

Connecting Training and Development with Employee Engagement: How Does it Matter?

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Abstract: Employee training is a learning experience that brings about a permanent change in employee behavior in the sense of increased productivity. Training is mainly concerned with the improvement and up gradation of the skills and knowledge of the employees which ultimately adds into the job performance by enhancing employee engagement. Training and development is the key element to enhance employee engagement. Employees if, are provided with ample training to manage their stress at work or at home are more productive and engaged to their job. Moreover Training and developing employees for error management and/or error avoidance whether indoor or outdoor does have relationship with employee engagement. Revenge motive can be reduced by training employees in stress management, ethical training and conflict management. A clear direction should be provided about ethics through training the individuals to enhance their engagement towards their job performance. Risk of conflict can also be reduced and avoided if employees are positively trained both for EE and Organizational performance. The study focuses upon the impact of training on employee engagement by exclusively spotlighting Stress Management (SM), Error Management (EM), Ethics and Conflict Management (CM). Training heaving said factors if addressed puts a significant effect on the employee engagement for the ultimate wellbeing of the organization. Thus by providing the right type of training and development the employee engagement can be affected in either way. The questionnaire contained total of 28 items for six independent and one dependent variable using a five point likert scale and the data was collected from a sample of 226 employees using a random selection method from three telecommunication companies of Pakistan.

Key words: Training and Development • Employee Engagement • Stress Management • Ethics • Error Management • Conflict management

INTRODUCTION

Training has been a critical dilemma to decide due to different resource factors for every organization since very long. Employee Engagement (EE) as a representative of any company's strength [1] includes efforts, obligation and aspiration towards not only the employee's personal growth but macro organization's objectives [2]. As narrated in a study [3] employee training as a learning experience and enhanced productivity for permanent transformation in employee behavior. They also portray Employee Development (ED) as a strategic approach that focuses upon the future oriented growth that includes higher positions with a larger pool of responsibilities. Training primarily connected with the improvement and up gradation of the

skills and knowledge of the employees and focuses on employee behavior at large to improve current and future state of job performance. The study [3] focuses on employee personal growth that caters for employee education to enhance their capabilities through sound reasoning infusion. A forced action may lead the employees towards putting the least effort for the work to be done. As indicated in a study, [4] Employee Engagement (EE) is the phenomena that lets the employees do not feel boredom in their work and having a feel of work enjoyment with internal satisfaction. In the recent years the term employee engagement has taken an inmost role in discussions on organizational efficacy. This is due in part to its hullabaloo impact on employee outcomes, describing a deeper level of involvement, passion and enthusiasm for work than other similar

constructs such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Since the establishment of the EE construct [5], in current volatile business environment, employee engagement objectives have become quite critical for the employers. According to a study, [4] a monotonous job may reduce the employee engagement level. Task characteristics have a profound affect on the engagement level of the employees. The study has been conducted to investigate the relationship of training and development with employee engagement. The trends of organizations are changing from thinking solely on economic grounds but to consider the human side of the organization by considering the employee engagement prospect of the employees. The literature [6] quoted that the engaged employees re those who are eager to put their sated endeavors not only for required micro but the macro objectives of the organization. Focus on EE leads the employer to make its employees more committed and to stay with organization.

According to [7] employees are more likely to be engaged when they are clear about what is expected from them and well understand the opportunities ahead of them. Employees if, are trained and developed in a transparent manner aligning the needs of both ends, would result in enhanced engagement. Training and development is designed to fulfill the needs of self actualization of individuals and once they feel that they are provided with the opportunities to become what their full potential is, they exert their maximum endeavors towards their job performance. Therefore training and development are the basic tools to make employees engaged in their work and make them more productive. The study aims to drill down the impact of T&D on employee engagement focusing the said four areas of training and to identify the various T&D issues that affect employee engagement. The study converge T&D and employee engagement by looking into the measures that can be adopted to multiply employee engagement through right T&D measures. Various organizational concerns of the Human resource managers regarding T&D impact on employee engagement carry along some important questions i.e. their existence, the extent to which these concerns affect employee engagement and their role of specific trainings on employee engagement and the organizational performance in totality.

