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great by
deeds, not by
birth"

-Chanakya

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**Employee Participation and Turnover Intention: Exploring the
Explanatory Roles of Organizational Justice and Learning Goal
Satisfaction***

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IIMK WORKING PAPER

Employee Participation and Turnover Intention: Exploring the Explanatory Roles of Organizational Justice and Learning Goal Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - This research examines the explanatory roles of organizational justice (OJ) and learning goal/needs satisfaction (LGS/LNS) in the relationship between participation in decision making (PDM) and turnover intention (TI) of employees. OJ was expected to mediate the relationship of PDM with LNS and TI. Further, LNS was expected to mediate the relationship of PDM and OJ with TI.

Design/methodology/approach – This study used a rigorous design with 192 responses collected with temporal separation using snowball sampling technique. Responses on PDM, OJ and LNS were taken at one point of time while responses on TI were taken at another point of time. Analysis was done using structural equation modelling approach in IBM SPSS AMOS 20.

Findings – OJ partially mediates PDM and LNS relationship but fully mediates PDM and TI relationship. Further, LNS partially mediates OJ and TI relationship but fully mediates PDM and TI relationship. PDM does not have direct effect on TI.

Research limitations/implication – Ensuring participation of employees on programmes and policies including those on human resources by itself may not be able to reduce TI of employees. It is when employees are able to experience fairness for themselves and/or they are able to add value for themselves by enhancing relevant knowledge base that PDM has an impact on TI. Therefore organizations must ensure all three aspects of concern to employees; ensuring participation, fairness and individual growth of the employees to address TI.

Originality/value – Although there are studies relating TI separately with PDM, fairness and satisfaction, our study is able to contribute by specifying two stage explanatory mechanism between PDM and TI. In addition, we believe our study has brought in so far unexplored nuance of relevance of individual quest for learning in explaining TI. Further, through the use of robust design the study contributes in corroborating research findings on TI.

Keywords: Participation in decision making, Organizational justice, Learning goal satisfaction, Turnover intention

INTRODUCTION

Participation in decision making (PDM) has been supported among many reasons for its ability to enrich the decision making process. PDM facilitates exchange and integration of information and fosters learning through the acquisition, sharing, and combining of knowledge (De Dreu and West, 2001). Individuals however might view learning as functional as well as dysfunctional as all knowledge may not be productive and the extent of learning therefore needed for better productivity becomes critical (e.g., Haas and Hansen, 2005). Infact, there are different perspectives on what constitutes value of knowledge (e.g., economic value, performance level, personal networks, codified knowledge, etc.; see Haas and Hansen, 2005). Therefore what one values as knowledge or for own learning or growth may be different from what someone else values. Further, acquisitions of knowledge may be dependent on aspects of cognition, society, or structure (Haas and Hansen, 2005). For example, a structure which does not facilitate fairness to a participating employee, may not be able to bring satisfaction with respect to learning imbibed through participation in organizational decision making. Instrumentality of learning therefore may hinge on satisfaction of the individual with the learning. Organizational psychologists have long attributed employee participation in organizational decision-making as substantial ingredient in job satisfaction and motivation (Bakan,Suseno, Pinnington& Money, 2012). Further, it is argued that when employees are owners, they think and act like owners thereby becoming more responsible and accountable for organizational outcomes (Pfeffer, 1998 in Bakan et al., 2012). It may therefore be interesting to explore relationship between participation in decision making and learning satisfaction and the explanatory mechanism (such as perceived fairness) of the relationship. Furthermore, obvious extension of the relationship to explain organizationally desirable outcome such as reduced intent to turnover is likely to be interest to organizations.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Psychological ownership theory (POT) states employee ownership may affect job attitudes and outcomes in multiple ways (see Klein, 1987). The first perspective of the theory as 'intrinsic' model suggests that employee ownership directly relates with employee attitudes and outcomes. The second perspective as the 'instrumental satisfaction' model suggests employee ownership having indirect effect on employee attitudes and outcomes and has been measured through perceived involvement in decision-making activities and perceived control over work. The third perspective as the 'extrinsic' model of employee ownership, suggests effect on attitudes and outcomes through financial rewards. In her study, Klein (1987), tested all three models and found support for second and third perspectives on employee satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention. It therefore seems that PDM is likely to relate with employee attitudes and outcomes and the effect being contingent on structural arrangements such as provisions of financial rewards.

