

Employee Engagement in Auto Ancillary Units in Pune during Pandemic

¹Dr. Daniel Penkar

Director, Sinhgad Institute of Management,
Sinhgad Technical Education Society's Sinhgad Institute of Management, Pune, India

Abstract: In human resources (HR) management the concept "Employee engagement" is used & it describes the level of enthusiasm and dedication a worker feels toward their job. Engaged employees care about their work and about the performance of the company, and feel that their efforts make a difference. An engaged employee is in it for more than a paycheck and may consider their well-being linked to their performance, and thus instrumental to their company's success. Sarah Cook developed a standard tool to find the Employee Engagement which is known as WIFI Model of Employee Engagement. Pandemic has an impact on Employee Engagement. Hence a study was made in Auto ancillary units in Pune area.

Index Terms — Employee engagement, Pandemic, Covid-19, work from home, Auto Ancillary, Pune. (key words)

I. INTRODUCTION TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

In human resources (HR) management the concept "Employee engagement" is used & it describes the level of enthusiasm and dedication a worker feels toward their job. Engaged employees care about their work and about the performance of the company, and feel that their efforts make a difference. An engaged employee is in it for more than a paycheck and may consider their well-being linked to their performance, and thus instrumental to their company's success. Employee engagement describes the level of dedication and loyalty a worker feels toward his / her job. Engaged employees are more dedicated about his / her work and then this has effect on the performance of their company. Thus the Employee Engagement brings a feeling in the employees that their efforts make a difference. Employee disengagement costs companies. Disengagement leads to 32% Lower operating income, 18% lower employee productivity, 17% lower customer engagement, 41% higher employee attrition. Each one of us has the inclination to do well, to give back to society. But there are many hurdles along the way. Paucity of time, lack of surplus funds, and most of all, the logistics involved. Wouldn't it be great if someone could take away the hassle out of community service and just leave you with the satisfying feeling of having done well? An engaged employee in the organization may consider their well-being linked to their performance and thus important to their company's success. Employee engagement has been considered part of management theory since the 1990s and became widely adopted in the 2000s. It was observed and felt that while it has its limitations based on the methods regarding the difficulties in the method of measurement but it was found that the employee engagement has a direct links to a company's profitability and financial health.

