A Study on Employee Passion, Work Environment, Social Support and HR Practices: A Case Study of Employee State Insurance Corporation Ltd.

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Abstract

Passion, in its general sense, is defined as a strong inclination towards an activity that people like and find important. Passionate employees are focused, engaged and committed to doing their best in everything they do. With the changing need of the time it has become necessary for the organisations to revise the HR practices to retain the talent in the organisation. The study focuses on identifying the level of passion in the employees of public sector. This study intends to test and validate different variables like workplace environment, HR practices and social support and find out whether they have significant relationship with employee passion at work or not. The study has been conducted in Employee's State Insurance Corporation, New Delhi. Different set of questionnaire were prepared to derive the opinion of the respondents about the various aspects related to their job such as work place environment, social support and HR practices in the organisation. In the study it has been observed that workplace environment and social support has a very great impact on employee passion. However HR practices do not dominate the passion level of employees as the ESIC follow the traditional HR practices. The study sheds light on the inter-relationship between workplace environment and social support, workplace environment and employee passion, Workplace environment and HR Practices. Workplace environment on one side impacts the motivation as well as the performance level of the employees while social support instils self-efficacy in the employees.

Keywords: Employee Passion, Work Environment, Social Support, HR Practices, Self Efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Employee passion is a concept that extends beyond the meaning of some of the present research on employee engagement. It includes but is not limited to satisfaction, morale, and performance. Employee Passion arises from a combination of hard and soft measures that include satisfaction, engagement, motivation, and willingness to exert discretionary effort. There has been very less research work done on employee passion in Indian context that too in government led organisation. Government organisations in India provide job security to their employees which somehow impact the performance level of the employees. Employee Passion results from the overall satisfaction with the organization, its policies, procedures, products, and management practices. Hard measures of Employee Passion include retention, absenteeism, tenure, and productivity. Soft measures include employee perceptions of fairness, justice, and trust.

Employee Passion is the positive emotional state of mind

resulting from perceptions of worthwhile work, autonomy, collaboration, growth, fairness, recognition, connectedness to colleagues, and connectedness to leader, all of which lead to standards of behaviour that include discretionary effort, long-term commitment to the organization, peak performance, low turnover, and increased tenure with the organization. Employee Passion results from the overall satisfaction with the organization, its policies, procedures, products, and management practices. Hard measures of Employee Passion include retention, absenteeism, tenure, and productivity. Soft measures include employee perceptions of fairness, justice, and trust.

Aside from the job scope itself, one factor that significantly influences how employees feel about work is the environment. By work environment, it reflects the relationship with co-workers and supervisors, organizational culture, room for personal development, etc. A positive work environment makes employees feel good about work, and thus provides the motivation to sustain throughout the day.

Social support is the verbal and nonverbal communication between recipients and providers that reduces uncertainty about the situation, the self, the other, or the relationship, and functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one's life experience. It talks about Actual Support and Perceived Support by the individuals' associated.

Traditional HR practices in the organisations do not support high performance level. Thus it is very important to educate the employee about passion as it may contribute to the overall development of the organisation. Employee passion increases the efficiency of the employees ultimately enhancing the organisational performance.

FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE PASSION

Employee Passion is the positive emotional state of mind resulting from perceptions of worthwhile work, autonomy, collaboration, growth, fairness, recognition, connectedness to colleagues, and connectedness to leader, all of which lead to standards of behaviour that include discretionary effort, long-term commitment to the organization, peak performance, low turnover, and increased tenure with the organization.

- **Meaningful Work:** Employees perceive the organization's larger purpose through products or services produced, consider their work to be worthwhile, and are proud of their individual actions and contributions that help the organization serve its customer.
- **Collaboration:** Employees perceive an organizational environment and culture that enhances collaboration, cooperation, and encouragement between all organizational members.
- **Fairness:** Employees perceive an environment where pay, benefits, resources and workload are fair and balanced and equitable, people treat each other with respect, and leaders act in an ethical manner.
- **Autonomy:** Employees perceive an environment where people have the tools, training, support, and authority to make decisions.
- **Recognition:** Employees perceive an environment where they are praised, recognized, and appreciated by colleagues and their leader for their accomplishments, where they receive monetary compensation for those accomplishments, and where they are contributing to positive relationships with others.
- **Growth:** Employees perceive an environment where people have opportunities to learn, grow professionally, and develop skills that lead to advancement and career growth.

