

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION

by

Sunil Pahilajani

(Registration No. 59868)

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EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION

by

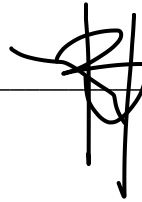
Sunil Pahilajani

(Registration No. 59868)

APPROVED BY

Vassiliki Grougiou

Dissertation chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a vertical line, positioned over a horizontal line.

RECEIVED/APPROVED BY:

Admissions Director

DEDICATED TO MY LOVING FAMILY

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ABSTRACT
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Sunil Pahilajani
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Dissertation Chair: **Dr.Vasiliki Grougiou**

With large-scale growth in the number of firms, be it services, manufacturing or other small-scale industries and a milieu of uncertainty and high competition, human capital challenges are on the rise. Many modern organizations are embroiled in the talent war and facing challenges in sustaining the employees' engagement levels. This study investigated the relationship between employee engagement and employee retention alongside measuring for the effects of demographic variables on both the constructs. The study carried out in three segments wherein an attempt is made to empirically identify the factors of employee engagement. The second part of the study was concerned with ascertaining the effects of employee engagement on employee retention. And the third part assessed the significant differences (if any) of demographic variables on both the constructs. Results indicated that five factors loaded onto the employee engagement construct and all found to be significant. Overall, there was a positive and strong effect of employee engagement on employee retention. Likewise, the study also looked for possible effects of each of the factors of employee engagement on employee retention and found that job resources had a higher impact on employee retention. Apart from the assessment of the impact of these variables on each other, the study also explored the performance of each of these constructs against a host of demographic variables. The results indicated that significant differences were found to exist across age, gender, marital status, income, industry, and geographical region, level of education and level of experience. The conclusions and inferences thus drawn from the current study will offer foundational help to organizations to design responsible human resource policies and practices. The study also predicts important trends both at the organizational and social levels. The findings of this study can have a seemingly large impact on the contemporary organizations and can prudently provide a framework for undertaking further academic research.

Key Words: Employee Engagement, Employee Retention, Quantitative Research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The workplaces are changing like never before. With growth in population globally, the demographics are constantly changing. Nowadays workplaces are seeing an influx of multigenerational workforce. Each demographic segment comes with its own goals, demands and aspirations. Meeting the aspirations and desires of each segment has become quite a challenge for the Human resource professionals as well as the organizations.

Comprehending diversity in organizations and multi-generational workforce is essential to understanding employee engagement and their retention. All high performing organizations and rapidly growing firms tend to not only add value in terms of sales and revenue, they also add to their employee numbers. Specific to the context of India, all leading IT firms with a CAGR of 30% and upward have added to their employee numbers from 2004 to 2010.

The increase in employee size generally witnesses an influx of different generational employees. These varied cohorts need to be managed as per their changing needs and aspirations. Additionally, each cohort has varied attitudes towards workplace challenges, engagement and collaboration.

Generation is typically defined as a group that has shares age and birth years. The people belonging to a certain generation may also share significant events of history, politics, war or other critical or notable events. The intra generational attitudes are also shaped because of similarities in upbringing, shared value system for people within certain cultures and because of parallels that can be drawn towards personal and professional orientations (Kupperschmidt, 2000). A generational cohort is also defined as a group of people who, because of their defining experiences, have a common history, birth year, and personality. Generational profiles in various groups aid in understanding of how a generation's experiences shape the emotions and attention of millions of people throughout a critical period of life and ultimately influence fundamental beliefs. Cohorts' values, work ethics, attitudes toward authority, and career goals are defined and shaped in part by

the historical, political, and social events they have encountered (Zemke et al. 2013; Duchscher & Cowin, 2004).

The idiosyncrasies that are characteristic of one generation are also shaped because of the socialization with a particular culture & environment, socio-economic events, technological exposure and interactions with family and work patterns (Joshi et. al. 2011; Giancola 2006; Noble & Schewe, 2003; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Egri & Ralston, 2004). The social conditioning coupled with various other experiences shape personalities and effectuate societal as well as workplace attitudes and behaviors that are unique to each generation (Macky et. al. 2008).

While we talk of the generational definitions, many have been adopted from the western contexts for analysis within the Indian contexts. To bring in more distinctiveness for better analysis of the workplaces, some research studies have redefined the generational categories in the Indian context as Traditional, Non-traditional and Gen Y cohorts (Srinivasan 2012) while others have talked of Conservatives, Integrators and Y2K categories (Chaudhari et. al. 2021). While these generational categories, to a large extent, echoed the Indianised character, the regional diversity cannot be overlooked. In an interesting study by Sinha et. al. (2001) brought forth the regional dissimilarities and similarities and how they can be mapped into various clusters that had workplace implications. The study talked of the influence of upbringing in certain regions which had a direct bearing on the individual value systems, familial orientations, hierarchical and personalized or depersonalized preferences. These social conditioning traits and individual value systems influenced the way in which people operated at the workplace. They also had a direct bearing on how individuals viewed their work lives, developed interests, desires, viewed family or marriage as an institution or not. Many such studies also explored the social & workplace aspirations for people of different strata as well as for those spread across rural and urban geographic regions (DeSouza et. al. 2009; Bijapurkar 2007). With its diversity and fast changing socio-economic dynamics and a rich demographic dividend, India offers an interesting research context.

While the demographic dividends are skewed across countries, the world population nevertheless has been constantly growing and stands at 8.1 billion as on 2024. The global population has been growing at 0.91% in 2024 as against 0.88% in 2023. As per UN, the global population is expected

to reach 8.5 billion in 2023 and 9.7 billion in 2050. This rapid growth in human population is expected to result in more urbanization, thus enabling accelerated migration. These outcomes will also have significant impact on fertility rates, migration, life span and talent mobility. While an estimated 61 countries will see shrinking populations by 2050, others will have higher population growths. Some countries are expected to witness lower growth in population which will be far below the total replacement rate owing to a drastic fall in fertility rates. What is interesting and notable amidst these statistics are the international migration issues and challenges that would arise because of the talent mobility. While some countries will struggle to find the right and adequate talent numbers, others will facilitate the availability through their surplus. In a globalized world, talent retention will pose huge challenges because of mobile workforces. The increasing life spans of people will also need to be addressed through adequate governmental and company level interventions. Interventions in this area will be essentially required because the economic security of people during their working years and post-retirement years needs to be catered to.

While debating on the role played by each generation of workforce, we can comprehend that Baby boomers now over 60, very few are now remaining as part of the formal workforce. Some have even resorted to freelancing and are frequently characterized as having a strong work ethic, being more devoted, competent, friendly, and dependable. Older professionals are acknowledged as being more likely to be recognized for their interpersonal skills in addition to their specialized talents. Baby boomers with their vast experiences of life have seen more workplace trends and challenges. They have successfully steered through with empathy, patience and dedication. This was one of the last workforce generations that sailed through tough times with resilience and adaptability. Workplace monotony, boredom and intentions to embark onto newer systems were rarely seen in this category of workforce because they believed more in stability. These traits and the acceptance of stability is something which is in contrary to the views held by the younger workforce. It is widely asserted that the younger workers have high expectations, are more inclined to challenge coworkers, and show less respect for the workplace hierarchy. They are also more likely to change jobs if they are dissatisfied with the balance between their personal and professional lives or with the workplace offerings such as gym membership, flexible scheduling, holidays, and so forth (Kane 2011; Wilson 2012). Despite the generational differences, individual employees hold value and significance for better pay, rewards, career growth and a collaborative

and cohesive work environment (Twenge et al 2010; Giancola 2010). The central aspects to this discussion on generational differences are individuals' preferences and choices towards life, personality-driven traits, circumstances and life/career stages are all overlooked by generational groupings, despite the fact that these factors can be significant influencers of workplace expectations and ideals (Delcampo et. al. 2011, Wong et. al. 2015, and Fenton & Dermott 2006). Understanding people's traits and their demographic characteristics always remains crucial to employee engagement and retention enquiry.

In an interesting study conducted on the nursing staff, it was reported that generational aspirations need to be carefully managed by leaders. Nurse leaders analyzed the age distribution, generational difficulties, and mix of generations on their nursing team when conducting a generational inventory of their work units. While it was critical to make all the team members to adhere to the same work standards, company policies, and procedures, nurse leaders needed to take into account the requirements of specific employees and the generational divide as it ensured that an environment of retention was fostered. This had an additional positive impact in the areas like coaching, motivating, communicating, and settling disagreements (Sherman 2007; Hart 2006; Halfer 2011). In another study on nurses, it was found that job satisfaction amongst all generation of employees and nurses' retention were directly influenced by the leadership approach. Therefore, it is widely agreed upon that adopting a suitable leadership style will enable increased efficacy when addressing generational concerns (Kowalski et al. 2010).

Other studies in this direction also focused on the significance of talent retention and when managed well how it can lead to numerous benefits such better organizational performance and outcomes, high employee morale and better knowledge management that creates a good employer brand as well as a sustainable competitive advantage. Losing vital talent base is damaging in terms of additional costs of talent attraction, productivity and reduced morale. Most companies presume that employees exit owing to lack of monetary growth. The generational aspirations may lead to a multitude of factors that can cause employees to prefer to exit like career growth and advancement, lack of adequate benefits, non-supportive work environment, conflict with peers and reporting authority, lopsided work life balance and many such significant factors (George 2015). The rise of a multigenerational workforce has a significant impact on talent management strategies and

presents opportunities and difficulties exclusive to firms seeking to leverage the skills and abilities of each generation (Kostanek and Khoreva 2018). Generational differences are also transforming the landscape of the workforce. Research indicates a decline in long-term employment connections and a preference among employees for immediate gratification over long-term benefits. Employees also wanted bonuses and instant salary increases in order to keep morale high, retention rates high, and productivity high. Additionally, when supervisors spend more time getting to know their subordinates, they build stronger relationships with them. As a result, supervisory responsibilities now demand greater time and expertise than in the past to handle employee-related concerns and serve as the organization's face (Tulgan 2004).

Another strategy for bridging the generational divide is to provide incentives and support. As it is improbable that a single incentive program can satisfy every employee in the office, it is crucial to make sure that incentives and support are tailored to each person according to their values and worldview. One way to recognize achievement could be to offer an option between a performance incentive and time off. Because various generations place different values on different things, rewards that reflect these differences can have a big impact on keeping key people around (Hatfield 2006).

The vast literature on different worker generations frequently discusses the generational differences and how they affect the workforce, with the majority of the articles concentrating on values and characteristics. These assessments frequently emphasized the generational divide as a reason for the internal conflict that exists in the workplace. The literature's substance focused on the necessity of innovative leadership strategies to identify points of agreement (Gursoy et al., 2008; Gursoy, et al., 2013; Lyons & Kuron, 2013; Baran & Klos, 2014; Salahuddin, 2011; Weingarten, 2009). Creating a diverse and inclusive work environment can also foster creativity and collaboration among employees of different generations, perhaps leading to increased productivity and employee retention (Bourne 2015).

The core of comprehending employee engagement lies in understanding age diverse organizations. With the changing dynamics, every employee is unique in a workplace as they bring in diverse interests, unique skills and competencies and aspirations. When these are not met, that's where the

talent retention challenges surface. Within this world of change and temporariness, employees need work challenges, more meaningful jobs and a workplace life that is devoid of boredom and monotony. While sustaining the aspirations of employees is definitely a daunting task, making the young millennials and Gen Z to opt for a long term association with a single employer for an extensive time period in today's times is beyond plausible. The preference for change and newness, the willingness to explore and the nomadic aspirations all contribute towards normalizing a workplace change. Despite engaging employees to a large extent, talent retention has become quite an uphill task for all the human resource professionals. The changing socio-economic dynamics also contribute towards this trend wherein sticking to a firm for a longer period of time is presumably considered a taboo amongst the younger employees. Their need for embracing change acts as a pull factor for exiting organizations.

1.2 Research Problem

In the current business climate, many firms find it difficult to address the issue of attracting and keeping qualified personnel, which is essential for gaining a competitive edge and improving overall organizational performance. Employer Branding is a common HR tactic used by large firms with a specialized HR department, where “employees” are substituted for “internal customers.” One proactive approach to resolving issues with employee engagement and retention is to rebrand employers as an “employer of choice,” which incorporates the more recognizable product branding into employment and organizations. Employer brand helps to effectively package and present to potential as well current employees an assortment of various functional, economic, and psychological benefits that is deemed desirable by the employees (Amarakoon and Colley, 2023; Ambler and Barrow, 1996; Tanwar and Prasad, 2016; Backhaus, 2016). According to the social exchange theory, employees tend to give back more to their employers when they get more in return for their time and labor. Recent studies have shown that people who feel their contributions are valued by the company develop positive attitudes toward the company and their jobs. Therefore, employee retention is also viewed as potential outcome and benefits from the use of the social exchange and reciprocity concept. According to social exchange theory, the unique perks offered by employer value proposition helps to achieve better organizational commitment and loyalty from the employees. They also have a significant impact on employee retention, job

commitment, satisfaction and a host of other workplace attributes. Research studies have classified the attributes of employer value proposition into various categories namely psychological, functional and economic. Right from the time an employee is onboarded, the experiences of every employee with the organizational culture, career growth, compensation and rewards, peer relationships, nature of work, empowerment, job stability etc. have a deepening and significant impact on level of engagement and stay (Blau 1964; Tsarenko et al., 2018; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Berthon et. al. 2005; . Kuchеров and Zavyalova 2012; Tanwar and Prasad, 2016).

Employee engagement is highest when the organization offers autonomy, support, and appropriate learning and development opportunities. According to academic literature, employee engagement is the process through which members of an organization harness their own identities for the purpose of performing their job. During role performances, individuals participate in physical, cognitive, and emotional self-expression. Employee engagement serves as a barometer to evaluate an individual's level of commitment to the company. A complex and multidimensional idea, employee engagement can be assessed in terms of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement. The psychological condition of intending to act in a way that enhances performance and produces favorable organizational results is known as behavioral engagement. The degree to which an employee understands their function within the company and the purpose of their work is known as cognitive engagement. The emotional component focuses on how the three components and the organization are perceived by the staff. There is no one paradigm emerging from the research on engagement; some argue that engagement is a variable at the human level, while others view it as a variable at the organizational level (Lee et al., 2022).

With the deliberations surrounding the significance of employee engagement and also keeping in mind the heightened level of talent mobility, comprehending and revisiting the impact of employee engagement on employee retention under different research contexts is imperative. Moreover the research studies that seek to establish a linkage between employee engagement and employee retention are of utmost importance in today's times because of the influx of various demographic workforce segments. Adding to the existing challenges is the adoption of new employment patterns like the partial work from office, hybrid and work from home patterns.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The research pertaining to *Employee Engagement and its Impact on Employee Retention* basically intends to understand the drivers that create employee engagement within organizations. It is widely believed that highly engaged employees contribute to more productivity, have a strong sense of ownership and are will create many other positive organizational outcomes. In recent times, considering the growth in jobs, economies and preferences for being mobile, creating a lasting engagement in the workplaces has become a priority for the human resource professionals. Highly engaged employees contribute towards creating healthy and sustainable organizations. Elaborating on the early industrialization days of employee welfare, it is now widely acknowledged that creating a climate of care, well-being and concern is taking precedence. It is believed that engaged employees create a positive work and organizational culture, thus enabling constructive outcomes (De Clercq et al. 2018).

Primarily employee engagement is defined as a state of mind associated with the work context, which is optimistic, enjoyable and satisfying. It is characterized by absorption, vigor and dedication. Absorption is the state of being totally focused and absorbed in one's work. Vigor is the state of having a lot of energy and mental fortitude while working. Dedication is the state of being deeply interested in one's job and feeling a sense of purpose, enthusiasm, and challenge. According to the definition of employee engagement, it is the simultaneous application of one's physical, cognitive, and emotional energies to an active, full work performance. Previous research has concentrated on personal engagement, which is defined as the uncoupling of an individual's identity from their work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves during role performances, whereas in engagement, people employ and express themselves with feelings, in the flesh and cognitively (Kahn 1990; Rich et. al. 2010; Schaufeli et. al. 2002; Christian et. al. 2011).

With many previous studies providing ample supporting evidence on the beneficial aspects of employee engagement, it is often deliberated that engaged employees can serve as a competitive advantage as well to organizations. However, the challenge is to keep the employees constantly engaged in the current times. Creating conditions that in turn create an enabling organizational

climate has been of heightened research interest in recent times. With the growth in startups alongside MNCs and conglomerates, exploring the need, preferences and the outcomes created by exceptionally engaged employees has intensified. This is all the more significant and calls for crucial deliberations and the need to revisit again and again. In an annual employee engagement survey conducted by Gallup, the 2023 data indicates that globally only 23% employees' experience engagement at their workplaces. This number is slightly higher for U.S. as it stands at 33%. However for organizations that adopt and implement best practices, a whopping 70% of engaged employees have been reported. There are still many countries due to poor labor policies either subject or allow their employees to be exploited by various firms. Workplace disengagement needs to be addressed before it leads to job dissatisfaction, decreased morale & productivity, reduced well-being and potential exit of employees that can lead to huge revenue losses.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Since the start of the era where employee orientation has gained prominence, increased consideration has been paid to positive psychology. Positive psychology is believed to look into the well-being aspects of individual employees. It is believed to be the scientific study of human forte and their ability to contribute to the optimal (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi 2000). This approach of positive psychology is more positive than the customary focus of psychology which focused more on negative aspects like psychological disorders, damage and other diseases or disabilities experienced by individuals. The focus areas of positive psychology because of its benefits towards optimal functioning have stirred interest of researchers in the organizational psychology area. This is mainly because when individuals are given due attention and comprehended from a perspective for their psychological strengths and competencies, it will lead to performance management and improvement at the workplace (Luthans 2002).

When the individuals' energies and competencies are channelized in the right direction, it is bound to result in higher work engagement. When employees are positively engaged at work, they not only contribute to better organizational outcomes, they also appreciate their own individual contributions. The engaged employees also feel that their work roles hold significant value in the organization and start experiencing indispensability. This will help to nurture positive emotions,

keep the employees satisfied, reduce stress & burnout and develop a sense of ownership. All the organizations with positive work cultures are nowadays working towards creating more meaningful roles which in turn develop a sense of ownership amongst the employees for their roles as well as their organizations.

What is interesting to note here is that, in a talent mobile era, engaged employees are the ones that contribute to employee retention numbers. This is contrary to the disengaged employees who experience a disconnect with their roles and organization. The disengaged employees unlike their engaged counterparts feel burdened with the everyday job demands and lack energy & enthusiasm to continue in their current job roles. Keeping employees engaged and sustaining their fervor alongside their contributions is one of the decisive challenges that are being faced by organizations in this day and age.

Rather than a fleeting and distinct feeling, engagement refers to a more lasting and widespread affective-cognitive state that is unfocused on any one item, event, individual, or conduct. It consists of vigor which can be understood as high levels of energy and mental resilience when working, a willingness to put in tremendous effort in one's work, and perseverance even in the face of adversity. Dedication is another aspect of engagement which is about being deeply invested in one's work and feeling a sense of significance, excitement, inspiration, pride, and challenge. Finally, absorption is also viewed as an important component of engagement and refers to individuals' being completely absorbed and happily riveted in one's task. Over a period of time, individuals experience the difficulty of disconnecting oneself from their job. Thus, vigor and dedication are regarded direct opposites of the basic burnout qualities of tiredness and cynicism (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). As a result, the correlations between vigor and exhaustion, as well as dedication and cynicism, are projected to be substantially negative. The other elements of burnout (professional efficacy) and work engagement (absorption) are distinct but not diametrically opposed.

Many studies have explored the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement wherein they explored performance & motivation (Susanto et. al. 2023; Boccoli et. al. 2023), job satisfaction (Nguyen & Ha 2023; Novianti & Ramli 2023), productivity (Kwarteng et. al. 2024;

Zen 2023; Raghaw 2024), retention (Chopra et. al. 2024; Kossyva et. al. 2024; Bhakuni and Saxena 2023; Smith et. al. 2020), well-being (De la Calle Duran and Rodriguez 2021; Faiz Rasool et. al. 2021; Hamilton et. al. 2021; Salmah et. al. 2024), burnout (Gillet et. al. 2024; Ajayi and Udeh 2024; Cole et. al. 2012; Freeney and Tiernan 2006), commitment (Vance 2006; Wachira 2013; Albrecht and Marty 2020; Gajenderan et. al. 2023) and leadership (Rezeki et. al. 2023; Yan et. al. 2023).

While many previous studies focused on the antecedents of employee engagement, very few have explored the direct implications of employee engagement on other consequences, in particular employee retention. Discrete studies specific to one industry have been reported till date. This study intends to bridge the gap by choosing a combination of industries to explore the relationship between employee engagement and employee retention. This study further gains significance as it is being conducted at that point in time where multigenerational workforce is present in organizations and poses immense challenges for the government, firms and employees alike. The challenges not just pertain to the kind of policies that need to be created and implemented; the challenge also lies in creating varied and sustainable employer value propositions that help nurture workforce in the short term and long term.

1.5 Research Purpose and Questions

The most fundamental and significant aspect for any research that is undertaken is to add value to the existing body of literature and pave way for new-fangled research thoughts to be explored under diverse research contexts. While every research is unique, it needs to take into account the dynamics and influence of each construct and variable. For a construct like Employee engagement, it will constantly evolve with changes in the generational workforce, changes in the organizational size & hierarchy, technological & environmental influences and with other macro and micro stimulus factors. While every organization and its culture are unique, their systems, practices and policies constantly evolve as per the mandated norms as well as the need to offer better value propositions to the employees. Employee engagement literature has been found to be influenced through workplace climates. The employee experiences are consequential to workplace climates and culture. They tend to shape employee attitudes, perceptions and intentions towards work, peers

and even intentions to stay. One of the unmissable aspects in any workplace is the role of leaders and their influential personality characteristics that can create a safer and nurturing environment. Good leaders are those that create workplace environments filled with civility, trust and transparency. The more psychological safety an employee experiences, the more engagement he or she demonstrates at work. Psychological safety is essential and a pre-requisite for the employees to gain positive experiences in the workplace. Feeling safe helps employees to learn more, innovate and engage in extra role behaviors besides being totally committed on the job and towards the organization. Psychological safety also ensures that employees experience more positive incidents in their work lives. Each such critical incident is documented for sense making about the organizational culture, team culture, leadership influence and overall experiences (Arakawa and Greenberg 2007; Buckingham and Coffman 1999; Harter et al. 2002; Luthans and Peterson 2002; Wagner and Harter 2006).

Though Employee engagement is not an under researched construct, its impact on key employee and organizational related outcomes still attracts attention. Employee retention has been one such employee related key outcome that poses a great concern to every employer. The electronic & print media well as other professional platforms and job portals are abuzz with recruitment advertisements on a daily basis. This truly is representative of the labor market dynamics that offers opportunities to potential as well as current employees to make a switch to new job roles. As economies boom, they bring in lot of opportunities to the potential as well as current employees and augment the talent retention challenges. Off late the challenges have been amplified with the growth in gig jobs. Many countries are yet to formalize the labor policies for the gig economy which is again posing challenges due to heightened labor movement. Adding to all these existing issues, the changing preferences for jobs and type of employment amongst the diversified workforce is another worriment that forms a foundational basis for employee attrition.

