

Effectiveness Of Employee Empowerment: A Study With Reference To Private Sector Companies In Vellore District

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Abstract: Empowerment is mainly concerned with establishing and building trust between management and employees, and motivating their participation. It is one of the modern concepts which are believed to improve the human element in the modern organisations to achieve high levels of cooperation, team spirit, self- confidence, innovation, independent thinking and entrepreneurship. Employee empowerment is a one kind of effective techniques for increasing productivity with employee and optimal uses of capacity their individual and group abilities in order to achieve organisational objectives. Empowerment is a process through which the development and influence expand and the capabilities of individuals and teams will be helping to improve performance and continuous improvement.

Key Words: Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Motivation and performance etc

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment has a broad context and it can be viewed through various dimensions and perspectives. It can be viewed as a set of managerial practices aimed at increasing an employee's autonomy and responsibilities, thereby enabling them to discharge their job or tasks more effectively and efficiently. Empowerment can also be viewed as an individual's approach to proactive work orientation, thereby increasing the employee's performance and efficiency. Employee empowerment activities like self-managed teams, total quality management, and quality control circles are implemented with the objective of increasing employee productivity and innovation (Lawler, 1992).

DEFINITION OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

Pastor (1996) stated that "it is part of a process or an evolution that goes on whenever you have two or more people in a relationship, personally or professionally".

Legge (1995) argued that empowerment should be seen in terms of a redistributive model whereby power equalization is promoted for trust and collaboration.

FACTORS DETERMINING EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

1. Job Satisfaction

Employee empowerment relates to an employee's job satisfaction. It has beneficial effects for employees over the long term, encouraging them to feel more control and independence and to assume responsibility for continuous improvement. Employee empowerment is also a greater organisational value as people build their career in an organisation. It is crucial to an established employee's sense of job satisfaction to build on initial feelings of empowerment and perhaps to become more influential over time.

2. Motivation

Employees enjoying regular contact with managers can suggest solutions and influence departmental and organisational decisions. This direct input depends on a manager's willingness to listen, and it motivates employees to think strategically about how to improve performance and make the company stronger. Employees want to work for an organisational culture that values employee empowerment.

3. Managerial Behaviour

There are also hidden effects of employee empowerment in the workplace. When managers seek to enhance employee empowerment, they earn the respect of their subordinates. They are rewarded with hard-working, loyal people. This kind of relationship casts a negative pall on managers who use an authoritarian leadership style and get business results but do not exhibit acceptable behaviors. Senior managers should weed out these managers with unacceptable behaviors instead of recognizing their results.

4. Uproots Old Beliefs

There are other effects of employee empowerment besides employees who take over more responsibility for their work-improving productivity. True empowerment changes the nature of the organisational culture with effects on previously held beliefs in the work culture. For example, managers must adjust to the idea that some of their power will be given to their subordinates.

PROCESS OF EMPOWERMENT

Though there are varying perspectives on how to use empowerment, the researcher has framed a method in proceeding the process of empowerment. There could be six stages in the process of empowerment identified by the researcher, they are

- ❖ Identifying the status of powerlessness.
- ❖ Preparing to communicate the responsibilities.
- ❖ Providing confidence, self-efficacy and information.
- ❖ Formulating a new empowering management process.
- ❖ Indicating the commitment level by providing training and
- ❖ Appreciating with rewards.

In applying this process, management should make attempts to tailor this according to the individual's attitudes. The practice of confidence building and active Rewarding and supportive environment are more relevant in conjunction with demanding tasks. Finally, appealing and challenging goals must be set for the effective implementation of empowerment in public companies. If goals are not perceived to be challenging and appealing, then it is difficult to empower employees especially in the public sectors.

PRINCIPLES OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

The most important principles of employee empowerment are:-

(a) Demonstrate that the organisation's value to the employees

The employer regards for people shines through in all of his/her actions and words. The employer facial expression, body language, and words express what he/she is thinking about the people who report to the employer. The employer goal is to demonstrate his/her appreciation for each person's unique value. No matter how an employee is performing on his or her current task, the employer value for the employee as a human being should never falter and always be visible.

(b) Share Leadership Vision

It is better that the goals and vision should be shared. Where possible, either make progress on goals measurable and observable, or ascertain that the employer has shared his/her picture of a positive outcome with the people responsible for accomplishing the results. If a picture and meaning, are shared, it means that the management agreed upon what constitutes a successful and acceptable deliverable. Empowered employees can design their own without close supervision.

