Enablers of employee engagement and its subsequent impact on job satisfaction

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Abstract: Research supporting the importance of employee engagement and its impact on organisational effectiveness is abundant, but there is paucity of research on how to go on about creating employee engagement. Facilitating robust employee engagement strategies is the overarching need in an organisation, because of the significant impact it has on the employees which will eventually reflect in the team and consequently at the organisation level. Though there is plenty of information on job characteristics, competence development practices, social support, communication, employee engagement and job satisfaction as individual constructs, there is no integrative framework that empirically examines the relationship between these unique combinations of variables. This study will investigate the relation between job characteristics, competence development practices, social support, communication, employee engagement and job satisfaction. Findings of the study indicate the need for a robust employee engagement strategy that is levered by the identified enablers namely job characteristics, competence development practices, social support and communication and its subsequent impact on job satisfaction.

Keywords: communication; competence development practices; employee engagement; enablers; job characteristics; job satisfaction; social support.


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1 Introduction

Popular press articles and business consultants have claimed that engaged employees are crucial for ensuring organisational effectiveness (HR Focus, 2016). Employee engagement (EE) is an excellent tool to facilitate every organisation to gain competitive advantage over the others. Engaged employees are most sought after as they are intellectually, emotionally and cognitively bound with the goals of the organisation and are willing to go for the extra mile in terms of expending discretionary efforts (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999; Wagner and Harter, 2006; Anitha, 2014). In addition engaged employees have also been found to stay with their company longer, thus reducing turnover and saving companies substantially in recruitment costs. Likewise, EE is inclusive of long-term emotional involvement and is a significant enabler to more temporary generalities of employee sentiment, such as job satisfaction (JS) and commitment (Wagner and Harter, 2006). As a consequence, it is important for firms to create conditions (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) that lever engagement among the employees which in turn will have a positive impact on the bottom line outcomes. Having an engaged workforce has varied consequences namely JS, organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizenship behaviour (Maslach et al., 2001; Harter et al., 2002; Saks, 2006). Hence to reap these benefits organisations should consider crafting effective and efficient engagement initiatives that not only result in positive bottom line outcomes but also capture the hearts, minds and souls of the employees (Fleming and Asplund, 2007). Because, people is one factor that cannot be duplicated or imitated by the competitors and is considered the most precious asset if managed and engaged properly.

In view of the growing worldwide commercial operations, it is necessary to study the behavioural facets of business within the contextual boundaries of socio-cultural events (Biswas et al., 2013). However, in the last two decades, work-related outcomes have gained immense attention due to their positive and negative consequences which directly affect the productivity of the organisation. In this connection, one of the most prominent sectors that brought the entire Indian economy into the limelight and has played a major role raising and sustaining the national GDP is the Indian IT industry (Mittal and Dhar, 2015).

The success of an Indian information technology is dependent on the ability to retain its human potential. More importantly, the industry has led the economic transformation of the country and altered the perception of India in the global economy. India’s cost competitiveness in providing IT services, which is approximately three to four times cheaper than the US, continues to be the mainstay of its unique selling proposition (USP) in the global sourcing market. However, India is also gaining prominence in terms of intellectual capital with several global IT firms setting up their innovation centres in India (India Brand Equity Foundation-IBEF, 2017). It has been noted that the Indian IT industry is on a high momentum path. Rampant growth, however, has come with its own set of challenges. Chief among them relates to skilled manpower resources (Bhatnagar,
In addition, NASSCOM (2015) has stated that the Indian IT-BPM sector continues to be one of the largest employers in the country directly employing nearly 3.5 million professionals, adding over 230,000 employees and has got the highest volume of diverse employable talent at the rate of 6.2 million. Not only does India need to sustain its vast pool of specialised IT talent, but it also has to ensure that it remains ‘industry-relevant’ and ‘rightly skilled’ (Simhan, 2006). IBEF (2017) states that India’s IT-BPM industry is projected to grow 8.5% in FY2016 from USD 132 billion in FY2015 to USD 143 billion, addition of USD 11 billion. The report also pointed out that by 2020, India’s IT sector total revenue is projected to reach USD 200–225 and between USD 350–400 billion by 2025 (IBEF, 2017). India’s highly qualified talent pool of technical graduates is one of the largest in the world, facilitating its emergence as a preferred destination for outsourcing, computer science/information technology accounts for the biggest chunk of India’s fresh engineering talent pool, with more than 98% of the colleges offering this stream (IBEF, 2017). This substantiates the matter that though India has a large talent pool, the success of any industry is dependent on the quality and on the ability to retain its human resources. One of the most decisive contributors to the genesis and development of this industry is human capital (Sharma, 2014). Owing to such large developments and availability of raw talent, it is crucial for organisations to create and nurture employees as people are the most important assets of a firm and they cannot be duplicated. Consequently the success of the IT sector is eventually reflected in rising and sustaining the national GDP, this can be achieved only when the employees are working their level best. In this context, attracting and retaining engaged program analysts (PAs) is a critical driver for success (Shuck and Wollard, 2010). On that account, from a governance, practitioners and academicians perspective it is vital to investigate how the selected enablers will have an impact on EE and its subsequent impact on JS for the PAs.

The extant literature accentuates that most of the studies (May et al., 2004; Saks, 2006; Rich et al., 2010; Tomažević et al., 2014; Cortez and Lynch, 2015; Nazir and Islam, 2017) have been done in the Western context with little empirically known about the relationship in developing economies like India, which is the second largest economy in the world. However studies on EE specifically in the IT sector are very limited that too with special reference to PAs are nil. This lack of studies can be counter-productive for sectors that rely a lot on their employee service, specifically in the labour intensive IT sector. Finally, this study focuses on PAs who play a pivotal role in the IT organisation. PAs are the new entrants to the organisation who come under the category for a span of three years. They are the potential prospects of the future IT scenario who will occupy the head positions. Hence, retaining such crucial talents play a strategic role. Likewise, engagement is individual-driven (Kahn, 1990); examining enablers at the individual level broadens the scope of EE. Not only does it broadens the scope of engagement; but majorly explicates on the needs, expectations of the PA and keeps them engaged in their jobs. Nurturing and addressing the needs of the workforce from the basic stages will indefinitely lead to effective and efficient workforce planning.

Over the past 2.6 decades, though engagement is gaining momentum, there remains a paucity of research on EE in the academic literature (Saks, 2006). While human resource researchers and practitioners are being asked to augment the engagement strategies, there is only little research on how to effectively develop EE. Though there are studies which emphasise the importance of engagement in the workplace; yet, research about how to create EE and its consequences are surprisingly undeveloped. This study proposes that
organisations can enhance EE by creating conditions in the form of enablers/drivers/antecedents namely job characteristics (JC), competence development practices (CDP), communication (COMM) and social support (SOCSUP) which subsequently will result in JS and eventually organisational effectiveness. By doing so, organisations can leverage their full human potential and employees too will be attached to the organisation in the long run.