- **Connectedness with Leader:** Employees perceive an environment where they trust their leader and where the leader makes an effort to form an interpersonal connection with them.
- **Connectedness with Colleagues:** Employees perceive an environment where they trust their colleagues and where their colleagues make an effort to form an interpersonal connection with them.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many studies has been conducted in this thrust areas with reference to Passion, Work Environment, Social Support and HR Practices to understand the effect, influence and impact of these factors each other as independent, dependent and intervening variables.

Strategic Leadership indirectly influenced Customer Devotion and Employee Work Passion by establishing policies, procedures, vision, and values and that Operational Leadership directly influenced Employee Work Passion and Customer Devotion through the daily operations of Strategic Leadership policies. The study also found that Employee Work Passion, in turn, was a key factor in creating Customer Devotion and Organizational Vitality. Further research created a model of how Employee Work Passion is formed, a definition of what Employee Work Passion is, and a core set of factors that must be present in the organizational and job environment in order for Employee Work Passion to be optimized (**Ken Blanchard, 2011**).

Another study has explained to (1) present a refined employee work passion model and associated hypotheses; (2) investigate how constructs of work cognition, work affect, job well-being, and work intentions related in keeping with the model; and (3) discuss implications for future use and modification of the model by researchers and HRD practitioners (**Zigarmi, et. al, 2011**).

Further study proposed the dualistic model of passion to the work setting and examines the relationships between harmonious passion (characterized by a strong but controllable desire to engage in an activity), obsessive passion (characterized by an internal pressure to carry out an activity), and optimal functioning outcomes at work (**Forest, et.al, 2011**). In one of the study proposed a model of job passion that links two types of passion, harmonious and obsessive passion, to employees' work performance, via the mediating mechanism of cognitive engagement (comprising attention and absorption). Results from a survey conducted with 509 employees from an insurance firm indicated that employees with harmonious passion performed better at

work, and that this relationship was mediated primarily by cognitive absorption, that is, the intensity of focus and immersion experienced by the employees when working. However, even though obsessive passion was negatively related to cognitive attention (i.e. the amount of cognitive resources spent thinking about work), it did not indicate a significant relationship to work performance overall. The researchers identified and discussed research and practical implications for job passion and performance management (Sze-Sze et. al, 2011).

Further another study sought to respond to the lack of consistency in the academic and practitioner literature regarding the construct of employee engagement and to offer a platform for the research and use of a refined construct called employee work passion. The study analyzed the differences between the concepts of engagement of the two groups of writers and proposes a new definition and framework based on social cognitive theory (Zigarmi, et. al, 2009).

The study aimed to determine what role leaders play in increasing organizational performance, the connections between Strategic and Operational Leadership, Customer Devotion, and Employee Passion, and how these variables linked to Organizational Vitality. This study, titled The Leadership-Profit Chain, was grounded in a literature review of hundreds of studies and meta-analysis from 1980 through 2005. The study concluded that strategic and operational leadership were the key variables for driving Employee Passion and that Employee Passion, in turn, was a key factor in creating Customer Devotion and Organizational Vitality (Ken Blanchard, 2009). Yet further one of the studies, the researcher sought to identify organizational factors that foster an individual's experience of spirit at work. Although this study did not investigate specific practices or strategies to increase spirit at work, results suggested that organizations wishing to enhance their employees' spirit at work could focus efforts on creating organizational conditions that encourage inspiring leadership and mentorship. (Val Kinjerski, et. al, 2006).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

PROBLEM DEFINITION

In order to establish a customer-focused culture in any organisation, in which all employees act as veritable ambassadors, it is essential to ensure that employees are passionate about the organization as well as the job they do. The deficit of passion leads to low performance of organisation as well as employees. So, in this context, the

role of HR policies, social support and work environment plays a radical role. Even though, organization follows good HR practices, provides adequate support and facilitate supportive work environment, passion among employees towards organization and their job are missing in the present scenario.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the impact of work environment on employee passion.
2. To examine the impact of social support on of employee passion.
3. To determine the impact of HR practices on employee passion.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is limited to one organisation, i.e. Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) to identifying the factors that influence employee passion. The target audience consisted of permanent employees working with Employee State Insurance Corporation, Rohini.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- H₀₁ – Workplace environment is not significantly related to employee passion.
- H₀₂ – Social support is not significantly related to employee passion.
- H₀₃ – HR practices is not significantly related to employee passion.
- H₀₄ – Work Environment, Social Support and HR practices does not significantly impact employee passion.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Causal / Predictive Design was designed to find out if the score on a particular measure or a test result corresponds with some other behaviour of interest.

