



International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research

ISSN : 0972-7302

available at <http://www.serialsjournals.com>

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Volume 15 • Number 22 • 2017

Developing Employee Excellence through Psychological Empowerment: A Conceptual Approach

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ABSTRACT

In the dynamic era of hi-tech and information technology, it is complicated to exploit the complete potentials of employees at workplace. Thereby, psychological empowerment can be used to change the mindset and mental resources of the employees to utilize their full potentials. The current paper based on the literature survey on psychological empowerment which brings new knowledge to understand and makes the employees more dynamic and task oriented to excel in all the areas of responsibilities to perform in an effective manner. The psychological empowerment has a positive relationship with organizational commitment, involvement, satisfaction, and performance, quality of work life and potentials of the employees. Out of various human resource practices, an inexpensive method, psychological empowerment plays a vital role to motivate and develop the employees' morale and become excellent at workplace. The current paper also suggested some measure to be taken into consideration for future researches.

Keywords: Empowerment, Psychological empowerment, Excellence, Performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary world is called as flexible, adaptable, changing, challenging, technological, and turbulent business economy. Such dynamic patterns draw the attention of the management to sustain in the current business environment for the longer period of time and make the organization more effective to be boom. This can be possible when the employees of the organization have all the competencies to perform the responsibilities but any negative aspects associated with their characteristics might be inclined them not to perform as expected by the management. Albeit, management has to rethink their current practices or systems to perform well and make them outstanding, superior, exceptional and best in all respects. In

doing so, one of the management practices can adopt to apply psychological empowerment to strengthen the employees to make them excellent in their work.

The term “excellent” is derived from the Latin word “excellencia” which means the quality of being extremely excellent. This connotations refers that employee should have all the qualities in the form of exceptional or superior than others and best in their own areas of specializations. The social sciences and management sciences practitioners instill the interest to understand the exceptional employees in their respective department and observing their potentials to utilize in the organizations. Exceptional employees contribute beyond the expectations of their employer and cultivate the similar values among others to do as desired by the management. Various schools of thought pointed out that understanding of employee nature is vital and placing norms and values would be at certain level of their excellence in the organization. Whenever roles, responsibilities, values, behavior, attitudes and other characteristics were not found fit with their requirement to perform better, then psychological empowerment serves as pivotal role to make them excellent.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Indeed, it is necessary to understand the term “empowerment” before discussing the concept of psychological empowerment which helps to develop the employee in an extraordinary manner. It is very difficult to draw the one meaning of empowerment all circumstances because it varies due to societal norms, culture values and political scenario. The different terms includes providing power, self-control, self-sufficient, dignity and spirit of one’s life value, self-strength, self-reliance, sufficient ability to take own rights, autonomy, awakening, own decision making and many more variables depends on the situations. These variables implanted with local belief and value structures. The term empowerment has gained more popularity over the decades, the leadership and management started to practicing in their organization to become more viable and effective by utilizing their employees at workplace (Zens, 2007 and Schein, 1992). Various definitions propounded by different scholars but few most popular are considered as a means to understand empowerment scientifically. The Oxford English Dictionary (1998) defines, “empowerment as giving (someone) the authority or power to do something”. However, empowerment is considered as one of the major solution of workplaces where employees were alienated, inventiveness were not recognized, showing disengaged with their work both personally and professionally and inequality in treatment of the employees. Rappaport (1987) pointed that “empowerment as a process by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over issues which is of concern to them”. In the light of cited definition it is clear that the empowerment means give the power to individual, group and community to became mastery and solve them accordingly with full satisfactions. Rawat (2011) said that empowered and committed employees are usually considered to be more indispensable for the growth, development and smooth functioning of contemporary world organizations.

A careful review of the definitions pertaining to empowerment revealed both in the form of commonality and diversity. Mostly, emphasizes the quality of human life become more viable if addressed the issue and give power, opportunities to participate in decision-making process and adequate resources to carry out the assigned responsibilities. Psychological empowerment has been made from two words Psychology and Empowerment. The empowerment can be easily understood from the above mentioned concepts and definitions, whereas, psychology can be defined as “scientific study of behavior”.

Certainly, psychological empowerment indicates and generates a sense of worth and control among the individual over his/her feeling at workplace, controlling employees, only focusing the management practices at their workplace but the psychological connotation is to give feeling or experiences at work. But Spreitzer (2007) said that employees have their own role in relation to their responsibilities- meaning, belief, values and behaviors. If employee would be psychologically empowered at workplace, it can be seen in the form of transformation in cognition, attitude and behavior. These transformation might lead to inculcate optimistic value orientation, self-efficacy, self-reliance, self-consciousness, better way of doing things and overall psychological well-being of the employees which makes them excellence at work to perform and perform better for the organization and develop the nations and society. However, Kemal (2010) has pointed out that capacity or power need to have desired results, it is essential to enhance the efficacy of employees through empowerment. Psychological empowerment generally observed as a driver to employee commitment, involvement and satisfaction to provide excellent productivity. Numerous research studies observed that psychological empowerment has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and vice-versa (Liden et. al., 2000; Koberg et. al., 1999; Holds worth & Cartwright, 2003; Thomas and Velthouse,1990; Davis & Wilson, 2000; Laschinger et. al., 2002; Wu & Short, 1996; Savery & Luks, 2001; and Dewettinck et. al., 2003).