In this paper it is argued that strong enablers are quintessential for a robust engagement strategy, which will eventually lead to JS. In particular, this study will examine how enablers namely JC, CDP, COMM and SOCSUP influence EE and identify the strength of impact of EE on JS. Therefore, this study offers interesting insights into the significant issues of an IT sector from the perspective of a developing economy.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 discusses literature review of the main variables and the hypothesis is formulated. Section 3 explains the description of the research methodology. Section 4 discusses the results. In Section 5 the discussion is presented and Section 6 explains the limitations and future research. Finally in Section 7, the conclusions are given.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Employee engagement

The last 2.6 decades have seen a prolific growth in the engagement literature. EE is most sought after amidst academicians and practitioners alike because of its monumental impact and expected outcome on the individuals and at the organisation level (Saks, 2006; Lee and Ok, 2016). Expected outcomes of EE take the form of productive employees, customer retention (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999), low turnover and discretionary efforts (Wagner and Harter, 2006; Fleming and Asplund, 2007). The first mention of the term ‘engagement’ was by Katz and Khan (1966) “they engage in occasional innovative and cooperative behaviour beyond the requirements of role but in the service of organisational objectives” in their work to achieve organisational effectiveness. Kahn (1990) in his ethnographic study articulated the concept of self-in role performances as personal engagement and personal disengagement and went on to define personal engagement as “the harnessing of organisation members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. The 1990s witnessed early ripples of scientific work on engagement and the decade closes with a flood of interest from practitioners (Welch, 2011). The second most influential contribution to the engagement domain comes from the practitioners for instance, Gallup’s Buckingham and Coffman (1999, p.248) in their book ‘First, break all the rules: what the world’s greatest manager do differently’ posit that “The right people in the right roles with the right managers drive EE”. Their work has been credited for causing an overnight sensation among business people (Shuck and Wollard, 2010).

Wide arrays of frameworks and different conceptualisations of engagement have emerged in the past 2.5 decades. Kahn (1992) proposed that engagement is observed through the behavioural investment of personal physical, cognitive, and emotional energy
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into work (Rich et al., 2010). Gallup researchers (Harter et al., 2002; Harter et al., 2003; Harter and Schmidt, 2008) view engagement as a combination of cognitive and emotional antecedent variables in the workplace (Welch, 2011). More significant engagement literature emerged from the burnout component (Maslach et al., 1997). They propound that burnout consists of mental exhaustion, cynicism, and restricted professional efficiency. Accordingly, burned-out employees can be described as energy exhausted, uninvolved, and inefficient. In contrast, engaged employees are involved, efficient, and fully energised at work. Whereas, Schaufeli et al. (2002, p.74) defined work engagement as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption”. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004, p.295) defined vigour as “high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties”. The second component dedication as “a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge”. Finally, absorption as “being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work” [Schaufeli and Bakker, (2004), p.295].

There was a swell of interest from the practitioners domain; Hewitt Associates LLC (2004, p.2) who defined EE as “the state in which individuals are emotionally and intellectually committed to the organisation or group, as measured by three primary behaviours: say, stay and strive” and also linked high engagement to high business performance. Gallup researchers came up with the Gallup workplace audit (GWA) (Harter et al., 2002) and the Q12 EE questionnaire (Harter et al., 2003; Harter and Schmidt, 2008) and propounded that an employee can be called engaged if he could say ‘yes’ to all the questions in GWA/Q12. In addition, they identified three types of people: engaged employees, not engaged employees, and actively disengaged employees in the workplace. Engaged employees strive to excel in their roles. Not engaged employees just do what they are told whereas actively disengaged employees are the dangerous ones as they are a bad influence on the other employees.

EE is a crucial aspect of business and engaged employees are the need of the hour because people are the most important asset of an organisation. Recruiting the best talents is imperative but even more significant is to retain them in the long run. Hence it is important for the organisations to establish conditions (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) to retain their best talents. It has been understood that employees decision to engage is a very rational and a personal choice (Kahn, 1990). Hence, it is important for organisations to create environments where employees can find themselves fully engaged in their job role performances. Kahn (1990, 1992) in his study has attributed three psychological conditions namely meaningfulness, safety and availability for an employee to engage in the work place. Meaningfulness (task and role characteristics, work interactions), safety (social elements, including management style, interpersonal relationships and organisational norms) and availability (individual distractions influences being physical, emotional energies etc.).

This study has adapted Kahn’s three psychological conditions and other significant studies (May et al., 2004; Saks, 2006; Rich et al., 2010) that propose some of the prominent drivers as the rationale for identifying the major enablers that aid engagement in the workplace.
2.2 Enablers of EE

This study has adapted Kahn (1990) for defining EE as “the harnessing of organisation members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. Further in his grounded theory he attributed psychological conditions, such as safety, availability and meaningfulness, to lever EE levels. May et al. (2004) empirical work revealed that job enrichment and work role were strong predictors of meaningfulness; rewarding co-workers and supportive supervisors relations were positively associated to psychological safety and consequently resources available are positively related to availability. Indicative publications (Robinson et al., 2004; Robinson and Hayday, 2007; Saks, 2006; Bakker et al., 2008; Hicks et al., 2014) have developed different enablers for EE. Diverse variables like JC (Saks, 2006; Breevaart et al., 2014; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016), perceived organisational support (POS) (Saks, 2006), leadership (Kular et al., 2008), rewards (Biswa and Bhatnagar, 2013), working environment, supervisor support (SS) (Griffin, 2015; Johnson, 2015) and team and co-worker relationship (Anitha, 2014; Breevaart et al., 2014) have been identified to influence engagement. Taking the viewpoints from the above literature, various enablers of engagement were selected and empirically tested to be strong enablers of engagement.