PDM benefits are seen from organization point of view in terms of increased productivity centering PDM on cognitive model related with use and flow of information and resources. Employee participation on one hand brings more up-to-date perspective of employees as a source of information, while on the other hand imparts an understanding of the implementation of such solutions to the participating employees (Van der westhuizen, Pacheco, & Webber, 2012).

The participative decision-making movement focuses on the needs of employees and posits organizations' responsibility to meet them. This perspective proposes that participation will lead to greater attainment of high-order needs, such as self-expression, respect, interdependence, and equality, which in turn will elevate morale and satisfaction (cf. Somech, 2010) and is empirically supported by studies relating PDM with satisfaction level (Van der westhuizen, Pacheco, & Webber, 2012). Therefore, PDM is likely to increase employee

motivation and satisfaction (Somech, 2003; also see meta-analyses by Miller & Monge, 1986; Wagner, 1994). The literature on the influence of PDM on job satisfaction is however relatively underdeveloped (Van der westhuizen, Pacheco, & Webber, 2012). As participation itself may accomplish little and may rarely brake down the wallsof bureaucracy (Hecksher, 1995); managers need to rethink their value orientations and adapt new models that encourage individualfulfilment, learning and personal development (Sarros et al., 2002). Therefore specifically exploring the relationship of PDM and satisfaction/motivation particularly from the angle of fulfillment/satisfaction of needs concerning learning/personal growth may be apt to rethink value orientation in organizations.

The third perspective of POT mentioned above however does not include intangible aspects. As discussed above, PDM models are also seen from human resource perspective wherein organization provides appropriate working environment and involvement and consultation of employees helps in satisfaction of their ego needs and attainment of higher order needs in the affective model of participation (see Van der westhuizen, Pacheco, & Webber, 2012). What therefore comes out is that PDM as manifest aspect of psychological ownership may not only be restricted to being explained through tangible aspects such as financial rewards but also through aspects of work environment such as equality, respect and opportunities to express viewpoints in relating with satisfaction of employee needs as well as other employee outcomes (also see Smith & Brannick, 1990). PDM has infact been widely studied within the organizational justice (OJ) literature (Roberson, Moye, & Locke, 1999). Organizational justice includes dimensions of distributive justice pertaining to consistency of outcomes with implicit norms for allocation, such as equity or equality; procedural justice regarding aspects of the processes that lead to decision outcomes; interpersonal justice on aspects of the interpersonal treatment people receive as procedures are enacted; and informational justiceon aspects of informationabout why procedures were used in a certain

way or why outcomes were distributed in a certain fashion (see Colquitt et al., 2001; Kumar & Singh, 2011). Further literature has also established relationship between organizational justice and various facets of satisfaction (see Roberson et al., 1999). In fact all dimensions of OJ have been empirically related with voluntary learning (Walumbwa, Cropanzano, & Hartnell, 2009). Further the mediating role of justice (procedural justice) on relationship between PDM and job satisfaction has been empirically supported (Roberson et al., 1999). Not only the procedural aspects of fairness, but other aspects of fairness such as the exchange of knowledge and information may be crucial for the effect of participation on outcome variables (Locke et al., 1997 in Roberson et al., 1999). PDM has been found in literature as mechanism to affect satisfaction level of employees which in turn affects TI of employees (Jackson, 1983).

Literature states TI as a response to incongruence between an individual's psychological perception about his/her job environment and individual's needs and aspirations, and these responses are mediated by an individual's attitudinal facets such as satisfaction with his/her job responsibilities (Biswas, 2009). Particularly, environment of fairness is likely to relate with TI as fairness can generate affective regard for the organization thereby enhancing psychological attachment to the organization as well as trigger other motivational forces such as contractual, calculative, and normative forces which may make employees less likely to quit (Posthuma, Maertz, & Dworkin, 2007; also see Maertz & Griffeth, 2004).

