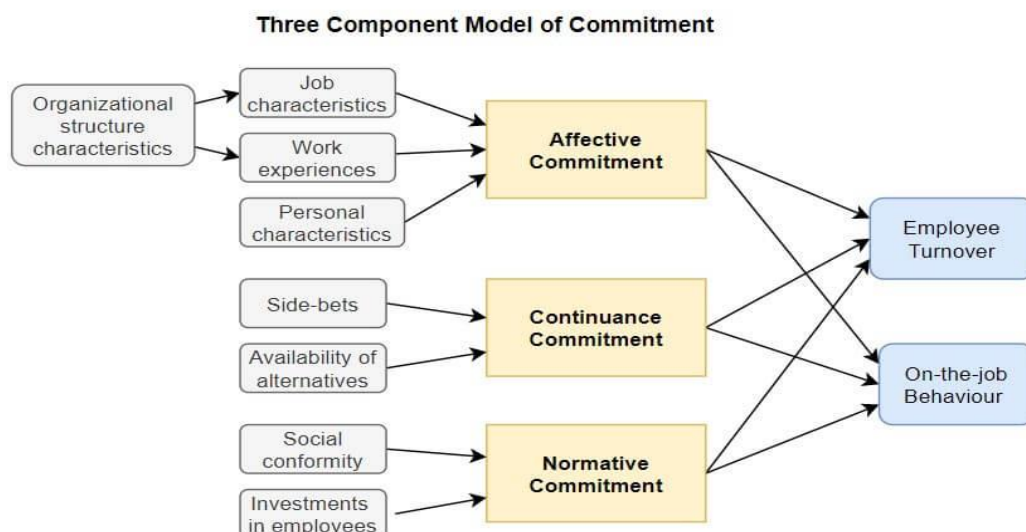
This turning point made it easier to measure job satisfaction by taking into account how involved and committed individuals are to their work. It emphasized the significance of feeling energised, committed, and engrossed in one's work in addition to being fulfilled.

The significance of job and organizational resources in promoting employee engagement was also underscored by the three-component model. It was proposed that high levels of employee engagement are more likely to occur when workers have access to the tools and assistance they need. Since the workplace has been shown to play a significant influence in increasing employee engagement, developing a supportive and upbeat organizational culture has become increasingly important.

Additionally, the three-component approach gave employers a useful tool to evaluate and quantify employee engagement. It made it possible to create questionnaires and surveys that could record the various aspects of engagement, giving companies the ability to monitor their progress over time and pinpoint areas in need of improvement.

All things considered, the creation of the three-component model represented a critical turning point in the development of employee engagement since it gave rise to a more comprehensive understanding of the concept and a workable framework that businesses could use to improve and track employee engagement.

Figure 4 Meyer and Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment



Source: https://www.12manage.com/forum.asp?TB=organizational_commitment&S=26

5. The Deloitte Model

Engage employees by creating a culture where people are involved, respected, and challenged. The premise of the Deloitte employee engagement model is to create a workplace that's "irresistible" to workers—somewhere they want to work every day. The key to following this model, according to Deloitte, is culture. There are five core elements to this culture, each with its own accompanying actions.

Figure 5 The Deloitte employee engagement model



Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

Meaningful work

As in Zinger's model, the foundational element of engagement is work that employees find meaningful. Deloitte identifies four key elements that are necessary to help employees find meaning in their work:

- Autonomy*: People thrive when given greater independence and control over their work. Give employees ownership in order to make their work more meaningful.
- Cultural hires*: Academic accolades and impressive job histories won't tell you whether or not someone will connect to your organization's goals and purpose. Prioritize hires who fit your culture and are interested in the work itself.
- Small, empowered teams*: Small teams encourage camaraderie, autonomy, and fast decision-making in a way that large teams simply can't. Follow Jeff Bezos's "two-pizza rule" to keep your team at the most productive size.
- Time for slacking*: Employees who are run ragged are likely to face burnout. Create room for rest, whether it's something like Google's 20% rule (providing company-sponsored time for passion projects) or simply enforcing time off and providing personal days.

Hands-on management

Managers make or break your employee experience strategy. Align and empower management to engage your employees with these actions:

- Setting clear, transparent goals*: The goals that managers set for teams and employees must be simple and regularly revisited. Otherwise, employees and managers can quickly become misaligned and frustrated. Consider a goal-setting process like objectives and key results (OKRs), championed by companies like Google and Intel.

- ii. *Coaching*: Managers who work alongside their employees and provide regular feedback will likely see improvements in performance and engagement. Equip managers with the employee engagement tools and training they need to coach their teams.
- iii. *Investing in management development*: Given the importance of managers to employee engagement, organizations should prioritize creating the best leaders possible. This starts by hiring the right managers. But don't stop there; provide mentorship for first-time managers, and prioritize ongoing learning and development for management.
- iv. *Managing performance*: Traditional performance reviews are too infrequent and formal to really help managers and employees develop. Rethink performance management to emphasize growth opportunity over "grades."

