



The Efficacy of Providing Counselling and Psychological Support To Employee Engagement At Work Places

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ABSTRACT

In today's data driven business climate, there is almost no company that does not have stressed workers. The global economy is considerably shifting and exponentially accelerating the need for organizations to address challenges imposed by technological, demographic and marketplace changes that are further affected by globalization. These shifts also require organizations to maximize productivity with minimum workplace leading to reevaluation of costs associated with talent. Therefore, employees are expected to professionally function with responsibility, new initiatives, effective time management and commitment, and these expectations will result in employees being physically and mentally strained at their workplaces. Employee may become overwhelmed outside the workplace. Employees are one of the most valuable assets of any organization. The active role they play towards a company's success cannot be underestimated. Therefore, counseling intervention must play on employee engagement in ABC Apparel Manufacturing Pvt Ltd. Two independent factors have been considered in this research. They are group counseling and individual counseling; therefore, the sole dependent variable is employee engagement. 150 employees were selected as the sample for this study. The analysis of findings revealed that there is a better relationship between group counseling, individual counseling and employee engagement. Counseling intervention is the most critical party in this situation to increase employee morale and, it is found that counseling intervention plays a role in enhancing employee engagement in a company.

1. Introduction

Employee counseling service has emerged as the latest Human Resource tool to attract and retain the best employee while also increasing the quality of the workplace (Seligman, Parks & Steen, 2014). As far as counseling service is concerned, the best way is to develop employees' progress on their daily work. However, work place related problems exacerbate the situation in regard to employees who are dissatisfied with the management and the office. Although international organizations retain staff, more organizations enhance the efficacy of their goods by using counselling programs, which provide more tactical strategies in order to calm the minds of their workers. Workplace related issues include managing deadlines, meeting targets, lack of time to fulfil personal and family commitments or bereaved and disturbed due to other personal problems. Simple strategies are designed to mimic the action of happy people and in turn, generate greater well-being. They do not mention or focus on problems but emphasize positive elements in the lines of industrials (Parks & Denier, 2014).

According to the observation of the researcher, although the organization had counseling service, there was no suitable application to take benefits from the service. Counseling is focused on prevention of mental health disorders, promotion of mental health and treatment of distress via positive psychology intervention. The main purpose of counseling should be to give the client a systematic understanding of himself and the society around him. The self-awareness of the counselor helps to understand the true nature of the factors that cause problems. This is where the counseling process begins and the counselor acts as the listener (Bernard, 2003). Counseling relationships may vary according to the need, but may be concerned with developmental issues, addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, and developing personal insights. Counseling is

the application of mental health, psychological or human development principals through cognitive affective, affective behavioral or systematic interventions and strategies that address wellness, personal growth and psychological wellbeing. Besides, counseling is a scientific process assistance extended by an expert in an individual situation to a needy person (Dave, 1994).

The research investigated how the relevant organization utilizes counseling service as a tool to enhance their productivity. This study basically covered impact of counseling intervention within work places. The organization is a strong apparel manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka. Over the past decades, HR professionals, consultants and researchers have linked employee engagement to a number of critical human capital and business outcomes within organization including stronger intentions to leave resulting in increased staff turnover and how low employee morale affects overall satisfaction at work (Society of Human Resource Management, 2016).

There are many ways of promoting employee engagement strategies, but counseling is a valuable device to enhance engagement at the organization. However as per the observation of the researcher, it was noted that there is a minimum level of counseling intervention within the organization, because employees are not aware about such counseling services. It has been observed that the company has gained high revenue and they are attentive to the positive mental wellbeing of their employees. This includes both their work and personal life. However, there is a need for the top management of the company to persist on the availability of counselling services in the organization. The study is based on two types of research questions. The general research question is "What is the impact of counseling intervention on Employees Engagement? While the specific research questions are, what is the impact of group counseling

intervention on employee engagement? And what is the impact of individual counseling intervention on employee engagement?

This study has included definitions, theoretical findings and previous research which are highly relevant to this study.

1.1 Group Counseling

Group counseling involves 4-8 clients meeting with 1-2 trained counselor(s), typically once a week for 1.5 hours. Group members talk about a variety of issues including exploring relationships, improving self-esteem, and enhancing coping skills (Robert & Garry, 1990). Group members share information about them and provide feedback to others while group leaders facilitate productive communication in the group. Group counseling is a unique intervention system that differs significantly from those procedures that can be described as guidance and the therapy process commonly referred to as psychotherapy. Much of the difficulty in delineating the functions of these processes stems from the fact that a considerable overlap exists in training of group leaders, methodologies employed and client population served (Berg & Landreth, 1990).

