

ELEVATING EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT AMONG EMPLOYEES WORKING IN COWORKING SPACES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the employee experience and employee engagement among co-workers. The study is descriptive in nature and purposive sampling method was applied in this study. The research measuring instrument using for employee experience is based on the theory of Jacob Morgan (2017) and for measuring employee engagement, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale developed by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) was used. The relationship between the two variables is positive, result indicates that the correlation between experience and engagement is 0.639 and there is a positive correlation. There is no difference in employee experience and engagement based on their gender whereas job role may influence engagement, with certain roles potentially fostering higher engagement levels. The findings of this study are consistent with the results of the previous studies related with employee experience and engagement. When the employee experience is high that will lead to higher engagement among employees in co-working spaces.

Keywords:- Employee Experience, Employee Engagement, Co-working Spaces, Work Environment, Cultural Environment.

Human resource management is an important element because it can help businesses to achieve success by improving employee engagement, productivity, and communication, by attracting and retaining top talent (Plaskoff, 2017). Employees are valuable resources, but they are also human beings. Many organizations now recognize the importance of treating their employees

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as individuals, rather than merely as components of the company. Investing in employee satisfaction and well-being can yield significant business advantages.

Employee experience encompasses more than just happiness; it's about fostering engagement, productivity, and overall fulfilment. When employee engagement and experience are viewed together, they create a more comprehensive picture of the human experience at work, which leads to a better organizational outcome (Maharani & Febriansyah, 2022). Therefore, it is essential for all companies to pay attention on employee experience and engagement. When the employees are given the option to work in an actual setting, they can perform better on the job, be more satisfied, and be more creative (Harlianto & Rudi, 2023). The physical workspace significantly influences employees' creativity, job performance, and overall satisfaction. Since the work environment is one of the top three factors shaping employee experience, it should be designed thoughtfully to foster productivity and well-being. One of the trending workspace concepts these days is co-working spaces, also known as free workspaces or shared workspaces. Freelancers, entrepreneurs, new ventures also incumbent firms increasingly use co-working spaces. The alignment of workspace and social space can facilitate organizational empowerment supporting individual work satisfaction (Bouncken et al., 2020).

Literature Review

The overall work life journey and interactions of an employee within an

organization can be considered as employee experience. It can be a significant impact on their satisfaction and motivation (Nürnberg, 2023). Physical environment, technological environment and cultural environment are the major variables of employee experience (Morgan, 2017). The physical environment is where employees work, the technological environment encompasses everything from the applications employees use to the hardware, software, user interface, and overall design (Morgan, 2017). Company's cultural environment was found to be the most influential factor in employee engagement out of the three dimensions. The company's physical environment is then followed by the technological environment, which has the least impact (Maharani & Febriansyah, 2022). Various factors such as communication, HR strategies, organizational performance, employee well-being, superior support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction have a positive relationship with employee experience in an organization (Porkodi et al., 2024).

There are many other dimensions of employee engagement and experience were identified by many authors some of them are alignment, effectiveness and action orientation (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2021), Vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), technology, transparency, recognition and support to employees and periodic workload analysis (Erwina, 2022), organisational climate, internal policies and leadership (Shenoy & Uchil, 2018). These components help in creation of employee experience and building employee engagement. Higher employee engagement levels, fewer

attrition rates, and more frequent and successful innovations are all characteristics of organizations with high employee experience scores (Kimonyo, 2024). Both employee experience and engagement is influenced Turnover Intention (Erwina, 2022). Turnover Intention was positively and significantly impacted by the Engagement Program and negatively impacted by Employee Experience Journey (Darmawan & Napitupulu, 2023). The theory by Jacob Morgan and the theory by Hary Febriansyah can be applicable for the measurement of experience and engagement respectively (Maharani & Febriansyah, 2022).

While reviewing the previous literatures related to employee experience and engagement, the studies were mainly conducted among employees who do their work in traditional work spaces owned or hired by the companies. But there are limited studies have been conducted on employee experience and engagement among employees working in a coworking spaces in Kerala. Therefore, this study mainly focuses on employee experience and engagement in co-working spaces.

Theoretical Background of the Study

Employee experience and engagement are key components of human resource management. Employee experience refers to the various inputs an employee receives throughout their journey with an organization; shaping their perceptions from the moment they are hired to after they leave. It reflects how employees feel about different aspects of their work environment. In contrast, employee engagement is the outcome of this experience, influencing their motivation, commitment, and overall contribution to the organization.

