

IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN CREATING VALUE IN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR: ROLE OF SDL

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Abstract: Purpose - The purpose of present study is to examine empirically the theoretical concepts of SDL to create value through effective participation of faculty members of two universities operating in northern India namely University of Jammu (UOJ) and Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU). Thus the present study makes an endeavour to provide inducement for investigating concept of value creation based on current demanding behavioural trends of interaction and networking of SDL.

Design / Methodology – An empirical analysis is conducted to understand the extent to which SDL is predicted by employee participation to create value. Four hundred faculty members of University of Jammu and Guru Nanak Dev University were contacted for gathering data related to the study. Census method was used to contact selected faculty members. The questionnaires were personally distributed to faculty members. All the Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors were contacted from faculty members. The analysis was done using multi-group analysis through SEM.

Findings – The findings of the study reveal that UOJ and GNDU faculty members demonstrate averagely SDL based behaviour with regard to collaborative competencies and absorptive competencies. SDL is evolved as a three dimensional construct comprising collaborative competencies, absorptive competencies – I and absorptive competencies – II. The SEM results further indicate significant relationship of SDL with employee participation as well as with value creation.

Originality/Value – Recent developments in research considers value creation as a central concept applicable to service sector and has been receiving substantial attention in marketing (Kuzgun and Asugman, 2015). The study therefore adds to the extant literature by examining the role of SDL as predicted by employee participation to create value. Further the study examines the faculty members role in value creation by their interactive behaviour through active participation in the departmental activities, publications, research contribution and so on.

Research Limitation/ Future Research - The research is limited to single perspective of faculty members only. Future studies need to explore the relationship from other stakeholder perspective like higher officers, students, research scholars and supporting members. Future studies should also examine the role of other social variables like organisational justice organisational commitment, personality traits, motivation in predicting SDL. Consequential variables of SDL like organisational performance, customer satisfaction etc. should also be examined.

Key words: Service Dominant Logic (SDL), Employee Participation, Value Creation, Higher Education Sector, Faculty Members.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The increase in competition in organisations has necessitated the need to put in place several strategies to improve organisational performance to create value. The challenge in organisations these days is to implement effective human development strategies to enhance organisational performance and accountability. One such strategy is employee empowerment or employee participation. Others strategies include employee satisfaction, employee productivity, customer satisfaction, job satisfaction, team empowerment, participative management, strategic planning etc. The level of communication between employers and employees within an organisation affect several other stakeholders associated to an organisation. This means that employees who are actively participating and empowered, impact performance of the organisations. Participating employees are thought to be more likely remain in duty with an organisation even in adverse conditions so that the goal of the organisation can be attained. Employees in service industries and particularly those who have frequent contacts with the customer like the higher education, hospitality, health care, banks usually serve as representatives of both the organisation and its services to the customers. In such a condition they can either portray a positive or negative picture to the customers and further have a major role to play in determining whether a customer would enjoy the experience or turn to their competitors for better solutions. This forces organisations to rethink their strategy because as Zeithaml, Bitner and Dwayne (2006) point out, organisations today recognize that they can compete more effectively by distinguishing themselves with respect to service quality as reflected by their participating employees.

Organisation being a network of individuals, influences achievement of organisational goals and outcomes, (Bowler, 2006; Cabiddu, Lui and Piccoli, 2013). Service dominant logic (SDL) helps in the organisational growth through effective participation of stakeholders in creating value for the organisation (Lusch et al., 2007; Ford and Bowen, 2008; Chou, Lin and Huang, 2016). Vargo and Lusch propounded the term SDL in 2004. The SDL concept takes a service-centred view of marketing as opposed to the goods-centred view that existed before. The SDL views operant resources (i.e. competences, capabilities and dynamic capabilities (Madhavaram and Hunt, 2008) as the fundamental sources of competitive advantage (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). This is grounded on the network theory, which suggests that organisational members interact because of the need to access capabilities of these members. The concept further positions that every organisation is a knowledge-based and the flow of products is less central to the firms future success than is the flow of information (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). This flow of information is based on knowledge exchange and interaction among organisational members that leads to value creation. It is thus quite apparent that the SDL gives organisation a chance to direct their strategies to determine and enhance value creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

