
“Impact Of Employee Training On Their Work Engagement: A Study Among IT Professionals In Bangalore City”

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Abstract:

Since last two decades, in response to changes in the competitive working world of business and management, organizational researchers have focused their attention towards employee work engagement practices that can in turn enhance the creativity and performance of employees (Nawaz, 2014). Elnaga and Imran (2013) found that training is one of the vital human resource management practices that positively affect the quality of the workers knowledge and skills and this results in higher employee performance on job.

In consistent with this, the purpose of this study is to investigate the contribution of employee training programmes on their work engagement using evidence from Bangalore’s IT sector.

The study also aims on examining the 3 dimensions of Work engagement namely Vigour, Dedication & Absorption are influenced by the training programmes conducted in the IT sector. The research would be beneficial to managers, trainers & policy makers in enhancing the employee work-engagement in the IT sector.

A structured questionnaire would be developed and a survey among IT professionals would be conducted and further the responses so obtained would be tabulated and statistically analyzed using SPSS and the hypothesis formulated would be empirically tested.

Keywords: *work-engagement, Vigour, Dedication, Absorption, employee training.*

Introduction:

Employee engagement is the central concept that truly captured the concentration of HR and management professionals.

The term 'engagement' is used very frequently, that it brought many changes in the operations of an organisation.

An early definition of engagement in 90's is given as 'harnessing of organisation members to their work roles'; people express themselves physically, mentally, emotionally during role performances (Kahn, 1990, p.694). Therefore engagement is 'role specific'.

Objectives of the study

To examine the impact of training on employee engagement

To determine which dimensions of work engagement are impacted by training

To prove that training provided for employees improves their job performance and satisfaction levels, which in turn increases their engagement level in the organisation.

Literature review:

In our day to day life, we play various roles like being a daughter, a mother, a sister, a brother, etc.,. The same concept was applied by Saks (2006) to our professional life, as many roles has to be played by an employee in workplace like, job role, role of a team member, departmental member.

A widely accepted social exchange theory (SET) is applicable to the concept (Saks, 2006). This is based on the perception of ‘social exchange’ between an individual and exchange partner. This means, workplace relationships develop through social interactions to create trustworthy relationship over time. Workplace relations are key facilitators in driving engagement by ‘you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours’ approach.

We do have evidence that engaged employees can significantly contribute to organisation success like increased productivity, best performance, profitability, customer satisfaction loyalty and reduced levels of absenteeism (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). A highly engaged workforce gives a competitive advantage to organisations, this is because of the inherent difficulty in imitation by competitors. It has been stated that “it is easy to adapt your product and price but creating a highly engaged workforce is entirely different”.

The UK is still facing an ‘engagement gap’, with 68% of employees reportedly ‘not engaged’ and 21% actively ‘disengaged’ (Gallup, 2017).

Employee engagement gives a lot of positive outcomes like job satisfaction (Saks, 2006), increased job performance (Rich, Lepine, Crawford, 2010; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli, 2007) and increased loyalty (Saks, 2006; Yalabik, Popaitoon, Chowne and Rayton, 2013). Companies having engaged employees

outperforms in their primary roles when compared to those companies which lack in engaged employees (Towers Watson, 2011).

Training is an activity which is provided to employees to enhance their skills and knowledge which ultimately adds into the job performance (Azeem, Rubina, & Paracha, 2013). Lack of ongoing job training leads to lower performance of employees. This training programs not only develops their skills and knowledge, but also sharpens their thinking capability and decision making capacity in more productive way (Elnaga & Imran, 2013).

In order to prepare employees do their desired job, companies provide training to optimize their employee's potential (Kiweewa & Asiimwe, 2014). Most of the organisations, using a long-term planning, invests in training programs to change the attitudes of employees towards the workforce, enabling them to cope with uncertainties which they may face in future, thus improving the performance of the employees.

American companies spend more than \$720 million with the intention of improving employee engagement, observed by Gerst (2013). Some estimations show \$350 billion a year. These estimations clearly represents that employee engagement is at the top of the agendas of all companies, whether it is public or private (Attridge, 2009).

Whittington and Galpin (2010) gives the example of Procter and Gamble where there is highest conversion ratio of interns to full-time employees. The success is attributed for their early efforts of strengthening employee engagement amongst the interns by involving them in meaningful work with high level of recognition.

A survey research was conducted amongst the international civil servants, which proved that training had an impact on the performance of employees. As a fact, employee engagement is one of the crucial factor for the success of the organisation and also for increased profits and sales. Robinson, Perryman & Hayday (2004) stated that "the higher the level of employee commitment, the better the business outcome. If

employee engagement is indeed beyond commitment, the rewards should be even greater”.