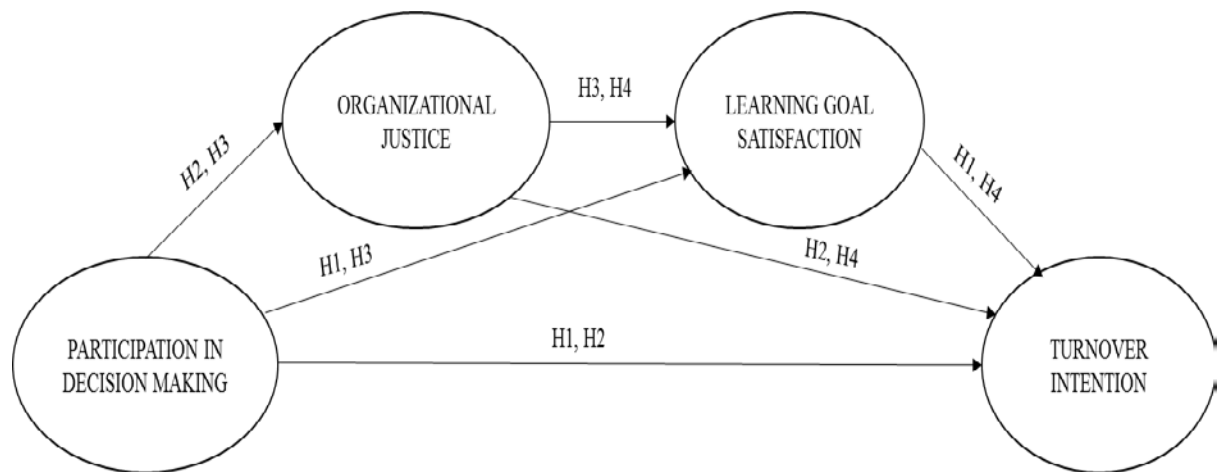


Figure 1 Hypothesized Model

H1: Learning goal satisfaction will mediate the relationship between participation in decision making and turnover intention

H2: Organizational justice will mediate the relationship between participation in decision making and turnover intention

H3: Organizational justice will mediate the relationship between participation in decision making and learning goal satisfaction

H4: Learning goal satisfaction will mediate the relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention

METHOD

Sample and Procedures

This study focuses on aspects such as employee participation in decision making, perception regarding learning opportunities, and intention to quit. It is important that the study sample consists of people who work in environment that provides decision making and learning opportunities and consists of employees who are at such stage of life when thoughts of job change are more likely. For conducting this study, we used snowball

sampling technique to identify individuals in our networks who were more likely to have the above context and these individuals were in turn requested to do the same while identifying respondents in their networks.

Data were collected from individuals on aspects of participation in decision making, organizational justice, and satisfaction with learning opportunities at one point of time and on turnover intention at another point of time, using a web-based survey. A total of two hundred and four respondents completed both the survey, out of which one hundred and ninety two responses (n=192) were considered for analysis. This study was part of a larger study. Of the 192 respondents, 75% were males and 28.6% were married. Mean age of respondents was 28.12 years and average organizational tenure was 35.36 months.

Measures

Participation in Decision Making

PDM was measured using a four-item scale (e.g., How frequently do you usually get to participate in the decision on the adoption of new programs?) of Dewar, Whetten, and Boje (1980). Respondents were asked to rate their perception on a five-point scale (1-Never to 5-Always). Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this scale was 0.83.

Organizational Justice

Organizational justice was measured using twenty items scale of Colquitt (2001). The measure consists of four dimensions of organizational justice; distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice. Distributive justice was measured using four items (e.g., "Does your "outcome" reflect the effort you have put into your work?"). Cronbach's alpha coefficient for distributive justice dimension was 0.96. Procedural justice was measured using seven items (e.g., "Have you been able to express your views and

feelings during those procedures?”). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for procedural justice dimension was 0.86. Interpersonal justice was measured using four items (e.g., “Has (he/she) treated you in a polite manner?”). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for interpersonal justice dimension was 0.93. Informational justice was measured using five items (e.g., “Has (he/she) been frank in (his/her) communications with you?”). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for informational justice dimension was 0.90. Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each item on a five-point scale (1-To a small extent to 5-To a large extent).

