THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DIMENSIONS ON EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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3. Acknowledgements

5.2 Enhanced Executive Summary

As one of the nation leading university, UiTM commitment to Quality Management System (QMS) is absolutely unquestionable and its implementation has been right from its establishment and has been growing ever stronger until this present day and definitely through its future years. Knowing that the success of any QMS initiative will depend on its employee involvement, identifying the antecedents to this behavioral attributes is thus crucial. This study has successfully identified 7 organizational climate dimensions that would contribute to employee involvement to the quality management initiative. These OC dimensions are integration, supervisory support, effort, feedback, quality, flexible and formalization. The multiple regression model resulted in the adjusted R2 of 0.61 is considerably high (61% predictive ability). The most significant dimension is feedback (B=0.280), followed by quality (B=0.233), flexible (B=0.196), integration (B=0.84), formalization (B=-0.157), supervisory support (B=0.136) and lastly effort (B=0.127).

To ensure high employee involvement with the QMS initiative, management need to put in place an effective and immediate employee feedback mechanism. Though important, supervisory support rank least significant of the OC dimensions, showing that they are just to provide direction and authority, whilst the employee commitment to quality management has to be intrinsic. Another very interesting outcome is that, while all other dimensions of OC have positive relationship to employee involvement, formalization has a negative relationship. Higher employee involvement is the outcome of lower bureaucracy. For the quality management to be successful, participant need to have freedom to work beyond formal limits, as this is the bedrock of innovative and creative behavior. An important element embedded in quality management system is continuous improvement (kaizen). An organization to entrench in birocracy will restrict innovative culture among its employees.

Descriptive statistics is another important aspect of this study. It gives a snap-shot of what is going on in an organization. Employee involvement and all dimensions of OC have only moderate score on the Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). None of the variable has a means score of more than 4. The respective mean score for the entire variable are; Involvement (2.80), quality (3.33), formalization (3.15), integration (2.87), supervisory support (2.84), feedback (2.83) and flexible (2.63). Management has to see this situation as a challenge for further increase their effort to ensure stronger employee involvement and more pro "quality management climate" in the organization.

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5.3 Introduction

Employee involvement (EI) is frequently recognized as an important enabler of a host of quality management initiatives. EI is the extent to which employees producing a product or offering a service had a sense of controlling their work, receiving information about their performance and being rewarded for the performance of the organization (Lawler, Mohrman and Ledford, 1992).

A bulk of EI research has been conducted in the organizational behavior area. However, the effects of EI on employee satisfaction and/or performance, and also organizational performance are still equivocal. These findings also effect the generally positive conclusions reached in the quality management literature. Different EI practices exhibit different results; thus combining diverse practices can yield inconclusive findings (Cotton, 1993).

Quality management's scholars believe that if organization will change their management system to be more participative by involving employees in problem solving, decision making and strategy formulation, firms will improve the performance (Rao, 1996). At the heart of TQM is the concept of intrinsic motivation-involvement in decision making. It is popular approach of good management that human resources are most important dimension in quality productivity improvement (Ross, 1994).

Some researches believe that EI is associated with quality activities such as quality circle and communication. Evans (1995) and Hogan (1992) suggested that employees should participate in advisory groups to voice concerns and exchange views on quality issues. For example, two hotels in their study use employees focus groups, called "employee exchange communication meeting', as a means of giving employees an opportunity to address their concerns or to provide input on upcoming issues.

Research also has shown that job enrichment and task characteristics such as skill variety and autonomy are directly associated with higher work quality and employee satisfaction (Kopelman, 1986). In addition, Partlow (1996) suggested that TQM should be more supported by human resources practices such as EI. Therefore, it is evidenced that EI and TQM are interrelated.

Organizational climate, as suggested by West et al. (1982), refers to the perceptions that organization member's share of fundamental elements of their orgnization. Meanwhile, Moran and Volkwein (1992) defined climate as a relatively

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