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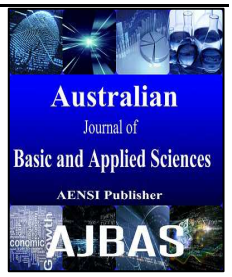

The Effects of Organizational Culture on Employee Empowerment and Job Satisfaction: A Proposed Framework

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a critical review of the relationship between employee empowerment, organizational culture and the levels of job satisfaction experienced by employees**.** This study aims to propose a framework that shows the positive relationships between these three variables**.** From the discussion, it appears that organizational culture does play an important role in promoting the job satisfaction for employees towards the organizational success, and this could only be achieved by ensuring that an appropriate culture was being developed or shaped in the organization that matched managerial values, attitudes and behaviors. Evidently, organizational culture does affect employee's job satisfaction. In addition, employee empowerment is one of the most successful ways to improve job satisfaction, and a great deal of effort has been expended to explore empowerment in organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

Generally, employees are very important assets in an organization (Davidson, 2004). An employee who is satisfied with his job would perform his duties well and be committed to his job, and subsequently to his organization. Thus, it is of utmost importance for employers to know the factors that can affect their employees' job satisfaction level since it would affect the performance of the organization as well (Awang, Ahmad & Zin, 2010).

Some others think that employees work only for financial return. If they are incapable to be an integral part of the organization, this may be true. Allowing employees to have independence and feedback within the organization is what makes the empowerment process successful (Amir & Amen, 2014).

Therefore, Employee empowerment is defined as giving the power to employees to make decisions. It is a form of freedom in which employee takes decisions to ensure maximum satisfaction to customers. (Ahmed Imran, Muhammad, Naeeem & Syed Waqar, 2011). Empowerment means encouraging the people to make decisions with least intervention from higher management (Handy, 1993).

Spice and Gilbert (1991) advised the managers to give the authority to workers in making decisions for maximum utilization of human capital. Dobbs (1993) stated that empowerment enhances the performance of workers and improves the work environment of the organizations.

According to Manouchehr, Taymor and Reza (2014), nowadays, organizations are working at a competitive environment and needs to empowerment process to survival. One of most important component which helps to human resource empowerment is culture.

Organizational culture influences employee empowerment process. More specifically, culture determines the use of power that ultimately affects the empowerment process (Douglas, 1996).

According to Ghosh (2013), organization culture plays an important role for effective functioning of employee empowerment because it helps organization to attain business excellence and obtain sustainable competitive advantage.

Other than that, organizational culture as one of the components of organizational effect has always been under special consideration among managers and theorists. Numerous studies on organizational

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culture and its relationship with other components such as job satisfaction, performance, productivity and efficiency confirm this (Ebrahimpour *et al*., 2011).

Typically, satisfaction has been widely studied in the management literature (Spector, 1997) due to its relevance to the physical and mental well-being of the employees. Job satisfaction can be an important indicator of how employees feel about their jobs and a predictor of work behaviors such as organizational citizenship, absenteeism and turnover. An understanding of the factors involved in job satisfaction is crucial to enhance the happiness of workers (Okpara *et al*., 2005).

The individual who perceive higher job to be significant, feels higher levels of work satisfaction than those who think that their work add little value. (Coetsee, 1996). Therefore an increase in job satisfaction will more than likely be the main factor employees will consider when contemplating whether to stay in their jobs or move elsewhere (Robbins, 2005).

Problem Statements:

There is a large number of employee's working in different organizations. They are facing lot of problems during their jobs. These problems include policies of companies, roles, couture, internal and external factors of the organization which have influence on employee's job performance and job satisfaction. This influence could be direct or indirect (Asad, Muhammad Alam, Muhammad Wasif & Nasir, 2015).

However, there are five major problems faced by the employee's during the job, empowerment, management behavior, teamwork, motivation, work environment. These variables have directly impact on employee's performance and job satisfaction. The connection or relationship between the works, workplace tools of work had becomes the most important aspect in their work itself (Chandrasekar, 2011).

