

The relationship between social capital and employee participation in Gorgan medical science university

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we investigate the relationship between social capital and employee participation in Gorgan Medical Science University. The results of our study indicate that there is an indirect relationship between employee participation networks and employee participation, an indirect relationship between trust and closeness with employee participation and there is an indirect relationship between employee closeness and employee participation. Our investigation shows that there is a relationship between trust grade and employee participation. In other words, as trust grade increases there is an increase in employee participation. Another observation is that there is an indirect relationship between employee communication networks and participation. Another observation is that there is a direct relationship between communication network and closeness as well as trust, which means that as communicational network increases, trust and closeness grades in organization increase too.

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1. Introduction

Social capital is sum of real and potential resources, which exists in communication net-work among people. Social capital involves increasing of bilateral communications, trust, friendship, and cooperation among people. Social capital is one of the most important concepts in economic and social study area in the world. Social capital is sum of the existing norms in the social systems, which causes enhancing of cooperation level of the social members and decreasing of exchange and communication charges (Lawler et al., 1992). Social capital has a deep and strong effect on various aspects of the life and it's development. The capital reflects social relations in an organization as well as it leads to better use of physical, financial and humanitarian resources of an organization. There are many evidences, which indicate the social capital leads to increase the cooperation and participation in an organization. The cause of the increase is because of the trust, delivered from social capital,

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which increase relying on the goals and plans of management and the organization among employees and leading to participation in achievement to them. The participation is a natural and innate requirement of a human being. The participation has been one of the important tools in human life and nowadays in prosperous organizations; the employees participate in decisions, which are associated with their works. In the recent decades, the participation role has been uncovered, progressively.

Recently, participation theory and the advantages has become practical tool and it seems that the theory bears advantages for both employees and employers. As a result, for achieving to daily progress and development in the organizations in the fields of management, work force, efficiency, achievement in completion, the true and achieving participation in the decisions and organizational affairs, seem necessary. During the past few decades, there has been an increase for the participation of the employees in organizational affairs. The researches show that many of the leading organizations somehow make use of employee participation systems in the organizational affairs (lawler et al., 1992). Employee participation advantages appeared in comparing of the traditional organizations with modern organizations, which use participation systems (Macy et al., 1989; Bush & Spangler, 1990; Gay & Diehl, 1992).

In this paper, we study the relationship between social capital and employee participation to investigate the importance of the participation and its role in achieving the organizational goals. The proposed study of this paper is implemented among employees of Gurgan Medical University and the results are discussed.

2. Social capital kinds

Putnam (2002) divided social capital kinds into four groups and the employee participation kinds in the following sub-groups.

2.1 Formal and informal capital participation

Some of social capital forms, like parents and faculty organizations or the unions are formally organized, as they have famous charges, membership conditions, duties, pointed meetings and so on. However, the organizing soccer games or the people who gather in a restaurant are very informal. Both of them form next works that bilateral relations developed in them and the relations can produce special and public results (Becker, 1996).

2.2 Thick and thin social capital

Some of social capitals are strongly interlaced and are multiplex. For instance, consider a group of copper workers who work with each other in a manufactory every day. They go outside to play soccer every Saturdays, and go to church every Sundays. There are very tough thin social networks and they are nearly the invisible fields, of social capitals, like greeting that, some people in the grocery's line do, or meeting another one in an elevator (Bowles & Gintis, 2002).

2.3 Inward and out ward – looking social capitals

Some of the social capital forms are inward-looking and tend to increase material, social and political interests of their members, whereas other forms are outward-looking and they deal with the public interest.

2.4 Bridging and bonding social capital

Polarization in inward-looking and outward-looking has close relationships with bridging and bonding aspects, but menacingly they vary from the others. Social capital, continuously gathers the

people who are alike in important aspects such as race, age, gender, social rank and so on (Potnam, 2002).

2.5 Chained social capital

Woolcock (2001) introduced another social capital named Chained-like besides bridging and bonding social capital.

2.6 State and civil social capital

There are two types of social capitals: State social capital involves contracts, practicable social laws, and civil freedom limitations. Civil social capital involves common values and customs, norms, informal networks and membership in the unions (Portes, 1998).

3. Participation demands

The participation in every organization can be studied with regard to five demands as follows.

3.1 Participation grade

The participation grade is influence and control level of the employees on organizational decisions; totally, participation grade can be divided to 3 primary trunks.