Literature Review: Better engagement of the employees on their jobs paves the way for the organizations to achieve organization's financial and non financial

objectives [8]. More Energy and commitment from the employees on their jobs are required by almost every organization [9] which can be achieved through proper training in relation with many other means. Early studies have been made on T&D and EE in bits and pieces developing a multidimensional constructs as the researcher [10] studied the interaction of individual task characteristics and individual's ability to perform to determine the individual task engagement. The individual ability can be improved through training and development of the individual. Thus training and development has a positive effect on individual's ability to perform thus increase the task engagement of the individual. A study [11] linked cognitive and behavioral engagement. Literature [12] also explored engagement strategies with the conclusion that collaboration deserves a more critical examination, particular when the interests of stake-holders conflict and the balance power between them are unequal. People [5] worked on the linkage between the psychological conditions i.e. meaningfulness, safety and availability with engagement and disengagement at work. Another study [13] investigated the impact of ethical leadership on the employees' innovative work behavior which concludes that feel of ethical leadership by the employees drive them to put their best to device innovative work processes. The studies [14, 15] strongly declare T&D an imperative driver of employee engagement.

The study focuses upon the impact of training on employee engagement by exclusively accentuating Stress Management (SM), Error Management (EM), Ethics and Conflict Management (CM).

Stress Management Training: The literature [16] studied how stress management can reduce the accident at work place and thus improve the efficiency and effectiveness. Stress is the main factor that affects the employee productivity thus diverting him from putting his best efforts. Stress management can help cope up with this problem. By providing stress management training employee can overcome and identify the stress symptoms and thus make preventive measures to reduce the affect of stress on their work. Another researcher [17] did an experiment on employees by studying their behavior before and after stress management training which resulted in helping the employees to better cope with the work stress that can affect their health and thus cause in absenteeism.

A study [18] discussed the importance of stress management training for the teachers. The study revealed the demanding nature of teacher's job is very much vulnerable to stress, so the teachers should be provided with proper stress management training to cope with the demanding nature of their job.

Studies [19] looked into the relationship of job demand and job resources with burnout and employee engagement. The result stated that burnout and engagement are negatively related. Burnout is predicted by job demand and job resources. The more demanding the job with less job resources, the higher the rate of burnout. A study [4] investigated on the relationship between trait boredom, subjective underemployment, Perceived organizational support and job performance. It was concluded that boredom prone workers considered them to be under employed, perceive less support from organization and low rating from supervisor for their performance. The level of stress at work has a significant effect on the employee engagement. The employees that are provided with ample training to manage their stress at work or at home are more productive and engaged to their job. The above statements measure the impact of stress on individual job and support to overcome such issues.

Ethical: People [20] studied the impact of ethic training on the cooperation among the students. It was revealed that those who were given ethics training were more cooperative than those who were not given ethics training. This difference can be linked to the inner moral of the individual because ethics make a person more caring for other and thus increase the level of cooperation among them. Literature [21] shows the impact of ethics training on the business person's perceptions of organizational ethics which resulted in significant impact of ethics training on the business person's perception of organizational ethics. When employees are given ethics training they are better able to understand the ethical issues of the organization and respond in an ethical manner. A study [22] explored that both face to face and at distance ethics training have significant affect on the ethical behavior of the employee. The main idea is no matter what type of approach is used in the ethics training the results are positive. Another study [23] found out the impact of ethics instructions, religiosity and intelligence on cheating with the result that ethics instructions and religiosity combined have a negative impact on cheating behavior, whereas intelligence do not show significant relationship with cheating behavior. The more religious a

person the more fruitful will be the results of ethics training to change his cheating behavior and vice versa. [24] Stated that the organizational and subculture affect the conflict management style. People from different culture have different values and norms and they like to be treated according to their values and norms.

