



Designing & Measuring Impact of TalentAcquisition on Employee Engagement in IT

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Purpose –

This study explores the role of talent acquisition by applying the service quality framework to understand the impact of exchanges between the recruiter, recruiting process and the recruit across the recruitment cycle on employee engagement (EE)in Indian IT.**Design** – Data were collected through a stratified random survey in software companies in Mumbai, India, using two survey instruments. Responses were collected from 222 employees/candidates and 194 HR. In addition, HR data was matched with employee/candidate data from different software organizations to create a dyadic data set. Multiple linear regression using SPSS (version 20.0) was employed for data analysis. **Findings** – TA experience service quality positively and significantly impacts EE. Further, each of the sub-dimensions of TA service quality responsiveness, empathy, reliability and trust individually have a significant impact on EE. **Limitations/future research** – Future research could consider the longitudinal study, third-party observations, comparison between different service quality methods and their impact on TA experience, mixed methodology method, the impact of TA on performance and actual employee turnover. **Practical Implications**: To facilitate service quality and a positive TA experience, HR recruitment teams should consider candidates' perceptions when designing a robust recruitment process. This would result in long-term relationship-building, a higher ratio of job offers to acceptances and a higher level of employee engagement.**Value** – There is a dire need to attract and engage talent in the IT industry. This research extends the existing engagement literature with empirical evidence establishing the complex relationship between designing TA service experience and EE. Therefore, it provides a better understanding of managing engagement in the IT sector in an emerging economy like India and further proposes a framework for ensuring congruence between recruiter and candidate perceptions throughout the recruitment process. Applying a transdisciplinary framework of (HRM) talent acquisition, positive psychology, and service quality analyzes the new relationship between TA and EE.

Keywords: Talent acquisition, service quality, employee engagement, IT

DOI Number: 10.14704/NQ.2022.20.12.NQ77354 **NeuroQuantology2022;20(12): 3439-3455**

1. Introduction

The IT service sector plays a vital role in the Indian economy; the number of employees working in the Indian software industry increased from 242,000 in 2002 (Murthy &Abeysekera, 2007; Grossman, 2006) to3,100,000 in 2021(NASSCOM, 2021) and projected to earn US\$194 billion in 2021 as per NASSCOM, 2021 reports. Further, engagement has received considerable academic interest from different streams in

the literature, including marketing (e.g. Kumar et al., 2019) and management (e.g. Catteeuw et al., 2007). In today's competitive marketplace, thought leaders realize that work engagement leads to more significant innovation and efficiency while lowering recruiting and retention costs(Parent and Lovelace, 2018). Driving this paradigm shift is the belief that people are the critical component necessary to construct a unique competitive advantage (Dessler, 2011). This



position is even more vital in the IT industry, where survival and success depend on attracting talent (Prabhudayal& Dave, 2003). Therefore, the IT industry's most significant challenges are attracting valuable human capital, retaining talents and managing knowledge effectively to deliver the latest technologies and innovative solutions and services(Gope et al., 2018). They include the sheer magnitude and size of recruitment at the entry-level positions (Schlosser, 2006), and HRM leaders spend almost 80 per cent of their time on recruitment and selection (Rehman, 2021)Over the past two decades, this intensified growth in Indian IT led to high demand for IT professionals (Lo, 2015) and increased competition among employers. Therefore, to recruit employees, IT firms must communicate that they are a 'great place to work (Kavitha & Srinivasan, 2012).

In a human capital-intensive IT industry, attraction and engagement are the two wheels for competitive advantage. Further, EE is a "multidimensional motivational concept that reflects the simultaneous investment of an individual's physical, cognitive, and emotional energy in active, full work performance" (Rich et al., 2010, p. 619). This energy is tied to the role of others and is directed at job performance (Kahn, W.A.1990) and organizational outcomes (Shuck &Wollard, 2010).

However, the previous research has primarily focused on personal and job resources, leadership and management support as an antecedent of EE(Bailey et al., 2017). Further, limited literature on the impact of recruitment or TA on EE creates a research gap that limits the proliferation of TA as a viable consideration for addressing engagement and talent attraction concerns in IT.

Hence the current study aims to provide the answers to the following questions:

RQ 1: How does an organization create differentiation and build relations when competing for the same talent pool?

RQ 2: Does the alignment between the candidate search and organization recruitment process strengthen EE, long-term association, job offer-to-acceptance ratio, and social media advocacy?

RQ 3: How does the TA experience impact EE in the Indian IT industry?

