Adoption of Employee Engagement practices at the workplace: Higher Educational Institutes

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Abstract

Employee Engagement is the latest HR fad nowadays. Many organizations are implementing or adopting Employee Engagement practices. It has been seen that employee engagement practices help to enhance the productivity, efficiency, and performance of the employees. The commitment of the employees affects almost every major part of the organization, including profits, earnings, customer experience, employee turnover, and more. In this paper, the researcher will explore the different practices in the context of employee engagement used by higher educational institutes by using primary and secondary data i.e.; taking interviews and reviewing the existing relevant research papers, and analyzing data by using NVivo 11 software. This will provide the effective implementation of said practices in different educational institutes at the ground level.

Key Words: Employee Engagement, Commitment of the employees, higher educational institutes, Employee Performance, and Employee Productivity.

1. Introduction

Employee Engagement

William Kahn researched in 1990 under the title "Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work" for the first time Employee engagement can be described in simple words as an emotional relationship that employees feel with their work or culture, job, organization, co-workers, team or community, and this relationship impacts well-being and productivity. Research shows that 92% of managers believe engaged employees improve performance, improving the efficiency of their teams and their organization's performance. Several definitions have been provided in the academic literature. Kahn (1990), defined personal engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances." Whereas personal disengagement refers to "the uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances". So, according to Kahn (1990), Engagement involves being mentally present when occupying and fulfilling an operational function. According to Maslach et al. (2001), engagement is represented by strength, commitment, and effectiveness, the exact opposite of the three burnout aspects of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficiency.

A one-size-fits-all strategy will not work if businesses want to motivate and engage their employees. According to a study, all respondents were between the ages of 20 and 40, with more than 90% being under the age of 30 or Gen X workers. It was also concluded that those employees place a higher value on work culture or environment, growth opportunities, and job satisfaction, and because there are so many opportunities for advancement for them, they do not bother to quit their jobs. (Pandey & David (2013)). Employee Engagement is based on belief, integrity, dual involvement, and

communication with an organization and its employees. It offers more business opportunities and adds to the quality, competitiveness, and well-being of businesses and individuals. Organizations with engaged workers outperform their competitors in terms of productivity, customer satisfaction, and employee turnover. They vary greatly from low to high. It can be drastically nurtured and enhanced, lost and rejected. Employee Engagement in every management team is a priority. At the beginning of the year in organizations, the targets are reviewed periodically and updated 12 months later to see how they have been reached. This long time is virtually a guaranteed engagement killer, without feedback or check-in. Indeed "94% of employees would prefer feedback and growth opportunities in real-time from their managers and 81% would prefer to check-ins with their managers, at least quarterly," according to the Growth Divide Survey.

1.1 Level of engagement:

The level of engagement can be categorized into three categories based on the commitment of the employees. These are as follows:

Engaged: Employees are very passionate and interested in their job. They are self-motivated and enthusiastic. They are known as psychological "owners," which propel market growth and innovation.

Not Engaged: Not engaged employees are unconnected to their work and the organization mentally. Since their motivation needs are not adequately met, they put time – but not effort or commitment – into their job.

