

TALENT DYNAMICS: EMPOWERING INDIAN ITES THROUGH STRATEGIC EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

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ABSTRACT

Talent management and employee engagement are popular topics in the literature, thus this mixed method research explores them. The first portion polled 272 BPO/ITES workers. Workplace Audit or Gallup q12 was utilized. Focus group talks addressed attrition and engagement. A phase II BPO business was randomly picked from phase I's sample. Analysis of departure interview data utilizing factors and content. Results met research goals. Lack of factor loadings predicted poor engagement at hiring and after 16 months in the first phase. High factor loadings indicated later-career involvement. Interviews indicated this increased short-term loyalty. Factor loadings identified career planning, incentives, and organizational support as organizational culture components in phase 2. The first two events indicated substantial attrition. No more than 272 people took the poll. Some Gallup q12 subscales have low Cronbach's alpha. Mixed method data triangulation using surveys and unstructured focus group interviews builds research robustness. Employee participation matters theoretically. Build pollution from employee pleasure, devotion, and participation is not studied. Indian scholars may explore this issue and create a unique employee engagement evaluation based on its causes and theory. Current research suggests that a moderate degree of involvement may temporarily retain ITES workers. Report recommends tougher employee engagement framework. The practical consequences of BPO/ITES personnel retention are being studied.

Key Words: Human resource management, Employee retention, India.

INTRODUCTION

Internationally, companies are increasingly prioritizing talent management. The literature discusses several trends in talent management, including as talent disputes, talent attacks, talent shortages, talent metrics retention, and talent strategy problems. These tendencies are seen in other countries, including Asia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, China, and India. Given intense market rivalry and the limited availability of highly talented and qualified staff, firms prioritize the discovery and retention of such individuals as extremely crucial (Fegley, 2006). In order to effectively recruit and retain top-quality workers worldwide, employers need to have a robust and favorable employer brand. A recent research suggests that personnel management is crucial in interventions related to the company brand. HR executives have acknowledged talent management as a significant driver for this approach in 2007 and future years, according to reports in HR Focus 2006 and Focus 2007 Malik et al. (2023). Talent acquisition has emerged as the primary factor in human resource management and achieving a competitive edge. Talent management is a crucial strategic role of human resource management in firms, as highlighted by Bhatnagar (2004); Chanda (2005) in line with the strategic HRM

framework. Recent research indicates that a shortage in the labor market has resulted in fierce competition for skilled workers. However, there is a lack of academic research on strategies for personnel management that promote a competitive advantage. Pfeffer and Sutton (2006) argue that the conventional approach to human resource management and talent management, which views performance outcomes solely as a means to evaluate talent, results in reduced productivity and dissatisfied employees who do not reach their full potential. This indicates insufficient talent engagement Rajput, & Singh, (2021); Reddy & Rao, (2019).

Talent engagement, as acknowledged by is a separate field that requires focused attention research specialization. It prompts queries such as:

1. The engagement score assesses the level of involvement or participation.
2. To what degree do different departments and skill categories participate?
3. Does the degree of involvement progressively rise over time?

Organizations that effectively engage their employees convey their values and attributes through "*signature experiences*" - noticeable and unique features of the workplace environment that effectively communicate strong messages about the organization's goals, as well as the qualities of determination, dedication, and expertise that employees need to succeed in such establishments. Having engaged staff is crucial for the retention of skilled individuals. The aforementioned topics need thorough academic investigation, as shown by the study conducted. The lack of academic discourse in India about employee engagement, a significant dependent variable, highlights the need for the Indian HR community to examine Western trends that are relevant to this topic. The study is important due to the changing character of the work environment after deregulatory initiatives Mehra & Malhotra, (2019).

