Moderation Effect of Organizational Commitment on the Relationship Between Information Sharing and Organizational Productivity: A Review of Literature

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Abstract

In the current competitive business environment globally, organizational productivity, both in profitability and client satisfaction, is a vital phenomenon to almost all organizations worldwide. There are some variables such as information sharing, employee involvement, and organizational commitment which affect organizational productivity in one way or another. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between Information Sharing (IS), Employee Involvement (EI), and Organizational Productivity (OP). Besides that, the current research has tried to explore the effects of Organizational Commitment (OC) on the relationship between the variables, as mentioned earlier. In addition to that, the relationship between variables has been discussed. After a comprehensive literature review, a conceptual framework has been developed that depicts the relationships among all variables. As this is literature-based research, the data used in this research is secondary and collected from reliable sources.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, WIFI model, Information Sharing, Employee involvement, Organizational Productivity, Organizational Commitment

Introduction

In the era of globalization, where competition has highly increased, and the use of information technology has had a vast impact on organizations, employees are still counted as the primary source of competitive advantage for every single firm. Furthermore, the level of employee engagement plays a vital role in the success and productivity of an organization. Bailey et al. (2017) defines employee engagement by narrating from different scholars who are pioneers of employee engagement. They define employee engagement as an individual's cognitive, emotional, and physical expression of the authentic self at work.

According to Kahn (1990), The second definition of employee engagement is the activated positive state of mind directed towards work tasks. Furthermore, Singh and Mehrazi (2016) state that employee engagement is a vital issue for organizational leaders because employees are the core assets of all organizations.

According to Hassan et al. (2018) and Anitha (2014), employee engagement, in general, is the level of commitment and involvement that employees exhibit towards their organization and its values. Further, Soane et al. (2012) explain employee engagement as a latent construct, in which the higher-order factor of engagement underlies the facets of work. Mason (2020) and Lockwood (2007) explain employee engagement as the degree to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization. At the same time, Kahn (1990) explains employee engagement as a person's involvement and enthusiasm in their job. Further, Sharma and Anupama (2011) demonstrate employee engagement as employees' commitment towards achieving the organizational goal, mission, and vision.

Many types of research have been conducted on employee engagement and its relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour, counterproductive work behaviour, and the role of employee engagement drivers in employee engagement. In this research, the researchers look into organizational commitment, employee involvement, information sharing, and their relationship with organizational productivity.

Though literature shows more than 45 top employee engagement drivers, this research will focus only on two drivers based on the WIFI model, which are "information sharing and involvement."

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To explore the moderating role of organizational commitment between information sharing and organizational productivity.
2. To explore the moderating role of organizational commitment between employee involvement and organizational productivity.

2. Literature Review

In this part, the researchers will dig deeper into the relevant past theories and studies about employee engagement drivers. Mainly, two of the drivers based on the WIFI model, which are information sharing and involvement, are studied in this research, along with the role of organizational commitment and the effects of the mentioned variable on organizational success and productivity. The conceptual framework has been drawn based on the following review of the literature.

2.1 Employee Engagement and its drivers based on WIFI model

As previously mentioned, employee engagement is the degree to which an employee is committed to someone or something within an organization. Turner (2020) elaborates that employee engagement is considered positive and proactive behavior in the organization, which is being performed by a combination of motivated and emotionally attached

employees; and empathic managers to achieve communicated business objectives. Further, Shrotryia et al. (2020) emphasize the positive impact of employee engagement on organizational performance. Based on the literature, employee engagement drivers have been identified and defined differently by different authors. Britt et al. (2001) count involvement and commitment as employee engagement drivers. Seijit (2006) explains 10 Cs as employee engagement drivers: Connect, Career, Clarity, Convey, Congratulate, Contribute, Control, Collaborate, credibility, and Confidence. Wallace et al. (2006), Bhatla (2011), Mani (2011) emphasized contributions, connections, growth, advancement, employee welfare, empowerment, employee growth, interpersonal relationships, organizational culture, and communication as employee engagement drivers. This paper's primary objective lies in the WIFI model, so it is required to consider the WIFI model starting from the very next paragraph. Cook (2008) has designed the WIFI model, which consists of four essential components. To develop a robust employee engagement strategy, a firm must bring them all together. WIFI, "in terms of employee engagement and this model," typically stands for Well-being, Information, Fairness, and Involvement. Moran (2009) defines well-being as the feeling of an employee about the organization they work for and a good work-life balance which results in high levels of employee engagement. Moran (2009) further explains fairness as providing fair recognition and reward system within an organization, starting from recruitment to developmental opportunities. Additionally, it has a positive effect on the increment of employee engagement level within an organization.