Actively disengaged: Actively disengaged workers are not only depressed at work but also dissatisfied with the lack of fulfillment of their desires and the lack of satisfaction. In reality, these staffs contradict every day what their engaged co-workers do.
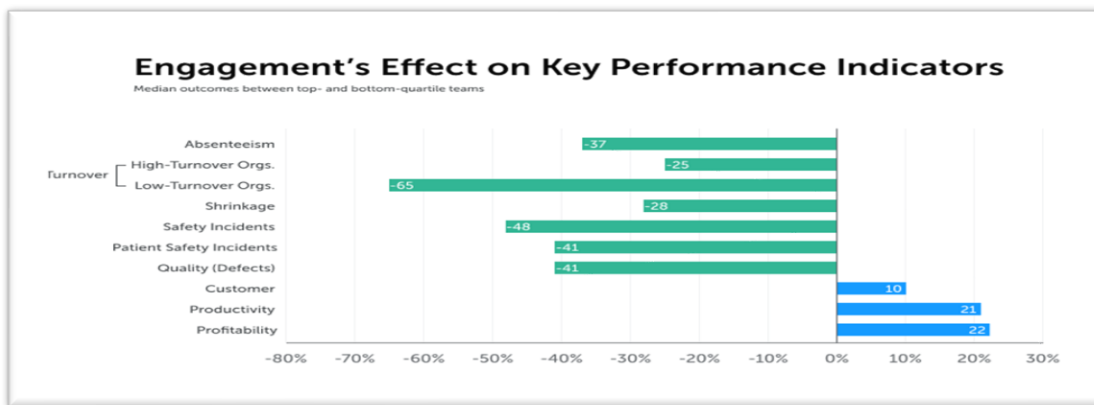
Despite increased strategies of organizations, nearly 85% of the world's employees are either not involved or intentionally disengaged.
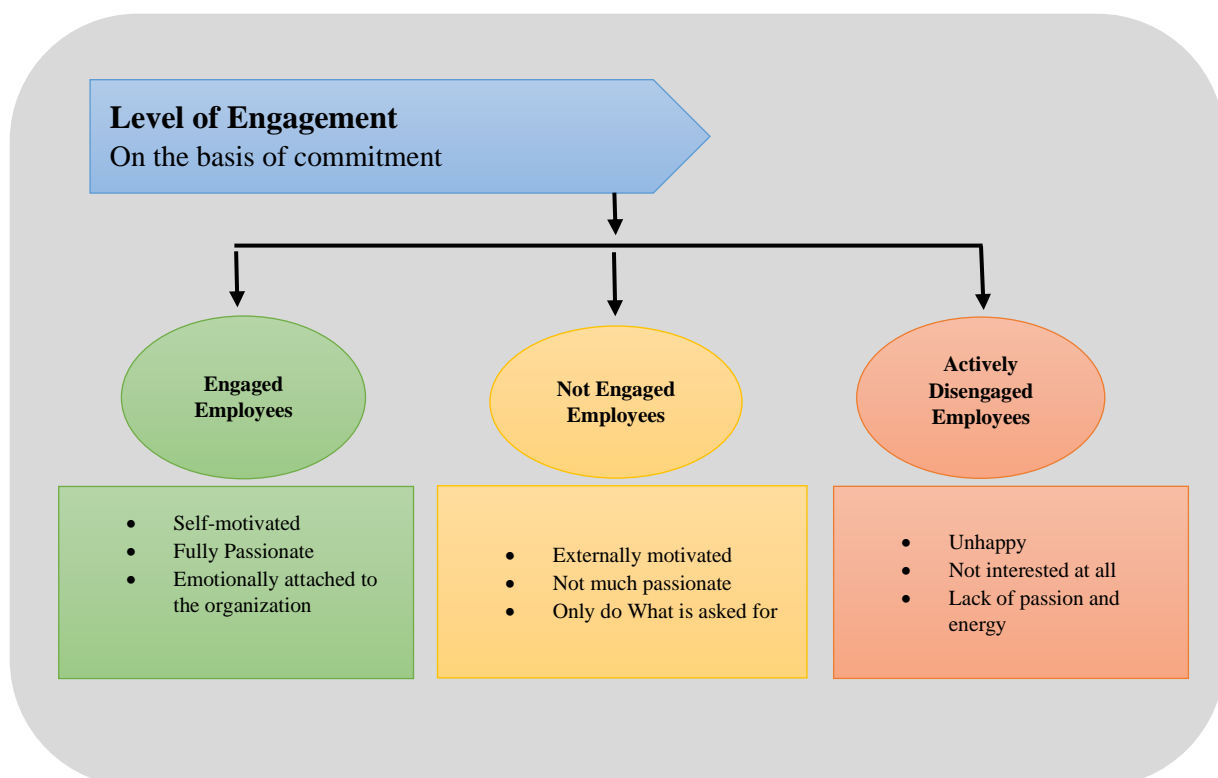
Source: Self-made

According to Gallup, "Nine major key assessments indicate positive outcomes as the Engagement of workers rises. Absenteeism, shrinkage, safety events, Patient safety incidents, quality (defects), and turnover have all been reduced by a minimum of 25% and often by more. The beneficial outcomes are seen by customer service, productivity, and profitability." Even though this is the greatest rate in the previous two decades, just 36% of employees are engaged, according to a Gallup study done in 2020, 64 % of respondents are still dissatisfied with their jobs.

