

Does Employee Empowerment Influence Employee Motivation? Findings of A Study on A Multinational Corporation Operating In the IT Industry

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Abstract

In the era of the digital economy, human resources has become the most relevant asset in generating added value that gives companies a significant competitive advantage. Therefore, ensuring that companies implement an appropriate, effective and efficient set of HR practices in the area of employee motivation is of particular importance.

Consequently, this study aims to present a model for analysing the relationship between the practices through which employee empowerment is achieved and the HR practices through which employee motivation is achieved in a multinational corporation operating in the IT industry.

Among the main results obtained, we may mention that there is a statistically significant relationship between the practices through which employee empowerment is achieved and the HR practices through which employee motivation is achieved in the analysed company. In other words, employee empowerment significantly influences the level of employee motivation.

Key words: employee empowerment, employee motivation, organisational culture

J.E.L. classification: M10, M12, M15, M16

1. Introduction

Industrial and trade concepts are being reconfigured and reshaped according to the new global market requirements to serve the world's population, which is also undergoing a process of deep change, given that the global economy does not change or transform at the discretion of a single state or international body and that changes in the global economy are based not so much on contextual factors as on objective factors such as the rapid change in global human resource market trends, a phenomenon that forces the emergence of new perspectives on the approach to human resource practices within companies (Mohamed *et al*, 2019).

In such a context, highly motivated employees are a critical factor for the long-term success of an organisation (Khalili *et al*, 2015). Given this, company managers are becoming increasingly interested in how the elements of control systems affect employee motivation at all organisational levels. Employee empowerment has been advocated by researchers as a way to increase employee motivation (Drake *et al* 2007, p. 72; Nurimansjah *et al*, 2022).

Similarly, research has shown that employees who feel empowered have higher levels of motivation, which, in turn, has been linked to greater organisational effectiveness and performance. Therefore, it is presumed that there is a link between empowerment and motivation, and many studies in the literature have examined this relationship and the ways in which various aspects of a company affect employee empowerment, motivation, satisfaction and performance (Drake *et al* 2007, p. 72).

Certain studies in the literature, based on empirical research, have shown a positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee motivation and performance.

Some authors (Bose, 2018, p. 73) identified significant correlations between employee empowerment and employee performance. According to these studies, any impact of employee empowerment on employee performance is due to some of the behavioural consequences generated by empowerment, notably an improved sense of meaningfulness, as well as an improved sense of responsibility and control (Bose, 2018, p. 73).

Employee empowerment seen as a source of motivation relying on individual self-fulfilment in the form of work, enhancement of competence, self-improvement and influence on work is closely related to employee motivation and performance (Iis *et al*, 2022, p. 12803).

2. Literature review

2.1. Employee empowerment

There are different approaches to defining employee empowerment in the literature. Bose (2018, p. 72) mentions Conger and Kanungo 2008, who linked the concept of employee empowerment with the process of boosting feelings of self-efficacy and eliminating the factors triggering feelings of powerlessness in employees, while other authors emphasised the shift of power to employees as being fundamental to employee empowerment (Bose, 2018, p.72).

Other authors have defined the concept of employee empowerment using four dimensions, namely autonomy, impact, meaningfulness and group strength. As concerns the benefits of employee empowerment in general, studies highlighted aspects such as improved self-control, the feeling of self-fulfilment and the development of self-responsibilities (Bose, 2018, p. 73).

Andika & Darmanto (2020, p. 242) state that empowerment is the authority to make decisions in certain areas without having to get the approval of others. Employee empowerment can make employees fully responsible for what is done in the organisation, thus forcing leaders to learn how to relinquish control, while employees are forced to learn to be responsible for their work and to make the right decisions (Andika & Darmanto, 2020; Paillé & Francoeur, 2021).

Employees who become and feel empowered by their leadership will feel valued through their autonomy, which can lead to improved employee performance (Andika, & Darmanto, 2020; Nurimansjah *et al*, 2022).

Iis *et al* (2022, p. 12803) mention that empowerment is reflected in the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation, through a comprehensive analysis of organisational competences and management. The same authors mention a number of studies in the literature indicating a relationship between the empowerment effect and employees' motivation to work.

Employee empowerment is essentially a process of managing the potential and optimising the use of each individual employee, in the context of career coaching and improvement of organisational performance (Mohamed *et al*, 2019; Khalili *et al*, 2015). Empowerment is well reflected by the concept of intrinsic motivation based on self-fulfilment, competence, self-determination and impact (Iis *et al*, 2022, p. 12804).