2.2 Information Sharing

Cook (2008) states that it is imperative to understand the organization's objectives and goals as an employee or an employer and how well the issue is communicated. The author further explains that regular dissemination of information at different levels ensures high levels of employee engagement across the organization.

Passalacqua et al. (2018) cite Mehta (2013), which states that sharing responsibility among employees and management makes employee engagement more meaningful. Further, it denotes that duties are required to be communicated between management and employees.

According to Shashi (2011), communication has a vital role in the success of organizations. She further explains that employees are the most potent contributors to organizational success compared to any other variables considered for the success of an organization, and their internal communication ensures success and productivity within an organization.

According to Bedarkar and Pandita (2014), communication ensures higher levels of employee engagement. The authors' further state that employees need to have comprehensive communication with their supervisors to understand their role in the organization's success. They further claim that employee engagement is affected and ensured by the internal communication practices that disseminate information on organizational core values to the employees. They conclude that employee engagement is a progressive learning process, improvement, and action that requires comprehensive communication and information sharing to ensure better organizational performance.

Abdien (2019), Bao et al. (2020), Ewing et al. (2019), Walden et al. (2017), and Mishra (2014) agree that openly shared information and treating employees well can result in employees trust towards the organization and managers which in turn can lead to higher levels of employee engagement. They further explain that employees require the correct information to do their jobs well and preferably get the information from their direct supervisors or co-workers. Mason (2019) emphasizes that employees' trust in top management and the adoption of good communication skills by top managers will foster employee engagement within the organization.

According to Hayase (2009), formal and informal information sharing within the organization is operationally called internal communication. Effective internal communication leads to high levels of employee satisfaction and involvement and finally leads to employee engagement.

Bilginoglu and Yozgat (2020) and Borah and Barua (2018) cite Baumruk et al. (2006), who have identified five steps in increasing employee engagement. The fifth step is communication, which includes regular internal interaction and information sharing, providing required feedback, and sharing ideas. This study further emphasizes "Listen, Understand and Respond" appropriately, leading to high levels of employee engagement across the organization.

Proposition 1: Information sharing is positively related to organizational productivity.

2.3 Employee Involvement

According to Moran (2009), employee involvement refers to a situation when employees are asked to share their opinions during decision-making and consider their idea while the decisions are finalized. Mehta (2013) discusses the importance of employee involvement in decision-making that affects an employee's job or work and further explains that high levels of employee involvement result in increased employee engagement levels.

According to Javed et al. (2019), the high degree of employee involvement is determined when an employee has psychological safety to speak, share ideas and explain things without fear of negative consequences of interpersonal relationships within an organization. Wood (2012) divides employee involvement into two significant parts: direct employee involvement and indirect employee involvement. Direct employee involvement refers to conducting team-works, designing flexible job descriptions, and idea capturing schemes, while indirect employee involvement refers to training and disseminating information.

Rhoades et al. (2001) state that employees' involvement increases an organization's activities when they are entirely committed to the organization. This results in employees' productivity and their engagement in the organization's actions towards achieving organizational goals. Mason (2019) cites Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) that explain employee engagement as the involvement and satisfaction of individuals and their enthusiasm for the job and organization.

Kelloway et al. (2017) state that the effects of initiatives taken to involve and engage employees vary widely and depend on the individual employee. Further, the authors explain that employee involvement practices significantly relate to perceived benefits for the organization resulting in tangible improvements and outcomes. Moreover, Phipps et al. (2013) acknowledge that increased employee involvement causes augmented organizational productivity. Rees et al. (2013) conducted a comparative study of two firms and stated the positive relationships between; employee voice and employee engagement, employee voice and employee trust in senior management, employee voice and the employee-line manager relationships, and finally, to employee engagement. Further, their study shows that employees who speak their options and suggestion are more likely to be engaged with their work.

