

Employee Engagement and Organisational Performance in the Indian Corporate Sector: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Employee engagement has become one of the most widely discussed constructs in human resource management research, reflecting growing recognition that the discretionary effort, commitment, and emotional investment employees bring to their work has direct consequences for organisational outcomes. This paper empirically examines the relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance in the Indian corporate sector, drawing on primary data collected from 120 employees working in mid-to-large private sector organisations across information technology, banking and financial services, and manufacturing. A structured questionnaire employing five-point Likert scale items was used to measure three widely recognised dimensions of employee engagement — vigour, dedication, and absorption — alongside a perceptual measure of organisational performance covering productivity, quality of work, and goal achievement. Cronbach's alpha reliability testing, Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) across organisational tenure groups. The results show that all three engagement dimensions are significantly and positively correlated with organisational performance, with dedication emerging as the strongest individual predictor. Regression analysis indicates that employee engagement, taken as a composite construct, explains a substantial proportion of variance in perceived organisational performance. The findings reinforce the practical relevance of engagement-focused human resource strategies for Indian corporate organisations seeking to strengthen performance outcomes, and the paper concludes with managerial implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

Keywords: employee engagement, organisational performance, Indian corporate sector, vigour, dedication, absorption, human resource management

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the past two decades, employee engagement has moved from a peripheral concern of organisational psychology into a central pillar of human resource strategy across industries and geographies. This shift has been driven by a growing body of evidence linking engaged employees to a range of favourable organisational outcomes, including higher productivity, better customer service, lower absenteeism and turnover, and stronger financial performance.

In the Indian corporate sector, which has undergone rapid structural transformation over the last two decades — including the expansion of the information technology and IT-enabled services industries, the liberalisation and consolidation of the banking and financial services sector, and the modernisation of manufacturing operations — questions of how to attract, retain, and motivate a skilled workforce have taken on particular urgency. Rising employee expectations, intensifying competition for talent, and periodic waves of restructuring and downsizing have made the maintenance of high engagement levels a persistent managerial challenge rather than a one-time initiative. This study is positioned within that context, seeking to empirically test whether, and to what extent, employee engagement is associated with organisational performance among employees working in Indian corporate organisations.

The Indian context adds further complexity to this picture. Many large Indian corporates operate alongside multinational subsidiaries that import global human resource practices, creating considerable variation in how engagement is defined, measured, and acted upon across organisations of different ownership structures and sizes. Surveys conducted by global consulting and human resource research firms have repeatedly flagged India as a market with comparatively high self-reported engagement scores alongside persistently high voluntary attrition in sectors such as information technology, a combination that has puzzled both practitioners and researchers and that partly motivates the present enquiry into how specific dimensions of engagement relate to performance outcomes rather than treating engagement as a single undifferentiated construct.

1.2 Concept of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is most commonly defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour refers to high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, dedication refers to a strong sense of significance, enthusiasm, and pride in one's work, and absorption refers to being fully concentrated and engrossed in one's work such that time appears to pass quickly. This tripartite conceptualisation, most closely associated with work engagement scholarship, is distinguished from related but narrower constructs such as job satisfaction, which reflects contentment with one's job, and organisational commitment, which reflects attachment to the organisation as a whole, rather than the more active, energised orientation captured by engagement. Employee engagement is also frequently discussed in relation to job resources and job demands, with adequate resources — such as supervisor support, autonomy, and opportunities for growth — theorised to foster engagement, while excessive demands without corresponding resources are theorised to erode it over time. For the purposes of this study, employee engagement is operationalised across its three widely used dimensions of vigour, dedication, and absorption.