II. IMPACT OF PANDEMIC SITUATION ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

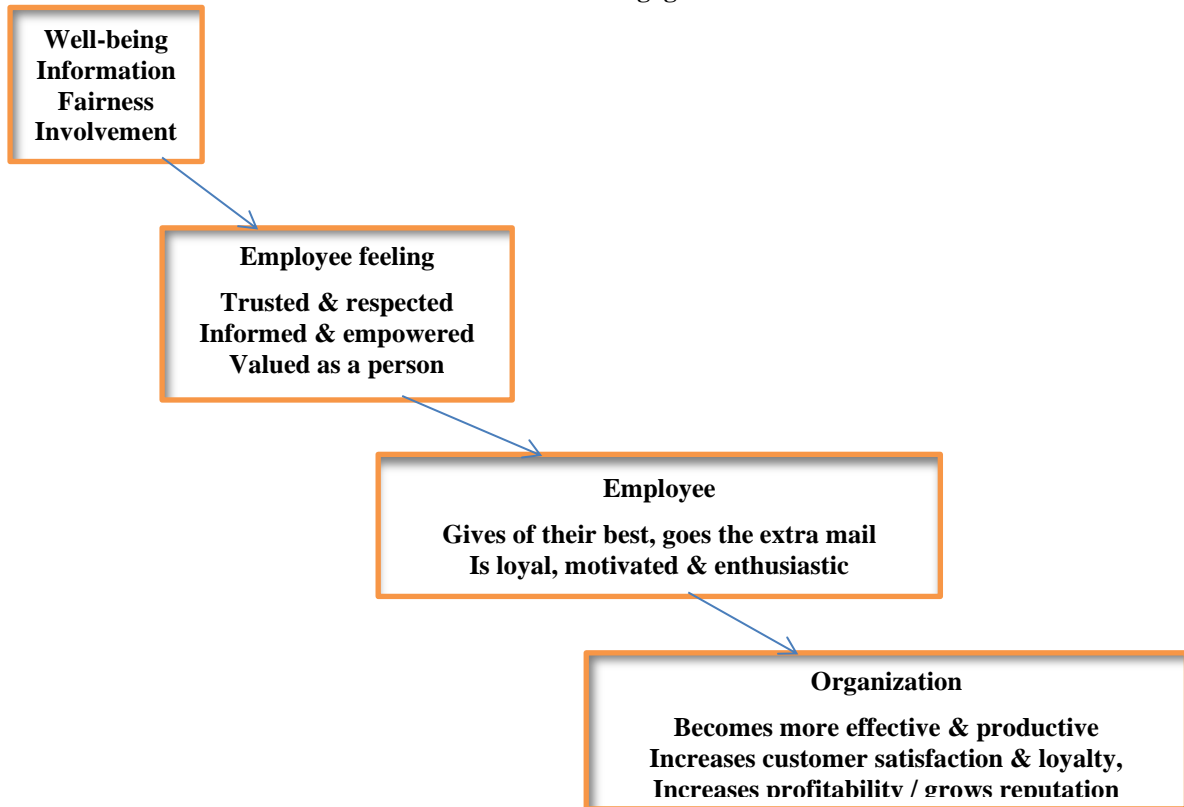
The year 2020 brought the mayhem of COVID-19. After almost a complete lockdown for few months, the economies reopened slowly with steps of social distancing, other protective norms etc. The industrial situation brought an uncertainty at the workplace as many SMEs, industries closed down, introduced systems of employee reduction etc. With a higher number of lay-offs, many organizations started de-prioritizing employee engagement owing to severe business losses due to lockdown. Many corporations were shut down completely. Some employees faced stress as workload & working hour increased. The ways and means of employee engagement pre- COVID-19 & during the COVID-19 were very different and the main effect is on the mindset to invest in employee engagement in a more meaningful way as the economies started recovering. This was first of its kind experience for everyone & all were trying to adjust to the New Normal. Work from Home became imperative for IT & ITES companies but manufacturing remained a challenge. Pandemic crisis impacted not only on the health of an individual but also on the health of an organization. Because of these situations it created issues related to job security, remuneration, bonus and affected the engagement levels of employees. The situation demanded applying new workplace policies and procedures. It has been observed that workforce issues are more challenging during & post pandemic time. Human Resource Professionals of the organization were at the forefront to face these challenging times. HR was constantly involved in making new policies and procedures for improving the performance level and has a communication with the employees. The auto ancillary industry is entirely transformed in terms of its production capacity, innovation and adoption of technology as there is shift to electrical vehicles from tradition petrol – diesel method and the shortages of chips worldwide. This has also effect on the performance of the auto ancillary industry during pandemic is different as compared to other manufacturing sectors. Hence it is necessary to know the psychology of the employees & their involvement during this pandemic times.

III. THE WIFI MODEL OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT BY SARAH COOK

In human resources (HR) management the concept "Employee engagement" is used & it describes the level of enthusiasm and dedication a worker feels toward their job. Engaged employees care about their work and about the performance of the company, and feel that their efforts make a difference. An engaged employee is in it for more than a paycheck and may consider their well-being linked to their performance, and thus instrumental to their company's success. Sarah Cook developed a standard tool to find the Employee Engagement which is known as WIFI Model of Employee Engagement. Pandemic has an impact on Employee Engagement. Hence a study was made in Auto ancillary units in Pune area. To improve employee engagement in the organization, one must first find out the key issues in the company and the general level of engagement among the employees. In the Essential