Given the evident connections between work happiness and employee morale, employee engagement may be important to an organization's growth. Communication is essential for establishing and maintaining employee engagement. Employees who are engaged are more likely to work hard and perform well. They also frequently demonstrate a stronger commitment to an organization's principles and aims.

Engagement's Effect on Key Performance Indicators
Median outcomes between top- and bottom-quartile teams

Source: Gallup

Why Employee Engagement is important for organizations?

Engaged workers are more likely to be regular productive – leading to higher profits. Gallup's findings show that employees with a high degree of commitment or engagement have increased their efficiency by 22 %. This trend is easily seen by managers and is more based on the level of employee engagement. The Workplace Research Foundation found that 38 % of employees are more likely to be engaged in shows above than the average annual production.

According to a Gallup investigation, firms with good HR and employee engagement have the following characteristics:

- In high-turnover organisations, there is a 24% reduction in turnover.
- Low-turnover organisations have 59 percent lower turnover.
- Increases in customer satisfaction of 10%
- Productivity is up 17%,
- absenteeism is down 41%.

Source: Gallup

Employee engagement is influenced by factors such as job satisfaction, job participation, organizational commitment, effective communication, incentives, and recognition.

The study suggests many employee engagement tactics for new workers, such as successful induction programs, intense training and development programs, certification programs, and providing them with a realistic job preview (Chandani, et.al (2016)).

1.2 Employee Engagement in Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs) :

In the World, the Indian higher education system is the third largest. The objective of the higher educational institutes in India such as colleges and Universities is to provide better education and to guide students in the right direction to achieve their goals in life. Man cannot exist independently, and a higher education institution cannot exist apart from its teaching assistant. Learners with a higher degree of education are not zero learners. They know things, but not much. They must move from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Every big organization on the planet is concerned with employee engagement. Employee engagement, for example, is a particularly difficult problem in the higher education industry. HEIs must now bring together the interests of a wide range of parties and interest groups. HEIs must not only fulfill the expectations of students, faculty, and employers, but they are also more vulnerable to worldwide competition.

2. Review of Literature

External factors such as occupational stress, remote working, social support, and work-life balance, as well as internal organizational factors such as organizational climate, motivation, employee engagement, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction, will have an impact on an employee's performance.

After reviewing research and survey findings from Gallup, Right Management, Hay Group, IRS survey, and others, Siddhanta and Roy (2010) concluded that organizations with high Employee Engagement levels lead to improved employee commitment and employee engagement in decision-making processes and towards their job, which helps to establish a motivated workforce, which helps employees in achieving their common organizational goals. Highly engaged employees result in an overall successful organization in both financial and non-financial terms, which improves employee performance in an organization. It was discovered that engagement is related to work performance and that overwork attitudes have a gradual validity in forecasting performance (Slaughter, Garza, and Christian (2011))

Anitha (2014) conducted a study on the impact of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance to identify the key factors that carry out Employee Engagement and determine the relationship between engagement and employee performance. To determine the impact of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance, a questionnaire was developed and data was collected and analyzed using Regression analysis. It was concluded that improving an organization's working environment in all aspects such as physical and emotional environment, creating a healthy relationship between employees of the organization, and effective leadership results in high Employee Engagement and an increase in employee performance. It demonstrates that employee engagement has a direct and positive impact on Employee Performance.

Tanwar (2017) investigated how positive Employee Engagement leads to enhanced employee and organizational performance. Employee engagement has been identified as a critical aspect in increasing employee motivation and excitement. Employee engagement not only serves to motivate employees, but it is also positively associated with employee performance, as seen by increased productivity, the profitability of the organization, employee satisfaction, and loyalty to the organization. It was also determined that highly engaged employees have a reduced turnover ratio and absenteeism.

