CORPORATE COMMUNICATION: BEST PRACTICES ADOPTED BY IT COMPANIES TO ENHANCE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

G. Das[1] and S. Ramaswamy[2]
[1]Institute of Management Development and Research, Pune, MS, India
[2]Institute of Management Education Research and Training, SPPU, MS, India
gopa.das10@gmail.comshubha.ramaswami@gmail.com,

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ABSTRACT

Employee Engagement has become a term that has caught the attention of Human Resource (HR) practitioners all over the world in recent years. Effective communication may increase employee engagement, workplace productivity, and business growth. The purpose of this study is to evaluate and understand the strategies used by IT businesses to improve employee management, with a focus on corporate communication. This research is a well-structured strategy to reviewing secondary data from high-quality data sources such as research papers from Science Direct, Sage publications, and other sources to provide a foundation for literature review. Corporate communication plays an important role in employee engagement in the IT industry. The results reveal that highly engaged employees have better health, are more satisfied, have a higher retention rate, are more loyal, and are more productive. This research will be used by many IT and other industries to build future communication-based employee engagement initiatives.

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Introduction

'Employee Engagement,' which developed mostly from consultancy practice, is a concept that is currently being investigated and contested in academics. Most people think of engagement as a state of mind or behaviour that include being preoccupied with, involved in, fascinated by, dedicated to, retained, and persistent in organisation. Employee engagement allows organization to track and manage employee's opinions on important aspects of workplace culture. Organization can determine whether staffs are fully engaged in their task or merely putting in their time. Improving employee engagement practices is significant to a company's success. Employees that are disengaged are less productive at work and have poor customer service abilities. (Osborne and Hammoud, 2017) Organizations can also find out whether team-building activities and HR procedures have a good impact on company outcomes or if there is chance for improvement. The importance of corporate communication in fostering a transparent connection between management and workers, which leads to employee engagement. Employees' perceptions of fairness in the communication process decrease their uncertainty, enhance their involvement, and increase their readiness to put up discretionary effort. Employees will be engaged in work if an organization treats employees as partners, values teamwork, places trust in employees, shows respect for them, and treats them as creative and enterprising people while cultivating their willingness to act, make decisions, and take responsibility while acting ethically. (Baran and Sypniewska, 2020) "As per the result of the study by Tiwari and Lenka, (2020) resonant leadership has a non-significant relationship with employee engagement. However, greater influence of internal corporate communication, knowledge sharing, continuous learning, intrapreneurship, and perceived communication satisfaction has increased the employees' levels of engagement. High employee engagement helps in developing the organisation's image as an employer brand."

Statement of Problem

Indian market's IT sector is one of the most expanding industries. It's important to investigate employee engagement methods and the significance of corporate communication in this.

Objectives

1. To comprehend the significance of employee engagement in the IT industry.

2. To explore the significance of corporate communication to enhance employee engagement in IT industry.

Scope

The focus of the study is limited to employee engagement practises. India's IT business is one of the growing industries, this study focuses mostly on it.

Literature Review

Employees who are 'engaged' are intellectually and emotionally connected to the business, are enthusiastic about its aims, and are devoted to its values (Tiwari and Lenka, 2020). Employee engagement refers to employees' emotional commitment to their job, the organisation, its business operations, and its ideals. (Patel, 2020). It increased if there is a high degree of trust inside the business, supervisors' honesty with the employees, clear communication of the company's goal to the employees, and strong motivation. It will immediately enhance your company's production and profitability, regardless of the size of your company. (Sharma, 2015). Communication business leaders may be able to enhance company processes while also affecting good social change (Osborne and Hammoud, 2017).

Organizations may enhance employee engagement by focusing on opportunities, improving employee decision-making, and increasing commitment (Chandani et al., 2016). Communication, Conciliation, Cultivation, Confidence and Compensation are elements that promote organisational health and welfare in the present crisis, according to the suggested employee engagement model, and indicators are offered to measure each one's accomplishment (De-la -Calle-Durán and Rodríguez-Sánchez, 2021).