Hence, to achieve the above research objectives, this study draws on social exchange theory (SET), talent supply chain, EE, and service quality theories to establish a causal relationship between TA experience and EE. Further, we analyze the impact of alignment between the candidate search process and EE. Therefore, in the following sections, we review the context of the IT talent attraction and engagement challenge through relevant theories like talent supply chain and employee engagement theories to synthesize the appropriate hypothesis. Further, we detail the rationale of the framework and methodological approach adopted for the data synthesis. Later, we report on the findings relating to the TA experience and its impact on engagement and analyze the implications to indicate directions for future study.

2.Literature Review & Hypothesis Development

2.1 Challenges Faced by the Indian IT sector

The intensity of attrition in India is uncommon in other countries. Each year, Indian IT companies lose up to 15% of their workforce(Pallathadka et al.,2021). This challenge has become more acute because of the limited availability of employable talent and the exponential growth of IT applications across multiple sectors (Joseph et al., 2007; Hecker, 2005). Further, empirical evidence suggests that organizations have to endure higher financial costs due to employee turnover (Harhara et al., 2015; Mitrovska&Eftimov, 2016).In India, attrition is a consequence of

concentration risk. (Bhat et al.,2022)As a result, many firms move into similar locations, offering job opportunities (FSA, 2005). Further, they compete for the same talent pool. As technology advances, this dynamic industry's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are constantly changing, so predicting the skills even two quarters from now seems quite challenging (Rao, 2010).

Consequently, IT employees have no clear expectations or means of fulfilling these expectations associated with their jobs. In addition, information about appropriate behaviours in job situations is also lacking (Allen, Armstrong, Reid, & Riemenschneider, 2008). A combination of these factors contributes to role ambiguity for IT employees, and given the perennial talent shortage, job hopping is very common. Therefore, managers should understand the trends in what employees value (Biswas et al., 2013)—for example, providing working contexts suitable to prospective employees' role expectations and, subsequently, their workplace environment (Herriot, 2002; Morgeson&Dierdorff, 2013).

Given that talent attraction is a source of competitive advantage, researchers must address the twin issues of attraction and retention and explore innovative methods of linking talent acquisition with employee engagement.

However, the competitive advantage of an employer brand helps "to secure and retain the most sought-after employees" (Moroko and Uncles, 2009). In addition, IT employees do not have clear expectations associated with their jobs nor clear means of fulfilling these expectations. Information about appropriate behaviours in job situations is also lacking (Allen et al., 2008). All of these factors contribute to role ambiguity for IT employees, which may lead them to reduce their work efforts and experience burnout.

2.2 Employee Engagement

Generally, EE refers to employees' "positive or negative attachment to their jobs, colleagues, and organizations that have a profound impact on their willingness to learn and perform at work"(Sandhya &Sulphey, 2019). Further, EE contributes to effective performance, superior work capability, business excellence and desirable outcomes (Mariappanadar, 2018; Al Mehrzi& Singh, 2016). (Kahn, W.A.1990) has explained employee engagement(EE)as bringing their self to work. Researchers Bakker and Albrecht (2018) believe future research should refine and advance engagement knowledge.

Moreover, researchers that engagement should be viewed as an inclusive management tool that impacts organizational effectiveness (Nienaber, 2020; Reijseger et al., 2017). Further, in the context of the recruitment process and the IT industry, social exchange is involved. Contextually, (Saks, A.2006) theorized EE through the lens of social exchange and distinguished between organizational and job engagement. In his view, EE is an integrated cognitive, emotional, and behavioural construct associated with individual role performance. However, Cropanzano et al. (2017) posit that SET explains engagement as it shows how employees respond to various overtures of social exchanges which underline organizational behaviour.

Additionally, engagement includes the appraisal of the employee's experience, the interpretation of that appraisal, and, ultimately, the manifestation of behaviours on work performance based on that appraisal (Rich et al., 2010; Shuck & Rose, 2013). This conceptualization of the engagement construct encompasses a broader view of what motivates employees to behave or perform in the workplace (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rich et al., 2010). This comprehensive focus of the engagement construct supports testing this concept in the popular perception of



organization support through HRM services and the scrutiny of the exchange and its experience under the service quality model.