Employee Engagement

Except for the majority of literature on employee engagement is focused on practical aspects and lacks empirical research. This study examines both facets that have been addressed in the existing literature. After analyzing tailor-made definitions for professionals, we move on to academic research. As per the CEO Speak of the Hewitt Best Employers Survey 2004, firms have a significant difficulty in maintaining strong employer brand equity (Fitzenz, 2003). A very effective approach to achieve this goal is to give priority to staff retention. This might theoretically be achieved if firms provide their personnel with a strong feeling of motivation, a captivating office environment that optimizes their productivity. Moreover, a highly sought-after employer actively seeks and attracts skilled personnel by employing strategies that incorporate both tangible and intangible factors, prioritize both immediate and long-term goals, and customize them to match the specific needs of the organization Branham, 2005. According to 75% of the participants, this was said. The second most critical problem was cited by 60.7% of respondents as staff engagement and higher productivity. The study conducted by HR Focus in 2006 revealed that 59.8 percent of the participants regarded leadership training and development as the third most important issue. By implementing efficient talent management policies and processes, one can demonstrate a strong dedication to the development and usage of human resources. This, in turn, leads to increased employee engagement and reduced staff turnover. Hence, employee engagement has a significant influence on both the retention of workers and their productivity asserts that the degree of employee engagement significantly impacts an organization's financial performance. To attain optimal outcomes in contemporary work settings that demand innovation,

flexibility, and productivity, employers must actively engage their employees. To effectively deal with the growing importance of self-actualization and self-realization in the postindustrial period, the best strategy is to enhance employee engagement by offering them chances to participate, exercise autonomy, and build trust. Based on the performance statistics of top US firms, it is evident that goals are achieved more easily and workers are more likely to feel unhappy when they are not actively involved in all the specified areas of work. The topic of becoming a preferred employer is the focus of a growing number of studies that seek to maintain a strong employer brand.

Conceptual Framework: Basis of Employee Engagement

According to, the resource-based view (RBV) of the organization highlights the significance of committed people in providing organizations with a competitive edge. Therefore, it is crucial to foster employee engagement consistently. As per the resource-based approach, organizational and human resources have a greater impact compared to other elements. A corporation may achieve a long-lasting competitive advantage by possessing physical, technical, or financial resources that are challenging to duplicate. Organizations highly value individuals that actively participate in and display devotion to their duties. These individuals are considered vital assets for preserving a competitive edge and operating as a strategic resource. A strategic asset, as defined by a collection of resources and competencies that are challenging to duplicate or exchange, have limited availability, are vulnerable to appropriation, and are specialized in nature. The listed resources provide a competitive advantage to the company. Engaged workers possess unique characteristics that are difficult to replicate and exclusive to a given firm, hence supporting the resource-based view of the business. This brings us to the concept of employee engagement, where we examine the many expressions of employee engagement and how they are integrated into the theoretical framework underlined the need of prioritizing the cognitive, physical, and emotional elements of persons, sometimes known as "heads, hands, and hearts," in a personnel management approach. The core of employee engagement lies in an individual's innate drive and passion. Moreover, the present body of research about employee engagement lacks accuracy. The concepts of organizational commitment, intrinsic motivation, and employee engagement are closely connected in the workplace, as shown by the workers' strong excitement and attention to their responsibilities on the other hand; intellectual engagement involves a heightened awareness of one's position and goals within the professional setting. As per workers may demonstrate involvement in one aspect while lacking it in another. However, the level of employee personal engagement often rises in direct proportion to the extent of employee involvement in all aspects. In contrast, according to one might assess participation by analyzing the increase or decrease of certain commitments.

Methodology of Research

Self-administered questionnaires, focus group interviews, and appropriate secondary sources (exit interview data for this research) were utilized to analyze this data. The 2005–2006 research focused on four BPO/ITES organizations in India's National Capital Region. The first phase of the survey asked 350 workers for questionnaires. Direct connection with participants was used for feedback and interviews. The researcher received 272 completely completed surveys, a response rate of 78%. The sample was 58% male and 42% female. Minimum requirement: bachelor's degree; average candidate age was 24. The BPO/ITES Company conducted 90-minute

focus group interviews. The interview schedule was purposely unstructured, incorporating open-ended questions on attrition factors and Gallup q12 items Table 1. All levels of employees were interviewed, with an emphasis on entry-level personnel. Thirty male team managers, project directors, and management school technical leaders participated. They actively participated in management training. They're BPO/ITES middle managers. BPO/ITES companies were randomly selected for the second round of examination in 2006. The organization examined 72 departure interview forms to understand what causes team developers, technical staff, and team members to leave. The first two entry-level positions offered by this BPO organization are described below. A limited percentage of recent university graduates have engineering degrees at these levels Nair & Pillai, (2020).

