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Managerial Skills for Managers in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Purpose To examine the crucial skills required by management students which address the needs of corporate in the dynamic global economic world of the 21st Century.

Design/methodology/approach The paper is based on theory and empirical analysis made through psychometric tests results of management students reflecting their personality profile, juxtaposed against the needs of the corporate world identified through Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), – a report showing results of the global survey of corporate recruiters about employability skills.

Findings The paper highlights the personality traits of management students identified through 16 PF test and elaborates the areas which the ‘real’ business world is focusing upon. The current report of GMAC reflects the need for skills like interpersonal skills and team working; decision making and problem solving while the students score low on extraversion and leadership; creativity and abstract thinking. The educational curriculum still leaves a lot to be desired in being activity based and skill oriented.

Practical implications The paper will show direction to educators of professional courses especially management education regarding curriculum design and trainers regarding training needs of the young workforce such that they are able to provide to the corporate skilled managers who can sustain in the challenging and dynamic global work environment of the 21st Century.

Originality/value Marking out the areas where the professional management and business education need to work into to create skillful managers who need to cater to the demands of MNCs and TNCs.

Keywords Skill sets, personality traits and managerial skills, Management students, young global managers, training needs.

Introduction

Resurgence of, optimism and hope about a buoyant economic scenario seems to be hovering in the horizon but it is equally marked with flux and confusion. Conflicting signals and mixed reactions are coming in from the industry which anticipates increased business activity, better performance reflected in increased returns and profits on one hand and yet the ‘play safe’ mode has not been relinquished completely on account of which policies for cost cutting to overcome economic challenges is still in practice. Therefore efficiency and better performance to higher yields remains in focus for which the recruitment strategies adopted by business firms means

increased hiring but with a focus on certain set of managerial skills which could handle the needs of the dynamic business world. Most companies in business world focus upon hiring MBAs because the common understanding is that a management student is much better equipped because of their knowledge of general business functions and can therefore through behavioral competencies manage the decision making process through innovation and strategy (GMAC, 2010).

It is time now for Management Education to review the developments in the emerging working world both at conceptual and practice levels which will certainly lay down foundations to better understanding of strengths, limitations and gaps in application of the managerial concept in real business environment. The gaps could possibly be bridged with a scientific analysis of behavioral skills and the ratio in which behavioral science could be applicable at the workplace. In this age of globalization behavioral competencies required in a job can provide useful information for training and development to B-Schools in grooming the right combinations of skill set for future managers which could help them cope with the challenges of 21st century.

In this era of competitiveness managerial skills have emerged as a basis for competitive edge as they become essential for running business activities successfully and which are further manifested as attitude. Furthermore interest in economic and managerial education and training is growing because of the knowledge society development. New ways to equip teachers and learners with the competences and skills they need for the knowledge society and economy should therefore be found.

The purpose of this paper is to examine impact and effectiveness of Managerial training during the duration of graduate management program. The study harps upon the Behavioral Skills development as a part of Managerial Skills training and Attitude alignment and their learning during MBA training. The present study tries to identify the factors that employers consider important while selecting new employees for managerial roles. In addition, it will also examine the managerial skills which are important across different organizational levels and organizational functions in the context of today's work environment.

Conceptual Analysis of Managerial Skills

Sue et al. (1982), have worked on a seminal paper which highlighted three key components of competencies and thereby their training as belief/ attitude, knowledge and skills. These three components hold a very important position in the field of occupational psychology pertaining to recruitment and selection where personality and the use of psychometric tests have been found to be very valid predictors of managerial performance (Schmidt, 1988). Whereas the academic rigor provided through the management course, tests the knowledge element of a student (Gottfredson, 1997; Graham, 1999).

Mintzberg (1973) has identified a few key activities which a manager of the present day world performs all of which indicate that the work environment is largely episodic and action oriented (Ingleton, 2005). The responsibilities of a manager include, performs a great quantity of work at an unrelenting pace; undertakes activities marked by variety, brevity and fragmentation; has a preference for issues which are current, specific and non-routine; prefers verbal rather than

written means of communication; acts within a web of internal and external contacts and is subject to heavy constraints but can exert some control over the work.

Implications of Personality Traits on Managerial Skills

One of the earliest approaches to studying personality was the trait approach, which assumed that some traits can predict whether a person will attain positions of manager and be effective in these positions. Available literature has shown that there exists an association between the two. Barrick and Mount, (1991); Orpen, (1983) have found that there exists a positive correlation between the salary a manager draws and conscientiousness whereas co-relation with promotion was and conscientiousness was found by Howard and Bray, (1994); Jones and Whitemore, (1995). Conscientiousness is also found to have a positive co-relation with the job performance rating by the supervisors (Hough et al., 1990); and with job status (Judge et al., 1999). Yet, another personality trait neuroticism has found to have a negative co-relation with job performance (Salgado, 1997) whereas it is also validated that neuroticism is a valid predictor of performance (Spector, et al. 2000) and aspects of neuroticism negatively co-relate to salary (Harrell, 1969; Rawls and Rawls, 1968) and the status one enjoys at the work place (Melamed, 1996a, 1996b).