“The quality of an organization’s talent, its passion and commitment is nearly impossible to replicate. Engagement is the fuel that drives the value of intangible assets.” (Wellins, Bernthal & Phelps, 2005, p. 3). Engagement is not just about bringing employees to work hard, but also the process of giving their best effort to perform, which is a two-way relationship (involves employer and the employee).

Age also plays a crucial role in determining the employee engagement level. Employees in their 20’s have high level of engagement, while employees in their 30s-50s have lower level. Younger workers tend to change their jobs more often than the employees who are settled in their way.

Factors contributing the declining of engagement levels are – job insecurity, unfairness, jobs with no space, highly stressful jobs with low flexibility, long-time working periods without break, are some of the examples (Markwich & Robertson-smith, 2009, p.39). Other factors which are worth to mention include lack of security as having accident or injury at work, experiencing harassment or having other development plan. These factors have a negative impact not only on the engagement level, but also on the organisational performance.

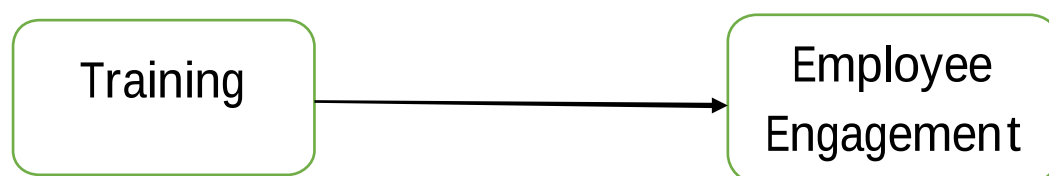


Figure: Research Frame

Research Methodology

The present research methodology adopts the analytical research design and the study involves software employees at different cadre from different software companies. The study area is restricted to the Software companies with 105 sample size. Both primary and secondary data were used for the research study. The primary data was collected through questionnaire and the secondary data involves various published documents. SPSS software is used for data analysis process.

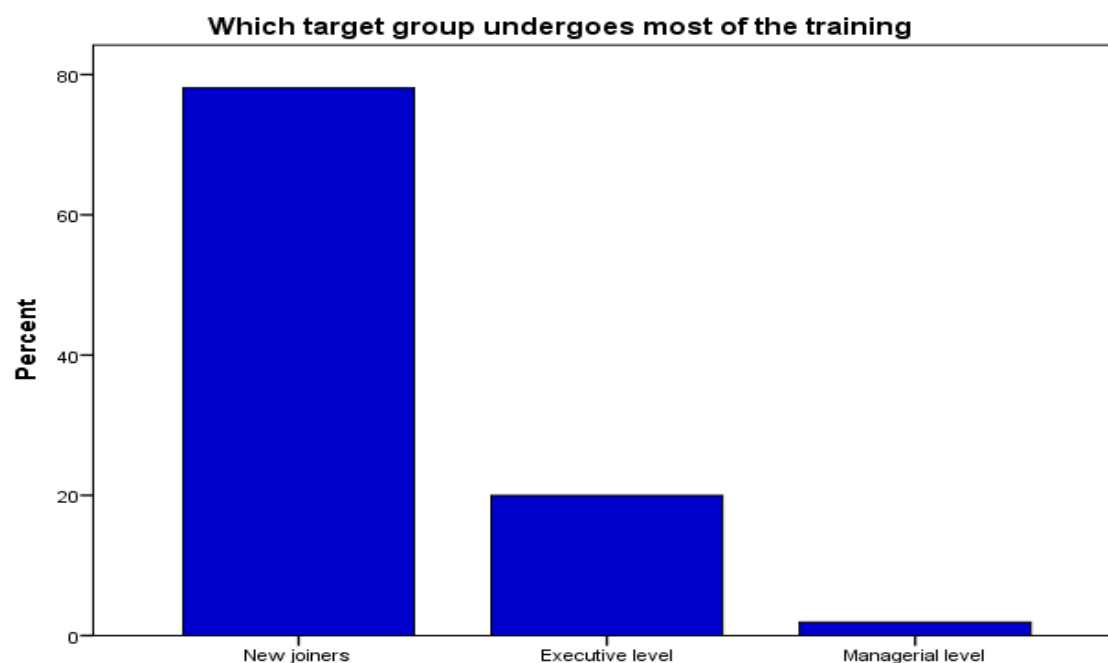
Results**1.1 Training is important in IT sector**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
Neutral	2	1.9	1.9	2.9
Agree	14	13.3	13.3	16.2
strongly agree	88	83.8	83.8	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

From the sample population, majority of the population accepted that training is very much important in the IT sector. Majority of the training programs are planned quarterly and annually. Employees of IT sector mainly want to participate in STRESS MANAGEMENT in order to balance their professional and personal life. Then they preferred RISK MANAGEMENT and then TECHNICAL TRAINING. Soft skills were preferred by very less percentage of population, which stood last in preference.