2.3 Talent Supply Chain Experience

In 1985, Porter introduced the concept of "value chain". Since then, it's been applied in many fields. Delivering customer-perceived benefits creates value (Kothandaraman & Wilson, 2001). A generic strategy must create more customer value than it costs (Porter, 1985). A chain player's competitive advantage depends on its position in the industry chain. TA is the critical predictor of organizational effectiveness in a highly competitive and global market (Phillips-Wren et al., 2016; Allen et al., 2007). Moreover, there is an increase in competition for acquiring talent has increased due to the emergence of the Internet and technologies are facilitating the easy access to potential job candidates to the HR managers (Pillai & Sivathanu, 2020). Second, evidence suggests that employers value different attributes than candidates' search criteria (Lievens, 2007; Reis et al., 2017) and it is just as important for prospective employees to choose the proper organization as it is to choose the right job (Rynes & Cable, 2003).

IT companies can compete and differentiate themselves from their competitors by creating service value and managing talent acquisition experienced during the organization's continual attracting and sequential sourcing, assessing, and employing processes which form TA supply chain and the associated technological innovation such as browsing the website, uploading the application. For instance, research from (Hartwell et al., 2018) demonstrates that even a small change to reduce application redundancy can have applicant attrition while positively impacting applicant quality. It is consistent with empirical research and theoretical perspectives indicating that recruitment websites influence job seekers'

perceptions of the organization (e.g., van Birgelen et al., 2008; Selden & Orenstein, 2011; Stone et al., 2013;). Further, Individuals looking for work with a technological firm reported their impressions of the firm's website usability and perceived likeness to their recruiter, organizational trustworthiness and trust, and intent to accept a job offer (Kedarnath et al., 2020). At each point of the recruitment cycle interface, candidates form perceptions and sentiments by appraising the organization's processes, culture, practices, information, and people. These exchanges are the foundation from which the candidate feels emotionally identified with the prospective place of work. As a result, the candidate decides to continue in the recruitment process, exit, or even alter other stakeholder relationships, such as a customer or future applicant. In addition, the candidate may write positive or negative posts on social media (Miles & McCamey, 2018). This systemic research will enable HR managers to overcome the transactional focus of merely filling position to exploring TA as a transformational practice uncovering the service value potential as talent supply chain or even as service profit chain.

2.4 Hypothesis building

Engagement and talent attraction operates as a standalone practice, although strategic. For example, engagement is still measured through annual surveys rather than in routine HRM practices like selection and recruitment (Albrecht et al., 2015).

Empirical research is surprising lacking on why specific HRM-like selections lead to engagement (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016). Further, Service quality in retailing differs from any other product/service environment (Finn, 2004). A similar issue arises with the TA interface in IT, which cannot be approached in the same manner as other service industry. It demands transdisciplinary perspectives between social and contextual bases shaping a candidate's perception of the job and the



organization. Subsequently, applying a service quality framework to talent acquisition provides meaningfulness and safety, leading to emotionally identifying with the future place of work. However, an empirical examination between selection practices and engagement is missing (Inceoglu & Warr, 2011; Mäkikangas et al., 2013). The current study examines talent acquisition and subdimensions as social-exchange experiences, their theoretical roots in social science, and their refinement through service quality. Thus, TA is antecedent of EE.

Therefore, from the literature above, we can hypothesize that:

H1 Talent Acquisition experience, through its sub-dimensions, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and trust, provides a positive and significant impact that leads to employee engagement.

Building Congruence between Recruiter & The Candidate

The traditional top-down approach to defining employee job descriptions does not work in today's dynamic and competitive business environment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Griffin et al., 2007). Instead, employees must go beyond their current work roles, accommodating ongoing changes (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) and accomplishing their job objectives without following explicit instructions (Frese & Fay, 2001). Such a congruence between the recruit and the recruitment process creates a climate for initiative and psychological safety – which may influence employee involvement during and at work (Brock et al., 2005). However, a framework integrating perceptions of HR and the candidate to build long-term relationships, sustainable attraction and engagement is missing. This presents us with a research gap. Further, HRM leaders devote about 80 per cent of their time to recruiting

and selecting employees; however, poor decision-making or a lack of impartiality makes the hiring processes ineffective. (Grossman, 2006; Karaboga & Vardarlier, 2020). Additionally, understanding the requirements at different stages from both the organization's point of view and the candidates' creates the foundation for the organization's recruitment process and assists organizations in providing a positive candidate experience that results in a positive outcome. (Miles & McCamey, 2018)

More specifically, it stands to reason that an applicant will, in part, evaluate service quality based on the reliability and responsiveness of the recruiter or the recruitment process. For example, whenever online applications are challenging to navigate, are inefficient, and mainly when applicants are asked to re-enter information already contained in an uploaded resume (Feldman & Klaas, 2002), influence applicant perception to continue or exit from the recruitment process. Therefore, reducing redundancy in the application process will improve applicants' perceptions (e.g., organizational attractiveness). In addition, applicants' behaviours and intentions, such as applicant attrition, will decrease, improving the quality of applicants (Celani & Singh, 2011). Thus, the talent acquisition experience's success hinges on the applicant's integration and the recruiter's belief in what constitutes a robust TA acquisition process. Therefore, this research examines how potential recruits and their recruiters perceive the service value provided during the IT recruitment process.

