

## **EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: ROLE OF DEMOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES**

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### **Abstract**

The objective of the study is to examine the similarities or differences that Professional tenure, Marital status and Gender could impose on Employee engagement, among the employees working in IT and ITeS sectors. It is hypothesised that the employees working in IT and ITeS sectors would remain to be homogeneous on Professional tenure, Marital status and Gender on Employee engagement. The study was conducted at Kerala state among the employees working in IT and ITeS companies, having offices in Trichur, Calicut, Cochin and Trivandrum. Samples were drawn using systematic random sampling from the NASSCOM registered companies. It is observed that Professional tenure, Marital Status and Gender differ significantly on the scores of Employee engagement whereas sector (IT and ITeS) failed to differentiate. Factorial analysis conducted to identify the impact of 'Gender and Professional tenure' as well as 'Marital status and Professional tenure', both, differentiates on the scores of Employee engagement. Conclusions, implications and recommendations are further discussed.

### **Keywords:**

Demography

Employee Engagement;

Gender;

Marital Status;

Professional tenure

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## 1. Introduction

Indian IT and ITeS industry is the world's prominent sourcing destination with 56% market share and employs more than 10 million employees. IT & ITeS sector of India has expanded at a CAGR of 13.7% over 2010 – 2016. This growth rate is calculated to be three times higher than the global IT-BPM growth rate. By 2025 this growth rate is expected to expand at a CAGR of 9.1% to USD 350 trillion. Moreover, India is famous for its highly qualified technical engineering talent pool which is again one of the largest in the world. At the same time this sector ranks fourth in India's total FDI share that accounts for 37% of private equity investments in the country [1]. The IT companies are going through unprecedented change in terms of disruptive innovation and work force diversity. Information Services industry is looking for employees who are flexible, innovative, competitive, willing to contribute and work beyond formal job descriptions or work contracts. Talent acquisition and development and employee engagement would be an increasingly important capability IT and ITeS organisations has to develop and sustain for gaining competitive advantage. Information services companies are in search of new ways to actively engage their employees.

Engaged employees have passion and feel a profound connection to their work [2]. It is the state where an employee is emotionally and intellectually committed to the company. Engaged employees are affected by the work itself and overall work experiences [3]. Employee engagement is also considered to be a work place approach designed to ensure commitment to the organisation's goal and values as well as, to enhance their own sense of well-being [4]. However, [5] refers engaged employees as those who are emotionally/intellectually committed to the organisation and group. According to [6] engaged employees are those who go beyond the call of duty by being committed and showing pride. It is [7] equated employee engagement with employee commitment and defined it more generally as a "research-based cluster of employee attitudes and behaviours that can be measured and has been shown to make a difference to business results".

### Literature Review:

Gallup studied about employee engagement assessing the work conditions that were relevant to the enhancement of engagement, and studying the relationship between employee engagement and organisational profitability [8]. Moreover, [9] reported that

employee engagement increases organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Employees have the ability to transfer their feelings of engagement to colleagues; which in turn leads to better organisational performance [10, 11]. It is [12, 13] who reported that employee engagement enhances employee performance and additional extra-role behaviour. Moreover, according to [14] employee engagement is considered one of the best variables for improving job performance. Practitioners and academics sources support the view that a key practical reason for the growing interest in employee engagement is its relationship with several bottom-line outcomes that lead to effectiveness and competitive advantage [15, 16, 17]. High level of employee engagement is linked to individual and organisational outcomes such as reduced employee turnover intentions [18, 19]. Demographics influence work behaviour and productivity of the employees. The studies by [20] suggest that the level of work engagement is affected in general terms by the demographic characteristics of the employees. It is [21] observed those employees' personal characteristics such as age, gender, and job tenure can have significant effect on organisational commitment. Studies by [22, 23] show that demographic variables like gender, age, designation, education, marital status and numbers of years in organisation of the employees are vital in determining the satisfaction of employees. Thus, it is observed from the above reviews of literature that demographic variables have the potential to influence the employee engagement among the employees. Further, [24] very clearly stated that individual differences may have significant effects on employee engagement.