The proposed study intends to explore the relationship between employee engagement and employee retention. It intends to bring out outcomes related to high levels and low levels of engagement and the associated positive and deleterious effects of the varied levels of employee engagement. The proposed study also intends to look at the specific factors of employee engagement and their ability to vary as per the changes in the HR policies and how such policies

also influence the perceptions of employees. Making a quantitative evaluation of such employee engagement policies and undertaking the comparison of the consequential implications across various departments, hierarchical levels, demographic categories will help the study to concretize the variations and patterns if any. While exploring the various factors and establishing causal relationships, it is also imperative to identify appropriate strategies and interventions that can be implemented by firms to boost their employee retention in a volatile and mobile talent market, to track shifts in retention and engagement over time, offering insights on the long-term viability of engagement programs, examine the wider consequences for the success and performance of the organization that arise from better employee retention through increased engagement and provide HR specialists and organizational executives practical advice on how to use employee engagement tactics to their advantage in order to retain talent.

The overall goal of this study's research is to provide empirical data and insights into the ways that encouraging higher employee engagement levels can have a positive impact on employee retention. This will help organizations develop more successful retention strategies and increase their overall performance. This study will currently limit itself to evaluating the formal sector employment wherein the Employee engagement practices and their impact on Employee retention will be assessed. The current study intends to answer the following Research Questions:

1. What are the major factors of effective employee engagement strategy within organizations?
2. Do the factors of employee engagement influence employee retention among Indian employees?
3. Do demographics play a role in influencing employee engagement and retention among Indian employees?

Each of these research questions would be given a different statistical treatment in order to obtain the best possible results. The first research question has been addressed through factor analysis. The second research question has deployed regression while the third resorted to utilizing the one way ANOVA technique to answer each of these questions.

1.6 Conclusion

Employee engagement is considered to be on the most critical and fundamental drivers to achieving organizational success and employee retention. With rapid demographic changes in the workplaces, Gen Z is preferring to pursue meaningful jobs that can keep them engaged. Apart from Gen Z, the workplaces are also witness to generational differences who have their own professional preferences. The bottom line to running effective workplaces as well meeting the generational requirements is to ensure that the roles are engaging and meaningful. Research has evidenced the fact that engaged employees bring in huge benefits to a workplace through improved productivity (Bourne 2015; Kwarteng et. al. 2024; Zen 2023; Raghaw 2024), performance (Susanto et. al. 2023; Boccoli et. al. 2023), job satisfaction (Nguyen & Ha 2023; Novianti & Ramli 2023), retention (Chopra et. al. 2024; Kossyva et. al. 2024; Bhakuni and Saxena 2023; Smith et. al. 2020), greater commitment (Vance 2006; Wachira 2013; Albrecht and Marty 2020; Gajenderan et. al. 2023) and a host of other consequences.

Other popular surveys that were conducted in workplace contexts have also substantiated the relationship between employee engagement and positive organizational outcomes. Gallup 2023¹ survey have put forth the facts that, at a global level, 62% of the employees are not engaged while those who are actively disengaged stands at 15%. Only 23% are found to be engaged. Workplace engagement of the employees is extremely important as engaged employees can significantly lower the attrition rates to a whopping fifty nine percent. However, disengaged employees have the capacity to lower the global GDP to an alarming extent of nine percent. The same survey also stated that in India, only nine percent of the workforce is engaged and the voluntary turnover rate is almost thirty percent because of thirty three percent of actively disengaged workforce who contribute to this. Considering the literature background and the survey data, employee engagement is a dynamically changing construct which can also vary from vulnerable industries to not so vulnerable industries. This calls for testing of this construct to look at its impact on employee retention in a hugely populated and highly diversified workplace context like India. This study will offer interesting insights and will allow for corroborating the relationship between employee engagement and employee retention in India, which has a huge labor supply and a dynamic labor market.

¹ <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349484/state-of-the-global-workplace.aspx>

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents comprehensive overview for the existing body of knowledge on related area of study in order to provide necessary background for undertaking the present research study. Extant literature review has been carried out to build the strong foundation to support the research study. This section deals with several research studies undertaken earlier in the area of employee engagement and employee retention. Research outcomes of the research studies in the related areas of research are highlighted here. The literature review has been divided into three broad sections i.e. Employee engagement, employee retention and impact of employee engagement on employee retention (Refer Figure 2.1).

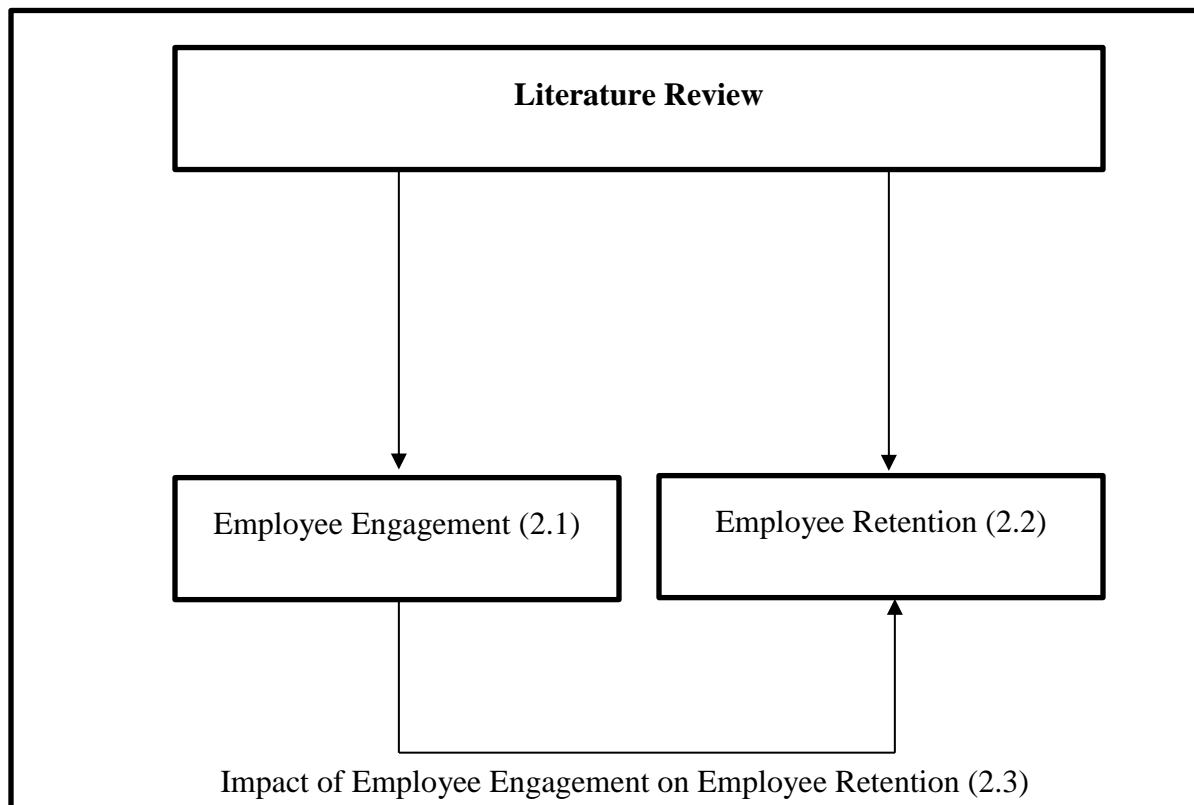


Figure 2.1: Showing the Schema of Literature Review (Developed by the Researcher)

2.2 Employee Engagement

Times have gone when employers were determined on asking their employees to work from office because employee productivity was measured based on their time spent in office. Things have changed post-covid era, where productivity is now measured based on output and less on time spent in office (Hill, et. al., 2003). In such changed times, effectively engaging employees has become very challenging either on site or remotely. Employee engagement is an important factor in organizational performance and has become a hot topic for academics, practitioners, and researchers (Saks, 2006). This review of the literature will provide an overview of employee engagement, including its definition, importance, and relationship to employee retention.

As quoted by Kular et. al., (2008), the word “employee engagement” refers to the emotional connection that people have with the organizations they work for and the positions they hold. When employees are invested in their work, they are committed to it, take responsibility for it, and are eager to go above and beyond to support the success of their organization. Employee engagement is defined as the level of commitment, passion, and loyalty that employees have towards their work and their organization. Hanaysha (2016) has linked employee engagement has been linked to various positive outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity, and overall organizational performance.

Khan (2017) provided a comprehensive review on employee engagement and stated that employee engagement can be viewed as a trait, a condition, a performance behavior, or a combination of all three. Employee engagement has grown in significance in the conceptualization and assessment of the value of human capital in businesses and in the integration of numerous HR-related factors, including psychological contracts, commitment, involvement, and job design (Arrowsmith and Parker 2013). It offers a method of detecting how emotions can affect reasoning in the workplace. As the business and organizational landscape continues to evolve, businesses are being compelled to recognize the relationship between people and performance as well as the importance of understanding and managing talent. Employee involvement appears to have an impact on individuals, teams, and organizations as well (Alagaraja et. al., 2015).

Botes & Rensburg (2000) stated two problems, which have plagued and continue to plague research on employee engagement. First off, there are several definitions of employee engagement, and there is still no clear understanding of what it actually entails. In fact, there is no consensus among scholars on the construct's name. While some contend it ought to be called employee engagement, others propose calling it job engagement or work engagement (Saks and Gruman, 2014). Currently, there is no agreed-upon definition because engagement has been operationalized and assessed in a variety of inconsistent ways. Few researchers have still attempted to define employee engagement as the term used to describe how dedicated and involved an employee is with their work and the company they represent. It is a crucial component of the workplace since motivated, productive employees are more invested in accomplishing organizational goals (Letona et. al. 2021).

Al Mehrzi& Singh (2016) stated that, a favorable work environment, professional development opportunities, work-life balance, recognition, rewards, and job satisfaction are just a few of the aspects that contribute to an engaged workforce. Employee engagement tactics are frequently used by organizations to raise employee morale, lower attrition rates, and increase overall performance. Yousif& Hasaballah (2020) also stated that regular communication, clear goals and expectations, opportunities for professional growth and training, feedback and praise for outstanding performance, fostering an inclusive and happy workplace culture, and ensuring work-life balance are all examples of effective employee engagement techniques. Organizations may develop a workforce that is more motivated, effective, and committed by putting employee engagement first.

Saks (2006) investigated the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and found that job resources, social support, and job demands are important antecedents of employee engagement, and that engagement is positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance. Hakanen, et. al., (2006) studied the relationship between burnout and work engagement among teachers found that burnout and work engagement are negatively related, and that work engagement is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The meta-analysis done by Harter, et. al., (2002) examined the relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes, using data from 7,939 business units in 36 companies and found that employee satisfaction and employee

engagement are positively related to various business outcomes, such as customer satisfaction, productivity, and profitability.

Considering the increasing appreciation of effective employee engagement, many researchers have given several models and theories of employee engagement. Among which, theories like JDR Model, Social Exchange Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Job Characteristics Theory and Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) theory are commonly studied and used for understanding employee engagement. Some studies have also relied on the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, the Khan's model and Aon-Hewitt model while comprehending and devising policies for higher employee engagement.

Demerouti & Bakker (2011) explained the job demands-resources (JD-R) model. The JD-R model suggests that engagement is influenced by job demands and resources. Demands such as workload and time pressure can lead to burnout, while resources such as social support and opportunities for development can promote engagement. A theoretical framework that describes the connection between job features, employee well-being, and job performance is known as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. According to the model, employee well-being and resource availability have an impact on job performance. Work demands are defined as elements of a job that call for persistent effort or have associated costs on a physical, psychological, social, or organizational level. Job demands include things like deadline pressure, workload, emotional demands, and role uncertainty. If these demands are too great or are not sufficiently met, they can cause stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Schaufeli, 2017).

On the other side, job resources are elements of the job that support employees in achieving work objectives, lowering workload demands, and promoting personal development. Social support, feedback, autonomy, and chances for growth and development are a few examples of job resources. These resources may result in better health outcomes, greater motivation, and job satisfaction (Xanthopoulou et. al. 2007).

As per Radic, et. al., (2020), the JD-R concept claims that employee well-being is directly impacted by job demands and resources, which might have an impact on job performance. The status of a

person's emotional, physical, and mental health can be described as their well-being, which is determined by things like their job responsibilities, available resources, personal traits, and social support. Job performance may suffer if well-being is low, whereas high levels of well-being can result in enhanced job performance. In order to increase employee well-being and optimize job performance, the JD-R model indicates that firms should concentrate on giving workers appropriate job resources and lowering excessive job demands (Bakker, et. al., 2007).

Many studies while researching on what enables higher engagement or disengagement for the employees at the workplace have found the two major all-encompassing categories, job demands and job resources to act as the enablers and disablers. Job resources essentially are the enablers that offer motivation to the employees to contribute in their respective roles. This leads to higher productivity for the organization and satisfaction for the employees. Job demands, on the other hand are the disablers that do not support the employee and cause burnout in a particular role. The disablers thus lead to work inefficacies, unproductive work behaviors, disengagement and dissatisfaction. For employees to engage in productive behaviors and to commit through superior performances, the aspects that act as strong antecedents to workplace engagement need to be amplified. Different research studies have identified diverse antecedents like job meaningfulness, availability and safety that can potentially determine the employee engagement levels. The organizational culture, environment and other individual traits, personalities and job attitudes also have the potential to influence (Kahn 1990). Other research studies have focused more on the job related aspects like job relevance, clarity and control as influencing employee engagement (Britt 1999). Further studies have reported the antecedent influencers of employee engagement as being all encompassing with a gamut covering leadership, job aspects, individual aspects, organizational support systems, transparency and fairness, favorable organizational culture, supportive peer group and environment, nonpareil rewards and recognition programs, work autonomy, attuned value systems of employees and organization and career growth opportunities (Maslach and Leiter 2008; Harter et. al. 2002; Macey and Schneider 2008). While the job demands-resources model tends to put forth the fundamental issues that cause engagement and disengagement at the workplace through broader categories of job demands and job resources, it largely fails to create distinctiveness amongst various jobs. The model also fails to map out the varying levels of demands and resources as observed with changing times as well as those that are self-reported by

the employees. The model predictions are stand questionable because it principally does not look beyond the two categories of demands and resources while comprehending employee engagement (Bakker et. al. 2008; Schaufeli and Bakker 2004; Cavanaugh et. al. 2022; Lazarus and Folkman 1984). This model is essentially challengeable in the current times with the changing nature of jobs and constant changing of the market dynamics.

While analyzing employee engagement and its antecedents and consequences, some research studies relied on the transactional theory of stress to comprehend this concept in a better manner. It was therefore concluded that stress did influence workplace engagement. The job demands that were viewed as hindrances negatively impacted employee engagement while the job demands that were viewed as challenges had a positive impact on the employee engagement levels. What needs to be understood here is that, a blanket attempt to identify the relationship between job demands and employee engagement shall not lead to fruitful conclusions but a sub categorization from the perspective of challenges and hindrances can bring forth meaning deliberations in the domain of employee engagement (Boswell et. al. 2004; Cavanaugh et. al. 2022; Lazarus and Folkman 1984; LePine et. al. 2005; Crawford et. al. 2010).

One of the significant aspects of modern organizations is to create robust operational strategies that can maximize employee engagement. For creating attractive strategies on this front, organizations are relying on the existing body of empirical studies that can address the positives and the flip side challenges of the job demands- resource model that is operational within various sectors and organizations (Schaufeli, 2017). The entire deliberations on the need for revisiting and redesigning employee engagement strategies have been aiming for greater health, productivity and well-being for individuals, teams and organizations. A thorough conception and systematic collation of the antecedents, consequences and mediating variables will also help the policymakers at the macro and micro level to ensure better employee engagement process and outcomes (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). The need to revisit and redesign the employee engagement strategies specifically from the job demands resource perspective is fundamentally obligatory because of the changing dynamics of the jobs. When the job demands are beyond manageable and impose greater costs on the physical and psychological well-being of individual employees, they tend to impact workplace performance, productivity and in most cases lead to employee attrition. While the job

demands vary from industry to industry, hierarchy to hierarchy or as per the specific geographical region or country, they do call for interventions that can contain the deviant workplace outcomes (Taris & Schaufeli, 2016). One of the widely acknowledged aberrant outcomes is the job burnout. This is being largely witnessed in today's times with the generational shift in workforce demographics that prefers autonomy and seditious attitudes even at work. While job resources are also viewed with similar challenges, they also need to be addressed to allow for greater growth opportunities for the employees and to offer unrelenting coping support wherever needed. Increasing the job resources is one of the focal strategies to encourage employee engagement at work. Given their capacity to help employees meet job expectations and to start a process of personal development and learning, resources have in fact been found to be the best indicators of work engagement time and again. Social resources are very important for employee well-being. These include encouraging actions and support from leaders and colleagues. However, compared to forms of social support received from direct supervisors and coworkers, organizational support such as a supportive culture has a longer-lasting impact on employee engagement at work (Ashforth et. al. 2008; Biggs et. al. 2014).

While diverse studies utilizing the Job demands resources model have been conducted, all of them essentially have broadly put forth organizational resources, job resources, developmental resources and social resources as the all-encompassing categories. However, recent studies have also incorporated personal resources and engaging leadership as other requisites for an employee to experience engagement or disengagement at the workplace. An individual's motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) and self-efficacy alongside the quality of leadership in organizations have been under-researched for their influence on workplace engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Xanthopoulou et. al. 2009; Mazzetti 2023).

Another theory which is commonly used and studied is social exchange theory. While Social exchange theory was largely known as a social transaction theory, it is being relied on to draw workplace implications owing to its psychological impressions and ramifications. With the constant change in dynamics in the workplaces, social exchanges and their positive or negative reciprocity adds to the understanding of host of workplace outcomes. Social exchange theory came into being as early as the 1920s and has since been explored through various disciplines like

anthropology, psychology, sociology and social psychology. One of the earliest research on this theory looked at how social behavior can be viewed from the exchange perspective that explores power and the associated influences (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005; Cropanzano, et al., 2017; Chernyak-Hai and Rabenu 2018; Cooper Thomas and Morrison 2018; Homans 1958; Malinowski, 1922; Kelley, 1959; Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1964; Firth, 1967).

This theory proposes that engagement is influenced by a social exchange between the employee and the organization. Employees who feel valued and supported by their organization are more likely to engage and reciprocate with increased effort and commitment. An approach to social psychology known as social exchange theory examines human behavior and relationships in terms of the transfer of resources between people or groups. According to this idea, people balance the advantages and disadvantages of social contacts and relationships, and their decisions are influenced by how they feel about fairness, reciprocity, and trust. According to SET, people engage in social exchanges to maximize their benefits while reducing their expenses (such as social support, love, money, power, information, etc). (e.g., time, effort, emotional investment, etc.). A social interaction might have tangible or intangible benefits and costs that can be assessed either subjectively or objectively. Social exchange theory emphasizes the significance of norms and expectations in influencing social exchanges in addition to benefits and costs. Expectations are people's assumptions about how other people will behave, whereas norms are the unspoken laws and standards that govern social interactions. According to social exchange theory, people are more willing to participate in social interactions when they believe that the rules and standards of the scenario are fair and equal. Ultimately, SET offers a framework for comprehending how people negotiate the complexities of social relationships and interactions, as well as how they balance the conflicting demands of self-interest and social responsibility (Cropanzano, et al., 2005). The social exchange theory was developed further through the "social psychology of groups" which introduced the idea of "exchange and power".

This describes the capacity of one party to persuade another party to take a particular action. While the exchange and power emphasized the economic orientation, the psychological orientation of social exchange theory brought forth the influential demeanors of the parties that were involved in the exchange process. As per the noteworthy scholarly contributions, the concept of social

exchange in this context is restricted to behaviors that rely on positive responses from others, while exchange behavior refers to the voluntarily undertaken acts of persons who are driven by the anticipated benefits.

Further studies in the organizational psychology domain have extended the implications of social exchange theory to delve deeper into individual, team and organizational outcomes. These include trust, justice and fairness, organizational citizenship behaviors, peer and leadership support and exchanges and other organizational support systems and arrangements. The underlying factor that determines these exchanges and outcomes within the social or workplace spheres is the economic paybacks. The social life cycle continues to sustain when the economic returns are fulfilling for all the parties that are involved (Homans 1969; Bishop et.al. 2000; Organ 1990; Ladd and Henry 2000; Tepper and Taylor 2003; Mitchell & Ambrose 2012; Ahmad et. al. 2023).

Positive and negative starting actions are the two types of actions that can be understood from the social exchange theory perspective. It is believed that the first actor in an exchange process initiates certain actions. Justice and organizational support are examples of positive initiating acts, while rudeness, workplace incivility, harsh supervision, and workplace bullying are examples of adverse outcomes. There are two types of responses namely relational and behavioral which the target provides. Eventually, a successful exchange turns an initial economic transaction into a social exchange relationship and keeps the social lifecycle going. The reciprocity rules and other norms of exchange do exist here and they tend to vary from context to context. The other influencing variables like the national culture, regional beliefs and values and other aspects like the social conditioning of individuals also play a huge role in the social exchange process.

Based on the reciprocity rules and norms workers in a company might reciprocate organizational support by exchanging commitments. Psychological exchanges can be influenced by the relationships between participants in an exchange process and hence more pluralistic exchanges occur the closer the two parties are. Being close to someone is about being connected with them especially on a daily basis which remains significant to the amount and type of reciprocity.

The everyday social and psychological exchanges are rooted in the fact that we tend to socially compare ourselves to those who are close to us, which in turn influences the reciprocity. As a result, the parties' social distance or physical separation from one another influences their connection. Moreover, the nature or intensity of their psychological interactions will be directly impacted by such a relationship. It's crucial to remember that a healthy connection not only makes psychological interactions possible, but it may also have a comparable effect on toxic relationships. Comparably, a healthy partnership does not guarantee that pleasant psychological interactions will only take place; negative interactions might sometimes happen. Social exchanges will tend to witness negative interactions as the economic benefits and returns are not as per one's desirous standards.

Many studies have also explored specific workplace implications of the social exchange theory. It is thought that social exchange connections entail a series of contacts that generate undefined duties. Advantageous and fair social exchanges lead to strong relationships that develop productive work behaviors and constructive employee attitudes. When an organization provides financial and emotional support, people feel obligated to give back in like and reimburse the organization. Individuals can give back to their organizations by becoming as involved as they are. In other words, workers will decide how much and to what extent to involve themselves based on the resources that their company provides. Employee engagement is essentially an outcome as per the social exchange theory as it is offered in return to the benefits or other social, financial and emotional resources that are received by the employees from their respective organizations (Saks 2006; Xanthopoulou et. al. 2009).