The researchers first assessed employee participation using the Gallup q12, commonly known as the Gallup Work Place Audit. This method is proven to assess employee engagement. These 12 questions illustrate the psychological process new hires go through before they become totally immersed in their employment Peteraf, (1993).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Items	AFL	Cronbach's	Mean	SD	Variance
<i>Base camp: "What am I going to get?"</i>		0.5			
(BASE 1) I am aware of what is required of me at work, and I am in possession of the necessary supplies and equipment to do my tasks.	0.5		4	0.84	
function properly (BASE 2)	0.412		4	0.91	
What do I give? it asks in Camp 1.		0.75			
I have the chance to accomplish what I am most skilled at when I am at work.	0.72		3.54	1.01	
The daily routine (Camp 1.1)					
Over the course of the last week, I have been honored or recognized for my	0.69		3.2	1.15	
<i>appreciation for the effort that was done (Camp 1.2)</i>	0.677		3.61	0.83	
It seems like my boss or someone else at work is concerned.					
in terms of who I am as a person (Camp 1.3)	0.68		3.56	1.06	
	0.684	0.53	3.48	0.77	
	0.721		3.35	0.92	

	0.494		3.94	0.89	
At the workplace, there is a person who is supportive of my	0.23		3.48	1.14	
		0.42			
the development of (Camp 1.4)					
	0.517		3.69	0.91	
Am I a part of this community? Camp 2					

Table 2 comprises the sample items and the corresponding reliability statistics, specifically Cronbach's alpha. As indicated by the reliability statistics, the obtained reliability values for the scale were satisfactory, with a value of 0.70. However, the present study is constrained by the relatively low scores observed in the subscales of the GWA. The items, their factor loadings, and the corresponding Cronbach's alpha values are detailed in the table Kossyva et al. (2023).

Variables	Mean	SD	Age	Gender	Education
Base camp	8.4*	1.47*	20.1	0.04	20.48
Camp 1	14.0	3.09	0.12	20.32	20.087
Camp 2	14.3	2.46	0.2	20.15	20.35
Camp 3	6.9*	1871*	20.0	0.05	20.04

In the second segment, the exit interview questionnaire was divided into two distinct sections. The initial segment comprised thirteen objective questions rated on a Likert scale of one to five, with an additional point allocated to accommodate the response choice of "Not applicable." The subsequent segment comprised a sequence of fourteen subjective, open-ended inquiries. Two distinct approaches were taken in the analysis of the data. Initial research involved a quantitative evaluation of the objective queries through the application of factor analysis. Conducting a qualitative investigation of the subjective inquiries through the application of content analysis methodologies constituted the second section. Both phases effectively accomplished the secondary aim of the current inquiry Pandey 2023; Pandeya et al. (2006) Table 3.

Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	0.74
Bartlett's test of sphericity approximate χ^2	466.63
df	77
Significance	0

The findings of phase two, which encompassed the factor analysis of 72 targeted exit interviews, offer additional substantiation for the conclusions drawn in phase one. To facilitate the factor analysis, the thirteen queries of the objective type were classified according to the attribute they evaluated. "Infrastructure support" was the title of one query, which stated, "*I was provided with adequate and timely infrastructure to effectively execute my duties.*" The

dependability was assessed using the KMO and Bartlett's tests subsequent to the completion of the nomenclature. Between 0.5 and 1.0 was the accepted threshold for the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure. The value of the data is contained within the allowed range. As shown in Table 4, the KMO result of 0.794 indicates a high degree of dependability.

Factors	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Role clarity	1.18	0.19	0.82
Infrastructure	0.42	0.37	0.05
Adequate training	0.37	0.28	0.93
Recognition	21.2	0.74	0.13
Growth opportunities	0.41	0.77	24.78
Career development	0.23	0.78	0.48
Policy clarity	0.59	0.36	0.08

Subsequently, a main components analysis was performed. These data indicate that three main components or variables explained a significant share of the diversity in the replies, amounting to 69.11 percent. The data in Table 4 demonstrates that only the first three items have eigenvalues larger than 1. Each of them alone accounts for 43.15 percent of the overall variance. The variables were categorized into separate factors based on their loadings, which needed to exceed 0.6 for each component. The variable "policy clarity" was excluded from the study due to its negligible loading (0.549) on any specific component. Consequently, the following classes were formed: The phrase "organizational culture" included internal communication, customer centricity, and work culture. The variable accounted for 43.15 percent of the variation in answers and was the main factor contributing to attrition.