Extraversion and job performance has also found to be linked. Salary and the occupational performance have found to be related (Melamed, 1996a, 1996b) and facets of extraversion (dominance and sociability) also have a co-relation with salary and promotions (Caspi, Elder and Bem, 1987; Howard and Bray, 1994; Rawls and Rawls, 1968). Jobs requiring routine work activities are handled better by introverts (Cooper and Payne, 1967) and therefore no personality is good or bad but that it should be appropriate and should match the need of the job (Tett, Jackson and Rothstein, 1991) on account of which indicates a negative relationship between extraversion and job performance (Stewart and Carson 1995). Openness and agreeableness are good predictors of training proficiency (Barrick and Mount, 1991) and performance of job (Judge and Bono, 2000).

The focus of this research is to provide empirical evidence of training on the personality traits of students which eventually has implications on the managerial skills and performance of them as professionals. The emphasis is on traits and skills that contribute to managerial effectiveness and advancement. The term trait refer to a variety of individual attributes, including aspects of personality, temperament, needs motives and values. Considerable evidence shows that traits are jointly determined by learning and by an inherited capacity to gain satisfaction from particular types of stimuli or experiences (Bouchard et.al., 1990).Some traits (e.g. values, social needs are probably more influenced by learning than others (temperament, physiological needs). The term skill refers to the ability to do something in an effective manner. Like traits, skills are determined jointly by learning and heredity.

Skills may be defined at different levels of abstraction, ranging from general, broadly defined abilities (intelligence, interpersonal skills). Taxonomies proposed by Katz (1955) and Mann (1965), is evident that the technical skills are primarily concerned with people, and the conceptual skills (or cognitive skills) are primarily concerned with ideas and concepts. Some writers differentiate a fourth category of skills (called administrative skills)that are defined in terms of the abilities to perform a particular type of managerial function or behavior(e.g. planning, negotiating, coaching).Administrative skills usually involve a combination of

technical, cognitive, and interpersonal skills. The line between skills and behavior becomes blurred when skills are defined in terms of abilities to perform managerial functions. There seems to be little difference between the constructs when they are both measured at a low level of abstraction with items containing examples of effective behaviors (Hunt, 1991).

Method

The key objective of this study was to evaluate the overall impact of management education and training on the personality of students. It was spread over a year to understand and analyze the managerial skills (gauged through their personality reports) of students in light with requirement of corporate.

Participants

A sample of 200 students (both boys and girls) from a B-School of II tier city was taken where most entrants have an average academic performance. Their age ranged from 20 to 29 years. 200 students had diverse educational backgrounds with little or no work experience. Few students had financial liability in terms of education loan and therefore the expectation out of the course was high. 16 Pf test was administered on management students twice; pre data was collected at the start of the program and post data was taken after 10 months of behavioral training as a part of curriculum which also included a 14 week industry interface.

Description of the Tool used

Personality traits were assessed using 16PF (7th edition developed by Raymond Cattell). This questionnaire consisted of 187 questions. There were 16 primary personality factors, which emerged from the questionnaire, and four global or secondary factors derived from the combination of these primary factors. The primary and global factors were bipolar in dimension. These eight second-order factor scales were referred to as— Extraversion, Anxiety, Toughness, Independence, Control, Adjustment, Leadership and Creativity. Each scale score was interpreted as being low scores direction versus high score direction. In the 'Extroversion scale', low scores described introversion and high scores extroversion. In the 'Anxiety scale', low scores described low anxiety and high scores high anxiety. In the 'Tough poise scale', low scores described tender-minded emotionality and high scores described tough poise. In the 'Independence scale', low scores described subduedness and high scores independence. In 'Control' low scores described low rule consciousness and unorganized personality and high scores described perfectionism. In 'Leadership' low scores described poor leadership skills and high scores described high leadership skills. In 'Adjustment' low scores described poor adjustment and high scores described good adjustment skill. In 'Creativity' low scores described poor creativity and high scores described good out of box thinking. For the study the data was segregated into 3 categories namely High (score 8 -10), Average (4 to 7.9), Low (0 to 3.9).

Statistical Analysis

Paired Samples Statistics

Traits		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Extraversion	4.860	200	1.7035	.1205
	Exterversion 2	5.513	200	1.8247	.1290
Pair 2	Anxiety	5.483	200	1.5781	.1116
	Anxiety 2	4.761	200	1.6847	.1191
Pair 3	Toughness	5.569	200	1.4458	.1022
	Toughness 2	5.652	200	1.4823	.1048
Pair 4	Independence	5.430	200	1.3461	.0952
	Independence 2	5.975	200	1.3749	.0972
Pair 5	Control	6.599	200	2.0161	.1426
	Control 2	6.968	200	1.8718	.1324
Pair 6	Adjustment	4.867	200	1.8925	.1338
	Adjustment 2	5.853	200	2.0043	.1417
Pair 7	Leadership	5.884	200	1.4473	.1023
	Leadership 2	6.522	200	1.5179	.1073
Pair 8	Creativity	5.625	200	1.2786	.0904
	Creativity 2	5.5352	200	1.35751	.09599