guide to Employee Engagement, Sarah Cook introduces the WIFI model, an employee engagement strategy. The WIFI model consists of; Well-Being, Information, Fairness and involvement. Well-Being is about how good the employee feels about the organization and how in turn the organization cares for the employee. Well-being also includes having the necessary tools to succeed and having enough challenges at work. Information is how well the employees understand the goals and values of the organization. It gives the employees clarity of what to work towards. Fairness is the way organization provides the employees with a fair and appropriate rewarding system. Fairness is also about hiring the right people for the job description. It is also important to clarify what is expected from the employees, provide them with constructive feedback on a regular basis and create a development plan for each employee. Involvement is about two way communication. Managers should actively engage in conversation with employees as well as to listen and act when employees want to discuss with managers (Cook 2008). Engagement essentially explains the circumstances under which people work. It replicates a constructive physical, emotional and intellectual relationship of with their employee. Managers should choose appropriate model based on the needs of their organization and employees.

WIFI Model of Engagement



Source: (Cook, 2008)

The authors have used Sarah Cook's Employee Engagement standard survey for understanding it. The standard tool refers to the parameters of Employee Engagement viz. 1) Well Being 2) Information 3) Fairness 4) Involvement 5) Indicators of the degree of engagement.

IV. AUTO ANCILLARY INDUSTRY IN PUNE

With globalization and liberalization of Indian economy the auto industry in the 90s developed the much needed thrust for the automobile component industry in India. This industry has been growing in tandem with the India's automobile industry and is characterized by low manufacturing cost, high standard of quality and engineering expertise. India is one of the auto hubs in the world and have world's best auto manufacturing facilities in India. There are 83+ auto manufacturing organizations which are distributed all over India. Out of 21 units in Maharashtra 14 are in Pune District i.e. 16.87% and other in other parts of Maharashtra like Nagpur, Nasik, Aurangabad, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Bhandara. Many automobile ancillary small and medium scale enterprises are working in India, to support the large scale automobile manufacturing organizations. The Indian auto ancillary sector is well known in the world for the competitiveness in cost, quality and productivity and also emerged as a significant contributor to the worldwide automobile supply chain. The auto ancillary enterprises now supplies are range of high value and critical components to the International automobile manufacturers like General Motors, Toyota, Ford, Volkswagen, Fiat, Honda, Suzuki, Hyundai etc. Many other international automobile manufacturers have invested in India. The foreign direct investment in automobile components was around 53 billion. With saturated markets and growing manufacturing cost and dearth of skilled manpower in developed countries; international automobile manufacturers are given preference to India as a manufacturing center. The rapid growth of domestic automobile market is also responsible for the development of auto components manufacturing industry in India. Now, India is recognized as the small car manufacturing hub and frequent launches by domestic and global manufacturers are positioning the auto component sector in developing trajectory. Many other international auto ancillary manufacturers have a strong base in India and are now focusing on research and development functions. The Government of India is also encouraging the auto components manufacturing industries. Auto ancillary small and medium scale enterprises are one of the rapidly growing within the small and medium scale category of industries. These industries are the key contributors to the oval production of auto components and also have a significant share in the exports of the industry. There are some leading auto components Manufacturers in India.

They include Motor Industries Company Of India (MICO), Bharat Forge, Sundaram Fasteners, Wheels India, Amtek Auto, Motherson Sumi, Rico Auto and Subros etc. India's top 500 organizations, published by Dun and Bradstreet listed 22 auto ancillary manufacturers as top companies in India with a total turnover of US\$ 3 billion. These industries are in the process of making a mark on the global arena and some have already acquired assets outside of India. Maharashtra accounts for nearly 38% of the countries' output of automobiles by value and market share. Around 20% of the component manufacturers are in Pune and some of the major players are Bharat Forge, Carraro, Harita Grammar, Jai Hind Industries, Kirloskar group, Minda, Spaco Carburetors, Wheels India, TACO. The automobile sector is very important industry for Indian economy; the contribution is linked to manufacturing and service sector; The contribution by automobile industry to Indian economy is through manufacturing employment, manufacturing production value and total industrial investment.

