

Can engaged Employees Help Create Positive Organizational Behaviour? Impact of Employee Engagement on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

*Prof. (Dr.) Mukulesh Barua¹, Nandini Borah²

¹(Director, Assam Institute of Management, Guwahati, Assam, India)

²(Assistant Professor, Royal School of Business, Guwahati, Assam, India & Research Scholar, Assam Science and Technology University, Assam, India)

Corresponding Author: Prof. (Dr.) Mukulesh Barua

Abstract: Organizations have always been interested in understanding what employees feel about their jobs, and how willing are they to dedicate and invest time and energy in the organization. Two constructs, which have very strongly resonated with managers, are employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour. Both engagement and citizenship behaviour are considered to have important organizational outcomes. This study, therefore, tested the relationship between employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour in a sample of 123 professionals from the telecom sector through a self-administered survey. Factor analysis was done to validate the employee engagement scale. Correlation and multiple regression analyses were performed to determine the relationship between employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour. The results indicated two dimensions of engagement, namely, vigour and dedication, as significant predictors of organizational citizenship behaviour. However, no support was found for the relationship between absorption dimension of engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour. Discussion and direction for future research and practice are also provided.

Keywords: employee engagement, organizational citizenship behaviour, telecom sector

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I. Introduction

The telecommunication industry in India has witnessed significant developments and undergone tremendous changes in the recent past. As one of the fastest growing industries in the world, the Indian telecommunication sector has undergone major transformations through policy reforms and regulations (Borah, 2013). The sector is becoming highly competitive day-by-day, with the introduction of new players. This increased competition has forced the organizations to rethink the way they work and manage.

Organizations, of late, have developed keen interest in understanding the organizational and employee dynamics with respect to the workplace. One reason for this is the realization that employees are the source of competitive advantage for organizations, and it is the employees who drive organizations towards higher performance and productivity. Two constructs, which have very strongly resonated with managers, are employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour. Both engagement and citizenship behaviour are considered to have outcomes which are considered important for organizations (Bateman and Organ 1983; Nemeth and Staw, 1989; Buckingham and Coffman, 1999). The current study attempts to determine the relationship between these two important constructs. The study also focuses on the validation of the employee engagement scale based on this research in Assam.

II. Literature Review

Employee Engagement

The notion that individuals can be 'personally engaged' in their work, investing positive emotional and cognitive energy into their work role, was first proposed by William Kahn in the year 1990 in his seminal paper 'Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work'. Kahn (1990) established a theoretical framework to understand why individuals invest varying degree of attention and effort at work. Kahn (1990) defined personal engagement as "the harnessing of organization member's selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances." According to Kahn (1990), the cognitive aspect of engagement refers to the awareness of purpose by the employees and understanding of their respective roles in their work environment; to be emotionally engaged means to form meaningful relations with others; and the physical aspect of engagement

refers to the physical energy exerted by the employees' to accomplish their roles. Thus, according to Kahn (1990) engagement means to be psychologically present when occupying and performing an organizational role. Since Kahn's conceptualization of engagement, there has been a steadily growing stream of research on engagement and several researchers have attempted to define engagement. The next major conceptualization of engagement came in the form of positive psychology and is popularly termed as the *burnout family* (Maslach and Leiter, 1997; Maslach *et. al.*, 2001; Schaufeli *et. al.*, 2002). According to Maslach *et. al.* (2001), engagement is characterized by energy, involvement, and efficacy, the direct opposite of three burnout dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. Schaufeli *et. al.* (2002) built up on this initial concept provided by Maslach *et. al.* (2001) and defined engagement "as a positive fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption". For the purpose of this study engagement has been operationalized using the definition of Schaufeli *et. al.* (2002).

Employee engagement is a relatively new construct but has gained considerable currency in the modern management discourse. Engagement has garnered a lot of interest from both academicians and practitioners and this interest can be attributed to the dual promise of engagement, that is, enhancing individual well-being and organizational performance (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008; Christian *et. al.* , 2011 and Harter *et. al.*, 2002). Employee engagement is considered to be a significant predictor of organizational success and engaged employees are believed to be highly involved and enthusiastic about their job. Advocates of employee engagement claim a strong positive relationship between engagement and successful business outcomes, at the individual as well as the organizational level. It is considered to be a significant predictor of desired organizational outcomes such as customer satisfaction, retention, productivity, and profitability (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999).