Paired Samples Test

		df	Paired Differences		t	Sig. (2-tailed)
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
			Lower	Upper		
Pair 1	Extraversion -Extersion 2	199	-.9988	-.3072	-3.724	.000
Pair 2	Anxiety - Anxiety 2	199	.4057	1.0383	4.502	.000
Pair 3	Toughness - Toughness 2	199	-.3673	.2003	-.580	.562
Pair 4	Independence -Independence 2	199	-.8101	-.2789	-4.043	.000
Pair 5	Control - Control 2	199	-.7414	.0034	-1.954	.052
Pair 6	Adjustment - Adjustment 2	199	-1.3671	-.6039	-5.092	.000
Pair 7	Leadership - Leadership 2	199	-.9168	-.3582	-4.501	.000
Pair 8	Creativity - Creativity 2	199	-.16419	.34289	.695	.488

Significant at .01 level of confidence

Results & Discussion

Statistical analysis through t-test signifies that out of 8 second order factors of 16 PF studied, five personality factors showed significant improvement namely Extraversion, Anxiety, Independence, Adjustment and leadership whereas three factors namely Toughness, Control and creativity were found to be insignificant at .05 significance level. The mean value of Extraversion, the first factor reflects an improvement from 4.8 to 5.5, which further was validated statistically with significance at .05 levels. Extraversion as a second order factor consists of primary order factors like warmth, liveliness which have an impact on job performance and may relate to a higher salary and enhancement in the job levels (Melamed, 1996a, 1996b).

Dominance and sociability are also sub factors of extraversion which have found to bear a correlation with the promotions of managers (Caspi, Elder and Bem, 1987; Howard and Bray, 1994; Rawls and Rawls, 1968). Therefore it becomes important that students of B schools who are being trained into managerial roles which require a public interface must have enhanced extraversion but at the same time there are research studies which indicate a negative co-relation between extraversion and job promotion which is specifically relevant for jobs which require handling routine work and therefore often introverts are found to be better at such jobs than extraverts.

The common roles of managers of the 21st century would at large need heightened extraversion since relationship building and operating in a dynamic environment are integral to the contemporary managerial roles. The managers are expected to attend and conduct meetings in which candidates which are dominant, social, confident and energetic are likely to do better and achieve higher managerial positions (Tett, Jackson and Rothstein, 1991). Values obtained from the second factor of the Tool i.e. Anxiety on statistical analysis was found to be significant. The mean values of anxiety factor on pre and post data was found to be 5.4 and 4.8 respectively, reflected a significant drop as result of academic intervention. It reflects a positive impact of training on students pursuing management education because high anxiety is found to be negatively co-related occupational performance and rise in managerial levels (Barrick and Mount, 2001; Salgado, 1997).

Anxiety is manifested as hostility, depression, vulnerability and self-doubt all of which are detrimental to managerial performance. Very high level of anxiety and is found to be manifested in poor adjustment which is negatively related to salary (Harrell, 1969; Rawls and Rawls, 1968) and occupational status (Melamed, 1996a, 1996b). Further, the improvement in the mean value of Independence and Adjustment from 5.4 to 5.9 for independence and 4.8 to 5.8 in adjustment further validates the positive impact of training on the personality traits of management students ensuring lowered anxiety and that they get better prepared for efficiently and successfully fulfilling their managerial functions.

The study further suggests that Toughness as a third factor was found to be statistically insignificant. Same was observed in factor 5 i.e. control and creativity. In all the three factors the mean values obtained of pre-post data remained same Toughness; 5.5 and 5.6, Control; 6.5 and 6.9 and Creativity; 5.6 and 5.5 respectively. Improvement in leadership as a factor is found significant at .05 level, with a difference of more than 1 in mean values. Leadership has as its sub factors, openness and agreeableness which have been found to be a predictor of effectiveness (Judge and Bono, 2000) and overall job performance (Judge and Bono, 2000). Control as a factor which did not improve significantly is associated with traits like discipline, organized, order, competence and dutifulness. It is understood as

conscientiousness which positively relates to salary (Barrick and Mount, 1991; Orpen, 1983), to better career prospects in the form of promotions (Howard and Bray, 1994; Jones and Whitemore, 1995). Ratings and assessments by superiors are found to be higher for people high levels of control specifically in jobs like the security services, research and quality management and control (Hough et al., 1990). The lack of an increment in the mean values of creativity and control signals an area of attention and concern for academicians and trainers because the corporate demands high levels of control and creativity (GMAC, 2010).

For success as managers these traits are important as it has been noted that control results in an enhanced job status (Judge et al., 1999). Such positive associations between control and job performance is found because managers are bound to be promoted to higher and more responsible positions if they sensitive and capable (competent), organized and thorough (orderly and disciplined) and dependable and reliable (dutiful). People with low control are often found not to be acting according to the collective values or out of a sense duty towards a group or a community. They do not conform or hesitate to bend rules or develop their own set of rules whenever required. Such people are often understood as unreliable which can be extremely detrimental for managerial growth.

There are different personality factors required for different jobs and varying work environment but most managerial roles available for management students coming out tier –II b-schools require a high level of extraversion facilitating smooth interpersonal interactions, enhanced levels leadership and adjustment to work under dynamic and changing conditions and creativity to ensure that their performance matches the expectations of the industry since most organizations are gradually moving towards being knowledge based and service oriented. Factors like control and adjustment are beneficial for job performance across the occupational range.