A negative employee experience at any stage of the employment lifecycle can result in disengagement. Therefore, organizations prioritize creating a positive employee experience to enhance engagement. This paper focuses on coworking spaces, a type of workspace which has grown in popularity recently.

Co-working Spaces

Co-working spaces were initially envisioned as dynamic hubs fostering open social interaction, collaboration,

Figure 1
Components of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004)

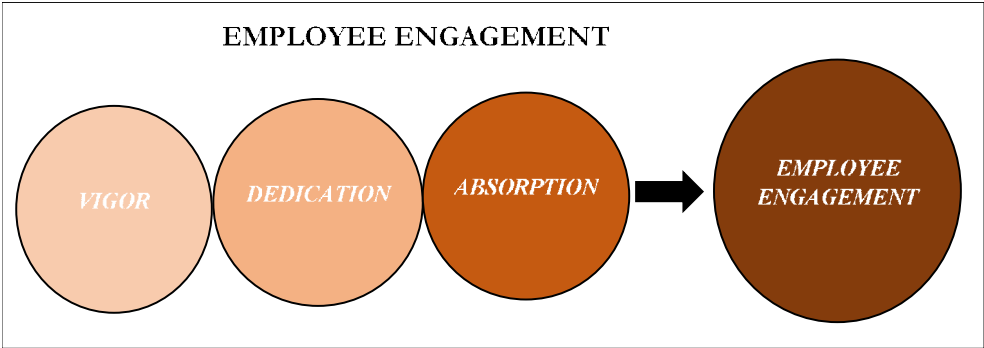
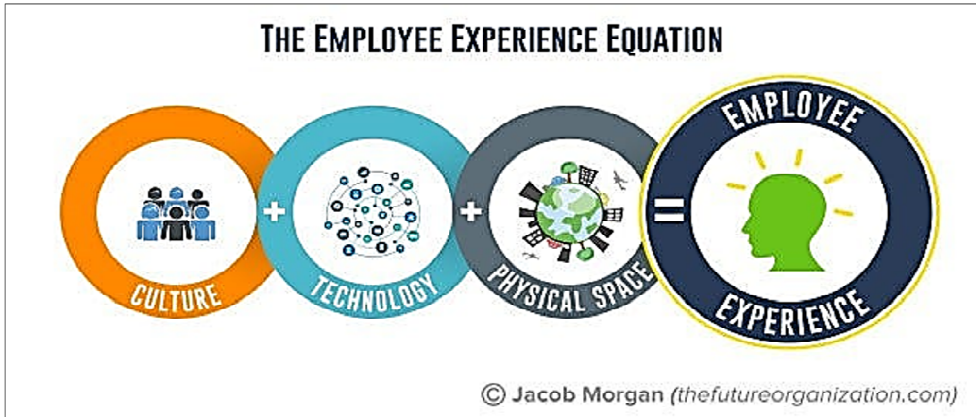


Figure 2
Components of employee experience based on theory of Jacob Morgan
(Morgan, 2017)



entrepreneurship, and innovation, particularly for freelancers, start-ups, and solo entrepreneurs. It is a well-planned layout that balances social and workspace areas can enhance teamwork, communication, and creativity within organizations (Bouncken et al., 2021).

Statement of the Problem

The workplace or work environment plays a vital role in shaping employee experience and engagement, as a well-designed physical workspace can significantly enhance their overall experience. Businesses are increasingly embracing the new types of work associated with co-working spaces. Co-working space is a new type of workspace that has recently gained popularity. Existing research on co-working spaces primarily focuses on their economic advantages, infrastructure, and networking opportunities, often from the perspective of entrepreneurs and freelancers. However, there is a limited understanding of how employees

particularly those working remotely for established organizations experience and engage with their work in co-working spaces. Moreover, studies have yet to comprehensively explore how factors like workplace culture, social interactions, and environmental design influence employee engagement in co-working settings. Addressing this issue is crucial to understanding whether co-working spaces foster higher engagement levels and improved employee experience compared to traditional office settings.

Significance of the Study

Analysing employee experience is crucial for improving engagement, making research in this area highly valuable for organizations. This paper focuses on the employees who are working in a workspace named co-working space/ shared work spaces. Co-working spaces started with the idea of a melting pot of open social interaction, collaboration, entrepreneurship, and innovation for freelancers, new ventures, or solo

entrepreneurs. The purposeful design of the different social and work areas in co-working spaces can improve communication, collaboration, and innovation in companies (Bouncken et al., 2021). This concept has become more widespread globally, including Kerala, where companies and individuals increasingly prefer co-working spaces.