2.2.1 Job characteristics and employee engagement

JC is the extent to which jobs involves a variety of skills, autonomy and provide feedback, this enables the organisation members to experience meaningfulness (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) and responsibility and fosters engagement (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Hackman and Oldham (1980) have identified skill variety, task identity and task significance as contributing towards the psychological state of meaningfulness (Kahn 1990, 1992) whereas autonomy is associated towards the experienced responsibility for outcomes of work. Being enriched in the role provides gratification, greater self-esteem (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) and a positive emotional response to the role (Rothbard, 2001). Jobs designed in this aspect let people to bring more of their selves in the roles to be performed (Kahn, 1992; May et al., 2004; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016). Hence, in sum JC is operationally defined as “the extent to which jobs involves a variety of skills, autonomy, challenging work, variety, personal discretion, and the opportunity to make important contributions” (Hackman and Oldham, 1980; Kahn, 1990,1992). Pandey and David (2013) identified motivating and fulfilling work environment, pride in working with organisation, respecting employees opinion and ideas as key determinants of engagement. SHRM (2016) has identified meaningfulness of the job (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) opportunities to use skills and abilities and work itself as a top condition for engagement. Further Saks (2006) posits that employees who are provided with enriched and challenging jobs will feel obliged to respond with higher levels of engagement.

2.2.2 Social support and employee engagement

2.2.2.1 Social support

SOCSUP has been considered as a multidimensional concept encompassing variables such as organisational support, SS and support from co-workers (Choi et al., 2012). This is in line with Eisenberger et al. (1986) that employees differ greatly in their acceptance
of the reciprocity norm in terms of perceived organisation and SS in regard to work. Saks
(2006) posits that the two main components of SOCSUP come from perceived
organisational (Kurtessis et al., 2015) and SS (Griffin, 2015; Johnson, 2015) in
congruence with Kahn’s (1990,1992) safety dimension – the amount of care and support
provided by the organisation and supervisor. Blau’s (1964) social exchange theory is
considered as the most influential theoretical paradigm for understanding workplace
behaviours (Dasgupta et al., 2012). Social exchange theory is based on a central
foundation that the exchange of social and material resources is a primary form of human
interaction. In addition it implies that one’s expectation of unspecified obligations based
on trust is formed for the other, assuring that gestures of goodwill are reciprocated at a
future time (Blau, 1964). When two parties who are in a state of reciprocal
interdependence (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) interact with each other, obligations
are generated (Saks, 2006). In the present study, the authors focused on the role of
SOCSUP, defined as “that subset of persons in the individual’s social network upon
whom he or she relies for socio emotional aid, instrumental aid, or both” [Thoits, (1982),
p.148]. This study encompasses supervisor, peer, team and co-worker support under the
construct of SOCSUP.

2.2.2.2 Supervisor support
Supervisors act as agents of the organisation, who have responsibility for directing and
evaluating subordinates’ performance, employees would view their supervisor’s
favourable or unfavourable orientation toward them as indicative of the organisation’s
support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The relationship a worker has with the supervisor
plays a crucial role in determining his engagement level (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004;
Griffin, 2015; Johnson, 2015). The relationship between the supervisor and the employee
has been found to have the greatest impact on psychological safety. Experiencing
psychological safety is often seen in relationships that are supporting and trusting (May
et al., 2004; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016). The manager plays a crucial role in engagement
(Lockwood, 2007). Supervisors who encourage a supportive work environment, display
concern for employees needs and feelings, provide positive feedback, encourage them to
voice their concerns and develop new skills (Pandey and David, 2013). The line manager
plays an important role in fostering the employees sense of value and involvement
(Robinson et al., 2004). Payne and Huffman (2005) strongly indicate that immediate
managers play a major role in employee turnover decisions.

2.2.2.3 Team and co-worker support (CW)
Team work is an integral part of organisation effectiveness and refers to the formation of
a group of employees who cooperate with each other toward a mutual goal (Mehrzi and
Singh, 2016). It is an important aspect that explicitly emphasises the interpersonal
harmony aspect of EE (Anita, 2014; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016). SHRM (2016) have
identified relationship with co-workers and immediate supervisor as a top condition for
engagement. It is important to have good relationship with co-workers (Anita, 2014) and
supervisors because only when the organisation members perceive the situation positive
in terms of behavioural consequences he/she engages his/her self in the work role. May et
al. (2004) and Anita (2014) identified that good co-worker support orients greater
meaning towards the work they do and also reflects safety for carrying out their job roles.
2.2.3 Competence development practices and employee engagement

2.2.3.1 Competence development practices

CDP can be defined as an overall designation for the various activities that can be used to affect the supply of employee competence and skills. Though, few studies have restricted their examination of competency development to training and formal education, thereby ignoring other HR practices that might encourage competency development (Nybo, 2004). Nevertheless, on-the-job learning and career management are vital HR practices in the development of employees and are, hence, equally important in the process of competency development as training and formal education (Nybo, 2004; Heijden et al., 2009). To be more specific it refers to a wide range of activities, including job rotation programs, mentoring, training and career development for both improving the productivity of existing employees and having them equipped in the day to day activities (Paré et al., 2000; Paré and Tremblay, 2007). In total, CDP is operationally defined as “those practices undertaken by the organisation that send employees the signal that decision makers are willing to invest in them beyond short-term returns” (Agarwal and Ferratt, 1999; Paré et al., 2000; Paré and Tremblay, 2007). As mentioned above, among the CDP enlisted, training and career development is an important dimension which is to be considered in the process of engaging employees since it helps the employees to concentrate on a focused work dimension and thereby builds his/her confidence and helps to enhance the career path (Pandey and David, 2013; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016). Likewise, Bhatnagar (2007) suggest that factors like growth opportunities and career development if not tended to, might lead to attrition. Further, SHRM (2016) identified CDP like career advancement and development opportunities as factors important for employees to be satisfied with the job.

2.2.4 Communication and employee engagement

2.2.4.1 Communication

COMM has been identified as an underlying factor associated with EE (Kahn, 1992). COMM has been posited as an important factor in the development of employment engagement (Welch, 2011; Cortez and Lynch, 2015). In this study, COMM is operationally defined as “an organisational practice with the potential to effectively convey the values of the organisation to all employees, and involve them with the goals of the organisation” Welch (2011). It is one form of employee psychological need (Kahn, 1990, 1992) which organisations have to meet to maintain and develop EE (Welch, 2011). Robinson et al. (2004) and Pandey and David (2013) have identified COMM as a strong driver of engagement for encouraging employees to voice their opinion in decision making. An efficient COMM strategy helps them communicate organisational values, such as caring for employees and regarding their opinions as important. Managers can create an environment through COMM where employees feel happier, more passionate about their jobs, exhibit attitudes and behaviours necessary for improved organisational performance (Dasgupta et al., 2012).
2.2.5 Rationale for identifying the enablers

As mentioned in the introduction, the prominence of engagement is gaining huge significance among academicians and practitioners. To understand this, various studies have been undertaken to test the prominence played by engagement in the workplace and by also linking it with various bottom line outcomes. However, very few studies have been undertaken to establish the conditions for engagement to take place. Hence, the current study has been undertaken to identify the enablers of EE and its subsequent impact on JS. The basic premise for identifying these enablers has been based on Kahn (1990, 1992) study that attributed psychological conditions, such as safety, availability and meaningfulness to lever EE levels. May et al.’s (2004) empirical work revealed that job enrichment and work role were strong predictors of meaningfulness; rewarding co-workers and supportive supervisors relations were positively associated to psychological safety and consequently resources available were positively related to availability.