The managerial work profile in the current business scenario with cross cultural operations, enhanced interpersonal interaction, constantly changing economic and social environment and diverse and varying assignments requires a heightened level of extraversion, creativity, leadership, adjustment and control all of which are seen to be positively impacted appropriate awareness and sensitivity and imbibed through training and practice through the formative years spent in a b-school. Group assignments, group discussions, out bound projects demanding an industry interface and internship leads to honing and sharpening of managerial traits. The soft skills training imparted in the form experiential learning exercises often conducted outside the confines of classroom on a consistent and regular basis can be understood as the key reason for the positive change in personality of management students. Reduced anxiety level could be a result of gradual familiarization with the living conditions and study and work environment as most students used as samples had moved out of their homes for the first time and the initial phase of acclimatization to the new environment was the key reason for high anxiety ion the pre-test results.

Limitations and Scope of Further Research

Future studies should look at a range of occupations in order to identify which personality factors are more beneficial for which occupations, a finding that would be very useful for occupational psychologists and human resource managers.

Conclusion

The current business world has employers who need and demand a certain set of skills which match a particular job type and they can be bifurcated into two broad categories – technical

skills and human skills. Most students coming out regular B schools largely possess these skills which are acquired through the academic process as a blend of training, natural process of learning acquired through the professional exposure and the mentoring from the academic institutions and the corporate helps. The distinguishing factor about quality driven management education is that the regular industry interface helps in guiding and tailoring making programmes which cater to the changing industry needs ensuring that the students are able to meet up the challenges and deliver top to the corporate as they pass out of college.

The human skills are more susceptible to the changing business needs and though the sets of skills remain the same their order of usability and therefore immediate applicability keeps varying. Agencies like GMAC play a very important role in researching and bringing out the contemporary and relevant needs and the goal of management education is to add value to its graduates and equip these prospective managers for the roles and responsibilities to the corporate world.

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Annexure

RAYMOND CATTELL'S 16 PERSONALITY FACTORS

Descriptors of Low Range	Primary Factor	Descriptors of High Range
Impersonal, distant, cool, reserved, detached, formal, aloof (<i>Schizothymia</i>)	Warmth (A)	Warm, outgoing, attentive to others, kindly, easy-going, participating, likes people (<i>Affectothymia</i>)
Concrete thinking, lower general mental capacity, less intelligent, unable to handle abstract problems (<i>Lower Scholastic Mental Capacity</i>)	<u>Reasoning</u> (B)	Abstract-thinking, more intelligent, bright, higher general mental capacity, fast learner (<i>Higher Scholastic Mental Capacity</i>)
Reactive emotionally, changeable, affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset (<i>Lower Ego Strength</i>)	Emotional Stability (C)	Emotionally stable, adaptive, mature, faces reality calmly (<i>Higher Ego Strength</i>)
Deferential, cooperative, avoids conflict, submissive, humble, obedient, easily led, docile, accommodating (Submissiveness)	<u>Dominance</u> (E)	Dominant, forceful, assertive, aggressive, competitive, stubborn, bossy (<i>Dominance</i>)
Serious, restrained, prudent, taciturn, introspective, silent (<i>Desurgency</i>)	Liveliness (F)	Lively, animated, spontaneous, enthusiastic, happy go lucky, cheerful, expressive, impulsive (<i>Surgency</i>)
Expedient, nonconforming, disregards rules, self indulgent (<i>Low Super Ego Strength</i>)	<u>Rule-Consciousness</u> (G)	Rule-conscious, dutiful, conscientious, conforming, moralistic, staid, rule bound (<i>High Super Ego Strength</i>)
Shy, threat-sensitive, timid, hesitant, intimidated (<i>Threctia</i>)	<u>Social Boldness</u> (H)	Socially bold, venturesome, thick skinned, uninhibited (<i>Parmia</i>)
Utilitarian, objective, unsentimental, tough minded, self-reliant, no-nonsense, rough (<i>Harria</i>)	<u>Sensitivity</u> (I)	Sensitive, aesthetic, sentimental, tender minded, intuitive, refined (<i>Premisia</i>)
Trusting, unsuspecting, accepting, unconditional, easy (<i>Alaxia</i>)	Vigilance (L)	Vigilant, suspicious, skeptical, distrustful, oppositional (<i>Protension</i>)

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Grounded, practical, prosaic, solution oriented, steady, conventional (<i>Praxernia</i>)	Abstractedness (M)	Abstract, imaginative, absent minded, impractical, absorbed in ideas (<i>Autia</i>)
Forthright, genuine, artless, open, guileless, naive, unpretentious, involved (<i>Artlessness</i>)	Privateness (N)	Private, discreet, nondisclosing, shrewd, polished, worldly, astute, diplomatic (<i>Shrewdness</i>)
Self-Assured, unworried, complacent, secure, free of guilt, confident, self satisfied (<i>Untroubled</i>)	Apprehension (O)	Apprehensive, self doubting, worried, guilt prone, insecure, worrying, self blaming (<i>Guilt Proneness</i>)
Traditional, attached to familiar, conservative, respecting traditional ideas (<i>Conservatism</i>)	Openness to Change (Q1)	Open to change, experimental, liberal, analytical, critical, free thinking, flexibility (<i>Radicalism</i>)
Group-oriented, affiliative, a joiner and follower dependent (<i>Group Adherence</i>)	Self-Reliance (Q2)	Self-reliant, solitary, resourceful, individualistic, self sufficient (<i>Self-Sufficiency</i>)
Tolerates disorder, unexacting, flexible, undisciplined, lax, self-conflict, impulsive, careless of social rules, uncontrolled (<i>Low Integration</i>)	Perfectionism (Q3)	Perfectionistic, organized, compulsive, self-disciplined, socially precise, exacting will power, control, self-sentimental (<i>High Self-Concept Control</i>)
Relaxed, placid, tranquil, torpid, patient, composed low drive (<i>Low Ergic Tension</i>)	Tension (Q4)	Tense, high energy, impatient, driven, frustrated, over wrought, time driven. (<i>High Ergic Tension</i>)
Primary Factors and Descriptors in Cattell's 16 Personality Factor Model (Adapted From Conn & Rieke, 1994).		

