Role Efficacy: Studying the Impact on Employee Engagement, Employee Motivation and Attrition

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ABSTRACT

Several studies have been carried out in the recent past on effectiveness in the workplace in the IT sector. Authors and researchers have made in-depth studies of the internal dynamics of the organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational learning, managerial behaviour and resistance to change and recommended many methods in negotiating the complex aspects that a specific role is likely to bring to the organization in this sector. With this in view, a study on Role Efficacy has been carried out on major multinational organizations across the IT industry in India. The main purpose of the study was to examine the level of role efficacy in IT companies. A secondary purpose was to investigate the influence of role efficacy on the lines of employee engagement, motivation and attrition. Role Efficacy Scale developed by Uday Pareek (1980) has been used to assess the level of role efficacy possessed by the 55 employees of various IT companies in India. The result of this study reveals that above mentioned three issues were widely affected on the middle management in the IT companies. Key finding of the present piece of work is role efficacy has been found to be one of the instrumental factors in determining the level employee engagement, motivation and attrition. The implications of the finding have also been discussed in terms of the culture of organizations of the IT sector.

Keywords: Attrition, Employee Engagement, Employee Motivation, Impact, Role Efficacy

INTRODUCTION

The performance of a person working in an organization is a factor of his own effectiveness as a person, his technical competence, managerial experience and on how his role in the organization has been defined. Only when both the aspects i.e. his skills as a person and a favourable role design are integrated will he be able to excel in his job. Unless a person has
the requisite knowledge, technical competence and the skills required for the role, he cannot be effective. If the role does not allow the person to use his competence, and if he constantly feels frustrated in the role, his effectiveness is likely to be low. The integration of a person and the role comes about when the role is able to fulfill the needs of the individual, and when the individual in turn is able to contribute to the evolution of the role. The more we move from role taking to role making, the more the role is likely to be effective. This potential effectiveness is termed as efficacy and since we are defining this within the framework of an organization and of a specific role within it, the term to be used is Role efficacy. Role efficacy can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness. Therefore simply put, role efficacy can be defined as the potential effectiveness of a role.

Udai Pareek (1980) defines role efficacy as the potential effectiveness of a role or the psychological factors underlying role effectiveness. He outlined 10 aspects of a role and defined a scale that can be used for role clarification in team building, for coaching key managers, for problem identification within a work team, and for training managers and supervisors about the concept of role efficacy. The dimensions of the Role Efficacy Scale are centrality, integration, proactivity, and creativity, inter-role linkage, helping relationship, super ordination, influence, growth and confrontation.

In order to better understand role efficacy, it is useful to understand the various dimensions that influence it. Role efficacy can be broadly broken down into three groups or dimensions.

**ROLE MAKING**

Role Making is an active attitude towards the role, to define and contribute to it while Role Taking is passive acceptance of responding to others’ expectations. Role making has the following variables.

1. **Self-Role Integration:** Each person has his strengths, experience, technical training, special skills, and some unique contribution that he may be able to make. The more challenging the role is and the more opportunities it provides the employee to showcase his abilities, higher the role efficacy is likely to be. This is called self-role integration. The self or the person and the role get integrated through the possibility of a person’s use of his special strengths in the role. Our special strengths are used in the role so that it may be possible for us to demonstrate how effective we can be. Integration contributes to high role efficacy. On the other hand if there is a distance between the self and the role, role efficacy is likely to be low. For example an employee saying “I am able to use my knowledge effectively in my role.”

2. **Proactivity:** A person, who occupies a role, responds to the various expectations that people in the organization have from that role. While this certainly gives him satisfaction, it also satisfies others in the organization. However, if he is also expected to take initiative in starting some activity, the efficacy will be higher. Reactive behaviour helps a person in being effective to some extent, but proactivity contributes much more to efficacy. If a person feels that he would like to take initiative but has no opportunity to do so in the role that he occupies in the organization, the efficacy will be low. The converse is also true in this aspect i.e. higher the role efficacy, more proactive the role-holder is likely to be. For example “I prepare the budget for discussion” as opposed to “I prepare the budget as per the guidelines given by my boss”.

3. **Creativity:** It is not only initiative which is important for efficacy. An opportunity to try new and unconventional ways of solving problems or an opportunity to be creative is equally important. If a person perceives that he has to perform only routine tasks,
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