(c) Trust People

It is compulsory that trusting the intentions of people that they do the right thing, make the right decision, and make choices that, though may be not exactly what you would decide, still work. When clear expectations are received from their superior, employees relax and trust the supervisor. Consequently they focus their energy on accomplishing, not on wondering, worrying, and second-guessing.

(d) Provide Information for Decision making

Make certain that the employer has given people, or made sure that they have access to, all of the information they need to make thoughtful decisions.

(e) Delegate Authority and Impact Opportunities, Not Just More Work

The Employer knows, delegate the important meetings, the committee memberships that influence product development and decision making, and the projects that people and customers notice. Then employees will grow and develop new skills. The employer's plate will be less full so he/she can concentrate on the contribution. The employer reporting staff will gratefully shine - and so employer too.

(f) Provide Frequent Feedback

Frequent feedback should be provided so that people know how they are doing. Sometimes, feedback works as a reward and recognition as well as improvement coaching. People deserve employer's constructive feedback, too, so they can continue to develop their knowledge and skills.

(g) Solve Problems

When a problem arises, inquire with the employees what is wrong with the work system that caused the failure, not what is wrong with them.

(h) Listen to Learn and Ask Questions to Provide Guidance

Ensure that people communicate by listening to the management and ask questions. Guidance should be given to grown up employees by asking questions not by telling instructing them what to do. Employees generally know the right answers if they are given an opportunity to exhibit them. When an employee comes with a problem to solve, ask them "What is your opinion to solve this problem?" or enquire with them "What steps of action do you suggest?" Employees should demonstrate what they knew and grow in the process. Eventually, the employer will feel comfortable telling the employee that he or she need not ask about similar situations. The employer should trust their judgment.

(i) Help Employees Feel Rewarded and Recognized for Empowered Behaviour

If employees are under-compensated, under-titled for the responsibilities they take on, under-noticed, under-priced, and under-appreciated, results of employee empowerment can't be seen. The basic needs of employees must feel met for employees to give their discretionary energy, that extra effort that people voluntarily invest in work. Recognition plays an important role in employee empowerment.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Liberalization and Globalization of Indian economy brought industrial revolution in India and paved the way to operate many private sector companies with productive element. In this juncture, systematic HRD practices and empowerment of employees would support the development of the organisation. Therefore, it is the duty of any organisation to change the organisational evolution through managerial effectiveness, besides them, the sources of efficiency creation is also vital in empowering employees. Since this process is rigorous, tidiness, time consuming and cost consuming, it poses challenges to every organisation and also kindle them in the empowerment process. Hence the study is very much needed and important within the broader area of HR practices.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Globalization has opened up various opportunities and challenges for Indian Companies to compete internationally. Besides Technological advancement, a developed, competent and empowered workforce will give Indian companies an edge over its competitors. In new organisational competitive turbulent and changing world, traditional principles of management and organisation such as bureaucracy, command and control have been invaded. The strategies based on bureaucratic control such as provision application, rules, instructions, hierarchy and activities" standardization do not have enough efficiency to uniform employees" behaviour. The work force has been caught in bureaucracy for indicating their talents and creativities and they cannot use their potential and pay to solve problems. In such situation the organisations are successful which their managers have new strategies for workforce. In this regard, all managers and senior leaders have another role except the role of coordinator and facilitator which is that potential synergies of employees. Some factors such as increasing customers" expectations, globalization, process and highly advanced technology are some factors which make twenty – first century organisations have a different form of traditional organisations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the factors of employee empowerment in private sector companies.
- To analyze the intrinsic relationship among the factors of employee empowerment.
- To ascertain the effectiveness of employee empowerment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is conducted by using both analytical and descriptive type of methodology. The study primarily depends on primary and secondary data.

Study Area

The survey is conducted in private sector companies in Vellore District

Sampling Size and Design

The questionnaire is circulated to 544 respondents of the private sector companies in Vellore District are considered for the study. The sample of the study covers all parts of Vellore District. Totally 544 employees are selected on convenient random sampling method. Out of these samples 512 employees returned the filled-in questionnaires in which 495 are found usable. Hence, the exact size of the study is 495.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire consists of Three Parts. The First part deals with personal and organisational profile of the employees in private sector companies. It consists of closed ended optional type questions. The Second part comprises statements in Likert's 5 point Scale which ranges from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The main aim of these statements is to evaluate the employee empowerment that exists in the private sector companies. The Third part is composed of statements in Likert's 5 point scale aimed at measuring the effectiveness of empowerment among employee in private sector companies.