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HRD Climate and Occupational Self-efficacy as Predictors of Employee Engagement

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Abstract

Employee engagement has become a topic of great interest among the academicians owing to the increasing importance of the construct for organizations demonstrated by practitioners. The commercial engagement concept was originally espoused by the Gallup Organization. With time many other international business consulting firms like Blessing White, Hewitt, Sirota, Towers Perrin, Valtera, and Watson Wyatt Worldwide also started working on the similar theme. It has been found that the employee engagement is related positively to the business outcomes that the organizations value. Engaged employees on an average have been found to show 27% less physical absenteeism (Wagner & Harter, 2006) than their peers, saving organizations an average of 86.5 million days per year in lost productivity (The Gallup Organization, 2001). The Gallup Organisation (2004) found critical links between employee engagement, customer loyalty, business growth and profitability. Engaged employees have also been found to stay with their company longer, thus reducing turnover and saving companies appreciably in recruitment and retraining costs. Owing to the tremendous benefits of having engaged employees organizations are increasingly looking forward for the ways in which the engagement level of the employees can be enhanced. This paper attempts to find how HRD climate existing in Indian organizations and Occupational self-efficacy of employees influence the engagement level of employees.

Keywords: Occupational self-efficacy, employee engagement, vigor, dedication, confidence.

Introduction

Employee engagement is one of the most recently studied topics in organizational behavior literature. Research has shown employee engagement has the potential to predict valued individual and organizational level outcomes like intention to quit, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior.(Saks,2006). Critical links between employee engagement and customer loyalty, business growth and profitability has also been reported (The Gallup Organization, 2004).Thus an engaged employee is certainly an asset for the organizations in the current highly dynamic and unpredictable business environment.

Though numerous attempts have been made to define the construct of employee engagement, some significant and relevant contributions are:

Kahn (1990) defines employee engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. In the burnout literature engagement has been defined as the opposite of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined Work Engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior. Employee engagement has been defined as "a distinct and unique construct that consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components associated with individual role performance" (Saks, 2006).

Research has generally conceptualized work engagement as a relatively stable phenomenon because of the continued presence of specific job and organizational characteristics (Macey & Schneider, 2008). However, it has been reported that daily changes in social support effect daily work engagement among fast-food restaurant employees (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2009b).

The present research has employed the impression of employee engagement which is based upon the conceptualization of Employee engagement as proposed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). Here employee engagement can be characterized by three factors i) Vigor is characterized by 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. ii) Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. iii) Absorption, is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work’.

HRD Climate

Human resources have become critical for the success of any organization. In the present era of globalization organizations have realized the importance of developing the human resources in order to achieve sustained competitive advantage. In other words there is a need of favorable HRD climate in every organization in present times. HRD is primarily concerned with developing employees through training, feedback and counseling by the senior officers and other developmental efforts. (Rao & Pareek, 1992). HRD culture is derived from the overall organization culture. HRD culture is identified based on how the organizations treat, believe and handle the employees.

HRD climate in an organization is the perception of its employees about the developmental climate prevalent in the organization. (Rao & Abraham, 1986). HRD climate is characterized by the tendencies such as treating employees as the most important resources, perceiving that developing employees is the job of every manager, believing in the capability of employees, communicating openly, encouraging risk taking and experimentation, making efforts to help employees recognize their strengths and weaknesses, creating a general climate of trust, collaboration and autonomy, supportive personnel policies, and supportive HRD practices. An optimal level of development climate is essential for facilitating HRD activities (Rao & Abraham 1986).

A study on public sector cement organization ascertains the relative importance of HRD climate for the success of public sector undertakings (Banu, 2007). Srimannarayana (2001) identified below average level of HRD climate in a software organization in India. Mishra &

Bhardwaj (2002) concluded that the HRD climate in a private sector undertaking in India was good. In one more study on HRD climate in Indian organizations by Srimannarayana in 2008 the HRD climate in manufacturing organizations was found to be more favorable (62.39%) than in service and IT sectors. HRD climate survey developed by T.V. Rao and E. Abraham has conceptualized HRD Climate under three dimensions of general climate, OCTAPAC culture and implementation of HRD mechanisms. The general climate deals with the importance given to human resources development in general by the top management and line managers. The OCTAPAC items deal with the extent to which openness, confrontation, trust, autonomy, proactivity, authenticity and collaboration are valued and promoted in the organization. HRD mechanisms measure the extent to which various HRD mechanisms like potential appraisal, performance appraisal, training & development, career planning and development etc. are implemented seriously and successfully. (Rao & Abraham 1986).

In addition to the impact of the developmental climate on employee engagement there are evidences in the literature that the individual differences among the individuals also have a major role on the individual level outcomes.