Empowerment can be structural or psychological. Structural empowerment is defined as workplace conditions that promote optimal job performance and provide employees with access to information, support and resources (Saleh *et al*, 2022, p. 1).

Psychological empowerment is defined as the individual's cognitive state characterised by a sense of perceived control, competence and goal internalisation. It has four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact (Saleh *et al*, 2022, p. 2).

2.2. Employee motivation

Motivation refers to the efforts a person dedicates to pursuing a goal. It is therefore closely related to employee satisfaction and job performance. Motivation is essential for managers because, by definition, managers must work with others and must therefore influence the behaviour of their subordinates. Managers must understand certain employees' behaviours so they can influence them to work according to the organisation's needs (Mohamed *et al*, 2019). Motivation can thus be defined as the skill of directing employees to want to work successfully in order to achieve organisational goals. Motivation is a force that causes individuals to behave or act in a certain way (Widarko & Brotosuharto, 2022, p. 124).

Motivation can be defined as the ability to transform the behaviour and performance of employees at work. It is considered the internal driving force behind an individual's activities. The psychological and motivational dimensions of human capital development policies should be anticipated to improve

overall organisational performance. In fact, motivation is what differentiates human resources from the other resources used by companies to carry out their activities (Mohamed *et al*, 2019).

In this respect, organisations need to establish effective motivational strategies taking into account their employees' determination and productivity. Statistics in the literature show that motivation has a significant effect on the level of employee performance, and employees with high motivation levels appear to perform better than other employees with lower motivation levels (Tumi *et al*, 2021, p. 3).

Many researchers and authors have defined motivation as the psychological drive that controls a person's level of effort and persistence in the face of obstacles in the workplace. Therefore, the main aspects that make up the definitions of the concept of employee motivation are: effort, direct and unmediated action on the part of the individual, and the different ways of manifesting appropriate behaviour and effort (Tumi *et al*, 2022, p. 12).

Other authors states that motivation is the process of stimulating and encouraging behaviour and performance. This means that motivation is a process of stimulating a person to perform a task, process through which the intensity, direction and disposition of the person's effort to achieve performance is determined (Mohamed *et al*, 2019). Moreover, employee motivation is an important factor affecting employee performance (Iis *et al*, 2022, p. 12806).

Intrinsic motivation is an impulse that arises from a desire to meet unsatisfied needs; it occurs when someone is involved in a task simply for the pleasure of succeeding in it, because that task is interesting and fun in itself, and for self-fulfilment, including for the acquired skills, experience, freedom and creativity it confers (Andika & Darmanto, 2020, p. 242).

Employees who are intrinsically motivated will enjoy jobs that enable them to use their creativity and innovation and to work with a high degree of autonomy, and they do not need to be closely monitored. Therefore, work motivation is expected to improve employee performance (Andika & Darmanto, 2020, p. 242).

Higher motivation leads to job satisfaction. An organisation cannot achieve the desired outcomes without motivated staff, and motivation plays an important role in retaining employees, increasing productivity and consequently improving organisational performance (Saleh *et al*, 2022, p. 2).

3. Research methodology

This study aims to present a model for analysing the relationship between the company practices for empowering employees and the HR practices for motivating employees in a multinational IT corporation.

More specifically, the goal is to present a model for analysing the relationship between employee empowerment (*EE*) and employee motivation (*EM*) in a multinational IT corporation.

The results of the study are based on quantitative methods of data analysis used to assess the respondents' perception of the company practices through which employee empowerment is achieved and of the HR practices through which employee motivation is achieved within the analysed company.

The questionnaire consisted of items aimed at assessing the respondents' perception of company practices for employee empowerment and HR practices for employee motivation.

The analysed variables were rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 - completely disagree; 5 - completely agree).

The research was based on a sample of 323 respondents, managers and employees from the company under study. The following variables were used to build the model for analysing and assessing the practices through which employee empowerment is achieved and the HR practices through which employee motivation is achieved:

- (1) *Employee Empowerment (EE)*
(1.1. - 1.6.) *EE 1 - 6*
- (2) *Employee Motivation (EM)*
(2.1. - 2.8.) *EM 1 - 8*

4. Findings

The analysis of the company practices through which employee empowerment is achieved and of the HR practices through which employee motivation is achieved is based on a construct comprising a set of 6 and a set of 8 simple statistical variables (items) making up 2 aggregate statistical variables, *EE* and *EM* respectively (Table 1).