3.1.1 participation extent

Another one of the participation demands is extent of the issues that the employees have the right to express their ideas about them. The issues that the employees can participate in them are: participation at technical issues and ways of the execution of them. Participation at the decisions related to employment issues and work force, like select and employment, appointment and work distribution, evaluation, trunk of occupations, wage pay, safety and health, vacations, welfare services, dining saloons, residence, and so on, participation at appointing of economic and financial policies, which includes participation at regeneration of the organization and participation at selection of the managements.

3.2 Participation limits

Participation limits point to the issue when the employees participate at the decisions either directly or indirectly.

3.3 Participation basis

Another demand of the participation is associated with formal or informal being of the participation.

3.4 Participation level

Another kind of participation demands is the organizational level that the participation accure in it. The participation can divided into strategic level, middle management and operational managers and supervisors levels.

4. Employee participation techniques

There are different techniques for employee participation, which are as follows.

4.1 Information dividing

The base and foundation of all employee participation techniques is the information divided into primary factor of all activities related to the participation. The lack of information of the employees regarding organizational output, entity and disputes related to organizational activity, as well as the lack of information reasons regarding decisions, which affect occupation situation, leading to frustration and despondency of them and the employees will not have loyalty and faithfulness to the organization and its goals.

4.2 Survey feedback

Surveying is a useful way because it is a time-saving way for participation of many, as well as it is a useful tool for governing to developments of activities related to work–life quality improvement or organizational circumstances.

4.3 Suggestion systems

Suggestion system is one of the ways for employee participation at any organization. The execution goals of suggestion systems are work improvement, humanitarian relations between the employees and management, etc.

4.4 Substantial group way

This way is relatively fast and simple for employee participation at different organizational issues, both knowing of improvement opportunities to appointment of organizational goals. The groups members are selected as people from all different levels of the organizations with several responsibilities participate at it. The process involves four stages:

4.4.1 Giving ideas in silence

The audience is wanted to write their ideas if they tend to it.

4.4.2 Circuitous request

Every participant must in turn give his/her vote.

4.4.3 Explanatory discussion

After registration all the votes, the administrator shows in turn every vote then wants from audience to ask their questions about that.

4.4.4 Vote and classifying

Every participant is asked to select the best vote.

4.5 Task forces

Work forces are the least requirement for executing of solution to a problem, work forces, simply, are a group of managers and the employees who gather for solution to a special problem.

4.6 Quality circles

The quality circles are small teams of volunteers from a special work-field. The team members, with selecting a special problem gather the information, and then with using different ways, give their suggestion to the manager.

4.7 Natural work teams

The executing of the way starts with knowing of natural work teams in the organization. A natural work team involves some of the employees organized during a unique work process. They rely on each other in their professional works, and have a common supervisor.

4.8 Autonomous work teams

The autonomous teams involve a group of employees with a high grade of option and responsibilities in the decisions. The team members organize and lead themselves inside it and they govern the team.

5. Theoretic framework and study analytical model

In this model, organizational social capital concepts have been divided on the basis of its factors as well as its effect has been studied on the employee participation. The study model was completed after analytical statistics due to adding of demography varieties. Fig. 1 shows details of our study.