1.3 Employee Engagement and Organisational Performance in the Indian Corporate Context

Organisational performance, in the context of this study, refers to employees' perceptions of how effectively their organisation achieves its productivity, quality, and goal-related

objectives, rather than externally audited financial metrics, which are frequently unavailable at the individual respondent level in survey-based research of this kind. Prior research conducted specifically within Indian corporate settings has examined employee engagement across sectors including information technology, banking, telecom, and public sector undertakings, generally reporting positive associations between engagement and various performance-related outcomes, though the strength of these associations, and the specific engagement drivers found to matter most, vary considerably across studies, sectors, and organisational contexts. India's corporate sector presents a distinctive setting for this research, characterised by a young and rapidly changing workforce, considerable variation in organisational maturity and human resource practice sophistication between multinational subsidiaries and domestically owned firms, and continuing debate about whether high attrition rates in fast-growing sectors such as information technology reflect low engagement or simply an unusually competitive external labour market. This study contributes to that ongoing discussion by providing fresh, quantitatively analysed primary evidence from a cross-sectoral sample of Indian corporate employees.

A further consideration specific to the Indian setting is the coexistence of traditional, hierarchical management practices in many domestically owned firms alongside more participative, flat structures favoured by newer technology-driven organisations and multinational subsidiaries. This coexistence means that engagement drivers found to be important in Western research settings — such as autonomy, participative decision-making, and open upward communication — may operate differently, or with different intensity, within Indian organisational cultures that place comparatively greater emphasis on hierarchy, respect for authority, and collective identity. Sector-specific dynamics further complicate the picture: information technology firms in India have historically invested heavily in structured engagement surveys, career-development frameworks, and employee recognition programmes, partly in response to talent-retention pressures, whereas manufacturing and some traditional banking environments have often approached engagement less systematically, relying more heavily on compensation and job security as retention levers than on deliberate engagement-building strategies. These sectoral differences make a cross-sectoral sample, of the kind used in this study, particularly useful for identifying engagement-performance patterns that hold across rather than within a single industry context.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives and Determinants of Employee Engagement

Foundational work on employee engagement has emphasised its conceptual distinctiveness from related constructs and its grounding in job demands-resources theory, which proposes that engagement is fostered when job resources such as autonomy, feedback, and social support are available to help employees cope with job demands and pursue work goals (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011). Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, and Saks (2015) extended this perspective by linking specific human resource management practices — including selection, training, performance management, and reward systems — to engagement outcomes, arguing

that engagement functions as a key mediating mechanism through which human resource practices translate into competitive advantage. Boxall and Macky (2014) cautioned, however, that high-involvement work practices intended to boost engagement can simultaneously intensify workload, and that the net effect on employee well-being and engagement depends on whether adequate resources accompany increased demands. Emotional and relational factors have also been identified as important antecedents of engagement: Brunetto, Teo, Shacklock, and Farr-Wharton (2012) found that emotional intelligence and job satisfaction jointly shaped engagement and, in turn, organisational commitment and turnover intentions among public sector professionals, while Carasco-Saul, Kim, and Kim (2015) reviewed the leadership literature and concluded that transformational and empowering leadership styles are consistently associated with higher engagement levels. Within the Indian context specifically, Christopher and Tanwar (2012) examined knowledge-sharing practices in outsourcing environments and found that structured knowledge management processes contributed to employee empowerment and engagement, while Garg, Dar, and Mishra (2018) reported that job satisfaction and work engagement were closely linked among private sector bank managers, with autonomy and role clarity identified as significant engagement drivers. Studies of employer branding and communication have further identified internal communication quality, employer brand perception, and person-organisation fit as important levers through which Indian firms shape engagement levels (Bhasin, Mushtaq, & Gupta, 2019; Tomar, 2017).

2.2 Empirical Evidence on the Employee Engagement–Organisational Performance Link

A distinct but related stream of research has focused more directly on the relationship between employee engagement and organisational-level performance outcomes. Agarwal and Bhargava (2019), in a comprehensive review of the literature, concluded that employee engagement is consistently, though not always strongly, associated with organisational performance indicators such as productivity, profitability, and customer satisfaction, while cautioning that much of the underlying evidence relies on cross-sectional, perception-based measures rather than objective performance data. Gupta, Acharya, and Gupta (2015) examined the impact of work engagement on performance within the Indian higher education system and found a significant positive relationship, suggesting that the engagement-performance link extends beyond conventional corporate settings into knowledge-intensive service organisations more broadly. Ghuman (2016) examined functional and emotional drivers of employee engagement in an Indian business context and reported that emotionally driven engagement factors had a stronger relationship with employee performance outcomes than purely functional factors such as pay and benefits. Rurkkhum and Bartlett (2012), studying engagement in a Southeast Asian context, found that engaged employees were significantly more likely to exhibit organisational citizenship behaviours that indirectly support organisational performance, a finding echoed by studies linking engagement to discretionary effort more broadly. Research on downsizing and workforce restructuring in Indian IT/ITES firms similarly indicates that engagement levels among surviving employees are closely tied to perceptions of organisational support, communication, and employer branding, with implications for post-restructuring performance (Tiwari & Lenka, 2020). Kim, Han, and Park (2019) examined whether work engagement is