Besides that, the management challenge is to create working conditions in which individuals in these teams voluntary choose to commit, collaborate and act towards accomplishment of organisational goals (Duvall, 1999). Gardner and Siegall (2000) stated that for empowerment to work, employees must first perceive themselves as empowered. For this reason Block (1987) stated that the idea of empowerment being taught in a programme, and the prevailing attitude that someone in a position of authority can empower an employee are simply incongruent with the conscious decision of an individual to act in an empowered way.

According to Ripley and Ripley (1992) and Spatz (2000) stated that empowerment can enhance the responsibilities as well as motivation of employees in their routine work, improve satisfaction level, quality of services, employees loyalty and productivity by giving them self-respect that worth a lot and ultimately increases the productivity and quality of products and reduces the employee turnover. The two awards were given to the software companies, one was Exceeding Customer Expectations and second was Motivating and Retaining Employees for the reason that the companies had happy and empowered employees. The restaurant industry could get the benefit by giving the empowerment to employees as his immediate decisions on customer issues enhance the satisfaction of employees and save the time in the form of waiting decisions form the top management (Potochny, 1998).

In United States, job satisfaction fall to low record of 45%. It was recorded that the previous rate was 49% in 2008. The study found that there were only few employees considered their jobs to be interesting, income have not kept up with inflation and soaring cost health insurance has eaten into worker's take-home pay. Studies on empowerment have shown that it has a strong correlation to employee performance in terms of higher productivity, job satisfaction and reduction in staff turnover in organizations (Ongori, 2007).

According to Manouchehr, Taymor & Reza (2014), nowadays, organizations are working at a competitive environment and needs to empowerment process to survival. One of most important component which helps to human resource empowerment is culture. Unfortunately, nowadays, organizations don't pay attention to it and we should aware without culture, empowerment is impossible.

Malaysian studies on organizational culture in higher education show that cultural values in universities will enhance innovation and to abandon those practices that hinder creativity and innovativeness and to warrant success in managing knowledge (Altbach, 2007; Asmawi & Mohan, 2010; Devi, Chong & Lin, 2007; Yiing & Ahmad, 2009). An effective university culture teaches and exhibits appropriate behavior, motivates individuals, and governs information processing; these components of culture can shape internal relations and values.

Research Objectives:

As the purpose of the research is generally to examine the whole relationship of employee empowerment and job satisfaction in organizations, the objectives can numerically be listed are follows:

1. To investigate the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction.
2. To determine what is employee empowerment has the most effect on job satisfaction.
3. To determine empirically the relationship between organizational culture and employee job satisfaction.
4. To investigate the mediating on organizational culture towards the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction.

Literature Riview:

Employee Empowerment:

The word empowerment, popularized since 1980s, is employed to refer to a new form of Employee involvement (Wilkinson, 1998), it is derived from various approaches and fields of study such as psychology, economy, education, and social and organizational studies (Page & Czuba, 1999).

According to Spreitzer (1995), employee empowerment as intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions which is meaning, competence, self-determination and impact, reflecting an individual's orientation to his or her work role.

The common dictionary definition of empowerment, to give official authority to delegate legal power to commission, authorize (Grove, 1971) is the one most understood by most people. Job satisfaction was one of the earliest anticipated outcomes of empowerment (Spreitzer, 1997).

According to Olshfski and Cunningham (1998), empowerment is about delegation or sharing of power, authority or responsibility by those in the organizational structure to those lower levels of the organization. This in essence is the process of decentralizing decision-making in an organization where managers give more discretion and autonomy to the front-.line managers. Wagner (1994) calls it a process in which influence is shared among individuals who are otherwise hierarchically unequal. Collins (1995) sees that as a limiting type of empowerment as at the end of it, the workers are empowered only in the sense that they have a greater responsibility to act within a narrow sphere and then held accountable for their limited action.

Hickey and Casner-Lotto (1998) state that empowerment is about delegating directly to non-management employees a significant amount of decision-making authority commonly reserved for managers.

Pun, Chin and Gill, (2001) points out that empowerment is a process whereby employees are taking part or having shares in managerial decision-making. They further point out that true involvement draws people on the hierarchy up to the levels above them and shares the power that is available.