These conditions have been established in such a way that they can overlook the gamut of individual differences. For instance, JC will be relevant for PAs in IT sector (Agarwal and Ferratt, 1999); because through autonomy, freedom and personal discretion employers allow employees to assume responsibility and exert greater influence at work while enjoying increased autonomy (Agarwal and Ferratt, 1999; Paré et al., 2000; Paré and Tremblay, 2007). This augments a greater sense of responsibility and positive work attitudes from the PA. CDP in the form of mentoring, job rotation, training and development is important in an IT setup (Agarwal and Ferratt, 1999) because they have to be equipped with the necessary skill set to go on with their day to day tasks. Organisations must provide employees with the requisite knowledge and skills to carry as they represent major sources of competitive advantage and performance. Eventually, organisations rely on frontline employee skill and initiative to identify and resolve problems (Paré et al., 2000; Paré and Tremblay, 2007). Next, SOCSUP plays a critical aspect in deciding their engagement levels (Anitha, 2014; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016) because as new entrants to the organisation they look for support from supervisors for guidance in their day to day tasks and friendly support from peers and co-workers to go on with the day to day tasks. Finally, we present COMM which has been identified as a cornerstone for engagement (Welch, 2011). Effective COMM assists employees in achieving their work goals (Eisenberger et al., 1986) because it allows organisations to disseminate their strategic goals (Veld et al., 2010). It is during this process that employees realise how their role contributes to the organisation’s strategic imperatives (Cortez and Lynch, 2015). By feeling ‘in on things’ at work, and understanding how their role contributes to the organisation’s main objectives, employees may be more likely to become immersed in, and engaged with their work (Shantz et al., 2016). Cohesively these enablers identified have been on the premise of the three conditions established by Kahn (1990, 1992).

Moreover examining the PA than the whole IT employees would provide the practitioners with specific guidance on how to engage and sustain them as they are the critical mass in an IT setup and are the potential employees to occupy the head positions.
Brayfield and Rothe (1951) defined JS as an individual’s attitude toward his or her work and the net sum of the individual’s positive and negative emotions experienced at work (Weiss, 2002). JS is a positive experience undergone by an employee when his expectations are met and makes him work more and better (Tomažević et al., 2014). In the present study, the authors focused on the role of JS and defined it as “an individual’s attitude toward his or her work and the net sum of the individual’s positive and negative emotions experienced at work” (Brayfield and Rothe, 1951). However, it can be understood that JS is an important indicator that measures the generalities of work that are subjected to temporary swings depending on the day to day work experience. But steady indications of employees work are grounded in their work experience. Hence EE may be identified as a construct which is primarily concerned with understanding the positive work experience and establishes greater linkage among them, their job and their organisation (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999; Kahn, 1992). Wagner and Harter (2006) posit that EE is inclusive of long-term emotional involvement and is an antecedent to generalities of work such as JS and commitment. Because engaged employees experience a pleasurable emotional state at work, indicating high level of JS (Saks, 2006; Haynie et al., 2016) and are found to be brisk and ardent about their tasks, and wholly engrossed in their work (Macey and Schneider, 2008; May et al., 2004). Engaged employees are the need of the hour because they are strong organisational assets for sustained competitive advantage and a strategic asset. Research (Saks, 2006; Harter et al., 2002; Wagner and Harter, 2006; Rich et al., 2010; Haynie et al., 2016) also shows that presence of high levels of engagement enhances JS. Since engaged employees are highly absorbed in their work roles it is expected that they would invoke all possible means to get their work done and attain the work goals. In this context, we propose that when employees get their work done and are happy about their role performances (Kiarie et al., 2017), that would eventually be reflected in their job and would invoke an innate feeling of gratification. Under these circumstances, we argue that since the impact of EE on JS was already shown in these above-mentioned studies, this study proposes to study the strength of impact EE has on JS.

### 2.3 Hypotheses

Based on our literature review, we propound the following hypotheses:

**H1** JC, CDP, SOCSUP and COMM will be positively related to EE.

**H2** EE will be positively related to JS.

**H3** After controlling for JC, CDP, SOCSUP and COMM, EE will predict unique variance in JS.

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample

The IT sector in India has brought the Indian economy into the limelight and has played a major role in raising and sustaining the national GDP, yet only limited studies have been
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Conducted in this area. This warrants further research in this industry so that academicians and researchers can better understand recent trends that lead to an engaged workforce. Data to test the hypothesis was obtained through a survey of employees. The data was collected from seven private MNC companies functioning in the TIDEL Park, Coimbatore. The TIDEL Park is a joint venture of Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) and Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT). This was set up by TIDEL Park Ltd in the year 2006 to promote the growth of information technology in other districts of Tamil Nadu. All the major IT players in India have set up their divisions in the TIDEL Park, Coimbatore.

Recruitment of the organisations began by contacting the HR personnel in each IT organisation. Out of 15 IT firms functioning in the TIDEL Park, ten IT firms were selected using simple random method. Hence, an electronic information package explaining the purpose, objectives and implications of the study was sent to the HR in the selected organisations. Out of these seven IT organisations accepted to participate in the study and permitted for data collection. Each company employs around 1,000–1,500 employees and 250–300 PA are employed at the entry level. The IT companies targeted were such that they were employing similar engagement practices for the target sample i.e., the PA.

Though there has been significant debate over what constitutes an adequate sample size for the results to be statistically valid (Hinkin et al., 1997), with there being no established rule to define an appropriate sample size (Flynn and Pearcy, 2001). Different authors have suggested different sample sizes as appropriate, including an absolute sample from hundred to two hundred (Flynn and Pearcy, 2001) and ratios of items to respondents from 1:4 to 1:10 (Hinkin, 1995; Flynn and Pearcy, 2001). Keeping in mind the number of items (46 × 4 = 184; 46 × 10 = 460) in the current study and according to this criterion, a minimum of 184 and a maximum of 460 is specified. Therefore, 550 questionnaires were circulated so that the final sample size would be more or less equal to 460. The data was collected in a simple random sampling manner so that 1/5th of the population of PA were covered. However, completed set of responses received were 421, which was well above the minimum and close to the maximum criteria. Hence, the study was carried out with a sample of 421.