In a study based on the role of engaging employees at work in the Indian context, which took six articles to encourage the Human Resources Department to recognize the importance of employee engagement to keep an employee happy and effective, it was discovered that employee engagement measurement provides a conceptual guideline for employee productivity and identifies employee engagement as the single most powerful predictor of performance. Employees can be rewarded and recognized in monetary and non-monetary ways, such as promotions and assignments to more complicated positions. Training programs can help employees enhance their talents and competencies (Veena and Manickam (2017)). Organizations would benefit from focusing more on strategic objectives such as (a) rewards and recognition, (b) employee empowerment, and (c) creating a relationship between leaders and workers. (Osborne and Hammoud (2017)

According to Gupta (2018), there is a need to investigate the antecedents of employee engagement at work, particularly in the Indian context, to determine to what extent changes in components will improve the level of productivity as a result of employee engagement. Organizations must focus on how different employee engagement relates to the way different individuals accomplish strategic outcomes and increase overall effectiveness (Singh andVijila (2018)).

Employees who are engaged are more likely to contribute to corporate productivity. It also helps to keep a higher degree of dedication. Employee engagement is the amount of commitment and participation of employees in their organization and its principles. Employee productivity determines organizational performance, which is enhanced by the employee's commitment to his organization (Sarangi and Nayak (2018)). Employees are granted compensation raises regularly based on their performance. Organizations must have training and development plans in place to constantly increase employees' competence and capability. Furthermore, organizations should provide the most up-to-date facilities and technology to assist workers' job processes. As a result, employee engagement is a critical aspect of increasing staff performance and productivity (Azmy (2019)). The study finds that an organization is responsible for increasing and establishing employee engagement, and that organization must provide a positive work environment, training, and development to all workers, as well as uphold a reputable organization's image. Organizations should make their workers feel essential to the achievement of the organization by including them in decision-making, and the supervisor-employee relationship must be in good condition (Nagesh, Kulenur, and Shetty(2019)).

Employee engagement has become one of the most important priorities for human resource managers and practitioners in firms owing to the COVID-19 epidemic. During this disease outbreak situation, organizations are advancing many engagement activities such as online family engagement practices, virtual learning and development, online team building activities, webinars with industry experts, online conduct weekly alignment sessions, team meet-ups over video conference for lunch, short online game sessions, virtual challenges and competitions, online courses, appreciation sessions, communication exercises, and live sessions for new-skill development. Work-from-home routine engagement activities are extremely beneficial to both individuals and employers. Organizations that involve their staff in these kinds of activities are acquiring new skills and improving themselves. Employees are devoted to the organization and remain engaged despite the COVID-19 epidemic. In this pandemic condition caused by a coronavirus, these types of engagement initiatives increase employee morale and make employees feel inspired and devoted to the business (Chanana & Sangeeta (2020)).

Some of the variables of engagement highlighted are working conditions, superior support, coworker support, career progression, organizational support, and incentives and recognitions. And some of the tactics for improving employee engagement include providing employees with advancement chances and giving employees some insight into their professional growth, which will ensure their satisfaction and contribute to the retention of highly talented personnel. (Purushothaman and Kaviya (2020)). To achieve their objectives, organizations must go beyond employee incentive tactics and focus on growing employee engagement. Having engaged faculty has become critical in an era where institutions want their personnel to take initiative, be creative, and be proactive in finding answers to present teaching methodologies (Beri and Gulati (2020)).

Tiwari and Lenka (2020), according to findings, employee engagement is favorably connected with internal corporate communication, knowledge exchange, continual learning, innovativeness, and perceived communication satisfaction. The employee engagement factors like as leadership style, training and development, salary and benefits, organizational fairness and policies, and technology have a substantial influence on representative engagement practices in the research area's private banks (V.Tharanya, Gajenderan, and Nawaz (2020)). Employers must concentrate on objectives such as improving employee skills, and knowledge, providing frequent training, as well as identifying constraints so that employees may focus more on work. The work environment, the organization's image, supervisor-coworker interactions, and training and development programs all have a significant impact on employee engagement. Employee input has minimal influence on how choices are made ((Nagesh, Kulenur, and Shetty (2019) and (Juliantara, Sihombing and Sulistyawati (2020)).

Organizations are evolving many engagement activities during this pandemic situation, such as online family engagement practices, virtual learning and development, online team building activities, webinars with industry experts, online conduct weekly alignment sessions, team meet-ups over video conference for lunch, short online game sessions, virtual challenges and competitions, online courses, appreciation sessions, communication exercises, and live sessions for new-skill training. Work-from-home routine engagement activities are extremely beneficial to both employees and employers (Chanana and Sangeeta (2020)). Organizational welfare for employee development was discovered to raise employees' skills and capacities and improve their job performance, which shows in the overall organizational problem, while 12.9 percent disagree. Employee engagement requires good organizational participation, according to 51.6 percent of respondents (Radhakrishnan and Sujatha (2020)).