The process of empowerment increases creativity and initiative of individuals and committed individuals to work more and increases job satisfaction (Wang, 2012). According to Fardin (2012) empowerment caused to improve the effectiveness of organization and increase increased flexibility and dynamics of organization and knowledge and people skill. Employee empowerment is a continuous process, which needs to be encouraged, monitored, nurtured and enhanced in their organizations. Employee empowerment is not a destination, but a journey that no one reached at its final stage (Linda, 1997).

Other than that, there are two complementary perspectives about empowerment in the workplace. The first perspective focuses on structural conditions and second perspective is about psychological background of empowerment (Spreitzer, 2007). Peter and colleagues have identified seven elements for empowerment that are responsibility and accountability, knowledge and skills, independence, information, creativity, initiative and innovation, power and decision-making (Abraiz & Raja, 2012). Ford and Fottler, (1995) emphasize that the empowerment process necessitates the sharing of information and knowledge necessary to enable employees to contribute to organizational performance.

Empowerment is also understood by numerous researchers as a variable that positively influences employees' trust. According to Khan (1997), empowerment enhances trust between employees and managers. Amara and Bietry (2008) reported that there is a significant relationship between empowerment and employees' trust in their colleagues, in their superiors and in organization. In addition, when managers encourage empowerment, they give employees the opportunity to solve problems by themselves. So that, this will improves their satisfaction and organizational commitment and develops their trust in the organization (Bartram & Casimir, 2007).

Mohammed *et al*., (1998) states that empowerment is a state of mind. An employee with an empowered state of mind experiences feelings of:

i) Control over the job to be performed.

ii) Awareness of the context in which the work is performed.

iii) Accountability for personal work output.

iv) Shared responsibility for unit and organizational performance.

v) Equity in the rewards based on individual and collective performance.

Job Satisfactions:

Balzer (1997) define Job satisfaction as the feelings a person has about her or his job. According to Jurkiewicz (2000), two factors the impact employee satisfaction and commitment are, feelings that the organization can be relied on to carry out its commitments to its employees and feelings that the individual is of some importance to the organization. Besides that, Rad *et al*., (2006) stated that job satisfaction of the employees is affected by the culture of the organization.

Job satisfaction is a complex and multifaceted concept which can mean different things to different people. Job satisfaction is usually linked with motivation, but the nature of this relationship is not clear. Satisfaction is not the same as motivation. Job satisfaction is more of an attitude, an internal state. It could, for example, be associated with a personal feeling of achievement, either quantitative or qualitative (Mullins, 2005).

Fulford and Enz, (1995) has been found that customer satisfaction comes by empowering to the employees. People enjoy feeling that their work has a purpose and their activities are significant to the company (Moses, 2000). Top performers do not generally leave a job over money. It is often because their job does not tie into their goals and the things that make them happy (Melymuka, 2000). Although salary and benefits play a role in recruiting and retaining employees, people are also looking for opportunities to learn new things, the challenge of new responsibilities, and the prospect of personal and professional growth (Wagner, 2000). Satisfying these intrinsic needs helps build trust, morale, loyalty, and overall satisfaction in employees (Nunn, 2000).

Job satisfaction is an attitude but points out that researchers should clearly distinguish the objects of cognitive evaluation which are affect beliefs and behaviors (Weiss, 2002). Liden (2000) argue that individuals who feel that their jobs are significant and worthwhile have higher levels of satisfaction compared to those who feel their jobs have little value.

The term job satisfaction refers to the attitude and feelings people have about their work. Positive and favorable attitudes towards the job indicate job satisfaction. Negative and unfavorable attitudes towards the job indicate job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2006).

Edward and Scullion (1982) identified the meaning of job satisfaction as the overall measurement of working attitudes of the reception, happiness, and pleasure in the job. Employees' job satisfaction is also concerned with supervision quality, working conditions, intrinsic compensation, benefits, and company policies (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992). Robbins and Coulter (1996) stated that job satisfaction is an employee's general attitude towards his or her job. Meanwhile Cranny, Smith, and Stone (1992) defined job satisfaction as whether employees find their employment sufficiently satisfactory to continue in it, either permanently or until they have prepared for greater responsibilities.