1.2 Which target group undergoes most of the training

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
New joiners	82	78.1	78.1	78.1
Executive level	21	20.0	20.0	98.1
Managerial level	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

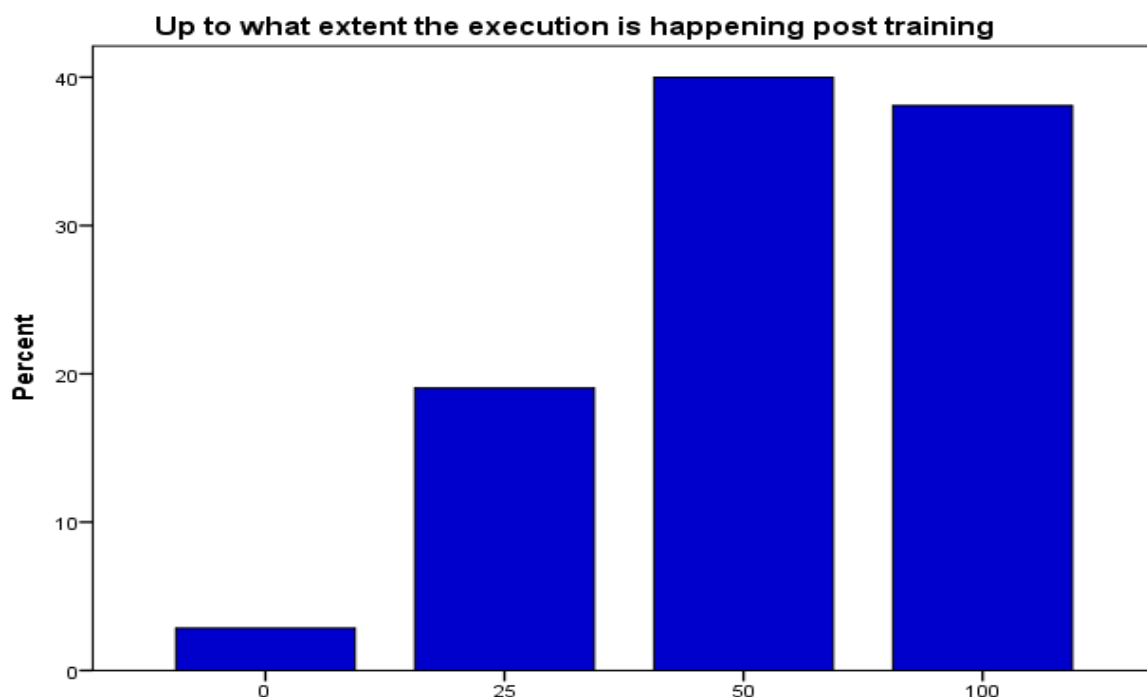


It can be seen that training is provided for new joiners in majority of the companies, to give knowledge about the projects and skills required to perform the job well. Then comes the executive level and finally for managerial level employees, from the research analysis.

1.3 What are important barriers to training and development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Time	62	59.0	59.0	59.0
Money	7	6.7	6.7	65.7
Non availability of skilled trainer	22	21.0	21.0	86.7
lack of interest from senior management	14	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

The first barrier to training, as given by the sample, is TIME. Due to the time constraints, organizing training programs have become difficult in the organizations. Then stands non-availability of skilled trainer, lack of interest from senior management and money.



After the training program, 50-100% of execution of the training practices are implemented in large companies. But, in few companies, only 25% of the execution is implemented in the company.

Knowledge	Efficiency	Communication skills	Teamwork	Confidence	Satisfaction level	Job Performance	Conflict reduction
3.04	3.24	3.30	3.24	3.44	3.35	3.45	3.47

This analysis of data proves that the training provided for employees improves their job performance and reduces conflicts, misunderstandings. Following this, the training also improves Confidence, Satisfaction level, Communication skills, Teamwork, Efficiency, Skills and Knowledge.

Real life examples	Case studies	Updated software	Facilitation	Pleasant Environment	Time conscious
3.77	3.56	3.51	3.47	3.46	3.34

This research report shows that majority of the employees prefer real-time examples to be provided in the training for their better understanding. Following this, Case studies, Updated software, Facilitation stands in the next consecutive places. Finally comes the pleasant environment and time conscious in the training practices.

