

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS AND THE SUCCESS OF SUGGESTION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this research study was to identify the organisational factors such as Organisation culture, organisation climate, top management involvement and supervisor support. The success of suggestion system is measured in terms of the active participation of employees in suggestion scheme. Data were collected using questionnaire from a random of 180 employees working in Automobile Industry in India. The findings of the analysis indicates that all four organisational factors significantly influence the employee participation in suggestion system.

Keywords: Suggestion scheme, organisation culture, organisation climate, top management involvement, supervisor support

INTRODUCTION

Business across countries, national borders are becoming less, organizations with global markets and global customers, need to be focus on continuous organizational improvement to sustain in a competitive global business environment. The aims of all types of organizations are continuously exploring ways to improve their competitive advantage in order to ensure their survival in the global market.

In order to survive in the current competitive world, organisations should be creative and innovative and use any possible management tool that contributes to it. The oldest form of employee involvement tool is the employee suggestion scheme which is used by all types of industry to encourage employees' ideas (Lasrado. F, et.al, 2016). To a creative and innovative organisation, the suggestion system will be consider as one of the instrument that will be used to extract the idea from employees (Marx, A. E., 2008). An employee suggestion is a useful way to obtain and utilize employees' creative ideas especially when operating in a world where innovation and constant improvement plays an increasingly vital part in economic success of the organisation. (Sundaray, B.K., et al., 2010).

Suggestion system is the process by which the organisation solicits employees valuable ideas related to cost reduction, time saving, improving customer satisfaction, improving working conditions in order to decrease cost and more competitive in the global environment. The concept suggestion system is described as any thought and new idea that could result in making a positive change, improvement of the method, increase of quality, decrease of expenses in the organization (Abooie, M. H., et al., 2010). Toyota is one of the most successful examples to implement suggestion scheme called as Toyota suggestion Program (TSP) (Ostrowski, D.& Jagodziński, J., 2021) and generate cost savings through suggestion system. On average, Toyota employees submit 1.5million suggestions each year and produce \$300 million in annual savings.

Today, the concept of new economy, hyper-competition are forced the organisations to involved in competitive market which leads to more focus on the concept of useful suggestions system

management.

2. EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION SYSTEM

The term employee suggestion system can be described as workers participation technique used to encourage employees to give ideas related to cost reduction, increase productivity and improved work environment. The employee suggestion system is a tool by which the suggestions and ideas of employees are used to sustain in a competitive business environment (Bahraminasab et al, 2013)

According to Jaja, S. A., & Okpu, T. (2013), suggestion schemes are a valuable means for employees to participate in improving the efficiency of an organization. In addition, the researchers proved that the suggestion scheme had a significant positive effect on employees' continuance and normative commitment. Employee empowerment is very difficult and even impossible to do without participative management. The establishment of a suggestion system is one of the important tools to involve employees in an effective way to implement empowerment (Yazdani, 2011).

Vilasini N and Neitzert T.R (2012) pointed out that suggestion system is one of the main vehicles for workers participation which result in organizational improvement. The researchers also mentioned the importance of suggestion system as:

- Suggestion system contributes employee's recognition, which helps to build workers self-esteem and motivation.
- Suggestion system removed the communication barriers and workers can discuss process issues directly with their management.

3. ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE SUGGESTION SYSTEM

Unless the environment is supportive the members of the organisation should not participate in the suggestion system. Perceived work environment (Amabile et al., 2004) such as management involvement, supervisor support and organization policy are the critical factors for successful suggestion system (Lasrado, et.al, 2016). The effective performance of suggestion scheme in organizational is based on favorable organizational context includes policy, training, evaluation and motivation/rewards (Charles, A. A., & Chucks, O. K., 2012). The Organisational culture, manager characteristics are effective suggestion system factors (Timas, A., & Shahi, S. , 2013). The relationship with supervisor has a significant effect on employee willingness to submit a suggestion (Marksberry, P., et al. ,2014).

Therefore, the management involvement and commitment (Mohammad Rouhi Eisola et al. ,2013; Baluch, N., et al., 2013; Lloyd, G. C.,1996; Du Plessis, AJ, et al. , 2008), supervisor support (Lasrado,F. et al, 2015; Marx, 2008; Lasrado,F. et al, 2016), Organisational culture (Marin-Garcia, J. A., & Miralles, C., 2007; Marx, A. E., 1995; Karimi, A., et al. ,2013) and the Organisational climate (Axtell et al, 2000; Kieser, 1998; Marx, A.E., 2008)) are the critical organizational factors for the effective suggestion system.