### **Need and Significance of the study:**

Whilst a growing body of empirical literature focuses on the role of demographic variables and employee engagement, the focus tends to be on European and Western contexts with little focus on developing countries and emerging market economies, especially in Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled Service Sectors (ITeS sectors). This study investigates the relationship between demographic variables (Professional tenure, Marital status, Gender) in IT and ITeS sector and Employee Engagement in an emerging market economy and developing country such as India.

**Research Questions:**

This study specifically seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Does Employee Engagement vary with sector (IT and ITeS)?
2. Is Employee Engagement related to Professional tenure?
3. Is Employee Engagement related to Marital status?
4. Is Employee Engagement and Gender related?

**Objectives of the Study:**

The study aims at observing and analysing the similarities or differences in Employee Engagement among executives working in Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology enabled Services (ITeS) sector with respect to their demographical variables; Professional tenure, Marital status and Gender. The main objectives are:

- 1) To study the Employee Engagement of executives working in (IT) and (ITeS) sector.
- 2) To study the similarities or differences with special focus on 'Professional tenure', 'Marital Status' and 'Gender' on Employee Engagement among the executives working in (IT) and (ITeS) sector
- 3) To study the impact of 'Gender and 'Professional tenure' on Employee Engagement among the executives working in (IT) and (ITeS) sector
- 4) To study the impact of 'Marital Status and 'Professional tenure' on Employee Engagement among the executives working in (IT) and (ITeS) sector

**2. Research Method**

Hypotheses framed for the study:

- 1) Null Hypothesis: The executives working in (IT) and (ITeS) sector would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: The executives working in (IT) and (ITeS) sector would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_a$ )

- 2) Null Hypothesis: The male and female executives would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: The male and female executives would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement( $H_a$ )

3) Null Hypothesis: The Married and Single (Unmarried) executives would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: The Married and Single (Unmarried) executives would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement( $H_a$ )

4) Null Hypothesis: Professional tenure would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: Professional tenure would differ on their scores on Employee engagement ( $H_a$ )

5) Null Hypothesis: The 'Gender and Professional tenure' would remain to be homogeneous on the scores of Employee Engagement( $H_0$ ).

Alternate Hypothesis: The 'Gender and Professional tenure' would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement( $H_a$ )

6) Null Hypothesis: The 'Marital Status and Professional tenure' would remain to be homogeneous on the scores of Employee Engagement( $H_0$ ).

Alternate Hypothesis: The 'Marital Status and Professional tenure' would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement( $H_a$ )

Sample, sampling frame and characteristics:

For the purpose of the study, executives working in Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology enabled Services (ITeS) industries of Kerala state were marked as the Universe. The perusal of the records of the NASSCOM registered companies as of October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 resulted in 38 companies having offices in various districts of Kerala State. However, it was identified that majority of the companies are having offices in four districts, 'Ernakulam', 'Calicut', 'Trichur', and 'Trivandrum'. Permission was requested to conduct the study in all the above NASSCOM registered companies. From the list, 'thirteen' companies were shortlisted based on the interest of the management to carry out the research. Finally, five companies each were selected using lottery method. The list of executives in cross-functional areas with minimum three years was prepared with the help of human resource managers working in the selected companies. The executives with a graduate professional degree such as B.Tech / B.E or

Master's degree, engaged in any department (Design / R&D, Software coding, Testing, Pre-sales, Operations, H.R., Marketing, Customer Service, and Finance), with not less than 'three' years of experience were considered to be included in the sample. It was decided to take 20% of the total population. Hence, 425 respondents from 2125 employees were selected to be included in the sample. Finally, 399 employees responded accurately that was considered as sample.