Secondary Data

The secondary data was collected from Journals, Magazines, Publications, Reports, Books, Dailies, Periodicals, Articles, Research Papers, Websites, Company Publications, Manuals and Booklets.

Gaps in the Literature

After viewing National and International literature pertaining to employee empowerment and its effectiveness, the researcher identified three important lacunas.

1. An unaddressed issue of exactly underpinning the factors of empowerment of employees in private sector companies.
2. The foreign and Indian research works did not touch upon the elements of organisational effectiveness in private sector companies.
3. Many studies at international level did not find the empirical evidences of the relationship between employee empowerment and organisational effectiveness. Therefore the present study ventures on fulfilling the above mentioned gaps innovatively.

Data Analysis

The Primary data collected are analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) computer packages.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the limitations of the study:

1. The study is based on the perceptions of the employees in private sector companies in Vellore District.
2. The study is limited to only selected companies where HR practices are found conspicuous.
3. The study covers only offices located in Vellore District. Due to time constraint and the cost, the study is restricted only to Vellore District.
4. The study focuses only on major empowerment factors related to private sector companies.
5. The responses given by the respondents are based on the existing work environment in their respective organisations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tschohl, (2010) has suggested that in the workplace, empowered employees have the power and authority to make quick and informed decisions to advance a task or solve a problem.

Singh & Dixit, (2011) had examined that manpower is that basic tool on which the growth and future of any organisation are mainly dependent. This manpower is basically required to be empowered to take decisions and make judgments in time.

Gilaninia, et al (2013) has identified that empowerment is a development strategy and organisational prosperity. In this section, with a practical approach has been paid to concept of employee empowerment, explain dimensions of this concept, definitions, organizational characteristics of formidable employee, factors affecting on empowerment, achievements and obstacles in organizations.

Testing of hypothesis

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND THE FACTORS OF EMPOWERMENT

Table 1.1
Relationship between Educational Qualification and the Factors of Empowerment

Factors	Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TAO	Between Groups	.187	2	.093	.208	.812
	Within Groups	220.911	492	.449		
	Total	221.098	494			
DP	Between Groups	1.059	2	.530	.928	.396
	Within Groups	280.785	492	.571		
	Total	281.845	494			
PA	Between Groups	.752	2	.376	.703	.496
	Within Groups	263.055	492	.535		
	Total	263.806	494			
PE	Between Groups	2.841	2	1.420	2.757	.064
	Within Groups	253.437	492	.515		
	Total	256.278	494			
IC	Between Groups	.351	2	.176	.336	.715
	Within Groups	257.142	492	.523		
	Total	257.494	494			
OTM	Between Groups	.560	2	.280	.603	.548
	Within Groups	228.793	492	.465		
	Total	229.354	494			
GA	Between Groups	.014	2	.007	.017	.983
	Within Groups	199.989	492	.406		
	Total	200.003	494			
RAF	Between Groups	.115	2	.058	.142	.868
	Within Groups	199.386	492	.405		
	Total	199.501	494			
	Between Groups	.429	2	.214	.975	.378

ROW	Within Groups	108.263	492	.220		
	Total	108.692	494			
PWE	Between Groups	.791	2	.396	.503	.605
	Within Groups	386.934	492	.786		
	Total	387.725	494			
CD	Between Groups	3.512	2	1.756	3.136	.044*
	Within Groups	275.549	492	.560		
	Total	279.061	494			
VTM	Between Groups	5.025	2	2.513	5.829	.003*
	Within Groups	212.073	492	.431		
	Total	217.098	494			
TT	Between Groups	.608	2	.304	.738	.479
	Within Groups	202.676	492	.412		
	Total	203.284	494			
PAP	Between Groups	2.450	2	1.225	2.791	.062
	Within Groups	215.993	492	.439		
	Total	218.443	494			
EOI	Between Groups	.712	2	.356	.662	.516
	Within Groups	264.294	492	.537		
	Total	265.005	494			
EI	Between Groups	4.042	2	2.021	3.426	.033*
	Within Groups	290.210	492	.590		
	Total	294.252	494			
IOI	Between Groups	.935	2	.468	.785	.457
	Within Groups	293.174	492	.596		
	Total	294.109	494			
IIOE	Between Groups	.215	2	.107	.614	.541
	Within Groups	85.969	492	.175		
	Total	86.183	494			
PI	Between Groups	.138	2	.069	.237	.789
	Within Groups	143.040	492	.291		
	Total	143.178	494			