This brings us to our second hypothesis.

H2: Recruiter-recruit perception congruence on TA experience and its impact on EE proves the robustness of the Integrated construct.

3. Method :

To achieve the objectives of the study, a conceptual framework has been proposed (as depicted in Fig. 1) based on the literature



review , for integrating perceptions of candidates and HR for strengthening the quality of talent acquisition experience

leading to meaningfulness, safety and long term relationship and EE.

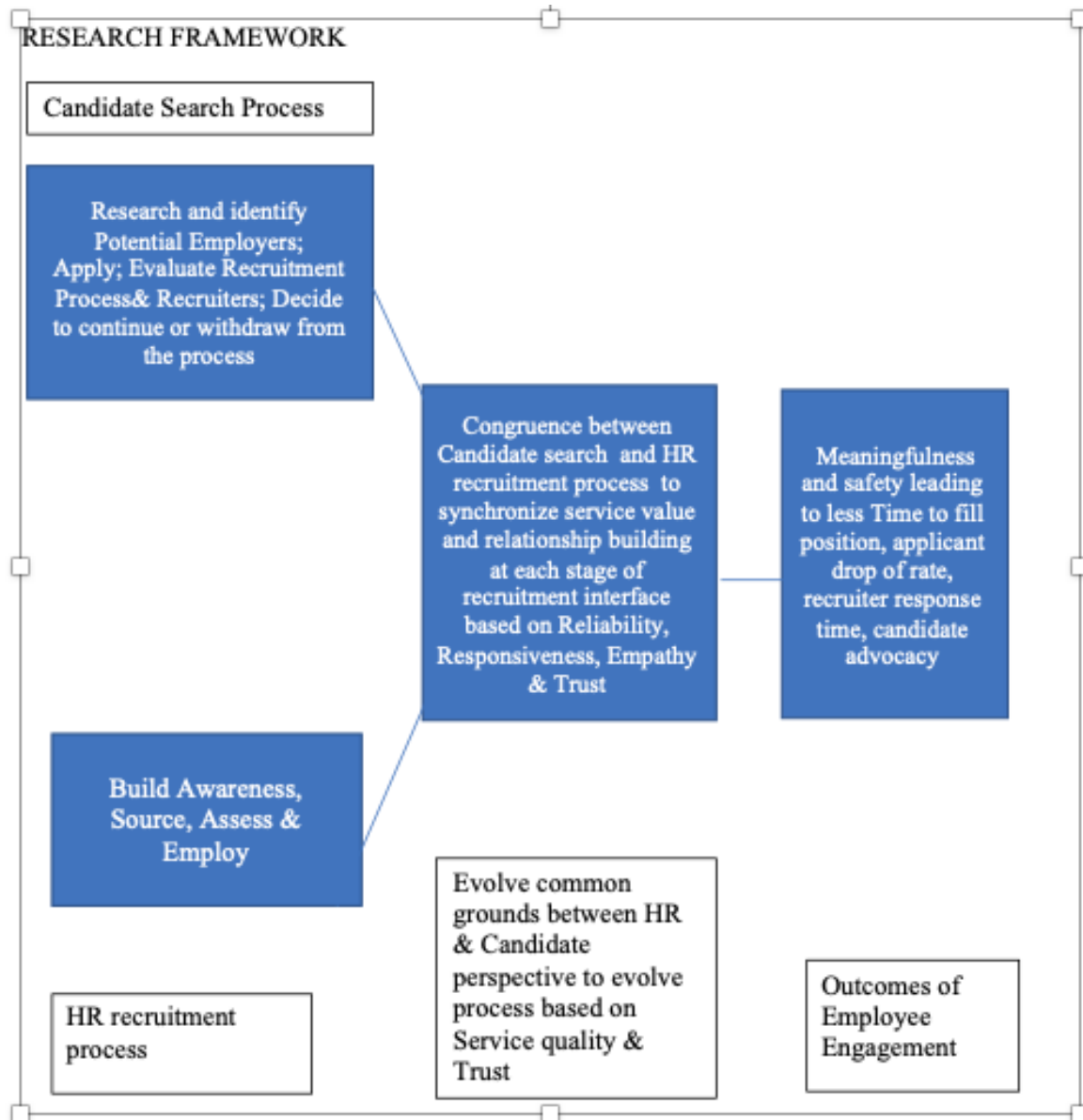


Fig .1. Integrated Model: Integrating Job Aspirant Experience with Employee Engagement.