Hypotheses Testing

Set 1

H₀: There is no significant difference between the number of training programmes attended in one year by an IT professional and his total experience

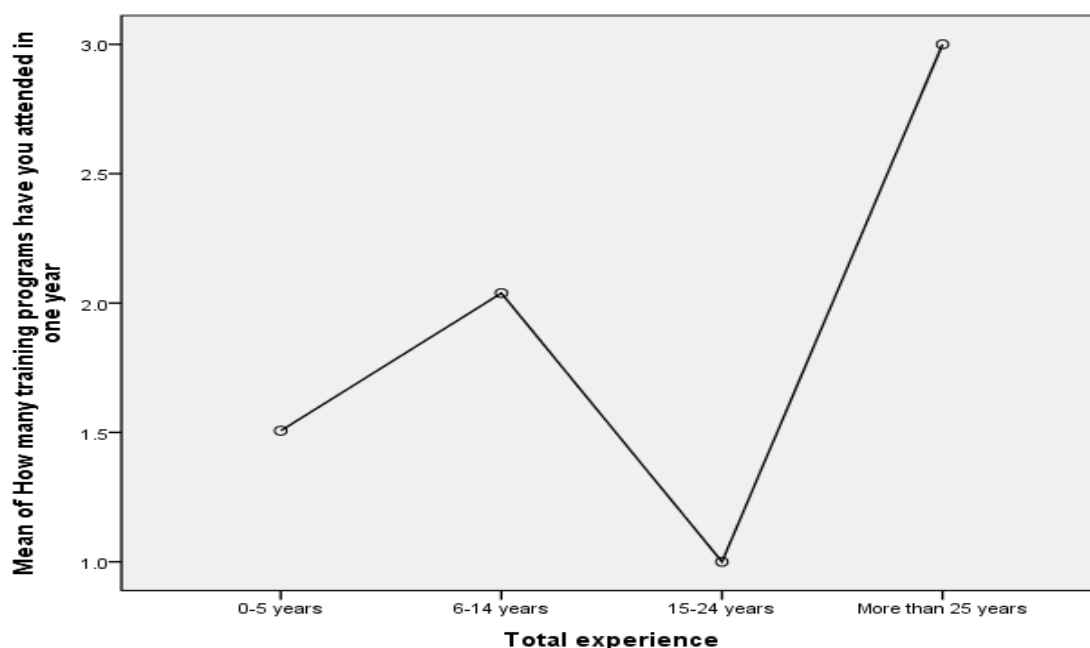
H₁: There is a significant difference between the number of training programmes attended in one year by an IT professional and his total experience

One-way ANOVA**ANOVA**

How many training programs have you attended in one year

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.754	3	2.585	4.336	.006
Within Groups	60.208	101	.596		
Total	67.962	104			

From the above table, it can be seen that at 5% significance level, the P-value (0.006) is less than the threshold value of 0.05 which indicates that there is a significant difference between the number of training programmes attended in one year by an IT professional and his total experience.



From the above graph. It can be seen that IT professionals having more than 25 years of experience attend more number of training programmes compared to IT professionals having 6-14 years of experience who in turn attend more training programmes compared to those having 0-5 years of experience. Therefore, IT

professionals tend to realise the value of Training programmes with their total experience.

Set 2:

H0: There is no significant association between IT professionals' perception towards the importance of Training and their level of work-engagement (Vigor, Dedication & Absorption)

H1: There is a significant association between IT professionals' perception towards the importance of Training and their level of work-engagement (Vigor, Dedication & Absorption)

Correlations

Correlation

		Training is important in IT sector	Work Engagement
Training is important in IT sector	Pearson Correlation	1	.245*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.012
	N	105	105
Work Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.245*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	
	N	105	105

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

From the above Correlation table, it can be seen that at 5% significance level, the P-value (0.012) is less than the threshold value of 0.05 which indicates that there is a positive correlation between IT professionals' perception towards the importance of Training and their level of work-engagement.

Correlation

Training is important in IT sector

	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Training is important in IT sector	1		105
Vigour	.248*	.011	105
Dedication	.166	.091	105
Absorption	.251**	.010	105

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

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

From the above correlation table, it can be seen that at 5% & 1% significance level, the p-values (0.011) & (0.010) for Vigor & Absorption respectively is less than the threshold value of 0.05 & 0.01. However, the p-value for Dedication (0.091) is greater than the threshold value of 0.05 at 5% significance level. Hence, it can be concluded that both vigour and absorption are positively correlated with IT professionals perception towards the importance of Training in IT sector however Dedication does not show any correlation with the same.

