

Investigating the Influence of Employee Input on Leadership Efficacy within the Banking Industry

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Abstract

The evolving workplace dynamics highlight the crucial role of employees in organizational success, with leadership playing a pivotal role in fostering and facilitating employee input. The study, encompassing 462 employees from the top 26 banking institutions in India, demonstrates a positive relationship between various forms of employee voice and the adoption of transformational leadership styles. Transformational leaders cultivate an environment conducive to employee input by fostering trust, openness, and a shared vision. In return, employee voice enriches the effectiveness of transformational leadership by providing valuable insights and a nuanced understanding of organizational dynamics. The study underscores the importance of integrating employee voice and transformational leadership, offering practical strategies such as active listening, empowerment, recognition, and transparent communication to foster a harmonious relationship. By embracing these strategies, organizations can leverage the collective intelligence of their workforce, adapt to change, and achieve sustained growth, contributing to the ongoing discourse on organizational dynamics and optimizing workplace cultures for long-term success.

Keywords: Employee Input, Leadership Efficacy, Workplace Dynamics, Organizational Success and Transformational Leadership.

Introduction

The synergy between effective leadership and active employee engagement is essential for organizational success (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass & Riggio, 2006), highlighting the importance of fostering empowered and motivated employees amidst workplace changes (Harter et al., 2002). This study aims to explore how employee voice contributes to organizational vitality, recognizing it as a valuable resource for innovation and problem-solving (Brown & Cregan, 2008; Morrison, 2014), while also promoting organizational learning and adaptability (Morrison, 2014). Employee involvement in decision-making correlates with increased job satisfaction and organizational dedication (Brown & Cregan, 2008).

This study addresses the gap in understanding the relationship between employee voice and leadership strategies, emphasizing the importance of employee input for organizational effectiveness (Dundon et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2019). Focusing on the banking sector, it investigates how leadership practices either facilitate or hinder employee voice expression and its impact on organizational performance (Dundon et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2019). The research aims to provide insights for leaders, HR professionals, and researchers to create empowering workplace environments (Decramer et al., 2013).

Literature Review

Employee Input

Employee input, encompassing the expression of opinions and ideas within organizations, is a proactive communication behavior recognized for its potential to enhance organizational processes and outcomes (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Liang et al., 2012). This multifaceted concept, as described by Morrison (2014), includes various means of expression, from traditional grievance procedures to modern strategies like social media engagement, contributing to improved organizational outcomes and employee well-being (Donaghey et al., 2011).

Both promotive and prohibitive voices play crucial roles in organizational functioning, with promotive voice involving employees actively contributing ideas to enhance processes and outcomes, while prohibitive voice entails raising concerns and identifying risks (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Li et al., 2010). Recent research emphasizes the importance of considering both types of voice as complementary rather than mutually exclusive, contributing to a comprehensive feedback mechanism for organizational improvement (Grant & Mayer, 2009). These expressions of voice are influenced by organizational culture, particularly one that values open communication and psychological safety, thereby encouraging employees to voice both innovative ideas and concerns (Wheeler-Smith, 2011; Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, & Kamdar, 2011).

Effective employee voice mechanisms contribute to organizational growth and adaptability (Rusbult et al., 1988), while also correlating with increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Brown & Cregan, 2008). Organizational culture, particularly one that values openness and collaboration, plays a pivotal role in shaping employees' willingness to

express their viewpoints (Morrison, 2014), with hierarchical and autocratic cultures potentially hindering effective employee voice mechanisms (Wilkinson et al., 2017). Empowering employees to voice their ideas enhances organizational innovation processes (Nishii & Wright, 2008), facilitated further by technological advancements such as social media platforms (Morrison, 2014). However, the acceptance and nature of employee voice may vary across different cultural contexts (Farndale et al., 2014). Effective employee voice mechanisms also contribute to organizational learning and continuous improvement by facilitating issue resolution (Gollan & Wilkinson, 2007), ultimately leading to higher levels of job satisfaction among the workforce (Nawakitphaitoon & Zhang, 2021).