Learning Goal Satisfaction

Learning goal/need satisfaction was measured by adapting five items from learning goal orientation dimension of scale by Vandewalle(1997). One item pertaining to reading habit was not used as it was considered less relevant for the context. The instruction asked the respondents to answer these questions based on their perception of extent to which their needs were being taken care by the present organization or the organization they worked last in case they had recently joined the present organization. The items pertained to challenging aspects, opportunity creation and skills and abilities enhancement (“I am encouraged in this organization to select the challenging assignments those I think I can learn a lot from”; “I am able to get challenging and difficult tasks at work in this organization where I enjoy learning new skills; “I often am encouraged in this organization to look for opportunities those I think will help me develop new skills and knowledge”; “I am encouraged in this organization to take risks to develop work ability that are important to me”; “I am given opportunity to spell out my preferences for works requiring high level of ability and talent in this organization”). Respondents rated on a five-point scale (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for this scale was 0.86.

Turnover Intention

The turnover intention measure was based on five items from Bozeman and Perrewé (2001). It included items related to the three cognitions of the thought of quitting, search, and the intention to quit (e.g., “I will probably look for a new job in the near future”). Respondents were asked to rate each statement on a five-point scale (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for this scale was 0.87.

Control Variables

Past research on TI suggests that demographic factors (like age, gender, tenure, marital status etc.) can be related with intent to quit. We used demographic factors, like tenure (in months) and age (in years), education level, gender and marital status as controls. Although recent meta-analysis by Griffeth, Hom and Gaertner (2000) did not find the demographic variables to be relating with employee turnover, earlier meta-analysis by Cotton and Tuttle (1986) on the contrary found age, tenure and education to be strong correlates of turnover while marital status had weak to moderate correlation. Therefore to make sure that our findings hold irrespective of these variables, we incorporated these variables as control variables in our research.

Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics and correlations between the constructs are given in Table 1. Next, we tested for the convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs using Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared Variance (ASV). For reliability, a threshold of 0.7 was followed (Hair, Tatham, Anderson, & Black, 2006). For convergent validity, the rule of CR >

AVE > 0.50 was followed (Hair et al., 2006). As an evidence of discriminant validity, both MSV and ASV should be less than AVE. All values were on expected lines (refer Table 2).

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Participation in Decision Making	2.19	0.89	.83						
2. Distributive Justice	2.86	1.35	.31	.96					
3. Procedural Justice	2.86	.95	.34	.63	.86				
4. Interpersonal Justice	4.01	1.09	.10	.28	.42	.93			
5. Informational Justice	3.07	1.18	.32	.50	.66	.57	.90		
6. Learning Needs Satisfaction	3.43	0.93	.43	.38	.41	.32	.39	.86	
7. Turnover Intention	3.27	1.00	-.20	-.42	-.31	-.20	-.33	-.41	.87

All correlations (barring between participation and interpersonal justice) are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
 Values in bold are the Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

To test our hypotheses, we followed structural equation modelling approach using AMOS 20. Model fit was assessed using model chi-square measure, Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI/TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen 2008). Relative χ^2 (χ^2/df) less than 3; RMSEA less than 0.08; CFI greater than 0.90; SRMR less than 0.10; and NNFI greater than 0.90 were taken as acceptable threshold levels.

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
Participation in Decision Making	0.810	0.530	0.226	0.159
Organizational Justice	0.845	0.584	0.277	0.229
Learning Need Satisfaction	0.863	0.558	0.277	0.235
Turnover Intention	0.876	0.591	0.209	0.154

Table 2 Convergent and Discriminant Validity Test

For checking the significance of indirect effects, we used the more rigorous and powerful bootstrap test instead of Sobel test, as suggested by Zhao, Lynch, and Chen (2010). In this test, if 'Bootstrap Result for Indirect Effects' at 95% confidence interval does not include 0 (zero), the indirect effect is significant and mediation is established.

Results

Organizational justice was taken as second-order construct, composed of four dimensions. Therefore, second-order factor model consisting of first order factors of distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice was specified. Exhaustive meta-analysis by Colquitt et al. (2001) suggests the dimensions of organizational justice to be empirically distinct and differently relating with different outcomes and therefore caution against combination measures that combine the justice dimensions into a single variable. As our study uses other individual variable which were unidimensional and since all the justice dimensions were expected to similarly relate with these other variables, we thought it appropriate to take an overall second order factor of organizational justice. We were careful in our study however not to merely combine the dimensions of justice.