Table no. 1 Statistics of the variables under analysis

Variable	Index	Cronbach's alpha	Sign	item-test correlation	mean	sd	cv	se(mean)
		α		α				
Employee Empowerment	EE1	0.8771	+	0.6724	4.123839	.6939097	.1682679	.0386102
	EE2	0.8650	+	0.7480	4.074303	.7313238	.1794967	.0406919
	EE3	0.8741	+	0.6918	4.102167	.7991231	.1948051	.0444644
	EE4	0.8689	+	0.7242	4.108359	.7904858	.1924091	.0439838
	EE5	0.8619	+	0.7664	4.021672	.7155077	.177913	.0398119
	EE6	0.8673	+	0.7336	3.993808	.6640447	.1662686	.0369484
<i>EE</i>	-	0.8171	+	0.9996	4.070691	.5292425	.1300129	.0294478
Employee Motivation	EM1	0.9363	+	0.8182	4.124164	.5920231	.1435498	.032941
	EM2	0.9348	+	0.8401	4.056347	.6971425	.1718646	.03879
	EM3	0.9344	+	0.8453	4.049536	.7705919	.1902914	.0428769
	EM4	0.9355	+	0.8299	4.03096	.8445852	.2095246	.046994
	EM5	0.9367	+	0.8134	4.083591	.8610679	.2108605	.0479111
	EM6	0.9372	+	0.8053	4.130031	.7891711	.1910812	.0439107
	EM7	0.9423	+	0.7299	4.018576	.8301174	.20657	.046189
	EM8	0.9399	+	0.7655	3.965944	.7406254	.1867463	.0412095
<i>EM</i>	-	0.9229	+	0.9996	4.057394	.616648	.1519813	.0343112

Source: (Own research)

In the analysis of the main statistical indicators presented in Table 1, it is first to be noted that Cronbach's alpha coefficient registers very high values for all the variables analysed, $\alpha > 0.8$, indicating that all the variables analysed have a very good internal consistency, which means that they are constructed in a relevant way with regard to the measured phenomena, notably employee empowerment and motivation.

As for the other statistical indicators, the variables analysed have good values, as follows:

(1) *Employee Empowerment (EE)*:

(1.1.) The statistical variable *EE1*, which summarises the level of involvement of the company's employees in their activities, has a good mean of 4.1238 and a standard deviation of 0.6939, with a coefficient of variation (cv) of 16.82% and a standard error (se(mean)) of 0.0386.

(1.2.) The statistical variable *EE2*, which summarises the extent to which decisions made within the company are based on adequate authority and the availability of the most appropriate information, has a good mean of 4.0743 and a standard deviation of 0.7313, with a coefficient of variation of 17.94% and a standard error of 0.0406.

(1.3.) The statistical variable *EE3*, which summarises the extent to which information is widely shared within the company so that all employees can get the specific information they need at work, has a good mean of 4.1021 and a standard deviation of 0.7991, with a coefficient of variation of 19.48% and a standard error of 0.0444.

(1.4.) The statistical variable *EE4*, which summarises the extent to which business planning ensures the involvement of all employees in the company's processes, has a good mean of 4.1083 and a standard deviation of 0.7904, with a coefficient of variation of 19.24% and a standard error of 0.0439.

(1.5.) The statistical variable *EE5*, which summarises the extent to which company management effectively develops the process of empowering employees to act and

share their knowledge and experiences openly, has a good mean of 4.0216 and a standard deviation of 0.7155, with a coefficient of variation of 17.79% and a standard error of 0.0398.

(1.6.) The statistical variable *EE6*, which summarises the extent to which the organisational structure based on effective delegation of duties is flexible and promotes innovation in business processes, has a good mean of 3.9938 and a standard deviation of 0.6640, with a coefficient of variation of 16.62% and a standard error of 0.0369.

(1) With regard to the aggregate variable *EE*, which summarises the practices within the company through which employee empowerment is achieved, it has a good mean of 4.0706 and a standard deviation of 0.5292, with a coefficient of variation of 13.00% and a standard error of 0.0294. These results indicate that the company has effective and efficient practices regarding employee empowerment; however, there are opportunities for improvement to further strengthen the level of empowerment applied in the organisation.

(2) *Employee Motivation (EM)*:

(2.1.) The statistical variable *EM1*, which summarises the extent to which company management motivates and mobilises employees to use their full potential in order to achieve the organisation's general and individual specific objectives, has a good mean of 4.1241 and a standard deviation of 0.5920, with a coefficient of variation of 14.35% and a standard error of 0.0329.