DATA COLLECTION

To collect primary data, three standardized questionnaires has been used which were designed by the Management and Leadership Program (M&L) Management Sciences for Health for HR Practices. Work Place Environment questionnaire designed by Connecticut State Department of Education and Employee Passion questionnaire which has been designed by Lintegro Leadership Institute has been used to collect data. HR Practices and Work Place Environment were measured on a 5 point likert scale and

Employee Passion was measured by 10 point semantic scale. Secondary data has been collected from books, websites and journals.

POPULATION, SAMPLING AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Population of the study consisted of Deputy Director, Joint Director, Assistant Director, Assistants, Upper Division Clerk (UDC) and Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS). Population size (N) was 151 which consist of Deputy Directors- 5, Joint Directors – 9, Assistant Directors -13, Assistants- 29, Upper Division Clerks – 36 and Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) -59.

Simple random sampling procedure was adopted for the study. The sample composition consisted employee from every level of the organisation's management including the Deputy Director, Joint Director, Assistant Director, Assistants, Upper Division Clerk (UDC), Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS). A list of employees was obtained from Personnel Administration Department of ESIC and random selection was done to finalise the respondent to be the sample.

Sample size (n) determined was 109 with the help of Sample Size Calculator and questionnaires were distributed to the respondents belongs to Deputy Directors- 2, Joint Directors – 5, Assistant Directors -10, Assistants- 19, Upper Division Clerks – 26 and Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) -47. Only 100 filled questioners were returned and the response rate was 72.18%.

Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support were computed. The details of linear correlations and inter correlations are depicted in the table 3.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation)

Variable	Mean	SD
Work Environment	4.28	0.71
Social Support	4.33	0.64
HR Practices	4.29	0.69
Employee Passion	5.98	3.20

As stated in table 1, it can be depicted that Social Support is highly valued in the organisation under the study. The mean value is 4.33 which is close to the higher side of the 5 point likert scale. So, it is clear from the mean analysis that there exists a very cordial and helping relationship exists between the employee with his subordinate, peer and superior. The other two variables such as HR Practices (mean value 4.29) and Work Environment (mean value 4.28) have also significantly considered by the respondents. The dependent variable is also significantly considered. The calculated mean value is 5.98 on a 10 point semantic scale.

Testing of Hypotheses Correlation Analysis

This study attempted to examine the extent of relationship between Employee Passion, Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support. Keeping this, the researcher computed coefficient of correlation to understand this relationship. To comprehend this relationship, linear correlations between Employee Passion,

Table 2: Correlation between Employee Passion with Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support

Correlations

		EP	HRP	WE	SS
EP	Pearson Correlation	1	.089	.182	.179
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.379	.070	.075
	N	100	100	100	100
HRP	Pearson Correlation		1	.283**	.403**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.004	.000
	N		100	100	100
WE	Pearson Correlation			1	.313**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.002

	N			100	100
SS	Pearson Correlation				1
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N				100

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 depicts the correlation matrix of dimensions such as Employee Passion, Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support. It illustrates that correlation between Employee Passion, Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support. It was found that the correlations between Employee Passion, Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support were positively correlated but not significant. Employee Passion is positively related with Human Resource Practices ($r = .089$, $p > .01$), Employee Passion is positively related with Work Environment ($r = .182$, $p > .01$) and Employee Passion is positively related with Social Support ($r = .179$, $p > .01$). Thus, it can be inferred that Employee Passion would positively influence Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support but the relationships are not significant. This resulted the acceptance of H_{02} , H_{03} , and H_{04} and thus stated that Employee Passion is not significantly related with Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support

Further, it was found that Human Resource Practices are positively and significantly correlated with Work Environment ($r = .283$, $p < .01$) and Social Support ($r = .403$, $p < .01$) which depicts that Human Resource Practices significantly impact Work Environment and Social Support. So, it is concluded that Work Environment and Social Support can enhance by incorporating appropriate Human Resource Practices.

Regression Analysis

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support with Employee Passion

Model Summary ^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.223 ^a	.050	.020	13.42064	.050	1.670	3	96	.179	1.230

a. Predictors: (Constant), HRP, WE, SS

b. Dependent Variable: EP

ANOVA ^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	902.480	3	300.827	1.670	.179 ^a
	Residual	17290.910	96	180.114		
	Total	18193.390	99			

a. Predictors: (Constant), HRP, WE, SS

b. Dependent Variable: EP

Coefficients ^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	19.078	21.455		.889	.376	-23.510	61.667
WE	.461	.348	.141	1.323	.189	-.231	1.152
SS	.636	.518	.137	1.228	.222	-.392	1.663
HRP	-.025	.455	-.006	-.055	.956	-.928	.878

a. Dependent Variable: EP

The result of the regression as indicated in the coefficient table indicates that Human Resource Practices, Work Environment and Social Support has not much cause and effect relationship with Employee Passion having beta values of .141, .137 and .006 which was tested using t test. The t test value was found to be 1.323, 1.228 and .005 with stated no significance ($p > .05$). The R^2 value is .050 indicated in the model summary table indicates that Work Environment, Social Support and Human Resource Practices explains only 5 % per cent variance in the dependent variable Employee Passion. The ANOVA table only states that F Value (1.670) which is not significant (sig is .179). This depicts that Work Environment, Social Support and HR Practices does not significantly impact Employee Passion.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE STUDY

