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Research Article

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AS A CATALYST FOR TEAM RESILIENCE IN THE BANKING SECTOR

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Abstract

This study focus is the examination of the empirical relationship between employee engagement and team resilience in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. The study adopted a positivist approach therefore generated data using a structured survey instrument primarily from a sample of 116 employees of the deposit money banks. The data generated were inferentially analyzed using the Pearson Statistic. The results indicated that vigour, dedication and absorption, which are dimensions of employee engagement, relates positively and significantly with team resilience. From the findings, it is concluded that an engaged workforce shows inspired behaviour of commitment to the organization therefore breeding work teams that have capacity to meander through changing environment and work processes. It was therefore recommended that managers should initiate some measures, like social rewards, incentives, empowerment for the employees as a means of attracting engagement.

Keywords: Engagement, Vigour, Absorption, Dedication, Team resilience, Adaptability.

Introduction

Work teams have been adjudged in literature as providing the assuming potency to strategically attain goals (Carnelli, Friedman, Tishler, 2013; Bersin, 2014; Botter et al, 2014; Joshi, et al, 2017). Work teams are created by organization as amalgam of creative ideas that support a responsive approach to market needs and providing the organization with competitive capability (Maynard, Kennedy & Sominer, 2017). Teams' ability to put in check the individual soldering behaviour and consistently aggregate the collective capabilities of the member is considered important. This must equally be associated with oneness, common purpose and concrete membership confidence amongst members. These attributes characterise team resilience (Zaccarao, Gualtieri & Minionis, 2005; Shin, Taylor & Seo, 2012). Team resilience is desired behaviour that serves as collateral for vigour oriented team which reiterates to all members the common goal been sought. Despite the stressed discourse on team resilience as a premium character for attaining goals, there is seeming contention on the individual member

willingness to adapt to imposing environmental changes that are likely to dwindle their collective resolve at goals. It is also argued that the collective strength of members may experience disjoint due to varied level of member willingness to support common goals thereby creating functionality gap (Cha, 2007; Hollenback et al, 2017; Copper-Thomas et al, 2014). The conceptual focus of this debate is that employees that constitute teams are likely to be positively committed to the collective configuration of teams. Individual level of commitment referred as engagement according to Balley et al (2015) is required as catalyst for refining cognitive heterogeneity that come with teams at first instance and transform it strategically for intended goals. In other words, disengaged employees are likely to exhibit dysfunctional attributes that breaks cohesiveness and sense of pluralism that sustains collective efficacy. Employee engagement according to Hu, Reigeluth and Lee (2014) is a minded commitment that is associated with vigor, dedication and absorption that cannot only spur extra-roles but also make employees to be interested in lauding management. This promotes high level of motivation that channels desired outcomes. If this conceptualization is anything to go by, team resilience character can be likely attained through individual level of engagement that culminates to having dedicated teams therefore this study is a copious attempt at establishing the empirical relationship between employee engagement and team resilience in deposit money banks.

Literature Review Concept of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement according to Cha (2007) is the employee's active participation in work and the physiological state of mind, intellectual ability and expressions that align with work dynamics such as work involvement, recognition and good sense of feeling and value at work. This suggests that engagement of employee's affects the psycho-social mental state and intellectual capability of employee's which snowballs into their being able to develop and sustain their commitment to the organization. It also refers to the constructive, vastly stirred emotive state consisting of energy and involvement. Xiao and Duan (2014) noted that engagement is the level of commitment of individuals in contributing to the growth and survival of organization and it is critically expressed through employee initiative, loyalty effectiveness, identity and positively professing the organization to other stakeholders (Soane, et al, 2012; Xu.,Guo., & Wang, 2013; Xiao & Duan 2014; Liu, 2016). Scholars of engagement have seemingly presented a common conceptual focus that view employee engagement as pro-social behaviour that transcend the agency doctrines that are mainly contractual. Gutana (2012) particularly described engaged workforce as that which emotional in perpetrating his convictions and belief in the organization therefore willing to be demonstrably involved in extra roles that support inclusive effort at goals of the firm. Bardoel et al (2014) argues that employee engagement is laced with moral tendencies that instigate selflessness, passion, support for members and devotedness. Mauno, et al (2007); Mishra, Boynton and Mishra (2014) defined employee engagement as a motivated commitment associated with vigour, dedication and absorption. In other

words engaged employees brings unusual energy that compel actions with voluntary attitude to functionally change status-quo and attain goals responsively.