Furthermore, the study measured the demographics namely – age, gender, education level and number of years of experience. In reference to the target sample (i.e.,) the PA; considering their mean age of 30 years, experience of around 3 to 4 years and education. In that context, the items used to measure each of these variables are suitable to a PA because, EE covers three sub dimensions (physical, emotional and cognitive). For any employee who is expending his efforts in an organisation for a 9 to 5 job, an indispensable tool to know if he is investing his physical, emotional and cognitive dimensions (Kahn 1990, 1992; Rich et al., 2010) in his day-to-day tasks will be by using this measure.

JS captures the extent to which a PA is satisfied with his job and the current working scenario.

Enablers identified – JC, CDP, SOCSUP and COMM.

JC items which measure their scope to utilise their skills, scope for autonomy and feedback are perfectly suitable for a PA who is new to the job and checks the relevance and meaningfulness associated by a PA to his job. Second, CDP opportunities that capture the extent to which PA can develop their skills, activities like coaching, training
professional courses offered acts as an excellent lever to motivate a PA to perform better. Third, SOCSUP, which captures the extent of interpersonal harmony in the workplace among the supervisor, peer, team and co-worker, instils a sense of safety to exhibit themselves in terms of behavioural consequences. Finally, COMM captures the daily flow of activities, information available for day-to-day activities are detrimental to know if a PA is engaged. Because, the articulation of information on goals, play a pivotal role in investing his full self in role performances.

The main reason for choosing PA as the sample is because they play a pivotal role in deciding the success factor of an IT firm. PAs are strong organisational assets, difficult to imitate and are unique to an organisation. So attracting and retaining satisfied and engaged PA is becoming a critical factor of competitive advantage and business excellence in the IT sector.

Since the study considered a sample of PAs who are the new entrants to the organisations. They come under this designation for a period of three to four years and later on move to higher positions. Hence, the mean age was less than 30 years with an experience of 3–4 years, 60% were male and 40% female. In which 15.1% had completed diploma, 74.8% had completed graduation and the rest 10.1% finished professional courses (N = 421).

3.2 Data collection and measures

Data was collected from 421 PAs from seven IT organisations via questionnaire. To guarantee anonymity, the questionnaire did not include individual data. The questionnaire was easy to follow and logical for the employees to rate the responses.

3.2.1 Measures

In this study, we used previously published scales to collect data relevant for the study. Participants indicated their response on a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

a EE

In response to the call for increasing empirical use of Kahn’s (1990) multidimensional framework, EE was measured using the 18-item job engagement scale (JES; Rich et al., 2010). The JES is a three-factor scale (cognitive, emotional, and physical engagement) with separate six scales for each factor. This measure is widely used in the engagement literature (Rich et al., 2010; Shuck and Reio, 2014; Haynie et al., 2017). Internal consistency reliability estimates for each subscale in the current study was as follows: cognitive engagement, $\alpha = 0.89$ (six items); emotional engagement, $\alpha = 0.91$ (six items); physical engagement, $\alpha = 0.853$ (six items). The overall reliability is $\alpha = 0.91$ (18 items).

Kahn’s exceptional framework offers researchers a specific framework reflecting the underlying context of an employee’s willingness to engage-a documented limitation of other engagement frameworks (see Cole et al., 2012; Rich et al., 2010). JES has been widely used and accepted because it fully captures the essence of ‘preferred in-self’ engagement via the three dimensions mentioned above.
Enablers of employee engagement and its subsequent impact

b  JC

JC were measured by six items from Hackman and Oldham (1980). Internal consistency reliability estimate is $\alpha = 0.76$ (six items). JC were measured by six items from Hackman and Oldham (1980). This scale has been extensively used in engagement-JC literature (Saks, 2006; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006; Piccolo et al., 2010; Christian et al., 2011).

c  SOCSUP

CW, SS and peer support (PS) were measured using the scale developed by Iverson et al. (1998). Internal consistency reliability estimates for each subscale in the current study was as follows: CW $\alpha = 0.842$ (three items), PS $\alpha = 0.92$ (three items), SS $\alpha = 0.89$ (three items). The overall reliability is $\alpha = 0.930$ (nine items). This scale has been used by Iverson and Maguire (2000).

d  CDP

CDP were measured using a scale developed by Tremblay et al. (1998). Internal consistency reliability estimates for each subscale was as follows: CDP $\alpha = 0.85$ (six items). This scale has been used by Paré and Tremblay (2007), Srivatsava and Dhar (2015).

e  COMM

COMM was measured using a four item questionnaire developed by Robinson et al. (2004). The overall reliability is $\alpha = 0.70$ (four items). This scale has been used by Robinson et al. (2004) and Robinson and Hayday (2007) for extensively identifying the drivers of EE.

f  JS

JS was measured with Camman et al. (1983) three-item scale. Internal consistency reliability estimate $\alpha = 0.91$. This scale has been used by Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013).

The instrument was validated using a pilot data from 60 respondents. Since the overall cronbach alpha value ($\alpha = 0.891$) is significant, the instrument was used for the main study.

4  Results

4.1  Analysis of data

It can be understood from Table 1, that the wide range of means signify a good dispersion of data. EE (M = 4.01, SD = 0.52), JC (M = 3.81, SD = 0.56), SOCSUP (M = 3.89, SD = 0.56), COMM (M = 3.77, SD = 0.53), JS (JS) (M = 3.76, SD = 0.40), CDP (M = 3.77, SD = 0.53).

To test H1, correlation analysis was done to test the relationship among EE, JC, SOCSUP, CDP and COMM to study the strength and direction of relationship between the variables of interest simultaneously (Hinkle et al., 2003). The model hypothesised
that JC, CDP, SOCSUP and COMM would be related to EE. Hence, the underlying assumptions of correlation and hierarchical regression analyses were checked before testing the model. Therefore multicollinearity, homoscedasticity and linearity were checked for.

**Table 1**  Descriptive statistics of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.0146</td>
<td>0.52282</td>
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<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8139</td>
<td>0.56970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCSUP</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8976</td>
<td>0.56879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>421</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.7761</td>
<td>0.53666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JS</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.7678</td>
<td>0.40486</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.7724</td>
<td>0.53239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multicollinearity occurs when two variables are highly correlated this means that both variables are measuring the same construct. Hence, to avoid multicollinearity, correlation between independent variables greater than 0.90 should be removed or combined (Green, 1991). However, intercorrelations were checked and no correlation between independent variables was found to be greater than 0.90.

