

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: A KEY TO INDIAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS' GROWTH AND SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are engaged in the arena of philanthropic and humanitarian interventions and empowering marginalised groups to build sustainable livelihoods. In recent years, the increasing relevance of NGOs, they have realized the importance of developing their employees as assets of their organisations. NGOs are providing ample opportunities to foster employees' skills, knowledge and capabilities to achieve organisational outcomes. While they are known for managing the donor-driven projects with their outcomes, NGOs are critiqued for their internal management problems and constraints that block the growth of the employees and organizations. Additionally, NGOs are faced with insufficiency of trained personnel, non-existent of placement and promotion, ineffective recruitment and selection, insufficient training opportunities, increasing project costs, resistance of workforce and institutional deficiencies (Patel & Thara, 2003; Aboramadan, 2018; John et al. 2018). In this context, NGOs are revisiting their internal management dimensions and develop high performing employees' engagement practices. NGOs are recognizing the need for a strategic approach to link human resource development as a tool to enhance their employee relations. The current research has developed a systemic research blue print to investigate the agenda further. In view of collecting data, there were six NGOs from top six states have been invited to participate in Case research. The findings of sample organizations have indicated that many NGOs valued employee engagement practices are to increase their performance with desired outcomes and to build organizational excellence. NGOs have introduced employee relations-building strategies like introducing employee grievance cell, flexi hours, employee annual retreat, weekly performance evaluation, individual development plans and skill development training. In conclusion, NGOs with high employee engagement practices are found to be successful in their service delivery and employee growth orientation. The limitations of current research are: involvement of more states and increasing sample size.

Keywords: Institutional, Deficiencies, Relations-Building Strategies, Grievance Cell, Flexi Hours, Employee-Annual-Retreat, Non-Governmental Organizations (Ngos).

I. INTRODUCTION

Employees are the epicenter of the organizations. Employees are the face of the organizations. There is no exemption for NGOs. NGOs are beginning to understand the role of employee relations as important as the projects run by NGOs. While they are known for managing the donor-driven projects with their outcomes, NGOs are critiqued for their internal management problems and constraints that block the growth of the employees and organizations. Additionally, NGOs are faced with insufficiency of trained personnel, non-existent of placement and promotion, ineffective recruitment and selection, insufficient training opportunities, increasing project costs, resistance of workforce and institutional deficiencies (Patel & Thara, 2003; Aboramadan, 2018; John et al. 2018). The current research aims to explore the various dimensions of employees' relations in the context of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from the perspective of Indian experience.

Objectives

The objectives are to study the top Six NGOs who have employee engagement practices. The objectives also are to understand the nature of employee HR engagement and its dynamics in selected six NGOs.

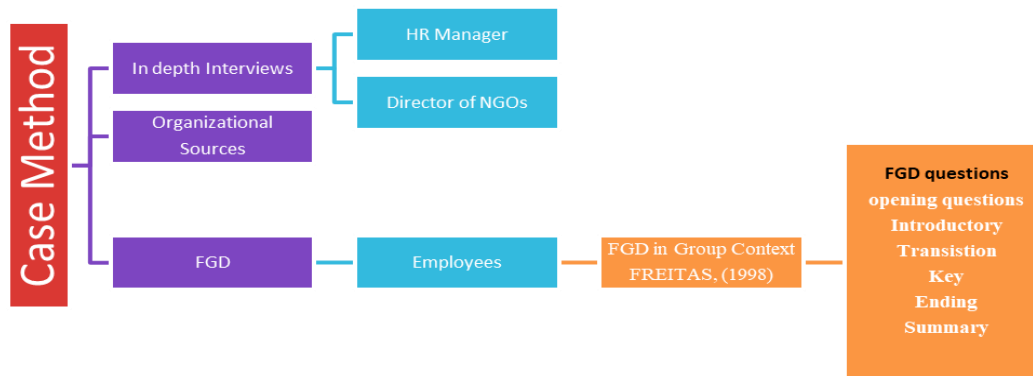
II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample NGOs

NGOs in top six states represent 50% of the total NGOs in India. The top six states that have been ranked on the basis of the number of NGOs registered are Uttar Pradesh (Vatsalaya) Maharashtra (Child Rights and You), West Bengal (SEVA KENDRA), Tamil Nadu (Manitham), Delhi (GOONJ), and Andhra Pradesh (Teach for India).

Case Study Methodology

Yin (2003) has further explored in the background of qualitative research and has proposed that case study needs to be single-case focused with important characteristics to verify the aspects like trustworthiness, credibility, accountability, transparent approach, leadership process, employee growth and organisational trust. He has emphasised further that these characters of case study are to be found and analysed in the milieu of NGO case studies. Merriam (1988) argued that case study plays a valuable role in adding to the prevailing knowledge in terms of the contextual issues associated with a case. Swanborn (2010) has added an important dimension to the case study of the current research. It is opined that case study is utilised to verify the factors and insights drawn from the questionnaires and allow the researcher to do an in-depth analysis through a structured way of collecting information further. This is considered to be the complementary insight that adds information to the current research.