#### Measures:

The Gallup's Engagement Scale (GWA)Q12® was developed by [25] This instrument has two broad categories of survey items: those that measure attitudinal outcomes (satisfaction, loyalty, pride, customer service intent and intent to stay with the company) and those that measure actionable issues that drive the above outcomes. The twelve statements use a rating scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' and set out the employee's needs (statements one and two); their understanding of what is expected and thought of them (statements three to six); their fit to the organisation (statements seven to ten); and their opportunity for self-development (statements eleven and twelve). The Gallup's scale (GWA) use a five point rating where "5" is extremely satisfied and "1" is extremely dissatisfied. The maximum possible score is sixty and minimum twelve. Higher scores relate to high level of Engagement.

### 3. Results and Analysis

Null Hypothesis: The executives working in IT and ITeS sector would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: The executives working in IT and ITeS sector would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_a$ )

Table 1 Sector and Employee Engagement (Independent Samples test):

Levene's (Equality of Variances)		Test t-test (Equality of means)						
F	Sig.	t	d.f	Sig. (2-tail)	Mean Diff	S.E Diff	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower	Upper

Equal variances assumed	3.74	.054	.90	397	0.369	.78	.86	-.92	2.46
Equal variances not assumed			.90	387	0.37	.78	.86	-.92	2.46

Table 2 Sector and Employee Engagement (Descriptive):

	Sector	N	Mean	S.D
Employee Engagement	IT	203	36.67	8.03
	ITeS	196	35.89	9.12

On observing the above Table 1 and 2 and considering the Levene's test for equality of variances, as the significance value (P value 0.054) > alpha value (0.05), we select equal variances (no differences in the variances). In the t-test the P value (0.369) > alpha value (0.05), we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Sector and Employee Engagement scores.

Gender and Employee Engagement:

Null Hypothesis: The male and female executives would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: The male and female executives would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_a$ )

Table 3 Gender and Employee Engagement:

Levene's Test (Equality of Variances)		T-test (Equality of Means)							
F	Sig.	t	d.f	Sig. (2-tail)	Mean Diff	S.E. Diff	95% Confidence Interval		
							Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	10.33	.001	-2.01	397	.044	-1.75	0.87	-3.447	-.045
Equal variances not assumed			-1.95	316	.051	-1.75	0.89	-3.504	.0105

Table 4 Gender and Employee Engagement (Descriptive):

	Sector	N	Mean	S.D
Employee Engagement	Female	229	35.5415	7.70135
	Male	170	37.2882	9.57032

On observing the above Table 3 and 4 and considering the Levene's test for equality of variances, as the significance value (P value 0.001) < alpha value (0.05), we select equal variances not assumed. (There is difference in the variances). In the t-test the P value (0.051) > alpha value (0.05), we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Gender and Employee Engagement score. However at 10% confidence level we reject the null hypothesis that there is a significant difference between Gender and Employee Engagement Score.

## 8.2 Professional tenure and Employee Engagement:

Null Hypothesis: The levels of Professional tenure would remain to be homogenous on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_0$ )

Alternate Hypothesis: The levels of Professional tenure would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_a$ )

Table 5 Professional tenure and Employee Engagement (Descriptive):

Number of years	N	Mean	Std. Devi	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max	
					Lower	Upper			
Employee Engagement	3 to 10	193	36.76	8.44	.61	35.56	37.96	22	58
	10 to 20	97	35.86	9.39	.95	33.96	37.74	15	55
	20 to 30	82	34.29	8.24	.91	32.48	36.10	18	51
	30+	27	40.48	5.47	1.05	38.31	42.64	27	54
	Total	399	36.28	8.58	.43	35.44	37.13	15	58

Table 6 Professional tenure and Employee Engagement (One way ANOVA):

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Employee Engagement	Between Groups	862.697	3	287.566	3.994	.008
	Within Groups	28436.732	395	71.992		
	Total	29299.429	398			

One way ANOVA was conducted to test whether there is any significant difference between Professional tenure and Employee Engagement. Since the P value (0.008) < alpha value (0.05),



we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Professional tenure and Employee Engagement. The descriptive table and figure 1 (the graph) shows that during the initial stage of the career, the respondents' mean scores of Employee Engagement is 36.76 and it decreases when the Professional tenure increases. The mean score of the respondents with 10 to 20 years is observed to be 35.86 and the mean Employee Engagement score of the employees with 20 – 30 years is observed to be 34.29. However, it is very interesting to observe that the mean Employee Engagement score increases drastically with 30+ years of Professional tenure.

