

A study on employee empowerment in agribusiness sector

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment is one of the efficient ways of facilitating employees at all management levels to utilize their ideas to enhance the performance of the organization. Authority, freedom to take decisions, responsibility, resource etc give empowerment to the employees to do their duties and responsibilities. Hence empowerment supports the employees to accomplish their task successfully. The main aim of the present study was to measure the level of empowerment and find out the relationship between empowerment and job involvement. Snowball sampling method was used to collect the information from the sample respondents. The study was confined to the agribusiness sector in Tamil Nadu. The agribusiness sectors selected were bank, retail and input company each sector consisting of 40 samples making a total sample size of 120. Primary data were collected from the employees of agribusiness sector through online by using elaborate and structured-questionnaire. It was found that majority of the sample respondents were moderately empowered and there was a substantial association between empowerment and job involvement.

Keywords: Agribusiness sector; employee empowerment; job involvement; bank; retail; input company

INTRODUCTION

Employee empowerment is the most important talkative issue in every organization. Empowered employees perform better with new and innovative ideas. They have the ability to solve current problems in an organization. In today's business world empowered employees are very important for organizational development. In order to develop such employees an organization must offer training and educational programmes. Most of the empowered employees are self-controlled and self-directed. Empowerment allows the employees to make decisions in right time for organizational development. Apart from that empowerment is an effective tool in motivating employees and offer more meaningful and satisfying jobs. Employee empowerment is divided into psychological and organizational empowerment.

Psychological empowerment

It is a set of psychological conditions that are essential for individuals to feel a sense of control related to their work. According to Spreitzer (1995) the four dimensions of psychological empowerment are

meaning- relation between the objective of the job and idea of an employee, competence- the confidence about one's capacity to complete a work with skill, self-determination- the choice an individual has for starting and regulating an action and impact- the level to which a person can influence plan, administrative or operating outcomes at job.

Organizational empowerment

Organization provides all the support to empower the individual to accomplish the task. Empowerment is trust-based relationship between employees and management. According to Matthews et al (2003) the three dimensions of organizational empowerment are dynamic structural framework- all the guidelines regarding organization given to the employees, control of workplace decisions- all the levels of employees allowed to take decisions, fluidity of information sharing- all the data regarding company are accessible by all the employees.

As per Haas (2010) empowerment provides employees the freedom to the autonomy to make decisions about how they go about their daily activities.

Whereas according to Hsieh and Chao (2004) empowerment is a discretionary construct that has management providing employees with discretion and autonomy over their tasks.

Schaufeli et al (2002) defined job involvement as a positive, fulfilling and work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption. In the opinion of Paullay et al (1994) job involvement is the degree to which one is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in and concerned with one's present job.

The main objective of the present study was to measure the level of empowerment and find out the relationship between empowerment and job involvement.

METHODOLOGY

Psychological empowerment scale (Spreitzer 1995) was used to measure the level of psychological empowerment and organizational empowerment scale (Matthews et al 2003) was used to measure the level of organizational empowerment of an employee. The Job involvement scale (Lodahl and Kejner 1965) was used to measure job involvement of an employee.

The primary data were collected through online with the help of structured-questionnaire. Snowball sampling method was adopted to collect the information. Three agribusiness sectors viz bank, retail and input companies were selected for the study with the sample size of 120 (40 samples from each sector). The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and correlation analysis.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Demographic features of sample respondents

The data given in Table 1 show that majority of the sample respondents were males (66.66%) and most of them were undergraduates (52.50%). Majority of them were in the middle level (53.33%) followed by junior level management (46.66%). Most of the sample respondents had 1-2 years work experience (75.00%) followed by 3-5 years (23.33%).

Level of empowerment of the respondents

Percentage analysis was used in this study to measure the level of empowerment of the employees. Based on sample response results are shown in Table 2. Majority of the sample employees were moderately empowered (74.16%) followed by high level of empowerment (20.83%).

Table 1. Demographic features of sample respondents (n= 120)

Characteristic	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	80	66.66
	Female	40	33.33
Educational qualification	Undergraduate	63	52.50
	Postgraduate	57	47.50
Level of management	Junior management	56	46.66
	Middle management	64	53.33
Work experience (years)	1-2	90	75.00
	3-5	28	23.33
	>5	2	1.66

Table 2. Empowerment level of the respondents (n= 120)

Level	Respondents	
	Number	Percentage
Low	6	5.00
Medium	89	74.16
High	25	20.83

Relationship between empowerment and job involvement

Correlation analysis was used in the present study to find out the association between empowerment and job involvement. The data given in Table 3 show that the Spearman's correlation coefficient (Myers and Well 2003) between empowerment and job involvement was positive and significant (0.581).

Table 3 Relationship between job involvement and empowerment of the respondents (n= 120)

Component	Spearman's Rho	Job involvement	Employee empowerment
Job involvement	Correlation coefficient Sig (1-tailed)	1.000	0.581** 0.000
Empowerment	Correlation coefficient Sig (1-tailed)	0.581** 0.000	1.000

**Significant at 0.01 level (1-tailed)

This confirmed the relationship between empowerment and job involvement. It shows that the empowerment leads to job involvement of the employees. Employee empowerment in the three sectors viz bank, retail and input would lead to the job involvement.

The same relationship was also found in the manufacturing industry (Boon et al 2007).

CONCLUSION

Majority of the agribusiness employees were moderately empowered followed by high level of empowerment. Most of the respondents were males and undergraduates. There was a significant and positive relationship between employee empowerment and job involvement. It was found that all the seven dimensions of the empowerment highly influenced the job involvement. Hence the management of the companies in three sectors should empower the all employers (dynamic structural framework, control of workplace decisions and fluidity of information sharing) of organizational empowerment.

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