Positive work environment

If you want employees to look forward to coming to the (virtual or physical) office every day, you need to create an environment where they feel comfortable, respected, and appreciated. To create this kind of workplace, you'll need the following:

- i. *A flexible, humanistic work environment*: Your employees aren't robots, and their personal lives don't disappear at the office door. Respect the fact that your employees are human—that they sometimes have bad days, too much on their plate, or work/life conflicts. Offer policies (such as working from home or flexible schedules) that allow people to work in the way that's most productive for them.
- ii. *A culture of recognition*: Develop a peer-to-peer recognition program to foster a culture that continually celebrates progress and accomplishments.
- iii. *An inclusive, diverse work environment*: Create a culture where everyone feels more empowered to share their ideas, knowledge, and skills. Take steps to build a more inclusive workplace, and everyone will reap the rewards.

Growth opportunities

Employees who stagnate at work lose the drive to do their job. Avoid this scenario by providing the following:

- i. *Training and support on the job*: Comprehensive employee onboarding processes, continual peer and managerial support, and adequate training are all essential to growth for both employees and the company.
- ii. *Facilitated talent mobility*: Employees need to know their career is going somewhere with your company—otherwise, they'll likely look for opportunities with other employers to move forward. Emphasize internal hiring, and be transparent with employees about growth opportunities.
- iii. *High-impact learning culture*: Give employees resources (an education stipend, for example) and cultural support to independently build their knowledge. Provide opportunities to learn from other teams, try new tasks, and build new skill sets.

Trust in leadership

The final, critical element is leadership that is committed to their employees. This commitment breaks down into four factors:

- i. *Mission and purpose*: Leaders must clearly understand—and clearly communicate—the company's purpose. Deloitte's research shows that "mission-driven companies have 30 percent higher levels of innovation and 40 percent higher levels of retention, and they tend to be first or second in their market segment."
- ii. *Continuous investment in people*: Leaders must invest time and resources in their people. We already mentioned the importance of learning and development, but time is just as important. Executives in high engagement companies take the time to get to know individuals, offer feedback, and involve themselves in the life of the company.
- iii. *Transparency*: Modern employees aren't content to be a cog in the wheel. A culture of transparency helps employees feel involved in the company and fosters trust.
- iv. *Inspiration*: Leaders set the tone for the organization. Their words, actions, and vision for the company drive employee morale.

1.8 The Shift to Organizational Factors:

The impact of organizational characteristics on engagement levels was highlighted as a major turning point in the evolution of employee engagement by Macey and Schneider's (2008) research. According to their Job Demands-Resources model, the balance between job demands and job resources determines employee

engagement. The physical, psychological, social, and organizational components of a job that need effort and may be difficult for employees are referred to as job demands. If these expectations are too high or improperly handled, burnout and disengagement may result. Job resources, on the other hand, are those elements of a job that might assist people in reaching their objectives, lessening the demands of their jobs, and promoting personal growth.

The approach underscored the need of giving workers sufficient job resources, including autonomy, organizational support, and growth chances, as this can improve employee engagement. This demonstrated how crucial it is to actively provide employees with the tools and assistance they need to succeed in their jobs in addition to lowering job demands.

The acknowledgement of the impact of organizational elements on employee engagement resulted in an increased focus on cultivating happy work environments, supportive leadership, and a growth and development culture. Businesses started allocating funds for employee growth and well-being, adopting flexible work schedules, and fostering an environment that prioritizes training and development.

By taking organizational issues into account, the Job Demands-Resources model has helped to provide a more thorough understanding of employee engagement overall. It gave firms pointers on how to deploy resources wisely and foster a positive work atmosphere, which eventually raised employee engagement levels.

1.9 Dimensions or factors of Employee Engagement identified by different author:

Sl No	Study Conducted by	Dimensions of Employee engagement	No of Dimensions identified
1	Kahn (1990)	1. Meaningfulness: experiencing a sense of purpose and value in one's work. 2. Safety: feeling psychologically safe and supported in the work environment. 3. Availability: having the necessary resources and opportunities to engage in work activities.	Three
2	Britt et al. (2001)	1. Employee involvement 2. Commitment	Two
3	Hewitt's (2004)	1. Say: the extent to which employees feel comfortable expressing their opinions and ideas. 2. Stay: employees' intentions to remain with the organization. 3. Strive: employees' willingness to go above and beyond in their roles.	Three
4	IES in 2004	1. Leadership, 2. Relationships at work, 3. Total reward 4. Recognition, 5. work-life balance, 6. The nature of the work itself.	Six
5	Schaufeli and Bakker (2004)	1. Vigor: high levels of energy and mental resilience. 2. Dedication: a sense of significance, enthusiasm, and pride in one's work. 3. Absorption: being fully engrossed and immersed in work tasks.	Three
6	IES in 2005	1. Job satisfaction 2. Feeling valued and involvement 3. Equal opportunity 4. Health and safety 5. Length of service 6. Communication, 7. Cooperation.	Seven
7	Saks (2006)	1. Meaningful Work: perceiving the work as meaningful, purposeful, and aligned with personal values. 2. Supportive Management: experiencing support, recognition, and respect from supervisors and leaders. 3. Growth Opportunities: having opportunities for skill development, learning, and career advancement.	Three
8	Seijit (2006)	1. Connect 2. Career 3. Clarity 4. Convey 5. Congratulate 6. Contribute 7. Control 8. Collaborate 9. Credibility 10. Confidence	Ten
9	Bakker and Demerouti (2007):	1. Job Resources: factors that support work engagement, such as autonomy, social support, and development opportunities. 2. Job Demands: factors that require effort and may lead to strain, but can also stimulate motivation and growth.	Two
10	Towers Watson	1. Rational: This refers to how well employees understand their roles and	Three

