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Impact of Employee Participation in Productivity Effectiveness in Pharmaceutical Industries and Clinical Research Organizations

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Abstract

Pharmaceutical Industries and Clinical Research Organizationsare among the leading uplifters of the world's economy.Though the concept of employee participation gained its significance only around a couple of decades ago,its contribution to the pharma industryis enormous. Many pharma and Clinical Research Organizationsindustrialists across the globe have fathomed the intangible coherence between employee participation and success.Employee engagement is one of thekey drivers that acceleratesthe organization's productivity and efficiency.Itdirectly influences the worker's performance and his association with other employees and the organization. Organizational identification is another vital element of employee participation that measuresthe degree to which an employee identifies himself with his organization. Based on many research results, many employees who have better identified their association with their organization have showed outstanding performance toward their work. This study is aimed to illuminate the various factors that emphasize on the importance of employee participation in pharma and Clinical Research Organization domains. The key elements scrutinized in this study help in identifying the entities that will enhance employer-employee bonding to achieve commercial goals in the global pharmaceutical landscape.

Key words: Employee participation, Pharmaceutical industry, Clinical Research Organization, Employee engagement

Right from the dawn of the 20th century, pharmaceutical industry across the globe has encountered various phases of growth and advancement in terms of drug discovery, drug development, drug testing models and clinical trials. Pharmaceutical firms are social entities that are goal driven, carefully designed activity systems with employee participation[1]. The success story of the pharma industry is based on various factors, but chief among them is employee participation. Employees are the key drivers of any organization; through them and by them the whole organization swings around. Therefore, the core concept of employee participation has proved to be an irrefutable potentialpart in the pharmaceutical niche. The theory of employee participation is common to many different disciplines in the pharmaceutical industry. Hence, pharma companies have to devise unique employee engagement methods to shape the budding industry leaders to encounter industrial challenges.

DEFINITION

Employee or worker participation means any process in the company that enables employees to exert influence over their work or their working conditions. There are many definitions for employee or worker participation. According to María C, worker participation is defined as "a variety of processes and structures which enable, and at times encourage, employees to directly or indirectly contribute to and influence decision – making in the firm and in the wider society"[2].Arrigo and Casale also defined employee participation with respect to the work place, "as any process in the company that allows workers to exert influence over their work or their working conditions under which they work" [3].Bakker et al in his article

has defined the word "Engagement" as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption"[4].

OBJECTIVES OF EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

- To accelerate the motivations of the employees towards their work and responsibilities
- To create new avenues for the employees to express their sense of importance
- To help understand the employees the bond between harmony and development
- To make the employees act as a tool in solving organizational oriented issues
- To involve employees in decision-making processes related to the effectivity and productivity of the pharma industry

Employee participation in the decision-making processes includes working atmosphere, physical and mental health, work safety, job security, job responsibilities and employees'rights and opportunities. Employee participation is a subject of extending equal opportunities to all the employees of the company to participate effectively towards the betterment of the company in terms of productivity.The merits of employee participation are development of loyalty towards the organization and co-workers;building trust and confidenceand a sense of responsibility[5].

EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION - AN IMPORTANT AREA OF RESEARCH

In research,employee participation or engagement has emerged as a complexideologyaddressing the challenges faced in motivatingthe employees towardspositive outcomes of productivity and effectivity in the industry[6,7]. Despite its complexity,Employee participation stands as a promising approach towardsworkstation psychologyto yield high profit for the industry. Participation through employee engagement is believed to unleashmore intensifiedserviceability of employeesat the organization[6,8].

While the concept of employee participation looks encouraging and promising in the eyes of organizations in terms of profit and growth, the modus operandi devised for employee participationat work was never plain-sailing[6]. According to the survey conducted by Gallup Consulting in 2018, 53% of workers in the U.S fall under the disengaged or not engaged at work category meaning they are merely satisfied with their mundane tasks, but are not dedicatedly attached to their work, 13%of workers surveyed were observed to beactivelydisengaged at work and only 34 percent wereactively engaged[9]. The survey of the results hasgained moreattention on findingways to improvise employee participation. Many articleshave discussedon various aspects ofemployee participation [10,4,8].

Factors influencing employee participation:

- Organizational identification
- Employee engagement

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

Many researchers have focused on organizational identification and have elaborated its importance and influence on employees[11,12,13].Organizational identification elicits the concept of organizational psychology, the level in which employees identify and associate themselves with the organization; how much they experience a sense of belongingness to the organization, it's work culture, methods etc[14,15].It is also reported that when employees identify themselves with their organization,they become more contentwith

their job, and are less likely to quit. Employeescalibre of work performance; readiness to involve in organisational citizenship; intrarole behaviors like giving constructive suggestions or helping colleagues and extra role activitiesare improved[12,13,15,16,17].