essential or merely desirable for employee performance and found that engagement exerted a significant, though moderate, direct effect on performance, with contextual factors such as job autonomy strengthening this relationship. Lee, Kwon, Kim, and Cho (2016), reviewing work engagement and career-related literature, similarly concluded that engagement is most strongly linked to performance when embedded within supportive career development systems rather than treated as an isolated intervention. Collectively, this literature supports a generally positive relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance, while highlighting that the strength of this relationship is shaped by sector, organisational support systems, and the specific dimensions of engagement examined — a relationship this study tests directly using primary data from Indian corporate employees.

It is also worth noting a methodological pattern across much of this literature: studies conducted within Indian organisational settings have tended to rely on relatively modest sample sizes drawn from single organisations or narrowly defined sectors, and comparatively few have applied a full multiple regression approach to disaggregate the relative contribution of individual engagement dimensions to performance outcomes, as opposed to treating engagement as a single composite score. This gap is one of the specific methodological contributions this study seeks to make, by decomposing employee engagement into its vigour, dedication, and absorption components and testing their individual, as well as joint, predictive relationships with organisational performance across a sample spanning three distinct industry sectors rather than a single organisational setting.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive, cross-sectional, quantitative research design intended to empirically test the relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance among employees in the Indian corporate sector. Primary data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire distributed both in person and through an online survey link to employees working in private sector organisations in the information technology, banking and financial services, and manufacturing industries. Respondents were selected through a combination of convenience and purposive sampling, targeting employees with a minimum of one year of continuous service in their current organisation to ensure sufficient familiarity with organisational processes and performance. After screening for completeness and removing responses with excessive missing data, a final usable sample of 120 respondents was retained for analysis.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section captured demographic and employment-related information, including gender, age group, educational qualification, industry sector, and organisational tenure. The second section measured employee engagement using nine items across its three established dimensions — vigour, dedication, and absorption, with three items per dimension — rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), adapted from constructs commonly used in prior work engagement research. The third section measured organisational performance using seven items covering perceived productivity, quality of work output, achievement of organisational

goals, and overall competitiveness relative to industry peers, also rated on a five-point Likert scale. All items were reviewed for content clarity through a small pilot exercise with ten respondents prior to full-scale data collection, and minor wording adjustments were made based on pilot feedback.

Respondents were approached across three broad channels: direct distribution of paper-based questionnaires at two information technology firms and one manufacturing unit located in the National Capital Region, an online survey link circulated to employees of a private sector bank through internal human resource communication channels, and snowball referrals from initial respondents working in banking and financial services. This combination of channels was adopted to improve sectoral balance within the constraints of a convenience-based sampling approach, though it is acknowledged that such an approach cannot guarantee full representativeness of the Indian corporate workforce as a whole. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and respondents were informed that their responses would be used solely for academic research purposes, in keeping with standard ethical practice for survey-based organisational research.

Data were coded and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 23 or higher). The following statistical techniques were applied: (a) descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and standard deviations) to summarise the demographic profile and the level of each study variable; (b) Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency reliability of the engagement and performance constructs; (c) Pearson product-moment correlation to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between employee engagement dimensions and organisational performance; (d) multiple linear regression to determine the extent to which the three engagement dimensions jointly and individually predict organisational performance; and (e) one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine whether perceived organisational performance differed significantly across employee tenure groups. A significance level of 0.05 was adopted for all inferential tests.