3.1 Data Collection Framework:

We developed the initial scales through an extensive literature review and interviews with the academic fraternity and the specific context of this study. Thus creating an inter-rater reliability. Several service industries have raised questions about the applicability of SERVQUAL's five generic dimensions. In subsequent studies, SERVQUAL has been adapted for various industry contexts, and the

findings indicate that service quality attributes are context-bound (e.g., Cai and Jun, 2003; Ladhari, 2009). To address IT talent acquisition needs, we have adapted five SERVQUAL dimensions into three: reliability, responsiveness, and empathy. Moreover, to increase our TA scale's robustness, we have added trust, a crucial component of effective working relationships (Colquitt et al. 2007) and higher perceived organizational support (Sousa-Lima et al. 2013). The relationship



between a job applicant and the recruiting organization is largely determined by perceptions of their trustworthiness, which may influence the recruitment and selection process (Klotz et al., 2013). Although Dickinger's (2011) study on trust and SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, 1991) and SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1991) have been referred to and considered as guidelines for creating scales; however, we have modified them for our research hypothesis on candidates experiencing fair organization policies and procedures, and reciprocating to the norm of SET. Furthermore, employee engagement was considered as a dependent variable based on the study context, social exchange outcomes, agreement on attraction and meaningfulness, from an job aspirant's appraisal of whether their potential job and workplace as meaningful, safe (physically, emotionally, and psychologically), is the bond an individual feels toward their job his/her work such as pride and belief (Shuck & Reio, 2011). These positive emotions can broaden an employee's thinking (Fredrickson, 2001). Further evolving behavioural or social engagement involves how individuals employ themselves as (Saks, 2006, Alfes et al., 2010; Soane et al., 2012) into vigour, and behaviours like accepting the offer and providing referrals (Fletcher, 2014; Shuck and Wollard, 2010) argued that cognition and emotion are essential expressions of experience that are routinely overlooked. Therefore, we have considered cohesiveness (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994), candidate commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), well-being (Ryff and Keyes, 1995) and vigour (Shirom, A., 2003) as components of EE. Thus, EE outcomes are consistent with Kahn 1990 and Saks's multi-dimensional model.

A Likert scale measures responses ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." This response measure was adjusted to the hypotheses developed. It has been extensively used in the past literature to

measure the strength of agreement since respondents readily understand how to use it (Malhotra and Birks, 2000).

The independent variable (X) is Talent acquisition experience, and its sub-dimensions are reliability (X_1) responsiveness (X_2), empathy (X_3) from Parasuraman SERVQUAL 1988, SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992) and trust (X_4) from Dickinger, A. (2011).

and SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, 1991) and SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1991) have been referred to and considered as guidelines for creating scales, to ensure that the respondents' opinions were obtained regarding only their recruiters, and recruitment process and no other organization resources.

Furthermore, employee engagement was considered as a dependent variable based on the study context, social exchange outcomes, agreement on attraction and meaningfulness, safety evolving into vigour, and behaviours like accepting the offer and providing referrals (Fletcher, 2014; Shuck and Wollard, 2010) argued that cognition and emotion are essential expressions of experience that are routinely overlooked. Therefore, we have considered cohesiveness. For example, nine items were on the reliability and responsiveness scale, ten on empathy, and six on the trust scale. Similarly, 29 items on the EE scale combined positions taken from HR with constructs related to candidate perceptions and objective operational measures (Bowen, 2016).

These items relate to how employees/ job aspirants perceived that their experiences lead to relationship building. For example, commitment, cohesiveness, vigour, and well-being, constitute the experience, the way the recruitment manager or the recruitment process showed competency, efficiency and care about their well-being.

The dependent variable (Y) is employee engagement. Work engagement was

measured using a 29-item scale that combines the items proposed by, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), Saks(2006), May(et al.,)Rich et al. (2010), and Schuck et al. (2017).

As this study involves constructional dimensions (experience, social exchange, relationship building, and behaviours), employee engagement was measured by combining behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement to determine how recruiters and the recruitment process are perceived. Employee engagement measures included six questions about well-being derived from Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995); Wright et al. (2007); ten questions based on (Podsakoff &MacKenzie, 1994) for cohesion; six questions concerning commitment from Allen & Meyer (1990;2004); and seven statements about vigour from the Burnout scale (Shriom, 2003). *Employee engagement* is defined as individual self-expression (Kahn, 1990). The

questionnaire captured the essence of EE by evaluating the candidate's sense of cohesiveness, commitment, well-being, and vigour during multiple recruitment processes. Further, we have considered the same factors from the organization or HR point of view to establish cross-validity and data triangulation.