A study [25] explored the relationship between perceived coworker loafing and Counterproductive Work Behaviors (CWB) toward organization and toward coworkers with the view that CWB is a behavior that is harmful to the organization and workers productivity. Employee loafing can be minimized with training, if the job is made meaningful to the employee.

Error Management Training (EMT): A well planned training creates strong affects on the service inaccuracy which ultimately leads towards service performance and employee engagement [26]. Research [27] shows the effects of training type (learning goal vs. performance goal) and training type (error management vs. error avoidance) on word processing skill acquisition with older workers. EMT showed a significant relationship with intrinsic motivation of employees. The better the employee is able to manage the errors that occur during his worker the better will be his performance. The cost of EMT can justified in terms of reduced waste due errors that can save a lot.

Error management is more like an exploratory study [28] that enhances learning ability of the individual who makes error [29]. Early studies declared EMT that included Error Avoidant Training (EAT) as one of the drivers of performance enhancement which comes through the employee right understanding about the error avoidance and error management by engaging themselves into their jobs. [30-34]. According to a study [35] error enable the individual performing any task to learn psychologically. [34] Analyze that making error feedback should also be included into training process.

Conflict Management Training (CMT): Revenge motive can be reduced by training employees in stress management, ethical training and conflict management.

A researcher [36] studied the relationship between work engagement and employee personality and his social relationship with the peers. Study [12] has gone through the process of investigation about strategies of engagement and found out that collaboration deserves a more critical examination, particular when the interests of stakeholders conflict and the balance power between

them is unequal. Conflicts are main cause of employee being unproductive. The more the employee are having conflicts with their peers, their boss etc. the more there will be affect on their engagement to their work. By training employees how to reduce conflict is a healthy way to manage employee engagement.

Employee Engagement: A research view [37] shows the effect of employer networks on workplace innovation and training. The research found out that managerial participation in networks positively affected the adoption of high performance work practices. Literature [38] shows stakeholder engagement. The study found a positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and corporate responsibility. It can taken as when the shareholder consider that the management care for their well being they are more engaged with the organization of whom they are share holders. A study [39] investigated that a relationship exists between all these variable of interest. A research [40] tells the importance of IT training and the influence of coworker for the usage of IT in the work place. It was found out that employee’s coworker exerts an important influence on IT usage, whereas individual level factors exhibit more modest effects.

Research [7] shows the impact of training and development on the organizational performance which is gained through employee engagement. He also narrates that on the job training, training design and delivery style have a great impact on the training and development effectiveness. The more the employee is provided with training the more he/she improves his/her skills and so enhanced engagement. Turning a specialist into a generalist not only increase the employee engagement but also reduces employee turnover. Studies [36] investigated the relationship between work engagement and employee personality and his social relationship with the peers.

Research [41] looks into the job burnout as well which identified three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism and sense of inefficacy as the main cause of the burnout. Research [7] shows the impact of training and development on the organizational performance. The research found that on the job training, training design and delivery style have a great impact on the training and development effectiveness. Training and development is designed to fulfill the needs of self actualization of individuals and once they feel that they are provided with the opportunities to become what their full potential is then they put in their full efforts. This acts as a catalyst for employee engagement in his job. The more the employee is engaged in his job the more will he be productive for the organization. Therefore training and development drives the employees to be more engaged in their work and make them more productive.

Conceptual Model: In the model 1, the impact of T&D on employee engagement is of concern. The better the T&D opportunities provided to the employee the better he will be engaged in his work.

Hypothesis:

- H₁ = There is a significant relationship between Stress Management Trainings (SMT) and Employee Engagement
- H₂ = There is a significant relationship between Error Management Trainings (EMT) and Employee Engagement
- H₃ = There is a significant relationship between Ethics Training (ET) and Employee Engagement
- H₄ = There is a significant relationship between Conflict Management Training (CMT) and Employee Engagement.