* Significance at 5 % level

Source: Computed data

From the above table it is found that three factors Career Development ($F = 3.136$, $P = 0.044$), Versatile Training Measures ($F = 5.829$, $P = 0.003$) and Economic Independence ($F = 3.426$, $P = 0.033$) differ significantly with respect to educational qualification of the employees. Hence Duncan analysis is applied and the following results are obtained.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKING HOURS OF EMPLOYEES AND THE
FACTORS OF EMPOWERMENT**

Table 1.2
**Relationship between Working Hours of Employees and the Factors of
Empowerment**

Factors	Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TAO	Between Groups	.694	2	.347	.775	.461
	Within Groups	220.404	492	.448		
	Total	221.098	494			
DP	Between Groups	1.867	2	.934	1.641	.195
	Within Groups	279.977	492	.569		
	Total	281.845	494			
PA	Between Groups	1.344	2	.672	1.259	.285
	Within Groups	262.463	492	.533		
	Total	263.806	494			
PE	Between Groups	1.099	2	.549	1.059	.347
	Within Groups	255.179	492	.519		
	Total	256.278	494			
IC	Between Groups	.334	2	.167	.319	.727
	Within Groups	257.160	492	.523		
	Total	257.494	494			
OTM	Between Groups	.133	2	.066	.142	.867
	Within Groups	229.221	492	.466		
	Total	229.354	494			
GA	Between Groups	.931	2	.466	1.151	.317
	Within Groups	199.072	492	.405		
	Total	200.003	494			
RAF	Between Groups	1.109	2	.555	1.376	.254
	Within Groups	198.392	492	.403		
	Total	199.501	494			
	Between Groups	1.209	2	.604	2.767	.064

ROW	Within Groups	107.484	492	.218		
	Total	108.692	494			
PWE	Between Groups	2.722	2	1.361	1.739	.177
	Within Groups	385.003	492	.783		
	Total	387.725	494			
CD	Between Groups	.076	2	.038	.067	.935
	Within Groups	278.985	492	.567		
	Total	279.061	494			
VTM	Between Groups	.973	2	.487	1.108	.331
	Within Groups	216.125	492	.439		
	Total	217.098	494			
TT	Between Groups	1.228	2	.614	1.495	.225
	Within Groups	202.055	492	.411		
	Total	203.284	494			
PAP	Between Groups	.362	2	.181	.409	.665
	Within Groups	218.081	492	.443		
	Total	218.443	494			
EOI	Between Groups	1.164	2	.582	1.086	.338
	Within Groups	263.841	492	.536		
	Total	265.005	494			
EI	Between Groups	.427	2	.213	.357	.700
	Within Groups	293.826	492	.597		
	Total	294.252	494			
IOI	Between Groups	.958	2	.479	.803	.448
	Within Groups	293.152	492	.596		
	Total	294.109	494			
JIOE	Between Groups	.568	2	.284	1.631	.197
	Within Groups	85.615	492	.174		
	Total	86.183	494			
PI	Between Groups	1.656	2	.828	2.879	.057
	Within Groups	141.521	492	.288		
	Total	143.178	494			

Source: Computed data

From the above table it is clear that the factors of employees empowerment do not differ with respect to the Working hours of employees. This shows that the Working hours of employees do not find any blockade in their advancement of empowerment.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALARY PER MONTH OF EMPLOYEES AND THE FACTORS OF EMPOWERMENT

Table 1.3
Relationship between Salary per Month of Employees and the Factors of Empowerment

Factors	Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TAO	Between Groups	1.016	3	.339	.755	.520
	Within Groups	220.082	491	.448		
	Total	221.098	494			
DP	Between Groups	.161	3	.054	.093	.964
	Within Groups	281.684	491	.574		
	Total	281.845	494			
PA	Between Groups	.313	3	.104	.195	.900
	Within Groups	263.493	491	.537		
	Total	263.806	494			
PE	Between Groups	1.345	3	.448	.864	.460
	Within Groups	254.932	491	.519		
	Total	256.278	494			
IC	Between Groups	.196	3	.065	.124	.946
	Within Groups	257.298	491	.524		
	Total	257.494	494			
	Between Groups	2.372	3	.791	1.711	.164
	Within Groups	226.981	491	.462		