Scope of the Study

This paper is focused on employee experience and engagement levels of employees who choose co-working spaces as their workspace. The study is limited to the employees working in different companies and different sectors but they do their work in the co-working spaces rather than their traditional office setting. The study covers major co-working spaces located in South Kerala. The study aims to understand whether the features of co-working spaces improve employee experience and engagement, and also to identify which type of workspace they prefer for working efficiently. Freelancers, business owners, and start-up founders are not included in this study unless they are identified as employees of a company.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the level of employee experience and engagement in co-working spaces.
2. To find the association between level of Experience and Engagement employees working in co-working spaces.
3. To examine the relationship between the employee experience and employee engagement in a co-working spaces.

4. To compare the employee experience and engagement based on gender.

5. To compare the employee experience and engagement based on job role.

Methodology

The study is descriptive and analytical in nature and purposive sampling method was applied in this study. The data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data needed for the study were collected by a survey using structured questionnaire, administered among 69 employees of different companies working in co-working spaces. The research measuring instrument used for employee experience is based on the theory of Jacob Morgan (2017). It includes physical, cultural and technological environment and its sub dimensions. For measuring employee engagement, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Wilmar Schaufeli and Arnold Bakker (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) is used. This scale has three basic aspects of engagement i.e., Vigor, dedication, and absorption. The Pearson correlation test is used to see the relationship and the level of strength of the relationship between employee experience and employee engagement.

Instrument Validity

The constructs' reliability was measured through Cronbach's alpha. A value of 0.70 Cronbach's alpha or higher is considered "worthy". The table given below confirms that Cronbach's alpha value for all the variables was above the threshold value i.e. 0.70. So, the Employee experience scale and engagement scale are highly reliable.

Results and Discussions

Table 2 shows that number and percentages of employee experience and engagement, it clear that 73.9 per cent of employees have moderate level of experience, so it can be concluded that most of the employees have moderate level of experience in their workspace. Whereas employee engagement, 47.8 per cent of employees has moderate level of engagement, 34.8 per cent have high level of employee engagement. Only 17.4 per cent have low engagement.

Level of Significance (5 Per cent)

Table 3 shows that the chi-square value (χ^2) is 32.609, with a p-value of .000. Since the p-value is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, it can conclude that there is a significant

association between the level of Experience and the level of Engagement among employees in coworking spaces. So, it can be concluded that, employees with higher levels of experience tend to show higher levels of engagement. Specifically, while all employees with low experience reported low engagement, those with moderate or high experience were more likely to report moderate or high engagement levels. The results indicate that employees with more experience are more likely to be moderately or highly engaged, suggesting that experience may positively influence engagement in coworking spaces.

Table 4 shows the relationship between the employee experience and engagement among employees working in the co-working spaces. The result

Table 1
Reliability Statistics

	Reliability Statistics	
	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Employee experience	0.904	7
Employee engagement	0.950	22

Source: Primary data

Table 2
Level of Employee Experience and Engagement (Percentile Rank)

	Employee Experience		Employee Engagement	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low Experience	6	8.7	12	17.4
Moderate	51	73.9	33	47.8
High	12	17.4	24	34.8
Total	69	100.0	69	100.0

Source: Primary data

Table 3
Association between Employee Experience and Engagement (Chi-square Test)

Level of Experience		Level of engagement			Total	χ^2	P value
		Low Engagement	Moderate	High			
Low Experience	Count	6	0	0	6	32.61	.000
	Percent	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0		
Moderate	Count	6	27	18	51		
	Percent	11.8	52.9	35.3	100.0		
High	Count	0	6	6	12		
	Percent	0.0	50.0	50.0	100.0		
Total	Count	12	33	24	69		
	Percent	17.4	47.8	34.8	100.0		

Source: Primary data

Table 4
Relationship Between the Employee Experience and Employee Engagement (Karl Pearson’s Product Movement Correlation)

		Experience	Engagement
Experience	Pearson Correlation	1	.639**
	P value		.000
	N	69	69

Source: Primary data ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

indicates that correlation between experience and engagement is .639 and there is a positive correlation. The P-value is .000 and it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between experience and engagement. So, it is generalised that when experience is high that will lead to higher engagement among employees in co-working spaces.