III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Employer-employee relation is gaining momentum in the context of NGOs. Dhamija, a (2020) indicated that employer-employee relation has to be viewed as management role to enhance employees' perception and commitment towards their organizations. the studies of Ochieng, O. F., & Stephen, N. M. (2020) have shown that hr managers are unable to make harmony between employees and employers in terms are their strategies, development of human resources and their functions. they have also indicated that there needs an appropriate balance in job operationalization and have identified the various tensions and conflicts among employees-employer in NGOs.

Ugoani, J. (2020). has emphasised the reciprocal effects in employer-employee relations with reference to their shared values, performance, and innovation that are crucial for organizational excellence. Jehangir, M. (2018) spelt out the need for employee engagement practices that would enhance employee-employer relations and promote creativity and innovation within the organizations.

Gichira, P. M., W Were, S., & Orwa, G. O. (2017) have indicated with research of NGOs in Kenya regions that employees had a low morale and motivation that has led to the absence of NGOs' justice and commitment. Thus the review of literature has enabled to find the research gap to be addressed.

Data Analysis and discussion

Employee engagement practices and their Implications for NGOs are important and significant. The aspects of the Employee engagement practices are common to all NGOs irrespective of their size and establishment. The top six NGOs are found to have employee engagement practices. The following characteristics are used by the selected NGOs for enhancing their employees.

Employee centric approach

Manitham believes in organizational culture that cares and builds human resources as strategic growth indicator for the development of the organization. Manitham links the

Strategic Training and development

Manitham puts the employees as the central to the organizational engagement practices. The training is a part of organizational strategic plan with a short term goals and developing employees' training and competency building. The strategic training in Manitham is to identify the personal needs of skills, knowledge and attitude and trap own potentials for the growth and make employees as multi-tasking employees. The employees are given a scope of on job training. Vatsalaya has a formal process of hiring employees for the organization. The

formal process involves the steps of recruitment, hiring, induction and development of employee skills and knowledge

Strategic Rewards and recognition

Strategic rewards and recognition in Manitham aims to build team efforts, performance and outcomes. Manitham uses the recognition as a strategy of empowerment and motivation of employees and the mentors among their own people. All the awards of Manitham aim to create a culture of commitment and dedication along with organizational climate of trust and competence. Strategic reward and recognition in GOONJ plays an important role to motivate and recognise the contribution of the employees.

Strategic Initiatives

At CRY, Flexi hours for employees is another aspect of CRY's initiative in the background of Strategic HRD initiatives. The working hours of jobs are basic to employees. CRY has adopted the new initiative to introduce the flex hours at the work place. Based on the employees' need, availability, quality of employees and time factor, CRY has designed Flexi hours to have mutual benefits and allow employees to make work-life balance in their personal lives. In Seva Kendra, employees appreciate the initiative of introducing 'Employee Grievance Cell (EGC)'. This cell works for the welfare of the employees. Employees could address the following; employees addressing their grievances to the cell, the inquiry report submitted and final solutions given to protect the employees. SKC has laid policies namely Organisational policy, employee grievance policy, financial policy, Sexual atrocities policy, child protection policy and environmental policy. These are policies formulated to support the employees, target population and benefiting the larger society. Teach to Lead has an innovative framework of impact assessment of Employees named "CSIL". This CSIL model has the basic foundation to understand the role of oneself to the group and the role between groups towards oneself. This CSIL framework has indicators, namely; contributing, inspiration, support and Learning. These are the four basic assessment factors that help the employees to understand their performance and the impact made through the project intervention. This is a unique learning for the researcher because this model provides double-loop understanding of performance contribution from individual to teams and teams to the individual. Manitham has the best organisational support for employees. Employees have enumerated that employee are with mentors and vice versa. If any employee or mentor has a family or a social problem, the entire organisation is with them and show their solidarity to contribute and extend the helping hand to propose a solution and solve the problems. The group solidarity within Manitham is noteworthy and employees feel that they are supported to face the problems alone. When one employee goes through difficulties, the job sharing is done and helped with organisational support. Thus, the application of SAO and HRDO dimensions in the context of NGOs is found to be enabling and empowering.

IV. CONCLUSION

The research insights of all the NGOs have enabled to identify the strength of organization that guides and shapes the future of NGOs. It has been observed that NGOs focus on the accountability and it becomes an important imperative as well as a challenge for all to ensure proper implementation of projects and programs. The has become a model for other NGOs to adopt a framework of Employee engagement practices and use them effectively for the organisational growth and outcomes.

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