Attributes of Organizational identification:

Organizational identification can be further linked to two work-related attributes—job involvement and job engagement. Thesetwo attributes can be better explained with the followingillustration: A junior-regulatory writer in a pharma company is asked by his manager to take up a particular new task, only if he is acquainted with it or else, he is at liberty to avoid it and continue with his usual task. In connection with the above scenario, an engaged employee, although he is at liberty to skip the task due to lack of knowledge on the new task, he will take all efforts to learn and gain knowledge about the new task by approaching his colleagues or proactively enlighten himself on the new process. Contrastingly, the involved employee (who is not as enthusiastic as the engaged employee), will avail the liberty of skipping the new task and most likely only perform his usual task.From the above illustration, anengaged employee becomestotallysaturated anddedicatedwith the work andinvests all his energy with enthusiasmand extends his efforts and ideologies to new endeavours rather than mere completion;whereas an involved employee is just involved superficiallywith the task assigned to him and only puts the smallest possible efforts to retain his job without proactiveness. It clearly explains that job engagement makes employees leap aheadof their job responsibilities and involve activelyfor betterment of company's effectivity and productivity[6].

It is likely that the concept of identification occurring between employees and clients is a very less probedsubject.But studies conducted byTyler and Blader, reveal that employeeswho are strongly influenced by group identification concept show greater eagerness towards their responsibilities and greater employee client interaction[18,19,20].

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Although the concept of employee engagement is seen as a new area of research in the management, it has now evolved as a popular subject in the human resource management field[21,22,23].Many pharma and Clinical Research Organization (CRO) companies at the threshold of success have well analysedthat employees are their only key operators and through their potentialitythey canwin the confidence of the organization and succeed in the market over their competitors[24]. In connection to the above statement, a pharma company's success also relies on the approaches the company adopts to mobilize and engage their employees at work[25]. Hence, employee engagement is accepted widely in many pharma and CRO firms as an inevitablesegment of the organization to motivate human resourcestowards organizational success[21,26]. Table 1 depicts employee engagement programmes that were implemented by some of the leading pharmaceutical companies[27,28,29,30].

Kahn first proposed the theory of 'employee engagement' in 1990s while performing his ethnographic activities. According to him, employee engagement is defined as: "Harnessing of organizations' members' selves to their work roles; in engagement sessions people employ and express themselves physically and emotionally during role performances"[21,31].

Ten C's for Employee Engagement:

A review of the article in light of the 10 C's for Employee Engagement by, George Ambler in 2007 drew out the elements and facts from the story called the Ivey Business Diary and correlated the explanations of the 10 C's as provided belowand represented in Fig. 1[32,33,34].

1.Connect: Leaders should always express their value for the employees and make the employees feel it. Only if the employees feel optimistic and trustworthy about their relationship with their leaders, a good employee engagement can happen. But if the employees tend to have a pessimistic mind set towards their boss or the vice versa, then employee engagement is impossible.

2.Career: Management and leaders should assign work for their employees that are demanding and beneficial to the employees and organization. They ought to open new avenues for their employees to press forward in their career. Many ambitious employees always anticipate an opportunity to qualify themselves and foresee a new job position. For illustration, management should set-up prospective goals that pave way for a career advancement and high rewards. If the offered job positions are devoid of such opportunities, they should be made available. A mere visual detail of a career ladder would throw more light on this part.

3.Clarity: Managers and leaders must pass on a clear vision to their subordinates. A proper transfer of information is always essential in any relationship. How explicit a leader or manager is about his/her expectations from the employee is an all-inclusive portray of how that job affects the company, the better. In a team, if there are 11 members and suppose if the 11th employee is uncertain about the vision of his team as well as the company's goal and its whole picture, there will prevail a stress and vexation between the other 10 members in the team.

4.Convey: Leaders ought to elucidate their expectations about employees and impart a constructive feedback on their performance in the organization and how well it suits into the whole frame of the company.

5.Congratulate: Leaders should always bear in mind to give credits and recognition to a job well accomplished by an employee. Time and again management and leaders probe into the failures and negative aspects of an employee but fail to congratulate them on a job done flawless.

6.Contribute: A leader must always intend to make an employee feel important. An employee gets even more involved and engaged if his manager expects a report on the taskhe is performing or a feedback about the company. This gives the employees a contented feeling of participating in the company's success and its future.

7.Control: Employees have clearly understood their control over the work flow and the momentum of their jobs. So, leaders ought to create chances for employees to execute this control. A sense of "being in on things," and of being provided with chances to take part in decision may redress the stress; it builds up a trust and creates a culture for employees to take full control of critical situation and find appropriate solutions.

8.Collaborate: Employees working in unison with their teams will obviously win the trust and support of their co-workers. The overall outcome and performance of employees working in such teams will surely outperform the performance in teamsthat function without trust and co-operation. Proactive team leads in course of time soar up as influential bosses because they can harness a productive team that trust each other. Team building need to be dragged up.