Occupational Self-efficacy

Another variable studied in this research is occupational self-efficacy: a domain specific self-efficacy. Empirical evidence reveals that the construct of occupational self-efficacy is related positively with many organizationally important variables, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and preparedness for organizational change (Schyns, 2004; Schyns & von Collani, 2002., Hill et al., 1987). Thus self-efficacy belief has a commanding influence on the level of achievement of any individual.

Perceived self-efficacy refers to belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to manage prospective situations. (Bandura, 1997). Occupational self-efficacy has been defined as "one's belief in one's own ability and competence to perform successfully and effectively in situations and across different tasks in a job" (Schyns & Collani, 2002). Occupational self-efficacy has been defined as the belief in ability and competence to perform in an occupation (Pethe, Chaudhari, & Dhar, 1999).

According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy beliefs influence the choices people make and the courses of action they pursue. Individuals tend to engage in tasks about which they feel competent and confident and avoid those in which they do not. Efficacy beliefs also help determine how much effort people will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronting obstacles, and how resilient they will be in the face of adverse situations (Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987). The higher the sense of efficacy, the greater the effort, persistence, and resilience. Efficacy beliefs also influence the amount of stress and anxiety individuals experience as they engage in an activity (Pajares & Miller, 1994).

The present study uses the conceptualization of occupational self-efficacy as given by Pethe, Chaudhari and Dhar (1999). They identified occupational self-efficacy as consisting of six factors. These factors are confidence, command, adaptability, personal effectiveness, positive attitude and individuality.

The empirical research investigating the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and employee engagement has reported occupational self-efficacy to be related to employee engagement. In a study on Indian software programmers, occupational self-efficacy was

found to be significant predictor of employee engagement the relationship being mediated by organizational and supervisory support (Pati & Kumar, 2010). In an empirical study on 170 managers in USA manager's self-efficacy was reported to partially mediate the relationship between his or her employee's engagement and manager's rated effectiveness (Luthans & Peterson, 2001).

As employee engagement has been defined in the burnout literature as an antipode of burnout. In a study on nine regions examining relationship between general self-efficacy, role stressors and burnout has reported significant negative relationship between burnout and self-efficacy (Perrewe et al., 2002). An analysis of literature reveals that most of the research is focused around general self-efficacy, though the studies have shown occupational self-efficacy as significant implications for the organizations (Schyns & Collani, 2002) the empirical evidence supporting the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and employee engagement is still scarce. A review of the relevant literature allowed us to form the following hypothesis.

H1: Occupational self-efficacy will positively relate to employee engagement.

A study on employees of NGOs in south India HRD Climate was found to relate positively and significantly with employee engagement. Also HRD Climate was reported to be significant predictor of employee engagement and accounted for 33.5 % of variation in employee engagement scores (Chandrashekar, 2009). No other study in the academic literature has yet tried to relate HRD Climate and employee engagement. In a study by Towers Perrins in 2007 has reported significant engagement gap in the global workforce. A study on 40 global companies has revealed companies with the maximum percentage of engaged employees increased earnings per share by 28% year to year. Also according to the study the top driver of employee engagement globally was the extent to which employees believe senior management is sincerely interested in their well-being and it is the organization itself which has most significant influence on the engagement level of employees.

Thus we hypothesized

H2: HRD climate will positively relate to employee engagement.

Rather than restricting the scope of the study to a particular sector or profession this study attempts to analyze how occupational self-efficacy of employees and HRD Climate together predict the engagement level of employees in select public and private sector Indian organizations. Hence we hypothesize

H3: HRD Climate and occupational self-efficacy significantly predict employee engagement.

The Sample

The elements of the universe is comprised of middle and senior level executives of Indian organizations, a total of 66 samples from both public and private Sector Manufacturing and Service Organizations of India, were collected using random sampling in order to remove the sector effect on the results. The information was collected during Nov-Dec 2010. The questionnaires were given to the employees randomly, taking into consideration their availability and interest to respond the questionnaire. Mean age of the sample is 34.56. The

organizations included in the study are Everest Industries Ltd (14), Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (25) and Mudra Group's unit 'Multiplier' (27).

Table1: Demographic table

	Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	<30	20	30.3
	30-40	32	48.48
	>40	14	21.21
	Non Respondents	0	0
2	Education		
	Undergraduate	30	45.45
	Post Graduate	36	54.54
	Non respondents	0	0
3	Work Experience		
	<5yrs	26	39.39
	5-10yrs	16	24.24
	Above 10yrs	21	31.81
	Non respondents	3	4.54
5	Total Annual Income		
	<5lakhs	28	42.42
	5lakhs-10lakhs	29	43.93
	>10lakhs	3	4.54
	Non respondents	6	9.09
6	Gender		
	Male	53	80.3
	Female	13	19.69

Objectives

1. To study the HRD climate existing in Indian Organizations.
2. To study the occupational self-efficacy of Indian managers.
3. To study the engagement level of middle and senior level managers in Indian Organizations.
4. To study the impact of HRD Climate and Occupational self-efficacy on Employee engagement in Indian organizations.