Practices Adopted by IT Companies

"Indian IT sector in its challenging course of action is focusing on exclusive engagement strategies bottom lined with the principles of communication, appreciation, rewards, recognition and care. The present day witnesses the transformation of the workplace into a 'nurturing hub' of employees where their personal and professional aspirations are taken care of in an imperative manner; identifying the critical role played by employee engagement in enhancing the overall performance of the organization." (Manjunath and Chandni, 2018) According to researcher Sharma (2015) strategies used by various companies may be same, but the instruments used to measure will differ according to the nature and behaviour of the employees in the organizations. The practices adopted by IT companies are explained briefly:

- **Clarity in terms of the company's values, policies, and procedures:**

  "By sharing strategic information with your employees, you can engage them in the vision of the company, its products, and the future direction of the company so that they become brand ambassadors for your company. (Mishra et al. 2019) "These strategies are resonant leadership, internal corporate communication, knowledge sharing, continuous learning, intrapreneurship and perceived communication satisfaction. Clear and consistent messages about changing business priorities through appropriate channels increase the trust of employees in management." (Tiwari and Lenka, 2020)

- **Benefits and Pay:**

  In order to inspire workers to work in a company, it is necessary to have a good compensation structure in place. Employees must be given specific pay and benefits in order to increase their level of involvement. "Employees want the rewards to be transparent and merit-based, while they feel that the recognitions must be immediate." (Patel, 2020).

- **Performance Appraisal:**

  One more essential factor for determining an employee's degree of involvement is a fair evaluation of the employee's performance. Employee engagement is better in organisations that use an appropriate assessment process that is known to be unbiased and open.

- **Communication:**

  Employee engagement and satisfaction are heavily influenced by communication.

"Organizations must make an effort to inform all employees as to what is happening in the organization and engage their employees through more periodic communications on organization's progress towards its business goals." (Patel, 2020). The following are some of the tools used by highly engaged organisations:

➢ Meetings with one person at a time

➢ Meetings with the entire company

➢ Emails from department or leadership team meetings

➢ Interviews towards the end of a project

➢ Employee satisfaction surveys

➢ Conversations or performance reviews

➢ Tools for using social media

➢ Round table discussions concerning administration
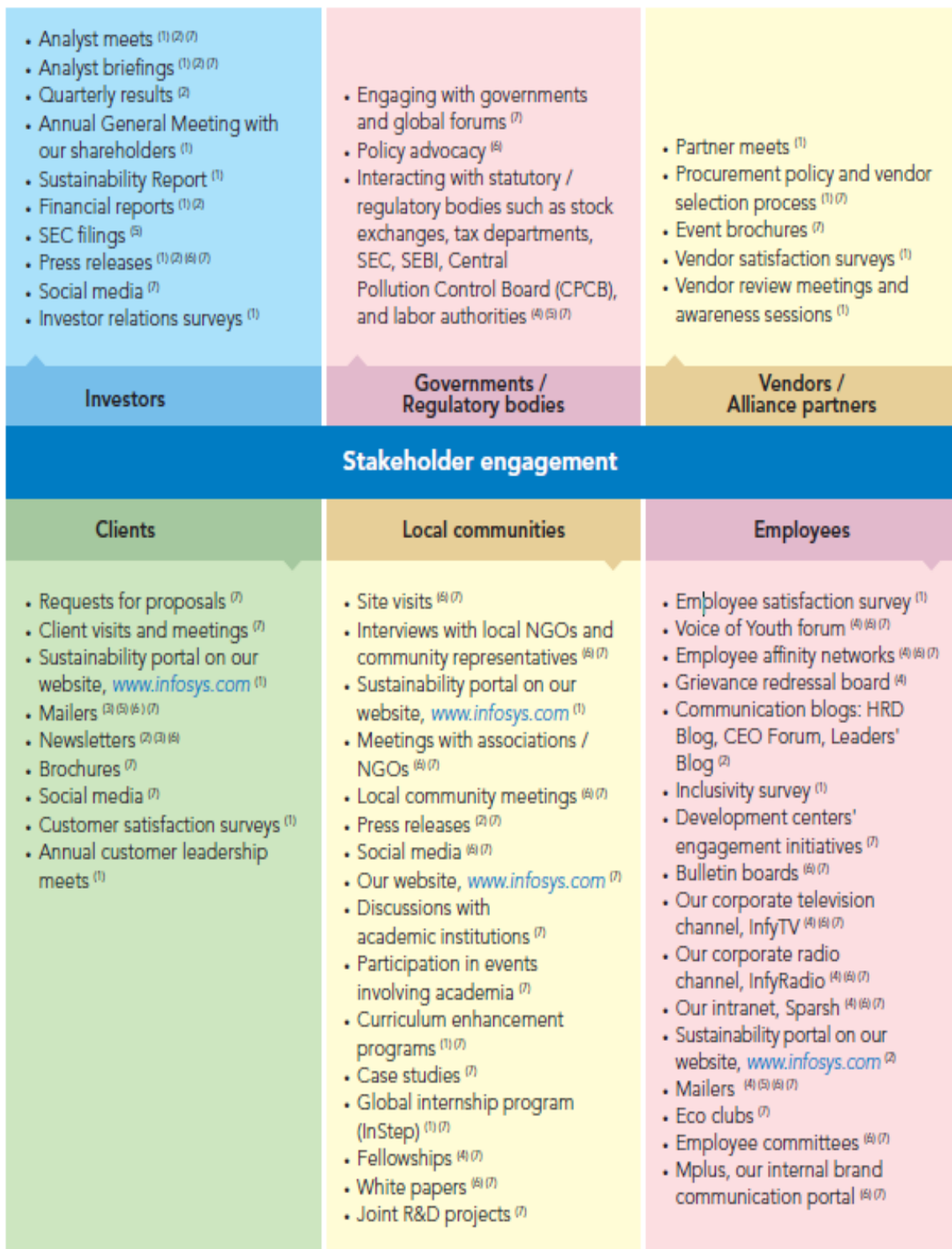
➢ Formal objectives

