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The Future of Employee Experience Management (EXM) Platforms

TREO Talk Paper

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Abstract

Employee experience management (EXM) platforms are designed to boost employee performance, engagement, and retention rates by enhancing employer-employee relationships, monitoring employees' sentiment, and facilitating employees' personal and professional development (Abhari et al. 2021; Cornelius et al. 2022). EXM platforms ideally allow employers to act on employees' experiences regarding their responsibilities, roles, and relationships toward the organizational goals (Enzing and van der Graaf 2022). Despite these promises and considerable investment, EXM platforms such as Microsoft Viva remain underused. This exploratory study is to shed light on the EXM's design issues from both employee's and employer's perspectives and provide a theoretical framework guiding further research and development.

The data were collected from popular EXM platforms including Qualtrics XM, Microsoft Viva, Adobe Workfront, Trakstar, 15Five, Lattice, Culture AMP, and Motiivosity. We analyzed these platforms, their websites, product documentation, and user forums, and interviewed employees who interacted with these platforms. Our analysis allowed us to first identify the key functionalities of these platforms individually. We then broke down these functionalities into more general features including Homepage, User Dashboard, Surveys, Goal Manager, Employee Growth, Roster/Team Overview, Performance Review and Management, Peer Recognition, Data Visualization, Notifications, Profile, Networking Schedule, Team Overview, and Meetings. We were then able to make comparisons between these different platforms and identify the key common features defining a comprehensive EXM platform. For this generic EXM platform, we introduced key common modules and their features. The follow-up interviews also allowed us to list the key goals of each module and subsequently the key affordances of EXM from both employees' and employers' perspectives. Lastly, we examined how potential users react to the EXM key affordances in terms of their preferences. We captured users' preferences in terms of experiential values of EXM such as learning experiences and socializing. Our findings showed the relative importance of the affordances (and corresponding features) within these EXM platforms and the improvement that can be made.

This study not only systematically defines EXM platforms (what they are and what they offer) but also offers practical steps toward creating a better EXM platform. For example, this study highlights the importance of customizable monitoring and tracking functionalities that measure employees' attitudes toward their jobs, superiors, work-life balance, and the like. This may also include a more objective performance review feature that gives managers and their subordinates an efficient and universal peer evaluation process. These functions should be complemented with analytical and visualization tools for processing and presenting data—gathered directly through the surveys and indirectly through behavior-tracking features. However, EXM platforms are more than employee sentiment and performance tracking systems. They can enable or facilitate employee mentorship and development programs, employee innovation initiatives, and employee relationship management. For instance, EXM platforms should provide employees with development plans wherein employees receive peer-to-peer and mentor support, career-crafting toolkits, and tailored learning materials for achieving career goals such as promotions and transitions as well as overall wellbeing pertaining to a sense of meaning and purpose. Similarly, social features that allow cross-departmental interactions, community-building, and organizational-wide peer recognition can enhance both employee innovation and relationships.

References

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