	(2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsibilities within the organization. 2. Emotional: This measures the level of passion and emotional connection that employees have towards their work. 3. Motivational: This assesses the willingness of employees to invest discretionary effort and go above and beyond in performing their role. 	
11	Rich et al. (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical engagement: The level of physical energy and involvement in work tasks. 2. Emotional engagement: The emotional connection and enthusiasm towards work. 3. Cognitive engagement: The level of mental concentration and absorption in work activities. 4. Social engagement: The extent of interaction and collaboration with colleagues. 	Four
12	Bhatla's (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizational culture 2. Organizational communication 	Two
13	Mani (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employee welfare, 2. Empowerment, 3. Employee growth, and interpersonal relationships 	Four
14	Gallie, D., Zhou, Y., Felstead, A., & Green, F. (2012).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teamwork 2. Skill development 3. Employee welfare 	Three
15	Caligiuri, P., De Cieri, H., Minbaeva, D., Verbeke, A., & Zimmermann, A. (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proper communication 2. support for health and safety 3. Flexible work arrangements 4. Training 5. Intercultural knowledge 6. Experiential exercises 	Six
16	Pauliková, A., Gyurák Babel'ová, Z., & Ubárová, M. (2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Occupational Health and Safety 	One
17	Mauliddya, D. (2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respect at work, 2. Feelings of enthusiasm 3. pride in his work 	Three
18	Ilham, M. N., Indrawan, M. I., & Ritonga, H. M. (2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Job characteristic, 2. Better commitment, 3. Work experience 	Three
19	Srimulyani, V. A., & Hermanto, Y. B. (2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizational culture 2. Leadership influence 3. Quality of service. 4. Fair treatment services 	Four
20	Liu, S., Liu, S., Liu, Z., Peng, X., & Yang, Z. (2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical engagement, 2. Emotional engagement 3. Cognitive engagement 	Three
21	Abduraimi, P. B., Mustafi, M., & Islami, X. (2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizational culture 2. Work life balance 	Two
22	LaGree, D., Houston, B., Duffy, M., & Shin, H. (2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respectful communication 2. Job satisfaction 	Two
23	Qaralleh, S. J., Rahim, N. F. A., & Richardson, C. (2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Job resource 2. Job performance 	Two
24	Jufrizen, J., Harahap, D. S., & Khair, H. (2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work Engagement 2. Job Satisfaction 	Two
25	Ghobakhloo, M., et al (2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feeling valued 2. Involvement 3. Equal opportunity 4. Health and safety 5. Length of service 6. Communication 7. Cooperation 	Seven
26	Alkorashy, H., & Alanazi, M. (2023, February).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sense of significance 2. Enthusiasm 3. Pride in one's work 	Three
27	Mishra, A., & Awasthi, S. (2024).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meaningful work 2. Hands on management 3. Positive work engagement 4. Growth opportunity 5. Trust in leadership 	Five
28	Jiang, H., & Luo, Y. (2024).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CSR communication 2. Employee perceived motives 	Four

		3. Social media engagement 4. Job engagement.	
29	Yanting, L., & Wareewanich, T. (2024).	1. Fairness in job environment 2. Effective HR Strategy	Two
30	Salmah, E., et al (2024).	1. Work flexibility 2. Organizational support 3. Work-life balance	Three

2.0 Conclusion and Findings:

This study adds to the current understanding by identifying the dimensions of employee engagement within selected Indian IT firms and examining their influence on organizational effectiveness. The Findings underscore the pivotal role of employee engagement in driving performance and offer insights into devising effective strategies to enhance engagement levels. By comprehending and addressing the key dimensions of employee engagement, organizations can cultivate a positive work environment, enhance employee satisfaction, and ultimately attain sustainable growth and success in India's fiercely competitive IT industry. This, in turn, could contribute to India's aspirations of becoming a 5 trillion-dollar economy on the global stage.

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