Table 1 Distribution of automobile plants state wise

State	Units	%
Punjab	1	1.20
Jharkhand	1	1.20
Andhra Pradesh	1	1.20
West Bengal	1	1.20
Gujrat	3	3.61
Madhya Pradesh	7	8.43
Rajasthan	4	4.82
Utter Pradesh	5	6.02
Haryana	8	9.64
Karnataka	10	12.05
Tamil Nadu	15	18.07
Maharashtra	21	25.30
Kerala	1	1.20
Uttara hand	5	6.02
Total	83	100

(Source wikipedia)

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To study and understand the employee engagement concept,
- To study and understand the employee engagement in the auto ancillary industry in Pune;
- To study the effects and the impact of pandemic on employee engagement in this industry.

➤ LIMITATIONS

The survey was conducted for the auto ancillary industry in Pune during the pandemic and the employee engagement sample size was only 100. As the sample size was small the findings cannot have the results which can be applied to a large population. The study targeted employees from the auto ancillary industry in Pune. 124 Employees from auto ancillary industry in Pune responded to the survey questionnaire but only 100 were proper as others were not have answered the questions objectively which may be due to time constraints etc. The survey & study covers only auto ancillary industry in Pune so study needs to be done in other industries to get proper results and findings.

➤ RESEARCH METHODS USED

In this study the author has used the Standard Questionnaire based on Sarah Cook WIFI Model of Employee Engagement which having Five parameters viz. 1) Well Being 2) Information 3) Fairness 4) Involvement 5) Indicators of the degree of engagement. The questionnaire has 45 statements, 10 statements for first four parameter & 5 statements for Fifth parameter. The response were sked to select the statement on the Scale of 1 to 10 from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Convenience Sampling was used to reach out to the employees working in the auto ancillary industries in Pune. This study is based on 100 respondents who filled the Questionnaire that was shared to them that formed the part of Primary data. Secondary Data was generated through Journal papers that were available in the Public domain.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

The authors have tried to understand the perspectives from the research already conducted. Few of the major research related to the current study are mentioned herewith and in the references. These research studies have come out with specific observation related to the pandemic & its consequences. The general observation is that the survival of the business firm was much tougher than normal as the economy was getting slow day by day. People were feeling more and more insecure about their jobs as there is no proper workplace, team spirit & leadership. Employees are facing poor working environment & are having low moral which is drastically impacting engagement levels. (Kaushik & Guleria 2020). Jones & Kober (2019) explained strategies to achieve superior employee engagement in difficult time for higher business results. Core values are non-negotiable & companies must focus on them which will encourage employee engagement. Providing explicit support to the employees keep them motivated. Soliciting employee feedback freely & openly. Communication by the Leaders hold the key. Show commitment towards employee's employment in turn they will commit to Organisation. If the strategies are implemented then there will be engaged employees that will result in Organisation growth & development. Model of employee engagement provides insight into five major elements that are value, voice, variety, virtue and vision. Value & voice are in the context of employees & are discussed in the context of organization. These five levers of employee engagement are non-materialistic & require minimal organizational outlay, but serious attention. It the organization focus on these five elements organization can ponder over the level of employee engagement & enhance its quantity as well as quality (Puneet Kumar 2021). Employees & organizations depend on one another to achieve their respective goals. Companies must strive

meeting the expectations of employees for its wellbeing. Companies must ensure that there is continuous cycle of awareness, intervention & change. Because of Covid 19 there is a reduction in Employee Engagement that has a bearing on organizational effectiveness (Moetaz Soubjaki 2021).

VII. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

In this section responses that were received for every statement in the parameter were totaled & this sum was used for interpreting the results. Interpretation for the first four parameters viz. 1) Well Being 2) Information 3) Fairness 4) Involvement is as follows:

Scores 75 and over out of 100: This score would indicate a high degree of engagement in this element

Scores 51 to 74: This score would indicate an average degree of engagement in this aspect of WIFI

Scores 1 to 50: This score would indicate a low degree of engagement in this aspect of WIFI.

Interpretation for the first fifth parameters i.e. Indicators of the degree of engagement is as follows:

Scores 31 and over: This score would indicate a high degree of engagement

Scores 21 to 30: This score would indicate an average degree of engagement

Scores 1 to 20: This score would indicate a low degree of engagement.