Glew et al. (1995) has defined employee involvement as individuals' intended and conscious endeavor at all levels of an organization that provides role-expanding opportunities for employees across the organization. The authors divide employee involvement into four elements which are power, information, knowledge & skills, and rewards.

Proposition 2: Involvement is positively related to organizational productivity.

2.4 Organizational Productivity

There is a total agreement on the importance of productivity among different authors, but there is little agreement on the meaning of the word productivity. Some prior authors such as; Abid & Hussain (2019), Kresnayana

(2020), and Mohammadi et al. (2017) have used the word productivity to mean the efficiency and effectiveness of individuals, groups, organization units, entire organizations, industries, and nations. In contrast, Pritchard (1990) opined productivity as synonymous with concepts such as; individual performance, motivation, organizational effectiveness, output, profitability, cost-effectiveness, competitiveness, and work quality.

Moon et al. (2012) describe organizational productivity as a well-established construct synonymous with the classic conceptualization of organizational efficiency. They further explain that organizational productivity at any level would be evaluated by the output level against planned activities but differs from organization to organization. Hanaysha and Majid (2018) further explain organizational productivity as a standard measure used to evaluate organizational performance within organizations.

Phipps et al. (2013) explain that employee engagement interventions reflect that the organization cultivates and sustains a culture that values employee participation and involvement, which paves the way for organizational productivity. The authors further cite a literature review by Easton (2018), revealing that organizational development interventions frequently influence organization productivity and organizational improvement.

Wushe and Shenji (2019) and AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013) explain that based on a survey conducted by CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), communication has a significant role in the organizations' productivity. The survey further shows that upwards communication is a vital supporter of employee engagement and organizational productivity.

According to Sorenson (2013), in a study conducted by Gallup, engagement is considered a powerful tool in increasing productivity and profitability in organizations. Additionally, Adil et al. (2020) emphasize that employee satisfaction has a wide range of impacts on business productivity, employee performance, absenteeism, and turnover. The study further underlines enhancing productivity by the monitory motivation of newly entered employees in an organization to elevate individual productivity for organizational productivity.

Mann (2016) concludes that if employee engagement is integrated into the company's human resource strategy, the mentioned company will be counted as a high-growth company. Further, the study states that the leadership involvement and commitment, having a comprehensive communication strategy and systems which make leaders accountable for pursuing and evaluating employees' engagement, will lead the organization towards productivity. But Ahmad (2020) mentions that it is not only enough

to have employee engagement integrated into the company's human resource strategy, but it should be guaranteed. The author further states that merit-based and sound recruitment ensures and enhances individual productivity, leading to organizational productivity.

Hardy (2019) explains the effect of employee involvement initiatives that may improve the organization's efficiency but will not guarantee the improvement of an individual employee. While in terms of individual performance that is a non-separable part of organizational performance and productivity, Momand and Shams (2019) state that employees' performance is measured by the appraisal, which is considered an integral part of all organizations. Pritchard (1990) states that besides the importance of productivity, one should know that productivity measurement is equally important. He further explains that productivity differs based on the vision of different disciplines (engineering, economy, and organizational psychology). Regarding the productivity measurement, the author points out the following objectives (comparing large groups of organizations with one another, evaluating the overall productivity, managing information systems, controlling different sections of the organization, and using productivity as a motivational tool). On the "how" of the productivity measurement, the author proposes three features which are (the use of baseline period, comparison groups, and monitoring personnel time). The author further suggests that to increase productivity, one must document the effects of the designed systems to be compared with baseline.

2.5 Organizational Commitment

Baysal (2020) states that organizational commitment is a concept that has been discussed in various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and philosophy. Organizational commitment affects the factors such as absenteeism, labor turnover, job performance, and job satisfaction in organizations. There are several definitions of organizational commitment in the literature. To further enrich the concept, different scholarships are cited from various scholars. Etzioni (2012) has pointed out that the organizations' powers and provinces that are used to direct the behaviors of the organization members are associated with the members' commitments to the organization. O'Reilly and Chatman (2014) defined the concept of commitment as sensationally attaching to the organization.