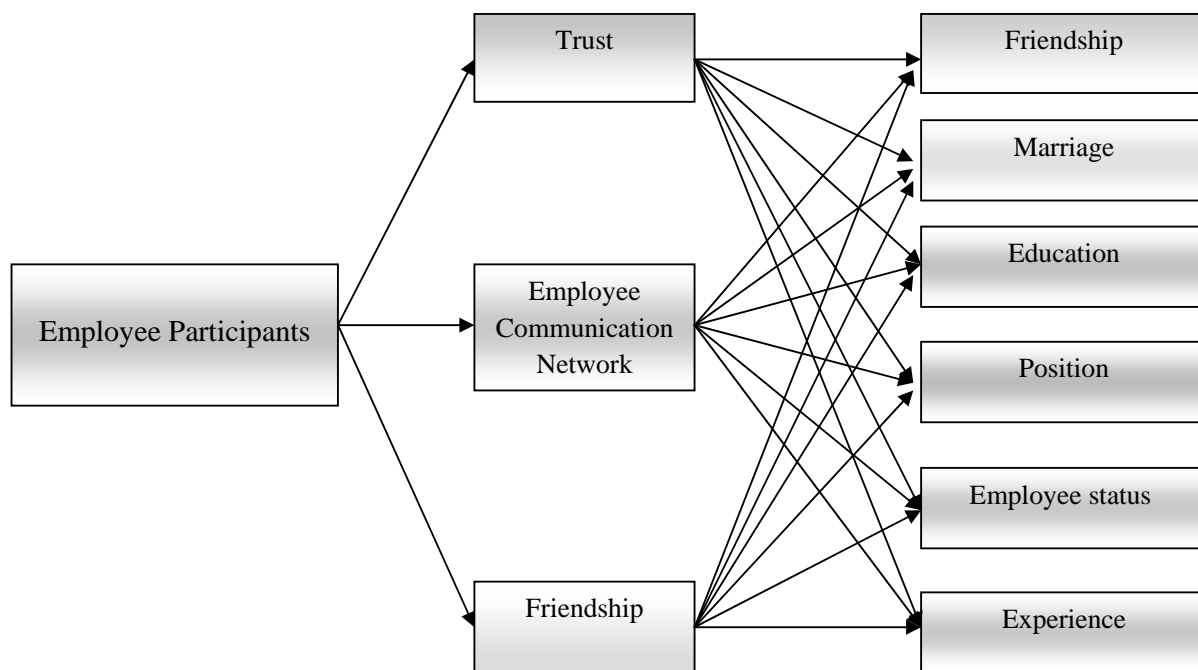


Fig. 1. The framework of the proposed study

The main objective is to know the relationship between social capital and employee participation in Gorgan Medical Science University. There are other minor issues, which are learning more about the relationship between employee communicational network and employee participation rate in the studied organization and the relationship between trust among employees and managers with employee participation rate in the studied organization. The main hypothesis is the relationship between social capital and employee participation in Gorgan Medical Science University. There are two subordinate hypotheses, which are as follows,

1. Employee friendship has relations with employee participation in Gorgan Medical Science University .
2. Employee communicational networks have relations with employee participation in Gorgan Medical Science University.
3. The trust between employees and managers has the relations with employee participation rate in Gorgan Medical Science University.

5.1 The methodology

The present questionnaire is planned with regard to the existing questionnaires in other articles. Cronbach Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) for different questions are calculated. The results for ten questions associated with Trust is 85%, Communication networks with seven questions is 81%, Friendship with five questions is 65%, Social capital with twenty two questions is 88% and Employee participation with 24 questions is 95%.

5.2 Statistical Community

The statistical community of the study involves managers and employees of Gorgan Medical Science University. The managers involve superior manager, middle manager and operational managers. There are approximately 700 people involved in our survey. The sample size is calculated using the following formula,

$$n = \frac{N \times z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}{\varepsilon^2 \times (N - 1) + z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}, \quad (1)$$

where N is the population size, $p=1-q$ represents the yes/no categories, $z_{\alpha/2}$ is CDF of normal distribution and finally ε is the error term. Since we have $p = 0.5$, $z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$, $\varepsilon = 0.02$ and $N=700$, the number of sample size is calculated as $n=276$ and we have decided to choose $n=300$. Data analyzing method of the questioner is contemporary using of explanation and inferential statistics. So frequency distribution table was used in explanation statistics and variance matrix and covariance analyzing were used in the inferential statistics. The proposed path analysis uses nine independent variables and one dependent variable.

Independent Variable	Gender Experience	Marriage Trust-com	Education Net-com	Position Closeness	Employee status (Emp- stat)
Dependent Variable	Employee participation (Particma)				

Table 1

Direct relationships of variables

Direct relations of variables	Estimate value	Standardized value	Standard error	T value	P-value
Trust and participative management	0.76	0.32	0.10	8.29	P<0.01
Closeness and participative management	2.49	0.52	0.22	11.8	P<0.01
Gender and participative management	-2.57	-0/07	1.25	-2.05	P<0.01
Position and participative management	3.32	0.16	0.87	3.84	P<0.01
Empstat and participative management	-1.35	-0.08	0.66	-2.05	P<0.01
Netcom and trust	0.43	0.50	0.044	9.97	P<0.01
Netcom and closeness	0.25	0.59	0.017	14.75	P<0.01
Gender and Netcom	4.81	0.28	0.89	5.38	P<0.01
Education and trust	1.97	0.24	0.45	4.37	P<0.01
Position and Netcom	3.29	0.32	0.54	6.10	P<0.01
Position and closeness	0.58	0.13	0.16	3.70	P<0.01
Empstat and trust	-1.45	-0.20	0.44	-3.28	P<0.01
Experience and trust	0.98	0.14	0.40	2.45	P<0.01
Trust and closeness	0.13	0.26	0.019	6.69	P<0.01

Table 2 also shows details of the indirect relationships between different items.