According to the findings, adequate virtual tools, communication from corporate executives, mental health screening, and online training, all contribute to increased employee engagement. Organizations should help employees to enhance virtual tools such as internet speed and computer settings (Chaudhary, et al., (2021)). Employer support and appreciation help to build trust between employees and management. The organization's support of information, knowledge, and resource sharing, as well as opportunities for employees to learn and improve, promoted employee engagement. Employee engagement is demonstrated through good incentive schemes and tactics that indicate an interest in employee career development (Sivasubramanian and Rupa (2021)). Budiyono and Welly (2022) Some suggestions for improving implementation include employee involvement in operating pattern tasks, regular evaluation of the working from office scheduling system, assistance and support for working in the office, agility for employees to

decide where and when they work from office or home, equal treatment for all employees, both local and global employees, and the facility and incentive for supporting working from home.

It was discovered that a positive work environment, fair treatment by supervisors, strong relationships with colleagues, and adequate work facilities go a long way toward increasing faculty engagement. Many of the professors were pleased with their universities' work environments. With many universities becoming more research-oriented, the administration has made measures to send faculty members to the most recent research training workshops, such as SEM, SPSS, and Ph.D. conferences. In certain situations, institutions have launched their research programs with financial incentives for their faculty to increase enrollment in Ph.D. programs. The expense of attending national and international conferences is also covered by the colleges to boost faculty research output while reducing classroom workload. Such faculty-friendly regulations must be maintained to achieve high results. In the event of a problem, supervisors and coworkers would discuss and resolve the issue, therefore maintaining a pleasant work atmosphere. Many of the faculty members have been given laptop computers and access to major databases such as Ebsco, Proquest, and WGSN to help them stay up to date on the current research trends in their respective professions. This has enhanced faculty motivation and dedication to their work resulting in a rise in the production of articles in high-quality journals (Deepa and Bhojanna (2022)).

3. Objectives of the study

1. To explore the different employee engagement practices used by higher educational institutes of Himachal Pradesh.
2. To study the outcome of the adopted practices of employee engagement in higher educational institutes of Himachal Pradesh.

4. Research Methodology

For the study, all the higher educational institutes of Himachal Pradesh are taken as the population Higher educational institutes under NAAC accreditation have been taken as a sample and under NAAC accreditation there are 49 higher institutes so the sample size of the study is 49. Primary data as well as Secondary data, both are taken for the study. The Primary data has been collected through taking an interview with the principal or the head of the college and for the Secondary data previous studies have been reviewed and both the collected \data are analyzed by NVivo 11 software under thematic analysis.

5. Analysis

The data collected from the primary and secondary sources have been analyzed by NVivo 11 Software. For analyzing data in NVivo 11, thematic analysis has been done. Data has been categorized under various themes and nodes for following the pattern of the data.

6. Findings:

The findings of the analyzed data are presented under this topic. In NVivo 11 software, data is divided under some themes and nodes, representing the pattern of the data that is similarities and dissimilarities of the data collected. Here a table is representing the analysis of the Secondary data. In the table "Sources" represents the total number of research sources that is interview transcripts, video, audio, memos, and any other document taken for the study, and "references" is the count of the number of selections inside that source that have been coded to any code. Two references would be counted if the same selection was coded to two different nodes.

From the Employee Engagement review of the literature (Table no.1), it was observed that the most used employee engagement practices by the organizations are "Reward & Recognition"

as the 10 sources are coded for this and under 20 references are coded for the node. After this practice, the second most widely used practice is "Training & Development Programs" having 9 sources and 18 references. After that "Employee participation & involvement" is the third most used practice having 7 sources and 8 references coded for the same and other practices are "Career Development opportunities", "Health & well-being of the employees", "Effective Communication", "Effective feedback from superiors", "motivational practices", "better working environment", "Family friendliness schemes", "Team Building & Leadership activities" and "Pay & Benefits", and "health and wellbeing". During Covid-19 period online practices came into consideration and are implemented such as "Virtual Communication", "Digital learning", and "Work from Home".