Homoscedasticity occurs when the variability in scores for one variable is almost identical to all values of the other variable, which is linked to normality. When normality is not met, variables are not homoscedastic (Cohen and Cohen, 1983; Green, 1991). The homoscedasticity postulation was tested with bivariate scatter plots and examined for an oval shape in opposition to a cone or funnel shape (Green, 1991). An oval shape provides confirmation that the variance of residual error was constant for all values of the independent variables. Thereby, the scatterplot showed a generally oval shape for all independent variables.

Linearity assumes the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is linear (Cohen and Cohen, 1983). This assumption was tested with a bivariate scatterplot (Green, 1991). An assessment of the bivariate scatterplots exhibited relatively linear lines, thus there were no violations of linearity.

Correlational analysis for H1:

H1 stated that there would be a relation between JC, SOCSUP, CDP and COMM and EE. Hence, Cohen’s (1988) effect size evaluation criterion, was used for correlational coefficients which state that < + 0.28 are small effects; medium effects range from + 0.28 – 0.49; and, large effects are greater than + 0.49.

First, each scale was assessed with subscales aggregated together to give a total composite score. EE was positively and significantly correlated with JC ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.001$), SOCSUP ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$), CDP ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$) and COMM ($r = 0.56$, $p < 0.001$). It can be understood that there exists a high correlation among the variables according to Cohen’s (1988) thus H1 is supported. This infers that employees who score high on the identified enablers namely JC, CDP, COMM and SOCSUP are more likely to report high levels of engagement.
### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>PE</th>
<th>EE1</th>
<th>CE</th>
<th>EE</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>CWS</th>
<th>PS</th>
<th>SOCSUP</th>
<th>JC</th>
<th>CDP</th>
<th>COMM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.566**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.711**</td>
<td>0.724**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.836**</td>
<td>0.891**</td>
<td>0.894**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.337**</td>
<td>0.590**</td>
<td>0.542**</td>
<td>0.571**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWS</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.396**</td>
<td>0.596**</td>
<td>0.565**</td>
<td>0.598**</td>
<td>0.647**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.423**</td>
<td>0.533**</td>
<td>0.592**</td>
<td>0.589**</td>
<td>0.657**</td>
<td>0.835**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCSUP</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.428**</td>
<td>0.642**</td>
<td>0.630**</td>
<td>0.652**</td>
<td>0.861**</td>
<td>0.876**</td>
<td>0.890**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.489**</td>
<td>0.679**</td>
<td>0.659**</td>
<td>0.699**</td>
<td>0.631**</td>
<td>0.695**</td>
<td>0.685**</td>
<td>0.745**</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.427**</td>
<td>0.623**</td>
<td>0.472**</td>
<td>0.588**</td>
<td>0.575**</td>
<td>0.513**</td>
<td>0.399**</td>
<td>0.553**</td>
<td>0.505**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.434**</td>
<td>0.559**</td>
<td>0.485**</td>
<td>0.566**</td>
<td>0.404**</td>
<td>0.415**</td>
<td>0.382**</td>
<td>0.446**</td>
<td>0.437**</td>
<td>0.693**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *p < 0.05 (2-tailed), **p < 0.01 (2-tailed).
- PE-physical engagement, EE1-emotional engagement, CE-cognitive engagement, EE-employee engagement,
- SS-supervisor support, CWS-co-worker support, PS-peer support, SOCSUP-social support, JC-job characteristics,
- CDP-competence development practices and COMM-communication.
Each subscale within each major scale was examined with the variables identified for the study for identifying significant relationships. The physical engagement subscale was positively and significantly correlated with JC ($r = 0.48, p < 0.001$), CDP ($r = 0.42, p < 0.001$), COMM ($r = 0.43, p < 0.001$) and SOCSUP ($r = 0.42, p < 0.001$). The cognitive engagement subscale was positively and significantly correlated with JC ($r = 0.65, p < 0.001$), CDP ($r = 0.47, p < 0.001$), COMM ($r = 0.48, p < 0.001$) and SOCSUP ($r = 0.63, p < 0.001$). The emotional engagement subscale was positively and significantly correlated with JC ($r = 0.67, p < 0.001$), CDP ($r = 0.62, p < 0.001$), COMM ($r = 0.55, p < 0.001$) and SOCSUP ($r = 0.64, p < 0.001$). The results suggest a medium to strong effect positive relation between the subscales of engagement and the other variables, further reinforcing H1. This implies that employees who score high on each scale of engagement report higher levels of JC, CDP, COMM and SOCSUP.

SOCSUP was measured using three subscales (i.e., SS, peer and team and co-worker support), each of the three sub scales were examined with engagement subscales for statistical significance. The physical engagement subscale positively correlated with SS ($r = 0.33, p < 0.001$), peer ($r = 0.42, p < 0.001$) and team and co-worker support ($r = 0.39, p < 0.001$).

The cognitive engagement subscale positively correlated with SS ($r = 0.54, p < 0.001$), peer ($r = 0.59, p < 0.001$) and team and co-worker support ($r = 0.56, p < 0.001$). The emotional engagement subscale positively correlated with SS ($r = 0.59, p < 0.001$), peer ($r = 0.55, p < 0.001$) and team and co-worker support ($r = 0.59, p < 0.001$). The results suggest a medium to strong effect positive relation between the subscales of engagement and the subscales of engagement further reinforcing H1. This implies that employees who score high on three subscales of SOCSUP report higher levels of engagement in physical, emotional and cognitive dimensions.

Additionally JC correlated significantly and positively with COMM ($r = 0.43, p < 0.001$) and CDP ($r = 0.50, p < 0.001$). JC was also positively correlated with SS ($r = 0.63, p < 0.001$), peer ($r = 0.68, p < 0.001$) and team and co-worker support ($r = 0.69, p < 0.001$). This suggests that employees who perceive significance in JC are more likely to report high levels of SOCSUP. Finally, COMM correlated significantly with SOCSUP ($r = 0.44, p < 0.001$) including the three subscales namely SS ($r = 0.40, p < 0.001$), peer ($r = 0.38, p < 0.001$) and team and co-worker support ($r = 0.41, p < 0.001$). The effect sizes of these associations were in the medium to large range (Cohen, 1988). This implies that employees who perceive high levels of COMM also report high scores for the SOCSUP aspect.

Overall, from Table 2 and results indicate that JC, CDP, COMM, SOCSUP and EE are all significantly and positively related.

Correlational analysis for H2:

H2 stated that there would be a relationship between EE and JS. Hence a correlation was done to understand the significance based on effect size standards. Therefore, the EE scale was positively related to JS ($r = 0.76, p < 0.001$), establishing a very strong and positive correlation (Cohen, 1988). Therefore, the results indicate that employees who report high levels of engagement are more likely to report high levels of JS.