Additionally, Jaiswal (2019) and Jeoung (2018) described the organizational commitment as being associated with consistent behaviors with several benefits by making side bets. Baysal (2020) cites Salancik (2003) that organizational commitment is based on the compliance relationship

between workers' behaviors and attitudes. The organizational commitment concept is defined as the psychological commitment, including performing the duties, addressing oneself to the job, accepting the organizational values (Uluturk, 2016).

Dhar et al. (2017), Masud & Daud (2019) cite Allen & Meyer (1991), who analyzed the organizational commitment under three titles. One of those titles is affective commitment. The integration degree of workers with the organization, active participation in the organizational activities, and the emotional bond between the worker and organization is the affective commitment. The workers who have a solid affective commitment tend to remain a part of the organization and sustain the organization membership (Noordin et al., 2011). Further studies defined commitment as the means perceived cost signifies that being aware of the expenses in leaving from the organization membership (McMahon, 2007). The third title is the normative commitment that reflects the feelings of sustaining the organization's membership (Allen & Meyer, 1991).

Furthermore, the following factors allow workers to perceive the organizational commitment as a virtue; past experiences, habits, customary rules, social and cultural values of the workers, working in the same organization for a long time; being appreciated by earning the organization's trust. Within this scope, the workers continue their organization memberships by accepting this commitment as a virtuous behavior (Kaya & Selcuk, 2007).

Bakker (2020) cites Lub et al. (2011), which states that employee commitment towards organization is a psychological state of mind which is regarded as the relationship between employee and the organization, while normative commitment refers to a situation when employees feel obligated to the organization. Therefore, organizations should develop well-defined pre-employment experiences to ensure that employees stay committed to the organization.

Proposition 3: Organizational commitment moderates the effect of information sharing and involvement on organizational productivity.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Based on a comprehensive review of the literature written by different scholars, the following conceptual/theoretical framework has been developed. The theory demonstrates that both information sharing and employee involvement impact organizational productivity while organization commitment strongly affects the relationship between them contingently.

Through developing this conceptual framework, this research contributes to the pool of knowledge and research in this area which has not been yet done in the Afghanistan context and allows researchers to use this conceptual framework as a model to investigate the effects of employee engagement drivers on organizational productivity.

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's compilation

3. Methodology

This paper aims to know the relationship between (information sharing & involvement) and organizational productivity and the moderating role of organizational commitment between (information sharing & involvement) and organizational productivity through literature review. All the secondary data used in this research has been collected from different articles, books, websites, and academic journals.

4. Conclusion

As discussed above, the present study investigated the effects of information sharing and employee involvement on organizational productivity while the moderating role of organizational commitment has been considered. Throughout the literature study, the researchers have found out that most of the scholars have emphasized the positive relationship between information sharing and organizational productivity. Other researchers have stressed the positive relationship between employee involvement and organizational productivity. Some scholars have further emphasized the role of organizational commitment as moderating variable. The predictions of this research have been derived from the conceptual framework, which clearly shows the relationship between variables. Thus, organizational commitment is considered to have a moderating role in the relationship between (employee involvement & information sharing) which increases organizational productivity.

4.1 Research Limitations

Every research has its limitations, and researchers of this research acknowledge that some limitations challenged this research. First and foremost, the proposed conceptual framework for this research has included only two drivers of employee engagement (information sharing & employee involvement) based on the WIFI model, which has four drivers. Time limitation is considered a limitation for this research because thousands of articles are written about employee engagement drivers, organizational productivity, and organizational commitment. The researchers could only review 50 articles to the extent of time they had. Different views of the scholars and theorists regarding employee engagement are considered a limitation because it makes it difficult to draw a broad conclusion while there are diversified theories. Future researchers are encouraged to investigate organizational productivity in different organizations using the conceptual framework that this research has developed. The researchers suggest that future researchers are also encouraged to consider adding two other drivers of the WIFI model to the conceptual framework to investigate their effects on organizational productivity. Furthermore, researchers can also explore the impact of employee engagement drivers other than those of the WIFI model on organizational productivity.

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