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Bateman and Organ (1983) first used the term 'Organizational Citizenship Behaviour', commonly known as OCB, however, links to Organizational Citizenship Behaviour can be traced back to more than half a century ago, when Barnard (1938) stated that the willingness of individuals to contribute cooperative efforts to the organization was indispensable to the attainment of organizational goals (Jahangir *et. al.*, 2004). Since its introduction, there has been extensive research on the concept of OCB. Despite proliferation of research, researchers still do not agree over a common definition and operationalization of organizational citizenship behaviour construct (Jahangir *et. al.*, 2004). This can be attributed to the fact that research on organizational citizenship behaviour has focused more on the outcomes of the construct, rather than on the construct itself. Notwithstanding, organizational citizenship behaviour has emerged as an important construct that determine the success of an enterprise.

Although different authors have defined organizational citizenship behaviour differently, one of the distinguishing features of the construct is that managers cannot force their subordinates to perform organizational citizenship behaviour (Organ, 1988). Organ (1988) defined organizational citizenship behaviour as an individual behaviour that is discretionary, not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization. Thus, organizational citizenship behaviour is inherently internal to the employee and arises from an employee's intrinsic need for achievement or affiliation (Organ, 1988). Van Dyne *et. al.* (1995) proposed the construct of 'extra-role behaviour' and defined it as 'behaviour which benefits the organization and/or is intended to benefit the organization, which is discretionary and goes beyond existing role expectations'. Subsequent conceptualization of the construct by Morisson (1994) complicated its discretionary aspect. Morisson (1994) conceptualized organizational citizenship behaviour as 'in-role' as opposed to 'extra-role' and stated that employees who considered it 'in-role' exhibited more of it. Thus, the multitude of definitions and conceptualizations make it difficult to situate the concept in a particular manner. This changing definition of organizational citizenship behaviour also makes it difficult to identify its dimensions.

Although researchers are divided in their opinion regarding the construct of organizational citizenship behaviour, there is consensus among researchers regarding the organizational benefits derived from citizenship behaviour. Citizenship behaviour is considered vital for the survival of an organization (Organ, 1988). Organizational citizenship behaviours have an accumulative positive effect on organizational functioning (Wagner and Rush, 2000). Thus, organizational citizenship behaviour is considered to be an important organizational variable.

III. Purpose Of The Study

With the knowledge that the employee behaviours are the source of competitive advantage, it is felt that it would be an appropriate to investigate, understand and evaluate the concept of engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour as predictors of employee behaviour. The study is a step forward to establish the generalizability of the employee engagement scale. The study also makes an empirical

investigation to explain organizational citizenship behaviour in the telecom sector with respect to employee engagement construct. Employee engagement framework has already been tested in various contexts to explain organizational citizenship behaviour. However, to the best of our knowledge, hardly any study in this region has been conducted that uses this framework. This study is therefore, an attempt to validate the employee engagement construct in Guwahati region of Assam. Furthermore, organizations will also benefit from the findings and suggestions as to how engagement can be nurtured and grown.

IV. Objectives Of The Study

- a. The study attempts to establish the generalizability of employee engagement model in Guwahati, Assam.
- b. The study focuses on finding the impact of employee engagement on organizational citizenship behaviour of employees.

To fulfill the second objective, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Organizational citizenship behaviour positively relates to employee engagement.

V. Methodology

Participants

The sample consisted of 132 professionals from the telecom sector. A total of 123 usable questionnaires were returned (93.18% response rate). The final sample consisted of 53% men and 47% women; the average age was 37 years; and the average tenure was 5.40 years.

Measures

Engagement was measured through the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli *et. al.* (2006) consisting of 9 items. The resulting three sub-scales were: vigour, dedication and absorption which combined to give the total engagement score. Each item was presented in the form of a statement with a seven-point Likert scale from 0 (never) to 6 (always). The outcome, namely organizational citizenship behaviour, was measured using the scale developed by Organ (1988). Each item was presented in the form of a statement with a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Procedure and data analysis

A self-report questionnaire was designed and completed by telecom professionals in the Guwahati region of Assam. Data was gathered using a hardcopy survey. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and its confidentiality. Factor analysis, bivariate correlations and multiple regression analyses were used for the purpose of analysing the data.