3.1 Organization culture : Organisation culture is a set of beliefs, values, norms in which the behavior of its members is determined. The success of any system or program in an organisation is influenced by its organizational culture. The culture of an organisation is determined the formation and enrichment of effective parameters of suggestion system (Fadaei, K., & Dalfard, V. M., 2011). suggestion system should be integrated with the organization culture (Darragh-Jeromos , 2005; Marin-Garcia, J. A., & Miralles, C., 2007). The research studies also proved that suggestion systems tend to be more successful with an open and participative culture (Marx, A. E., 1995). Ahghar (2006) also stressed the importance

of participation culture that participation culture focuses attention on the contribution of organizational members in decision-making and creates the feeling of responsibility, ownership and more commitment to the organization.

Employees are encouraged doing something with their ideas. This will only happen where the organisation culture allows the individual to express their creativity. Van Dijk, C., et al. (2002). There is significant relationship between organizational culture and the amount of creativity among employees (Karimi, A., et al., 2013).

Khosravi et al. (2012) in their research “Recognition the Obstacles of Implementing Suggestion Systems in Governmental Organizations” mentioned that organizational culture is one of the major obstacles in the initial stage of implementing suggestion system. Every organisation has its own culture and its suggestion system should be moulded around that. Employees are an excellent source of ideas but there should be a supportive culture that encourages ideas (Marx, A.E., 2008). Organizations need to create a culture that encourages employees to express their creative ideas.

H1: Organisational culture is significantly contributes to suggestion system

3.2 Organization climate : Organizational climate is one of the critical factor for successful suggestion system (Marx, A.E., 2008). Th term organisational climate refers to the employees’ perceptions of organizational events, practices, and procedures within one organization (Bernstrom, V. H. ,2009). An organisation needs to be open to receiving input from its employees and willing to take risks. Favourable organisational climate is one of the key indicators to make a positive change in the improvement of Employee suggestion (Frankel et al., 2008). An innovative organisational climate (Kieser, 1998) and the company atmosphere that appreciates novelties can create more successful inventors and innovators (Prodan, I., & Ahlin, B., 2008).

If the employees felt that their input was no longer appreciated in the organization, and the flow of suggestions dried up (Tourish, D., 2005). The employees who work in a “safe” climate for creativity tend to make more suggestions (Axtell et al, 2000). Choudhury, G. (2012) stated that negligence of employee’s views and suggestions may feel dissatisfaction and this can create grievance within the employees.

In an organisation which has a predominantly autocratic management style, a suggestion system is less likely to succeed, the reason being that the autocrat is insensitive to the ideas of others. The suggestion scheme is a management tool that involves the employee and is therefore a tool for participative management. If, on the other hand, management is not in favour of participative management, the suggestion system will be worthless. Before any measure of success can be achieved with a suggestion scheme, there must be some indication of an attitude change towards participative management throughout the entire organisation.

H2: Organisational climate is positively related to suggestion system

3.3 Top management commitment: Management of a company must desire change, to uncover opportunities for changes, to gather different viewpoints on individual problems/opportunities and to implement changes as answers to the dynamic environment (Prodan, I., & Ahlin, B. ,2008). Top management commitment, commitment from middle and junior managers (Lloyd, G. C., 1996; Marx, A. E, 1995; Frankel, et al., (2005) are the important cornerstone for the success of the suggestion system. In the organisation, the management’s involvement and their effort to make the suggestion system will encourage employees to become active in the system (Du Plessis, AJ, et al. (2008). Additionally, top managers and management can help employees to improve their individual

suggestions by coaching to the participants (S. Thamizhmanii, S. Hasan ,2010).

The active participation of employees in the suggestion scheme is based the management commitment and their encouragement towards the scheme (Lasrado, F., 2012). The main influences for suggestion system are coming from the management commitment and resources allocation. Neagoe, L. N., et al. (2009) . The suggestion schemes will not yield results without the active involvement of everyone in the organization, and the required resources and support from top management.

Jaja, S. A., & Okpu, T. (2013) in their research identified the relationship between suggestion scheme and workers commitment. The researchers pointed out that senior management encourages employees to participate in organisation processes and changes through the use of suggestion schemes; it will increase employee commitment to the organisation. The management always extends its hands of cooperation by accepting and implementing the cost effective and productive suggestions from the employees (Sundaray, B. K et. Al, 2010).

