

The Impact of Socio-Demographic Variables on Faculty Engagement in Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

The concept of Faculty Engagement in higher education sector is considerably different from corporate sector and there are only a very few researchers who applied the concept of engagement in Higher Education sector. Higher education institutions are the crucial pillars for the success of any nation and its societal transformation. Therefore, the concept of faculty engagement in higher education becomes an inevitable factor for its survival. The present study shows the impact of socio-demographic variables on Faculty Engagement in Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu with the sample of 401 respondents.

1. INTRODUCTION

The buzzword of this 21st Century, which leads the organizations to survive and efficiently contend in the rapidly shifting and turbulent work environment, is Employee Engagement. It is the most essential factor in human resource management that helps the organizations in “not just retaining talented people, but fully engaging them, capturing their minds and hearts at each stage of their work lives”. Employee Engagement is a complex concept that is influenced by many factors namely organizational culture, management practices, reward and recognition, training and development, organizational reputation and so on.

Employee Engagement is a trump card that creates a sustainable competitive advantage for any organization which could enable and develop its employees to be “proactive and show initiative, collaborate smoothly with others, take responsibility for their own professional development and are committed to high quality performance standards” in the organizations. Hence, organizations need the highly engaged work force, which would lead to an edge-less environment and this could be attained only through effective employee engagement practices in the organizations. Concisely, Employee Engagement has become an inevitable factor for the survival of any organization including Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in current scenario.

BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Nelson Mandela had once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. Education is the most significant lever for societal, economic, and political transformation in this twenty-first century. Thus, in today’s technology driven globe, the destiny of a nation depends upon research and knowledge and thus on higher education. An emerging shift in higher education plays a pivotal role for economic wealth, cross-cultural encounters, information-technology development, and so on. At present higher education in India is at the phase of evolution and is poised to witness major growth in the years to come, as India will have world’s largest tertiary- age population and second largest graduate talent pipeline globally by the end of 2020”. However, lot of changes have been taking place, the eleventh five year plan (2007-2012) and the twelfth five-year plan (2012-2017) mentioned that Indian Higher

Education sector is still facing plentiful challenges on disparate counts such as ‘inequitable and low access to higher education, dearth of competent faculty, deficient infrastructure, and most importantly inadequate research and competence of teachers’. Therefore, it is evident that the urgent need of faculty engagement with transformation and enhancement in the quality of Indian higher education sector becomes indispensable.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The researcher found that engagement is a complex fact to understand and it's depend on many factors. Many academic researchers and numerous professional networking groups framed the model for employee engagement in different ways based on their workforce but still there is no consensus in how it should be measured? Even if there is a complex phenomenon in measuring employee engagement drives, the impact of socio-demographic variables like age, gender, educational qualification, and experience of employees on employee engagement is a unique feature to understand. In this regard, this study focuses on assessing the impact of socio-demographic variables on Faculty Engagement in Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the faculty engagement in Jesuit higher education institutions in Tamil Nadu based on socio- demographic variables.
2. To suggest suitable measures to improve the level of faculty engagement based on findings of the research.

3. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference between age of the respondents and their overall faculty engagement.
2. There is no significant difference between educational qualifications of the respondents and their overall faculty engagement.
3. There is no significant difference between Administrative and Non-administrative positions of the respondents and their overall faculty engagement.
4. There is no significant difference between nature of faculty (Government-Aided & Self-Financed) and their overall faculty engagement.

4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study discusses the Faculty Engagement in Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu. It covers both the Aided colleges and Self-finance colleges of Jesuits including the Arts and Science Colleges, Colleges of Education, and B-Schools. The researcher has chosen the institutions that have crossed more than five years of establishment. The study covers following regions of Jesuit Higher Education Institutions namely Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai (Karumathur), Tirunelveli (Palayamkottai), and Thiruvanamallai (Vettavalam). This study is descriptive in nature that aids in achieving the purpose and objectives of the study. A sample of 401 faculty from five-Arts and Science Colleges, two- Colleges of Education, and two- B-Schools of Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu has been chosen for the purpose of the study. The structured questionnaire dealt with socio-demographic information about the respondent and the drives to measure faculty engagement namely Organizational Culture, Management Practices, People, Work, Commitment, Performance, Total Reward, and Quality of work life.

5. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Kevin Kurse, (2012) defined employee engagement as “the degree of emotional commitment that an employee has to their job and organization as a whole” .

Barman, A., and Saikat, R., (2011) studied a work on Faculty Engagement in Higher Educational Institution to examine the factor which engaged the faculty of management in colleges and institutions. In addition, it developed a model for faculty engagement based on the study conducted in Tripura state. The findings indicated that it would add a new dimension to the faculty engagement in the context of higher education .

Gladies, J. J., and Vijila, K., (2013) had undertaken a study to examine the factors that influenced faculty engagement among Arts and Science and Engineering and Technology Institutions. A sample of 662 faculty members representing 10 percent of the population was selected with stratified sampling method. It revealed that the faculty engagement among Arts and Science and Engineering and Technology factors variance with regard to the type of the institution, nature of the institution, age, and current position .

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY**GENDER WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	269	67.1
Female	132	32.9
Total	401	100.0

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 1**INFERENCE**

Above table 1 reveals that 269 respondents are men constituting 67.1per cent while 132 are women representing 32.9 percent. It shows that men professors are more in number than their counterpart in Jesuits Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS 1

To test whether there is any significant difference in the engagement level of male and female respondents, Student‘t’ test is used.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS AND OVERALL FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Overall	Overall Faculty Engagement	Mean	SD	T=-1.547 Df=399 .123>0.05 Not Significant
	Male (n=269)	342.25	36.268	
	Female (n=132)	348.20	35.897	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 1**INFERENCE**

As the calculated value is greater than $p > 0.05$ value, the null hypothesis is accepted and research hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it could be concluded that there is no significant difference between gender of the respondents and overall faculty engagement.

AGE- WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 30 years	58	14.5
31 to 35 years	99	24.7
36 to 40 years	80	20.0
41 to 45 years	64	16.0
46 to 50 years	38	9.5
51 to 58 years	60	15.5
Above 58 years	2	0.5
Total	401	100

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 2**INFERENCE**

It is seen from the above table that respondents from 31 to 35 years of age group constitute the highest percent of 24.7 and age group of above 58 years of respondents constitute the lowest percent of 0.5.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS 2

To test whether there is any significant difference in the engagement level of age of the respondents ANOVA 'f' test is used

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS AND OVERALL FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Overall faculty engagement	N	Mean	SD	SS	DF	MS	Statistical inference
Between Groups				31837.791	6	5306.298	F=4.244 .002<0.05 Significant
Below 30yrs	58	328.88	39.875				
31 to 35yrs	99	339.10	32.774				
36 to 40yrs	80	342.61	31.473				
41 to 45yrs	64	354.77	39.773				
46 to 50yrs	38	352.42	31.115				
51 to 58yrs	60	352.07	37.503				
Above 58yrs	2	376.00	1.414				
Within Groups				492612.613	394	1250.286	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 2

INFERENCE

As the calculated value is less than $p < 0.05$ value, the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it may be concluded that there is a significant difference between age of the respondents and overall faculty engagement.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Educational qualification	Frequency	Percent
Ph.D.	203	50.6
M.Phil	182	45.4
Post Graduation	16	4.0
Total	401	100.0
Completed NET/SET		
Yes	124	30.9
No	277	69.1
Total	401	100.0

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 3**INFERENCE**

Above table 3 shows the educational qualification of the respondents. As per UGC regulations, a person possessing Ph.D Degree or NET or SET qualification only can be appointed as a faculty in a college. By going this norm, it is seen that 327 faculty members constituting 82 percent posses the required qualification in Jesuit Higher Education Institutions in Tamil Nadu

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS 3

To test whether there is any significant difference in the engagement level and educational qualification of the respondents Oneway ANOVA 'f' test is used.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS AND OVERALL FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Overall faculty engagement	Mean	SD	SS	DF	MS	Statistical inference
Between Groups			19113.184	2	9556.592	F=7.527 .001<0.05 Significant
Ph.D. (n=203)	350.98	33.674				
M.Phil (n=182)	336.91	37.732				
PG (n=16)	341.38	35.217				
Within Groups			505337.220	398	1269.692	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 3

INFERENCE

As the calculated value is less than $p < 0.05$ value, the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it may be concluded that there is a significant difference between educational qualification of the respondents and overall faculty engagement.

ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Administrative positions	Frequency	Percent
Administrative	96	23.9
Non- Administrative	305	76.1
Total	401	100.0

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 4**INFERENCE**

Above table 4 shows administrative position wise classification of respondents. It indicates that 96 respondents constituting 23.9 percent are held or presently hold administrative positions in colleges. Whereas, 305 respondents constitutes 76.1 percent not held or presently hold any administrative position in working place. It is observed from selected sample that majority of the faculty members are found to be not held or presently hold any administrative positions.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS 4

To test whether there is any significant difference in the engagement level of administrative and non- administrative positions of faculty Student 't' test is used.

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ADMINISTRATIVE AND NON-ADMINISTRATIVE
POSITIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THEIR OVERALL FACULTY
ENGAGEMENT**

Overall faculty engagement	Mean	SD	T=2.594 Df=399 .010<0.05 Significant
Yes (n=96)	352.51	33.509	
No (n=305)	341.60	36.683	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 4**INFERENCE**

As the calculated value is less than $p < 0.05$ value, the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it may be concluded that there is a significant difference between administrative and non-administrative positions of the respondents and overall faculty engagement.

DESIGNATION WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Designation	Frequency		Total	Percent
	Grant- in –Aid	Self- Financed		
Associate Professor	74	8	82	20.4
Assistant Professor	112	203	315	78.6
Professor	0	4	4	1.0
Total	186	215	401	100

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 5

INFERENCE

Above table 4.7 shows designation wise classification of respondents. It reveals that 82 respondents are Associate Professors constituting 20.4 percent, 315 respondents are Assistant professors constituting 78.6 percent and 4 respondents constituting 1 percentage are Professors. Majority of the sample respondents are Assistant Professors, which includes 112 Grant-in – Aid faculty members and 203 Self- Finance faculty members. In Gran-in-Aid section, professors those who have below 15 years of experience are categorized as Assistant professors. Professors those who are in Self- Financing section are categorized only as Assistant Professors.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS 5

To test whether there is any significant difference in faculty engagement of different nature Student ‘t’ test is used.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURE OF FACULTY AND THEIR OVERALL FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Overall faculty engagement	Mean	SD	T=1.996 Df=399 .047<0.05 Significant
Grant-in -Aid Faculty (n=186)	348.08	32.153	
Self-Financed Faculty (n=215)	340.87	39.151	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 5

INFERENCE

As the calculated value is less than $p < 0.05$ value, the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it may be concluded that there is a significant difference in engagement level of faculty of different nature and their overall faculty engagement.

RELIABILITY TEST

TABLE NO 6

Dimensions	Measurement Instrument	No.of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Result
D1	Organisation Culture	12	0.728	Acceptable
D2	Management Practices	12	0.897	Good
D3	People	13	0.798	Acceptable
D4	Work	10	0.814	Good
D5	Commitment	07	0.827	Good
D6	Performance	13	0.782	Acceptable

FINDINGS

It provides a better understanding of the relevant aspects of Employee engagement in general and Faculty engagement in Jesuit higher education institutions in Tamil Nadu. Finally, it explains the effects of certain socio-demographic variables on faculty engagement in Jesuit higher education institutions, Tamil Nadu and brings forth a new path for existing research in India.

CONCLUSION

All organizations are not just retaining the talents but, finding a way to engaging them, capturing their minds and hearts at each stage of their work lives. A successful organization is built with the efficient employees who will move forward the organization into edge less environment. Employee engagement is more than satisfaction and beyond commitment and it is the emotional bond between the employer and employee it creates the circumstances in which *employees extend more of their abilities and potentials* to preserve a healthy relationship within the organization and be with the organization in all its difficulties.

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