Leadership Effectiveness

Leadership, encompassing various styles and behaviors, is a crucial process guiding organizational success by inspiring and influencing individuals towards shared goals (Liphadzi et al., 2017; Gochmann et al., 2022). Transformational leadership, characterized by charisma and vision, significantly impacts employee voice by fostering an ethical environment conducive to open communication (M. E. Brown & Treviño, 2006). Early theories focused on identifying intrinsic traits and observable actions of leaders (Stogdill, 1948; Fleishman et al., 1992; Jaqua & Jaqua, 2021), while contingency theories introduced the notion of situational effectiveness (Fiedler, 1967). Transformational leadership emphasizes inspiration and motivation, contrasting with transactional leadership's focus on contingent rewards and management by exception (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Greenleaf's servant leadership emphasizes humility and empathy (Greenleaf, 1977), while authentic leadership promotes self-awareness and ethical decision-making, fostering trust and positive organizational cultures (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

Various leadership styles, including despotic and democratic approaches, have distinct impacts on organizational outcomes, with despotic leadership associated with task effectiveness but potentially lower employee satisfaction, while democratic leadership fosters satisfaction and cohesion (Carr, 1969; Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Gender stereotypes influence perceptions of leadership behavior (Eagly & Johnson, 1990), and adaptive leadership is essential for fostering resilience in teams. Cultural dimensions theory informs understanding of how leadership varies across cultures (Ferreira et al., 2014), and effective leadership development programs enhance leadership skills and situational awareness (Day et al., 2009). In the digital age, transformational leaders are adept at navigating digital complexities, fostering innovation and adaptability (Bass & Riggio, 2006), highlighting the nuanced and context-dependent nature of effective leadership (Aloysius, 2010).

Relationship between Employee Input and Leadership

The dynamic interplay between employee voice and leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership, is crucial for organizational effectiveness (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008). Employee voice, encompassing the expression of thoughts and concerns, is positively associated with transformational leadership, which fosters open communication and psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). A culture that values innovation and teamwork encourages employee voice, contributing to a reciprocal relationship that enhances organizational culture and effectiveness (Detert & Edmondson, 2011; Istiqomah & Trinarningsih, 2022). Transformational leaders who actively listen to employee input and encourage participation foster trust and accountability, ultimately leading to a more supportive work environment (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012; Eisenbeiss et al., 2008). Research indicates that employee voice positively influences transformational leadership, creating a cycle where both concepts reinforce each other, leading to enhanced employee satisfaction and organizational performance (Wang, 2013; Kim & Ishikawa, 2021).

H1: Promotive voice positively influences Transformational leadership.

H2: Prohibitive voice positively influences Transformational leadership.

Methodology

Data was collected from India's top 26 financial institutions, with approximately 36% reporting formal incorporation of employee voice. Both managerial and non-managerial employees were surveyed, with 600 questionnaires distributed and 482 returned, resulting in an 80.3% response rate. After eliminating 20 questionnaires with the lowest standard deviations, 462 responses were used for analysis. Surveys were conducted in English using a 5-point Likert scale, and data was collected through personnel visits, emails, and social media apps. Promotive and prohibitive voices were measured using a 10-item scale developed by Liang et al. (2012), while transformational leadership was assessed using a 7-item Global transformation scale by Carless et al. (2000). Data analysis was performed using Smart PLS 4 and SPSS 21.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Evaluation of Measurement Model

Table No 1

Construct	Scaled Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Promotive Voice	PMV1	0.833	0.945	0.875	0.734
	PMV2	0.834			

	PMV3	0.854			
	PMV4	0.855			
	PMV5	0.863			
Prohibitive Voice	PHV1	0.822	0.869	0.832	0.644
	PHV2	0.843			
	PHV3	0.863			
	PHV4	0.855			
	PHV5	0.824			
Transformational Leadership	TL1	0.843	0.938	0.854	0.756
	TL2	0.883			
	YL3	0.787			
	TL4	0.844			
	TL5	0.794			
	TL6	0.865			
	TL7	0.836			

It can be inferred that, the indicator reliability, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha (α), and average variance extracted (AVE). Indicators with loadings greater than 0.7 and composite reliability (CR) exceeding 0.7 are considered reliable, following the criteria outlined by Hair et al. (2012). Convergent validity of the indicators is established, indicated by AVE values surpassing the 0.5 threshold, as suggested by Sarstedt et al. (2017).