	Total	229.354	494			
GA	Between Groups	1.142	3	.381	.940	.421
	Within Groups	198.861	491	.405		
	Total	200.003	494			
RAF	Between Groups	.778	3	.259	.641	.589
	Within Groups	198.723	491	.405		
	Total	199.501	494			
ROW	Between Groups	.555	3	.185	.841	.472
	Within Groups	108.137	491	.220		
	Total	108.692	494			
PWE	Between Groups	2.876	3	.959	1.223	.301
	Within Groups	384.849	491	.784		
	Total	387.725	494			
CD	Between Groups	.795	3	.265	.467	.705
	Within Groups	278.267	491	.567		
	Total	279.061	494			
VTM	Between Groups	.922	3	.307	.698	.554
	Within Groups	216.176	491	.440		
	Total	217.098	494			
TT	Between Groups	.048	3	.016	.039	.990
	Within Groups	203.236	491	.414		
	Total	203.284	494			
PAP	Between Groups	.292	3	.097	.219	.883
	Within Groups	218.152	491	.444		
	Total	218.443	494			
EOI	Between Groups	.229	3	.076	.141	.935
	Within Groups	264.777	491	.539		
	Total	265.005	494			
EI	Between Groups	1.344	3	.448	.751	.522
	Within Groups	292.909	491	.597		
	Total	294.252	494			
IOI	Between Groups	.678	3	.226	.378	.769
	Within Groups	293.431	491	.598		
	Total	294.109	494			
JIOE	Between Groups	.207	3	.069	.393	.758
	Within Groups	85.977	491	.175		
	Total	86.183	494			

PI	Between Groups	.234	3	.078	.268	.849
	Within Groups	142.944	491	.291		
	Total	143.178	494			

Source: Computed data

The above table indicates and clearly reveals that the factors of employees empowerment do not differ in their opinion with respect to the salary per month of employees. Hence it is concluded employees believe that income enhances them and earning power brings the decision- making power in them, as the Power of decision- making is a real test of empowerment of an individual.

FINDINGS

The findings of previous chapters are summarized and presented below

FACTORS OF EMPLOYEES EMPOWERMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON EMPLOYEES AND THEIR ORGANISATION

- The employees in Vellore district have a formidable management policy in their working organisation for their empowerment. The management policies have made them to possess the awareness about their potentiality and key roles in their organisation.
- The factors identified in the management policies are Trust and Openness Strategy and Development Policies.
- The employees believe that the development of their potentiality by the organisation is to empower them by identifying their talents.
- The employees have a positive attitude about their organisation in empowering them by encouraging them through leadership and team building.
- Innovative Climate and Optimistic Team Management are the two factors identified in Organization development and employees empowerment. Employees have a stirring opinion that the process of empowerment in the organisation endowed with a favorable innovative climate helped them in their development.
- The employees consider that the information provided to them on organisational vision, clarifies the significance of task accomplishments
- The rewards and facilities given in the organisation often serves as a motivational factor for the employees.

- The employees do have the key roles in their organisation by channelizing their potentiality. The employees feel empowered in the organisation when their role in the organisation is highly encouraging.
- Employees develop their potentiality in their organisation to empower themselves. The development of their career in the organisation helps them to believe that they are suitable for all jobs.
- The employees agree that the organisation plays an important role in developing their career as the organisation provides an encouraging atmosphere supportive for the employees.
- The employees profoundly believe that the government provides an astounding policy for empowering the employees in the country.
- The policies adopted in the organisation and in the government for the development of employees have led to their empowerment increasing the self-confidence and various abilities among the employees.
- The employees trust that on empowering them the organizational efficiency and reputation is enhanced. The employees believe that empowerment has an impact on their working organisation.

CONCLUSION

Organisational factors play a vital role in empowering the employees and using their potentiality, knowledge and skills to improve the organisational efficiency and productivity. The employees are profoundly empowered through rigorous HRD practices. Most of the organisations and their policies are conducive to the employees through developing their personal career and skills. Some Organisations are practicing HRD only for the benefit of the organisational efficiency and not focus on the empowerment of the individual employees. Employees flexible behaviour and obligable approach in the organisation attracts the top management to employ the strategies to empower the employees so as to extract maximum potentials from employees.

The organisations concentrate on two blocks of employees empowerment process. The first approach concentrates career development, innovative climate, development policies, optimistic team management, prospective enhancement, technological training, persistent assessment, and role of employees, versatile training measures and trust and openness strategy. The second approach is aimed at development of rewards and facilities, goal achieving, and performance of employees. The study identifies the 8 factors namely innovative climate, career development, development policies,

rewards and facilities, performance of employees, optimistic team management, prospective enhancement, and persistent assessment are the predominant factors those predict the empowerment of employees in the organisation. In the study it is found that eradication of impediments is the main and prominent factor, which determines the exact employee's empowerment through external factor. Similarly economic independence and portrayal and participation of employees perfectly estimate the potentiality of external factors in determining the employee's empowerment.

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