Table no. 1. Employee Engagement practice's theme based on ROL

Employee Engagement Practices	Sources	References
Better work environment	3	3
Career development opportunities	5	9
Effective Communication	6	13
Effective Feedback	2	3
Employee participation & involvement	7	8
Extra Activities (fun, birthdays, Sport, Awards, etc.)	1	2
Family Friendliness schemes	2	2
Health & Well-being	7	9
Motivational Practices	3	5
Pay & Benefits	5	8
Rewards & Recognition	10	20
Team Building & Leadership activities	5	10
Training & Development Programs	9	18
During COVID-19		
Digital Learning	3	7
Virtual Communication	1	3
Work From Home (WFH)	2	4

Source: NVivo analysis

Table no. 2. Employee Engagement practice's theme based on Interviews

Employee Engagement Practices	Sources	References
Best Teacher Award	3	3
By observing overall academic performance	4	4
By observing the Change in attrition rate	1	1
By observing a fall in absenteeism	5	5
By observing the growth & productivity of faculty	5	5
By observing the quality of content delivery and dedication	5	5
By providing Reward & Recognition	6	7
By observing Teaching Effectiveness	3	3
By using SAP	1	1

Source: NVivo analysis

After performing thematic analysis on the data collected through interviews (Table no. 2), it was observed that the most used employee engagement practices for measuring the

engagement of the faculty in higher educational institutes are "reward & recognition" this practice is directly related to the engagement of the employee. As the work of the employee is rewarded and recognized by the superiors, they show a great level of engagement. Second is "by observing the quality of content delivery and dedication" of the faculty according to the analysis 5 sources statements, it counts for how much passion a teacher puts towards their work. A dedicated teacher not only cares about their job and enjoys teaching, but also works incredibly hard to make the classroom a better place for everyone. The other practice is "by observing growth & productivity of faculty and by observing fall in absenteeism", it justifies that if a faculty enjoys their work then they

work better and perform better, which ultimately decreases the absenteeism rate. The rest of the practices are, "By observing overall academic performance" that is teacher's overall performance is observed by observing the relationship between students and teacher, the behavior of the teacher is also observed, and student-teacher interactions are observed. The "Best teacher award" is another practice where the teacher is awarded by the principal or the HOD of the institute for their remarkable commitment and work. The "Teaching Effectiveness", "By observing the Change in attrition rate" and "SAP" software are the least used practices that are used for measuring the engagement of the faculty.

Table no. 3 Outcome of implementing EE practices

Outcomes of implementing EE practices	Sources	References
Boost in Morale of the faculty	1	1
Faculties are aware of their surrounding & achieving their goals.	5	5
Improved efficiency and performance of faculties	9	9
Improved team bonding	4	4
Increased Commitment	9	9
Increased faculty productivity	2	2
Self-motivated staff	7	7

Source: NVivo analysis

According to table no. 3, it can be observed that the outcome of implementing the Employee Engagement practices has a positive effect on the staff. It can be seen that the faculty of the higher institutes of Himachal Pradesh are self-motivated and these practices lead to improved efficiency and performance. It is also concluded that these Employee Engagement practices improve team bonding, increased the commitment of the faculty, also increased the productivity the faculty. Faculties are aware of their surrounding & achieving their goals and the morale of the faculty has been boosted by these practices.

7. Conclusion:

The key to a company's success is developing employee engagement in the organization's set targets. All means should be taken by organizations to engage the employees (Azmy (2019)). According to the study, it was concluded that HEIs use various practices to enhance the engagement and commitment of the faculty and staff by providing monetary and non-monetary rewards and giving them recognition for their work. In many institutes, the Best teacher award is given to the faculty who performs well in the institute which is chosen by the Principal, head of the departments, and student's feedback. Higher education personnel in Himachal Pradesh are self-motivated, and this leads to increased efficiency and performance. It is also found that these Employee engagement approaches boost

team bonding, increase faculty loyalty, and raise faculty efficiency. Faculty are aware of their surroundings and attaining their aims, and these activities have enhanced faculty morale.

8. Future Scope:

This research may be expanded to a variety of Organizations such as Hospitals, banks, marketing organizations, etc. It is to observe how the phenomena of employee engagement affect the organization's success and productivity. Performance management systems and employee career development are some other issues that may be studied concerning employee engagement.

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