The psychological contract is formed by clear instructions on work tasks and responsibilities, reporting connections, and authority. Employees' perceptions of fairness in the communication process decrease their uncertainty, enhance their involvement, and increase their readiness to put up discretionary effort. It is as important to consider how an organisation delivers a message as it is to consider what message is being communicated. This is especially true when it comes to corporate communication. In these changing times, company's culture may provide a significant strategic edge. However, if workers are to comprehend and act on culture's goals, beliefs, and practises, they must be properly conveyed through best practises. (Ellspermann, 2021). Isaacs (2020) in her blog discussed the benefits of Amdocs cloud services, which were created to interact with employees and increase employee engagement.

• **Healthy and Secured Environment:**

"Employees go extra mile only when they feel recognized, concern for employee feelings, healthy, competitive environment, challenging work environment and allocating off shore projects based on merit and experience (Gantasala and Reddy, 2016). The sensation of security while working was found to be associated with levels of involvement. As a result, all businesses must have appropriate systems and processes to ensure employee safety and health. Working hours, as well as health and safety, have been discovered to be predictors of employee involvement in the public sector.

According to authors Srivastava et al. (2014) "mostly Indian companies have utilized the concept at behavioural level thereby only promoting employee engagement by making the employees to participate in some activities." According to researcher Gantasala and Reddy, (2016) contributing factors which lead to employee engagement in IT industries are Organizational Support, Intrinsic support, Employee oriented organizational culture, distributive justice, effective goal settings, Hygiene elements, equity, appraisal transparency, customized training, feedback and cohesiveness.

Investors

- Analyst meets [1][2][7]
- Analyst briefings [1][2][7]
- Quarterly results [2]
- Annual General Meeting with our shareholders [1]
- Sustainability Report [1]
- Financial reports [1][2]
- SEC filings [5]
- Press releases [1][2][6][7]
- Social media [7]
- Investor relations surveys [1]

Governments / Regulatory bodies

- Engaging with governments and global forums [7]
- Policy advocacy [6]
- Interacting with statutory / regulatory bodies such as stock exchanges, tax departments, SEC, SEBI, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and labor authorities [4][5][7]

Vendors / Alliance partners

- Partner meets [1]
- Procurement policy and vendor selection process [1][7]
- Event brochures [7]
- Vendor satisfaction surveys [1]
- Vendor review meetings and awareness sessions [1]

Stakeholder engagement

Clients

- Requests for proposals [7]
- Client visits and meetings [7]
- Sustainability portal on our website, www.infosys.com [1]
- Mailers [3][5][6][7]
- Newsletters [2][3][6]
- Brochures [7]
- Social media [7]
- Customer satisfaction surveys [1]
- Annual customer leadership meets [1]