Each scale of engagement was examined for statistical significance with JS to assess the effect size standards (Cohen, 1988). The physical engagement subscale positively correlated with JS ($r = 0.55, p < 0.001$), cognitive engagement subscale ($r = 0.67, p < 0.001$) and emotional engagement subscale ($r = 0.75, p < 0.001$) positively correlated
with JS. Results show a very strong and positive relation between each engagement subscale and JS, thereby supporting empirical support for H2. Overall, this indicates that employees who report high levels of engagement in each subscale are more likely to be satisfied in their jobs. Detailed, correlational statistics regarding EE – its three subscales and JS are given below in Table 3.

Table 3  
Correlation co-efficients for EE and its subscales and JS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>PE</th>
<th>EE1</th>
<th>CE</th>
<th>EE</th>
<th>JS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>0.566**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>0.711**</td>
<td>0.724**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>0.836**</td>
<td>0.891**</td>
<td>0.894**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JS</td>
<td>0.558**</td>
<td>0.751**</td>
<td>0.677**</td>
<td>0.761**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *p < 0.05 (two-tailed), **p < 0.01 (two-tailed).
PE-physical engagement, EE1-emotional engagement, CE-cognitive engagement, EE-employee engagement and JS-job satisfaction.

4.2 Hierarchical regression analysis

While testing for the first model in hierarchical regression, it can be observed that JC ($\beta = 0.315, p < 0.01$), CDP ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.01$) and COMM ($\beta = 0.18, p < 0.01$) contributed unique variance to the prediction of JS ($R^2 = 0.52, p < 0.01$) in the regression model in Table 4. Likewise, in the second block after controlling for JC, CDP, COMM and SOCSUP, EE statistically contributed to an additional variance to the regression equation ($R^2 = 0.118, p < 0.01$); which showed an increase in the adjusted $R^2$ from 0.52 to 0.636; thus H3 was supported in the model. This implies that employees who rated high score for JC, CDP and COMM (Tomaževič et al., 2014) were more likely to be satisfied in their jobs. These findings further suggest that JS can be predicted by JC (Rathi and Lee, 2017) i.e., when employees enjoy more autonomy, skill, task variety and feedback they tend to be satisfied in their jobs. Second, CDP, this states that if the firm is willing to invest in their employees; this instills a sense of gratification in their minds which is eventually reflected in engagement and JS. Third, when employees are told what is expected of them and clear articulation of goals keeps them more engaged and satisfied in their jobs. Next, in the second block when the three engagement subscales were added cognitive engagement ($\beta = 0.182, p < 0.01$) and emotional engagement ($\beta = 0.382, p < 0.01$) emerged as prominent predictors of JS. This implies that JS can be predicted based on the emotional engagement component i.e., when employees are enthusiastic, excited, interested, proud and positive about their jobs; cognitive component – at work I concentrate, pay a lot attention and absorbed in my job.

In addition, results indicated that JC, SOCSUP, CDP and COMM are significant predictors of EE with an $R^2$ of 59% see Table 5.

That is, it explains that employees who perceive high levels of SOCSUP, JC, CDP and COMM are found to be highly engaged in their jobs. Furthermore, the ANOVA results in Table 6, show a significant probability value ($p = 0.000$) and stipulate that all the factors of JC, SOCSUP, CDP and COMM explain EE significantly. In Table 7, out of the four indicators, JC ($\beta = 0.40, p < 0.01$) and COMM ($\beta = 0.21, p < 0.01$) have high
beta values. Thus, this explains that organisations that provide good scope for employees in terms of autonomy, task and skill variety in JC, articulate the necessary information to keep the employees informed of their expectations in their role performances are more likely to have engaged employees in their organisations.

**Table 4** Summary hierarchical regression analysis with JC, SOCSUP, CDP, COMM and EE predicting JS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Job satisfaction model</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$R$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job characteristics</td>
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<td>0.315</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence development practices</td>
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<td>0.280</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor support</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-worker support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Block</td>
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<td>0.726</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee engagement</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.382</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive engagement</td>
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<td>0.182</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
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<td>0.803</td>
<td>0.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5** Regression model summary – EE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th>$R$ square</th>
<th>Adjusted $R$ square</th>
<th>Std. error of the estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.775$^a$</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.597</td>
<td>0.33187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: $^a$Predictors: (constant) job characteristics, social support, communication and competence development practices.

**Table 6** Results of ANOVA$^a$ for EE model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>45.818</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>0.110</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114.802</td>
<td>420</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: $^a$Dependent variable: employee engagement.

$^b$Predictors: (constant), job characteristics, social support, communication and competence development practices.
Table 7  Regression co-efficients for EE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$\text{Std. error}$</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
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<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>0.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCSUP</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.045</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.042</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable: employee engagement.

Table 8  Regression model summary – JS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>Adjusted $R^2$</th>
<th>$\text{Std. error of the estimate}$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.761$^*$</td>
<td>0.579</td>
<td>0.578</td>
<td>0.26306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $^*$Predictors: (constant), employee engagement.

Secondly, EE explains up to 57% of variance in JS in Table 8. In addition, the ANOVA results in Table 9, shows a statistically significant $p$ value ($p = 0.000$), this vindicates that the relationship is significant.

Table 9  Results of ANOVA$^*$ for JS model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$\text{Sig.}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>39.849</td>
<td>575.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
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<td>0.069</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68.843</td>
<td>420</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: $^*$Dependent variable: job satisfaction.  
$^b$Predictors: (constant), employee engagement.

Table 10  Regression co-efficients for JS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardised coefficients</th>
<th>Standardised coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$\text{Std. error}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>1.403</td>
<td>0.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variable: job satisfaction.

As shown in Table 10, a high beta value of ($\beta = 0.76$, $p < 0.01$) illustrates that EE explains a significant degree of JS. This indicates that having engaged employees will subsequently result in having them satisfied in their jobs. Thus organisations who look to create an engaged workforce can believe that it will lead to positive results in enhancing JS.
Discussion

The current study examined a series of relationships between JC, CDP, SOCSUP, COMM, EE and JS variables. The results stipulated that the identified enablers were significant predictors of EE, further JC, CDP, COMM, emotional and cognitive engagement have been found to predict a unique contribution to JS, thereby provided empirical support for H1, H2 and H3.