Job qualities predict job engagement, procedural justice predicts organization engagement, and perceived organizational support predicts both job and organization engagement. Because of the obligation created by the concern and caring associated with perceived organizational support, employees appear to respond with higher levels of job and organization involvement. On the contrary, employee mistrust and cynicism increased as a result of imbalanced social exchanges, which were also found to be positively correlated with employees' perceptions of organizational support and affective commitment as well as contextual performance behaviors. Such imbalanced social exchanges occurred when employers demanded more of their workers but offered little as

benefits, perks or resources through work roles. When an employee, due to any compulsions, stays in the scenario of imbalanced social exchanges for a longer period of time, then such employee experiences burnout as well. Job burnout is another domain that is drawing policy makers and researchers attention off late due to its intertwined relationship with employee engagement, productivity, satisfaction and intentions to stay (Cartwright and Holmes 2006; Maslach and Leiter 2008; Bakker & Schaufeli 2008; Dollard and Bakker 2010). Furthering the existing research, Pincus (2022) interestingly put forth employee engagement as human motivation that had twelve underlying motives. Both employee engagement and human motivation are similar as they become discernable at individual level, are driven by antecedents and consequences, with their latent nature they can be viewed as psychological states and both are multi-dimensional with explicitly defined goals. Interestingly the study also put forth the motives of the social domain, wherein the inclusion and exclusion of individuals especially by the peer group members, caring and uncaring policies adopted by the employer and the recognition and indifference to an employee's contribution are some of the remarkable aspects that can be rooted in the social exchange theory. The employee engagement as identified by many researchers is fundamentally a state and is vulnerable to changing personal, social and workplace dynamics. Though observable, employee engagement is seemingly latent, essentially multi-dimensional and can cause lot of challenges to employers irrespective of the kind of organizations and their performance orientations. These challenges vary culturally, socially and demographically as well and defy the traditional perks and benefits that once facilitated the employee engagement and productivity levels in various organizations. Social exchange theory through the lens of employee engagement, thus calls for a revisit and methodical deliberations by all involved stakeholders.

Deci, et. al., (2017) explained self-determination theory and stated that it is one among the famous theories in the field of employee engagement. This theory suggests that engagement is influenced by the extent to which employees feel a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in their work. Employees who feel a sense of control over their work, have opportunities to learn and grow, and feel connected to their colleagues are more likely to be engaged. The motivation and personality of people are the main topics of Edward Deci and Richard Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), a psychological theory. According to the theory, persons have three fundamental psychological needs: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. These requirements, in accordance

with SDT, are necessary for development, wellbeing, and ideal performance. The need for people to feel in control of their own life, to make their own decisions, and to believe that their own acts are their own is referred to as autonomy. The need to feel competent and effective in navigating one's surroundings and attaining one's objectives is referred to as competence. The term "relatedness" describes the desire to feel a connection to others as well as a sense of support and belonging.

According to self-determination theory, people are more likely to be intrinsically driven when these requirements are satisfied, which means they participate in activities because they find them rewarding and enjoyable in general. When these demands are not addressed, on the other hand, people may become extrinsically motivated, which means they participate in activities as a result of rewards or peer pressure from outside sources. Self-determination theory has been used in a variety of contexts, including employment, sports, health, and education, among others. The theory has been applied to the development of interventions and programs that support boosting intrinsic motivation and supporting the satisfaction of these fundamental psychological needs, which can result in better outcomes and improved wellbeing (Ryan, 2009).

Self-determination theory has been widely utilized to comprehend workplace outcomes as well as leadership behaviors and their ensuing influence. While out of all the leadership styles and behaviors, transformational is most desirable, it helps in achieving the predicted organizational goals through higher motivation and engagement of the employees (Breevaart et al., 2014; Tims, Bakker, & Xanthopoulou, 2011). Through the self-determination theory, it can be comprehended that workplace motivation is crucial to accomplishing certain work outcomes. The concepts of self-determination theory also offer insights into understanding the motivational mechanisms that goes into each leadership style and why each style is preferably adopted (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017; Gagne & Deci, 2005; Kanat-Maymon, Yaakobi, & Roth, 2018).

Based on the degree to which motivation is internalized, self-determination theory provides a multidimensional model that distinguishes between three major categories of motivation. Participating in an activity with complete decision and choice is a hallmark of autonomous motivation. Self-determination theory states that people are autonomously motivated when they

participate in an activity because they find it fascinating and pleasurable or because they recognize the significance and goal of the action. Pleasure is intrinsically driven while the goal is identified by the individuals because of various influencing factors. Controlled motivation, on the other hand, requires involvement with a feeling of control and pressure.

When someone's engagement is only superficially internalized and motivated by internal pressures like self-worth contingencies, ego-involvement, or guilt or when it is not internalized and driven by external factors like seeking a reward or avoiding a punishment, that person is seen as being controlled. Controlled motivation is characterized by a lack of affiliation and a sense of ownership; demands are made of the person in a way that is not entirely familiar to them, and they are exerted both internally and externally.

The body of research on Self-determination theory and leadership is noteworthy in a number of ways. They address the origins of leadership styles first. Research provides much-needed insight into the natural dynamics of how supervisors' desire for their jobs may translate into their leadership styles. The results imply that supervisors' motivations for carrying out their jobs have a somewhat bearing on whether they exhibit transformational, transactional, or passive-avoidant leadership styles. Based on the leadership styles and intentions of supervisors, the employee engagement manifests at the workplaces. Although the design and implementation of technology in the workplace can significantly affect people's motivation, motivation is frequently disregarded in this process. One helpful multidimensional understanding of motivation that can aid in the prediction of these effects is provided by self-determination theory. Self-determination theory states that in order to sufficiently inspire employees, guarantee their best performance, and promote their well-being, three psychological demands must be met. People specifically need to feel competent and in control of their surroundings, which is a need for competence; they also need to feel like agents of their own behavior rather than merely "pawns" of outside forces; finally, they need to feel related to others and have meaningful relationships with them, which is a need for relatedness.

Satisfying these three requirements is linked to improved performance, less burnout, increased organizational commitment, and decreased turnover intentions, according to meta-analytic

research. Additionally, self-determination theory makes a distinction between the three different motivational states that employees may encounter: amotivation (the absence of a reason to engage in an activity), extrinsic motivation (doing something for an instrumental reason), and intrinsic motivation (doing something for one's own sake which is based on interest preferences). Meta-analytic research indicates that higher levels of self-determined motivation are positively correlated with important performance and attitude outcomes, including proactivity, job performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction, compared to higher levels of controlled motivation. As such, scholars support the cultivation and advancement of self-determined motivation in a variety of spheres of life, including the workplace. More self-determined motivation is strongly correlated with the satisfaction of the three psychological demands as mentioned above.

While it is widely accepted that jobs and businesses are filled with uncertainties and interdependence, the self-determination theory plays a significant role in helping to comprehend work motivation and work outcomes. There is a need for the businesses to satisfy the varied needs that arise because of work motivation. Recognizing each need is important and any undermining on this front can cause adverse work outcomes and consequences. Research studies in the organizational psychology domain have identified a host of predictors ranging from leadership behaviors, rewards, peer environment, job related aspects etc. that can support or impede work motivation and thereby the satisfaction of an individual's psychological needs. The nature and organization of people's work tasks within a job or role, such as who makes what decisions, how varied people's tasks are, or whether people work alone or in a team structure, as well as compensation systems, have all been extensively studied in relation to the effects of work design on need satisfaction and work motivation. Individuals can also be proactive in meeting their needs and enhancing their motivation by designing their jobs. Significantly, high-level cognitive and emotional abilities will be needed for the work tasks that people are more likely to perform in the future. These skills are more likely to be developed, employed, and retained when they are supported by self-determined motivation. Therefore, it's critical to comprehend how future employment may satisfy or fall short of the psychological demands outlined by self-determination theory if people are to be productive in their future careers.

Future workplaces may develop into places where psychological needs are either disregarded or better met. Furthermore, there's rising concern that future labor will fulfill the requirements of those with sufficient access to technology and the know-how to use it, while further undermining the fulfillment of marginalized and neglected communities. It is vital to relate important aspects of work to fundamental ideas in self-determination theory in order to comprehend how future work might be in line with human needs. Future work may exhibit interdependence, complexity, volatility, ambiguity, and environmental unpredictability. Here, we concentrate on interdependence and uncertainty because these characteristics encapsulate fundamental worries about the future and how it will affect interpersonal relationships in the evolving workplace. While more social, team- and network-oriented behaviors are needed at higher levels of dependency, more adaptable behaviors are needed at higher levels of uncertainty (Gagne et. al. 2022; Bakker 2022).

Global supply networks and rapid technological advancements have made the environment more unpredictable and the actions necessary for success less clear. The majority of theories of human adaptation center on reducing uncertainty, which serves as a powerful motivator for objectives and actions. Corporate leaders should consider leveraging and even creating uncertainty rather than trying to eliminate it if it starts to define and permeate corporate existence. Put differently, it may be more practical and adaptable for staff members and organizational leaders to think about using more experimental strategies, including improvisation and experimentation, to deal with uncertainty in a highly dynamic setting. It is implied by all of these factors that future effective work will need for proactive behaviors like innovation and the creation of new working methods as well as adaptive behaviors like changing the way work is done. Automation is more practical as a replacement or supplement in circumstances that are stable and predictable, where fewer self-determined types of motivation may be adequate to continue the performance of repetitive tasks. However, in an unpredictable environment people will gain by displaying proactivity, creativity, and cognitive flexibility—all traits that are more likely to surface in those who possess self-determined motivation (White and Sheldon 2014; Humphrey et. al. 2007). Essentially the research studies have focused on the ramifications of self-determination theory from many perspectives. This theory can read into individuals, their psychological motivations, the business environment and the associated consequences, the work outcomes that can be accomplished by bringing in

variations to certain workplace predictors etc. Of all the discussions and deliberations associated with this theory, employee engagement forms the significant and underlying upshot of workplace research (Chua and Ayoko, 2021).

Saavedra and Kwun (2000) explained job characteristics theory where they proposed that engagement is influenced by the presence of key job characteristics, such as skill variety, task identity, and feedback. Jobs that provide these characteristics are more likely to be engaging and fulfilling for employees. The paradigm known as the job characteristics theory was created by Hackman and Oldham to explain how specific elements of a work might affect an employee's motivation, satisfaction, and output (Fornaciari, et. al., 2005). According to the idea, there are five fundamental job qualities that influence these results. The first fundamental quality is the extent to which a profession necessitates the use of a variety of abilities and skills in order to execute tasks. Second is task identity, which is basically the extent to which a job entails a finished, recognizable product that contributes to a bigger result. Third quality is the extent to which a job significantly affects the lives or work of others is referred to as task importance. Fourth quality is autonomy, it basically the extent to which a position enables a worker to exercise independent judgement and control over their work. Last element is feedback, feedback is the degree to which a worker is given precise, direct feedback regarding the quality of their work (Epstein, 1973).

According to job characteristics theory, employees are more likely to be motivated, satisfied, and productive in occupations that have high levels of these qualities. The theory also contends that some environmental and individual factors, including as organizational rules and practices and individual variances in wants and beliefs, might mitigate the relationship between work features and results. Including job enrichment, job rotation, and job redesign are just a few of the ways that JCT has influenced how firms create and manage employment to enhance employee outcomes (Hackman and Lawler, 1971).

The job characteristics theory has been widely used to comprehend the various job aspects and how they can be utilized to improve employee performance alongside producing quality and innovative products. With the growth in the services industry worldwide, employee performance was further emphasized and seen as a medium to offer better quality services that can offer a

competitive edge as well as retain customers. However, with changes in global dynamics and technological advancements, the services industry has seen huge changes. Some for the better with more automation infusion while for the worse, greater job losses and fragile support systems at the workplaces (Oliva and Kallenberg, 2003; Bowden, 2009; Oliva and Sterman, 2001; Taylor and Pandza, 2003). To better navigate the economic and market uncertainties, many companies have also resorted to having fewer employees onboard as compared to the requirement. This has in a way enhanced the job demands whilst the availability of resources remains largely constrained. The non-availability or decline in timely support and employee feedback has also led to the experience of greater job burnout at the workplaces (Reinardy, 2013; Demeroutiet al., 2001). While eliminating the uncertainties was seemingly impossible, they could be predicted and controlled to boost employee satisfaction and performance. That's when the concept of meaningful work and employee engagement were explored and brought into execution with a belief that engaged employees were happier and more productive. While previous studies explored these concepts through top-down strategic implementation, later studies have equally focused on employee initiated changes pertaining to the job as a bottom up approach (May et al., 2004; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Holman et al., 2010). The important and significant role of job crafting has been highlighted in literature which allows employees to tweak in changes in their job roles which can enhance satisfaction and engagement for each of them (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001).

Previous studies have explored various job aspects that positively influenced an employee's performance on the job. One of the major indicators was found to be job crafting that had the potential to create an optimal service orientation for the customers, thus helping employees to remain productive as well. Job crafting is essentially believed to bring about more positive outcomes cognitively, emotionally and attitudinally for the job holders. When employees connect with their jobs emotionally, psychologically and cognitively, they develop more positive attitudes through a sense of ownership and tend to devise their own strategies to evaluate and course correct their own jobs. Interestingly the studies explored not just the long term states and dynamics of job crafting but the everyday benefits of such job crafting as well. Employees when given the autonomy to review their job characteristics and undertake job crafting as a bottom up approach,

tend to experience more meaningfulness at work, resilience, satisfaction and a greater sense of engagement and ownership (Ohly et al., 2010; Hoge and Schnell, 2012; Tims and Bakker, 2010).

Another attention-grabbing prevailing categorization of job crafting literature is seen from the job redesign perspective as well as the positive psychology perspective. It is believed to have stemmed from both the perspectives and has its own benefits and workplace implications when viewed from either. The positive psychology view predicts that individuals seek to satisfy their psychological needs at work and undertake meaningful work contributions. They also seek to contribute through improved performance. The effort put in by individuals enhances their overall well-being, intrinsic satisfaction and psychological happiness. On the other hand, the job redesign perspective highlights the role of workplace autonomy which is utilized by individual employees to balance out their job demands and resources. Through job crafting, employees add meaningfulness to their everyday work in a manner that best suits their desires and capabilities. This in turn has been found to have a positive and productive impact on employees' engagement levels (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Tims and Bakker, 2010; Petrou et al., 2012). Literature through various cross-sectional and longitudinal research studies has highlighted the strong relationship between job crafting and work engagement with work meaningfulness acting as a mediating variable. Various studies have also highlighted the everyday as well as weekly impact of the job crafting on employee engagement and other significant work related outcomes like person job fit and many more (Peral and Geldenhuys 2016; Tims et al., 2016).

Over the years with the growth of capitalism and the private sector thereon, people tend to spend much time at work. The significance attached with career success is huge in today's society. While work is essential for an individual's financial well-being, it can lead to deleterious effects on the mental well-being front if it is not managed well. While work can offer satisfaction to an individual, it can equally cause dissatisfaction, stress and burnout. Employee experiences tend to largely vary across organizations, roles and job responsibilities and accountabilities. While the role of an individual's attitude and personality traits cannot be denied in tackling the possible negativities at work, the need to redefine jobs and roles specific to creating better employee engagement is incontestable. The constant need and pressure to perform has created a taxing environment for the employees at work. Thus it has created a necessity for the employers to

improve the employees' work experiences. In this regard, understanding the job related resources and demands through the lens of job characteristics model and adequately bringing about the necessary variations in order to enhance employee workplace engagement, becomes a significant priority to all the organizations. Research studies have indicated that when job characteristics are altered, it results in meaningful work. Meaningful work and employee engagement have together been found to positively influence human resource practices in organizations, creating sustainable business practices and social responsibility culture (Aguinis and Glavas 2019; Westerman et. al. 2020). With the changing workplace aspirations amongst employees, meaningful work is no longer seen as a practice found in best organizational cultures, but is essentially being viewed as a psychological need that is vital and as a reflection to an employee's self-esteem, self-worth and personal goals. This aspect has gained widespread acceptance amongst human resource professionals, practitioners and policy makers who strongly believe that employees who engage in meaningful work produce positive and sustainable work outcomes at all levels of individual, team as well as the organization (Fletcher and Schofield 2021; Kahn and Heaphy 2013; Saks 2011; Yeoman 2014; Bailey et. al. 2018; Lysova et. al. 2018). Some researchers have also emphasized on the ethical and moral obligations on the part of employers to adopt and nurture bet practices that enable the sustenance of meaningful work and workplaces (Lysova et. al. 2018; Chalofsky 2010; Pratt et. al. 2013; Michaelson et. al. 2014).

While exploring employee engagement, its drivers, antecedents, consequences and the beneficial implications on an employee's personal and professional life, many studies have pointed towards the role of job characteristics such as job significance, work autonomy, feedback, skill and job variety and other support systems. Other psychological factors, mediating mechanisms have also shown consistent and strong relationship with employee engagement. However, the influencing role of job resources and meaningful work has been found to create more engaged employees. In fact, meaningful work has been viewed as a significant mental state that establishes a noteworthy relationship between job characteristics and employee engagement (Lysova et. al. 2023; Bakker et. al. 2007; Lesener et. al. 2019; Bailey et. al. 2017; Christian et. al. 2011; Bakker and Demerouti 2008; King et. al. 2006; Kahn 1990; Cartwright and Holmes 2006; Albrecht 2013). However more research in this direction is needed to establish a sturdy relationship amongst the variables and to

empirically put forth the strong antecedents of highly engaged employees (Han et. al. 2020; Soane et. al. 2013).

Much has been talked of employee experiences and the need to provide meaningful work at the workplaces. While the debate on life's true meaning has been around for centuries in time, the significance of this within the work sphere dimension has been drawn into a few decades ago merely. The work meaningfulness has been arrived upon by delving into employee motivation, performance and satisfaction at work. With more and more employees viewing their work roles as significant aspects of their lives, they are ascribing monetary, psychological and emotional connect with their jobs. Workplace roles are now seen as medium of fulfillment through which positive employee experiences are gained when the job offers worthiness and becomes valuable to the employee. This acts as a prerequisite to employee motivation and performance (Oldham et. al. 1976; Lysova et. al. 2023; May et. al. 2004; Eagleton 2007; Wrzesniewski et. al. 2013; Spreitzer 1995; Cardador and Rupp 2011).

Studies pertaining to meaningful work and job roles have largely drawn immense disagreements within the research community. However the meaningful work domain has fundamentally found its roots in the needs theory, job characteristics theory and positive psychology (Hackman and Oldham 1976; Maslow 1970; Deci and Ryan 2000; Fredrickson 2001).

Job characteristics theory largely helps to creating meaningful job roles and ensuring greater employee motivation and performance. The fundamental and theoretically defined job characteristics pertain to task identity, task significance, skill variety, autonomy while working on the job and feedback that helps in improving the contribution. Each of these characteristics is considered vital to achieving positive work outcomes like augmented engagement, decreased absenteeism and greater work satisfaction. Studies have also reported that meaningfulness alongside other critical variables like feedback and responsibility mediate a strong relationship between job characteristics and positive work outcomes. Studies also showed that job roles that reinforced positive characteristics of the job were significantly correlated to career growth fulfillment, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, satisfaction with leadership and peers, happiness

with compensation and rewards and overall satisfaction with the organizational support system (Allan 2017; Allan et. al. 2019; Humphrey et.al. 2007; Albrecht et.al. 2021).

While drawing a linkage between work meaningfulness and employee engagement, studies have found that an employee's emotional attachment i.e. affective commitment with his or her job has the potential to create effective engagement and beneficial work outcomes. It also adds the possibility of allowing an employee to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior thus partaking in the success of the organization. While it does lead to intrinsic satisfaction of the employee as well as support in the attainment of other key positive outcomes, it enhances the intentions to stay in an employee.

Holistically the research studies have agreed upon the significant outcomes that can be achieved through variations in the job characteristics and how it can lead to affective commitment, engagement and satisfaction (Meyer and Allen 1998; Meyer and Allen 1991; Aamodt 2016; Rainey 2014; Meyer et. al. 2004).

Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) theory is another theory of employee engagement which focuses on the positive aspects of organizations and suggests that engagement is influenced by factors such as organizational culture, leadership, and meaningful work. Organizations that prioritize these factors are more likely to foster engagement among their employees. A paradigm in organizational psychology called Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) aims to comprehend and foster successful outcomes in companies. The foundation of POS is the notion that businesses may be more than just locations where people go to work; they can also be sources of fulfilment, happiness, and thriving for their workforce (Cameron, et. al., 2003).

Instead of concentrating only on issues and shortcomings, POS strives to comprehend and enhance an organization's and its individuals' strengths. It is predicated on the idea that constructive attitudes, conduct, and procedures can result in improved results for people and companies. A few of the fundamental POS ideas are as follows: Positive deviance is the process of identifying and learning from people and organizations that are performing remarkably well, then applying this information to boost performance generally. Resilience: Increasing people's and organizations'

capacity to adjust to change and triumph over hardship. High-quality connections: Establishing positive working relationships that can increase employee engagement, creativity, and productivity. Focusing on an organization's or situation's assets and positive features rather than only its flaws and shortcomings is known as appreciative inquiry. Virtuous leadership: Leaders who exhibit virtues like kindness, empathy, and honesty can foster cultures in their organizations that are conducive to well-being and productivity (Caza and Cameron, 2008).

In order to build healthy organizations that are advantageous to both individuals and the organization as a whole, POS theory emphasizes the significance of cultivating pleasant emotions, relationships, and practices in the workplace. Overall, these theories suggest that engagement is influenced by a variety of factors, including job demands and resources, social exchange, autonomy and relatedness, job characteristics, and organizational culture and leadership.

Furthering the debate on POS and its beneficial implications on organizations, studies have delved into comprehending the human resource practices which are termed to be caring. Literature agrees upon the fact that employee engagement is a multidimensional motivational state and hence it has a host of antecedents. The various influencing aspects are the job resources that help to reduce work demands and offer a strong support system to the employee. Greater job resources enhance learning and development opportunities on the job whilst setting clear work goals. A greater adaptability on the job is experienced by the employee as it allows sustained physical and socio-psychological efforts through resilient support arrangements (Crawford et al. 2010; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Wollard and Shuck 2011).

With employee engagement being multidimensional in nature, studies have listed out a host of antecedents for creating highly engaged employees. However, this also adds to the confusion for the organizations over prioritizing each of these antecedents as the practical benefits need more conceptual foundations (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Ostroff & Bowen, 2016).

Organizational climate that fosters care, concern and support towards its employees creates a positive psychological impact on its key internal stakeholders. Employees who are subjected to caring human resource practices feel that their growth, physical and mental well-being is

promoted. Interestingly, while speaking about the significant role of positive culture and climate, studies have attributed that when employees are given a platform to voice their concerns in a free and fair manner; it would lead to greater engagement with their jobs and also slackens emotional fatigue. Offering flexible human resource practices have been found to lead to greater performance, better employee retention rates and engagement especially amongst the young generational worker cohorts (Conway et. al. 2016; Saks 2021).

Studies have also pointed towards greater satisfaction and happiness amongst the employees when they were offered work from home or telecommuting facilities. This fostered care, creativity and productivity through flexibility. Other aspects associated with positive organizational scholarship were strongly attributed to an organizational climate that offered care and concern for the employees. They fundamentally pertained to perceived organizational support, perceived line manager behavior, high commitment human resource practices that resulted in sustained long term relationships, resilience and performance attributions that mediated between high performance work systems and employee engagement (Masuda et. al. 2019; Aktar and Pangil 2017; Alfes et. al. 2013; Zhong et. al. 2016; Boon and Kalshoven 2014; Cooke et. al. 2019; Huang et. al. 2018; Alfes et. al. 2021).

