New Approach in Participatory Management, Concepts and Applications
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Abstract

Participatory Management (PM) is a process where subordinates share significant degree of decision making power with their superiors. The author examined the differences between PM and teacher’s demography. A total of 903 teachers in high schools in Mashhad, Iran participated in the study. Teachers believe an increase in the levels of education causes a decrease in PM. In addition, increase in age group and the years of service cause an increase in PM. This study suggests the application of the results for achieving a suitable strategy for the logical use of the human resource in educational organizations.

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Keywords: Participatory Management, Teacher's demography, High schools;

1. Introduction

Today, with the rise in general understanding and importance of education for national development, educators seem to be in favor of more participation in the educational organization. They are willing to take part in the decision making procedures related to their own conditions. Within this changing environment, educational organizations begin to develop strategic alternatives to adapt to new internal and external conditions and to use all available resources effectively. Hence PM is one of these alternatives. Increased participation in the workplace will better align us with the Enlightenment's vision of freedom and democracy, helping to create the genuine democracy that nurtures human progress.

2. Statement of problem

Through a judicious use of PM, managers make sound decisions by drawing upon the collective expertise, experience, and wisdom of their employees (Lichtenstein, 2000). Oosthuizen and Du Toit (1999) asserted that PM can be defined as a system engaging employees as willing co-producers of a better future. For Gono (2001), a style is the PM main character, under which managers have complete trust in subordinates, and much of the decision-making is made through group participation. In short, PM is a process where subordinates share significant degree of decision-making power with their immediate superiors. As for Kim (2002), PM is a process in which influence is shared among individuals who are otherwise hierarchically unequal. Although barriers to change still exist, successful manager believe that broad participation in organization is the most powerful strategy for designing and implementing lasting change in organizations. On the other hand, researchers found differences between PM and
teachers' demography in high schools in Mashhad. So it is questioned that if this method is employed, can there be a relationship between PM and the teachers' demography?

3. Literature review

In the US, the first formal study of PM dates back to Mary Parker Follett’s (1868–1933) management ideas. The Hawthorne studies concluded that the workers were more responsive to social situations than to management controls. Since the Hawthorne study, PM researchers have focused their research on human motivation. McGregor showed this distinction by suggesting theory X and theory Y. McGregor’s theory Y matches PM assumptions. Chris Argyris suggests that employees should be treated as mature adults. Argyris points out that participative leadership can decrease the degree of incongruence between the formal organization and the healthy (Argyris, 1957). Rensis Likert (1967) was the first to conduct systematic survey research on PM. Likert identifies four types of management styles consisting of exploitive-authoritative, benevolent-authoritative, consultative system and participative system. William Ouchi (born 1943) studied PM from the point of trust and created the term Theory Z. He emphasizes that management must have a high degree of trust in its workers in order for PM to work. More recently, Drucker (2002) expects that future managers will face increased needs for employee participation. Hence managers will have to be able to understand when to command and when to partner, this is mainly because of rapid change in work environments.

Researchers have found that Participative management may positively impact job satisfaction (Kim 2002; Spence-Laschinger & Finegan 2004), perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002; Lau & Lim 2002), extend stronger support to realize the goals, better decisions and greater efficiency (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Likert, 1967), organizational citizenship behaviour (Eisenberger et al 1990), labour-management relations (Ospina & Yaroni 2003), job performance (Lau & Lim 2002; Ming 2004). Employee satisfaction, motivation, morale and self-esteem (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991) positive work outcomes, solving problems establishment of strong networks among the members and open communication (Blase & Blase, 2001).

4. Body

4.1. Purpose of the research and research questions

This study looks at difference in PM and teachers' demography among female teachers in Mashhad, Iran. The purpose of the research was to provide principals with greater understanding of the benefits of PM and teachers' demography. Three research questions connected with the aim are developed and tested:

Research questions 1: What is the difference in PM and educational level in high schools in Mashhad?
Research questions 2: What is the difference in PM and teachers’ age-groups in high schools in Mashhad?
Research questions 3: What is the difference in PM and teachers’ teaching experience high schools in Mashhad?