Value creation becomes very important because it views value as not created by the organisation alone but through interaction and active participation of various stakeholders as they all integrate resources collaboratively (Lusch and Webster Jr, 2011; McColl-Kennedy, 2012; Kuzgun and Asugman, 2015). All the partners need to collaborate effectively to enhance the value of the firm. In this context, Chahal and Mahajan (2015) in their study on higher education indicate that in order to create maximum value output, effective networking and participation of organisational members can play significant role. Recent developments in the literature postulate that value is created and perceived by all actors involved (Ulaga, 2001; Vargo and Lusch, 2008). Thus it is argued that the value perceptions of providers are based on competences and capabilities that service provider access. With the autonomy and necessary support needed to perform organisational tasks, employees can go a long way to making a difference (Gronroos, 2001). Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) and Yi, Nataraajan and Gong (2011) discuss in their study the impact of employees participation on organisational performance to create value. Littleton and Whitlock (2004) and Baron et al., (2010) consider the influence of employee participation in value creation in the SDL framework. They suggest that service provider has important role to play in promoting the organisational performance through creation of value. The same is recognised by Cappelli and Rogovsky (1998), Binyaseen (2009) and Saradha and Patrick (2011). The study thus determines the impact of employee participation on value creation in the SDL framework.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT:

2.1 Employee Participation

Employee participation refers to the involvement of employees in the working of an organisation and interactions among workers to exchange information and ideas (Cappelli and Rogovsky, 1998; Binyaseen, 2009). It is well established that employee participation in an organisation increases job satisfaction, commitment and performance of employees (Saks, 2006; Saradha and Patrick, 2011) and also reduces employees stress (Cappelli and Rogovsky, 1998; Saradha and Patrick, 2011). Thus it is defined as a distinct and unique construct that consists of emotional and behavioral components associated with individual role performance. Researchers have different views regarding the dimensionality of employee participation. Various perspectives such as, engagement, pay and benefits, equal opportunities, feeling valued and involved, stress and work pressure, career development, management, colleagues, feedback, communication training and development are studied by scholars such as Saks (2006), Joennesson (2008), Binyaseen (2009) and Saradha and Patrick (2011). According to Saks (2006) and Bhatti and Quereshi (2007) employee participation as a two dimensional approach namely, *job engagement* and *organisational engagement*. Promoting employees to participate in an SDL based organisation leads to value creation (Kuzgun and Asugman, 2015; Pires, Dean and Rehman, 2015). SDL networking system encourages employee participation in terms of interaction among different stakeholders in the organisation (Tonnessen, 2005; Kuzguna and Asugman, 2015). Pires, Dean and Rehman (2015) remark that employee participation impacts organisational performance leading to value creation. In other words SDL oriented culture promotes efficiency and competitiveness in the organisation and at the same time job security, working environment and organisational performance can also be improved (Tonnessen, 2005). As such employee participation in organisation should be encouraged to increases job satisfaction, commitment and performance of employees (Saks, 2006; Saradha and Patrick, 2011) and also reduces employees stress, leading to reduced turnover (Cappelli and Rogovsky, 1998; Saradha and Patrick, 2011). All this will consequently lead to creating value in the organisation.

2.2 Value Co- creation

The foundation of the SDL emphasizes on the need to focus on value creation through the networks of various stakeholders (Gummesson, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2008). Lin and Lin (2006) remark that value is the key determinant to collaborative provider-customer relationship. As such, value creation results when all members are directing their efforts and capabilities collectively to enhance the organisational performance (Robson, Bailey and Larkin, 2004; Collins and Murphy, 2009; Ippolito, 2009; Chou, Lin and Huang, 2016). Thus in all kinds of exchange, the worth of what is obtained is evaluated in terms of value gained (Gummesson, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2008;

Kuzgun and Asugman, 2015). Prior research has considered value co-creation from different perspectives, such as “value-in-experience” (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004) and “value-in-use” (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). However three dimensional approach related to value-creation is followed mainly various researchers namely, value created for employees, value created for customers and value created for both providers and customers (Lin and Lin, 2006; Hollebeck and Brodie, 2009; Kuzgun and Asugman, 2015). Lin and Lin (2006) and Ippolito (2009) express that value for employees is generated only when they are allowed to participate in decision- making and are considered as an important part of the organisation. Further in terms of customers, the employees are required to consider customers as the key asset of the firm to create value in the longer run (Gronoos, 2008; Ngugi, Johnson and Erdely, 2010; Gronoos, 2011). Value for customers means making and providing products / services as per the needs and demands of customers (Lin and Lin, 2006; Payne et al., 2008). The third perspective states that value is created through customer-provider relationship, partnership and alliances (Gronoos, 2008; Ngugi, Johnson and Erdely, 2010; Gronoos, 2011). In the same context Yi and Gong (2011) state that both employees and customers together contribute in value creation through information seeking, information sharing and interaction. The level of the interaction of service providers and service users influences the level of value co-creation attained. As such, value is jointly created by both provider and customer (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Lin and Lin, 2006). Thus co-creation involves interaction between multiple parties to create value collaboratively. Based on the aforesaid discussion the study hypothesise that;

H1: There is a positive relationship between Employee Participation and Value Creation.