On the other hand, it is also observed that lack of management's support to suggestions system is an important barrier of suggestion system (Nouri and Ahanchi ,2012). Nouri, M., & Ahanchi, M. (2012) in their research “Identifying the management barriers for establishing suggestions system: A case study of educational system” mentioned that lack of accepting any risk on behalf of management team, conflict of interest in management style, lack of management belief on suggestions system in an organization,, lack of management's support to suggestions system are important barriers of executing suggestions system in an organization.

Therefore, the top management should build a commitment on suggestion system so that employees recognize the important of suggestion system and put their effort to make the usable suggestion system (Marx, A. E., 2008).

H3: Top Management support positively contributes to suggestion system

3.4 Supervisor support: Supervisor’s support is crucial to the subordinates that will encourage them to come up with new ideas. Supervisors have direct influence on workers, and can encourage them to use suggestion systems more frequently, facilitating employees for sending the idea and receiving feedback (Arif, et al. (2010). The supervisor is in-charge of communications, evaluation, implementation and reward of a suggestion (Franken and Brand, , 2008). For example, in Japanese companies, the number of suggestions made by each worker is looked at as a reflection of the supervisor’s efforts. It is a goal of managers and supervisors to come up with ways to help generate more suggestions by the workers (Khan, I. A. , 2011).

The line manager’s role is important in the success of the suggestion scheme (Du Plessis, AJ, et al. ,2008), they should coach the employees to offer suggestions and the companies also should recognize and encourage the supervisor's role by awarding them for adopted suggestions as well (Darragh-Jeramos, P. ,2005).

Sometimes, suggestions from employees are disregarded by their supervisor or manager because of lack of trust (Oyetunji, C. O. (2009). So, the supervisors must be well trained to encourage ideas so that the initial administration of refusing and reviewing the ideas will be eliminated (Sweetman, 2005; wood 2003). Thus, the supervisors must be trained in how they and their subordinates can benefit from the suggestion system, how to evaluate ideas, how to administratively assist subordinates and how to encourage ideas (Marx, A. E., 2008).

Supervisors play an important role in creating a culture of participation in the organisation. It will thus be a worthwhile investment for management to train supervisors how to encourage ideas and develop them from their subordinates. (Marx, A. E., 2008). .

Marksberry, P., et al. (2014) in their study on “The Employee Suggestion System: A New Approach

Using Latent Semantic Analysis” investigated the importance of supervisor relationships and its effect on employee willingness to submit a suggestion. The researchers found that supervisor relationship and teaming of employees has related to effective suggestion system. In addition, they illustrated that Toyota prioritizes the supervisor relationship as one of the fundamental factors for achieving a successful employee suggestion program.

H4: Supervisor support positively related to suggestion system

4. METHODOLOGY

In total of 180 employees working in automobile industry in India were taken as a sample to collect the data. According to the source, automobile industry is one the pioneering industry in implementing suggestion scheme and other tools like continuous improvement, kaizen ect., India is one of the major competitive hub for automobile .

The self-administered questionnaire was developed based on the evidence found in literature. All the items in the questionnaire were 5-point scale such as strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3) Agree (4) and strongly agree (5). Whereas, nominal scale is used for all the demographic variables. A pilot study was conducted with 30 employees working in automobile sector to ensure the consistency and validity of the questionnaire. The items of the questionnaire are given in the following table

Variables	Statements Number	Statements
Organisational culture	OCU01	My company has welcome the initiatives and innovations
	OCU02	Innovation and risk taking are encouraged in my organization
	OCU03	My company makes the best use of the employees’ skills to develop better work
	OCU04	My company emphasis open communication
	OCU05	My Organization is ready to adopt changes
	OCU06	In my organization, management practices allow freedom at work
	OCU07	In my organization involvement and participation in decisions is encouraged
	OCU08	My organization provides opportunities for the employees personal growth and development
	OCU09	In my organization the capabilities of employees are viewed as an important source of competitive advantage
	OCU10	Learning is important in my organization
Organisational Climate	OCL01	I have the freedom to make decisions on my work
	OCL02	In my job innovative contributions are appreciated
	OCL03	Opportunity is given to share information about my work
	OCL04	Sufficient time is given to explore my ideas
	OCL05	Employees are encouraged to Solve Problems creatively in the organization
	OCL06	The company recognizes the accomplishment of employees
	OCL07	I have sufficient opportunity to make my own decisions, find information and show initiative
	OCL08	I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing work
	OCL09	I am encouraged by my co-workers and other employees in the department to submit suggestions
	OCL10	I am able to easily get the Materials I need to do my work
Top Management involvement	OCL11	I am motivated to implement new ideas
	TMI01	Top management strongly promotes employee involvement in improvement activities
	TMI02	Top Management is sincere in its attempt to understand the workers’