Notably, firms with highly engaged employee's stands a chance to become successful than those with low engagement this is because highly engaged employee's contributes to high level innovative practices and outcomes (Hayes, 2015). In all, this paper is inclined to the engagement prescription of Mishra et al (2014) which includes vigour, dedication and absorption as earlier mentioned. According to Rayton and Yalabik (2014), vigor is the liveliness, psychological elasticity, strength of character that enable employees to consistently make more input at work. It is an element of work engagement that connotes increased level of drive and psychological ability in carrying out assigned functions at work. Employees with vigour demonstrate aptitude, showing zeal in contributing to the performance of work as well as the increase rate of doggedness in facing multiple challenges that come with tasks. It is also viewed as an aspect of motivation that propels the strength of individuals in carrying out job functions or repels against it, therefore, potency and endurance are critical aspects of engagement which is in tandem with the motivational views of (LaGuardia, 2009). Fox and Spector (2012), defines vigour as the emotional state of characteristics that employees put in their job in the workplace, when asked, this is usually done proactively in contrast to psychological traits like optimistic emotions.

Menegldel, Salanova and Martinez (2016), noted that dedication is the power to engage in a work and feeling a sense of importance, passion, encouragement, self-importance and difficulties. It is the level of emotional commitment of employees' that enables them to participate vigorously in their job, this makes them to feel important and encouraged to do more. It is the tendency of being self-motivated, excited as well as high level of involvement in one's job. Put differently, dedication is employee's ability to draw from his work a sense of being important, delighted about given task and a feeling of inspiration from the challenges of assigned jobs (Song, Kolb, Lee, & Kim, 2012; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014).

Dedication entails individuals' interest, affection ingenuity with continuous desire for enhancement. Mauno, Kinunen and Rnokolainnen (2007), posits that employee dedication is related with employ job involvement, therefore, a formidable emotional level of participation or contribution that exemplify a sense of bonding, which an individual develops for his job. Absorption according to Bradbury et al (2011) is the degree of engrossment by the employee on the internal concerns of the organization to the extent that he shows less concern for external activities that do not add up to how goals are achieved. Rayton and Yalabik (2014) viewed absorption as not showing interest on the happenings in one external environment thus leading to greater level of attentiveness and focus to one's job. Absorbed employees are not likely to be too interest in how much hours have been spent at work rather they are more interested in how well tasks are accomplished for overall goals.

According to Hayati, Charkhabi and Naami (2014), it offers the level of concentration and engrossment that individual attach to their work, this making it difficult for such individuals to waste time and minimize the level of detachment from the job. It underscore the tendency of employees to fully concentrate in their job while being enthusiastic in carrying out assigned jobs. It has been suggested that engaged employees develops the liveliness and emotional relationship with their job and see themselves as being capable of handling all the demands of their job, reminiscing inherent stimulation that drives individuals to play active role while working (Fullagar & Mills, 2008).

Team Resilience

Building work teams has been recently stressed as a strategic means of enhancing productivity and efficiency of firms (West, Patera, Catson, 2009; Song et al, 2012; Xiao & Duan, 2014). Early theorist in management like many Paker Follett drew attention to social group with common interest and goals as key to optimizing work goals. Teams are built across functions, levels and expertise and changed with the responsibility of striving towards theme goals. The character of work teams has been viewed as important as the goals sought. According to Xu and Wang (2013) the character of team member aggregates to a behaviour that determine the ability of the team to achieve desired goals.