Overall score

If the overall score for all five sections is 332 and above this indicates an above average degree of engagement.

Looking at all five sections of the survey, if the overall score is between 242 and 331, this indicates an average degree of engagement. If the overall score for all five sections of the survey is between 5 and 241, this indicates a lower than average degree of engagement.

Table 2 Demography Respondents

SN	PARAMETERS	RANGE	FREQUENCY (Response)
1	Age	24-34	29
		35-44	31
		45-54	40
2	Years of Experience	1-10	39
		11-20	35
		More than 21	26
3	Marital Status	Married	85
		Unmarried	15

From the above table it can be seen that 29% of respondents are in the age group of 24 to 34 years. 31% respondents are in age group of 35 to 44 Years and 40% of respondents are from the age group of 45 to 54 years which is the highest number of respondents in our sample space. 39% of the respondents have experience of up to 10 years. 35% of the respondents have experience between 11 to 20 years and 26% of respondents have experience more than 21 years. From the above graph it can be seen that 85% of respondents are married and only 15% are unmarried. Thus the percentage of married employees is very high.

The following table below shows the responses received based on 5 parameters of Sarah Cook Employee Engagement Model.

Table 3 SCORES OF RESPONSES ON FIVE PARAMETERS

Parameters	No. of Responses with score 75 to 100 (High degree of Engagement)	No. of Responses with score 51 to 74 (Average degree of Engagement)	No. of Responses with score 1 to 50 (Low degree of Engagement)
Fairness	44	39	17
Involvement	52	40	8
Well being	57	31	12
Information	53	37	10
	No. of Responses with score 32 and above (High degree of Engagement)	No. of Responses with score 21 to 31 (Average degree of Engagement)	No. of Responses with score 1 to 21 (Low degree of Engagement)
Indicators of the degree of engagement	81	13	6

For parameter Fairness - 44 responses were received with scores between 75 to 100 which shows a high degree of engagement with respect to fairness, 39 responses were received with scores between 55 to 74 which shows average degree of engagement with respect to fairness and 17 responses were received with scores between 1 to 54 which shows very low degree of engagement with respect to fairness.

For parameter Involvement - 52 responses were received with scores between 75 to 100 which shows a high degree of engagement with respect to Involvement, 40 responses were received with scores between 51 to 74 which shows average degree of engagement with respect to Involvement and 8 responses were received with scores between 1 to 50 which shows very low degree of engagement with respect to Involvement.

For parameter Well-being - 57 responses were received with scores between 75 to 100 which shows a high degree of engagement with respect to Employee well-being, 31 responses were received with scores between 51 to 74 which shows average degree of engagement with respect to Employee well-being and 12 responses were received with scores between 1 to 50 which shows very low degree of engagement with respect to Employee well-being.

For parameter Information - 53 responses were received with scores between 75 to 100 which shows a high degree of engagement with respect to Information sharing with employees, 37 responses were received with scores between 51 to 74 which shows average

degree of engagement with respect to Information sharing with employees and 10 responses were received with scores between 1 to 50 which shows very low degree of engagement with respect to Information sharing with employees.

For parameter Indicators to Degree of Engagement, 81 responses were received with scores above 31 which show a high degree of engagement, 13 responses were received with scores between 21 to 30 which show average degree of engagement and 6 responses were received with scores between 1 to 20 which shows very low degree of engagement.

The following Table provides overall degree of Engagement.

Scores	332 and above Above Average degree of Engagement	242 to 331 Average degree of Engagement	5 to 241 Lower than average degree of Engagement
	59	30	11

Overall Score

Looking at all five sections of the survey

59% respondents have scores above 332 (332 to 450) which indicate above average degree of engagement.

30% respondents have scores between 242 to 331 which indicates average degree of engagement.

