

The exploration of employee involvement model

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Abstract

This research explores the cause variables, which affect employee involvement via diverse orientations. That is to say, it studies the relationship and effect of individual characteristic of personality traits, organizational climate of perspective of Chinese society relationship orientation, and internal marketing upon employee involvement. The population is based upon five companies from the top five Taiwan financial holding groups in Taiwan. The research distributed 200 copies of questionnaire to each company. The number of valid returns was 342, the valid return rate was 34.2%. According to the empirical research finding, high-intensity internal marketing generates positive impact upon employee involvement and low-intensity internal marketing results in negative impact upon employee involvement; the effect of sentiment relationship upon employee involvement is prominent and positive; employees with personality traits of internal control reveal higher level of involvement than those with external control.

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1. Introduction

When most of the mature industries, particularly the industries which mainly offer service, enter the situation of small benefit, in order to upgrade the competitiveness of the enterprise, one would stress creativity, exporting speed and on-time feedback with regard to internal situation. Besides, from the perspective of internal marketing, stimulating the employees and the establishment of reasonable and effective system are also the important means one can employ in the enterprise. The effective operation and the employment of democratization within the enterprise is one of the current or prospective tendencies in many publicly operated and private enterprises. Employee involvement is the means to examine the operation of democratization in the enterprises, which not only diminishes the obstacle of the operation of the system, but also is the way to collect common consensus and pursue the benefits of most of the people. For the industries which gradually pay attention to additional values, apart from upgrading the service standard and content toward the customers, they should also explore how to establish a complete working surrounding, which is not only considerably valued by the employees, but also the basis of the stability of

the enterprise and sustainable operation. In other words, the degree of ‘employee involvement’ affects the achievements of the organization, and it is also the extended demand while the enterprises are pursuing additional values since the employees’ active participation in the process of decision will enhance their centripetal force in the organization as well as upgrade their working satisfaction (Locke & Schweiger, 1979; Miller & Monge, 1986; Schuler, 1980).

The previous researches with respect to the related issues of employee involvement explore the study from the following directions: (1) elaborating the impact of employee involvement upon personal behavior and achievements of the organization by means of different theories or perspectives. For example, through the questionnaire survey with regard to the planners of information system in 105 companies, Basu, Hartono, Lederer, and Sethi (2002) believed that the commitment of the organization, the involvement of middle level managers and the group involvement prominently affected the accomplishment of the objective of strategic information system planning. That is to say, the higher the degree of commitment and involvement is, the more possibility that one will accomplish the strategic objective. Mitchell (1973) integrated the theories of cognition and expectation and further pointed out that employee involvement enhanced the employees’ working objectives, their identification toward the organization and the upgrading of working achievements. Based upon the survey with respect to strategic business units of the enterprises of various countries, Judge and Stahl (1995) believed that the personality traits of middle level managers would affect their

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perceptive capacity. National culture plays the intermediary role. The managers' cognitive degree would affect the operation of strategic projects. In addition, from the perspective of internationalization, Strauss (1982) also proceeded with the comparative analysis with regard to the employee involvement of the projects of different countries. For instance, the most popular project of employee involvement in America was 'the quality of work life': one improved the work life of the employees of basic level via the discussion of the employees and middle level managers. Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) believed that internal marketing could be developed from different levels and perspectives. The first level was based upon the satisfaction of simulation with regard to the employees, i.e. to treat the employees as the internal customers and upgrade their satisfaction with the work. The second level was to integrate the internal opinions via the means of interactive marketing of customer orientation. The third level was to operate the strategies with regard to the company or functions via the conception of expanding internal marketing in order to respond to the change of the environment. (2) Regarding the content planned in the strategic project as the subject of exploration, for instance, how does employee involvement project affects production force, quality of work life, and commitment of organization and group evaluated by various empirical evidences (Griffin, 1988; Marks, Mirvis, Hackett, & Grady, 1986; Mellor, 1992)? Based upon the survey with respect to 69 Sweden companies, Ingelgard and Norvgren (2001) found out that the strategy of learning how to respond to the change of the surrounding was beneficial to the employees' working adjustment. Besides, the employees' participation was not only one of the factors which constructed the vision of the organization, but also the aspect that influenced the objective of reformation. Babin and Boles (1996) pointed out that the perception of the employees toward their colleagues' involvement as well as the support of the chiefs could reduce the pressure in the company and enhance the working satisfaction. In other words, the researchers stressed how the working surrounding of the employees or the cognition of the organizational climate affect the production of the work. (3) Exploring the relationship between the cause and outcome variables from the perspective of human resources management, for instance, McMahan, Bell, and Virick (1998) and Schuler (1980) pointed out the cause variables, which affected employee involvement such as character traits (character expectation and conflict), the scale of organization, structure traits and outcome variables (e.g. the effect of personal and organizational achievements and working satisfaction).

Although in the past, there were rare studies with regard to the issues related to employee involvement, one could still find the following aspects useful for further explorations, which are the objectives of this research. (1) The previous studies mostly explored the issue of employee involvement from the perspective of Western democratic decision and the said studies rarely discussed the subject from the standpoint of relationship orientation of Chinese society. (2) The information analysis with respect to previous studies was mostly based upon the qualitative case analysis or statistic method and rarely

employed the analytic method of non-linear Neuro Fuzzy model. (3) This research explored the cause variables, which affect employee involvement from the perspective of various dimensions. In other words, the research studied the relationship and effect of individual traits (personality traits), organizational climate (the perspective of relationship orientation) and internal marketing with regard to employee involvement, which was different from the previous studies that merely explored the cause and outcome variables from single perspective.

2. Literature review

2.1. Internal marketing

The previous marketing treated the employees as the internal customers and intended to fulfill the demand and desire of internal customers under the condition of complying with the operational objective of the company (Berry, 1981; Tansuhaj, Randall, & McCullough, 1988). In the past, there were many scholars who participated in the act of stimulating the employees to approach the objectives, which resulted in the orientation of customers and market (Gronroos, 1985; Johnson & Seymour, 1985). In other words, they employed more concrete project of stimulation. For example, via educational training and measures of stimulation, they allowed the employees to access to the mission and objective of the enterprise and they would further expect that in order to efficiently serve external customers, they must enhance the employees' internal common consensus and the employees' identification with the enterprise, which allowed the internal personnel of the company to efficiently convey the project of external marketing and carry out the project (Piercy & Morgan, 1991). Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) further pointed out that internal marketing included five elements, which were employees' stimulation and satisfaction, orientation of customer, customers' satisfaction, the adjustment and integration of internal functions and the strategy for executing specific function of the company. George and Gronroos (1989) and Gronroos (1990) redefined the meaning of internal marketing: "via aggressive, active and nearly marketing act as well as the means of integration and adjustment, the organization provides the best encouragement and stimulation to the internal employees with regard to developing service consciousness and orientation of customers." According to the previous definitions related to internal marketing, one can find out that the company paid attention to fulfill the demand of the employees and regarded stimulating and remaining excellent employees as the main developmental strategy (Berry, 1981; Berry & Parasuraman, 1991; Gronroos, 1985).

Consequently, the perspective of internal marketing has developed from the perspective of human resource or marketing into perspective of diverse dimensions. For instance, Rafiq and Ahmed (1993) pointed out that in order to achieve the objective of external market, the organization had to enhance efficient operation with regard to the internal exchange relationship between the organization and its employees.

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