		point of view
	TMI03	The top management is committed to implementing the suggestion system
	TMI04	Top management actively involved in suggestion system
	TMI05	Top management regularly interacts with the employees
	TMI06	Top management communicates the importance of suggestion system to the employees
	TMI07	Sufficient financial resources provided for the suggestion scheme
Supervisor support	SVS01	I have regular opportunities to voice my ideas about my job with my supervisor.
	SVS02	My supervisor provides continuous encouragement to do my job in the best way
	SVS03	My Supervisor encourages me to express opinion about my work
	SVS04	My supervisor expresses satisfaction when I perform my job creatively
	SVS05	My supervisor involves workers in decision making
	SVS06	My supervisor gives enough time for me to practice my skills to innovate new things
	SVS07	My supervisor gives Sufficient information to do my job well
	SVS08	My supervisor praises me when I do my job well
	SVS09	My supervisor encouraged me to communicate openly
	SVS10	My supervisor recognized my innovation efforts in front of others
	SVS11	My supervisor reviews my work and guides
	SVS12	My supervisor helps me to develop my skills and knowledge

5. RESULTS

5.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

To know the profile of the respondents, the demographic variables such as age group, educational qualification and experience level were taken for the analysis. Table 5.1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic variables	Percentage
Age	
> 25 years	22.5
26 – 35 years	34.2
36 – 45 years	26.2
Above 46 years	17.1
Educational Qualification	
I.T.I	26.2
+2 / Equivalent	17.6
Diploma	43.4
UG degree	12.8
Work Experience	
> 3 years	27.3
3 - 5 years	18.7
5 – 8 years	42.2
Above 8 years	11.8

Table 4.1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. From the table it is noted that 22.5% of respondents are less 25 years, 34.2 % of the respondents between 26 – 35 years, 26.2% of the respondents are fall between 36 – 45 years and 17.1% of the respondents are above 46 years. Majority

of the respondents are diploma holder (43.4%), 12.8% of the respondents are Qualified UG degree, 26.2% of the respondents are completed I.I.T and 17.6% of the respondents have completed +2/Equivalent. Referring to the work experience of the employees approximately 60% of the respondents having 3 – 8 years of experience, whereas 27.3% of respondents having less than 3 years and 11.8 % of the respondents having more than 8 years of work experience.

5.2 Factor loading

During factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett’s test also examined to determine the adequacy of sample size for conducting a factor analysis. According to Kaiser (1974), KMO values should be greater than 0.70 are considered as good and the sample size of the data is adequate for use in factor analysis. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity should have a value above 0.05, to measures whether there is a significant correlation between variables for conducting a factor analysis.

The following table shows the result of KMO values for all four variables was above 0.70 and Barlett’s Test was significant at $p < .000$, indicates that the data is adequate for conducting factor analysis.

Table – 5.1 : Result of KMO and Barlett’s Test

S.N	Variables	KMO test	Barlett’s Test		
			DF	Sig	
1	organizational culture	.908	4.38	45	.000
2	Organizational climate	.849	3.44	55	.000
3	Top management commitment	.857	3.19	21	.000
4	Supervisor support	.843	5.543	66	.000

A Principal component Factor Analysis with a Varimax (orthogonal) rotation was applied to identify the factor loadings. According to Hair et al. (1998), the loading of 0.50 or greater are considered very significant. In this study, the factor loading of 0.50 were considered as a cutoff for all 39 Likert’s scale statements. If the statements are loaded by < 0.50 are not included for path analysis.