Given the importance of teams, much research works have been embarked upon to understand what makes team to be effective and attain goals. Beyond effectiveness discourse is the resilience of team considering the fact that job demand, incentives and authority structure and volume of resource accounts for some reasons for frustration and depression amongst team members or collectively. Zaccaro and Barder (2003) in their work on team performance, posits that the success of teams at first instance results from members ability to integrate their individual actions and argued further that team leadership is key. Hill and Birkinshaw (2012) are of the view that, though the features mentioned by the previously scholars are conceptually validated, he argued the ability of team members to be aware of the complex and dynamic nature of the environment will instill their commitment to managing resources, creatively undertake roles, rely on authority structure and appreciate rewards for goals. Hills and Birkinshaw's position has been conceptualized as resilience in psychology literature (Luthans, 2002).

Team resilience therefore is the ability of team to make optimistic adjustment that results to creative work approaches in order not to be overwhelmed by the environmental circumstance. Sadeglin and Pihie (2012) reiterates that teams should express resilience by showing tendency to develop and modify status-quo for more functional means of getting tasks done. The diversity character of teams according to Sun and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) provides them with ability to contemplate proactively procedures and protocols that augment individual gaps and strive accordingly towards goals. This according to the author is as a result of the resilient asset inherent in teams. Festing and Schanfer (2014) had through a framework described team resilience

in terms of cohesion, adaptability and collective efficacy. Their framework has attracted reinforcement from the works of Castano, Watts and Tekleab (2013); Maynard, Kennedy and Sominer (2015). In the case of cohesion, they noted that it is team members' recognition of oneness thereby showing dedication and willingness to achieve team goals. Zaccaro (2010) argues that cohesive teams demonstrably share the common vision and goals of the team. Mayard et al (2015) observed that resilient teams are characteristically environmental adaptors. They show innate attitude to adapt to system disruptions that ordinarily hinder effort at goals. As a team, their bundle of individual experiences and capabilities constitutes shared value that reinforces them for goals. For collective efficacy, resilient teams are known to be taking common responsibility and vicariously committed to one another. Collective efficacy according to Xu and Wang (2013) provides the team synergy that promotes idea and experience sharing which culminate to capabilities for them to better appreciate and scrutinize the environment for goals.

Employee Engagement and Team Resilience

The tendency of employee engagement influencing work outcomes both for the individual employee and organization generally have found huge space in literature (Rothman & Rothman, 2010, Bardoel et al, 2014; Bailey et al, 2015). It has been demonstrated that employee engagement relates with work performance especially macro level performance (Huh, Reigeluth & Lee, 2010). Festing and Schafer (2014) indicated that engaged employees are inclined to exhibiting psychological feeling over their task to the extent that display ingenious commitment that radically ensure goal attainment. Employee engagement in this vein is antithetical to work vices that make for redundant behaviour and undesirable outcomes. Deductively, employee engagement provides inspirational behaviour that must be tapped by organization for attaining targeted goals. The capacity of employee engagement in ensuring functional and desired outcome is lucidly enunciated. However, as firm creates strategic teams for task accomplishment, the intricate nature of behaviour of the individual employees in ensuring team functionality equally requires attention. Team ability to be relevant and ingeniously contribute to attaining goals is viewed to be connected with their vigour and dedication alongside wholesome commitment to all internal factors that are result oriented. An engaged workforce expectedly incite inherent energy that acts as adhesive for collective thinking and acting towards common goals of the organization. Employee engagement no doubt has antecedents of positive outcome when correlated with team performance. This relationship though has empirical proof there is dearth of empirical evidence on the engagement discourse and team behaviour characteristics which in this circumstance is team resilience, therefore this study hypothesis thus:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between employee engagement and team resilience in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

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Methodology

This study has two variables in focus which are employee engagement and team resilience. The correlational design is used since it is aimed establishing a relationship between the variables. It surveyed a set of employees in deposit money banks using a structured questionnaire as instrument for generating data. The survey instrument was examined for reliability and showed a Cronbach alpha of 0.77. The data obtained from a sample of 116 employees were inferentially analyzed with the Pearson statistic. The approaches deployed for this study were premised on the underlying positivist epistemology that also allow for quantitative analytical procedures.