H2: SDL mediates the relationship between Employee Participation and Value Creation.



Figure 1.1: Research Model

3. OBJECTIVES:

- The objective of this research is to determine the impact of employee participation in value creation.
- The second purpose of this study is to test whether SDL acts as a mediator between employee participation and value creation.

4. METHODOLOGY:

4.1 Sample and survey instrument

University of Jammu (UOJ) and Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) were contacted for collecting data from faculty members. These two universities were contacted as they both are state level universities operating since 1969 and offering almost similar courses. Four hundred eighty one faculty members including professors, associate professors and assistant professors from both the universities were contacted for gathering data related to the study using census method. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the concerned respondents.

4.2 Measures

The employee participation scale is formulated were extracted from studies namely, Cappelli and Rogovsky (1998), Saks (2006), Joennsson (2008), Binyaseen (2009) and Saradha and Patrick (2011). SDL scale is formed by studies namely Lusch and Vargo (2008), Maglio and Spohrer (2008), Vargo (2008), Edvardson, Tronvoll and Gruber (2011) and Chahal and Mahajan (2015). Lastly a self-structured scale for value creation is generated from studies such as; Lusch and Vargo (2008), Gronroos (2008), Vargo (2008), Ngugi, Johnson and Erdely (2010), Gronroos (2011) and Randall, Gravierb and Prybutok (2011). All the three constructs namely, employee participation, SDL and value creation are anchored on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 stands for strongly agree.

4.3 Measurement Models and Study Results

Descriptive Statistics followed by EFA, item analysis and CFA were performed on the three constructs namely, employee participation, SDL and value creation. However before analysing the data t-test is used to measure perceptual gap between faculty members of UOJ and GNDU. T-test result indicates insignificant difference in the opinion of faculty members of UOJ and GNDU. Hence data of UOJ and GNDU is combined for further analysis and interpretation. Out of four hundred eighty one respondents the combined effective valid respondents after outliers deletion came out to be 400 (UOJ=213, GNDU=187) while the response rate came out to be 90.85% for faculty members. The analysis commenced with EFA, followed by item analysis and CFA to finalise the items of the three constructs in the measurement models. Its criteria included model goodness fit indices greater or equal to .9 and

RMSEA less than .08 with significant SRW values are considered for item selection under CFA. The measurement model results of the three constructs are given as under:

4.3.1 Employee Participation

CFA applied on bi-dimensional construct of employee participation namely, job engagement and organization engagement indicated significant critical ratios, ranged between 5.246 and 24.854 with SRW values between .596 and .851. The model fitness is magnificently attained ($\chi^2/df=4.722$, SRMR= .032, RMSEA=.053 GFI=.985, AGFI=.923, NFI=.977, RFI=.924, IFI=.981, TLI=.937, CFI=.981).

4.3.2 SDL

SDL is evolved as three factor structure comprising, *absorptive competencies I*, *absorptive competencies II* and *collaborative competencies* after the application of CFA. The model fit indices ($\chi^2/df= 2.800$, SRMR= .063, RMSEA= .067), GFI= .945, AGFI= .916, NFI= .924, RFI= .902, IFI= .950, TLI= .935, CFI= .950) were as per the prescribed criteria. Further the result reveals that all the three competencies significantly predict SDL with moderate to high SRW (.576 to .801) and critical ratio ranged from 9.147 to 13.910.

4.3.3. Value Creation

The CFA applied on the value creation resulted in good model fitness ($\chi^2/df= 2.739$, SRMR=.034, RMSEA= .060, NFI=.909, RFI=.964, IFI=.913, TLI=.968, CFI=.912). The four dimensions recorded significant SRW values that is, SRW=.853 (*teaching*), SRW=.823 (*research*), SRW=.755 (*coordinated services*) and SRW=.820 (*administrative services*).

4.4 Reliability and Validity

The psychometric results also indicate that all scales are reliable, that is, the values of cronbach alpha and composite reliability for all the three scales namely, employee participation, SDL and value creation are above .70 (Table 1). Validity of the scale is also examined through convergent validity and discriminant validity for all the five scales. The AVE values (greater than .5) given in table 1 reflect the existence of convergent validity while square root of AVE greater than correlation estimates reflect the discriminant validity (Table 1).