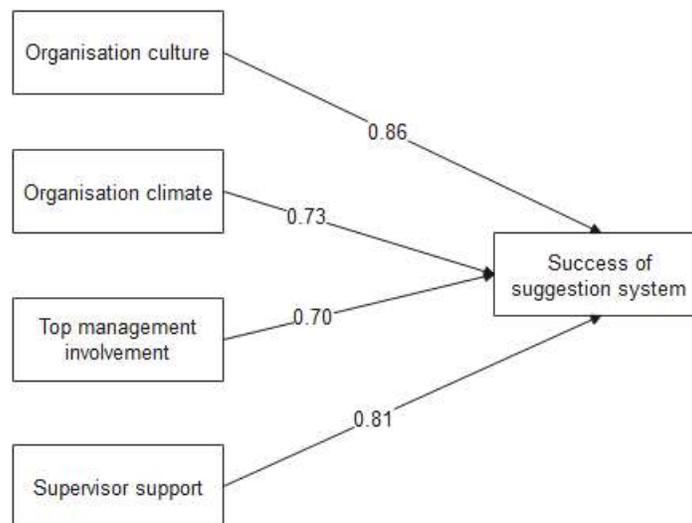
Variables	Statement	Factor loadings	Variables	Statement	Factor loadings
Organisational culture	OCU01	0.738	Organisation climate	OCL01	0.735
	OCU02	0.876		OCL02	0.596
	OCU03	0.851		OCL03	0.854
	OCU04	0.761		OCL04	0.861
	OCU05	0.812		OCL05	0.842
	OCU06	0.793		OCL06	0.829
	OCU07	0.807		OCL07	0.657
	OCU08	0.806		OCL08	0.601
	OCU09	0.816		OCL09	0.876
	OCU10	0.812		OCL10	0.685
					OCL11

	TMI01	0.803		0.839
	TMI03	0.684		0.753
Top	TMI04	0.813	Supervisor	0.720
Management	TMI05	0.813	support	0.613
Involvement	TMI06	0.784		0.604
	TMI07	0.777		0.793
				0.557
				0.562
				0.612
				0.808
				0.726
				0.631

The ten organisation culture items explained 57.8 % of variance with average factor loading of all the 10 items of organisational culture scale was 0.807 and its Cronbach alpha was 0.82. The eleven items of organisation climate explained 68.4 % of variance , the average factor loading of all the 11 items of organisational climate scale was 0.747 and its Cronbach alpha was = 0.91. The seven items of Top management involvement were chosen for factor analysis. The result of Principal component factor analysis, indicates that the statement number TMI02 has factor loading below 0.50, which was excluded for the analysis. Remaining six items accounted for 53.9% of total variance with average factor loading of all six items was 0.779 and Cronbach alpha was 0.78 . Twelve items were chosen to find out the impact of supervisor support towards suggestion system using principal component factor analysis. The analysis yields average factor loading 0.684 with 64% of total variance and Cronbach alpha was 0.85.

5.3 Path Analysis

The hypothesis was tested using Structural equation modelling (SEM). The result of SEM is shown in fig-1 and the results of goodness of fit ($\chi^2=97.2$, GFI= .951, CFI=.926, NFI=.923, and RMSEA=.084.) indicate the good fit of the model.



Among the four organisational factors organisational culture ($\beta = 0.86$) is highly influence the employees to participate in suggestion system followed by supervisor support ($\beta = 0.81$), Organisation climate ($\beta = 0.73$) and Top management involvement ($\beta = 0.70$). It is also inferred from the results that

all four hypothesis are significantly supported by the model.

6. DISCUSSION

This research study identifies how the four organisational factors such as organisation culture, organisation climate, top management involvement and supervisor support influence the employees to actively participate in suggestion scheme. The finding confirmed that all four organisational factors contributing to success of suggestion system.

Analysing the relationship between organisational factors and the success of suggestion scheme showed that all four organisational factors (organisation culture, organisation climate, top management involvement and supervisor support) were positively influence the employee participation in suggestion system. The findings give a guideline to the companies to focus on certain specific organisation condition is needed in order to increase the employee participation in suggestion system.

A culture that values feedback and continuous improvement will support a suggestion system more effectively. Organizations with a top-down approach might struggle unless they actively promote a culture of openness.

Effective suggestion systems require robust communication channels. An organization that fosters transparent and open communication will enable more meaningful and actionable suggestions.

Leadership must demonstrate a genuine commitment to the suggestion system. This includes allocating resources, recognizing contributors, and acting on suggestions. Leaders who actively participate in the suggestion process can inspire others to engage.

9. CONCLUSION

The research focused on the link the between organisational factors and its contribution to the success of suggestion system by influencing employees to participate in suggestion system. Organisation need to create a culture that empower the employees to involve and participate in decision making and encourage the employees to take risk and be innovative. Specifically, top management strongly promotes employee involvement in improvement activities, allocate sufficient financial resources to the suggestion scheme. Moreover, the supervisor facilitate the employees to express their ideas and recognised the employee's effort.

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