3.2 Pilot Study

Experts in the field tested the scale's nomological validity. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to establish the reliability of each scale as per(Tang et al., 2014). Our pilot study included 48 employees(HR recruiters and employees) of eleven IT firms in Mumbai, India, who responded online to the questionnaire using Google Docs.

, the participants could comment on the clarity of the questions or their sequencing and suggest changes if necessary.

For the HR group, Cronbach's alpha coefficients are detailed below :

TABLE-HR RELIABILITY

| RELIABILITY STATISTICS HR SCALE | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| VARIABLE | Cronbach's Alpha | No of Items |
| Trust | 0.74 | 5 |
| Responsiveness | 0.77 | 10 |
| Reliability | 0.71 | 12 |
| Empathy | 0.77 | 8 |
| Employee Engagement | 0.91 | 29 |
| Talent Acquisition | 0.91 | 35 |

Similarly, the Cronbach's alpha values for the TA and EE orientation scale candidates/ potential recruit group are detailed below:

TABLE-CANDIDATE RELIABILITY

| RELIABILITY STATISTICS CANDIDATE SCALE | | |
|--|------------------|-------------|
| VARIABLE | Cronbach's Alpha | No of Items |
| Trust | 0.81 | 6 |
| Responsiveness | 0.77 | 9 |
| Reliability | 0.78 | 9 |
| Empathy | 0.74 | 9 |
| Employee Engagement | 0.88 | 30 |
| Talent Acquisition | 0.90 | 33 |



Recommendation was made to collect data for employee who had joined in last two years instead of six months since during the time of COVID recruitment had been frozen in many IT companies in Mumbai, India.

3.3 Main Data Collection

Respondents were junior, and middle-level IT professionals. Management Students were asked to identify and collect responses from one HR manager and one software professional from IT companies in the Mumbai Metropolitan region as well as from software division of banks, telecommunication ,data analysts, software consulting firm .This was a part of their elective project .There was a 15-day time period for responding to the google doc survey. However , only 417 of 600 responses were considered for complete data.

3.4 Data Analysis

Our analysis was conducted using SPSS version 20 software. We measured Cronbach's alpha for all factors to ensure internal consistency. Further, using Cronbach's alphas, we compared the pilot scale analysis with the main study scale. Both scales had identical Cronbach's alpha values, thus ensuring scale reliability. Finally, the focal constructs of employee engagement were analyzed using simple and multiple linear regressions (Table 1-2). In this regression procedure, raw data was used as input.

3.5 Results

One stratum of our study was the recruitment team, which consisted of HR and line managers. In the second group, software professionals who were potential recruits or who had joined the organization within the past two years were included. Both data sets were significant at a level of 5%, i.e. $p < .05$. By using regression analysis, all factors were identified as predictors of employee engagement, with an adjusted R^2 value of

77.4 per cent for the candidate/employee surveyed, as shown in Table I and an adjusted R^2 value of 75.5 per cent for HR and recruitment team members, both are statistically significant. Variance impact greater than 25% are considered substantial (Heiman, 1998). Therefore, 77.4 and 75.5 per cent of employee engagement variance is explained by the candidate and HR TA factors, respectively, according to the R^2 value.

ANOVA of Table I shows a significant probability value ($p < 0.05$), indicating that talent acquisition experience, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and trust are significant factors in employee engagement. Therefore, talent acquisition experience influences 77.4 per cent of employee engagement. Accordingly, 77.4 per cent of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to talent acquisition experience. It includes reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and trust generated during recruitment interfaces. As a result, we find support for our first hypothesis, H1, which states that talent acquisition experience influences employee engagement positively.

The results below for the candidate surveyed prove hypothesis H1.