VI. Results

The analyses were conducted using SPSS 20.0. The following section describes the analysis and findings of the study.

Scale reliability

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Reliability is the overall consistency of a measure. A measure is said to be highly reliable if it produces similar results under consistent conditions. In order to establish the reliability of the scale Cronbach's alpha score was calculated which is the most frequently used measure of reliability. Cronbach's alpha score was found to be 0.794 which indicates high internal consistency.

Employee Engagement – scale validation

For the purpose of this study, engagement was measured using the UWES scale developed by Schaufeli *et. al.* (2006) consisting of 9 items which correspond to three different sub-scales. In order to determine the validity of the scale in the context of the study, a factor analysis was conducted. The result of the factor analysis is discussed in the following section.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.620
Approx. Chi-Square		141.253
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	36
	Sig.	.000

Table II. *KMO and Bartlett's Test*

The KMO measure of sample adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity for the data under consideration were found to be significant as the KMO score is 0.620 and the significance value for the Bartlett's test of Sphericity is less than 0.05 (refer to Table II).

Table III shows the extraction of factors (Principal Component Analysis Method) for the list of variables considered. All the factors with Eigen value more than 1 were extracted as a result of which three

factors were extracted. Results of before rotation and after rotation is displayed (refer to Table III) along with their cumulative percentages. From the table it can be observed that, these factors explain 63.39% of the variability in the original nine items. Therefore, the variables are grouped with 36.61% loss of information.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.984	33.159	33.159	2.984	33.159	33.159	2.276	25.284	25.284
2	1.594	17.711	50.871	1.594	17.711	50.871	1.933	21.481	46.765
3	1.127	12.526	63.397	1.127	12.526	63.397	1.497	16.631	63.397
4	.926	10.292	73.689						
5	.750	8.337	82.026						
6	.599	6.653	88.679						
7	.466	5.183	93.862						
8	.322	3.575	97.437						
9	.231	2.563	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table III. Total Variance

Before rotation, Factor 1 accounted for 33.15% variance, Factor 2 accounted for 17.71% variance, and Factor 3 accounted for 12.526% variance. After rotation, it can be observed that Factor 1 accounted for 25.28% variance, Factor 2 accounted for 21.48% variance, and Factor 3 accounted for 16.63% variance.

The rotated component matrix (Varimax) displayed the factor loading of the three components (factors) which is the correlation between the factor scores and the variables under consideration (VAR0001 to VAR009). While analysing, factor loadings of less than 0.5 was suppressed for better presentation (refer to Table IV). Thus, three factors were extracted from the given 9 items.

Table V shows the item details and the factor loading of the items. It can be seen from the table that, Factor 1 is composed of variables VAR0001, VAR0002 and VAR0005 which correspond to the Vigour sub-scale of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. Factor 2 is composed of variables VAR0006 and VAR0009 which correspond to the Absorption sub-scale of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. It is important to note that in the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale VAR0008 is an item under the Absorption sub-scale. However, VAR0008 failed to load to any of the three factors, that is, vigour, dedication, and absorption, and hence it was not considered for further analysis. Lastly, Factor 3 is composed of variables VAR0003, VAR0004, and VAR0007 which correspond to the Dedication sub-scale of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
VAR0001	.871		
VAR0002	.826		
VAR0003			.748
VAR0004			.793
VAR0005	.832		
VAR0006		.711	
VAR0007			.612
VAR0008			
VAR0009		-.689	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Table IV. Rotated Component Matrix

Table V also lists the mean scores for the items under the different sub-scales. As can be seen from the table the mean scores for the items range between 4.2500 to 5.2333. Since the scores are towards the higher end of the scale, this indicates that employees are engaged in their work.

Factor	Item description	Factor Loadings	Mean	Standard Deviation
Factor 1: Vigour	VAR0001: At my work, I feel bursting with energy	.871	4.2500	1.48009
	VAR0002: At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	.826	4.6333	1.20685
	VAR0005: When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	.832	4.9167	1.09377
Factor 2: Absorption	VAR0006: I feel happy when I am working intensely	.711	5.0333	.97366
	VAR0009: I get carried away when I am working	-.689	4.5500	1.12433
Factor 3: Dedication	VAR0003: I am enthusiastic about my job	.748	4.9000	1.16007
	VAR0004: My job inspires me	.793	5.2333	.90884
	VAR0007: I am proud of the work that I do	.612	5.1000	.98635

Table V. Factor components and item descriptions

Relationship between Employee engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

The second objective of the study dealt with the relationship between employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour. In order to determine the relationship between the two a bivariate correlation analysis was conducted.