Table 7 Professional tenure and Employee Engagement (Tukey - HSD):

Professional tenure of the respondents	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
20 to 30 years	82	34.2927	
10 to 20 Years	97	35.8557	
3 to 10 years	193	36.7617	36.7617
30+ years	27		40.4815
Sig.		0.370	0.072
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 61.802.			
b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used.			

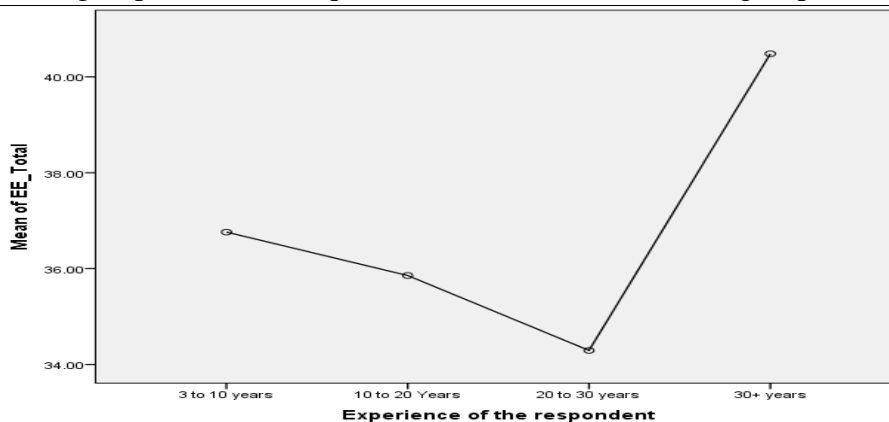


Figure 1: Professional tenure(Experience) and Employee Engagement scores

Further, from Tukey's Post Hoc test it is clear that people with more than thirty years of Professional tenure exhibit higher Employee Engagement scores (Mean Score 40.4815)

### 8.3 Professional tenure and Gender on Employee Engagement:

Null Hypothesis: The 'Professional tenure and Gender' would remain to be homogeneous on the scores of 'Employee Engagement' ( $H_0$ ).

Alternate Hypothesis: The 'Professional tenure and Gender' would differ on their scores on Employee Engagement ( $H_a$ )

Table 8 Professional tenure and Gender on Employee Engagement:

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1992.923	7	284.703	4.077	.000
Intercept	318883.192	1	318883.192	4566.067	.000
Experience	1101.595	3	367.198	5.258	.001
Gender	113.662	1	113.662	1.628	.203
Experience * Gender	848.496	3	282.832	4.050	.007
Error	27306.506	391	69.838		
Total	554644.000	399			
Corrected Total	29299.429	398			

Two way between group analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of Professional tenure and Gender on the scores of Employee Engagement. It is observed that the P value for Professional tenure (0.001) < alpha value (0.05) and hence null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant difference between Professional tenure and Employee Engagement. Similarly, it is observed that the P value for Gender (0.203) > alpha value (0.05) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it is hereby concluded that there is no significant difference between Gender and the scores of Employee Engagement. The P value (0.007) for the scores of the respondents on different levels of Professional tenure and Gender on Employee Engagement < alpha value (0.05) and hence we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant difference between Professional tenure and Gender on the scores of Employee Engagement. From the plot below, it is clear that there is an interaction effect between Professional tenure and Gender on the scores of Employee Engagement.