The proposed model suggests that PA who have good SOCSUP from supervisors, peer, team and co-workers; scope for autonomy, skill and task variety in their job; and when the firm invests in them, it instills a sense of gratification to do better. In addition to support from one’s supervisor; support and trusting relationships with co-workers are also important. One can obtain emotional resources through interpersonal relationships with others, because co-workers and supervisors are persons who have a strong influence on employees work performance. Therefore, the quality of the relationships that employees develop with their co-workers and supervisors can strongly affect the engagement levels. (Anitha, 2014; Bakker et al., 2008; May et al., 2004; Tiwari and Lenka, 2016). Further, co-worker support might create among employees the conviction that they will receive help from their colleagues when needed, which might increase their confidence that they will achieve their work goals. Furthermore, a good COMM strategy that articulates the goals, mission and what is expected of an employee will facilitate employees to be engaged in their work (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) and eventually results in JS (Tomaževič et al., 2014) too. Besides, high levels of EE would predict a significant variance in the JS which acts as a prominent lever for organisational effectiveness.

In support to the third hypothesis, results from the hierarchical regression projected that the selected variables were enablers of JS. In particular, JC, CDP (Rathi and Lee, 2017), COMM and EE (emotional and cognitive engagement) were found to predict unique variance in JS.

JC is one of the most important contributors for psychological meaningfulness (Kahn 1990, 1992). Kahn further suggested that meaningfulness (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) can be attained from challenging work, variety, use of different skill and the opportunity to make essential contributions. Having this set of characteristics would keep an employee engaged and result in JS. Findings of this study have been consistent with past studies (Saks, 2006; Anitha, 2014; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012).

Training and career development is another important dimension which is to be considered in the process of engaging employees since it helps the employees to concentrate on a focused work dimension and thereby builds his/her confidence and helps to enhance the career path (Nybo, 2004; Van der Heijden et al., 2009; Agarwal and Ferrett, 1999; Paré et al., 2000; Paré and Tremblay, 2007) and further keep them satisfied in their jobs (Pandey and David., 2103; Anita, 2014). This finding is consistent with studies (Kahn, 1990; Anitha, 2014) that show that EE levels increase when they perceive that organisations take unique interest in their professional growth. This further instills a sense of confidence by ensuring that they have marketable skills and will augment the sense of reciprocity cheering employees to give something back to the organisation.

COMM is an extremely vital part for employees to function well in their organisational life. It is a cornerstone for harnessing important and day to day articulation of information. It is only through effective COMM that employee and employer communicate. Having a good COMM strategy in place will definitely result in engaged
employees (Cortez and Lynch, 2015) and subsequently lead to high JS levels (Harter et al., 2002; Rothmann, 2008; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012; Tomaževič et al., 2014).

In this study, out of the three domains of engagement, cognitive and emotional domains have emerged as significant predictors explaining a distinctive variance in JS.

Emotional engagement. Rich et al. (2010) stated that emotional engagement is a combination of two independent dimensions – pleasantness (feeling positive) and activation (a sense of energy). Rich states that when employees are emotionally engaged it is reflected in positive organisational outcomes. Because emotional engagement provides a positive vibe and energy in the role performances they execute. Hence employees who perceive their work as positive are more likely to be engaged in their work and thus result in good JS (Harter et al., 2002; Rothmann, 2008; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012).

Cognitive engagement deals with the attention and absorption measure of engagement. Research (Rich, 2010; Rothbard, 2001) suggest that employees who are totally absorbed (i.e., level or amount of focus, concentration and the intensity) in their jobs are said to be cognitively engaged in their role performances and are more likely to be satisfied in their jobs (Harter et al., 2002; Rothmann, 2008; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012).

Therefore, this current study extends the research framework by propounding that JC, CDP, COMM, EE (cognitive and emotional dimension) play a substantial role in predicting JS.

**Figure 1** The influence of the enablers and EE on JS (significant beta values-based on hierarchical regression results)

In summary, JC, CDP, COMM and EE (emotional and cognitive) were all found to predict significant variance in JS. This study exhibited that when employees perceived high levels of autonomy, skill, task variety and feedback, felt as if the firm invests in them to develop their skills; shows genuine interest in their professional realm and when the necessary information were articulated regarding their day to day role activities they were more likely to engage in JS. In organisations, human capital is gaining more significance in today’s economy and is considered the most priceless asset because it plays an imperative role in the progress of an organisation and society as a whole. So
every organisation wants to have the best human resources to achieve its objectives, this can be possible only if they are engaged (Anitha, 2014; Rich et al., 2010; Haynie et al., 2016) and satisfied (Kiarie et al., 2017) in their jobs. An engaged and satisfied workforce exerts more efforts and works hard to achieve organisational objectives; in that context satisfaction of employees with their jobs has a direct effect on the success of the organisation (Islam et al., 2014; Kiarie et al., 2017).

Augmenting EE levels has become the main focus among practitioners and academicians alike (Shuck and Wollard, 2008). Taken together, these findings suggests that to create and sustain engagement amongst PAs, the HRD professionals have to make sure that there is scope for autonomy, skill, task variety and feedback is provided along with ample opportunities for training, career development; backed up by a good support system (in terms of supervisor, peer, team and co-worker support) and leveraged by a good COMM strategy. The above mentioned engagement measures when well crafted will eventually capture the hearts, minds and souls of the employees (Fleming and Asplund, 2007) and subsequently lead to JS.

6 Limitations and future research

This study has identified relationships and has brought out a cohesive model that comprises a unique combination of variables that have not been previously explored in the literature. In addition, research from this study has established the association between the conditions of engagement and enablers and consequences and provided empirical evidence regarding the predictive relation of EE (Khan, 1990) in JS.

Nevertheless, there are few limitations in this study. First, data were collected at one point of time and hence causal inferences will be a concern. Second, sample was homogeneous it covered employees from seven IT firms in Coimbatore; hence generalisation of the findings may be restricted. Third, future studies can be conducted at various levels of the organisation, say, large scale and MNCs to strengthen the model. Fourth, a comparative study may also be made with this model and earlier models of EE. Finally, future studies can be undertaken to retest these findings through longitudinal study in another sector in India or other countries in order to inclusively examine the role of enablers of EE and JS.

7 Conclusions

The findings from this study provide support for utilising the research variables identified in this study to leverage engagement and JS for development of specific and work-oriented interventions. For instance, as a result of this research, HRD professionals could focus on creating developmental interventions that augment autonomy, skill variety, feedback, task significance in JC, promote more opportunities for career and personal development, encourage a healthy work environment which fosters good SOCSUP in terms of supervisor, team and co-worker dimensions and provide scope for communicating their ideas as a way of leveraging EE. These interventions could take the form of job re-design, job rotation, training and development initiatives and encouraging the display of trust building behaviour by establishing good interpersonal support via effective COMM channels. This study positions human resource professionals as
important stakeholders as these variables have an impact on JS which will eventually lead to organisational effectiveness.

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Enablers of employee engagement and its subsequent impact


Enablers of employee engagement and its subsequent impact