Regression

Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.245 ^a	.160	.151	.73320	1.978

a. Predictors: (Constant), Training is important in IT sector

b. Dependent Variable: Work_Engagement

$$R^2 = 0.160$$

$$\text{Adj } R^2 = 0.151$$

ANOVA

ANOVA^a

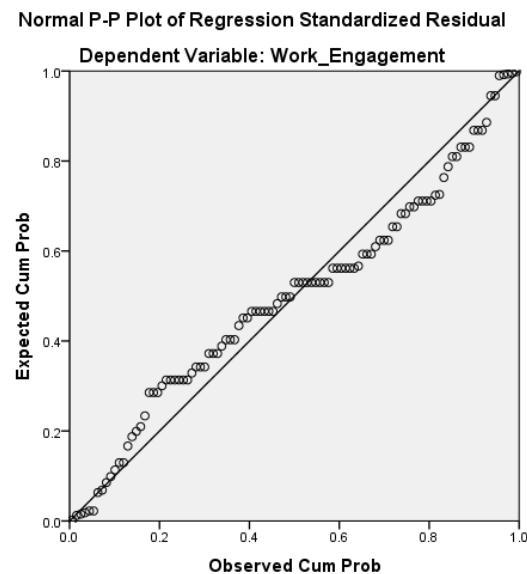
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.545	1	3.545	6.594	.012 ^b
	Residual	55.371	103	.538		
	Total	58.916	104			

a. Dependent Variable: Work Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Training is important in IT sector

From the above ANOVA table, it can be found that p-value (0.012) < 0.05, and RMSE value = 55.371, therefore the model is good.

Normal Probability Plot



From the NPP plot, it can be known that since it is almost a straight line, the error follows a Normal distribution.

Durbin-Watson coefficient (1.978) is less than 2, therefore it signifies that there is no serial or auto-correlation in the error.

Coefficients

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	2.198	.612		3.592	.001		
Importance of Training in IT	.326	.127	.245	2.568	.012	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work Engagement

From the above Regression table,

B0: Constant: 2.198 (p-value=0.001) shows that its significant

B1: Importance of Training in IT: 0.326 (p-value=.012) shows that its significant

VIF value (1.000) < 5 shows that there is no multi-collinearity.

The model that can be generated is:

Level of Employee Engagement = 2.198 + 0.326 * Mean of Employee perception of Importance of Training in IT sector.

Ex: if an IT professional perceives that Training in IT sector is not important (i.e. Strongly Disagrees – 1, then his level of employee engagement would be computed as below)

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Level of Employee Engagement} &= 2.198 + 0.326 * 1 \\ &= 2.524 \text{ (Low)}\end{aligned}$$

However if an IT professional perceives that Training in IT sector is highly important (i.e. Strongly Agrees – 5, then his level of employee engagement would be)

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Level of Employee Engagement} &= 2.198 + 0.326 * 5 \\ &= 3.828 \text{ (High)}\end{aligned}$$

Set 3:

H0: There is no significant association between the number of training programmes attended by the IT professionals and their level of work-engagement (Vigour, Dedication & Absorption)

H1: There is significant association between the number of training programmes attended by the IT professionals and their level of work-engagement (Vigour, Dedication & Absorption)

Correlation

Correlations

		Work Engagement	How many training programs have you attended in one year
Work Engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	-.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.556
	N	105	105
How many training programs have you attended in one year	Pearson Correlation	-.058	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.556	
	N	105	105

From the above Correlation table, it can be seen that at 5% significance level, the P-value (0.556) is greater than the threshold value of 0.05 which indicates that there is no correlation between the number of training programmes attended by the IT professionals their level of work-engagement.

From the above hypotheses, it can also be stated that it is the IT professionals' perception about the importance of Training rather than the number of training programs that an IT professional undergoes that has an impact on his level of work engagement.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, it shows that there is a significant positive association between employee engagement with training. These outcomes describe that employees who received training programs enhance their efficiency and skills, and are more loyal for the organisation.

In order to improve engagement of employees in IT sector, training programs also should be conducted at different levels. As employees of IT sector work in different shifts of work, they undergo a lot of stress and frustration. From the research, with a sample population, many opted for stress management as a prior option and risk management as secondary.

This shows that they require much managerial training programs than the technical and soft skills training programs. Organisations which conduct training programs related to these skills, employees are more energetic and enthusiastic to work than those who doesn't provide.

This study proposes a conceptual framework for determining the impact of training on the level of employee engagement. In this regard, an empirical study has been conducted in the IT sector, with the help of questionnaire to study the validity of the proposed frame work.

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