Measures

Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSES) It was used to measure the efficacy beliefs of the participants towards their occupations. This scale is developed by Pethe, Chaudhari, and Dhar (1999). This is a 19-item scale comprising of six factors. The six underlying dimensions of OSE Scale are- (i) confidence (ii) command (iii) adaptability (iv) personal effectiveness (v) positive attitude and (vi) individuality. This is a five point Likert-scale with the response range varying from 1 for 'strongly disagree' to 5 for 'strongly agree'. Both reliability and validity coefficients of scale are high. The reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .98. For the present study cronbach's alpha was found to be .816.

Employee engagement EE was measured by the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). The scale consists of three subscales; absorption (six items; Cronbach Alpha ranges between 0.79-0.88), vigor (six items; Cronbach Alpha ranges between 0.66-0.87)), and dedication (five items; Cronbach Alpha ranges from 0.83-0.92). The Cronbach alpha for the whole scale lies between 0.88-0.95 All the 17 items were rated on a 5-point frequency-based scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 =strongly agree). In this study Cronbach alpha for the scale was found to be .690.

HRD Climate Scale by Rao & Abraham (1986)

HRD Climate was measured using 38 items HRD Climate survey instrument by Rao and Abraham (1986) The HRD Climate questionnaire uses a five-point scale (almost always true, mostly true, sometimes true, rarely true and not at all true),average scores of 3 and around indicate a moderate tendency on that dimension existing in that organization. Scores around 4 indicate a fairly good degree of that dimension existing in the organization. In order to make interpretations easy the mean scores can be converted into percentage scores using the formula percentage score = (Mean Score-1) X 25. This assumes that a score of 1 represents 0 per cent, 2 represents 25 per cent, 3 represents 50 per cent, 4 represents 75 per cent and 5 represents 100 per cent. Thus, percentage scores indicate the degree to which the particular dimension exists in that company out of the ideal 100. The reliability of the scale is found to be .854(in this study).

Data Analysis

To analyze the results various statistical measures such as mean, co-efficient of correlation and regression analysis were used with the help of SPSS 16.0

Results & Discussion

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviations and the inter-correlations of the variables. By looking at the standard deviations it is very clear employees differ in their perceptions of HRD Climate of their organizations (HRD Climate, S.D = 15.25). Here, it is worth noting that all the study variables are positively correlated with each other. First, Occupational self-efficacy is highly correlated with employee engagement($r=.760$, $p<.01$) providing the support for H1.Thus making it clear that improving occupational self-efficacy of employees will result in improvement in their engagement levels. Secondly, it can be observed that HRD climate is moderately correlated with employee engagement($r=.660$, $p<.01$).Therefore it supports H2 and makes clear that improvement in HRD Climate is essential for improving the employee engagement.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation & inter-correlations of variables:

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1.Confidence	15.59	2.54	1														
2.Command	11.36	2.14	0.627**	1													
3.Adaptability	11.41	2.2	0.586**	.474**	1												
4.Personal Effectiveness	16.21	2.48	.584***	.468**	.596**	1											
5.Positive attitude	11.28	2.02	.506**	.355**	.482**	.520**	1										
6.Individuality	7.21	1.38	.339**	0.194	.444**	.264*	.368**	1									
7.General Climate	47.28	6.63	.448**	.421**	.364**	.303*	.331**	.305*	1								
8.OCTAPACE culture	39.24	5.3	0.095	0.157	-0.024	0.167	0.08	0.083	.497**	1							
9.HRD Mechanisms	53.27	5.88	.354**	.251*	.299*	.378**	.332**	.266*	.674**	.619**	1						
10.Vigor	22.34	3.04	.623**	.484**	.467**	.367**	.391**	.300*	.613**	.348**	.521**	1					
11.Dedication	19.51	2.77	.503**	.497**	.595**	.577**	.360**	.277*	.506**	.255*	.559**	.366**	1				
12.Absorption	21.96	3.12	.614**	.420**	.396**	.382**	.508**	.313*	.514**	0.223	.504**	.611**	.472**	1			
13.OSE	73.31	9.37	.858**	.733**	.764**	.763**	.7120**	.545**	.492**	0.134	.421**	.609**	.638**	.604**	1		
14.HRD Climate	139.8	15.25	.364**	.334**	.265*	.335**	.300*	.264*	.867**	.802**	.894**	.588**	.524**	.495**	.423**	1	
15.Employee Engagement	63.84	7.23	.719**	.581**	.591**	.541**	.516**	.367**	.675**	.339**	.644**	.825**	.734**	.867**	.760**	.660**	1

**correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed).
*correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed).

Having observed positive correlation between HRD Climate, Occupational Self efficacy and employee engagement further analysis was carried out to find out the correlation between various factors of both independent variables and employee engagement to identify which of the factors in the independent variables correlate the most with employee engagement. Thus it is very clear from the table 2.that employee engagement correlates most highly and significantly with confidence dimension of occupational self-efficacy($r=.719$, $p<.01$), followed by general HRD climate ($r=.675$, $p<.01$) and then with Implementation of HRD mechanisms ($r=.644$, $p<.01$) To test the study hypothesis H3 multiple regression analysis was carried out.