11% respondents have scores between 5 to 241 which indicates lower than average degree of engagement.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The author tried to study the employee engagement in the auto ancillary industry in Pune during the pandemic. The study on the Employee Engagement was based on the model of Sarah Cooks. This model helps to identify the level of or degree of engagement of employees in the auto ancillary industry in Pune. Engaging employees has become very essential for today's comparative industry and in particular in the pandemic situation due to COVID-19. Management of the organizations know that engaged employees are the key to success in this comparative industrial world and the tough time. So the management tries to be creative in Employee Engagement by keeping their employees satisfied and motivated and in particular during pandemic circumstances. Under the current situation, establishing employee engagement measures with the help of technology is essential for the growth of the organizations. Current study observed that even in the circumstances of pandemic, employees have a very good level of engagement towards their organizations as about 89% of employees feel an average degree of engagement towards their work or organization. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a major uncertainty among workers & their families. The use of Employee engagement by the employers of the auto ancillary industry in Pune during the pandemic has a very important and positive impact on Employees. The pandemic was very hard for the auto ancillary industry in Pune during the pandemic therefore having a good degree of Employee Engagement is very essential and valuable. Organizations need to make more efforts to improve well-being as well as overall work life balance of employees to procure a high degree of engagement from them.

REFERENCES

1. Bishakha Majumdar, "A Study on employee engagement in two Indian businesses" *Published In The Journal Asian Journal Of Management Research*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236619071_A_Study_on_employee_engagement_in_two_Indian_businesses
2. Bhagirathi Nayak, "Employee Engagement and Its Impact on Organizational Success – A Study in Manufacturing Company India" *published in journal of Management*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304524337_Employee_Engagement_and_Its_Impact_on_Organizational_Success_A_Study_in_Manufacturing_Company_India
3. Chinmaya Behera and Badri Narayan Rath, "The Title Of The Study The Covid-19 Pandemic and Indian Pharmaceutical Companies: An Event Study Analysis" https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349886803_The_COVID-19_Pandemic_and_Indian_Pharmaceutical_Companies_An_Event_Study_Analysis
4. Dr. Rajeev B. Khaire & Ms. Vaishnavi Chintawar "Employee Engagement in Pharmaceutical Industries during Pandemic" *Personnel Today*
5. Maria-carmen De-La-calle-Duran, "Employee Engagement and Wellbeing in Times of COVID-19: A Proposal of the 5Cs Model" <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/18/10/5470>
6. Nisha Chanana, "The title of study is Employee engagement practices during COVID-19 lockdown" *published in the Journal Journal of Public Affairs* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/pa.2508>
7. Nisha Chanana, "The title of study is Employee engagement practices during COVID-19 lockdown" *published in the Journal Journal of Public Affairs* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7536939/>
8. Puneet Kumar, "V-5 Model Of Employee Engagement During Covid-19 And Post Lockdown" <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0972262920980878>
9. Ranjit Barshikar July 27 2020, "The Title Of The Study Covid 19 – Impact And New Normal For Pharmaceutical Industry" *published in the Journal Journal of Generic Medicines.* <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741134320942275>
10. Moetaz Soubjaki, "The Impact of Covid-19 on Employees Engagement" https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354682613_The_Impact_of_Covid-19_on_Employees_Engagement
11. Meenakshi Kaushik, "Employee Relations And Engagement During Covid-19" <https://www.johnfoundation.com/journals/sparkling/sjmrsv3i2-2020/s-31/>
12. S. Purushothaman, "A Study on Employee Engagement in a IT company" https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3735771
13. https://people.empuls.io/employee-engagement-with-empuls?utm_term=employee%20engagement%20system&utm_campaign=S.Emp2_BOFU_Ind%2BIndn_Product&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&hsa_acc=4322681113&hsa_cam=17547828132&hsa_grp=141620390361&hsa_ad=6073

- 86649409&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=kwd-2967354199&hsa_kw=employee%20engagement%20system&hsa_mt=p&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gclid=CjwKCAjwgaeyBhBAEiwAvMgp2ggXVxJI9zByW_5GmSgsKxXX4pBOqu2KSdAsg-jQzCrYy_QwzcNg0hoCR_wQAvD_BwE
14. <https://www.thestairway.co.uk/publications/the-wifi-engagement-survey.html>