Table 5 shows the comparison of employee experience and engagement

based on gender. The obtained p value for employee experience is .618 ($p>.05$) and for engagement it is .241 ($p>.05$). It indicates that both employee experience and engagement have no significant difference based on their gender.

Table 6 shows the comparison of employee experience and engagement based on job role. The obtained p value for employee experience is .225. Here p value is more than .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference in Employee

Table 5
Comparison of the Employee Experience and Engagement based on Gender (t test)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P value
Experience	Male	42	30.14	2.62	.404	.501	.618
	Female	27	29.67	5.24	1.01		
Engagement	Male	42	86.93	12.12	1.87	1.16	.247
	Female	27	90.56	13.32	2.56		

Source: Primary data

Table 6
Comparison of the Employee Experience and Engagement based on Job Role (One-way ANOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P value
Experience	Between Groups	83.53	4	20.88	1.46	.225
	Within Groups	915.33	64	14.30		
	Total	998.87	68			
Engagement	Between Groups	1572.31	4	393.08	2.70	.038
	Within Groups	9285.33	64	145.08		
	Total	10857.65	68			

Source: Primary data

Level of Significance 5 per cent

experience based on their job role. In Employee engagement the p value is .038, which is less than .05. So, the result indicates that there is significant difference in employee engagement based on job role. In order to determine the significant difference, investigator Scheffe post hoc test was conducted and the result is shown below.

The table 7 shows that the mean score of engagement of employees in coworking spaces. The results indicate that Directors tend to have lower engagement scores compared to Associates and

Accountants, who exhibit higher levels of engagement. IT Professionals and Project Coordinators fall in the middle range of engagement scores, slightly higher than Directors but lower than Associates and Accountants. Results reveal a variation in engagement across different job roles, with Associates and Accountants showing the highest mean engagement levels, and Directors showing the lowest. This suggests that job role may influence engagement, with certain roles potentially fostering higher engagement levels.

Table 7
Scheffe post hoc test

Engagement		
Scheffe ^{a,b} Post hoc		
Job title	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
Director	3	80.00
IT Professional	54	87.22
Project Co-coordinator	6	88.00
Associate	3	102.00
Accountant	3	104.00
Sig.		.092

Source: Primary data

Findings

The goal of the research was to investigate the relationship between experience and engagement among employees working in co-working spaces. The relationship between the two variables is positive, which means the higher the employee experience, higher the employee engagement, and vice versa. While comparing the experience and engagement of employees, it revealed that both have no significant difference based on gender. Based on the job role of employees, there is a significant difference in engagement whereas experience has no significant differences. This study also focused on the level of experience of employees when they are working in co-working spaces. The result shows that majority of the employees are having moderate level of experience. Employees with higher level of experience tend to show higher levels of engagement. Specifically, while employees with low experience reported low engagement and employees with moderate or high experience were more likely to report moderate or high

engagement levels. 65 per cent of the employees have previous work experience in offices of their company however the majority of the employees prefer co-working spaces as their workspace. So, it can be concluded that employees tend to prefer co-working spaces over traditional office spaces.

Conclusion

The findings of this study are consistent with the results of the previous studies related with employee experience and engagement. Previous studies were mainly focused on experience and engagement of employees in office spaces. This study is different and it focused on co-working spaces but the result is similar. As a result of the link between employee engagement and employee experience, better employee experience will result in increased positive engagement with the company. Some of the co-working spaces are having eco-friendly work spaces and some of them are purely like office spaces. Employees working in co-working spaces and the owners of their companies have many advantages than the others.

Employees have more flexibility in their working environment and they are free from the formal office spaces. The owners are free from the issues related with technical, cleanliness and the infrastructural facility etc., because the entire responsibility is handled by the co-working space administrators and supervisors.

Suggestions

For the companies in which the employees are employed

- There is a need for providing training and orientation programs to help employees to adapt co-working spaces efficiently.
- Rather than investing in large office spaces, collaborate with co-working spaces to offer employees flexible and dynamic work environments tailored to their needs.

- Offer co-working space allowances or memberships for employees who prefer co-working setups over traditional offices.
- Implement flexible work policies to empower employees with greater control over their work environment, fostering higher engagement.

For Co-working spaces

- Improve the Work Environment to Boost Employee Experience.
- Organize networking sessions, industry talks, and social events to help employees build professional relationships.
- Develop flexible membership plans that fulfill the needs of freelancers, startups, and corporate employees, ensuring affordability and accessibility.

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