Prior to hypothesis testing, standard data-screening procedures were carried out. Missing values were minimal and were addressed through series-mean substitution where necessary. Skewness and kurtosis statistics for the composite study variables fell within the generally accepted range of plus or minus one, supporting the use of parametric statistical tests. Multicollinearity among the three engagement dimensions entered into the regression model was assessed using variance inflation factor (VIF) values, all of which remained below the conventional threshold of 5, and homoscedasticity of regression residuals was checked visually using a scatterplot of standardised residuals, which showed no systematic pattern, supporting the appropriateness of ordinary least squares regression for the dataset.

4. Results

Table 1: Demographic and Employment Profile of Respondents (N = 120)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	68	56.7
	Female	52	43.3
Age Group	21–30 years	44	36.7
	31–40 years	46	38.3
	41–50 years	22	18.3
	Above 50 years	8	6.7
Industry Sector	Information Technology	48	40.0
	Banking and Financial Services	39	32.5
	Manufacturing	33	27.5
Organisational Tenure	1–3 years	41	34.2
	4–7 years	47	39.2
	More than 7 years	32	26.7

Table 1 shows that the sample was reasonably balanced by gender (56.7 percent male, 43.3 percent female) and drew fairly evenly across the three targeted industry sectors, with information technology contributing the largest share (40.0 percent). A majority of respondents (73.4 percent) fell within the 21–40 age range and had between one and seven years of tenure with their current organisation, indicating a sample skewed toward early- and mid-career employees, which is broadly representative of the workforce composition typically found in India's private corporate sector.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Vigour	3	.82
Dedication	3	.86
Absorption	3	.79
Employee Engagement (Overall)	9	.90
Organisational Performance	7	.87

As shown in Table 2, all constructs exceeded the commonly accepted reliability threshold of 0.70, with the overall employee engagement scale yielding a Cronbach's alpha of .90 and the

organisational performance scale yielding an alpha of .87, indicating strong internal consistency across all measures used in the study. The absorption sub-dimension recorded the lowest, though still acceptable, alpha value of .79.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 120)

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Vigour	3.79	0.64	2.00	5.00
Dedication	3.94	0.61	1.67	5.00
Absorption	3.61	0.70	1.33	5.00
Employee Engagement (Overall)	3.78	0.56	2.11	4.89
Organisational Performance	3.82	0.59	2.14	5.00

Table 3 indicates that respondents reported moderately high levels of engagement across all three dimensions, with dedication receiving the highest mean rating ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.61$) and absorption the lowest ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.70$). The mean score for organisational performance ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.59$) suggests that respondents generally perceived their organisations as performing reasonably well on productivity, quality, and goal-related indicators.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Between Employee Engagement Dimensions and Organisational Performance

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Vigour	1			
2. Dedication	.54**	1		
3. Absorption	.49**	.57**	1	
4. Organisational Performance	.56**	.63**	.51**	1

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows that all three dimensions of employee engagement were positively and significantly correlated with organisational performance, with correlation coefficients ranging from .51 (absorption) to .63 (dedication). The overall composite employee engagement score was correlated with organisational performance at $r = .65$ ($p < .01$), providing strong initial support for Hypothesis 1, which proposed a significant positive relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis for Predictors of Organisational Performance

Model Statistic / Predictor	Value / Beta	Std. Error	t value	Sig. (p)
R	.671	—	—	—
R Square	.450	—	—	—
Adjusted R Square	.436	—	—	—
F value (df = 3, 116)	31.63	—	—	< .001
(Constant)	0.892 (B)	.221	4.04	< .001
Vigour	.249 (Beta = .268)	.071	3.51	< .001
Dedication	.312 (Beta = .326)	.069	4.52	< .001
Absorption	.142 (Beta = .151)	.066	2.15	.034