9.Credibility: Leaders should take painstaking efforts to conserve a company's reputation and sustain its high ethical standards. Once there is a lack of credibility or when it is leaked out that a leader has been a part of the shady dealings, company will go out of order. The leader will lose all his trustworthiness both from employees and clients; this will indirectly mar the reliability of the company.

10.Confidence: Outstanding leaders typify a channel of confidence in the company by being epitomes of high ethical quality standards. If employees behold their boss as a personification of a confident leader, they too will find all means to equip themselves[32].

OUTCOMES OF EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

Employee participation has an inseparable bonding to numerous positive outcomes in a pharmaceutical industry. Dedicated employees' participation has yielded remarkable outcomessuch as increased job satisfaction and morale of the employees.This would enhance their results in productivity and effectiveness of theorganization[35]. The implementation of employeeparticipation in teams has also enabled to share their ideas/ information in decision making. Employee participation has improved employee-management relationsand a sense of ownership[36]. A notable outcome of employee participation is that it helps in cost reduction by cutting the cost on supervision and control on employees.

Possible measures to improve Employee Participation:

To retain the employees and motivate participation, a proactive approach is critical.The strategies and tools shown in Table 2will help the organizations to improve employee participation[37].

CONCLUSION

Employees are the most valuable asset for the pharmaceutical industry and CRO firms. Pharma and CRO industries invest a huge amount of money for recruitment and training process. Thus, pharmaceutical industry should present a good ambience for employee participation in order to retain its valuable assets. Employee participation and employee retention are two main attributes of an industry which are directly proportional to each other. The human resource management team plays a pivotal role in retaining employees in the pharmaceutical industry. Employee participation will have its full efficacy when it is steered with changes in everyday work routine to achieve autonomy and job satisfaction. Consulting with employees on assorted schemes often lead to innovative approaches and novel designs. Direct and individual form of employee participation can influence the productivity and performance of a company as a whole.

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TABLE 1 NOVEL STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY PHARMA COMPANIES TO ENGAGE THEIR EMPLOYEES[27,28,29,30]

Company	Employee Engagement Programme	Objective
Astellas Pharma Inc.[27]	Vision 2015	To create an environment where employees' contributions are recognized and rewarded. To bring up a culture that allows employees to make a difference and utilize their distinct talents. To help them in having clear values for the wider environmental and societal impact of business activities[27]
AstraZeneca[28]	Balanced scorecard framework	To communicate the progress of the employees in each quarter To reward and celebrate significant and creative business achievements by employees To compensate the employees with a bonus based on personal scorecard objectives and leadership capabilities and performance.[28]
Pfizer[29]	Sustainable Development Goals Week at Pfizer	To increase the training for its employees to build an equitable and sustainable society. To promote the integration of the sustainable development goals in each department and field of work.[29]

Sun Pharma[30]	In-house competency development mechanism	To enhance their management skills without interrupting their careers.[30]

TABLE 2: POSSIBLE MEASURES TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION[37]

Applicable Measures	Outcomes
Assigning right task	Increases job satisfaction, full functionality, loyalty.
Proper communication	Proper communication about company policies and other decisions keeps the employees plan and prepare ahead.
Employee participation in decision making	Involve team members in the decision making to increase employee's commitment towards work and novel ideas will pop up for the organization's productivity.
Knowledge share	Team members ought to share their knowledge and experience to enhance the employees confidence and growth.
Quick feedback	Quick feedback on employee's performance increase the performance level of the employee.
New openings for growth	Employers should provide supportive work-life balance environment for employees to save on costs and for a productive workforce.
Acknowledge and appreciate	Boss and leaders should motivate the employees by appreciation which will increase employees level of confidence, growth and self esteem.
Clarity	Employees ought to be clear about the expectations of organizations upon them. They should be clear about their duties and roles.

Goal setting	Managers should make proper goal setting, give immediate feedback, keep up their promises, this will create an prosperous environment for the employees.
Incentives & bonus	Management should provide performance-based bonus to increase their commitment to work.

Fig. 1: 10C's of Employee Engagement[32,33,34]

Undertaking to be signed by all authors while submitting manuscript

We the undersigned herewith submit a manuscript entitled <u>Impact of Employee Participation in Productivity Effectiveness in Pharmaceutical Industries and Clinical Research Organizations</u> author by<u>Latha P Kurup and G. Murugesan</u> for consideration for publication as a
Review Article in the Indian J. PharmaceuticalSciences.

We hereby declare that the manuscript is not submitted or being considered to another Journal in part of full for publication.

> ➢ The manuscript is not submitted to or being considered by another journal in part or full for publication
> ➢ The authors listed above are involved in the carrying out research work presented in the manuscript and that the research work was carried out at the address(es) listed in the title page of manuscript.
> ➢ No part of the manuscript contains plagiarized portion from any other published material.

We also acknowledge that if any of the above declarations are found to be incorrect, then the manuscript will get rejected.

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