Group counseling is not similar to individual sessions. Group counseling is a type of psychotherapy that involves meeting with a group of individuals who face similar concerns. Group sessions involve sharing a person's experiences. It will help a person to understand any kinds of matters faced by them. Group counseling provides a wide range of supportive environment to discuss problems and concerns and to work toward a person's goal. In an apparel manufacturing industry, obtaining a group session is important because employees can overcome their problems asking others' opinions too (Jacobs, Masson, Harvill & Schemmel, n.d). Group 5-10 employees meet on weekly or quarterly basis with a counselor facilitating the session. As a result, an employee can

expect to meet 6-10 times during a quarter. Each group session varies in length from 50-80 minutes depending on the group. Also, employees may have an opportunity to continue with the same group into the next quarter. After a relaxation period, they may have enough time to understand the same personal situation faced by others in the group. Hence, there is an opportunity to derive a clear picture as to how they may solve problematic situations.

1.2 Individual Counseling

Individual counseling is focused on the individual's immediate or near future concern. Individual counseling is a one-on-one discussion between the counselor and the client, who seeks treatment. In that sense, individual counseling is a therapy session that involves a single client who confides in a single psychiatrist (Karin, Vincent, Allard, Jos & Willem, n.d). There are many other counseling options available including family therapy, group therapy, and child therapy. Individual Counseling is a discussion between the counselor and the client. The two form an alliance, relationship or bond that enables trust and personal growth. Individual counseling is aimed at helping client to cope with addiction, trauma and with stress that can cause anxiety and depression. It is about helping the client to heal from the negative things that have happened in everyday life such as losses, separation, and divorce, family conflict or violence or abuse. When taking definitions of Counseling, the British Association for Counseling (BAC) may have been the first professional association to adopt a definition of professional counseling. In 1986 the following definition was published: "Counseling is the skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self- knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim is to provide an opportunity to work towards living more satisfyingly and resourcefully. The role of the counselor is to facilitate the

work of the client while ensuring to respect the values of the client, personal resources and capacity for self-determination" (Eldhose, 2014).

1.3 Employee Engagement

As a concept that has developed overtime, engagement has been defined in numerous, often inconsistent ways in literature, so much so that the term has become ambiguous to many, and it is rare to find two people defining it in the same way (Macey & Schneider, 2008). It has been conceived as a psychological contract or an attitude, and some relate the concept to other specific constructs such as altruism or initiative. Hence, little consensus has been reached in the literature as to which of these definitions is the definitive or at least "best fit" model of engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). The degree to which an employee is satisfied with their jobs valued and experience collaboration and trust. Engaged employees will stay with the company longer and continually find smarter, more effective way to add value to the organization.

The second prior research studied by the researcher is "The Impact of Psychological Contract Breach on Work-Related Outcomes conducted a meta-analysis to examine the influence of psychological contract breach on 8 work-related outcomes: satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions) and individual effectiveness (actual turnover, generalization citizenship behavior and in-role performance). The results indicated that affect mediates the effect of breach on attitude and individual effectiveness. Two moderators were also examined including the type of bridge measure (Global vs. composite) and the content of the psychological contract breach (transactional vs. relations). Theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed. As conclusions of this study, the authors have identified the overall results of this meta-analysis that support the important

role that psychological contract breach has improved dictating employee attitude and individual effectiveness. The empirical research on the psychological contract is still in its infancy stage (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1999). The research focused on how psychological contract breach results in organizationally relevant employee outcomes. This also provides additional information on how psychological breaches affect employees' attitude and positive behaviors at workplace.

The final prior research study was selected by the researcher from the Society of Human Resource Management (SRHM) 2015. HRM research has found that HR professional executives and other business leaders frequently cite human capital management as a top priority for achieving economic success, and any related discussion must include employee engagement. Levels of employee engagement are typically defined by the actual conditions in the workplace and workers' opinions and behaviors as they relate to their jobs. SHRM research has shown that employees' engagement levels are often determined by the strength of their relationships with supervisors and co-workers, as well as the belief in their own ability to perform their jobs effectively and contribute to the organization. Other findings show that maintaining high levels of employee arrangement is viewed as a significant challenge among HR professionals and executive society for Human Resource Management (SRHM) (Society for Human Resource Management, 2015). The research supports the idea of how employee engagement is a challenge to HR professionals and how high levels of employee engagement results in the behavior and opinions of employees. Therefore, this research is an important literature base on identifying how imperative employee engagement is to organizations and how it can be enhanced through counseling. This research provides evidence that further

research is necessary to identify the importance of employee engagement.