The second aspect encompasses an individual's compensation, opportunities for advancement, career growth, acknowledgement, and promotion. The identified component is known as "*Career planning and incentives.*" This component accounted for 17.05 percent of the variance in responses, making it the second most significant factor contributing to employee turnover.

Factor 3, known as "*organizational support,*" encompasses the following components: job clarity, infrastructure support, effective training, and vision alignment. Considering that the component accounted for 8.917 percent of the variability in the response, it can be inferred that its impact was rather small.

Employee turnover is primarily influenced by two factors, as shown by the data gathered from departure interviews and the decrease in employee engagement at Base Camp and Camp 3. This is supported by the low factor loadings in Tables 1, 2 respectively. The following factors are:

The company's regulations and the existing working environment provide a significant obstacle. Based on the data obtained from exit interviews, focus group discussions, and engagement score surveys, this has emerged as the primary concern. In the business process outsourcing and information technology services sector, this problem emerged as the main factor contributing to employee turnover, even though it was only investigated in the quantitative analysis. The issues linked to the internal job posting procedure indicate an unfavorable environment marked by pervasive mistrust and uncertainty Mowday et al. (1982).

A crucial factor in the issue is the workers' dissatisfaction with the employment prospects provided to them. In addition, it seems that the firm's motivational and incentive programs have

little influence on the personnel. Furthermore, the validity of these study results is bolstered by the responses provided by the interviewed team supervisors. These supervisors said that after the first three years, the elements of incentive and recognition were no longer regarded as sanitary criteria. Subsequently, a comprehensive evaluation of the exit interview was conducted using content analysis. This portion of the study presents an investigation of the factors that contribute to the attrition of employees at this BPO/ITES organization. The data is gathered from the responses provided to the open-ended and subjective questions contained in the survey done during the departure interview.

There is a conspicuous indicator of discontentment with the current system for internal job listings (IJP). A substantial proportion of workers have expressed their discontent with the Internal Job Posting (IJP) system, while another substantial proportion have indirectly labeled it as "*the system of concern*." Another often used option is the term "promotions" or "opportunities for advancement". The notion that the IJP system lacks transparency is generally embraced and encouraged by the majority of individuals. There is a potential for workers to lack a thorough understanding of the process or to have a limited degree of confidence in the system. The results of this study corroborate the research done. The part of the job description that is generating the highest level of dissatisfaction among the staff members is the one that is being most often developed. To effectively convey the subject matter, many approaches such as demonstrating enthusiasm for challenging tasks or expressing a desire to engage in technical work are used. This seems to be a unique problem that mostly impacts those with engineering or scientific backgrounds. The presence of peer and social influences is very evident, as shown by the references to "family" and "status" that were consistently mentioned throughout the interviews.

Elements that are external to the individual are referred to as individual determinants. Nevertheless, including these criteria during the recruitment process might potentially reduce the percentage of employee turnover. The result seems to be mostly influenced by migration or marriage. The aggressive pursuit of relocation opportunities by personnel associated with this BPO/ITES should be duly considered. This BPO/ITES business has had a significant number of employees who have expressed a desire to transfer to other divisions of the company located in India. There is a potential for this to function as a tactic for the corporation to retain crucial employees inside the organization Paauwe (1994); Sharma & Gupta, (2020).

Due to the aforementioned reasons, a significant proportion of the workforce in the National Capital Region (NCR) has moved to alternative business process outsourcing (BPO) organizations. The migration has led to enhanced employment opportunities and a rise in wages. In the past, these organizations have often provided a minimum monthly salary increase of Rs 50,000, which is much more than the current compensation offered by this BPO/ITES Company. In summary, the five main factors that contribute to employee retention are: engaging in challenging work (48.4%), developing professional skills and acquiring new abilities (42.6%), forming partnerships with outstanding individuals (41.8%), receiving fair compensation (31.8%), and having an exceptional superintendent and supportive management (25.1%). These factors play a crucial role in fostering a successful career. (Nowack, 2006) The results suggest that companies that prioritize relational creativity, growth, and leadership effectiveness are likely to have higher levels of employee engagement. The aforementioned deduction may be derived from the findings of the investigation Phukan, (2007). The significance of these findings may be ascribed to the particular sector of business process outsourcing and information technology service providers (BPO/ITES) businesses that are now operational in India. Batt 2001 conducted research on 354 active service and sales centers in the United States that were involved in the