		Vigour	Dedication	Absorption
OCB	Pearson Correlation	.575	.509	.279
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.031

Table VI. Correlations between engagement sub-scales and OCB

The results of correlation analyses indicated that vigour ($r = 0.575, p < .05$), dedication ($r = 0.509, p < .05$), and absorption ($r = 0.279, p < .05$) were positively and significantly correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour. Although the correlation between absorption and organizational citizenship behaviour is significant, the correlation is rather weak.

To further test the impact of the three dimensions of engagement namely, vigour, dedication, and absorption, on organizational citizenship behaviour a multiple regression analysis was performed. Vigour, dedication, and absorption were taken as independent variables and the dependant variable was organizational citizenship behaviour. The results of the regression test are displayed below:

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.645 ^a	.417	.385	.25599

a. Predictors: (Constant), Absorption, Dedication, Vigour

Table VII Model summary of multiple regression analysis

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.620	3	.873	13.329	.000 ^b
	Residual	3.670	119	.066		
	Total	6.290	122			

a. Dependent Variable: OCB

b. Predictors: (Constant), Absorption, Dedication, Vigour

Table VIII ANOVA table of multiple regression analysis

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.166	.283		7.664	.000
	Vigour	.171	.048	.462	3.550	.001
	Dedication	.147	.052	.322	2.849	.006
	Absorption	-.020	.051	-.048	-.396	.693

a. Dependent Variable: OCB

Table IX Coefficients table of multiple regression analysis

Table VII shows that the value of adjusted R^2 is 0.385 indicating the predictive strength of the model. Table VIII shows that the significance against the F value (13.329) is 0.000 ($p < .05$). It is also seen that the value of constant (α) is 2.166 and the unstandardized coefficients of vigour, and dedication are 0.171, and 0.147 respectively. Results of the coefficients table indicated that vigour ($t = 3.550, p < .05$) and dedication ($t = 2.849, p < .05$) both are significant. On the other hand, the significance level against t test for absorption ($t = -0.396$) is 0.693 ($p > .05$). This implies that variation in organizational citizenship behaviour can be explained with the knowledge of the two engagement subscales namely, vigour and dedication. The R^2 value of 0.385 indicates that

approximately 38% of variance in organizational citizenship behaviour of the respondents can be accounted for by the knowledge of their engagement sub-scales of vigour and dedication. Absorption, though correlates with organizational citizenship behaviour, fails to act as a significant predictor of organizational citizenship behaviour.

VII. DISCUSSION

The present study used the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale developed by Schaufeli *et. al.* (2006) to measure engagement. UWES consists of 9-items and three items each constitute the underlying variables- vigour, dedication, and absorption. One of the objectives of this study was to validate the UWES in the context of Guwahati region. The findings of the present study identified three important underlying factors of engagement, namely, vigour, dedication, and absorption which is consistent with the UWES. However, it is important to note that out of the nine items one item failed to load in to any of the three sub-scales.

The findings of the study identified vigour and dedication as significant predictors of organizational citizenship behaviour. Absorption was significantly and positively correlated to organizational citizenship behaviour but not a predictor of citizenship behaviour. The vigour and dedication dimension of engagement refers to a high level of energy and strong identification with one's work. On the other hand, absorption dimension of engagement is characterized by being immersed and engrossed in one's work. Thus, an employee who is energetic and understands his job role will willingly cooperate with co-workers to achieve organizational goals. On the contrary, an absorbed employee – who is immersed in his /her work, may find it difficult to cooperate due to the high level of engrossment at work. Nonetheless, the findings of the study indicate that organizational citizenship behaviour is indeed a function of deeper attribute of the underlying dimensions of engagement.

The results of the study have important implications for organizational practice also. Engagement is a significant predictor of organizational citizenship behaviour which an important outcome variable for organizations. This means that engaged employees will go a step ahead to get the organizational work done. This has an important bearing on the achievement of organizational goals and overall organizational performance. Thus, managers can focus on creating an engaging environment for the employees and derive the benefits of having an engaged workforce.

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