



Notice for the PhD Viva-Voce Examination

Ms Susan George, Registration Number: 2090172, PhD Scholar at the Department of Social Work, School of Psychological Sciences, Education and Social Work, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Thursday, 30 October 2025 at 11.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru – 560029, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis : **Workplace Relationships, Psychological Safety and Employee Engagement in the IT Sector**

Discipline : **Social Work**

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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 15 October 2025

Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

The Indian Information Technology (IT) industry, a cornerstone of the country's economy, is the fastest-growing sector and the largest private-sector employer, contributing approximately eight percent to India's GDP. With over 1.5 million employees based in Bangalore alone, the industry faces a pressing challenge: persistently high attrition rates, especially in metropolitan hubs like Bangalore, as noted in the Analytics India Attrition Study Report 2022. In order to address this issue, enhancing employee engagement is crucial. Thus the present study investigates the relationship between employee engagement and its key antecedents - workplace relationships and psychological safety, while also exploring the moderating effects of age and gender.

Employing a descriptive research design, data were collected from 384 IT professionals in Bangalore using quota sampling. Standardised scales were used to measure employee engagement, psychological safety, and coworker relationships, while a new scale, the Worker-Supervisor Relationship (WSR) scale, was developed to assess supervisor-worker dynamics. The data analysis comprised descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and moderation analyses. The findings reveal significant positive correlations between psychological safety, coworker relationships, and positive supervisor-worker relationships with employee engagement. Psychological safety, in particular, emerged as a vital driver of engagement, although its positive impact diminishes slightly with increasing employee age, as indicated by moderation analysis.

The study further highlights generational differences, showing that Generation X employees reported higher engagement and psychological safety but also experienced more negative supervisory relationships compared to Millennials, who, in turn, reported stronger coworker bonds. These insights suggest that effective engagement strategies must be sensitive to generational differences to meet the varied needs of a diverse workforce. The development of the Worker-Supervisor Relationship scale provides organisations with a practical tool to diagnose and improve supervisory relationships, thereby promoting a more supportive, engaging, and efficient work environment. The implications of the study are profound, both theoretically and practically. It reinforces the importance of cultivating psychologically safe workplaces and nurturing strong interpersonal relationships to enhance engagement. By prioritising trust, open communication, and respect across all organisational levels, companies can better retain talent and build resilient cultures. While gender differences did not significantly alter engagement dynamics, the study reaffirms the universal importance of equitable and inclusive workplace practices.

This study underscores that employee engagement is not simply a business strategy, but a shared human experience that fuels organisational success. When employees are truly engaged, they experience belonging, purpose, and joy that transcend daily tasks. It is this spirit of connection that inspires creativity, strengthens loyalty, and ignites passion. Ultimately, when organisations invest in meaningful engagement, they do not merely build better workplaces, they nurture environments where people grow, thrive, and become part of something greater than themselves.

Keywords: *Employee engagement, Workplace relationships, Psychological safety, Generational diversity, Gender*

Publications:

1. Thomas, P., Venkatesh, B., & **George, S.** (2023). Talent Retention Practices: Concepts and Analytical Perspectives. In *HR Analytics in an Era of Rapid Automation* (pp. 249-271). IGI Global. Doi: 10.4018/978-1-6684-8942-0.ch016
2. **George, S.**, & Thomas, P. (2023). Adapting employee engagement strategies amid crisis: Insights from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 1-26. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10672-023-09484-z>