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A STUDY ON WORK ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND CONSTRAINTS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF MARKETING PROFESSIONALS WITH REFERENCE TO PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES IN COIMBATORE REGION

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Abstract

Employee engagement is a complex concept. Employee engagement and retention of the skilled and talented employees are very important aspects in the profitability of business and the success of human resource management policies (e.g. Vance, 2006; Cook, 2008; MacLeod & Clarke, 2009.) In simple terms, engaged employees make the organization work smoothly and well. The researcher have analyzed and found that, the business world is witnessing merging or acquisition or some sort of joint venture, and in pharmaceutical sector the process of amalgamations is of in high decree in nature due to hectic competition between companies. Consequently, there is a drastic change in work environment such as heavy targets, work pressure, stress, price cuts, and attracting best talents to their own companies. This has resulted in increasing employee turn-over that has led to a sense of catastrophe.

Keywords: Human resources, Recruitment, Marketing, Work environment.

Introduction

Employee engagement is a real-time phenomenon of every organization, and it is associated with performance of the employees in any place. Employee engagement has become one of the inevitable constructs of all organization whether it is educational, defense, Information and technology, hotel management or any other business type and when it comes to Pharmaceutical marketing profession, the job functions, job design, is so multi-task oriented, to get the employee engaged, and to manage those employee is really challenging task.

In the highly competitive and with the changing business dynamics, Employee engagement has become critically, strategized, inevitable policy of the business world. **As per John Hellevig**, Employee engagement is about how to achieve a

company's strategic goals by creating the conditions for human resources to thrive in, for each staff member, manager and executive to be fully switched on in their jobs so as to deliver their best efforts in the best interest of the business.

Employee Engagements as Business Strategy in Pharmaceutical Marketing

Despite pharmaceutical companies pay their employees with attractive salaries, devise new formulates by Human Resources department in order to make their employees attain satisfaction and committed to their organization. But the field staff leaves organization due to the work environment, stress, targets, competition, better salary, change of profession. In this crisis, whether conventional approaching of Employee Engagement is enough to retain the Pharma

field staff, being its grass root level executives, or field managers.

Factors that Lead to the Intention of Turnover of Employees

1. The stressful working nature,
2. Unstipulated timings of the job,
3. Job as per qualification is not rendered,
4. Monetary and non-monetary benefits,
5. Lack of Recognition,
6. Minimal Career opportunities: Promotion strategies, training facilities, and other benefits.
7. Supervision styles.
8. Management policies.
9. Decision-making and participation.
10. Improper Communication.

Job constraints : Such as a) Long working hours, b) Stress, c)Health issues, d) Interruption in family life, e) Excessive travelling, f) Supervision, g) Heavy work load, h) Unrealistic targets, i)Less salary, j) Unethical competition.

ATTRITION RELATED TO PHARMA INDUSTRY

Pertaining to pharmaceutical industry, the attrition rate is 31% when compared to IT industry which is 21%, hotel industry grabbles with 25 to 30%.

| Status of Attrition | In India | Pharma Industry | IT industry | Hotel industry |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Rate of Attrition | 41% | 31% | 21% | 25 to 30% |

Few Factors That Can Make An Employee Engaged

1. Understanding of job and how it contributes to overall corporate goals
2. Recognition, opportunities for advancement
3. Fair HR practices
4. Workplace culture or morale and alike factors.

Statement of the Problem

The profession is constructed with set of constraints, dynamic work environmental forces, and evolvement of new issues of work engagement in day-today business environment. In order to equate the shortcomings of the pharma marketing profession, the researcher intends to study on the following factors,

- Despite the existing of formulated Employee engaged policies, why the

attrition rate is being on rise pertaining pharmaceutical marketing profession?

- To analyze whether the socio-economic life of the respondents working in the pharmaceutical profession having any relation with the job function of the pharma marketing profession?
- To study the work environment of pharma marketing and whether they impact on the lives of the selected respondents?
- To study the if there is any constraints associated with the pharma marketing profession and to know to what extent the constraints affects the respondents' work-life balance?
- Based on the study the researcher intends to find the outcome, and formulated the Employee engagement policies for the pharma marketing profession.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Socio-economic conditions of the respondents of selected Pharmaceutical Marketing Professionals of Coimbatore Region.
2. To ascertain the work environment factors affecting work engagement of selected respondents of Coimbatore Region.
3. To analyze the constraints of Pharmaceutical Marketing profession faced by selected respondents of Coimbatore Region.

Null Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between personal factors of Marketing professionals and superiors. (Gender, age, educational qualification, monthly salary, designation, division, length of service, number of companies worked, and marital status)
2. There is no significant relationship between personal factors and Work Engagement of pharmaceutical marketing professionals.
3. There is no significant relationship between personal factors professional factors of pharmaceutical marketing professionals.

Professional Factors : (Long working hours, impairing family life,extensive travelling, health issues like stress and related problems , very less chance of career advancement, quality of supervision is moderate, high targets and work pressure is unrealistic, competitors' activities are unethical, no vacation or time

off, frequent changes in management strategies, no proper communication, Autocratic management).