2. Materials and Methods

The study followed the quantitative and qualitative method. Purposive sampling method was applied by the researcher and 150 sample respondents (employees) were selected. Only 128 questionnaires were collected from respondents, which were considered limitations of this study. Quantitative Primary data were collected through self-administrated questionnaires and qualitative data were collected utilizing in-depth interviews. The first section (part A) of the questionnaire consisted of questions regarding demographic variables like gender, age, education level. These questions helped to express a simple overview of the sample. The second section (part B) consisted of questions regarding two main independent

variables (group counseling & Individual counseling) and dependent variables (employee engagement). Section B consisted of 30 statements (10 statements relate to group counseling, 10 statements relate to individual counseling and another 10 statements relate to employee engagement) and basic scale system was applied with five categories, namely, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Secondary data were collected utilizing annual reports, daily investment report etc. to define the problem and to understand the industry. Responses were rated, tabulated sorted and analyzed with the help of SPSS computer package. Correlation calculations, statistical significance and regression analysis test were carried out to test the relationship and the significance between the variables. Besides, collected qualitative data were analyzed utilizing the thematic data analyzing method.

2.1 Conbranch's Alpha Reliability Test of Study Variable

Table 1. Conbranch's Alpha Reliability Test of Study Variable

Variable	Number of statements	Conbranch's Alpha
Group counseling	10	0.647
Individual counseling	10	0.790
Employee engagement	10	0.858

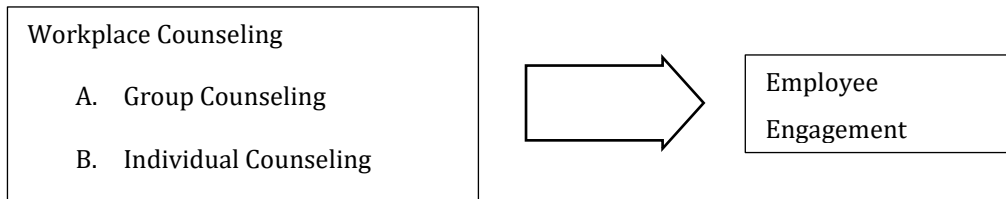
Source: survey data 2018

As shown by alpha values, the first independent variable (Group counseling) is 0.647, while the second independent variable indicated 0.790, and the internal reliability of development questionnaire was acceptable since that value is close 0.8.

For the third variable (employee engagement), Conbranch's alpha value indicated 0.858 measurement of that and the internal reliability of employee engagement was acceptable since that value is greater than 0.8

2.2 Conceptualization

Simply the conceptual framework can be mentioned as the theoretical structure of assumptions, principles and rules that hold together the idea comprising a broad concept. Based on the literature given above, the following theoretical framework was developed for this study. The theoretical framework was developed in consistent with the research questions. The framework and explanations about the variable are given below.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

This framework consisted of two main independent variables (Group Counseling and Individual Counseling) and one sole dependent variable (Employee Engagement).

2. 3 Hypothesis

The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of counseling intervention on employee engagement, and there were two independent variables considered in this research. They are, group counseling and individual counseling; therefore, the sole dependent variable is employee engagement. After conducting an extensive literature review, the researcher has developed the following research hypotheses.

H1: There is a positive impact of group counseling on employee engagement.

H2: There is a positive impact of individual counseling on employee engagement.

3. Results and Discussion

The aim of the study was to give an appropriate conclusion through the data obtained from ABC apparel manufacturing Pvt Ltd.

3.1 Reliability of the study variables

The reliability analysis procedure calculates several commonly used measures of scale reliability and provides information about the relationships between individual items in the scale. The test will be significant when

alpha value is more than 0.7. George and Mallery (2003) provide the following rules for alpha values: the reliability analysis procedure calculates several commonly used measures of scale reliability and also provides information about the relationship between individual items in the scale. George and Mallery provide the following rules for alpha values,

- Alpha value - 0.9 Excellent
- Alpha value - 0.8 Good
- Alpha value - 0.7 Acceptable
- Alpha value - 0.6 Questionable
- Alpha value - 0.5 Poor
- Alpha value (less than 0.5) - Unacceptable

A commonly accepted rule of thumb is that an alpha of 0.7 indicates acceptable reliability and 0.8 or higher indicates good reliability. Very high reliability (0.9) is not necessarily desirable, as this indicates that the item may be entirely redundant. The researcher has devised 18 questions to measure the impact of intervention of counseling on employee engagement. The researcher has selected respondents for this study according to a purposive sampling size (150) and the respondents were used to analyze the information. Here the researcher used the first part of the questionnaire to gather personal details or demographical information of employees. This section provides a summary of the following aspects,

such as gender, age, service period, marital status and salary status.