3.2. Sample of the research

The data for this study was obtained from 903 female teachers from 162 high schools in Mashhad, Iran. Random sampling method was used and the instrument for data collection was a structured postal questionnaire. The researcher requested the employees to fill the forms and return them within three week. Reliability of Questionnaire with Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was 0.97. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the PM in different educational levels, age groups and teachers’ teaching experience.
3.3. Limitations of the study

The research was conducted among female teachers, thus the findings of this study will be largely applicable to female teachers, and not to male teachers. As this study used the survey method, the accuracy of the findings depended on the honesty of the respondents in answering the items in the questionnaires.

4. Findings and results

Research questions 1: Differences of PM in relation to educational level

Table 1 shows, for educational level the F ratio was significant. $F (3, 890) = 4.578$, $p = 0.003$ indicating a significant difference between PM and educational level.

![Table 1: ANOVA comparing overall PM and educational level](image)

Since the F ratio was significant, post hoc tests were performed to examine the nature of differences. Duncan test was used to compare the levels. Teachers believe an increase in the levels of education causes a decrease in PM. For example, teachers who had a bachelor degree had higher PM than those who hold a master’s degree, and had lower PM than those who had a diploma. Figure 1 shows the results very well.

(Diploma > upper diploma > bachelor > master)

![Figure 1. The linear figure of mean scores of PM and educational levels](image)

Research questions 2: Differences of PM in relation to age group

Table 2 shows, for age group the F ratio was significant. $F (3, 892) = 6.977$, $p = 0.003$ indicating a significant difference between PM and age group.

![Table 2: ANOVA comparing overall PM and age group](image)
Since the F ratio was significant, post hoc tests were performed to examine the nature of differences. Duncan test was used to compare the levels. Teachers believe an increase in age causes an increase in PM except in age group 31 to 40 years. For example, teachers who were 41 to 50 years old had higher PM than those who were within 20 to 31 years old, and had lower PM than those who were 51 years old or more. Figure 4.62 shows the results of the analysis.

(51 years or more > 41 to 50 years > 20 to 30 years)

![Plot of Means](image1)

Figure 2. The linear figure of mean scores of PM and age group

**Research questions 3: Differences of PM in relation to years of service**

Table 3 shows, for years of service the F ratio was significant. F (3, 884) = 9.471, p = 0.000 indicating a significant difference between PM and years of service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Service</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>7480.009</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2493.336</td>
<td>9.471</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>232709.941</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>263.247</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total          | 240189.950     | 887|             |        |      |

Since the F ratio was significant, post hoc tests were performed to examine the nature of differences. Duncan test was used to compare the levels. Teachers believe an increase in the years of service causes an increase in PM except in years of service between 11 to 20 years. For example, teachers who had years of service between 21 to 30 years had higher PM than those who had served 10 years or less, and had lower PM than those who have been in service for 31 years or more. Figure 3 shows the results very well. (31 years or more > 21 to 30 years > 10 years or less)

![Plot of Means](image2)

Figure 3. The linear figure of mean scores of PM and years of service

6. Conclusion and implementation

PM is better than individual based decision making because it produces widely acceptable policies and decisions. In this respect, female teachers are willing to participate in high schools decision-making processes. Managers
attempting to provide maximum opportunities for teachers to participate or be involved in decision making allow free flow of information through open communication channels and grant authority, freedom and autonomy for teachers to make decisions affecting their work (Wood et al., 2004). The result of studies done by Adebzadeh (2004) however differs from the results of the present study. Their findings showed that there were no significant differences among teachers of different educational levels with respect to their perception of PM in Mashhad city. However, Zeyarati (2006) findings corroborates the findings of the present study that, teachers who had more than 10 years of service use PM more than teachers with less years of service. The findings of this study were not in agreement with those of Adebzadeh (2004) who found no significant differences between PM and years of service among teachers in Mashhad. This study suggests the application of the results for achieving suitable strategy for the logical use of human resources in educational organization.

References