About Pharmaceutical Marketing

The job of a pharmaceutical marketing involves a variety of customers, doctors, chemists, pharmacists, stockiest, nurses, and local community. The roles and responsibility differs with the other marketing professionals be it banking, insurance, automobile, textile or other sectors. The roles and responsibility of a Pharmaceutical professional is multi-tasking roles, and it demands his physical, mental, intelligence to perform his duties.

Details of Field Employees of Pharmaceutical Marketing Industry

In pharmaceutical marketing industry, marketing functions envelopes the following personnel with designation who execute the job as follows

Medical Representative (Grass Root Level):

A medical representative will represent a company, based on them where the image of the company is being perceived. They are the basic implementers of the company's strategies, beliefs, strengths, visions in the minds of the customers, like the doctors, chemists, Wholesalers/distributors, hospitals, clinics, and other paramedical, ultimately the end-customers, Patients. They are of both genders, male and Female.

Area Manager/Front Line Managers: Area Managers are referred as First Line or front line or Junior level managers. The Area managers act as bridge between the medical representative and the management.

Regional/Zonal Managers: These are referred as Second line managers preferably being based at the Capital of that particular state. A Regional Business manager is a Regional Head and monitors both the Area managers and medical representatives' job and the related. A Regional manager will have 5 to 10 Area managers reporting to him.

The above table clearly indicates that 90% of the respondents were male, and 10% of the respondents were female. It divulges the fact that the majority of the respondents i.e. 70% found to belong to the age group of 20-30 years. The majority of the respondents, i.e. 90% found to be having Educational Qualification of Under-graduation. The

This table lists the mean rank of each variable. High rank corresponds to

majority of the respondents, i.e.90% belong to the marital status of Single. It proves the fact that the majority of the respondents i.e. 80% of the respondents belong to the designation category of Medical Representative. It divulges the fact that the majority of the respondents i.e. 80% belong to the General division. It divulges the fact that the majority of the respondents i.e.80 % belong to the length of service group (0-5 Yrs). The majority of the respondents i.e. 80% found to have been working with 3 to 4 companies. The majority of the respondents, i.e.70 % of the respondents belong to the salary group of (10000-15000).

Constraints of Pharma Field Staff

| Factors | Mean value | Rank |
|---|------------|------|
| Salary disbursements are not reaching in time. | 10.00 | 5 |
| To make a Doctor's call is very tough. | 8.15 | 10 |
| Doctors never treat well. | 8.50 | 9 |
| Hospital staffs never treat well. | 7.89 | 12 |
| Chemists, pharmacists' interviews very tough. | 7.59 | 13 |
| Stockiest, distributors' responses are not encouraging. | 7.14 | 14 |
| Waiting time to Meet the Doctors is too lengthy. | 8.00 | 11 |
| Job security in this field is not encouraging. | 10.25 | 4 |
| There is no particular working hours in this field. | 10.85 | 3 |
| Targets are not easily achievable nowadays. | 8.75 | 8 |
| Unethical marketing by competitors. | 6.94 | 15 |
| Marketing activities by PCD companies. | 6.69 | 17 |
| Players of Generic products selling are more. | 6.88 | 16 |
| This job involves extensive travelling. | 11.36 | 2 |
| Stress level is high, affecting personal and family life. | 11.70 | 1 |
| Coercing attitude of Managers. | 9.45 | 6 |
| Sometimes management policies are not supportive. | 9.15 | 7 |

the higher values of the variables. It reveals the ranking of reason for selecting

the products. "Stress level is at high, affecting personal and family life" was ranked first by the selected sample respondents with the mean score of 11.70. And factor "This job involves extensive travelling" was ranked second with the mean score of 11.36. "There is no particular working hours in this field" was ranked third with the mean score of 10.85. "Job security in this field is not encouraging" was ranked fourth with the mean score of 10.25. The fifth rank was occupied by "Salary disbursements are not reaching in time" with mean score of 10. "Coercing attitude of Managers" was occupied by sixth rank with mean score of 9.45, and the seventh place being occupied by "Sometimes management policies are not supportive" with mean score of 9.15 and so also other factors.

Suggestions

Engagement Drivers: As the profession, demands the multifunctional job functions, policies such as best salary, risk allowances, helmet allowances, insurance policies for employees and family members, vehicle maintenance allowances, frequent training programs, LTA, and so on, where it would be **real time engagement drivers** for the employees to keep them engaged in their profession for best results and would promote

the retention of the employees with best expected level of the company. **Source:** (Primary data, feedback from companies like Abbott, Pfizer, Glaxo-Smithkime, MSD, Sanofi-Aventis, Lupin group etc.)

Conclusion

The work nature of medico-marketing, does affects the balance between their work life and personal life, hence, in eventually, the marketing professional gets his work-life balance disturbed. This leads to the stress, and some degree of disengagement. Despite, the great endeavors of Human resources department, spinning new motivational programs for their employees, there still exists, attrition rate in alarming nature. Adapting newer methods of working style for instance, mobile reporting, usage of palm tabs for detailing, new introduction of products, and development programs will be an real-time assurance for their better future in the company, which intend the employees to stay with the company considerably for longer time, where the increase of retention of employees will be rest assured.

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