(2.2.) The statistical variable *EM2*, which summarises the extent to which employees are adequately and effectively motivated to join and stay with the company, has a good mean of 4.0563 and a standard deviation of 0.6971 with a coefficient of variation of 17.18% and a standard error of 0.0387.

(2.3.) The statistical variable *EM3*, which summarises the extent to which the system of effective reward and recognition of results is appropriate and stimulates individual and team performance, has a good mean of 4.0495 and a standard deviation of 0.7705, with a coefficient of variation of 19.02% and a standard error of 0.0428.

(2.4.) The statistical variable *EM4*, which summarises the extent to which employees are adequately and effectively rewarded, taking into account their performance and degree of achievement of company objectives, has a good mean of 4.0309 and a standard deviation of 0.8445 with a coefficient of variation of 20.95% and a standard error of 0.0469.

(2.5.) The statistical variable *EM5*, which summarises the extent to which the company provides adequate, transparent and effective systems for assessing individual performance, has a good mean of 4.0835 and a standard deviation of 0.8610, with a coefficient of variation of 21.08% and a standard error of 0.0479.

(2.6.) The statistical variable *EM6*, which summarises the extent to which managers encourage employees to use their talent at work and reward them for doing so, has a good mean of 4.1300 and a standard deviation of 0.7891, with a coefficient of variation of 19.10% and a standard error of 0.0439.

(2.7.) The statistical variable *EM7*, which summarises the extent to which employees with high technical skills/competences are loyal to the company, has a good mean of 4.0185 and a standard deviation of 0.8301, with a coefficient of variation of 20.65% and a standard error of 0.0461.

(2.8.) The statistical variable *EM8*, which summarises the extent to which the company's managers provide employees with adequate competences to capture the most important aspects of job specificity, has a good mean of 3.9659 and a standard deviation of 0.7406, with a coefficient of variation of 18.67% and a standard error of 0.0412.

(2) With regard to the aggregate variable *EM*, which summarises the company's HR practices for motivating employees, it has a good mean of 4.0573 and a standard deviation of 0.6166, with a coefficient of variation of 15.19% and a standard error of 0.0343. These results show that the company has effective and efficient practices for employee motivation, i.e. there is a good level of motivation among the surveyed employees; however, there are opportunities for improvement to further strengthen the level of employee motivation.

It is to be noted that the analysed variables summarising the company practices related to employee empowerment and the HR practices related to employee motivation reflect a positive perception on the par of the respondents. Our aim is therefore to identify the existence of any link between the examined variables.

To this effect, we proceeded to the correlational analysis (Table 2) in which can be observed significant and strong correlation coefficients ($\rho > 0.5$) between some of the analysed variables, as follows:

- There is a strong relationship between the *EE1* and *EM1* variables ($\rho = 0.5061$), meaning that the level of involvement of the company's employees in their activities influences the extent to which the company's managers motivate and mobilise employees to use their full potential in order to achieve the organisation's general and individual specific objectives.

Table no. 2 Correlation table

	EE1	EE2	EE3	EE4	EE5	EE6	EE
EM1	0.5061*	0.4989	0.5327*	0.4817	0.4753	0.4791	0.6868*
EM2	0.4606	0.5339*	0.5488*	0.4403	0.4365	0.4683	0.6676*
EM3	0.4241	0.4729	0.4759	0.4398	0.4655	0.4376	0.6272*
EM4	0.3750	0.4186	0.5014*	0.3950	0.4306	0.4544	0.5949*
EM5	0.3465	0.5030*	0.5156*	0.4064	0.4255	0.3702	0.5958*
EM6	0.4355	0.3760	0.5206*	0.4901	0.4955	0.4401	0.6385*
EM7	0.4758	0.4684	0.4044	0.4134	0.4333	0.3608	0.5896*
EM8	0.3466	0.4003	0.4047	0.4148	0.3940	0.4163	0.5489*
EM	0.5185*	0.5677*	0.6038*	0.5375*	0.5508*	0.5281*	0.7643*

* $\rho > 0.5$

Source: (Own research)

- There is a strong relationship between the *EE1* and *EM* variables ($\rho = 0.5185$), meaning that the level of involvement of the company's employees in their activities influences both the HR practices related to employee motivation and the level of employee motivation.
- There is a strong relationship between the *EE2* and *EM2* variables ($\rho = 0.5339$), meaning that the extent to which decisions made within the company are based on appropriate authority and the availability of the most appropriate information influences the extent to which employees are adequately and effectively motivated to join and stay with the company.
- There is a strong relationship between the *EE2* and *EM5* variables ($\rho = 0.5030$), which shows that the extent to which decisions made within the company are based on adequate authority and the availability of the most appropriate information influences the extent to which the company provides adequate, transparent and effective systems for assessing individual performance.