Positive organizational scholarship has long since focused on the constructive dynamics in organizations that can enhance individual, peer and organizational performance. At the backdrop driving this performance, lays the human capabilities, their dormant potential and excellence that needs to be brought forth which represents fortitude and resilience. Resilience is another significant aspect that determines positivity and leads to incessant work role engagement for the employees. Since POS is a domain that has drawn inputs from other disciplines like sociology, psychology, anthropology and organizational theory, there are different aspects to it that offers positive workplace dynamics at various levels which includes individual, team and organizational. It is widely accepted that POS also allows for positive organizational behaviors to flourish as individuals tend to embrace and address deviant behaviors which also symbolizes the strength of resilience that organizations endorse.

While positive organizational scholarship with its host of antecedents creates beneficial outcomes, research studies have concluded that it also creates flourishing employees. Such engaged employees help organizations sustain even under uncertain business environments due to the factors associated with positive organizational scholarship. Creating engaged employees by providing flexible climate, organizational support system, supportive leaders, more job resources etc. is fundamental to authorizing the culture of thriving and flourishing (Kleine et. al. 2019; Demerouti et. al. 2015; Butt et. al. 2021; Rautenbach and Rothmann 2017; Abid et. al. 2018; Hobfoll et. al. 1990; Abid et. al. 2015; Caesens et. al. 2017; Ksiazek et. al. 2016; Del Libano et. al. 2012; Park et. al. 2022; Imran et. al. 2020).

After thoroughly reviewing the literature on employee engagement, the researcher developed a structured questionnaire by referring to various scholarly sources. The employee engagement survey instrument consisted of 30 items (Appendix B). The 30 items have been adapted from different sources in the literature. Items 1 to 17 were adapted from Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) and Schaufeli and Bakker (2004). The items included a variety of statements like *At my work, I feel bursting with energy*, *My job inspires me*, *I am proud of the work that I do*, *At my job, I am very resilient, mentally* and *It is difficult to detach myself from my job*. Items 18 to 20 were adapted from Bakker & Demerouti (2007) and they consisted of statements like *I have flexibility in the way I get my job done*, *I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role* and *My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time*. The last 10 items i.e. from 21 to 30 have been adapted from Kahn (1990) and Bakker et. al. (2011). The statements primarily questioned aspects like *I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job*, *When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one* and *At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems*.

2.3 Employee Retention

Any organization's long-term viability and profitability rests on its ability to hold onto its core personnel. The capacity to retain the best people in any firm has a significant impact on customer happiness, organizational performance in terms of higher sales, satisfied coworkers and reporting staff, successful succession planning, etc. Employee retention has been of great importance in every field of business (Das, et. al., 2013). Business are finding out very difficult to retain employees due to tough competitions from the competing businesses in terms of work culture,

compensation, working hours and etc. In such cut to cut competitive era, it becomes extremely vital to understand the key factors affecting employee loyalty in any organization (Mathimaran and Kumar, 2017). Before understanding the factors, it's important to understand the concept of employee retention. Although there are many definitions given by multiple authors and researchers, but the definitions still stands conflicting. Employee retention is about staying with a company for long time or it's about working with complete dedication and commitment even during short stay with the company (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010).

Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) explored that there are several factors that affect employee retention rather than just one, and that these factors all work together to keep individuals in an organization. Management must take into account elements like pay and benefits, job stability, training and advancement, supervisor support culture, workplace atmosphere, organizational justice, etc. The main determinants of an organization's success are staff retention and satisfaction. The three main components of the retention factor are social, mental, and physical. Employees always choose flexible work projects where they can utilize their skills and see the consequences of their efforts, which, in turn, assists in retaining the precious resources. Work characteristics make up the mental component of retention. The interactions that employees have with others, both inside and externally, make up the social dimension. The working environment and compensation are part of the physical dimension. The use of a wide range of human resource management criteria by organizations to affect employee commitment and retention was correctly noted (Renwick, et. al., 2013).

Pfeffer and Veiga (1999) explained employee retention as a company's capacity to keep its employees for a lengthy period of time, is a crucial component of any successful organization. A company's productivity, profitability, and general performance can all be adversely affected by a high personnel turnover rate. Cost-effectiveness is among the most important advantages of staff retention. Due to the expenses involved in hiring, training, and onboarding new staff, having a high employee turnover rate can be quite expensive for a business. Kransdorff, (1996) stated that finding a suitable successor for a departing employee consumes a significant amount of time and resources for the business, and it costs considerably more to train and acclimatize new workers to

the workplace culture. A business can reduce these expenses by keeping its current workforce, which benefits the bottom line.

Hughes, et. al., (2008) mentioned that increased productivity is a crucial advantage of staff retention. Long-term employees are more likely to have a thorough awareness of the company's culture, processes, and procedures. Also, they probably have stronger bonds with their coworkers and managers, which can foster better teamwork and collaboration. Higher productivity and improved outcomes for the business may arise from this degree of comprehension and cooperation. Taneja, et. al., (2015) also stated that increased employee satisfaction and motivation can also result from retention. Employees are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs and driven to work their hardest when they feel valued and appreciated. Employees can be shown that they are valued through retention strategies including recognition, rewards, and career development opportunities, which can ultimately result in higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction.

Also, keeping staff can help the brand's reputation and image. It may be difficult to attract new talent if there is a poor opinion of the organization due to high employee turnover. On the other hand, if a business is known for keeping its employees, it may be viewed as a desirable employer, which may assist it draw in top talent. Businesses that support the growth and welfare of their workers are more likely to be regarded as ethical and socially responsible (Du, et. al., 2010).

Employee dedication and devotion to their company are measured by employee loyalty. In the fields of organizational behavior and human resource management, this idea has been the focus of in-depth study. This review of the literature gives a general overview of the definitions, causes, and effects of the existing studies on employee loyalty. Although there are many different definitions of employee loyalty, it is typically understood to be a multidimensional term that encompasses emotive, normative, and ongoing commitment to the organization (Peterson, et. al., 2004). An emotional bond with the organization and a conviction in its principles are referred to as affective commitment. Although continuation commitment relates to the cost an employee believes they would incur if they left the company, normative commitment is based on a sense of duty or obligation to the firm.

Many antecedents of employee loyalty, such as job satisfaction, organizational support, and perceived workplace fairness, were investigated by Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002). According to research, loyal employees are more likely to identify with the company and feel a strong feeling of belonging. Also, staff members who have been with a company for longer times tend to be more devoted (Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019).

Employee loyalty has a variety of benefits that can benefit both the organization and the individual employee. For instance, loyal employees are less likely to quit the company, which can save turnover costs and improve stability. Moreover, loyal workers are more likely to exhibit traits that are advantageous to the business, like higher output, improved client relations, and lower absenteeism. Also, it has been discovered that companies with high levels of employee loyalty have a better reputation, which can increase their capacity to draw in new workers and clients (Meyer, et. al., 1997). Despite the benefits of employee loyalty, there is evidence to suggest that it might not always be beneficial. Employees who are devoted to the company without questioning its unethical or inefficient methods, for instance, may be less likely to do so (Titus, et. al., 2008). Additionally, if loyalty is attained through coercion or fear, it might have a negative effect on workers' well-being (Cortina and Magley, 2003).

In conclusion, employee loyalty is a complicated concept that is influenced by a wide range of variables and has a wide range of results, both favorable and unfavorable. Future studies should continue to investigate the causes, effects, and best practices for fostering and sustaining employee loyalty in firms. Also, researchers must think about potential negative effects of employee loyalty and create countermeasures. Organizations may make wise choices about how to promote and utilize employee loyalty for the benefit of both the employees and the organization by understanding its nature and impact (Raziq and Maulabaksh, 2015).

The various theories in the field of employee loyalty paint a clear picture of the various aspects affecting employee loyalty in each firm. The Human Capital Theory is the one that is applied and used the most. According to Tan's (2014) explanation of this theory, employees gain their skills, knowledge, and talents via education and experience, making them valuable assets to their employers. Because they have invested in their development and wish to protect that investment,

employers are loyal to their employees. According to the economic theory known as “human capital,” people are investments in themselves. It implies that people can increase their current well-being and potential income by making personal investments in their own growth. According to the notion, these expenditures produce a stock of human capital that can be employed to provide a return in the form of increased earnings and business prospects. The degree and quality of education and training acquired, one’s level of health and nutrition, and one’s exposure to new ideas and technologies are all said to have an impact on the return on investment in human capital. The human capital theory also acknowledges that not all people experience the same returns to their human capital, and that variations in outcomes can be linked to a number of variables, including as discrimination, access to education and training, and the standard of one’s diet and health. The human capital hypothesis proposes that investing in human capital can result in economic growth and development, which has significant consequences for public policy, particularly with regard to education and training. It is frequently consulted by economists and policymakers in order to understand the effects of education and training programmes on the labour market and the economy as a whole and to help them make investment decisions.

In social exchange theory, there was still another theory that touched on the idea of employer loyalty. According to this notion, employee and employer relationships are the foundation for employer loyalty. When they experience positive benefits, such as job stability, comfortable working environment, and fair pay, employees feel loyal to their employers. When employees make great contributions, such putting forth a lot of effort and dedication, employers are devoted to them. A social psychology and sociological perspective known as “Social Exchange Theory” analyses social development and stability as a process of individually-negotiated trades. According to the notion, everyone engages in social conduct because they hope to obtain something of value in return, and all social relationships are predicated on the idea of reciprocity (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

The idea contends that people participate in social trade when they anticipate outweighing the disadvantages of a connection by its advantages. Based on their expectations of the costs and rewards of continuing connection, they assess their relationships and modify their conduct as necessary. People may decide to discontinue a relationship or change the conditions of their contact

if they believe the expenses of the relationship outweigh the advantages. The Social Exchange Theory has been used to understand a wide range of social phenomena, including romantic relationships, friendships, organizational Behaviour, and social networks, in a number of social scientific disciplines, including sociology, psychology, anthropology, and communication studies. The idea has had a significant impact on how we perceive and explain social conduct, and it is frequently used in social psychology to explain social attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors. Although it has been criticized and modified over time, like other ideas, it has its limitations (Cook, et. al., 2013).

According to resource-based perspective theory Wernerfelt (1984), employer loyalty is a strategic resource that is important and unique. When employees contribute valuable talents, knowledge, and abilities to the company, employers are loyal to them because they help the company keep these resources via their dedication to the cause. According to the Resource-Based Vision (RBV), a strategic management theory, a company's internal assets and competencies are what really determine its competitive advantage and success. The RBV focuses on the special and valuable assets and skills that a company has, including its physical assets, intellectual property, reputation, and organizational culture, as well as its capacity to efficiently manage and utilise these assets. A firm's competitive edge, according to the RBV, results from the effective use and coordination of its resources, which enables it to develop and maintain a distinctive value proposition. The RBV also emphasizes how crucial it is for a business to be able to update and modify its resources in response to market and competitive environment changes. The RBV has been extensively used to a variety of industries, including the high-tech, service, and manufacturing sectors, in strategy research. The value chain analysis, the capability-based view, and the dynamic capabilities framework were all developed as a result of its emphasis on a firm's internal resources and capabilities (Chacón, et. al., 2014).

Barley, et al. (2008) conducted additional research on the normative control theory, which claimed that an organization's norms and values influence employee loyalty. Employers are loyal to their staff members when they share their beliefs and work towards the same objectives as the business and when they abide by its policies. A social psychological theory called the "Normative Control Theory" describes how people comply to societal standards. According to the notion, people are

driven to follow social standards because they want to be liked and accepted by other members of their social group. According to the notion, people have a natural tendency to follow social standards in order to win favor from others and prevent undesirable consequences like scorn or exclusion (Steil, et. al., 2020).

According to the theory, people internalize societal standards as a result of socialisation and personal experience, which induces a sense of duty to conform. The expectation of conformity from others within the social group, which establishes a normative control structure, serves to further reinforce this sense of obligation (Beugré, 2010). Prescriptive norms and proscriptive norms are the two types of norms that make up the normative control system. Prescriptive norms outline how people should behave, whereas proscriptive norms outline inappropriate behavior. According to the normative control theory, people actively engage in activities that express their commitment to social standards rather than simply being passive participants in the normative control system. This includes actions like looking up standards and behaviors, keeping an eye on one's own actions to ensure conformity, and making overt demonstrations of conformity. The approach has been used in a variety of settings, including businesses, neighborhoods, and political parties. Group dynamics, group behavior, and collective decision-making have all been explained using this theory. The idea emphasizes the significance of social norms in determining individual behavior as well as the influence of social groupings on the creation and reinforcement of standards (Martin and Dowson, 2009).

Psychological Contract Theory is a key idea in the field of employee loyalty. According to this notion, employee loyalty to an employer is supported by an unspoken contract that details expectations and commitments on both sides. Employees are loyal to their employers when they feel their jobs and benefits are satisfying and employers are loyal to their employees when they keep their promises and duties (Seeck and Parzefall, 2008). The psychological contract theory, according to Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) is a concept in organizational behavior and human resource management that refers to the unspoken understanding between an employer and employee regarding their respective responsibilities and expectations. The connection between an employer and an employee is shaped by a number of expectations, beliefs, and understandings. According to the notion, workers have expectations regarding the compensation they would

receive from their employers in exchange for their efforts. Together with monetary pay, this also includes non-cash advantages like work-life balance, chances for professional advancement, and a positive workplace culture.

Contrarily, Fatt et. al., (2010) asserted that employers also have expectations of their staff members in terms of productivity, performance on the job, and loyalty to the company. Based on the experiences and behaviors of the employer and the employee, as well as the psychological contract's dynamic nature, it may alter over time. Job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment all rise when the Psychological Contract is met. Yet, when the agreement is broken or violated, it may result in low levels of commitment, mistrust, and discontent. In order to have a beneficial and fruitful working relationship, the Psychological Contract Theory emphasizes the significance of managing the expectations and obligations of both the employer and the employee (Seeck and Parzefall, 2008). To sum up employee retention can be defined as encouraging employees to stay with the company for a long time for benefit of employee and organization both.

After thoroughly reviewing the literature on employee retention, the researcher developed a structured questionnaire by referring to various scholarly sources. The employee retention survey instrument consisted of 10 items (Appendix C). The 10 items have been adapted from varied sources in the literature. Items 1, 3, 4, 5 and 9 were adapted from Watson et. al. (2007). The items included a variety of statements like *I am able to balance my work and family domains* and *Overall, I am highly satisfied with my job and the company*. Item 10 was adapted from Mowday et. al. (1979) which stated that *I am not likely to leave my current company within the next 12 months*. Items 2, 6, 7 and 8 have been drawn from Kyndt et. al. (2009). The statements primarily elicited opinions about aspects like *I am happy to work in a flexible work arrangements system* and *My organization genuinely cares for its employees through Employee Assistance Programs and Wellness initiatives*.

2.4 Impact of Employee Engagement on Employee Retention

According to Nguyen, et. al., (2020), one among the most important factor affecting staff retention is employee engagement. Employee engagement is a term used to describe how dedicated, enthusiastic, and committed an employee is to their job and to their company. As it provides a

good work atmosphere that encourages loyalty and commitment, maintaining high levels of employee engagement is crucial to keeping brilliant people. This study of the literature looks at how employee engagement affects retention.

Employee retention (low attrition) is a sign of high employee engagement since it fosters commitment and psychological attachment of an employee with his company. By focusing on the drivers of employee engagement, or its significant aspects, the level of engagement can be raised. The management of human resources is crucial for employee retention. Retention can be increased with the use of good HRM practices in the areas of pay, rewards, career development, supervisor assistance, culture, and work environment. A wide variety of human resources management criteria that affect employee commitment and retention are being used by many firms. They claim that the work environment, supervisor support, organization image, employee value match, compensation, reward and recognition, employees' career growth, etc. are all elements that affect employee retention (Schaufeli, et. al., 2008).

Employee engagement has been found to be a key predictor of employee retention (Saks, 2006). According to the survey, engaged workers are more likely to stick around an organization than disengaged workers. Employees that were already actively involved in their work are happier with their jobs, more dedicated to their employers, and more inclined to promote them to others. Employee engagement has been linked favorably to job performance, job happiness, and organizational commitment, according to a different study by Harter et al. According to the survey, motivated employees are more likely to stick with a company than disinterested ones. In addition to being more productive and inventive, engaged workers are also more likely to go above and beyond the call of duty. Employee engagement, according to a 2007 study by Towers Perrin, is a key aspect of employee retention. According to the survey, engaged workers are 87% less likely to leave their company than disengaged workers. Also, the survey discovered that satisfied workers are more inclined to refer others to their company, which can aid in bringing in fresh talent.

Employee engagement is a crucial component of employee retention, particularly for younger employees, according to a study by Shuck, et. al., (2014). Younger employees are more likely to be engaged than older ones, according to the survey, and engaged employees are more likely to

stay with a company. According to the study, motivated workers are more likely to report job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance. Employee retention is significantly impacted by employee engagement. Employees are more devoted to their employers and less inclined to quit their jobs when they are actively involved in their work.

The attitudes, objectives, and behaviors of an individual influence their level of employee engagement (Ram & Prabhakar, 2011). Employee productivity, organizational performance, and the ease of hiring and retaining new employees are all significantly impacted by employee engagement (Bhatnagar, 2007). According to Casper (2007), research by the Corporate Leadership Council stresses the link of engagement to business success and its direct impact on employee performance and retention and concluded that there is a strong correlation between employee engagement and staff retention.

Markos and Sridevi (2010) concluded that employee engagement and employee retention are closely linked. Engaged employees are more likely to stay with their current employer, while disengaged employees are more likely to seek out new opportunities elsewhere. There are several models that explain the impact of employee engagement on employee retention, including: The Three Component Model: This model proposes that employee engagement consists of three components: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral. Engaged employees have positive feelings about their work, are committed to their job, and are motivated to perform well. According to this model, engaged employees are less likely to leave their current job because they are emotionally invested in the organization and its goals. A cognitive paradigm called the Three Component Model (TCM) describes how anxiety develops and persists. The model was created by David Barlow and colleagues in the 1980s, and clinical psychologists have utilized it extensively to help design efficient therapies for anxiety disorders (Bansal et. al., 2004).

The TCM claims that anxiety is the result of the interaction between three components: cognitive, physiological, and behavioral. The thoughts and opinions that a person has towards a given circumstance or item are referred to as the cognitive component. The physiological aspect describes the bodily reactions that take place when a person experiences anxiety, such as an elevated heart rate or perspiration. The behavioral element describes the responses that a person

has to their anxiety, such as avoiding the environment or thing that makes them anxious. As these three elements interact in a cycle, anxiety, according to TCM, is sustained. For instance, someone who fears spiders would believe that they are hazardous and could bite them (cognitive component). The physiological component of this concept may cause the person to experience physical feelings like perspiration and a rise in pulse rate, which causes them to avoid circumstances where they might come into contact with spiders (behavioral component). This avoidance may strengthen the notion that spiders are harmful and raise anxiety in subsequent circumstances (Solinger, et. al., 2008).

According to TCM, treating anxiety problems often entails addressing all three aspects of anxiety. With cognitive therapy, problematic thoughts and beliefs about the fearful circumstance or object are challenged and modified. It is possible to lessen the physical symptoms of anxiety by using physiological approaches like exposure therapy and relaxation training. To assist the person in facing their anxieties and reducing avoidance tendencies, behavioral approaches like exposure therapy and graded exposure are used. The TCM offers a complete approach to treating anxiety disorders by focusing on all three components (Kouimtsidis, et. al., 2007).

Another important model in literature is the job demands-resources model. This model suggests that engagement is influenced by the job demands (e.g., workload, time pressure) and resources (e.g., social support, feedback) available to employees. When employees have high job demands but also high job resources, they are more likely to be engaged. Engaged employees are less likely to leave their current job because they feel supported and valued by the organization. The physical, psychological, social, or organizational characteristics of a job that call for prolonged physical or mental effort and are linked to particular costs or losses, such stress, burnout, and health issues, are referred to as job demands in the JD-R model. High workload, time constraints, role uncertainty, emotional demands, and job instability are a few examples of employment demands. The physical, psychological, social, or organizational elements of a job that are useful in attaining work goals, minimize workplace demands and costs, and promote personal development are referred to as job resources on the other hand. Autonomy, social support, feedback, job control, and chances for professional development are a few examples of job resources (Bakker, et. al., 2007).

According to the JD-R paradigm, work demands and resources are two separate but connected areas that affect employees' motivation, performance, and overall well-being. The model specifically contends that while high job demands can result in increased stress and burnout, decreased job satisfaction and motivation, and lower levels of performance, high job resources can result in higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation, lower levels of stress and burnout, and higher levels of performance. The JD-R model also suggests that job resources can mitigate the detrimental impact of job demands on worker performance and well-being. In other words, employees are better equipped to handle workplace demands and retain their well-being and motivation when they have access to sufficient employment resources. Employees are more susceptible to the detrimental impacts of job demands when resources are sparse or insufficient, on the other hand. Overall, the JD-R model provides a beneficial framework for comprehending how job demands and resources may affect employee performance, motivation, and well-being as well as for developing interventions that may enhance favorable work outcomes (Schaufeli, 2017).

2.5 Conclusion

Employee engagement has been of much interest to the research community. This construct has been thoroughly examined for its antecedents and consequences. Employee engagement has been fundamentally explored in the literature as a mediating variable that could be potentially varied by changing the precedent variables. As a mediating variable employee engagement was also utilized by researchers to comprehend its impact on various organizational outcomes (Saks 2006; Burke et. al. 2009; Mahon et. al. 2014).

Literature has also witnessed many conceptual studies in this direction that elaborated on the anterior variables of employee engagement (Kossyva et. al. 2023). In a systematic literature review study on employee engagement by Wollard and Shuck (2011), 42 conceptual and experimentally determined individual and organizational factors were reported. In similar studies conducted for comprehending the various factors of employee engagement across two decades, it was found that various individual and organizational level criterion factors heavily influenced the levels of work and employee engagement. Studies in this domain have also attempted at classifying the factors

into various categories that broadly looked at employee, work and job either as independent determinants or through their interplay causing various individual or organizational outcomes with a host of factors classified into different categories. The categories can be associated with work skills, feelings and beliefs, psychological factors and other social exchange facets that govern positive/negative work behaviors, performance, work and family domain interactions, resources, commitment, satisfaction etc. The categories that influence organizational engagement are associated with cultural, leadership, quality of social exchange and work factors that in turn determine resource availability, performance, satisfaction, extra role behaviors and commitment.

The below tables showcase the various categories of Individual engagement outcomes as well Organizational engagement outcomes.