TA significantly predicts EE, $F(1,221) = 139.06$, $p < .001$, TA significantly predicts EE, $F(1,221) = 139.06$, $p < .001$, indicating that TA can have significant effects on EE ($\beta = .867$, $p < .001$). TA has a positive effect on these results. Furthermore, the $R^2 = 0.774$ demonstrates that TA contributes 77.4% to the variance in EE. We have also factored in the sub-dimensions. Responsiveness, Reliability, Empathy and Trust significantly predict EE, $F(4,218) = 186.27$, $p < .044$, for the multiple factors. The Table shows the summary of the findings. Looking at the unique individual contributors of the predictors, the results show that responsiveness ($\beta = .0.257$, $t = 5.996$,



p<.001), reliability ($\beta=0.145$, t=2.727,p<.001),empathy($\beta=.0.374$, t=4.882,p<.001) and trust ($\beta=0.082$, t=5.938,p<.021). This shows that talent acquisition experience collectively as well as

individually, each of the sub-dimensions reliability, responsiveness, empathy and trust have a significant impact on EE in the IT industry

Table-1

| Model Summary- Candidate | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Hypothesis | Regression Weights | Beta Coefficient | R ² | F Value | T Value | p-value | Hypothesis Supported |
| H1: There is a positive Impact of TA & its sub-dimensions on EE | TA-EE | 0.867 | 0.774 | 186.272 | 2.026 | 0.044 | Yes |
| | Responsiveness | 0.257 | | | 5.996 | 0 | |
| | Reliability | 0.145 | | | 2.727 | 0 | |
| | Empathy | 0.374 | | | 4.882 | 0 | |
| | Trust | 0.082 | | | 5.938 | 0.021 | |

Similarly for HR and the line managers group surveyed, There is a significant relationship between TA and EE ,F(1,193)=681.4, p<.001, , illustrating that TA can significantly impact EE($\beta=.888$,p<.001). It is clear from these results that TA has a positive effect on EE.Moreover, theR²=0.755 depicts that 75.5 percent of the variance in EE can be attributed to TA. We have also factored the sub-dimensions. Responsiveness, Reliability, Empathy and Trust play a significant predict EE, F(4,189)=139.06,p<.001, for the multiple

factors The Table 2 shows the summary of the findings. Looking at the unique individual contributors of the predictors, the results show that responsiveness ($\beta=.0.342$, t=6.93,p<.001),reliability ($\beta=.0.288$, t=5.935,p<.001),empathy($\beta=.0.234$, t=5.982,p<.001) and trust ($\beta=.0.128$, t=2.991,p<.001) positively predict employee engagement. This shows that talent acquisition experience has a significant impact on employee engagement.

Table-2

| Model Summary- HR | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Hypothesis | Regression Weights | Beta Coefficient | R ² | F Value | T Value | p-value | Hypothesis Supported |
| H1: There is a positive Impact of TA & its sub- | TA-EE | 0.888 | 0.755 | 139.06 | 5.605 | 0 | Yes |
| | Responsiveness | 0.342 | | | 6.93 | 0 | |
| | Reliability | 0.288 | | | 5.935 | 0 | |
| | Empathy | 0.234 | | | 5.982 | 0 | |



| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-------|--|--|-------|---|--|
| dimensions on EE | Trust | 0.128 | | | 2.991 | 0 | |
|------------------|-------|-------|--|--|-------|---|--|

The findings of the two tables' R² value of .775 for HR and .774 for candidates prove the H2 hypothesis that recruiter-recruit perception congruence on TA experience and its impact on EE proves the robustness of the Integrated construct.

4.1 Discussion

Studies on antecedent of EE have made substantial progress, but tend to largely focus on job and personal resources and their effects on individuals and organizations. A majority of studies used surveys rather than assessing agreement on variables. The present study is an first attempt to examine how TA experience influences EE through an integrated model that simultaneously examines service quality and talent acquisition processes. Further, the impact of TA experience sub-variables (reliability, responsiveness, trust, empathy) on EE has been largely unexplored. This paper makes several contributions to the EE literature. Impact of TA service experience were empirically tested on EE, and subsequently impact of each sub-construct was measured on EE. Further, This findings of the dyadic data establish highly significant relationship between talent acquisition candidate perception ($\beta = 0.867$, $p < 0.001$) and HR perception ($\beta = 0.888$, $p < 0.001$) and EE. Thereby supporting our first hypothesis, positive talent acquisition across the recruitment cycle leads to relationship building with the organization and eventually to EE.

Additionally, our results indicate that TA experience congruence between recruiters and recruiters had almost the same impact on

EE; ($R^2 = 0.770$ (HR) and $R^2 = 0.74$ (candidates); thus proving the robustness of our integrated construct and supporting our second hypothesis. In addition, candidates' perceptions of the TA experience congruent with the recruitment team indicate that they are much more likely to experience high levels of alignment with the job and organization at large. Hence, candidates appraisal of the organization process, workplace climate are positive; subsequently chances of applicant attrition may be reduced and bonding with organization and EE are increased.