As presented in Table 5, the three dimensions of employee engagement jointly explained approximately 45.0 percent of the variance in organisational performance (R Square = .450, Adjusted R Square = .436), and the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(3, 116) = 31.63$, $p < .001$, supporting Hypothesis 2. Among the individual predictors, dedication emerged as the strongest predictor of organisational performance (Beta = .326, $p < .001$), followed by vigour (Beta = .268, $p < .001$) and absorption (Beta = .151, $p = .034$), with all three dimensions contributing significant independent explanatory power.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether perceived organisational performance differed significantly across the three employee tenure groups (1–3 years, 4–7 years, and more than 7 years). The results did not reveal a statistically significant difference in organisational performance scores across tenure groups, $F(2, 117) = 1.84$, $p = .163$, indicating that, within this sample, organisational tenure was not a significant determinant of perceived organisational performance and supporting Hypothesis 3.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance among 120 employees working in the Indian corporate sector, using a structured questionnaire and standard SPSS-based statistical techniques. The findings provide clear empirical support for a significant positive relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance: correlation analysis confirmed a strong positive association between the composite engagement measure and performance ($r = .65$, $p < .01$), and multiple regression analysis showed that the three engagement dimensions jointly explained

approximately 45 percent of the variance in perceived organisational performance. Among the three dimensions examined, dedication emerged as the most influential predictor, followed by vigour and absorption, all of which contributed statistically significant independent explanatory power. No significant difference in perceived organisational performance was observed across employee tenure groups, suggesting that, at least within this sample, engagement-related performance perceptions are relatively consistent regardless of how long an employee has been with the organisation.

These findings are broadly consistent with the literature reviewed in this study, which similarly identifies dedication-related aspects of engagement — such as enthusiasm, pride, and a sense of significance in one's work — as central drivers of performance-related outcomes, while cautioning that engagement operates within a broader system of organisational support, leadership quality, and human resource practices rather than as an isolated psychological state. For human resource practitioners and organisational leaders in the Indian corporate sector, the results suggest that initiatives aimed at strengthening dedication — for instance, through meaningful work design, recognition programmes, and clear communication of organisational purpose — are likely to yield a stronger performance-related payoff than initiatives focused narrowly on energy levels or momentary absorption in tasks. The comparatively smaller, though still significant, contribution of absorption suggests that while deep task concentration matters, it may be more susceptible to situational and workload-related fluctuations than the more attitudinal dimensions of vigour and dedication.

The study is subject to certain limitations that should be acknowledged. The sample of 120 respondents, while adequate for the statistical techniques employed, was drawn using convenience and purposive sampling from three industry sectors and therefore may not be fully representative of the wider Indian corporate workforce, including employees in public sector undertakings, smaller enterprises, or industries not covered in this study. The cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported, perception-based measures of both engagement and organisational performance mean that the study cannot establish causality with the same confidence as an experimental or longitudinal design, and common method variance arising from single-source data collection cannot be entirely ruled out. Future research could usefully extend this study by incorporating objective organisational performance indicators such as productivity or financial data, employing larger and more sector-diverse samples, and testing potential mediating or moderating variables such as leadership style, organisational culture, and perceived organisational support to better explain the mechanisms through which employee engagement translates into organisational performance. Nonetheless, within its scope, this study contributes empirical evidence, grounded in Indian corporate data, that employee engagement — and dedication in particular — is a meaningful and statistically robust predictor of perceived organisational performance, reinforcing the practical value of sustained investment in engagement-focused human resource strategies.

Beyond its immediate statistical findings, this study offers a few broader implications for Indian corporate organisations. First, the consistent strength of dedication as a predictor across the analysis suggests that engagement surveys and interventions in Indian firms may benefit from placing greater relative weight on questions of meaning, pride, and purpose at work, rather

than concentrating primarily on energy-related or satisfaction-related items alone. Second, the absence of a significant tenure effect on perceived organisational performance suggests that engagement-building efforts need not be differentiated sharply by seniority or length of service, and that early-career employees are just as likely to translate engagement into positive performance perceptions as their more tenured counterparts, a finding of some practical relevance given the relatively young average tenure profile of much of the Indian corporate workforce. Third, the moderate but still meaningful unexplained variance in the regression model — just over half of the variance in organisational performance remains unaccounted for by the three engagement dimensions examined — is a useful reminder that engagement, while important, operates alongside a wider set of organisational, managerial, and market-level factors that jointly shape performance outcomes, and that engagement-focused interventions should therefore be treated as one important lever among several rather than a stand-alone solution to performance challenges.

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