Table 2.1: General Categorization of Engagement's Individual level outcomes

Individual Outcomes/ Engagement	General categories	Factors of each category
Work	Feelings and beliefs Work skills Psychological/Mental factors Social exchange dimensions	personal resources, affective commitment, life satisfaction, personal factors work ability, job crafting, proactive work behavior, employee contributions, contextual performance active learning behavior work-family enrichment, family-to-work enrichment
Employee	Feelings and beliefs Work skills Psychological/Mental factors	job commitment, job involvement self-report innovative work behavior, coping strategies, improved performance, employee effectiveness physical strains, burnout, deviant behavior, work centrality
Both Work & Job	Work skills	in-role performance
Work/Employee/Job	Feelings and beliefs Work skills	turnover intentions, job satisfaction extra-role performance, innovative behavior, task performance

Source: Kossyva et. al. 2023

Table 2.2: General Categorization of Engagement's Organizational level outcomes

Organizational Outcomes/Engagement	General categories	Factors of each category
Work	Work characteristics	job resources, job tension, work intensity, firm performance
	Cultural and organizational factors	organizational deviance, client satisfaction, extra-role customer service
	HR and leadership factors	leader-rated job performance
	Social exchange relationships	person-job fit
Employee	Cultural and organizational factors	innovation
Both Employee & Job	Cultural and organizational factors	organizational citizenship behavior
Both Work & Employee	Work characteristics	job performance
Work/Employee/Job	Cultural and organizational factors	organizational commitment

Source: Kossyva et. al. 2023

Many studies have explored the role of psychological capital and support that help sustain positive individual and organizational outcomes. Psychological capital enables internal communication with transparency which in turn creates strong organizational culture within firms. Organizational cultures that are rooted in transparency and utilization of employees' psychological resource capabilities create more optimism within the workplaces. They also create a climate which allows employees to unveil greater levels of self-efficacy and resilience through a sense of satisfaction and ownership. This creates underlying assumptions for the employees that their organization supports and endorses fairness and unbiased leadership. This in turn has a positive impact on employee engagement (Nazir & Islam 2020; Bentley et al. 2019; Sihag 2021; Karanges et al. 2015; Vercic 2021; Brunetto et al. 2014; Kang & Sung 2017; Ruck et al. 2017; Li et al., 2018; Chen & Peng, 2021).

While many theories and models in the domain of employee engagement have reported a host of antecedent and consequent factors, some studies have reported an interesting employee preference i.e. participation in CSR activities. Engaging in social responsibility activities created a sense of drive and significance for the employees (Duthler & Dhanesh 2018; Nazir et al. 2021).

The employee satisfaction literature has also brought forth many studies in the domain of work-life conflict, crossover and spillover effects. All these studies point towards the fact as significantly influencing employee engagement with a host of other mediating and moderating factors. Employee engagement is also influenced by the quality of work relationships which in turn determine the employee experiences as positive or negative. The work relationships are reinforced or hindered by leader member relations and peer support alongside other factors that can create satisfaction, happiness and engaged employees (Kengatharan & Kunatilakam, 2020; Tims et al., 2015; Breevaart et al., 2014). While some studies point towards the lack of adequate research in exploring organizational level outcomes, employee engagement research needs to holistically explore the policies, processes and mechanisms that bring forth positive as well as negative consequences (Kossyva et. al. 2023; Christian et. al. 2011; Shuck et. al. 2014; Bailey et. al. 2017). The literature on employee engagement has essentially offered many blanket benefits and policies to the employees to sustain their engagement at the workplaces. The benefits pertain to offering more job resources and other benefits like career support policies, training and other developmental opportunities through performance appraisal and management. Every benefit offered to the employee is believed to convert itself into satisfaction and augmented job engagement. Essentially employees exhibit more job and organizational commitment when they foresee career development and growth. This is fundamental to creating engaged employees who foster better organizational performance and outcomes (Payambarpour & Hooi, 2015; Schneider et al., 2018; Soliman & Wahba, 2019; Ahmed et al., 2020; Sabu & Manoj, 2020; Fairlie, 2011; Kura et al., 2019; Presbitero, 2017; Memon et al., 2021; Aktar & Pangil, 2018).

Literature also focused on offering greater job resources and autonomy to the employees which creates a cognitive, affective and emotional connects with the job. This again postulates that job resources and employee engagement share a positive and strong relationship (Mohanty & Arunprasad, 2021; Kahn 1990). Despite numerous studies, the employee engagement literature is

still not devoid of gaps. The literature needs to focus on the changing nature of employment, the changing demographics and their preferences (Priyashantha et. al. 2023). The organizations cannot ignore the changing societal roles or the gendered roles that are perceived in each culture and sub-cultures. The debate also needs to look at the role and influence of the growing gig job market and how they contribute to employee engagement levels. The trends of early retirement, entrepreneurial aspirations, taking breaks from regular employment etc. do call for a significant assessment and reexamination of how work engagement and retention patterns are changing.

In conclusion, the extensive examination of literature on employee engagement and its implications on employee retention elucidates a compelling narrative. The reviewed studies consistently affirm that fostering a highly engaged workforce is integral to mitigating employee turnover. The positive correlation between employee engagement and retention underscores the strategic importance of cultivating a workplace environment that nurtures commitment, satisfaction, and a sense of belonging among employees. In essence, this literature review underscores that employee engagement is not merely a discretionary investment but a foundational element for sustaining a loyal and motivated workforce, ultimately contributing to organizational resilience and success.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to describe the selected research methodology to achieve research objectives and answer research questions effectively for present research study. The justification behind selection of the present research methodology has also been elucidated. The research gaps were identified with the help of extant literature review undertaken for existing body of knowledge related with the selected area of research. Subsequent to identification of research gaps, research objectives, research questions as well as research hypotheses were developed in order to take research investigation to the next level. Schema of research has been developed and presented to provide direction to the present research and help researcher test the research hypotheses. This chapter discusses various elements of research methodology such as research design, data collection instrument, data source, data types, data collection methods and proposed strategy for data analysis employed for completing the present research study effectively and efficiently. Finally, limitations of the present research study have been highlighted with an anticipation that future research studies would attempt to minimize these limitations.

3.2 Overview of the Research Problem

A pursuit for knowledge is commonly referred to as research. A scholarly and systematic search for relevant knowledge on a given topic can also be defined as research. Indeed, research is a form of scientific inquiry. In the words of Krishnaswamy et. al. (2006) “Research can be defined as a systematic, self – critical enquiry”. Zikmund (2013) defined “Business research is the application of the scientific method in searching for the truth about business phenomena. These activities include defining business opportunities and problems, generating and evaluating alternative courses of action, and monitoring employee and organizational performance.” This definition suggests that business research information is not intuitive or haphazardly gathered. Literally, research (re-search) means “to search again.”

American Marketing Association stated that “Marketing research is the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information-information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications”.

The goal of research is to use scientific techniques to find answers to questions. The fundamental goal of research is to uncover the truth that is hidden and has yet to be uncovered (Kothari, 2004; Babbie, 2021). There are two types of research: applied (or action) research and fundamental (or pure) research. Applied research tries to solve an issue that a society or an industrial/business organisation is now confronting, whereas fundamental research is primarily concerned with generalisations and the formation of a theory. Research can also be categorized as Quantitative and Qualitative Research. Quantitative research is based on determining the quantity or amount of something. It can be used to describe phenomena that have a numerical value. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with qualitative phenomena, such as those involving or pertaining to quality or kind (Cohen et. al. 2002; Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Neuman, 2014)

The present research study is an applied research as it makes use of existing body of knowledge with an intention to understand a specific phenomenon. In addition to being an applied research, it can also be identified as a quantitative research as the present research studies relies on the collection and analysis of primary data collected from the selected respondents of the research study.

3.3 Operationalization of Theoretical Constructs

For each of the constructs namely Employee Engagement and Employee Retention, a thorough and in-depth literature review was conducted. For each of the construct, more than 150 research papers were accessed through open academic sources where scholarly literature was available. The theories supporting each of the construct, their influencing variables in the Indian and global

context were comprehended and documented in the literature review. Based on the documented understanding, a synthesis of the definitions, dimensions, measurement methods, indicators and previous studies for each of the construct was further summarized. Finally a structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher to empirically examine each of the constructs.

3.4 Research Purpose and Questions

A research question is a specific question to which the research aims to respond. It is at the heart of systematic study and aids in defining a clear path for the research process. A research question is typically the first step in any research study. The present research study aims to answer following research questions:

- What are the major factors of effective employee engagement strategy within organizations?
- Do the factors of employee engagement influence employee retention among Indian employees?
- Do demographics play a role in influencing employee engagement and retention among Indian employees?

Based on the research questions, the research objectives were developed. The outcomes one expects to attain by conducting research are known as research objectives. There are possibilities of multiple research objectives in a research study. Developing strong research objectives often help researcher in achieving its overall objectives. The present research study is intended to achieve following research objectives;

- To explore the determinants of employee engagement in Indian context.
- To investigate the influence of various determinants of employee engagement on employee retention among Indian employees.
- To examine the influence of demographic characteristics on employee engagement and employee retention

3.5 Research Design

According to Kothari (2004) “Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem”. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done systematically. Research methodology can be defined as a method for solving a research problem that includes gathering data using various approaches, interpreting the data, and deriving conclusions from the data. A research methodology is essentially the research or study’s blueprint. Methodology as defined by Crotty (1998) is “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes”. Myer (2009) considered research methodology as a ‘strategy of enquiry’. The researcher must understand not just the research methods and procedures, but also the research methodology. A well-defined research methodology is frequently seen as critical in a research study. While undertaking a research study, a researcher has an obligation to utilise suitable methodology within his or her knowledge set. It is unethical to use a method or approach that you know is ineffective to prove or disprove a point, such as selecting a highly skewed sample, utilising an inaccurate instrument, or drawing incorrect conclusions (Kumar, 1999).

Despite the fact that there are several distinctions in research methodologies, the most typical distinctions are Quantitative and Qualitative. The structured approach to research enquiry is usually categorised as quantitative research and unstructured as qualitative research. According to Kothari (2004) the quantitative research (also known as empirical research) is based on the measurement of quantity and is applicable to the phenomena that can be articulated in quantitative terms.

Contrary to this, If the purpose of the study is primarily to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem, or event; if the information is gathered using variables measured on nominal or ordinal scales (qualitative measurement scales); and if the analysis is performed to establish the variation in the situation, phenomenon, or problem without quantifying it, the study is classified as qualitative (Kumar, 1999; Silverman and Patterson, 2021). Quantitative research seeks explanatory laws; qualitative research aims at in-depth description” (McKereghan, 1998).

Research is fundamentally undertaken keeping a specific problem in mind. Usually in social sciences specific to business related research the problem can pertain to employees, customers, strategic challenges or related to any of the organizational outcomes. Each problem pertaining to any of the key stakeholders or operational aspects needs to be dealt with data that gives a fair indication of the health of that particular aspect. In business related research, conducting systematic studies will help to ascertain existing challenges and develop new theories that can add value and knowledge.

Systematic studies with representative samples can also offer generalizations of the findings. While extending research into various forms and categories, based on the need, problem type, research objectives and questions and the participants involved, either quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research can be undertaken (Sekaran 2000; Swanson & Holton 2005; Kothari 2004; Creswell 2011; Goertz & Mahoney 2012).

In simple terms, it can be said that the quantitative research is concerned with objectivity, whereas qualitative research is concerned with subjectivity. Mixed methods research is nowadays popularly utilised so as to overcome the challenges associated with quantitative and qualitative research. The present research study is a quantitative, objective-oriented investigation.

As early as 1250 AD, researchers and investigators in various fields have identified the need to compute data. The initial need to quantify findings started with the natural sciences and slowly spread its need and significance to other fields of investigation. While the West popularly embraced its importance, other regions of the world realised its worthiness and positive implications as it was believed to eliminate bias.

Social sciences research has a number of constructs that need quantification based on the context, environment and other influencing factors. Each construct in addition contains many variables which may also dynamically change over a period of time but nevertheless requires a quantification and justification for their association. Quantitative research also provides room for generalizations especially in organizational psychology as the aspirations, goals and systems may see similarities across various contexts. This is because the studies or investigations are often carried out

scientifically by following all the essential experimental rules and regulations. Researchers and other field investigators are needed to be completely objective with no scope for subjectivity and biasness. The investigations are carried out through structured research designs that capture the responses through standardized scales that duly establish reliability and validity.

Quantitative research is often looked upon as one of the best alternatives to capturing data because it does not allow the researcher to bring in his or her own interests or value systems or other social conditioning perspectives and perceptions that can create any kind of biasness to the research. Also according to researchers, every construct with its unique set of variables can be broken into definable components and assigned numerical values which in turn define their relationships with other study variables or constructs (Wong et. al. 2014; Chen, 2011).

The choice of a suitable research design is critical for any research study in order to arrive at valid findings, comparisons, and conclusions. A faulty research design leads to erroneous outcomes, resulting in a waste of both human and financial resources. According to Kothari (2004) “A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure”. A research design is a blueprint or framework for performing marketing research. It outlines the steps involved in getting the information needed. Its goal is to create a study design that will either test hypotheses of interest or decide plausible solutions to research questions, resulting in data that can be used to make decisions (Malhotra, Nunan & Birks, 2020).

In general, the research design to be adopted can be classified in broad terms as exploratory, descriptive or causal research designs. The main objective of exploratory research is to offer insights into and an understanding of marketing phenomena. It's employed when the subject of the study can't be quantified or when the measurement procedure can't accurately represent certain attributes. As the name implies, the key intention of descriptive research is to describe something – typically market characteristics or functions. The distinction between exploratory and descriptive research is that descriptive research requires the elaboration of particular research questions and hypotheses in advance. Cause-and-effect (causal) relationships are studied via causal research. Marketers make judgments all the time based on assumed causal relationships. These assumptions

may not be justified, and the validity of causal relationships should be tested by formal study (Malhotra, Nunan & Birks, 2020).

Whatever may be the type of research process that is adopted, it should be scientific, answer specific research questions and make room for generalizations wherever possible (Lelissa and Kuhil, 2018). Sometimes researches are randomly undertaken without clearly defining the research problem which again creates unwarranted confusion regarding the research design. With clearly defined processes, it is possible to mine and document maximum information in any given research context (Tegan, 2021).

Some of the few fundamental considerations that every researcher needs to keep in mind while planning for the execution of a research project is that of the desired goal, comprehending the requisite facts, whether goal is to generalise the findings or not. Research that is often conducted in the management and other social sciences domain needs to extend itself into the policy domain as well so as to offer more flexible and dynamic solutions to the changing demographic needs and aspirations that also aid in a nation's economic growth (Goundar 2019).

These are some of the fundamental questions which researchers need to carefully ponder upon as they are crucial to the selection of an appropriate research design. While every research context, its objectives and problems are unique, research design is generally viewed either as exploratory or as conclusive research (Asika, 2004).

Research designs are identified and selected by the researchers involved based on a number of factors. Of all the factors, the most significant is the availability of information in the existing literature. If a researcher intends to explore a relatively newer concept or establish a phenomenon or new dimensions or advance the theory, then he or she may choose to adopt exploratory research.

Exploratory research has long been preferred by researchers as it allows room for more interpretations especially for problems that are either new or need more insights into establishing relationships, antecedents, consequences and implications that enable policy creation and changes. Some researchers have interestingly defined exploratory research as similar to what explorers or

travellers tend to do. Flexibility while defining constructs and their variables allows for new data and insights to emerge. This is especially important under the social sciences, management sciences and psychology related research as the research design is evolutionary with no specific mandate on large sample sizes for data collection (Adams & Schvaneveldt 1991; Saunders et. al. 2016; Lelissaand Kuhil, 2018; Asika 2004).

Management science and the research associated within this domain are about providing solutions that can fit into the ever changing dynamic business environments. This requires constant knowledge documentation through strategic and satisfaction surveys of all the stakeholders which will aid managers to address problems, any bottleneck issues and implement innovative decisions. Researchers have also widely agreed upon this fact that an apt research method and design is essential to getting long lasting solutions to the managerial challenges (Bernd and Bueren 2022; Lelissa and Kuhil 2018). According to Bashin & Vamsikrishna (2022), utilising exploratory research design in the management science domain is worthy as it can offer more insights and advancements to a particular field of study.

Whatever is the research design, exploratory or conclusive, that is adopted by the researchers, it needs to be noted that empirical findings need to contribute to the existing theory. Empirical findings in all fields of study require a generalization which can either validate the exiting theories or create a new phenomenon or solution that can be replicated. Theories that have already been established are like the blueprint that offer researchers with established relationships and elucidations. The same can be utilised to further predict newer relationships or incorporate additional phenomenon. Empirical data and findings can allow for the theoretical facts to be corroborated alongside the establishment of newer phenomenon or variables. Despite the advantages of empirical studies, there is no stipulation that every such study should result in findings that contribute to the existing theory. However, studies can contribute more towards offering practical implications that can be utilised in modern day policy making (Avison & Malaurent 2013; Hambrick 2007).

Academic research was once viewed as unique that develops theory unlike what the business consultants or practitioners engage in. However, off late the roles have significantly blurred and

academic research is expected to up its scholarly efficacy and provide practical solutions and not just contribute towards theory which later on yet again requires empirical testing (Weick 1995; Gregor 2006).

The present research study is intended to investigate the relationship between employee engagement and retention, with a specific emphasis on how engagement affects employee turnover rates. The present research study is the combination of exploratory research and descriptive research. The exploratory research is being employed to extract the major determinants of employee engagement in Indian context. In addition, descriptive research is being employed to understand how determinants of employee engagement influence employee retention among Indian employees.

3.6 Population and Sample

The objective of the majority of research endeavors is to learn more about a population's characteristics or attributes. Population is defined as the sum of all the parts of the universe that share a common set of characteristics for the purposes of the research problem. It is crucial for researchers to designate a representative sample of the population in order to study them and generalize their findings. Sampling refers to any procedure that derives conclusions from measurements of a subset of the population. A sample is a subset of a larger population. In order to obtain a sample that is representative of the population, the present research employed a convenience sampling and snowballing approach to identify the respondents.

3.7 Participant Selection

The goal of most research initiatives is to learn more about a population's features or attributes. For the sake of the research problem, a population is the sum of all the pieces that have some common set of attributes and make up the universe (Malhotra, Nunan & Birks, 2020). It's very important for researchers to identify representative part of the population in order to study them and extend the results for the population.

Sampling is the process of selecting a group of people from target population in order to estimate the characteristics of the entire population. Researchers often try to acquire samples that are typical of the target population. Sampling involves any procedure that draws conclusions based on measurements of a portion of the population. In other words, a sample is a subset from a larger population (Zikmund, 2013). Krishnaswamy et al. (2006) emphasized two major objectives of the sampling design; the sample must be representative of the population, and the sample size must be adequate to ensure desired precision.

Sampling techniques are mostly categorized as non-probability and probability sampling. Random selection is used in probability sampling, which allows you to make strong statistical inferences about the entire group. Non-probability sampling entails making non-random selections based on convenience or other criteria to make data collection easier. Probability sampling techniques can be categorized into various categories viz. Simple random sampling, Systematic sampling, Stratified sampling and Cluster sampling. Convenience sampling, Judgmental sampling, Quota sampling and Snowball sampling are commonly used non-probability sampling techniques (Malhotra, Nunan & Birks, 2020; Kothari, 2004).

In line with Puška et al. (2018) the present research study relies upon convenience and snowball sampling for selecting the sample and identifying the respondents. In order to collect primary data from respondents, email questionnaires were sent to selected foreigners and non-resident Indians who are planning to visit India in near future as a tourist. Subsequently, these respondents were asked to pass the questionnaire to their acquaintances and to ask them to take part in the survey.

3.8 Instrumentation

Data collection is the systematic gathering and analysis of specific information in order to provide answers to relevant queries and assess the outcomes. It focuses on learning everything there is to know about a specific topic. Data collection help researchers conduct hypothesis testing in order to understand a phenomenon.

The goal of data collection is to collect high-quality evidence that answers all of the questions that have been posed. Data collection begins after the development of sampling plan as well as data collection instrument (Zikmund, 2013). Data collection can be done with the help of human observers, interviewers or machines. Contrary to face-to-face data collection, data are recorded by machines as in the case of scanner data and Web-based surveys.

Data collection using structured questionnaire is one of the most popular method of data collection especially in surveys. Quite often questionnaire is considered as the heart of a survey operation (Kothari, 2004; Fink, 2024). A questionnaire is made up of a group of questions that are printed or typed in a specific order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is distributed to respondents, who are expected to read and comprehend the questions before responding in the space provided on the form. The respondents must independently answer the questions. Structured questionnaires are easy to conduct and analyze for a low cost. Providing alternate responses might sometimes assist in properly understanding the purpose of the inquiry. However, such questionnaires have their own set of limitations.

Management research generally make use of four primary scales of measurement: nominal scale, ordinal scale, interval scale, and ratio scale. The most basic level of measurement is represented by nominal scales. A nominal scale assigns a value to an object solely for the purpose of identification or classification. Things can be sorted in order using ordinal scales based on how much of an idea they possess. An ordinal scale, in other terms, is a ranking scale. In reality, the word “rank order” is frequently used to denote an ordinal scale. The intervals are modified in terms of some rule that has been developed as a basis for making the units equal in interval scale. The units are equivalent only if the assumptions on which the rule is based are accepted. Although interval scales can have any zero, it is impossible to define what is known as an absolute zero or the unique genesis for them. Ratio scales are the ultimate type of measurement because they include all of the characteristics of interval scales with the ability to depict absolute values. Ratio scales have absolute meaning, but interval scales have only relative meaning. Ratio scales, in other words, provide iconic measurement (Kothari, 2004; Zikmund, 2013; Malhotra, Nunan & Birks, 2017; Field 2013; Salkind 2017).

For the present research study, a structured questionnaire was prepared and administered for the purpose of primary data collection from respondents. All the variables were identified from the literature review and measured using interval scales. Respondents were asked to give their opinion in agreement or disagreement with the statements developed to measure the selected variables on Likert 7 point scales where 1 means strongly disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means somewhat disagree, 4 means neither agree or disagree, 5 means somewhat agree, 6 means agree, and 7 means strongly agree.

The concept of reliability and validity are used very often to assess the quality of research. They describe the accuracy with which a method, approach, or test measure something. "Reliability refers to the extent to which a scale produces consistent results if repeated measurements are made" (Malhotra and Sharma, 2008). The degree to which the results of a study can be replicated or recreated under the same conditions is referred to as reliability. A high-reliability study produces consistent results every time it is undertaken. Reliability is evaluated by defining the proportion of systematic variation in a scale. There are three methods of assessing reliability of the measurement scales i.e., test-retest, alternative-form and internal consistency methods. Test – retest reliability is employed to assess the reliability to determine the consistency of measurement at different point of time (Cherry et. al. 2014). In test – retest reliability, respondents are given identical sets of scale items at two distinct times, under as close to identical settings as possible. In alternative-forms reliability, two equivalent forms of the scale are prepared. The same set of respondents are accessed at two different point of time, usually two to four weeks apart, with a different scale form being administered each time. The scores from the administrations of the alternative scale forms are correlated in order to evaluate reliability (Malhotra and Sharma, 2008). Internal consistency reliability is a measure of reliability used to appraise the degree to which different test items that probe the same construct produce similar results. It evaluates whether or not the items within a scale or measure are homogeneous (DeVellis, 2006; Mohajan, 2017). In the present research study, reliability of the measurement instrument was evaluated by computing the value of Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha is computed by correlating the score for each scale item with the total score for each observation and then comparing that to the variance for all individual item scores. The value of Cronbach's alpha generally ranges between 0 to 1 and the value of 0.6 or above indicates satisfactory internal consistency reliability (Hair, 2011).