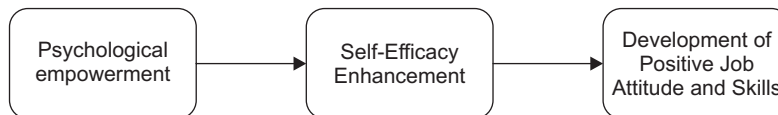


Figure 1: Showing psychological empowerment leads to create positive job attitude

It is noted that Arsiyah (2006) deliberates different concepts, meanings and structures of the psychological empowerment that have been observed and explored from the work done by earlier researchers and their main emphasis was to understand self-efficacy and enhanced the individuals' feeling related to self-efficacy (Spreitzer,1995; Brief & Nord, 1990; Conger and Kanungo,1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990 and Bandura, 1986 & 1997).

Spreitzer (1995) conclusion based on their findings that “meaning, competence, self-determination and impact” are the four components of psychological empowerment. According to Spreitzer (1995) empowered people decide the smart goal at workplace to be performed, having potential in discharging their duties, introspect their capability, feel autonomy to discharge their duties to get expected outcomes and having beliefs in mind, such results or outcome would have a great impact on overall organizational results. Traditional management practices has been changed through inexpensive method of psychological empowerment and getting back people’s feelings, experiences and observations of empowerment to enhance the skills in varieties of ways such as social, managerial, cognitive, personal and many more. In this methods, attention has been paid to peoples’ experiences, beliefs and holistic ways to understand their authority, control, power, ability and personal efficacy. Organizational culture has great influence on the psychological empowerment among the academicians and its facets (Sotirofski, 2014). Li et. al., (2015) revealed that innovation, contextual and research & development is observed to be positively related to psychological empowerment.



Figure 2: Showing relationship between psychological empowerment and autonomy

It is well known fact that when employer will give opportunity to their employees to participate in decision-making process, then they will develop sense of belongingness and worthiness to provide ideas, opinions and views to make the organization more success. Research conducted by Dewettinck et. al., (2003) have opined that an employee tending to develop positive feelings when such employees get the chances for participation in decision-making will certainly utilize these conditions to make them the sense of pride and meaning fullness at workplace. Similar findings were suggested by Zeithaml et. al., (2009). “When you allow your employees to think independently and assist the company, they will respond with increased work effort and greater efficiency” (Malan, 2002). Sibson (1994) stated empowerment as “delegation of authority by the managers to each employee, mostly with respect to job practices and methods”.

Ambad and Arsiah (2012) conducted a study among Construction Company and revealed that freedom and autonomy if given to the employees they felt empowered and incline more towards the commitment of work. Degago (2014) observed that empowerment of employees is essential in the era of globalization to understand the environment to response quickly and take such elements as an opportunity for better performance. Further, he opined that help, respect, providing training, cultivating their potentials, allow them to participate in decision making process and fair treatment may lead to empowerment along with higher degree of performance of the employees.

Concluding Remarks:



It is essential to conclude that success and failure of the organization totally depends on human resource efforts and their interest towards their works to discharge the assigned responsibilities. Albeit, psychological empowerment plays crucial roles to motivate their employees towards the professional and personal development with varieties of ways such as training, proper communication, generating a feeling of worthiness, creating self-reliance, avoid resilience types of attitudes and so on. The planning and execution related to their double “P” (personal and professional) can be achieved with the help of psychological empowerment of employees to make the organization success. It is well known fact that human being making errors, learning from those errors and eradication of error make them perfect, always help them to put their full effort for better performance. This attitude is generating motivation in designing and pioneering the products of the organization to make their brand image in the market to survive and sustain with stability. Cook (1994) said the empowered employees have always greater degree of understanding as compared to underpowered one of their work, because of it, they can easily make the plan and execute such plan on time, thereby, became more capable to determine the problems and coping mechanism for such problem for better performance of employees as well as organization. The author tried to bring varieties of components related to psychological empowerment with the help of earlier researchers and its impact on employees performance but certainly there will be some scope to make this conceptual study more dynamic by taking into consideration other variables and empirical research by using both inferential and

descriptive statistics. In glimpse, this particular conceptual framework will add certain values in the human resource practices to a great extent to deal and utilize the human potentials to make them more effective to contribute towards the progress of the organization.

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