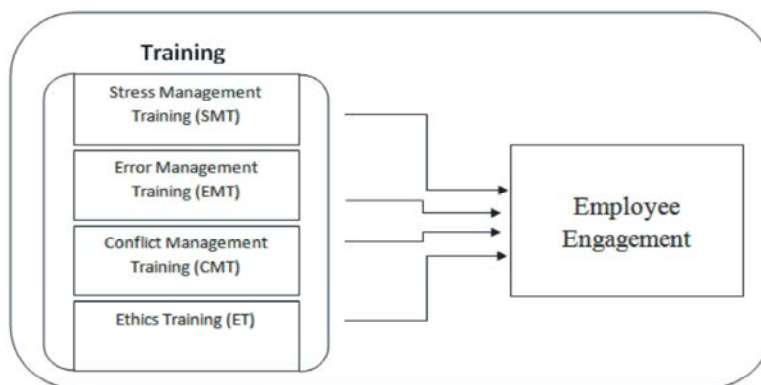


Fig. 1.1: Conceptual Model Relationship Between T&d and Employee Engagement:

Methodology: A quantitative survey approach was used to collect the data. The data for the research was collected through self administered questionnaires from the employees of three telecom organizations i.e. Mobilink, Zong and U-Fone. The questionnaire contained total of 28 items for six independent and one dependent variable using a five point likert scale. The data was collected from a sample of 226 employees using a random selection method. Total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among the three said telecommunication employee with the distribution of 100 each. 226 questionnaires have been returned completely or partially filled within the period of one month. Data was collected in the month of December 2013. The purpose was to generalize the result of the research to the vast population of the telecom sector employees. In order to find out the relationship between the said variables i.e. SMT, EMT, ET and CMT with Employee Engagement data analysis has been made using structural statistical software i.e. SPSS version 16.0.

Data Analysis: Subsequent to obtaining the data through self administered questionnaires, data was coded and entered into SPSS. The outliers were identified and removed and/or replaced by newly filled questionnaires. Some of the blank responses were filled as per the respondent pattern. Reliability analysis, correlation analysis, descriptive analysis and regression analysis were made in order to test the study hypothesis.

Reliability Analysis: Cronbach’s Alpha was calculated to understand how much the items are positively correlated to one another in any given set of questions and to check the reliability the reliability of the items included in the

questionnaire and the questionnaire itself. For stress management scale the Cronbach’s alpha is 0.722 with four items included in the questionnaire which ensured the items’ reliability. Cronbach’s alpha derived from SPSS was 0.786 for Error Management Training (EMT), 0.703 for Ethics Training (ET), 0.759 for Conflict Management Training (CMT), 0.0745 for Employee Engagement (EE) and for general T&D it was .692 which ensures that the items selected in the questionnaire are reliable.

Correlation Analysis: Correlation test was conducted for the purpose of examining relationship between the independent variables i.e. Stress Management Training (SMT), Error Management Training (EMT), Ethics Training (ET) and Conflict Management Training (CMT) and Employee Engagement.

In the above table correlation analysis for Employee engagement and Stress Management Training, Error Management Training, Ethics Training and Conflict Management Training (CMT). The correlation between the Employee Engagement (EE) and Stress Management Training (SMT) is .353, which is semi-weak positive correlation. The p-value is .000, this consistent with the correlation. The p-value is less than alpha therefore it is statistically significant. Thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between employee engagement and stress management.

The correlation between the employee engagement and error management is .454, which is semi-weak positive correlation. The p-value is .000, this consistent with the correlation. The p-value is less than alpha therefore it is statistically significant. Thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between employee engagement and error management.