HRD Climate and Occupational self-efficacy as predictors of employee engagement: Regression analysis was performed to explain the amount of association between the variables. F-value = 80.046 which is significant at 1% level proves that the regression model is valid (Table 3). In order to test the study hypothesis employee engagement was regressed simultaneously on HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy. As the results from table 3 indicate that HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy explain significant amount of variation in employee engagement (Adjusted R square =.709, $p<.05$). The standardized beta coefficient for HRD climate is .412, $p<.05$ and for occupational self-efficacy is .586, $p<.05$ which clearly shows HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy together significantly predict employee engagement. With respect to study hypothesis both HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy are significant predictors of employee engagement. Thus providing support for H3

Table 3: Regression analysis showing employee engagement as dependent variable with HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy as predictor variables

Regression model	R square	Adjusted R square	F value	df	Standardized Beta value
					0.412(HRD Climate)
D.V: EE	0.718	0.709	80.04	2,63	0.586(OSE)

$P<.01$, DV=Dependent variable, EE=Employee Engagement, OSE=Occupational self-efficacy.

Now in order to determine which factors of independent variable most significantly predict employee engagement we performed stepwise regression analysis. It can be seen from the table 4.below that 51.0% of the variance in employee engagement is explained by confidence with F value=68.58, $p < .01$). Confidence and HRD mechanisms together produce 68.1% of the variance in employee engagement with F value=70.36, $p < .01$. 70.8% of the variance in employee engagement is explained by confidence, HRD Mechanisms and general HRD climate. (F value=53.44, $p < .01$). Confidence, general hrd climate, hrd mechanism and adaptability together explain 72.9% of the variance in employee engagement (F value=72.9, $p < .01$)

Table 4: Stepwise regression analysis with employee engagement as dependent variable and dimensions of HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy as independent variables

Dependent variable	Independent variable	R square	Adjusted R square	F-value	Standardized Beta value
Employee Engagement	Confidence	0.517	0.51	68.58	.719
Employee Engagement	Confidence	0.691	0.681	70.36	.562
	HRD Mechanism				.445
Employee Engagement	Confidence	0.722	0.708	53.54	.502
	HRD Mechanism				.299
	General HRD Climate				.249
Employee Engagement	Confidence	0.746	0.729	44.73	.406
	HRD Mechanism				.289
	General HRD Climate				.229
	Adaptability				.191

The results of the study indicate that occupational self-efficacy and HRD Climate significantly predict the engagement level of employees. Thus employees in the organizations with favorable HRD Climate and with higher occupational self-efficacy are relatively more engaged. This may be because employees with high occupational self-efficacy can successfully face a challenge or master a task (Lee, 2008). The greater our self-efficacy, the lesser occupational stress one feels and better the performance as people with a high level of occupational self-efficacy face any challenge confidently. The proper support from the top management and line managers and successful implementation of HRD mechanisms in the organization along with the OCTAPACE culture increases the dedication level of employees. This may be because job resources set in motion a motivational process through which employees satisfy their basic needs such as the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens, 2008).

This is in congruence with many previous studies where job resources such as social support from colleagues and supervisors, performance feedback, skill variety, autonomy, and learning opportunities were reported to be positively linked with work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Also, in a study conducted among Finnish teachers job resources such as job control supervisory support and good organizational climate were reported to be positively related with work engagement. (Hakanen, Bakker, Schaufeli, 2006). The HRD climate in this study is found to be positively and significantly correlated with employee engagement. It has also been supported by a study on NGOs in

south Indian by Chandrashekar in 2009 where HRD Climate was found to correlate positively and significantly with employee engagement. Also it was reported to be significant predictor accounting for 33.5% of the variance in employee engagement.

Further, Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2007) examined the role of three personal resources (self-efficacy, organizational-based self-esteem, and optimism) in predicting work engagement in a study on highly skilled Dutch technicians. The findings reveal that these three personal resources relate positively with work engagement through job resources. Also occupational self-efficacy was reported to be correlated positively and significantly with employee engagement where organizational support and supervisory support mediated the relationship (Pati and Kumar, 2010).

Managerial Implications

The study was conducted to analyze the impact of HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy on employee engagement. The findings of the study provide support for the assumed hypothesis that HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy significantly predict employee engagement. Thus in order to improve the engagement level of the employees HR Department should attempt to improve the occupational self-efficacy of the employees especially the confidence level of employees which was found to be most highly correlated with employee engagement by proper training and coaching. In addition to improving the self-efficacy of employees HR department should also try hard to improve HRD climate existing in their organizations specially the support from top management and line managers and through fair and successful implementation of the HRD mechanisms like career planning, performance appraisal, training, job rotation and potential appraisal as these two dimensions of HRD climate are found to most significantly predicted employee engagement as shown by the stepwise regression analysis.

Scope for future research

The present study analyzed the impact of only two variables namely HRD climate and occupational self-efficacy on employee engagement though there can be some other variables which may influence the engagement level of employees. Further studies can be carried out analyzing the impact of other variables on employee engagement which remained unmeasured here. Also the nature of industries can be varied and sample size be increased to improve the generalization of the results.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the above study that occupational self-efficacy is a stronger predictor of employee engagement as compared to HRD climate. However, both these variables are found to significantly predict employee engagement. The confidence dimension of occupational self-efficacy is found to be most significant predictor of employee engagement followed by adaptability and out of three dimensions of HRD climate general HRD climate dimension is found to have highest influence on employee engagement followed by successful implementation of HRD mechanisms. Thus this study contributes to the existing dearth of academic literature on employee engagement. The present study also highlights the importance of occupational self-efficacy and HRD climate in the organizational context and adds to the academic literature on occupational self-efficacy, a construct which remained relatively unexplored.

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