The Workplace Environment impacts employee morale, productivity and engagement – in a positive and significant manner. In the study it has been observed that there is a no significant relationship between Workplace Environment and Employee Passion. An employee's workplace environment is a key determinant of the quality of their work and their level of productivity. How well the workplace engages an employee impacts their desire to learn skills and their level of motivation to perform. In the context of ESIC workplace environment is positive and supportive. Employees agreed that they are encouraged to solve as many of work related problems as possible. This makes the employees more confident about their work and workplace. Employees have also agreed that their administrative team provides an environment in which honesty and openness are valued. Employees are given the opportunity to give their view points on various matters related to the organisation. Administrative team considers the needs and preferences that affect the work life of the employees. So, the employees

also feel safe to go to members of the administrative team if they have any difficulty with some aspect of their job.

Further, in the study it has been observed that Social Support is another factor which has no significant relationship with employee passion. Social Support is described a relationship with one or more persons which is characterised by relatively frequent interactions, strong and positive feelings, and especially perceived ability and willingness to lend emotional and /or instrumental assistance in times of needs. Social support is an important resource that enables an individual to cope with stress and present burnout. Employee's State Insurance Corporation provides social support to its employees to cope up with the work related pressure. When asked about social support in the organisation they agreed that the administration help them feel relaxed when they are under pressure. Supervisors are in best position to implement their experience, knowledge and skills at workplace which results in enhancement of employee's performance. Thus the employees also agreed that the superiors support while taking major decision. It has been also observed that in the organisation the superiors guide the employees in avoiding any mistake.

The above described factors support employee passion in the organisation, however HR practices has been observed to have less significant relationship with employee passion. Study also observed that government organisation do not perform regular appraisal activity in order to review the performance of the employees on individual basis. It is required by the organisation to give constructive feedback to the employees so that they can improve their performance as per the needs of the organisation. Proper training and development courses should be developed as per the requirements. Further in the study it was found that

although training was provided to the employees but it not match to the requirements of the organisation. Employee State Insurance Corporation needs to review its HR Practices and implement better activities to inculcate more enthusiasm in the employees toward their respective work. Better HR practices, Social Support and suitable Workplace Environment enhance individual as well as organisational productivity ultimately resulting into growth and development.

CONCLUSION

Passion seems to be an important aspect of the new positive agenda in organizations, both as a research subject and an intervention target. Being passionate about one's work is possible. Although workplace environment and social support significantly support employee passion in the organisation but like other studies, this study also has some weaknesses that must be addressed. With the changing trends and increasing competition it has become important for the organisations to retain the talent. Especially for the government led organisations it is important to make some changes in the monotonous work schedule of the employees, so that they do not feel stressed at workplace. However, in ESIC's context it has been observed that administration is continuously making efforts to provide positive workplace environment to the employees. So it can be interpreted from the research work that workplace environment and social support is present in ESIC. However, study also inferred that HR practices are very important for every organisation and attention should be paid to it, as it has been observed that the level of passion is related to the HR practices. In the context of ESIC it has been found that level of employee passion is neither too high nor too low in the employees. One of the reason which has been identified while doing the research work includes that the government led organisation do not focus on improving the HR practices with the changing need of time. These organisations follow the traditional HR practices which do not prove to be beneficial for them. The changing trends and foray of multinational companies in to the market has increased the level of competition. So to retain the talent for better performance rewards and recognition should be given to the employees which is rarely done in the government organisations. Organizations must provide meaningful work, autonomy, and opportunities for growth, encourage collaboration and recognition, and address the concept of fairness in order to maximize Employee Passion. When Employee Passion is maximized, it in turn leads to devoted customers, which results in sustainable growth and profits.

Further study also proved that social support has got tremendous influence on employee passion which is determined through various variables like:-administrative team, culture of openness and honesty. Thus, healthy and conducive work environment should prevail so that it accords environment where in employees are empowered and they need not depend on supervisors much for decision making.

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