Local communities

- Site visits [6][7]
- Interviews with local NGOs and community representatives [6][7]
- Sustainability portal on our website, www.infosys.com [1]
- Meetings with associations / NGOs [6][7]
- Local community meetings [6][7]
- Press releases [2][7]
- Social media [6][7]
- Our website, www.infosys.com [7]
- Discussions with academic institutions [7]
- Participation in events involving academia [7]
- Curriculum enhancement programs [1][7]
- Case studies [7]
- Global internship program (InStep) [1][7]
- Fellowships [4][7]
- White papers [6][7]
- Joint R&D projects [7]

Employees

- Employee satisfaction survey [1]
- Voice of Youth forum [4][6][7]
- Employee affinity networks [4][6][7]
- Grievance redressal board [4]
- Communication blogs: HRD Blog, CEO Forum, Leaders' Blog [2]
- Inclusivity survey [1]
- Development centers' engagement initiatives [7]
- Bulletin boards [6][7]
- Our corporate television channel, InfyTV [4][6][7]
- Our corporate radio channel, InfyRadio [4][6][7]
- Our intranet, Sparsh [4][6][7]
- Sustainability portal on our website, www.infosys.com [2]
- Mailers [4][5][6][7]
- Eco clubs [7]
- Employee committees [6][7]
- Mplus, our internal brand communication portal [6][7]

Frequency of communication :

[1] *Annual*   [2] *Quarterly*   [3] *Monthly*   [4] *Trigger-based*   [5] *Regulatory compliance-based*   [6] *Targeted*   [7] *Need-based communication*

Figure 1: Infosys Stakeholder Engagement
(Source: Infosys Annual Report 2015-16)

According to 2016 annual report of Infosys they include employees as their stakeholders and Defined communication channels ensure focused engagement through the year. They discussed their stakeholder involvement techniques in the above figure 1. Their annual employee satisfaction survey, LITMUS, is still used to get input from employees, according to

the report. Their survey findings are analysed, and action items for improved employee engagement are determined. They use Mplus portal for their internal communication. (Infosys Annual Report 15-16).

According to Infosys employees Blons et al. (2019) "iterative, test, refine – keep your employees engaged and part of the transformation – communication is key to creating and successfully adopting change." In their study, they also discuss AI, will be a significant component in improving the work experience and increasing employee communication with HR team members. Google has an open communication culture that encourages employees to try new things and challenge the existing practices (Karen, 2017).

Employee Engagement Practices during COVID

Traditional workplaces and roles have shifted dramatically in the last decade, owing to increasingly global and varied workforces, the impact of digital technology and millennials, and the gig economy fuelled by data and high-speed connection. To stay up with this change, traditional employee workplace rules, engagement objectives, and tactics must alter. Pandemic mitigation measures like as lockdowns and stay-at-home orders have touched four out of every five workers in the worldwide workforce, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO), (2020). In the middle of this turmoil, businesses must find new and better ways to communicate with their employees. For enhanced efficacy, various jobs might be converted into newer responsibilities.

The present pandemic crisis has created a difficult environment for businesses, particularly in terms of human resource management. Workplace and social environments are undergoing significant changes, such as the move to remote work and the implementation of new workplace regulations and procedures to restrict interaction. Organizations are focusing on supporting remote working circumstances in order for workers to balance work and family life in this new scenario in order to achieve employee engagement. Many companies are

now developing a variety of employee engagement practises, such as virtual team meetings, virtual learning and development, weekly alignment online sessions, webinars with industry experts, anxiety and stress webinars, online team building activities, online family engagement practises, brainstorming, apology, and appreciation online sessions, TED Talks, online books, online courses, live sessions for new-skill training, online communication exercise, online sharing best practises for maintaining health and hygiene, digital classrooms training modules, e-learning modules, online guidance for exercise and meditation, online recognition and acknowledgment of employees, online employee feedback, short online game sessions, Virtual challenges and competitions, 5 minutes of casual discussion, lunch with the entire team via video conference, online counselling sessions, and social interactions at the virtual workplace are all examples of virtual challenges and contests (Chanana and Sangeeta, 2020).