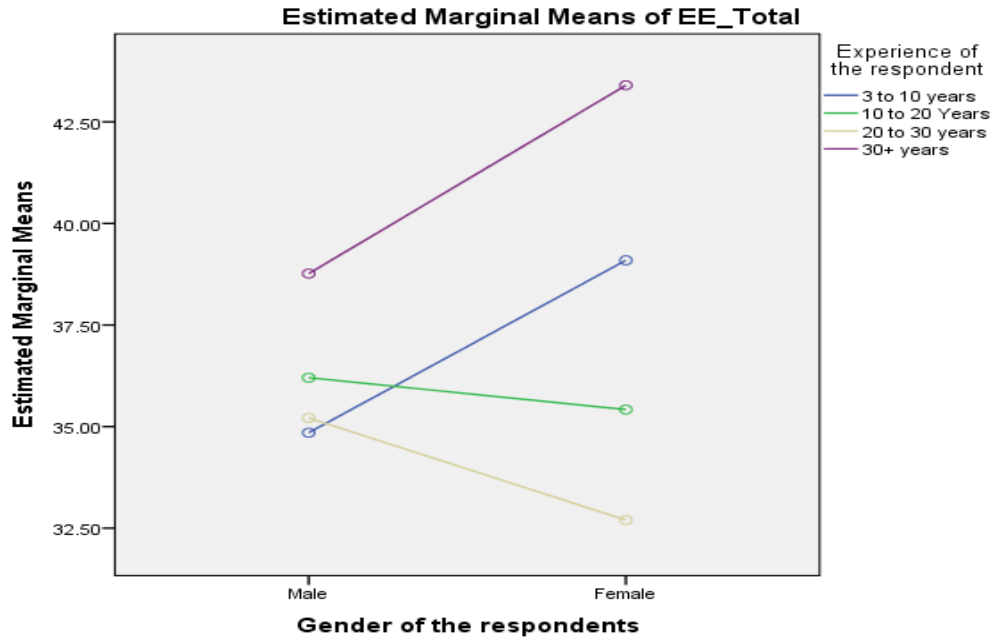


Figure 2: Professional tenure(Experience) and Gender scores

#### 8.4 Professional tenure and Marital Status on Employee Engagement:

**Null Hypothesis:**The 'Professional tenure and Marital Status' would remain to be homogeneous on the scores of 'Employee Engagement' ( $H_0$ ).

**Alternate Hypothesis:**The 'Professional tenure and Marital Status' would differ on their scores on 'Employee Engagement' ( $H_a$ )

Table 9 Professional tenure and Marital Status on Employee Engagement:

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	6206.615 <sup>a</sup>	7	886.659	15.013	.000
Intercept	336055.759	1	336055.759	5689.987	.000
Experience	510.314	3	170.105	2.880	.036
Marital	2833.149	1	2833.149	47.970	.000
Experience * Marital	639.192	3	213.064	3.608	.014
Error	23092.813	391	59.061		
Total	554644.000	399			
Corrected Total	29299.429	398			

A Two way between group analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of Professional tenure and Marital Status on the scores of Employee Engagement. It is observed that the P value for Professional tenure (0.036) < alpha value (0.05) and hence null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant difference between Professional tenure and the scores of Employee Engagement. Similarly, it is observed that the P value for Marital Status (0.000) < alpha value (0.05) and hence null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant difference between Marital Status and the scores of Employee Engagement. The P value (0.014) for different levels of Professional tenure and Marital Status < alpha value (0.05) and hence we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant difference between Professional tenure and Marital Status and the scores of Employee Engagement. From the plot below, it is clear that there is an interaction effect between Professional tenure and Marital Status on the scores of Employee Engagement.