4.2 Implications

Our study contributes to existing engagement literature by attempting to examine the relationship among different types of sub-variables of TA service experience applying trans-disciplinary theoretical frameworks of HRM, positive psychology and service quality, and how they influence EE. Combining these diverse theoretical perspectives provided a strong foundation for proposing and proving a significantly positive relationship between talent acquisition experience and employee engagement. Thus, the present study is the first, to our knowledge, to examine empirically TA as an intervention on EE (Bailey, et.al, 2017). Secondly, developing framework to build congruence between the recruiter and recruit on how prediction of TA experience consequences can be improved by considering candidates' perceptions during their interfaces with the recruiter and the recruitment process throughout the recruitment cycle. Thirdly, fill in the existing gap in the engagement literature on the possibility of link between recruitment practices and engagement. For example, there



is a surprising lack of empirical research on why specific HRM-like selections lead to engagement(Ostroff& Bowen, 2004; Inceoglu& Warr,2011).

Fourthly, by focusing on TA as a relationship building predictor augments attractabilityand creates a sustainable resource of the potential talent communitywith its focus on stakeholder interests and outcomes (Jarlstrom et al., 2018), stimulate the inclusion of job aspirants and HR (Podgorodnichenko et.al.,2020) as the driving force for sustaining EE.

Lastly, our study builds and strengthen (Kahn, 1990; Saks, 2006) model of engagement . By creating meaningfulness and safetythroughout the recruitment cycle interface leading to evolving basic needs from meaningfulness and safety to motivational and behavioural needs of relationship building, commitment and vigour .

4.3 Practical Implications

These results also have implications for management practices. Organizations allocate significant HR resources about 80 percent of their time is spend on recruitment alone(Freeman, 2006), however, potential applicants usually have two to three job offers and spend considerable time deciding which offer they should accept. Organizations are never certain about applicants' acceptance of any job offer until the applicants report to work (Grossman, 2006; Agrawal and Thite, 2003); only if managers understand the trends in what employees value (Biswas and Bhatnagar, 2013). Our results show that all TA experience and its four sub-variables three are correlated significantly with EE. Managers, therefore, need to focus on applying the proposed integrated framework to build positive interfaces throughout the recruitment cycle leading to long-term relationship and engagement .Our results also demonstrate that HR mangers need to build congruence between candidate perception and their own for robust selection and

reducing applicant attrition.. Managers can manage the EE at the very onset by selecting candidates based on TA experience. Lastly, this study understands the business challenges in IT and provides framework integrating attracting and engaging talent with the pool of talent community; by proposing roadmap to maximize talent acquisition experience through, relationship building initiating safety and meaningfulness leading to commitment, acceptance of the job offer and subsequent engagement .

4.4 Limitations and Future Research

This study, like all research, has limitations. First, research limitations include self-reporting and time limitations. Over an employee's life cycle, TA and EE evolve; Therefore, future longitudinal studies can examine changes between TA and EE. Additionally, obtaining third-party or objective measures of TA may strengthen the evidence over self-reported measures. Secondly, we have considered three of the five SERVQUAL parameters: reliability, responsiveness, and empathy for measuring TA experience. Finally, future studies could explore SERPERF(Cronin & Taylor, 1991) or (Dabholkar et al., 1996) service quality measures for comparing TA experience.

Third, the current study is limited to the Mumbai region and IT software only. For further research, the study should be extended to other IT service industries in India and abroad and to other industries within India to assess the generalizability of the findings across geography and industry.

Fourth, studies could apply our integrated framework to examine the impact of reward and recognition or performance management with EE. Fifth, while we have considered TA in general, future studies could explore the relative criticality of stages in predicting EE. Finally, an association between EE and TA can be examined for building brand, management practice and employee value proposition.



4.5 Conclusion

Our dyadic data establishes that TA experience significantly impacts EE(77 per cent for candidates and 75 per cent for HR), hence an essential component for understanding and influencing sustainable EE from the onset in India's IT industry. The proposed model was developed based on the SERVQUAL framework and trust in TA experience to investigate the impact on EE.

This model is tested and confirmed utilizing the multiple linear regression approach. It was found that reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and trust are the sub-dimensions of TA experience service quality individually and collectively influencing EE. Further, this study established the perceived validity and robustness of the framework that establishes Recruiter-recruit perception congruence on TA experience and its impact on EE empirically.

Even adoption for other HR functions can be tested with this proposed model for establishing links with EE. Similarly, the link between the employee value proposition and branding with TA could be explored. The proposed model provides vital insights to aid scholars, academicians and practitioners to better comprehend and advance the research on Engagement as a management practice and explore boundaries with other industries for generalization.

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