COVID-19's health problem has created a great deal of anxiety among workers, jeopardising their participation and well-being. Managers should address these aspects in order to maintain the firm's competitive advantage, given the beneficial impact of employee engagement and wellness on efficiency, productivity, and organisational performance, as well as the present pandemic backdrop. Managers should focus on supporting remote working circumstances in order for workers to balance work and family life in this new scenario in order to achieve employee engagement. Managers should also recognize that planning and implementing a compensation policy that responds to the new labour situation, not only with monetary payments but also with non-monetary benefits, which are more financially viable due to the company's economic circumstances as a result of the pandemic, is a good way to improve engagement (De-la -Calle-Durán and Rodríguez-Sánchez, 2021).

Five participating corporates (Accenture, booking.com, Enexis, EY, and PwC) met with chosen start-ups and scaleups to identify new ways to engage workers at work, hosted by the

School of Workplace Innovation and partners (Accenture, 2019).

Importance of Corporate Communication in Employee Engagement

"It was found that employee understands of the strategies, programs and systems in place for compensation lead to greater level of engagement among them. Long-term engagement starts with good communication between employer and employees as well as among co-workers." (Chandani et al., 2016) Employee engagement is frequently at the centre of HR and management activities, resulting in a slew of surveys, meetings, award schemes, and other innovative programmes. However, the most straightforward method to boost engagement is to start with day-to-day communication. This pandemic situation also proves that establishing a dependable communication route is critical to providing employees with stability and security at a time when they are most in need. When teams operate in various time zones, shifts, or locations, a single, digital hub keeps employees informed and on the same page, fostering connections that transcend location and time.

Corporate communication efforts to develop trust with workers may benefit both employees and the company. Employees are more engaged, trust their supervisor and the company, and are thus more empowered to create client connections on the company's behalf. Corporate communication that is more effective can improve employee engagement. Organizations may enhance employee morale, break through departmental barriers, promote employee events, educate workers about perks, and develop trust by analysing and creating corporate communication problems and goals. Here are some suggestions for improving the communication skills like consider audience, choose right medium of communication, develop employee resource groups, and adopt social media to connect with employees.

Employee engagement is greatly influenced by communications. Employees feel less frustrated and excluded when they are kept up to date on the latest company news and are linked to the rest of the team. They feel appreciated, supported, and empowered when they are encouraged to actively participate in corporate communications, whether through two-way interactions or content creation.

Findings and Discussions

1. The organization will be able to enhance productivity, work quality, and retain top talent by investing in employee engagement.
2. Highly engaged employees are having better health, great satisfaction level, and higher retention rate, greater loyalty, better productivity.
3. Employees that are engaged perform better, which results in better services for clients and consumers.
4. To enhance employee engagement, IT companies have combined new techniques with traditional ones.
5. Communication is one of the best practices used for employee engagement.
6. Employee engagement, workplace productivity, and corporate growth may all be boosted by effective communication.
7. COVID emphasized the importance of communication for employee engagement.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this study was to identify the Employee Engagement techniques used in IT organisations and to draw a link between the strategies emphasise and the various components or metrics of Employee Engagement. During the investigation, the researcher discovered that practically all IT businesses are adopting employee engagement practices for their employees. These businesses appear to have understood the importance of the concept of 'engagement,' not just for attaining their ultimate aims, but also for surviving in a market environment.

According to review of literature it is perceived that there are many different practices are adopted by the IT companies for employee engagement but the best practice of all is communication. Everyone likes to feel important, so when workers believe their ideas count, they are more inclined to participate actively in the culture. Employees feel more comfortable and motivated when a business uses excellent corporate communication techniques. Employees that are engaged are more committed to their jobs. As a result, make

good use of the corporate communication system and rapidly and efficiently grow it utilizing micro-learning content production. It will motivate staff to work harder on a constant basis in order to achieve bottom-line results.

about the factors that influence employee engagement. The study can also replicate to understand the practices adopted for employee engagement in other sectors such as hospitality, infrastructure, retail, and education. An empirical research of employee engagement methods and the influence of corporate communication may also be conducted.

Scope for further Research

A study may be conducted with specific IT Company or comparative study to learn more

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