As an evidence of measurement model, we specified a four-factor model (representing PDM, organizational justice as second order factor, learning needs satisfaction, and turnover intention) without the hypothesized relationships among them. This model (Model 1) provided an acceptable fit to the data (refer Table 3). To test the mediation hypothesis, we were guided by Kelloway's (1998) sequence of mediation tests. This sequence models the full mediation model (model with no direct path from PDM to TI), a partially mediated model (model with direct paths from PDM to TI; OJ to TI and LNS to TI in

addition to mediation paths), and a non-mediated model (a direct relationship between PDM and TI, with no paths from OJ and LNS to TI).

Model	χ^2	DF	RMSEA	SRMR	NNFI	CFI
Model 1	721.65	501	0.05	0.07	0.95	0.95
Model 2	1092.99	642	0.06	0.12	0.89	0.90
Model 3	1060.30	642	0.06	0.09	0.90	0.91
Model 4	811.01	639	0.05	0.08	.94	.94
Model 5	788.30	543	0.05	0.07	.94	.95

Model 1: Measurement model; Model 2: Non-mediated model; Model 3: Partially mediated model; Model 4: Fully mediated model; Model 5: Final Model (no direct path from PDM to TI)

Table 3 Results of the Model Tests

Non-mediated model (Model 2) did not fit the data well (refer Table 3). Partially-mediated model (Model 3) revealed a fairly good fit to the data. In Model 3, direct path from PDM to TI was insignificant. In the fully-mediated model (Model 4), all the paths were significant and model fit was good. However, Model 3 was accepted as the better model on account of chi-square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2(2) = 24.35, p > 0.05$) as it was larger model. The direct path from PDM to TI in Model 3 was non-significant. Therefore this path was removed subsequently and this new model was taken as final model (Model 5) on the basis of chi square difference test. Structural model is presented in Figure 2.

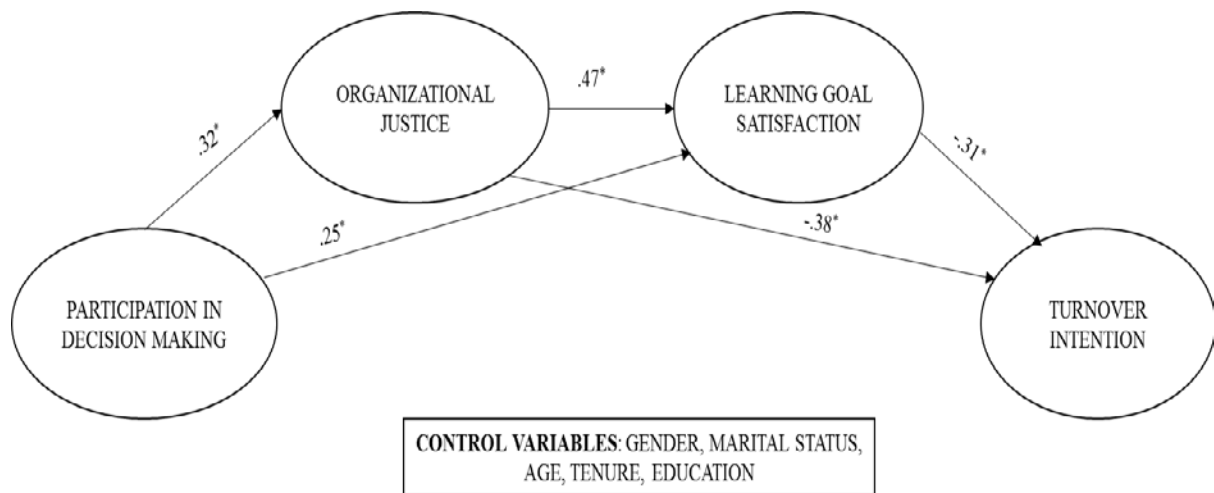


Figure 2 Structural Model

*Significant at $p < 0.01$

As shown in Figure 2, PDM was positively associated with OJ (path coefficient = 0.32; $p < 0.01$). Further, OJ was positively associated with LGS (path coefficient = 0.47; $p < 0.01$). However as expected, LGS was negatively associated with TI (path coefficient = -0.31; $p < 0.01$). Similarly, OJ was negatively related with TI (path coefficient = -0.38; $p < 0.01$). Finally, PDM was positively associated with LGS (path coefficient = 0.25; $p < 0.01$), whereas paths from both the control variables to TI were insignificant.