telecommunications industry. Based on the study's results, certain suppliers of business process outsourcing and information technology services typically compete either on the basis of price or on the basis of quality. Based on Bath's 2001 research, companies that prioritize cost competitiveness are more inclined to develop work systems that aim to improve call handling capacity while reducing expenses. Based on Bath's research, companies that focused on business process outsourcing and information technology services and emphasized customization and quality were more inclined to implement human resources systems that were similar to those utilized in high-involvement work environments. If the business process outsourcing and information technology services (BPO/ITES) sector in India were to move towards quality and customization centers, it is quite likely that there would be a significant rise in the use of high involvement work systems Sengupta & Das (2018) (HIWS). The systems are centered on employee engagement and are built around comprehensive organizational development (OD) interventions. According to, Indian BPO organizations must consistently prove their ability to provide services and develop a crucial position that allows the parent company to thrive independently. To achieve this objective, it will be essential to engage in the creation and implementation of systems and procedures, as well as the efficient oversight of expenditures. Furthermore, there is a need to enhance both technical proficiency and expertise in the subject area. By fostering more involvement and participation, which may be achieved via job sculpting or work co-creation, it is feasible to discover potential resolutions to issues. It is crucial to examine the aforementioned strategies while aiming to improve productivity, retain employees, and attract new ones conducted a study in 2006 for Towers Perrin, which revealed that 84 percent of highly engaged workers believe they have the capacity to positively influence the quality of the products their company creates. Conversely, just 31 percent of workers who express a lack of engagement in their job endorse this viewpoint. Typically, just 27 percent of disinterested workers hold this viewpoint, but 72 percent of highly engaged employees believe they have the capacity to favorably influence customer service. 68 percent of highly engaged workers hold the belief that they can have a favorable impact on expenditure in their role or department, representing a significant portion of the workforce. Conversely, workers who lack engagement in their job are just 19 percent more likely to adopt this perspective. Given the aforementioned result, it is crucial for the Indian information technology and engineering sector to evaluate the level of disengagement and take immediate corrective actions. Implementing this technique will likely lead to a decrease in attrition rates, if not its complete elimination. Moreover, it is crucial to consider that the results of the study may vary depending on the specific kind of business process outsourcing (BPO) used, since there is no universally applicable approach. As a result, firms may have unique inquiries that pertain specifically to their operations. These inquiries may be addressed by implementing surveys that specifically target those distinctive aspects Parsley (2006); Patel & Desai, (2018); Patrick et al. (2023).

In conclusion

The attrition rate in the Indian business process outsourcing and information technology services industry is believed to be between 30% and 45%. Senior management of BPOs and ITES businesses must diligently monitor this development and implement proactive actions. Although departure interviews are a customary practice in all BPOs and ITES firms, it would be advantageous to establish empirical correlations between phase 1 of the research (the examination of engagement ratings) and phase 2 of the research (the evaluation of exit interviews). The primary objective of the ongoing study is to develop conceptual connections between the

two variables. The workers of the analyzed BPO and IT services firms were unable of providing current information about employee engagement and attrition. Therefore, data acquired after the occurrence were analyzed instead. Since factor analysis was conducted using just 72 exit interviews, as specifically requested by the organization, the study is inherently constrained by this constraint.

Theoretical implication

The concept of employee involvement has significant consequences and ramifications for theoretical frameworks. Despite the considerable emphasis given by practitioners, there has been a scarcity of scientific research undertaken on this concept. The main objective of action research, from an organizational perspective, is to examine the extent of staff members' engagement. Only a few academics have examined both the theoretical and practical underpinnings of employee engagement. Regarding the elucidation of law, there seems to be a conflation of concepts that are not the primary focus of this article. The themes included in this list are employee engagement, employee commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and employee participation. Subsequent investigations in India might go into this domain and establish a distinct metric for evaluating employee engagement. This would prioritize the examination and assessment of preceding components, leading to the development of a more comprehensive theoretical framework. Engaged employees exhibit greater levels of production in contrast to disengaged employees. This finding has substantial importance for several companies. The issue that emerges is: to what degree does the disparity in productivity between an engaged workforce and a disengaged one persist? The source reference.