Blumberg et al. (2005) defined validity as the extent to which an instrument measures what it supposes to measure. It is the degree to which the results are truthful. In simple words, validity refers to the extent to which differences found with a measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested. The amount to which differences in observed scale scores represent real differences among objects on the feature being evaluated rather than systematic or random error can be characterized as the validity of a scale (Malhotra and Sharma, 2008). When there is no measurement error, a scale is assumed to have perfect validity. There are mainly four types of test for validity i.e., content validity, criterion validity and construct validity. Content validity refers to how well the questions on the instrument and the ratings associated with them represent all conceivable queries regarding the material. Face validity refers to the degree to which a test appears to measure what it claims to measure. Criterion validity is concerned with the link between scale scores and a measurable criterion. It examines how the scale distinguishes people based on a criterion it is supposed to predict. Construct validity involves testing a scale in terms of theoretically derived hypotheses concerning the nature of underlying variables or constructs. (Mohajan, 2017; Creswell, 2011; Leedy & Ormrod, 1980; Pallant, 2011). In the present research study, content validity of the measurement scale was evaluated by asking three domain experts to scrutinize the scale and provide relevant comment. Subsequently, the changes were made and scale was revised in line with the suggestions given by the domain experts to ensure content validity of the measurement instrument i.e. Questionnaire.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Data are individual facts, statistics, or items of information, often numeric. In a more technical sense, data are a set of values of qualitative or quantitative variables about one or more persons or objects. Data, in general, are decision-making atoms: they are the smallest units of factual knowledge that can be utilized as a foundation for reasoning, discussion, or calculation. Data can be anything from abstract concepts to real measurements, including statistics. Data is measured, gathered, reported, and evaluated before being shown as graphs, tables, or images. The quality of data collected and processed during the study process typically determines the research's efficacy (Gaurav, 2015).

Generally, data collection starts after a research problem has been defined and research design chalked out. The researcher should consider two categories of data while deciding on the data gathering strategy for the study: primary and secondary data. Primary data are those that are obtained for the first time and are hence unique in nature. Secondary data, on the other hand, is information that has already been gathered by someone else and has gone through the statistical process (Kothari, 2004). Secondary data are cost effective and can be accessed through various offline as well as online sources promptly; whereas primary data are more authentic, up to date and relevant to the research study for which they have been collected.

Both primary as well as secondary data were collected during the course of present research study. A structured questionnaire was prepared and administered in order to collect the desired responses from the respondents. As the research study is intended to explore the determinants of employee engagement and their impact of employee retention in Indian context; primary data was collected directly from the employees working at various organizations. Secondary data for the present research study was collected from published documents such as research papers, thought papers, articles, industry reports etc. The key research databases used by researchers to collect desired research papers and articles were Scopus, EBCO, Emerald, and Google Scholar. While using both primary and secondary data, an attempt was made to have synergistic outcome in order to gain in-depth understanding of the research problem and to achieve research objective in the most meaningful way.

Data collection for the present research study is carried out in two stages i.e. Pilot Study and Main Study. A pilot study, often known as a “feasibility” study, is a small-scale preliminary study undertaken before any large-scale quantitative research to assess the feasibility of a future, full-scale project.

Pilot studies are an important part of any research project. They can assist in identifying design difficulties as well as assessing the feasibility, practicality, resources, time, and cost of a study prior to the main investigation. In addition, pilot study also helps researcher to estimate optimal size of the sample and improve upon the research design prior to undertaking main study.

In the present research study, Pilot study was conducted with an objective to collect data to check the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument i.e. Questionnaire. The questionnaire was revised as per the feedback received in the pilot study and the final version of the questionnaire was designed. The main study was designed after ensuring the reliability as well as validity of the measurement instrument.

For main study, primary data was collected from respondents by administering the structured questionnaire. Respondents selected for the present research study were given structured questionnaire having three broader sections – first section was for demographic details; second section was for understanding respondents' opinion towards various constructs of employee engagement; and third section was for understanding the respondents' opinion towards influence of various constructs of employee engagement on employee retention in Indian context. All the items were measured by responses from respondents on a five-point Likert scale in agreement of the statements where 1 means strongly disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means neither agree nor disagree, 4 means agree, and 5 means strongly agree. For the present research study, responses were taken only from the employees working at various organizations in India.

3.10 Data Analysis

Following the collection of data, the researcher moves on to the work of analysing it. Data analysis necessitates a variety of closely related procedures, including the creation of categories, the application of these categories to raw data via coding, tabulation, and statistical inferences (Kothari, 2004; Malhotra and Sharma, 2008).

“Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, and supporting decision-making”. Data analysis has several dimensions and approaches, including a wide range of techniques under various titles and being applied in a variety of business, science, and social science sectors. Data analysis is important in today's business environment because it helps businesses make more scientific decisions and run more efficiently.

Understanding how to assess and extract meaningful meaning from the data is one of the major drivers of success in today's data-rich age. The process of collecting, modelling, and analysing data in order to derive insights that aid decision-making is known as data analysis. Depending on the business and the goal of the research, there are a variety of methodologies and procedures for conducting analysis. "if the researcher is interested in making probability statements on the basis of sampled multiple measurements, then the best strategy of data analysis is to use some suitable multivariate statistical technique" (Kothari, 2004).

As present research study relies upon the analysis of quantitative data collected directed from the respondents with the help of a structured questionnaire, the empirical data analysis techniques have been employed in order to meet the desired research objectives. Descriptive statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Linear Regression Analysis were employed for the purpose of data analysis.

Descriptive statistics believes in summarizing and organizing properties of a data set. A data set is a collection of responses or observations from a sample or entire population. A data set is a collection of responses or observations from a sample or population as a whole. A number of descriptive statistics are employed to present the quantitative descriptions of the objects under consideration in a handy form. A researcher is interested in three essential properties of a single variable: the distribution, the measure of central tendency, and the measure of dispersion (Subong & Beldia, 2005).

Generally, in social sciences, organizational research or psychology studies, the researchers tend to examine differences amongst various groups and whether they vary for a particular factor or not. In this particular research study, the different groups were identified based on varying demographic attributes of the sample respondents like age, gender, income, marital status, type of industry, geographical region, education and experience. To test whether employee engagement and employee retention reported any statistically significant differences amongst the various demographic parameters, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was adopted. This measure is generally utilized to test the group means of different independent groups based on a single variable (factor). ANOVA is one of the easiest yet a decisive way that allows the researcher to establish the fact that the sample respondents that are drawn from demographically diverse segments tend to actually

vary or not for the constructs that are being measured (Kim 2017; Chatzi and Doody 2023). Once the statistical differences are established through the one way ANOVA, this allows the researcher to further proceed with the other analysis that can establish a causal effect.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a statistical technique used in research to identify underlying relationships or patterns among a set of observed variables without specifying a priori hypotheses. It is a method of data reduction and dimensionality reduction that aims to uncover the latent factors that may be influencing the observed variables (Gaurav, 2008). In the present research study, Exploratory Factor Analysis was employed to extract the determinants of employee engagement in Indian context.

Regression Analysis is a statistical technique used to explore the relationship between a dependent variable and two or more independent variables (Malhotra et. al. 2020). In simple linear regression, the relationship between a dependent variable and a single independent variable is studied, whereas multiple regression extends this analysis to multiple predictors. In the present research study, various constructs of employee engagement were considered as independent variables whereas employee retention was taken as dependent variable in the multiple regression model in order to understand the influence of various constructs of employee engagement on employee retention in Indian context.

3.11 Limitations of the research study

Limitations are the constraints that influence the ability of research to generalize from the results, to further describe applications to practice, and/or to the utility of findings that are a result of the ways you initially chose to design the study, the method used to establish internal and external validity, or the result of unanticipated challenges that arose during the study.

No research study is completely free from limitations, and the present research study also has certain limitations. Although the necessary precautions were taken while building the suitable research model and employing effective tools for data collection and data analysis; this research study encountered few limitations that may confine the generalizability of the research findings.

The present research study follows the path of cross-sectional study that involves understanding the sample as well as population characteristics at a distinct point of time. Here, variables of observed without manipulating them. This form of research can be used to identify community features, but it cannot be utilized to determine cause-and-effect links between variables. Although it permits researchers to look at plentiful characteristics at once; It can only offer details about what is happening in a present population. As it's a known fact that the population's characteristics are likely to change over a period of time; the cross-sectional study may not track the changes that take place in due course of time.

Couper (2000) noted that “not all people included in the sample are willing or able to complete the survey”. In the present research study, primary data has been collected by administering the structured questionnaire to the respondents selected for the study. There were occasions where researcher encountered the situation of unwillingness of respondents to participate in the survey and giving their responses. In this research study, there is a chance of drop error and go error. Respondents who are willing and able to provide genuine responses may be excluded from the study's sample, resulting in drop error. At the same time, respondents who are hesitant to participate or who are unable to provide genuine responses may be included in the study's sample, resulting in the go error. For the success in the quantitative research study, avoiding the biasness in data collection is very critical. Bias at the data collection stage, in statistical terms, means that the data one has acquired isn't representative of the group or activity about which you wish to make a claim. Response bias is a broad phrase that refers to a variety of inclinations among participants to answer questions incorrectly or falsely. The possibility of biased response of respondents can't be completely ruled out. In addition, respondents who gave their responses for the present research study; authenticity of the data may be a cause of concern.

Appropriateness of the sample size is of vital importance for the effectiveness of quantitative research. It's often assumed that the large sample size is the true representation of the population. At the same time, the large sample size also limits the effect of outliers in the research findings. Although utmost care has been taken to have representative sample, the sample size is a very small fraction of the population considered for the present research study. The research study with much

bigger sample size would be more appropriate for generalizing the research findings of the present research study.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter made an attempt to present the detailed description for various aspects of research methodology designed for the present research study. Various tools as well as procedures of carrying out the present research study have been elucidated in highly effective manner. Research objectives developed for the present research study have been included. Sampling design as well as logic behind selecting respondents has also been explained. The various data sources and designing of questionnaire, data collection instrument is being elucidated here. Data analysis strategy is being discussed in detail in order to achieve the research objectives and draw conclusions for this research study. Finally, Limitations of the present research study have been highlighted in the anticipation that future researchers will try to extend or replicate the present research study while making an attempt to minimize the listed limitations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and findings of the statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses discussed in earlier chapters. This study seeks to extend the literature on the impact of employee engagement on employee retention in organizations. Specifically, the following three research questions are addressed;

- What are the major factors of effective employee engagement strategy within organizations?
- Do the factors of employee engagement influence employee retention among Indian employees?
- Do demographics play a role in influencing employee engagement and retention among Indian employees?

This chapter through its various sections puts forth preliminary analysis, basic descriptive statistics, results of exploratory factor analysis, correlations amongst the variables, and regression results for the research hypotheses.

Before embarking on a detailed collection of the responses, the researcher conducted a pilot study to assess the reliability and validity of the structured questionnaire that was utilized in the study. One of the preliminary analyses which the study conducted was to check for the normality of the data. The initial checks on the data were done and the researcher felt satisfied that the skewness and kurtosis were well within the limits specified and that the data can be considered to comply with the normal distribution. Apart from this, the researcher also tested for the scale reliabilities. This was to ensure that the scale and all its variables measured what was intended to measure. For this the measure, Cronbach Alpha was adopted. It is a useful measure especially in those cases where standardized instruments are not utilized in any particular study and the measure of internal consistency helps to identify the anomalies in the instruments if any.

A test or scale's internal consistency is gauged by its Cronbach Alpha (α). This indicates that every item on the scale measures the same construct and is connected to the others (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). Some general guidelines are used to interpret Cronbach alpha values (George and Mallery, 2003; Gliem and Gliem, 2003). The range of Cronbach alpha values is as follows: ≥ 0.9 indicates excellent, ≥ 0.8 indicates good, ≥ 0.7 indicates acceptable, ≥ 0.6 indicates questionable, ≥ 0.5 indicates poor, and ≤ 0.5 indicates unsatisfactory.

According to this rule of thumb, Cronbach's Alpha measuring the internal consistency for Employee Engagement is Excellent and for Employee Retention also it is Excellent. They are presented in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 respectively.

Table 4.1

Reliability Statistics of Employee Engagement	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.966	30

Table 4.2

Reliability Statistics of Employee Retention	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.910	10

Detailed information about the demographic profiles of the respondents is summarized in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 - Demographic Profile

Age	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60			
	93	78	96	83			
Income	0-5 Lakhs	6-10 Lakhs	11-15 Lakhs	16-20 Lakhs	Above 20 Lakhs		
	74	63	68	77	68		
Gender	Male	Female					
	188	162					
Education	Under Graduate	Graduate	Post Grad	PhD or Higher	Vocational		
	66	74	73	65	72		

Experience	Under 5 yrs	6-10 yrs					
	173	177					
Marital Status	Single	Married	Divorced	In a Relationship			
	96	74	89	91			
Industry	Tourism	IT & ITES	Real Estate	Health	Education	Media	Retail
	42	60	43	44	56	59	46
Geog. Region	East	West	North	South	Central		
	69	76	67	68	70		

4.2 Research Question One

For the study, a structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher after extensively reviewing the literature. The structured questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part captured the demographic details of each respondent. The second part measured the sample participant's employee engagement levels while the third part measured the employee retention intentions and its related aspects.

Employee engagement refers to the emotional connection that people have with the organizations they work for and the positions they hold. When employees are invested in their work, they are committed to it, take responsibility for it, and are eager to go above and beyond to support the success of their organization. Employee engagement is defined as the level of commitment, passion, and loyalty that employees have towards their work and their organization (Kular et. al., 2008). Employee engagement has been linked to various positive outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity, and overall organizational performance (Hanaysha, 2016).

The study through its administered questionnaire on employee engagement intends to capture the emotions and feelings which an employee experiences while working on a particular job or role. The study participants have also documented their responses regarding work autonomy, whether their work acts as an inspiration for them and experiences pertaining to meaningfulness, flexibility and collaborative work environment.

A total of 30 variables were considered for the employee engagement construct. All these 30 variables were drawn from the literature after thoroughly reviewing the research works conducted in the domain of employee engagement. A total of 350 respondents have submitted their responses for the study on which Exploratory factor analysis (Principal component analysis) was conducted to understand the main factors that contribute to explaining the construct of employee engagement.

This method aids in data reduction and is applied to big data sets. Factor analysis's main goal is to generate factors with the fundamental goal of lowering dimensionality which is the ability to decrease observable variables to a smaller number of latent variables that are unobservable but share a common variance (Bartholomew, Knott, & Moustaki, 2011). The basic tenet of factor analysis is that many variables are condensed into a small number of factors to facilitate data handling and factor characteristic evaluation. Two important factor analysis methods are exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Child, 2006).

The goal of exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which assumes that any variable can load onto any component, is to identify which latent factors exist. Conversely, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) has a solid theoretical underpinning and establishes the relationships between variables and factors. Both orthogonal and oblique rotation techniques can be used in factor analysis. Direct Oblimin and Promax are examples of oblique methods, whereas Varimax, Quartimax, and Equimax are some of the examples of orthogonal methods.

In this study, principal component analysis alongside varimax rotation was adopted to conduct the exploratory factor analysis for the Employee engagement construct. Principal component analysis is one of the oldest and the most widely used multivariate statistical technique. A data table consisting of different correlated variables at times becomes difficult to handle and interpret. Principal component analysis in such cases helps to extract the most significant data points and convert this information into new orthogonal variables known as the principal components (Abdi and Williams, 2010). The whole variance of the original variables is used to extract and quantify information as desired. The principal components thus generated are the ones that best explain the majority of that variance. The geometric characteristics of the principal components enable a

methodical and intuitive understanding of the key characteristics that are included in a complicated multivariate dataset (Greenacre et. al. 2022).

The principal component analysis was adopted for all the 30 variables of Employee engagement because it provided a better interpretable and reliable solution than other methods. Criteria for determining the number of factors is facilitated by Eigen values as per Kaiser criterion. If the Eigen value is greater than one, then it could be identified as a factor. Also, variance needs to be more than 0.7 before it could be considered a factor (Yeomans & Golder, 1982; Bandalos & Boehm-Kaufman, 2009).

The appropriateness of factor analysis for the data collected was further assessed. This meant that the conditions of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity should hold good. KMO value of 0.918, a measure of sampling adequacy, is excellent and is way above the guideline of 0.60. (Kaiser, 1974; Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). The Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ($p < 0.001$). If the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ($p < 0.05$), then factorability can be assumed (Pallant 2001). These conditions were confirmed in the current research study. To identify and integrate the similar variables onto each factor and to create more ease in comprehending the Employee engagement construct, the researcher decided to set a pre-condition for limiting the number of factors to 5. The results of the exploratory factor analysis are as below:

Table 4.4–KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.918
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	10065.086
	df	435
	Sig.	<.001

Table 4.5–Communalities

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	1.000	.721
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	1.000	.811
Time flies when I am working.	1.000	.729
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	1.000	.816
I am enthusiastic about my job.	1.000	.739
When I am working, I forget everything else around me.	1.000	.737
My job inspires me.	1.000	.752
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	1.000	.571
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	1.000	.665
I am proud of the work that I do.	1.000	.569
I am immersed in my work.	1.000	.670
I can continue working for very long periods at a time.	1.000	.706
To me, my job is challenging.	1.000	.688
I get carried away when I am working.	1.000	.701
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.	1.000	.659
It is difficult to detach myself from my job.	1.000	.774
At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.	1.000	.687
I have flexibility in the way I get my job done	1.000	.729
I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role	1.000	.583
My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time	1.000	.791
I feel that my job directly impacts organizational outcomes	1.000	.696
I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job	1.000	.749
I have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities on my job	1.000	.746
I work in a collaborative and conflict free environment	1.000	.751
There is lot of transparency in official communications within my organization	1.000	.786
I have a best friend at work	1.000	.815
When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one	1.000	.790
My co-workers welcome opinions different from their own	1.000	.797
The process for determining pay and rewards in our organization seems fair and unbiased	1.000	.778
At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems	1.000	.802

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4.6–Total Variance Explained through Initial Eigen Values

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	15.528	51.761	51.761	15.528	51.761	51.761
2	2.128	7.095	58.856	2.128	7.095	58.856
3	1.596	5.320	64.176	1.596	5.320	64.176
4	1.497	4.988	69.164	1.497	4.988	69.164
5	1.060	3.535	72.699	1.060	3.535	72.699
6	.856	2.854	75.553			
7	.746	2.486	78.039			
8	.733	2.442	80.481			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4.7–Total Variance Explained through Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings

Total Variance Explained			
Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.833	22.777	22.777
2	5.359	17.864	40.640
3	4.826	16.088	56.728
4	3.160	10.533	67.261
5	1.631	5.438	72.699

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Figure 4.1–Scree Plot

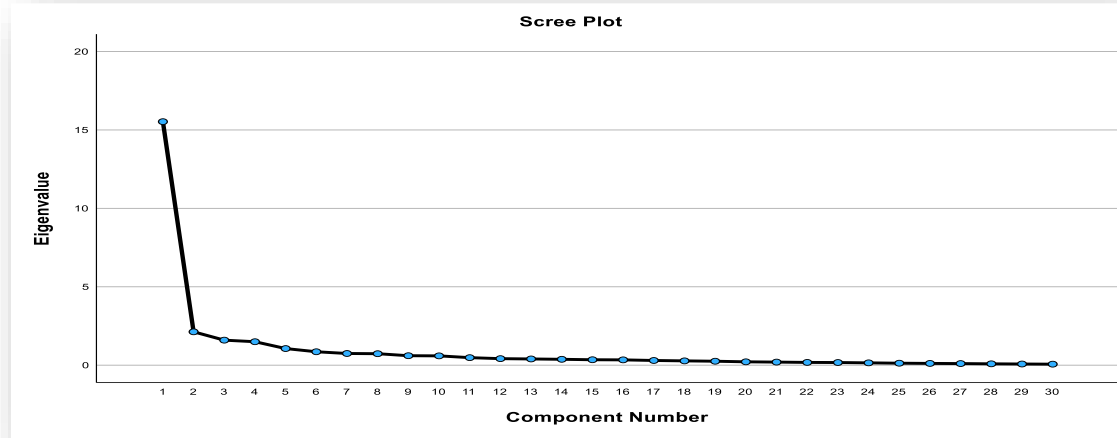


Table 4.8–Component Matrix

Component Matrix ^a					
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	.757				
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	.790	-.378			
Time flies when I am working.	.678			.374	.324
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	.769	-.356		.310	
I am enthusiastic about my job.	.750	-.356			
When I am working, I forget everything else around me.	.629		.456	.333	
My job inspires me.	.825				
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	.553		.460		
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	.770				
I am proud of the work that I do.	.668				
I am immersed in my work.	.803				
I can continue working for very long periods at a time.	.824				
To me, my job is challenging.	.759		-.307		
I get carried away when I am working.	.741		-.361		
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.	.613	.303	.385		
It is difficult to detach myself from my job.	.641	.461			.367

At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.	.654		-.364		
I have flexibility in the way I get my job done	.635	.385	-.343		
I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role	.631	.356			
My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time	.500	.598	.338		
I feel that my job directly impacts organizational outcomes	.430	.645			
I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job	.776				
I have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities on my job	.768				
I work in a collaborative and conflict free environment	.603			-.590	
There is lot of transparency in official communications within my organization	.732			-.398	.301
I have a best friend at work	.837				
When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one	.828				
My co-workers welcome opinions different from their own	.826				
The process for determining pay and rewards in our organization seems fair and unbiased	.754				
At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems	.815			-.306	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. ^a					
a. 5 components extracted.					

Table 4.9–Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix^a					
	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	.757				
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	.784		.377		
Time flies when I am working.	.719				.383
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	.831				

I am enthusiastic about my job.	.772				
When I am working, I forget everything else around me.	.526			.665	
My job inspires me.	.672	.438			
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	.476		.321	.433	
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	.651	.345			
I am proud of the work that I do.	.409	.544			
I am immersed in my work.	.461	.539	.322		
I can continue working for very long periods at a time.	.421	.561	.381		
To me, my job is challenging.	.378	.670			
I get carried away when I am working.	.395	.689			
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.			.389	.659	
It is difficult to detach myself from my job.			.303	.429	.618
At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.		.631			.414
I have flexibility in the way I get my job done		.788			
I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role		.639			
My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time		.315		.813	
I feel that my job directly impacts organizational outcomes		.336		.519	.557
I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job	.318		.633	.423	
I have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities on my job	.443		.680		
I work in a collaborative and conflict free environment			.835		
There is lot of transparency in official communications within my organization			.732		.309
I have a best friend at work	.470	.408	.583		

When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one	.487	.498	.520		
My co-workers welcome opinions different from their own	.458	.463	.465	.341	
The process for determining pay and rewards in our organization seems fair and unbiased	.544		.472	.340	
At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems	.367	.494	.614		
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. ^a a. Rotation converged in 13 iterations.					