Table No 2

	Mean	Standard Deviation	PMV	PHV	TL
PMV	0.326	0.675	1	0.454	0.433
PHV	0.324	0.732		1	0.532
TL	0.406	0.623			1

To assess discriminant validity, the Heterotriat-Monotrait correlation (HTMT) was utilized. The HTMT values, displayed in Table 2, are below the cut-off of 0.85 suggested by Sarstedt et al. (2020). Thus, the measurement model confirms discriminant validity, indicating that each construct within the model is distinct.

Structural Model Assessment

Table No 3

Construct	Promotive Voice	Transformational Leadership	Prohibitive Voice
Promotive Voice		1.669	
Prohibitive Voice			
Transformational Leadership		1.448	

Table No 4

	Transformational Leadership	Result
R Square	0.51	Medium
Q Square	0.23	Medium

When evaluating the structural model, it is essential to verify the constructs' collinearity. Multicollinearity among variables is indicated by a variance inflation factor (VIF) of five or higher, as outlined by Hair et al. (2016). In the current model, all VIF scores are below 5, indicating the absence of multicollinearity issues (see Table 3). Subsequently, the explanatory power (R^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) of the model were assessed. R^2 values of 0.25 are considered poor, 0.5 moderate, and 0.7 excellent in terms of explanatory power, according to Sarstedt et al. (2017). For predictive relevance, threshold values for Q^2 greater than 0.50, 0.25, and 0 are indicative of large, medium, and small predictive importance in the PLS-path model, as suggested by Hair et al. (2019) (refer to Table 4).

Table No 5

Hypotheses	Relationship	Path Coefficient	T value	P value	Decision
H1	PMV-→TL	1.39**	3.432	0.001	Supported
H2	PHV-→TL	1.67**	4.233	0.000	Supported

Note: PMV: Promotive Voice, PHV: Prohibitive Voice, TL: Transformational Leadership Significant level; $p^* < 0.001$, $p^{**} < 0.05$

Structural equation modeling was utilized to examine the influence of promotive and prohibitive voices on transformational leadership style. The standard path coefficient for promotive voice on transformational leadership is 1.39, significant at $p < 0.05$, supporting H1. Similarly, the path coefficient for prohibitive voice on transformational leadership is 1.67, significant at $p < 0.001$, thus supporting H2.

Discussion and Findings

This study synthesizes empirical findings and theoretical frameworks to elucidate the complex interplay between employee voice and transformational leadership, revealing how employees' proactive expression of ideas influences leadership styles in organizational settings. The results indicate a significant impact of promotive voice on transformational leadership ($p < 0.05$), as well as a significant impact of prohibitive voice on transformational leadership ($p < 0.001$). Literature suggests a reciprocal relationship between employee voice and transformational leadership, with authentic leadership emerging as a product of organizational climates that value employee input (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Participative decision-making, a key aspect of employee voice, is identified as a catalyst for transformational leadership behaviors (Liang et al., 2012). Theoretical frameworks rooted in social exchange theory and transformational leadership theory provide a robust understanding of these dynamics (Düger, 2020). Empirical evidence supports these propositions, indicating that organizations fostering employee voice witness leaders who inspire and motivate, thereby creating an innovative and engaged workplace culture (Detert & Burris, 2007).

Conclusion

The comprehensive examination of the interplay between employee voice and leadership has unveiled a nuanced interaction crucial for organizational dynamics. The acknowledged positive correlation between transformational leadership and the encouragement of employee voice underscores the pivotal role of leadership in fostering open communication and a culture of trust within organizations (Islam et al., 2020). While the study acknowledges limitations, such as potential self-report biases and the need for a more diverse exploration of leadership styles and organizational contexts (Valldeneu et al., 2021), organizational leaders aiming to enhance employee engagement, satisfaction, and innovation through the active promotion and appreciation of employee voice can derive significant benefits from the insights provided by this review. Further research endeavors should address identified gaps and utilize diverse methodologies to broaden our understanding of this fundamental relationship in various organizational settings (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016).

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