3.2 Frequency and percentage of gender

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Female	103	81%	81%
Male	25	19%	19%
Total	128	100	100

Source: survey data 2018

Majority of the employees were of the female category as it was observed that 80.5% were females and only 19.5% represented the male category.

3.3 Frequency and percentage of age

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of age

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
18-24	45	35.2	35.2
25-31	31	24.2	24.2
32-38	32	25	25
39-45	8	6.3	6.3
46-52	12	9.4	9.4
Total	128	100	100

Source: survey data 2018

There were five groups' categories the researcher selected and most of the respondents were between the age group of 18 to 42. It was 35.2% from the total number of the respondents. There were 24.2% percentage respondents in the age of 25-31. The least percentage was observed within 39-45 which was 6.3% Only.

3.4 Frequency and percentage of service experience

Table 4. Frequency and percentage of service experience

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
18-24	45	35.2	35.2
25-31	31	24.2	24.2
32-38	32	25	25
39-45	8	6.3	6.3
46-52	12	9.4	9.4
Total	128	100	100

Source: survey data 2018

There were five groups' categories the researcher selected and most of the respondents were between the age group of 18 to 42. It was 35.2% from the total number of the respondents. There were 24.2% percentage respondents in the age of 25-31. The least percentage was observed within 39-45 which was 6.3% Only.

3.4 Frequency and percentage of service experience

Table 4. Frequency and percentage of service experience

Year	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
0-1	29	22.7	22.7
1-4	30	23.4	23.4
4-7	33	25.8	25.8
7-10	22	17.2	17.2
Above 10	14	10.9	10.9
Total	128	100	100

Source: Survey data 2018

Employees have most of the service experience for the seven years in the plant. The percentage of the high service experience 25.8%. 0-1 year's frequency is 29 and percentage can be present 22.7%.

3.5 Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Correction coefficient analysis is a statistical analysis which can be used to identify the strength between two variables. By using correlation coefficient analysis, it could be

analyzed if two intervals or variables may have positive relationship or negative relationship. If the correlation coefficient analysis is positive, it suggests that two variables are simultaneously increased or simultaneously decreased. If correlation coefficient is negative, it denotes that when one variable is increased other decreased. Therefore, by using correlation analysis, the degree of line association between two variables could be measured.

Table 5. Correlation Coefficient Analysis

	Group Counseling	Individual Counseling	Employee Engagement
Group Counseling	1		
	128		
Individual Counseling	.517**	1	
	128	128	
Employee Engagement	.198*	.185*	1
	128	128	128
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)			
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)			

Source: Survey data 2018

The correlation between the variables is important to understand the relationship between them. The correlation of the employee engagement, group counseling, and individual counseling is given in the above table number 05. There is a significant positive association between Individual Counseling and Group Counseling. It is .517** and it can be said that 99% confidence level can be seen between Individual Counseling and Group Counseling. There is a significantly strong relationship between Employee Engagement and Group Counseling. It is 198* and it implies that 95% confidence level can be seen between the two variables (employee engagement and group counseling). The table illustrates that there is a significant relationship between Employee Engagement and Individual Counseling. The presented value is .185* and it implies that 95% confidence level can be seen.

3.6 Regression Analysis

Further, table number 05 illustrates that, there is a significant positive impact of group counseling (0.403) on Employee Engagement, while the same table shows that, there is a significant positive impact of Individual Counseling (0.394) on Employee Engagement. This table supports the hypothesis of the study.

Besides, it implies that there is a strong strength between Counseling Intervention and Employee Engagement.

Table 6. Regression of Independent Variable and Dependent Variable.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient			Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.465	0.182		8.047	.000
	Group Counseling	0.237	0.056	0.403	4.191	.000
	Individual Counseling	0.366	0.089	0.394	4.096	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement						

Source: Survey data, 2018

3.7 Model Summary

Table 7, Model Summary

Model	R	R ² .Square	Adjusted R. Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.392 ^a	0.153	0.14	0.49333	11.320	.000 ^b
a. Predictors: (Constant), Individual Counseling, Group Counseling						

Source: Survey data, 2018

Table 8. Hypotheses Analysis

Hypothesis	Expected result	Actual result	Accept or Reject	Value
H1: There is a positive impact of group counseling and employee engagement	Positive	Positive	Accepted	R= .517** B= .237**
H2: There is a positive impact of individual counseling and employee engagement	Positive	Positive	Accepted	R= .199** B= .366**

$P < .05 / P < .000$ *** $P < .001$ **

Source: Research's own construct, 2018

Since the model gives a high level of assurance for the employee engagement, it is also important to find out the overall predictive fit of the model. The predictive fit capacity is derived from the R Square and it is 0.153 for the model. The independent variables explained the dependent variables by 14%. It implies that 86 percent is described by other factors omitted by the researcher.