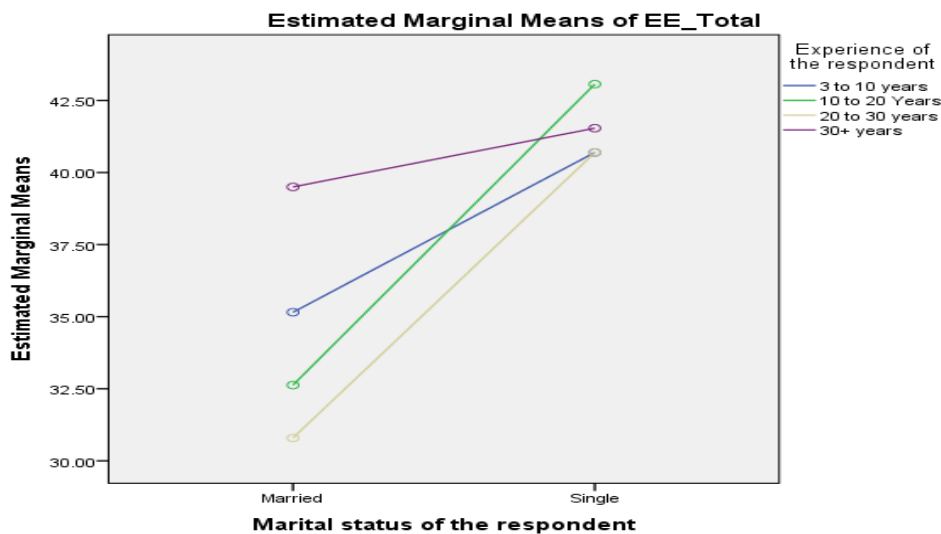


Figure 3: Professional tenure (Experience) and Marital Status scores

### Summary of Findings:

- The levels of Employee Engagement of respondents do not differ significantly with respect to the sectors (IT and ITeS).
- Majority of the respondents working in the IT and ITeS sector are males. Among IT and ITeS sectors, majority of male respondents are working in the IT sector

- The levels of Employee Engagement of respondents do not differ significantly with respect to Gender.
- The high and low levels of Employee Engagement differ with Professional tenure (different levels of Experience) and Gender.
- The levels of Employee Engagement of respondents differ significantly with respect to Marital Status.
- The high and low levels of Employee Engagement differ with Marital Status and Professional tenure (different levels of Experience).
- Majority of the respondents working in the IT and ITeS sector have Professional tenure between three to ten years. Also among the total respondents with a Professional tenure between three to ten years, majority are working in the ITeS sector. The least majority of respondents, both from IT and ITeS sectors have Professional tenure more than thirty years. All other age groups remained same irrespective of the sector.
- The levels of Employee Engagement differ with respect to different levels of Professional tenure.
- The Engagement of Employees decrease as the respondents gains Professional tenure from the initial years to thirty years.
- The Engagement of Employees increases as the respondents advance in their career after thirty years of Professional tenure.
- The high and low levels of Employee Engagement differ with different levels of Professional tenure and Marital Status.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The levels of Employee Engagement of respondents differ significantly with respect to Marital Status. Unmarried employees do have high scores on Employee Engagement. Hence, it is advisable for the management to find out the reasons behind this and take appropriate preventive and corrective measures in the form of awareness building, training and counselling. The levels of Employee Engagement differ with respect to different levels of professional tenure. The Engagement of Employees decrease as the respondents gains experience from the initial years to thirty years of experience in their professional tenure. Hence, management may provide adequate awareness and training programmes on various levels of 'professional tenure', and consider

gender differences as discussed to ensure enhanced levels of employee engagement. They may design various activities, programmes, workshops to tackle and improve such situations arising in the IT and ITeS industries. The high and low levels of Employee Engagement differ with different levels of Experience and Marital Status. Unmarried employees have high levels of Employee Engagement. Hence, management may focus on these groups and design various programmes to ensure Employee Engagement. In IT and ITeS industry, psychometric tests may be used to find out the Employee Engagement attitude at the time of recruitment to employ different recruitment options. Adequate awareness programmes may be designed for the executives working in IT and ITeS industry on 'Employee Engagement'. Training and retraining programmes also may be designed to fill the knowledge gap.

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