Table 2

Indirect relationships

Indirect relations of the capote participation	Estimate value	Standardized cellule	Standard error	T value	Meaning full level
Communicational net-works	1.10	0.54	0.08	13.23	$P < 0.01$
Educational level	2.13	0.11	0.53	4.05	$P < 0.01$
Experience	1.06	0.06	0.44	2.39	$P < 0.01$

Table 3 demonstrates details of direct and indirect relationships.

Table 3

The direct and indirect relations of different variables in employee participation model

The direct and indirect relations in employee participation model	Estimated value	Standardized value	Standard error	T value	Meaningful level	Rank
Trust	1.08	0.32	0.10	8.29	P<0.01	3
Communicational networks	1.10	0.54	0.08	13.28	P<0.01	1
Closeness	2.49	0.52	0.22	11.18	P<0.01	2
Gender	5.30	0.15	1.06	4.99	P<0.01	5
Education	2.13	0.11	0.53	4.05	P<0.01	6
o. position	5.08	0.24	0.77	6.56	P<0.01	4
Emp- status	-1.57	-0.09	0.50	3.14	P<0.01	8
Experience	1.06	0.06	0.44	2.39	P<0.01	7

As we can observe from the results of Table 3, communicational network is rank one in terms of importance, followed by closeness, trust, position, education, experience and employee status. Table 4 shows details of examining various hypotheses based on different index title.

Table 4

Details of different hypotheses

Index title	value	Range of acceptable	Result	Explanation
X2/df	12.11/14	X2/df<2	Confirm model	Chi square divided to degree of freedom
p-value	.059786	p>0.05	Confirm model	Significance level
RMSEA	0.000	RMSEA<0.09	Confirm model	Root mean square error of approximation
RMR	0.85	RMR>0	Confirm model	Root mean square residual
GFI	0.99	GFI>0.90	Confirm model	Goodness of fit index
AGFI	0.97	AGFI>0.85	Confirm model	Adjusted Goodness of fit index
NFI	0.99	NFI>0.90	Confirm model	normal fit index
CFI	1.00	CFI>0.90	Confirm model	cooperate fit index v
IFI	1.00	IFI>0.90	Confirm model	Incremental fit index

Based on the results we have, we can reject the first null hypothesis in favor of alternative one, which means there is an indirect relationship between employee participation networks and employee participation. The second hypothesis is also studies the relationship between trust and closeness with employee participation and the results of our test reject the second null hypothesis, concluding that there is an indirect relationship between trust and closeness with employee participation. The third hypothesis investigates the relationship between employee closeness and employee participation. Again, our results indicate that there is an indirect relationship between these two items.

The other observation from the results of our investigation is that there is a relationship between trust grade and employee participation for the case study of this paper. In other words, as trust grade increases there is an increase in employee participation. Another observation is that there is an indirect relationship between employee communication networks and participation. Another observation is there is a direct relationship between communication network and closeness as well as trust, which means as communicational network increases, trust and closeness grades in organization increase too. Our study indicates that employee communicational network grade for the case study of our proposed model is in average level. Another observation is that organizational closeness grade increases will lead to an increase in employee participation. The average grade in the case study of the proposed study is in low level.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we have investigated the relationship between social capital and employee participation in Gorgan Medical Science University. There are three main hypothesis with the proposed study of

this paper. The results of our study indicated that there was an indirect relationship between employee participation networks and employee participation, an indirect relationship between trust and closeness with employee participation and there is an indirect relationship between employee closeness and employee participation. Our investigation indicated that there was a relationship between trust grade and employee participation for the case study of this paper. In other words, as trust grade increases there is an increase in employee participation. Another observation was that there was an indirect relationship between employee communication networks and participation. Another observation was that there was a direct relationship between communication network and closeness as well as trust, which means as communicational network increases, trust and closeness grades in organization increase too.

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