Table 4.10–Component Transformation Matrix

Component Transformation Matrix					
Component	1	2	3	4	5
1	.605	.520	.487	.325	.147
2	-.578	.354	-.163	.538	.474
3	.067	-.688	.228	.679	-.097
4	.531	-.040	-.803	.201	.174
5	.117	-.360	.198	-.322	.845
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					

The current study used varimax rotation to carry out a factor analysis on the data. The total variance explained is 72.699% which is acceptable. Factor loadings have also been represented in the rotated pattern matrix. They indicate the strength of the relationship between a particular factor and a particular variable. In a simple-component matrix, a particular variable may show higher loadings for many factors, making it difficult to determine the variables under any given factor. We solve this problem by rotating the matrix, making it easier to assign a number of variables with greater loading for a particular factor (Bano and Jha, 2012). The rotated-component matrix shows that most of the items load well (> 0.3) on the five factors of the employee engagement scale. Since there is no consensus on what is a minimum factor loading that needs to be considered, this allows

the researcher to conclude that there is a strong relationship between the factors and the variables on this scale.

Through the first research question, the researcher intended to identify the main factors contributing to employee engagement within organizations. The factor analysis and its subsequent results indicated that there are five major factors of employee engagement that have implications on the employee retention levels within organizations. The five major factors are *Work Energy and Enthusiasm*, *Job Resources*, *Collaborative Work Environment*, *Job Significance and Impact on Organizational Outcomes*. Each of these factors consisted of various variables that influenced the experiences, perceptions and emotions of individual employees and their work engagement levels. The factors identified through this study namely work energy and enthusiasm (Schaufeli 2013; Jeve et. al. 2015), job resources (Albrecht et. al. 2021; Dlouhy and Casper 2021), collaborative work environment (Townsend et. al. 2014; Majumder and Kunte 2022), job significance (Anuradha et. al. 2017; Saks 2006) and impact on organizational outcomes (Harter et. al. 2013; Shuck et. al. 2011) are in line with the existing literature and reaffirm the implicative features of these factors within organizations.

4.3 Research Question Two

Through the second research question, the researcher intended to establish if there a relationship between employee engagement and employee retention in organizations. For establishing this relationship statistically, regression analysis was run. The results stand as below:

Table 4.11–Model Summary of Regression

Model Summary^b							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.988 ^a	.976	.975	.12359	.976	2765.580	5

Table 4.12–ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	211.214	5	42.243	2765.580	<.001 ^b
	Residual	5.254	344	.015		
	Total	216.469	349			
a. Dependent Variable: ER_Final						
b. Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1						

Table 4.13–Regression Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.375	.007		510.951	<.001
	Work Energy and Enthusiasm	.266	.007	.337	40.148	<.001
	Job Resources	.550	.007	.699	83.168	<.001
	Collaborative Work Environment	.270	.007	.343	40.787	<.001
	Job Significance	.346	.007	.440	52.326	<.001
	Impact on Organizational Outcomes	.198	.007	.252	29.958	<.001

The regression results through the sample indicate that the direct effect of employee engagement on employee retention was found to be significant ($p < .001$). As indicated by the multiple squared correlations (R^2) values, employee engagement predicted employee retention at ($R^2 = .976$) indicating that almost 98% of the variance in employee retention could be predicted by the employee engagement construct. This is a strong effect and puts forth that the model is a near perfect one that accounts for almost all the data variability. These results are consistent with the previous studies like Alias et. al. (2016) and Chib (2019) that acknowledge an apparent impact of employee engagement on employee retention.

Out of the five factors of employee engagement that were considered for the study, all the factors were found to have a significant impact on employee retention. The values are work energy and enthusiasm ($\beta = .337$, $p < .001$), job resources ($\beta = .699$, $p < .001$), collaborative work environment ($\beta = .343$, $p < .001$), job significance ($\beta = .440$, $p < .001$) and impact on organizational outcomes ($\beta = .252$, $p < .001$). of all the factors, job resources was found to have the highest impact on employee retention.

4.4 Research Question Three

Apart from exploring the factors of employee engagement construct and testing whether a relationship exists among the two major constructs i.e. employee engagement and employee retention, the researcher intended to further explore if the demographic characteristics of the respondents showed any significant differences for both the constructs.

Several analyses were conducted utilizing the One way ANOVA to determine the possible differences in demographic variables (gender, age, marital status, income, experience, educational background, industry of operation and geographical region) and constructs of interests (employee engagement and employee retention) across the entire sample using ANOVA. Results revealed that statistically significant differences exist amongst the sample respondents for employee engagement as well as employee retention for all the demographic variables.

- For Age, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).
- For Gender, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).
- For Marital Status, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).
- For Income, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).

- For Education, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).
- For Experience, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).
- For Industry of operation, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).
- For Geographical region, there were statistically significant differences reported for employee engagement ($p=0.00$) and employee retention ($p=0.00$).

Through the results, we can conclude that employee experiences of job/workplace engagement are not just intrinsically driven but are dependent on their demographic factors, life stage and a host of other exogenous factors that have possible implications on the employee retention as well. The tabulated results are as below:

Table 4.14–One Way ANOVA of Age and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Age	350	869	2.482857	1.259018		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1847728	1	1847728	6628.578	0.00	3.854816
Within Groups	194568.7	698	278.7517			
Total	2042296	699				

Table 4.15–One Way ANOVA of Age and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Age	350	869	2.482857	1.259018		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	171132.9	1	171132.9	5408.373	0	3.854816
Within Groups	22086.27	698	31.64221			
Total	193219.2	699				

Table 4.16–One Way ANOVA of Gender and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Gender	350	512	1.462857	0.249333		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1884593	1	1884593	6773.096	0	3.854816
Within Groups	194216.3	698	278.2469			
Total	2078809	699				

Table 4.17–One Way ANOVA of Gender and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Gender	350	512	1.462857	0.249333		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	182478.9	1	182478.9	5860.445	0	3.854816
Within Groups	21733.89	698	31.13737			
Total	204212.7	699				

Table 4.18–One Way ANOVA of Marital Status and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Marital Status	350	875	2.5	1.32235		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1847111	1	1847111	6625.613	0	3.854816
Within Groups	194590.8	698	278.7834			
Total	2041702	699				

Table 4.19–One Way ANOVA of Marital Status and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Marital Status	350	875	2.5	1.32235		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	170945.3	1	170945.3	5397.044	0	3.854816
Within Groups	22108.37	698	31.67388			
Total	193053.7	699				

Table 4.20–One Way ANOVA of Income and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Income	350	1052	3.005714	2.028621		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1828971	1	1828971	6552.246	0	3.854816
Within Groups	194837.3	698	279.1365			
Total	2023809	699				

Table 4.21–One Way ANOVA of Income and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Income	350	1052	3.005714	2.028621		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	165458.1	1	165458.1	5166.203	0	3.854816
Within Groups	22354.86	698	32.02702			
Total	187812.9	699				

Table 4.22–One Way ANOVA of Industry and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Industry	350	1423	4.065714	3.912575		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1791240	1	1791240	6395.493	0	3.854816
Within Groups	195494.8	698	280.0785			
Total	1986735	699				

Table 4.23–One Way ANOVA of Industry and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Industry	350	1423	4.065714	3.912575		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	154247	1	154247	4678.547	0	3.854816
Within Groups	23012.36	698	32.96899			
Total	177259.3	699				

Table 4.24–One Way ANOVA of Education and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Education	350	1053	3.008571	1.979869		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1828869	1	1828869	6552.452	0	3.854816
Within Groups	194820.3	698	279.1122			
Total	2023689	699				

Table 4.25–One Way ANOVA of Education and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Education	350	1053	3.008571	1.979869		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	165427.3	1	165427.3	5169.177	0	3.854816
Within Groups	22337.84	698	32.00264			
Total	187765.2	699				

Table 4.26–One Way ANOVA of Experience and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Experience	350	527	1.505714	0.250684		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1883037	1	1883037	6767.486	0	3.854816
Within Groups	194216.8	698	278.2476			
Total	2077253	699				

Table 4.27–One Way ANOVA of Experience and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Experience	350	527	1.505714	0.250684		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	181994.8	1	181994.8	5844.773	0	3.854816
Within Groups	21734.36	698	31.13805			
Total	203729.2	699				

Table 4.28–One Way ANOVA of Geographic Region and Employee Engagement

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Geog. Region	350	1044	2.982857	2.005436		
Employee Engagement	350	36833	105.2371	556.2445		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1829789	1	1829789	6555.449	0	3.854816
Within Groups	194829.2	698	279.1249			
Total	2024619	699				

Table 4.29–One Way ANOVA of Geographic Region and Employee Retention

SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Geog. Region	350	1044	2.982857	2.005436		
Employee Retention	350	11814	33.75429	62.02541		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	165704.1	1	165704.1	5175.76	0	3.854816
Within Groups	22346.77	698	32.01542			
Total	188050.9	699				

4.5 Summary of Findings

The findings of this study pertain to two constructs employee engagement and employee retention. Each of these constructs has been empirically tested in the Indian context across various industries and geographical regions with a sample size of 350. The findings of employee engagement reveal that five factors define this construct based on the data. These factors were arrived at after conducting an exploratory factor analysis.

A strong and significant relationship between employee engagement and employee retention was observed. Additionally, the demographic characteristics of the sample participants were also found to significantly impact employee engagement and employee retention. Overall the findings were encouraging and added substantial value to the existing literature.

4.6 Conclusion

This study is noteworthy as it was conducted across many industries and regions. The sample participants fairly represented the diverse professions, hierarchical ranks, industries and regions. The study can be largely generalized as it captures the inherent employee aspirations, emotions and dynamics present within each industry that enormously impact the employee engagement and employee retention levels within organizations.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion of Results

This study advances research in the domain of employee engagement and employee retention. Firstly, this study opted to empirically present factors of employee engagement through exploratory factor analysis. Second, an examination of the extent of influence of each factor on employee retention was conducted. Finally it was observed whether the demographic variables of age, gender, education, experience, income, marital status or the industry or geographical region

to which the sample belongs to, does play any role in understanding the constructs of employee engagement and employee retention. The study conceptualized was validated using data collected from various employees working in India across different industries and regions. Overall, the results provide fairly strong support for the proposed research objectives. Although there is much scope for further research, the findings strongly predict that employee engagement does have a significant impact on employee retention. The study with its findings offers significant managerial implications.

5.2 Discussion of Research Question One

The first research question explored the various aspects and factors into the construct employee engagement. The empirical data was utilized to conduct an exploratory factor analysis on the employee engagement construct. A total of five factors were identified and accounted for almost 73% of the total variance. The five major factors of employee engagement that have implications on the employee retention levels within organizations. The five major factors thus identified were *Work Energy and Enthusiasm, Job Resources, Collaborative Work Environment, Job Significance and Impact on Organizational Outcomes*. Each of these factors consisted of various variables that influenced the experiences, perceptions and emotions of individual employees and their work engagement levels.

5.3 Discussion of Research Question Two

This study considered employee engagement construct to be the exogenous variable (independent) and employee retention as the endogenous variable (dependent). After thorough reviewing of the literature, the researcher intended to empirically explore the relationship between the two constructs in the Indian context that would also include the factor conceptualization within the exogenous variable.

The findings of the study revealed that both the constructs held a strong and significant relationship with the coefficient of determination indicating a value of 0.976. This shows that the model is a

near perfect one that accounts for almost all of the data variability. These results are consistent with the previous studies. Out of the five factors of employee engagement that were identified through the study, all were found to have a significant impact on employee retention. Job resources ($\beta = .699, p < .001$) exhibited the highest impact on employee retention. This revealed that employees consider the resources on their job as vital which determine their performance. Having more job resources in hand also implies work autonomy and work significance to an employee. This bears a positive impact on an employee's mind and allows them to foster more resilience, enthusiasm and satisfaction. Those organizations that offer greater resources on the job are more likely to retain their employees as they make their people feel valued and trustworthy. Such resources at hand also foster citizenship behaviors and extra role behaviors.

5.4 Discussion of Research Question Three

In this research question and objective, the researcher intended to look beyond the constructs and establish further relationships that could possibly influence or offer notable implications to the overall study. A host of demographic factors namely age, gender, marital status, income, industry, education, experience and geographical region were considered as possible influencing aspects to the constructs of employee engagement and employee retention. The noteworthy findings of this research question revealed that all the demographic factors were statistically significant. This indicates that within the organizational psychology domain, especially for the constructs of employee engagement and employee retention, the impact of demographics cannot be undervalued. This is because, specific to the Indian workplace contexts, employees now belong to a multigenerational workforce category where the influence of age on engagement and retention aspects cannot be denied. Gender and marital status are significant and cause prominent workplace implications as the Indian aspirations are tied to societal and familial culture and values. Social conditioning and family background act as vital antecedents to education as a demographic characteristic. Income and experience again are tied to an individual's professional aspirations which in turn shape their monetary and non-monetary needs. Thus, making way for their decisions pertaining to work engagement and retention. Industry type and geographical region are tied to the labor market dynamics in terms of labor demand and supply, work load, work timings, flexible or rigid employment patterns and other organizational/business environmental forces. Workplaces

like the Govt. sector that offer job security contrary to their private counterparts are less likely to witness attrition rates and hence employee engagement strategies are unlikely to be designed. These aspects put together determine the choices made by individuals with regards to their work engagement levels and organizational commitment levels. The influence of demographic characteristics is often high in the Indian context as the society is fundamentally rooted in the familial systems and the professional choices and decisions are less individual and arrived at after due consultation with the spouse and other family members.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

The study was conducted to explore the impact of employee engagement on employee retention in Indian organizations. The major findings are listed below:

- Employee Engagement – A total of 30 variables were considered for the study and an exploratory factor analysis was conducted which resulted in a total of five factors. The five factors were namely *Work Energy and Enthusiasm*, *Job Resources*, *Collaborative Work Environment*, *Job Significance and Impact on Organizational Outcomes*. All the five factors that were identified through this study corroborated with the existing literature and re-established their significance in the modern day dynamic workplaces and the multigenerational worker contexts.
- Employee Engagement – Employee Retention. A significant and direct effect where the Coefficient of Determination was 0.976 was reported. Of all the five factors namely *Work Energy and Enthusiasm*, *Job Resources*, *Collaborative Work Environment*, *Job Significance and Impact on Organizational Outcomes* that were used as Independent variables to test their impact on Employee Retention, it was found that Job resources ($\beta = .699$, $p < .001$) exhibited the highest impact on Employee retention.
- Demographic Variables – Employee Engagement. Of the eight demographic variables namely *Age*, *Gender*, *Marital Status*, *Income*, *Education*, *Experience*, *Industry and Geographical Region* which were examined for their significant effect on Employee engagement revealed that all the variables had a significant impact on the Employee engagement construct.

- **Demographic Variables – Employee Retention.** Of the eight demographic variables namely *Age, Gender, Marital Status, Income, Education, Experience, Industry and Geographical Region* which were examined for their significant effect on Employee retention revealed that all the variables had a significant impact on the Employee retention construct.

6.2 Implications

One of the most challenging and daunting tasks for organizations nowadays is to get the right talent onboard. Filling in the required positions especially in knowledge based organizations has seen huge bottlenecks due to talent mobility and talent shortage. Adding to the talent search and onboarding impediments, firms are also facing huge challenges on the employee retention front. Competent human capital is a rare yet essential commodity for ensuring better organizational health and effectiveness.

In a world with growing gig roles, remote work and changing workplace perceptions and preferences, it is hugely formidable and unnerving to meet the employee expectations from time to time. The expectations tend to vary with demographics, life cycle stage and career stage of the employees. Maertzet. et. al. (1998) stated that employee turnover research in organizations has been relatively unexplored to ascertain the significant factors that can influence employees' retention or turnover decisions. With changing times and demographics, the factors that contribute towards such decision making also change.

Research has stressed on the need for employee retention. What cannot be overlooked here is that human resource professionals and researchers need to analyze on an in-depth scale not just the retention processes but also the quitting processes. When an employee decides to quit, the decisions can be taken in haste, based on emotional cues or a complete rationalistic assessment of the work role, growth, compensation and other factors of interest.

Generally firms tend to retain their people as it is nothing but a compulsion which helps with the status quo continuity. It also reduces other costs like onboarding, training and adaptability costs associated with new employees (Zineldin 2006). Denton (2000) also reported that employees intentions to quit are associated with the experience of job contentment. The more the contentment, the more is the demonstration of work enthusiasm by the employee. This has been found to have a positive impact on the customer satisfaction as well.

Employee retention has witnessed profound significance specific to client centric professions. Clients generally establish a level of comfort, convenience and ease of operations with specific employees. The ease and convenience of handling the day to day operations becomes simplified and ensures trust and precision when the client is dealing with long tenured employees who know the process and the bottlenecks per say. Stauss et al. (2001) emphasized the importance of employee retention from the client's perspective and how it allows for preferences, inspiration and behavioral desiredness. As and when organizations grow their customer, client and other stakeholder satisfaction becomes fundamentally imperative. Sustaining satisfaction is the key to competitive advantage and hence any firm would strive to retain its employees for a longer period of time as they are well aware of the processes and procedures and can in the due process strategize well (Panoch 2001).

While the talent war is on in many industries and across countries, one of the most challenging tasks for the human resource professionals is to get the right talent on boarded. Some markets and sectors have huge labor supply available. However out of the large labor supply that is available, the actual pool that meets the specific role and industry requirements is quite less. Even if firms get hold of such pool, the goal is to persistently meet the employee aspirations and also counter poaching from competitive firms. Employee retention has been the most challenging issue faced by firms nowadays. Despite the vast efforts to improve their employee value proposition and adopt and implement suitable retention strategies, the firms still need to navigate through a host of determining factors that govern the intentions to stay and quit (Cutler 2001; Steel et. al. 2002; Taplin et. al. 2003; Gbervbie 2008).

The critical antecedent to retaining employees is formulating and implementing competitive human resource policies which are difficult to beat in the industry. This allows employees to rethink on their intentions to quit. According to Acton and Golden (2003), the policies of various firms should be made in such a way that they not just reflect the maintenance essentials of employees but also appreciate their skills and competencies thereby aiding in employee retention. Many previous studies in this direction have affirmed the fact that employee retention strategies are a planned effort that help to groom, support, inspire and nurture people. They tend to bring in a sense of security amongst the people and alleviate their intentions to quit (Cascio 2006; Gberville 2008; Olowu and Adamolekun 2005).

What drives organizations to retain its people are their skills and competencies. Skills generally take time to be nurtured through a series of training and retraining. So in order to avoid the hiring expenditure, retaining is simpler and worthwhile. Kaliprasad (2006) in a significant study pointed towards four interlaced aspects mainly the motivation, communication, vision and knowledge which play a critical role to effectively managing the human resources. These are essential to keeping people motivated, experience a sense of psychological safety and remain engaged and committed to their work as well as the organization. More the efforts on the part of any organization to implement employee friendly policies, more will be retention with benefits on the managerial performance and organizational performance fronts. Each retention strategy should cumulatively focus on the compensation, safety and well-being at the workplace, growth visions, training and mentoring opportunities and trustworthy sustainable relationships (Baker 2006; Fitzenz 1990).

Other researchers have also identified definite factors like working conditions & environment, competitive salary and incentives, career growth opportunities, recognition for individual employees, positive work relations, timely & collaborative communication and work-life equilibrium & integration. Each of these factors plays a significant role in helping firms to retain their talent. These factors also help employees to feel motivated and committed and ultimately exhibit highest work engagement levels (Walker 2001).

Literature beyond the organizational offerings has also delved into the factors that drive individuals to continue their stay in a particular organization. Findings in this direction have drawn inputs from the Needs theory of motivation to identify the role of achievement, affiliation and power in an individual's professional life. When individuals are recognized and rewarded for their independent contributions, it elevates their sense of achievement and makes them feel indispensable within a particular organization. In tune with existing literature, subsequent studies have also endorsed that work relationships act as a strong support system. Such affiliations are looked upon by individuals as they exude positivity and warmth. The need for power also gets satisfied for an employee as and when they become senior in a particular system and move up the echelons to take up higher roles and responsibilities.

Research in the domain of employee retention has also predicted the role of an individual employee's idiosyncratic fortitude that determined unequivocal faith and loyalty towards his or her organization. A strong dedication and commitment towards the workplace was fundamental to employee retention (Kehr 2004; Hytter 2007).

Studies in the domain of employee retention have also explored the role of various demographic variables in employee staying or quitting decisions. Literature has delved into Age (Kyndt et. al. 2009; Singh 2019), Marital status (Sheridan 1992; Agyeman and Ponniah 2014), Gender (Doran et. al. 1991; Blau and Kahn 2017), Income (Sorn et. al. 2023; Phillips and Connell 2004); Education (Towns 2019; Fletcher et. al. 2018); Experience (Carr et. al. 2010; Cloutier et. al. 2015), Industry type (Sinha and Sinha 2012; Ghani et. al. 2022) and Geographical region (Stor 2024; Urme 2023).

Gender, in the Indian context, has been one significant factor which determined the staying and quitting decisions in an employee's career lifecycle. In a study conducted by Doran et al (1991) established that women at the workplace are more likely to quit than their male colleagues. This is particularly applicable to those studies where women are conditioned to be financially dependent on the male members in the family. This again is especially true in patriarchal societies that view a female's income as secondary. It is acceptable in such societies when the female members look upon other male members in their family, especially the father and spouse, for receiving the

necessary financial support for their living needs or education. The study by Doran et al (1991) has primarily concluded that an organization's employee retention strategies do not necessarily apply to the women as their decisions regarding work is dependent on the family requirements and cultural values.

Studies in this domain brought out the acceptance and utility of employee retention strategies amongst female employees despite the role played by other influencing factors (Igbaria& Chidambaram, 1997). However other studies claimed different results stating that for male employees the career growth opportunities, compensation, occupational well-being and other aspirational needs are linked to employee retention strategies more than their female counterparts (Ahuja 2002).

Other thought provoking aspects pertaining to gender based employee retention is the inherent biases in the workplace. For years the aspects like gender disparities in pay gap, equal opportunities at work and affirmative action have been debated. Yet organizations have taken the liberty to not meet the norms set by these raging debates. The perceptions regarding non-inclusivity, biases in pay & promotion and meager representation of women in board rooms are all contributing towards the intentions to quit for female employees. Studies in this direction have also documented their findings regarding the glaring disparities among female and male employees (Blau and Kahn 2017; Joshi et al. 2015; Bertrand & Hallock 2001).

Many previous studies in employee retention domain have also explored the role of gender. Apart from the working conditions, work life balance and other support factors, the gender differences in role satisfaction, job contentment and work fulfillment have all influenced the retention decisions. More importantly experiencing gender inequality and gender discrimination at work in terms of rewards and recognition and other organizational practices was also significant to employee retention. Studies reported that over a period of time the female employees' contentment levels have largely declined, thus leading to higher attrition levels. This was more in observance in the industrial establishments where the women representation was quite low (Mueller and Wallace 1996; Sloane and Williams 2000; Richter and Sterbova 2013; Macneil and Liu 2017).