Practical Application

To accomplish objective, the following human resources strategies should be considered: firstly, foster positive and continuous employee relationships to attract and retain a workforce that is actively engaged and enthusiastic about continuous learning and overcoming challenges; secondly, develop human resources interventions to sustain and enhance their level of involvement argues that it is crucial to establish a psychological agreement that is broader in scope and gives more importance to relational requirements rather than transactional demands. This is believed to pertain to the first and subsequent components of Camps' framework. Establishing mentorships and peer alliances that prioritize the quality of connections above the quantity of time spent together is crucial. Furthermore, these collaborations should duly acknowledge the emotional requirements of workers and their inclination to actively participate in their tasks. It is important to see workers as partners and recognize their role as collaborative contributors to the business's success. Furthermore, efforts must be made to assist individuals in achieving contentment via the establishment and mastery of cutting-edge areas of corporate expertise. Implementing this method would effectively address the developmental characteristics of workers. According to, the human resources department must promote the company and its brand in a manner that is equitable to both the current employees and the potential candidates from external sources argue that achieving a harmonious balance between monitoring and enjoyment necessitates the implementation of sophisticated systems that entail substantial investment and integrated control mechanisms. Furthermore, organizations have the option to include former employees on their internal blacklists for a duration of three months after their departure from the company. One potential approach to decrease attrition rates is to establish an

industry partnership with NASSCOM, which would include creating a blacklist and implementing temporary recruiting restrictions for individuals on that list. It is crucial to provide a thorough and unambiguous overview of the internal job posting (IJP) process, along with a well-defined mechanism for evaluating prospective candidates. Establishing the selection criteria and openly and plainly communicating them to the people is crucial. In order to facilitate career progression inside the company, it is important to prioritize the creation of internal job postings that aim to provide employees with prospects for promotion. To ensure that employees are cognizant of their career objectives and that their job responsibilities are directly aligned with those objectives, it is essential to design procedures that guarantee this knowledge and alignment. The personal aspirations of employees do not align with the duties and credentials offered by the company Schweyer, (2004); Seijts & Crim (2006); Sen (2007). This represents a clear and noticeable absence. To address this inconsistency, it is necessary to take corrective measures, such as improving communication throughout the selection process and reassessing the pool of potential candidates identified by the company. This method would permit a decrease in the number of individuals departing from the base camp. It is recommended to enhance the exit questionnaire by conducting in-person interviews with the candidates prior to their departure. This will ensure that any nuanced issues that may have been overlooked in the departure questionnaire are detected comprehensively. To provide trend projections about employee turnover probability, it is advisable to do a monthly analysis of the questionnaire data. By adopting this strategy, the organization would have a proactive framework that can predict future attrition rates. This paradigm might be likened to the methodology used by Cisco, as outlined in Saxena and Bharadwaj's study in 2007 Jain & Singh, (2018); Tapper (2004); Tripathi & Mishra (2017); Yadav & Tiwari, (2021).

CONCLUSION

Several variables failed to satisfy the specified dependability level of 0.70, which is a weakness of the research. Moreover, this further supports the need of constructing a measurement system that is self-sustaining, resilient, and tailored to the specific circumstances of the pan-Asian region. Investigating the applicability of this scale in other countries would be an intriguing and possibly productive avenue for further study. Furthermore, the researchers were unable to make any generalizations about workers in the whole BPO/ITES industry due to the restricted sample size. Future research may explore various types of business process outsourcing (BPO) and information technology (ITES) firms, including BPOs and KPOs, while considering the cost and quality of human resource management (HRM) systems and conducting more extensive investigations. There is a possibility of doing a future inquiry to explore the correlation between employee engagements and leave interviews. This would enable the experimental validation of the correlation between diminished levels of employee engagement and staff attrition. However, our analysis did not demonstrate this to be true.

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Received: 13-Feb-2024, Manuscript No. AMSJ-24-14498; **Editor assigned:** 14-Feb-2024, PreQC No. AMSJ-24-14498(PQ); **Reviewed:** 29-Apr-2024, QC No. AMSJ-24-14498; **Revised:** 05-May-2024, Manuscript No. AMSJ-24-14498(R); **Published:** 20-May-2024