3.8 Hypothesis Analysis

There were two hypotheses included in the study; it was evident that there was sufficient evidence to test the hypotheses as shown in the above paragraphs.

All the final evaluation of the study has defined the hypotheses analysis. Therefore, the two hypotheses of the study can be accepted. Both of the study's final evaluations described the hypothesis analysis; H1 of the study was proven using SPSS analysis and Hypothesis two was also proven by the researcher; as a result, the study's two hypotheses may be accepted in an appropriate manner. According to SPSS correlation and regression values, group counselling, individual counseling, and employee involvement have a positive effect.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research was conducted at ABC apparel manufacturing PVT Ltd to assess the effect of therapy involvement on employee engagement and to examine the interaction between community counseling, individual counseling, and employee engagement. The researcher observed the analysis since its beginning and chose employees for the survey in order to create this relationship by purposive sampling. The study's final conclusions are based on data obtained by the researcher from 128 respondents. Data was collected through questionnaires, and secondary data already gathered by the organization were also used. First, the study proved that there is a strong relationship

between individual counseling and employee engagement. Secondly, it was shown that there is a strong relationship between group counseling and employee engagement.

There are several plausible explanations for the beneficial interaction that exists between individual therapy within the company and employee integration. Solving an internal or external problem faced by an individual through counseling increases employee loyalty to the organization and increases employee involvement in the day-to-day running of the organization. Any problem that a team generally encounters in the corporate environment or outside of the corporate environment directly affects the productivity of the organization. Group counseling is a very useful practice in this case, with 3-5 counseling sessions giving employees the opportunity to avoid problems and return to work within the organization. Combining the above conclusions, then, it can be concluded that there is a strong link between counseling intervention and employee engagement.

This research correlation study can also be represented as a supportive partnership, but despite the organization offering specialized counselling resources in the plant, they were unable to achieve substantial compensation. The qualitative evidence from the research has indicated that workers should not expect benefits. In this way, the research results have led to a different conclusion. A reputed company isn't obtaining practical advantages from the counseling service. There are people in the company who are distressed due to day to day personal circumstances as well as the difficulties that arise in the work environment and are unable to achieve production objectives. Those employees do not refer to the counseling center during or outside working hours. Although professional counseling intervention is active within the organization, there is no practical program to direct employees to counseling. Some employees create conflicting situations in achieving the goals of the corporate environment, dealing with superiors,

adhering to orders imposed by management, as well as with working colleagues in the corporate environment. Apart from that, most of the mental disorders are related to the personal life beyond the corporate life of the individual. Although there is a need for good counseling, there is no understanding of the steps to follow or the counselor or the existing counseling service in the organization. The implication is that there is no practical program that directs employees to obtain counseling services.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study is the distance created between the employee and the counseling service in the environment. One of the main reasons for this is that the person does not have enough time to focus on a task other than working during the company's tenure. Product management does not agree to release the employee for counseling or any other need during working hours. The employee should take that opportunity during tea or lunch time. But a successful counseling session takes at least thirty to forty minutes. Individual counselling and group counseling can be used to increase staff motivation and achieve the organization's goals. The Human Resource Management Division has a significant role to play in activating counseling intervention on the work flow. This study introduces important suggestions to enhance individual counseling intervention inside the workplace. Among them, the first one is, making awareness of the Administrative Authority on the urgent need of the Individual Counseling Service. Second, informing the top management and Heads of Departments and discussing necessary future programs regarding counseling intervention and the advantages that could be obtained. The HR department should be more responsible than other departments and they should stress establishing of a counseling Centre in a centralized location at the plant.

The center should operate smoothly in the plant, with trained psychologists offering improved support. According to the findings, the Psychology Counseling Center and the Human Resources Department should be integrated. Further, planning future programs by regulating through an institutional process, maintaining and developing a computer system to make the counseling service easily and efficiently available should also be emphasized. The counseling center can be set up as a facility that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a final recommendation, the researcher suggests that the Therapy Center, in conjunction with all departments at the plant, introduce awareness campaigns and community counselling sessions. Finally, workers must be well informed of the plant's counselling services.

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