On the professional front, previous researches concluded that for women work life balance (Tiwari 2017) is extremely important to meet their family commitments. The turnover intentions were also influenced by the general perceptions that are held with regards to promotions, remuneration (McConnell 2011), gender inequality, learning opportunities (Macneil and Liu, 2017), educational level (Royalty 1998); professional skills (Sicherman 1996) and a host of other factors.

Majority of the studies predicted gender based turnover intentions and quitting rates from the job demands and workplace discrimination perspective. Other studies concluded that women despite being equally competent as their male counterparts, tend to quit whenever there is a friction between work and domestic demands. However, researchers equivocally state that gender as a stand-alone is fragile predictor of turnover intentions and it can be caused due to a host of antecedents and outcomes (Bryant et.al. 2010; Griffeth et. al. 2000).

Despite the gender-based constraints and reservations that fundamentally influence the female turnover intentions, the firm's sector of operation, the basic HR policies & practices and organizational culture. Culture of an organization is believed to be one of the strong determinants that can influence any employee's staying or quitting intentions. Studies have stressed on the importance of a pleasant and amiable working environment that can drive the employees to exhibit positive behaviors despite their job demands (Sheridan 1992).

Different organizational cultures have differing job demands because of the differing business environments. Some work roles need to prioritize customer satisfaction and in the process need to meet their work related targets as well. Some work cultures demand prolonged working hours from their employees. While gender is an undeniable factor in determining the turnover rates, each sector and industry shapes the worker's behaviors, attitudinal patterns and perceptions through their idiosyncratic characteristics. In the healthcare sector, the significance of age and gender of the caregiving employees has been highlighted and believed to positively influence (Scandura & Lankau 1997). Studies on nurses also revealed that their job contentment positively influenced their decision to stay (Lu et. al. 2019).

While it is important for every nation and its economy to address the female participation rates at the macro level, it is equally important to understand the needs of women and young girls when they take up educational and employment opportunities. The organizational and institutional culture and practices to which women and these young girls get exposed to can create obstacles for them thereby deteriorating their motivational and interest levels to continue their participation and contribution levels. One of the fundamental reasons for such detachment could be the perception and experiences associated with gender inequality in human resource practices (Jyrkinen & McKie 2012; Gilbert et al. 1999).

With increasing awareness and blurring of the gendered roles in the society, gender equality has become extremely significant and due consideration is being given by human resource professionals and practitioners. However gender equality as a policy is not something which many organizations have documented. This is especially true in the Indian context where women employees are unlikely to be offered additional advantages or a reliable support organizational support system.

Despite the many challenges women face right from the family and societal expectations to organizational level expectations, the growth of social media, cultural values transition and individual aspirations have all contributed to women's empowerment. Both rural and urban parts of India are striving to adopt better lifestyles by raising their per capita incomes. A certain lifestyle adoption and lifestyle products usage have become the norm in most Indian households. The aspirational India and its citizens are aiming to improve their lives through better education, better housing, improved healthcare and enhanced lifestyle changes by vacationing and resorting to premium purchases. Even the investment patterns of Indians have seen a widespread change over the last few years with majority of them switching from traditional investments to taking more calculated risks.

Various studies on female employees have documented that women are generally as ambitious as their male counterparts and intend to access the same career opportunities. Women tend to exit organizations that do not support their endeavor to balance their profession and family and look for stronger and gender equality endorsing cultures that meet their requirements. Previous studies

have stated that retention of female employees is lower in those organizations that are highly stressful for them and which cause a lot of friction between their work and family. However they look for better opportunities for their career and recognition (Adnan Bataineh 2019; Memon et. al. 2015).

In line with the previous studies, our study has indicated that significant differences were reported for both employee engagement and employee retention when tested for gender effects.

It can be inferred that female employees are willing to continue their professional lives despite the workload and expectations of family and other societal members. In a study by Hammond and Coetzee (2022) conducted in the financial services sector of South Africa, have specifically explored the retention enablers and impellers associated with senior female employees. The analysis revealed that the retention studies in particular are disconcerted in terms of the antecedents that cause an employee to leave the organization. The retention enablers and disablers have been synthesized as below:

Table 6.1: Enabling and Impeding factors of Employee Retention

Enabling factors of retention	Impeding factors of retention
Intrinsic motivation (Coetzee, 2021; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).	Burnout (Bakker et al., 2003).
Autonomy (Coetzee, 2021; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005).	Disengagement (Bakker et al., 2003).
Psychological attachment (Coetzee & Veldsman, 2013; Ferreira et. al. 2022; Kahn, 1990).	Excessive levels of stress (Bakker et al., 2003).
Effective mentor-mentee structures (Coetzee, 2021; Schutte, 2017).	A lack of person-organisation fit (Cregard & Corin, 2019; Sullivan et al., 2009).
Job characteristics (Coetzee, 2021; Dockel, 2003; João & Coetzee, 2012)	A lack of career development prospects (Coetzee, 2021; Cregard & Corin, 2019).
Employee empowerment (Coetzee, 2021; Ganji et al., 2021).	A lack of maternity leave (Cregard & Corin, 2019).
Opportunities for training and development (Coetzee, 2021; Dockel, 2003; Van Dyk et. al. 2013)	Lack of job satisfaction (Ganji et al., 2021).
Managerial support (Coetzee, 2021; Dockel, 2003).	Increased career and job mobility opportunities both locally and globally (Schawbel, 2020).
Career progression and career trajectory prospects (Coetzee, 2021; Dockel 2003; Potgieter et al., 2018; Tladinyane et al., 2013).	Emigration (Budler, 2019).

Job satisfaction (Van Dyk et. al. 2013)	Poor organisational performance (Meintjes, 2019).
Job embeddedness (Ferreira et al., 2022; Van Dyk et al., 2013).	Unfair remuneration (Coetzee, 2021; Kumar & Mathimaran, 2017)
Work engagement (Coetzee, 2021; Van Dyk et. al. 2013)	A lack of employee empowerment (Ganji et al., 2021).
Output rewards (Meintjes, 2019).	Negative ethical climate (Ganji et al., 2021).
Good organisational performance (Meintjes, 2019).	Perceived lack of organisational support (Ganji et al. 2021).
Positive ethical climate (Ganji et al. 2021).	
Potential promotions (Coetzee, 2021; Muzaffar & Javed, 2021).	
Psychological work immersion (Coetzee et al., 2018).	
Perceived organisational support (Ferreira et al., 2022; Ganji et al. 2021; Takawira & Coetzee 2019).	
Recognition (Bussin, 2018; Dockel, 2003)	
Work-life balance (Dockel, 2003; Takawira & Coetzee 2019).	
Fair remuneration (Bussin, 2018; João & Coetzee, 2012; Kumar & Mathimaran, 2017)	

Source: Hammond and Coetzee (2022)

Previous studies that explored the various factors associated with female employees have noticed that women generally stick to organizations that offer more fairness, job satisfaction, meets their personal goals, career growth, study support, and more importantly it offers job location convenience that facilitates the women to balance their work and family domains.

Other factors that impede their retention are negative experiences at the workplace that do not support their needs and expectations. One of the fundamental reasons for women employees contributing more to attrition rates is their evaluation of their work environment in terms of demands, constraints and opportunities. If the demands and constraints surpass the opportunities alongside a misalignment of their personal values and beliefs with the organizational values and beliefs, the circumstances favoring for exit becomes even stronger (Sullivan and Baruch 2009; Coetzee and Takawira, 2019). However, the fact cannot be denied that women and their careers have been more sporadic than their male counterparts as they tend to join or exit many organizations based on their personal requirements (Mainiero& Gibson, 2018; Sullivan &Baruch,

2009). The career and lifecycle stages also add to the apprehensions surrounding female employee retention.

What cannot be denied over here is that female aspirations vary across organizations. Their work outlook also tends to change depending on their work interactions in their early careers. The national culture and the cultural conditioning at the societal level are other factors that shape and influence the value system and beliefs of women and female employees in particular. The economic development of the country where one is operating also plays a significant role in influencing career choices and decisions.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The employee retention literature interestingly has not only emphasized on the hard offerings that are monetary in nature, it also emphasized on the soft offerings like leadership behavior, social infrastructure and work life balance. Some employees, especially the Gen Z are nowadays looking for more training and developmental support for their individual upskilling. This is again one element for which the younger generational workforce tend to be drawn towards and base their career decisions thereupon. Other generational preferences and personality attributes like intentions to lead, travel, professional attitude, educational & family background, ability to handle occupational pressure etc. also play a role in an employee's intentions regarding staying and quitting (Hytter 2007; Pritchard 2008).

Responsible human resource practices promote women's careers within organizations by offering them better work life balance. Women employees in such organizations are contented and are more likely to continue their tenure with such firms (Lamsa and Piilola 2015). The challenge over here is the formulation and implementation of responsible human resource practices. Though the domain of responsible human resource practices is quite nascent in some economies and industries as well, the macro governmental interventions are promoting implementation of such practices. In India, there have been large scale efforts to boost female workforce participation levels by mandating their representation in certain sectors and industries. Grass root level efforts in the education sector through scholarship for girls and other necessary support is yielding results. The government is also contemplating on making remote work for women as mandatory over the next

one to two decades time. In addition to these efforts, the corporate firms especially in the IT & ITeS have largely implemented women friendly policies to attract and retain female talent.

With all the societal changes and adoption of a new set of cultural and lifestyle values, a marked and significant change is being observed with regards to consumption patterns. Amidst all these changes, women have come to the fore to contribute more to the household incomes than ever before. Though they resort to their freedom to join or step away from being employed, the overall participation of women, be it gig, bet it remote or regular employment, the numbers have seen an upward rise. Contributing to the family income and earning a societal status for oneself have been observed as major changes off late with the female members. Women are increasingly contributing to the growing economic needs of their families and therefore looking at more sustainable careers that allow them to balance their work and family domains.

Most studies have also relied on measuring and assessing individual employee's data by comprehending their demographic characteristics, background data, past experiences and their current attitudes. Retention literature has failed to delve into individual employee's data by combining it with the employee's current employment status. By looking at this combination, it is easier to predict the attrition and retention rates of a firm. For certain work roles, if this is utilized then it would be easier for any firm to plan for its requisite demand and supply while acknowledging the employees' decisions to stay or leave (Trevor 2001; Maertz et. al. 1998). It will also help the firms to devise suitable management practices that allow the retention of competent human capital which is essential to sustaining a firm's viability and competitive advantage (Barney 1991).

By and large studies indicated a host of factors for employee retention and they reflected gender dissimilarities as well. Some of the striking and well known factors are job satisfaction (Biaison 2020; Steil et.al. 2022), contentment and happiness (Sarwar et. al. 2023; Dave and Raval 2016), organizational culture (Murtiningsih 2020; Inda and Mishra 2016), competitive remuneration and benefits (Terera and Ngirande 2014; Alhmoud & Rjoub 2020), employee friendly policies and practices (Haider et. al. 2015; Herman 2005), work-life balance (Kar and Misra 2013; Garg and Yajurvedi 2016) and the like.

The entire debate surrounding employee engagement and retention is also because of the dynamics within the labor market. The uncertainty over jobs, ambiguous and unannounced layoffs and changes in employment patterns have all contributed to a downfall in employee retention. These changes in the employment arrangements have reduced the job and organizational commitments amongst workers. High attrition rates within firms are now acceptable and not seen as a new trend anymore (Cohen 1993) because of widespread downsizing and hiring of temps (Hirsch and Soucey 2006; Cameron et al. 1993). The gig economy has further fueled the acceptance of high attrition rates amongst employees. With the growth in service economy, a platter of services is now being offered to the end consumers. Though this has created large scale employment, it has also equally created easy entry and exit options for the workforce who want to participate in the labor market through this type of employment arrangement. This represents heightened employee mobility patterns wherein a worker is free to decide on when he or she wants to participate in the production process or when he or she wishes to exit.

The gig economy in most countries is in a nascent or premature phase where it is currently absorbing the large labor supply that is available in the market especially of that which is at the bottom of the pyramid. One of challenges in this type of economy is the lack of social security measures which again leads to a drastic impact on the employee retention. While employee mobility aka social mobility is viewed as a positive trend that helps employers to find the right talent and fit to fulfill their job requirements, it also poses numerous challenges and costs on the retention and rehiring fronts (Ehrenberg et. al., 2021). Most employee mobility studies till date have focused more on employee turnover and less on employee retention. Interestingly studies have also mapped turnover intentions than mapping the actual reasons by documenting the decisions of those employees who exited. This could be largely due to the non-accessibility to the actual study participants i.e. the employees who left a particular organization and lack of support from the human resource department of a firm (Lazear 1999; Farber 1994; Schnake and Dumler 2000).

Through this study, the researcher perceives that more longitudinal studies in the domain of employee engagement and employee retention are needed. Also the self-reported measures are at times deceptive and do not bring forth the underlying issues. Also more niche studies that are

longitudinal and industry/region specific can offer greater insights to the existing literature on employee engagement and employee retention.

6.4 Conclusion

While the field of research pertaining to employee engagement or employee retention is not new to researchers and practitioners, the current study has offered fresh perspectives by considering a host of demographics and also brought forth the factors of employee engagement. This research is a simple and delicate presentation of the two main constructs i.e. employee engagement and employee retention. However, the researcher strongly feels that the constructs under study are elusive because of their dynamic nature. The focus of research now needs to look beyond the traditional way of capturing emotions, feelings and the perceptions of employees. A dual approach to assessment of the constructs can be adopted wherein the employee and employer perspectives can be captured within a single time frame.

As the research domain advances, it is anticipated that HR analytics will have a significant bearing on employee engagement and retention in the future. Incorporating occupational stress, mental well-being and other significant indicators like burnout, can add substantial value to the existing literature. Furthermore, according to Ravesangar and Narayanan (2024) integrating predictive modeling can further offer vital signs than merely identifying potential departing individuals to forecasting their likelihood and motivations for doing so.

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,
Greetings!!

We are undertaking a research to understand the impact of employee engagement on employee retention. Your response is very important for this research study. Please be assured that your response is completely confidential and will be used for the academic purposes only.

Thank You So Much!

Section A: Demographic Details

Name (Optional)								
Designation								
Tenure in the Current Company								
Age (Yrs)	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60				
Income (INR)	0-5 Lakhs	6-10 Lakhs	11-15 Lakhs	16-20 Lakhs	Above 20 Lakhs			
Gender	Male	Female	Other					
Education	Under Graduate	Graduate	Post Grad	PhD or Higher	Vocational			
Experience	Under 5 Years	6-10 Years	>10 Years					
Marital Status	Single	Married	Divorced	In a Relationship				
Industry	Tourism	IT & ITES	Real Estate	Health	Education	Media	Retail	Other
Geographical Region	East	West	North	South	Central			

Section B: Employee Engagement

Instructions: Please provide your honest feedback by rating each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Feel free to add comments or suggestions wherever applicable.

S No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy.					
2	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.					
3	Time flies when I am working.					
4	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.					
5	I am enthusiastic about my job.					
6	When I am working, I forget everything else around me.					
7	My job inspires me.					
8	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.					
9	I feel happy when I am working intensely.					
10	I am proud of the work that I do.					
11	I am immersed in my work.					
12	I can continue working for very long periods at a time.					
13	To me, my job is challenging.					
14	I get carried away when I am working.					
15	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.					
16	It is difficult to detach myself from my job.					
17	At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.					
18	I have flexibility in the way I get my job done					
19	I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role					
20	My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time					
21	I feel that my job directly impacts organizational outcomes					
22	I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job					
23	I have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities on my job					
24	I work in a collaborative and conflict free environment					
25	There is lot of transparency in official communications within my organization					
26	I have a best friend at work					
27	When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one					
28	My co-workers welcome opinions different from their own					
29	The process for determining pay and rewards in our organization seems fair and unbiased					
30	At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems					

Section C: Employee Retention

Instructions: Please provide your honest feedback by rating each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Feel free to add comments or suggestions wherever applicable.

S No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	I feel recognized and appreciated for my contributions.					
2	I receive adequate opportunities for career growth and development.					
3	I feel that my workload is manageable and reasonable.					
4	My feedback is accepted and appreciated					
5	I am able to balance my work and family domains					
6	I am happy that my organization has a positive and inclusive work culture					
7	I am happy to work in a flexible work arrangements system					
8	My organization genuinely cares for its employees through Employee Assistance Programs and Wellness initiatives					
9	Overall, I am highly satisfied with my job and the company.					
10	I am not likely to leave my current company within the next 12 months					

Additional Comments or Suggestions:

APPENDIX B

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	350	1	4	2.48	1.122
Gender	350	1	2	1.46	.499
Marital Status	350	1	4	2.50	1.150
Income	350	1	5	3.01	1.424
Education	350	1	5	3.01	1.407
Experience	350	1	2	1.51	.501
Industry	350	1	7	4.07	1.978
Geog. Region	350	1	5	2.98	1.416
Valid N (listwise)	350				

Frequency Tables

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30 Years	93	26.6	26.6	26.6
	31-40 Years	78	22.3	22.3	48.9
	41-50 Years	96	27.4	27.4	76.3
	51-60 Years	83	23.7	23.7	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	188	53.7	53.7	53.7
	Female	162	46.3	46.3	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	96	27.4	27.4	27.4
	Married	74	21.1	21.1	48.6
	Divorced	89	25.4	25.4	74.0
	In a Relationship	91	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Income					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5 Lacs	74	21.1	21.1	21.1
	6-10 Lacs	63	18.0	18.0	39.1
	11-15 Lacs	68	19.4	19.4	58.6
	16-20 Lacs	77	22.0	22.0	80.6
	Above 20 Lacs	68	19.4	19.4	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Education					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undergraduate	66	18.9	18.9	18.9
	Graduate	74	21.1	21.1	40.0
	Post Graduate	73	20.9	20.9	60.9
	PhD or Higher	65	18.6	18.6	79.4
	Vocational	72	20.6	20.6	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5 Years	173	49.4	49.4	49.4
	6-10 Years	177	50.6	50.6	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Industry					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tourism	42	12.0	12.0	12.0
	ITES	60	17.1	17.1	29.1
	Real Estate	43	12.3	12.3	41.4
	Health	44	12.6	12.6	54.0
	Education	56	16.0	16.0	70.0
	Media	59	16.9	16.9	86.9
	Retail	46	13.1	13.1	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Geog. Region					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	East	69	19.7	19.7	19.7
	West	76	21.7	21.7	41.4
	North	67	19.1	19.1	60.6
	South	68	19.4	19.4	80.0
	Central	70	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Employee Engagement	Mean	Std. Deviation
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	3.41	1.005
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	3.77	1.248
Time flies when I am working.	3.62	1.041
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	3.83	1.158
I am enthusiastic about my job.	3.77	1.079
When I am working, I forget everything else around me.	3.25	1.105
My job inspires me.	3.77	1.088
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	3.41	1.292
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	3.53	.977
I am proud of the work that I do.	3.52	1.026
I am immersed in my work.	3.64	1.197
I can continue working for very long periods at a time.	3.59	1.098
To me, my job is challenging.	3.67	.968
I get carried away when I am working.	3.47	1.023
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.	3.15	1.218
It is difficult to detach myself from my job.	3.32	1.151
At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.	3.21	.993
I have flexibility in the way I get my job done	3.27	.926
I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role	3.32	.946
My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time	3.10	1.033
I feel that my job directly impacts organizational outcomes	2.99	1.194
I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job	3.62	1.092
I have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities on my job	3.63	1.117

I work in a collaborative and conflict free environment	3.37	1.187
There is lot of transparency in official communications within my organization	3.64	1.174
I have a best friend at work	3.67	1.140
When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one	3.69	1.142
My co-workers welcome opinions different from their own	3.59	1.183
The process for determining pay and rewards in our organization seems fair and unbiased	3.88	1.227
At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems	3.52	1.064

Employee Retention	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel recognized and appreciated for my contributions.	3.64	1.197
I receive adequate opportunities for career growth and development.	3.59	1.098
I feel that my workload is manageable and reasonable.	3.67	.968
My feedback is accepted and appreciated	3.47	1.023
I am able to balance my work and family domains	3.15	1.218
I am happy that my organization has a positive and inclusive work culture	3.32	1.151
I am happy to work in a flexible work arrangements system	3.21	.993
My organization genuinely cares for its employees through Employee Assistance Programs and Wellness initiatives	3.27	.926
Overall, I am highly satisfied with my job and the company.	3.32	.946
I am not likely to leave my current company within the next 12 months	3.10	1.033
Valid N (listwise)	350	

Correlations							
		ER_Final	REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1	REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1	REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1	REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1	REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1
Pearson Correlation	ER_Final	1	0.337	0.699	0.343	0.44	0.252
	REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1	0.337	1	0	0	0	0

	REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1	0.699	0	1	0	0	0
	REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1	0.343	0	0	1	0	0
	REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1	0.44	0	0	0	1	0
	REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1	0.252	0	0	0	0	1
Sig. (1- tailed)	ER_Final	.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1	0	.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
	REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1	0	0.5	.	0.5	0.5	0.5
	REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1	0	0.5	0.5	.	0.5	0.5
	REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	.	0.5
	REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	.

APPENDIX C - Employee Engagement Questionnaire Development Sources

Adapted from	Statements
Schaufeli and Bakker (2003); Schaufeli and Bakker (2004)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy. 2. I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose. 3. Time flies when I am working. 4. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. 5. I am enthusiastic about my job. 6. When I am working, I forget everything else around me. 7. My job inspires me. 8. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. 9. I feel happy when I am working intensely. 10. I am proud of the work that I do.
Schaufeli and Bakker (2003); Schaufeli and Bakker (2004)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. I am immersed in my work. 12. I can continue working for very long periods at a time. 13. To me, my job is challenging. 14. I get carried away when I am working. 15. At my job, I am very resilient, mentally. 16. It is difficult to detach myself from my job. 17. At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.
Bakker & Demerouti (2007)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. I have flexibility in the way I get my job done 19. I have the autonomy to suggest and implement changes within my job role 20. My skills and training needs are met by my company from time to time
Kahn (1990); Bakker, Albrecht and Leiter (2011)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. I feel that my job directly impacts organizational outcomes 22. I have access to all the resources needed to execute and learn on my job 23. I have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities on my job 24. I work in a collaborative and conflict free environment 25. There is lot of transparency in official communications within my organization 26. I have a best friend at work 27. When I need a break, my organization allows me to take one 28. My co-workers welcome opinions different from their own 29. The process for determining pay and rewards in our organization seems fair and unbiased 30. At my workplace, I am allowed to openly express sensitive issues and problems

APPENDIX D - Employee Retention Questionnaire Development Sources

Adapted from	Statements
Watson, Thompson & Meade (2007)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I feel recognized and appreciated for my contributions. 3. I feel that my workload is manageable and reasonable. 4. My feedback is accepted and appreciated 5. I am able to balance my work and family domains 9. Overall, I am highly satisfied with my job and the company.
Mowday, Steers & Porter (1979)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. I am not likely to leave my current company within the next 12 months
Kyndt et. al. (2009)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. I receive adequate opportunities for career growth and development. 6. I am happy that my organization has a positive and inclusive work culture 7. I am happy to work in a flexible work arrangements system 8. My organization genuinely cares for its employees through Employee Assistance Programs and Wellness initiatives

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