According to Susskind, Borchgrevink, Kacmar, and Brymer (2000) explained that job satisfaction represents the workplace and employees perceptions of their job. Job satisfaction can be predicted by employee's evaluation of the work climate, levels of organizational support and the employment situation.

Organizational Culture:

Denison and Mishra (1995) measured the organizational culture from four traits: involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission; effectiveness was measured by subjective and objective items. According to Gutknecht and Miller (1990) culture represents the organization's soul, purpose and foundation.

According to Lund (2003), given the need for management to recognize the pervasive impact of organizational culture on employee-related variables in today's competitive environment. The present study focuses on the relationship of corporate culture type with employee job satisfaction within the typology of cultures.

Besides that, Besanko, Dranove and Shanley (1996) stated that organizational culture can create values since it can simplify information processing, decrease the supervision cost and smooth the bargaining between employees.

Martins and Terblanche (2003) stated that the two main functions of organizational culture, internal integration and coordination, have a strong influence on an organization's creativity and innovation. More specifically, internal integration describes the feeling of belonging and commitment, while coordination refers to the creation of a competitive ground and development of social glue that holds an organization together.

McHugh (1993) argue that bad and poor culture of the organization will lower the level of job satisfaction and lower productivity from the employees, and finally all these factors contribute to decrease the efficiency and performance of the organization. In addition, Jiang and Klein (2000) argue that supportive culture of the organization increases the satisfaction level of the employees and decreases the turnover ratios from the organization.

Huang and Chi (2004) opine that if the employees are satisfied with the culture of the organization it will motivate them to work hard and their obligations would be consistent which finally would raise organizational performance. Tang (2006) suggests that supportive culture of the organization raises the job satisfaction of the employees.

Organizational culture plays an important role in the successfulness of the change process and primary component of functional decision making in universities (Franlinger, 2007).

The model of organizational culture types has been developed by Cameron and Quinn (2006). They suggested four types of culture which refer mainly to the relations among employees:

i) The Hierarchical culture: this type of culture is considered to be well coordinated, characterized by formal rules and policies.

ii) The Market culture: organizations that adopt this type of culture aim to be highly competitive, while winning is the glue that holds the employees and the organization together.

iii) The Clan culture: this type of culture refers to a friendly and cozy working environment, where the working force is perceived as an extended family and the superiors are perceived as mentors, employees are characterized by high job and organization commitment and develop friendly relations.

iv) The Adhocracy type: this type of culture is characterized by innovation and risk taking, assured by a highly creative and dynamic working

environment.

Relationship Between Employee Empowerment, Organizational Culture and Job Satisfaction:

Lautizi, Laschinger and Ravazzolo (2009) have found the significant impact of empowerment on job satisfaction. There has also been an established significant and meaningful relationship between empowerment and satisfaction towards job.

According to Seyyed Ebrahim (2012) there is a strong and positive relationship between Organizational Culture and Employees' Empowerment.

Arnold (2006) and Mansoor and Tayib (2010) observe strong positive impact of organizational culture on the job satisfaction.

Chang and Lee (2007) conclude that organizational culture has a positive impact on the job satisfaction of the employees. The authors emphasize over the group oriented culture in the organization for raising the employees' job satisfaction. However, they find a positive relationship between the culture of the organization and job satisfaction.

Methodology:

This study used a quantitative approach based on the research framework and research purpose. The study also tends to use a cluster random sampling technique. The survey was conducted by distributing the questionnaire among the respondents which focused on the relationship between the organizational culture, empowerment and job satisfaction. For analyzing data, the *Statistical Package of Social Sciences* (SPSS) was used.

Conclusion:

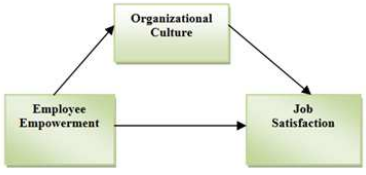

Diagram 1

Research framework:

Diagram 1 show the relationship between the three variables which is organizational culture, employee empowerment and job satisfaction. The conceptual framework of this study explains that how organizational culture has an influence on empowerment and job satisfaction. The independent variable was employee empowerment and the dependent variable was job satisfaction. There is mediating variable which is organizational culture.

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