To further validate the significance of indirect paths, we performed Bootstrapping test (as suggested by Zhao, Lynch, & Chen 2010). Indirect paths from PDM to TI (through OJ and LGS); OJ to TI (through LGS); and PDM to LGS (through OJ) were significant at $p < 0.05$. These results lend support to all the hypotheses. In line with Hypothesis 1, LGS did mediate the PDM-TI relationship. Similarly, in line with Hypothesis 2, OJ mediated the PDM-TI relationship. Further, in line with Hypothesis 3, OJ mediated the PDM-LGS relationship. Finally, in line with Hypothesis 4, LGS mediated the OJ-TI relationship. In sum, PDM-TI relationship was fully mediated by OJ and LGS, when controlled for the

demographic variables. The PDM-LGS relationship and OJ-TI relationships were however partially mediated by OJ and LGS respectively.

DISCUSSION

Fostering ownership among organizational members and generating a sense of oneness are utmost priority of organizational decision makers. Many a times decision makers delegate power and authority to employees in the hope of achieving organizationally desirable outcomes. In this study an attempt was made to identify the consequences of ensuring participation of employees in organizational decision making. When the employees get better opportunities to be part of nuances of decision making, to experience the difficulties and dilemmas involved in decision making, this perspective taking on account of participation is likely to address the outcomes such as alienation and TI. It is in this context, this study had set to explore the relationship between PDM and TI. The moot question however was whether participation itself would be necessary condition for reducing TI. It was hypothesized that an individual would expect his/her working environment to be just as well as would have the expectation that his/her personal goals would be satisfied by the organization. All the hypotheses were supported. Ensuring participation of employees by itself may not be able to reduce TI of employees. It is when employees are able to experience fairness for themselves and/or they are able to add value for themselves by enhancing relevant knowledge base that PDM has an impact on TI. Fairness perception and/or need satisfaction therefore were established to be necessary condition in this study for PDM to have effect on TI. Justice perception and LNS individually however on their own were found to be sufficient to relate with TI.

Among the control variables, none among the variables of age, tenure, gender, marital status and educational level had a significant relationship with TI.

Our research makes several contributions to the existent literature. Firstly, we establish relationship between less researched relationship between PDM and TI. Our findings support the stream of research that suggests relationship between PDM and attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

Secondly, we explored the mechanisms behind PDM and TI relationship. We suggest organizational justice and learning goal satisfaction as two key mechanisms through which PDM influences TI.

Finally, in terms of scale testing, we found support for second order four-factor conceptualization of organizational justice in our study conducted using Indian sample of respondents. We also found support for the adapted scale of LNS/LGS. Other scholars are encouraged to use this scale for further research in this progressive area.

Organizational decision makers are likely to appreciate the need to factor in multiple aspects to reduce turnover of employees. Merely focusing on structural interventions to ensure participation of employees in organizational decision making may not yield desirable results. Infact they need to ensure that even before employees are given participatory roles, adequate and elaborate arrangements of ensuring fairness are present in the organization. Detailed procedures to ensure equity, communication of those procedures, training of managers to ensure effective communication and handling of employee concerns are some of the arrangements which go long way in enhancing employee perception of fairness. In addition, managers would appreciate that PDM infact relates with fulfillment of employees' quest for knowing. Managers would therefore do well to ensure robust mechanisms to make the organizational systems as fair and align the participation activities with individual learning goals to anticipate reduction in employee turnover, as TI has been considered as strongest predictor of actual turnover.

Limitations and Future Scope

Despite the contributions discussed above, this study has limitations that should be noted. First, the study was conducted with snowball sampling method. Future studies can consider more robust study design for better generalization.

Another limitation of our study is its research design that prohibits statements of causality for mediating variables. Apart from TI, even the OJ and LGS measures should have been taken at separate points of time from all other variables.

Finally, for future research, scholars can explore the interacting effect of the four OJ dimensions in various relationships. Further, effect of PDM and OJ on performance goal satisfaction and the possibility of differential relationship of learning and performance goal satisfactions with PDM, OJ and TI could be studied. Also, effect of various other types of participation (for e.g., participation on issues specific to one's job), effect of other similar constructs such as job involvement and psychological empowerment could be interesting extensions of the study. Further, alternative approaches to measurement (instead of needs and satisfaction of needs being measured through same item, both can be measured differently) could also be explored.

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