Table 5.1

		SMT	EMT	ET	CMT	EE
SMT	Pearson Correlation	1	.195**	.173**	.176**	.353**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.009	.008	.000
	N	226	226	226	226	226
EMT	Pearson Correlation	.195**	1	.164*	.330**	.454**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		.014	.000	.000
	N	226	226	226	226	226
ET	Pearson Correlation	.173**	.164*	1	.100	.370**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.014		.136	.000
	N	226	226	226	226	226
CMT	Pearson Correlation	.176**	.330**	.100	1	.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	.136		.000
	N	226	226	226	226	226
EE	Pearson Correlation	.353**	.454**	.370**	.391**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	226	226	226	226	226
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.955	.667	.892	.000	.056
	N	226	226	226	226	226

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.2:

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.353 ^a	.125	.121	.98283	.125	31.878	1	224	.000
2	.528 ^b	.279	.272	.89409	.154	47.672	1	223	.000
3	.590 ^c	.348	.339	.85209	.069	23.524	1	222	.000
4	.628 ^d	.395	.384	.82291	.047	17.022	1	221	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), SMT

b. Predictors: (Constant), SMT, EMT

c. Predictors: (Constant), SMT, EMT, ET

d. Predictors: (Constant), SMT, EMT, ET, CMT

Table 5.3

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.972	.237		8.305	.000
	SMT	.365	.065	.353	5.646	.000
2	(Constant)	1.104	.277		3.978	.000
	SMT	.309	.062	.298	4.972	.000
	ET	.315	.059	.318	5.310	.000
3	(Constant)	.363	.291		1.248	.213
	SMT	.255	.059	.246	4.321	.000
	ET	.293	.056	.296	5.248	.000
	CMT	.291	.052	.318	5.643	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EE

The correlation between the employee engagement and ethics training is .370, which is perfect positive correlation. The p-value is .000, this consistent with the correlation. The p-value is less than alpha therefore it is statistically significant. Thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between employee engagement and ethics training.

The correlation between the employee engagement and conflict management is .391, which is semi-weak positive correlation. The p-value is .000, this consistent with the correlation. The p-value is less than alpha therefore it is statistically significant. Thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between employee engagement and conflict management.

The table 5.2 states that there is 12.5%, 27.9%, 34.9% and 38.9% in the dependant variable because of the independent variables i.e. SMT, EMT, ET and CMT respectively.

Table 5.3 describes that all the relationships of the independent variables i.e. SMT, EMT, ET and CMT are significant at 5% with the values of .353 for SMT, .298 and .318 for SMT and ET and .249, 296 and .318 for SMT, ET and CMT respectively.

CONCLUSION

The study attempted to identify the link between Stress Management (SM), Error Management (EM), Ethics & Conflict Management (CM). and Employee engagement. The broad objective of the study was to create a general awareness about the impact of the said four types of trainings on Employee Engagement (EE), in order to identify the maximize the employee engagement for the overall performance of the employees and the organization. Past studies heaving the impact of T&D upon EE have been though made following various constructs in bits and pieces but the said study variable have not been discussed earlier under the head of training at one time. The current study provided the researchers and managers with the evidence in telecom sector of Pakistan that the researched variables are significantly and positively linked with Employee Engagement.

In order to justify the developed hypothesis **H₁**, i.e. There is a significant relationship between Stress Management Trainings (SMT) and Employee Engagement, **H₂**, i.e. There is a significant relationship between Error Management Trainings (EMT) and

Employee Engagement, H_3 i.e. There is a significant relationship between Ethics Training (ET) and Employee Engagement and H_4 i.e. There is a significant relationship between Conflict Management Training (CMT) and Employee Engagement have been accepted empirically with its application in three telecommunication organizations of Pakistan. The results of the study are in line with past researches, made in the area of training and development. The correlation between the independent variable –T&D and the dependent variables – Employee Engagement is positive and semi weak. The p-value for both the correlation analysis is also in conformity with our correlation value and thus concluding that there is a relationship between the T&D and employee engagement.

After a deep study of the past research and getting a good awareness on the issue due to this research paper the following guidelines for the telecommunication industry specifically are presented to employee engagement through training and development:

- All kind of training and development activities have a positive impact on employee engagement.
- Training and development activities should be in line with the individual employee needs and personality.
- Effort should be made to make the employees involved in the training and development activities.
- Feel the employees a sense of ownership so they are more enthusiastic about there job.
- Provide the employees a sense of satisfaction in their job.
- Training and development should be more focused on internal grooming of the individual.
- Active participation of employee should be encouraged in the training and development projects.

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