- There is a strong relationship between the *EE2* and *EM* variables ($\rho = 0.5677$), meaning that the extent to which decisions made within the company are based on adequate authority and the availability of the most appropriate information influences both the HR practices related to employee motivation and the level of employee motivation.
- There are strong correlations between the variable *EE3* and the variables *EM1*, *EM2*, *EM4*, *EM5*, *EM6* and *EM* ($\rho = 0.5327$; $\rho = 0.5488$; $\rho = 0.5014$; $\rho = 0.5156$; $\rho = 0.5206$; $\rho = 0.6037$ respectively).
- There is a strong relationship between the *EE4* and *EM* variables ($\rho = 0.5375$).
- There is a strong relationship between the *EE5* and *EM* variables ($\rho = 0.5508$).
- There is a strong relationship between the *EE6* and *EM* variables ($\rho = 0.5281$).
- There are strong relationships between the *EE* variable and all the other variables summarising the company's practices related to employee empowerment ($\rho = 0.6868$; $\rho = 0.6676$; $\rho = 0.6272$; $\rho = 0.5949$; $\rho = 0.5958$; $\rho = 0.6385$; $\rho = 0.5896$; $\rho = 0.5489$); therefore, the HR practices related to employee motivation and the level of employee motivation itself are influenced by, or depend on, the company's practices related to employee empowerment.
- The correlation table also shows that the highest correlation is that between the two aggregate variables *EE* and *EM* ($\rho = 0.7643$), meaning that there is a clear link or dependency between employee empowerment practices and both HR practices related to employee motivation and the level of employee motivation itself.

The results obtained from the correlational analysis justify our further investigation into the relationship between employee empowerment practices on the one hand, and both HR practices related to employee motivation and the level of employee motivation on the other, or in other words, the relationship between employee empowerment and employee motivation.

To this effect, we used linear regression analysis to determine the influence of the *EE* variable summarising employee empowerment practices on the *EM* variable summarising HR practices related to employee motivation.

Table 3 presents a statistical analysis of the impact of the *EE* variable on the *EM* variable. The *EE* variable has a statistically significant impact on the *EM* variable (Prob > F = 0.0000). The change in the *EE* variable explains 58.42% ($R^2 = 0.5842$) of the change in the *EM* variable.

The coefficient of the *EE* variable is equal to 0.8905 and is estimated with p-value = 0.000 ($P > |t| < 0.05$); this means that for every increase by one unit in the *EE* variable, the *EM* variable will increase by 0.8905 units.

Table no. 3 Linear regression

Linear regression		Number of obs	=	323	
		F(1, 321)	=	648.91	
		Prob > F	=	0.0000	
		R-squared	=	0.5842	
		Root MSE	=	.39824	
EM	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
EE	.8905689	.0349602	25.47	0.000	.8217887 .959349
_cons	.4321625	.1492534	2.90	0.004	.1385241 .7258009

Source: (Own research)

Therefore, for a one unit increase or improvement in employee empowerment practices, the HR practices related to employee motivation and the level of employee motivation itself will increase by 0.8905 units. We can thus note that the impact or influence of employee empowerment on employee motivation in the company under study is very high.

Therefore, the analysed company's management should focus on improving and strengthening its practices related to employee empowerment, as these directly determine and influence the level of employee motivation.

5. Conclusions

Certain studies in the literature, based on empirical research, have shown a positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee motivation and performance. These have identified significant correlations between employee empowerment and employee performance. According to some authors, any impact of employee empowerment on employee performance is due to some of the behavioural consequences generated by empowerment, notably an improved sense of meaningfulness, as well as an improved sense of responsibility and control (Bose, 2018, p. 73).

Employee empowerment seen as a source of motivation relying on individual self-fulfilment in the form of work, enhancement of competence, self-improvement and influence on work is closely related to employee motivation and performance (Iis *et al*, 2022, p. 12803).

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More specifically, the goal is to present a model for analysing the relationship between employee empowerment (*EE*) and employee motivation (*EM*) in a multinational IT corporation.

Among the main results obtained, we may mention that impact or influence of employee empowerment on employee motivation in the company under study is very high, therefore, the analysed company's management should focus on improving and strengthening its practices related to employee empowerment, as these directly determine and influence the level of employee motivation.

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