Measures

The two variable examined were measured based on existing scales. Employee engagement was measured with Banda (2012) 18 item scale, the scale was adapted from employee prosocial behaviour questionnaire where respondents are requested to indicate the extent of agreement on the scale ranging from Strongly Disagree – 1 to Strongly Agree – 5. Sample item includes, *I enjoy doing my work because I am encouraged by our oneness; I will* not consider another company because we work like a family here.

Team resilience was assessed with 12 item, entrepreneurial resilience questionnaire for assessment of entrepreneurship resilience and venture success by Palsy and Jirico (2014) sample item includes, 'I can achieve targets even with minimum resources available to work; I adjust myself to meet the challenges of job demand.

Result

The Pearson result indicated a positive and significant relationship between the employee engagements construct and team resilience. In the case of vigour and dedication, the have r = 714 and .766 respectively which means a strong and significant relationship at p<0.01 for absorption with r = .553 and p <0.01, it is moderately strong and significant.

Table 1: Correlation Result on Employee Engagement and team Resilience N = 116

		TRes	Vg	Ab		Ded
Team Resilience	Pearson	1.000	.714**	.553**	.004	.766**
	Correlation	-	.000	116		.000
	Sig (2-tailed)	116	116			116
	N					
Vigour	Pearson	.714**	1.000			
	Correlation	.000	-	.000	116	.000
	Sig (2-tailed)	116	64			116
	N					

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Absorption	Pearson	.553**		1.000	
	Correlation	.004	.000	-	.000
	Sig (2-tailed)	116	116	116	116
	N				
Dedication	Pearson	.766**			1.000
	Correlation	.000	.000 116	.000 116	
	Sig (2-tailed)	116			116
	N				

Correlation is significant @ the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlation is significant @ the 0.05 level

Discussion

This study examined the nature of empirical link between employee engagement and team resilience in deposit money banks. The subject of employee engagement has dominated behavioural psychology discourse on both employee and organizational performance. Of course, the study results have enriched the position of extant literature linking engagement with positive workplace outcomes (Xu & Wang, 2013). The findings here indicate vigour component of engagement relating strongly with teams members show enthusiasm towards team goals, they show psychological assertion that engender their capacity to creatively adapt to environmental complexities. Fox and Spector (2012) found a relationship between engagement and team responsiveness. Though the components of employee engagement construct were not viewed independently, it indicates its antecedent in sharpening outcome. Dedication as a component of engagement was also found to have a significant relationship with team resilience. The study result underscores dedication amongst work members as ornamental for tasks accomplishment. Dedications instigate extra-role behaviour that reenergize effort at goals by team members.

Rayton and Yalabik (2014) observed that a dedicated workplace is responsive to process revolution that often comes with radical technological changes and reiterates that firms rely on dedicated work team to gain competitive advantage. The finding of this study concretizes the thinking, hence showing a relationship between dedication and team resilience. The absorption dimension of employee engagement from the study finding relates with team resilience. The finding supports the work of Zacaaro (2010). This study showed that employees whose concentration on their integral work dynamics show high level sophistry in task handling as they are not open to external distraction that robs-off the willingness to remain focused and drive goals.

Conclusion/Practical Implication

The behaviour of work teams when matched with the organizational expectations must be seen to be providing the strategic energy and capabilities that adds up to goal. They are expected to demonstrate functional strength

that understands the environmental dynamics and capitalize on their commonness to achieve result. This is conceptualize as a function of the level of engagement shown by team members therefore, this study investigates the empirical relationship between employee engagement and team resilience. The data generated from the respondent sample and analyzed shows that employee engagement is a determinant of team resilience character amongst the team members. The results indicate that employee psychological and mental disposition to vigour, dedication and absorption, instigate extraroles that reinforces teams collective strength to accomplish assigned tasks and attain overall goals the study concluded. The study finding points to the fact that organization continuously seeks for contemporary and contextualized ways, such as social rewards, incentives, development programmes of getting employees engaged. It is not mere gainsaying that an engaged workforce sees the organization beyond a means to an end rather that which he holds inherent states that requires his being altruistic with high absorptive capacity to function as strategic teams with goal orientation.

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