Table 1: Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted and Correlation Matrix

Constructs	Alpha value	CR	AVE	Correlation				
				SDL	OJ	OC	EPT	VC
SDL	.863	.922	.561	.707	-	-	-	-
OJ	.743	.799	.577	.131	.759			
OC	.774	.765	.696	.087	.022	.704		
EPT	.721	.725	.535	.019	.127	.560	.731	
VC	.749	.755	.515	.059	.391	.528	.372	.717

* Values in the diagonal of correlation matrix are the square root of AVE

Note: SDL (Service Dominant Logic); OJ (Organisational Justice); OC (Organisational Commitment) EPT (Employee Participation); VC (Value Creation), CR (Composite Reliability) & AVE (Average Variance Extracted).

4.5 Hypotheses Testing - Relationship between employee participation and value creation - SDL as a Mediator

Series of multiple regression is run to examine the relationship between employee participation and value creation with SDL as a mediating factor. The three conditions as cited by Baron and Kenny (1986) are examined to know about the mediating relationship. These conditions include; firstly, exogenous factor must affect mediating factor significantly. Secondly, exogenous factor must affect endogenous factor significantly and lastly, if condition first and second are satisfied then the value of exogenous factor affecting endogenous factor should be reduced to minimum and should be significant. Further if significant relationship exists between mediating factor and endogenous factor, then it indicates perfectly mediating relationship.

To examine the first condition multiple regression is run on employee participation (exogenous variable) as a predictor of SDL (mediating variable) and this resulted in significant beta value ($\beta= 0.832$, $p=0.000$) while for the second condition that is employee participation (exogenous variable) as a predictor of value creation (endogenous variable) show significant beta value ($\beta=0.738$, $p= 0.000$). For the last condition multiple regression statistics for value creation as endogenous variable and SDL and employee participation as exogenous variables indicate significant impact of SDL ($\beta=0.892$, $p=0.000$) and employee participation ($\beta= 0.962$, $p=0.000$) on value creation respectively. Overall results indicate that SDL mediates the relationship between employee participation and value creation but moderately, thus based on regression results hypotheses H1 and H2 stands accepted (Table 2).

Table 2: Regression Statistics for Examining Mediating Roles of SDL

R-Runs	Variable	Regression			Accept / Reject
		Beta	p-value	Standard Error	

Step 1	Employee participation (I)	SDL(M)	0.832	0.000	0.053	Accepted
Step 2	Employee participation (I)	Value creation (D)	0.738	0.000	0.058	
Step 3	Employee participation (I) & SDL(I)	Value(D)	0.962 & 0.892	0.000 & 0.000	0.091 & 0.099	

Note: I (Independent variable), M (Mediating variable) & D (Dependent variable)

5. DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

The study result reveals that SDL is evolved as comprising collaborative competencies, absorptive competencies – I and absorptive competencies – II. Among the three competencies collaborative competencies magnificently predicts SDL, while absorptive competencies- I and absorptive competencies- II moderately predicts SDL. Further, participation at the organisation and the departmental levels in various academic and non-academic activities and regular interaction with peer groups enable faculty members to develop absorptive and collaborative competencies. Further the SDL framework reflects significant impact on value creation of faculty members in teaching, research, coordinated services and administrative services. Value creation can be further enhanced by faculty members by accepting changes in the organisation, positively and sportingly, taking initiatives to enhance the quality of academic and research performance, considering accreditation as a matter of improving performance and not merely for gaining points by UGC etc.

Thus the SDL based organisational environment enables employees in enhancing knowledge and equip them with latest skills to attain excellency in their teaching skills. It also helps in developing effective decision making skills by considering faculty members suggestions and view points while taking decision regarding them in different formal committees and regulatory bodies. This helps in maintaining the level of interaction as well as their participation level in various organisational activities. In this regard Spice and Gilbert (1991) advise that employees should be given authority to in making decisions for maximum utilization of their competencies. The empowerment to employees enhances their performance and improves the working environment. It ultimately enhances the level of value creation in the organisation.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH:

The research is conducted from faculty perspective to understand the relationship between SDL and value creation in the higher education sector. Since SDL is a network concept, future studies need to explore the relationship from other stakeholder perspective like higher officers, students, research scholars and supporting members for underpinning the SDL framework. Further, besides the selected three antecedents, other constructs like personality traits, motivation customer participation, etc. can be explored in the future in predicting SDL. Similarly, other consequential variables like organisational performance, employee productivity, customer satisfaction etc. can also be examined to theorize the SDL framework. Further, the present study results are confined to two higher educational institutions UOJ and GNDU with respect to SDL culture framework. These results can further be validated across other private and public educational institutions and in other service sectors like hotel management, tourism, banking, tele-communication, insurance companies, corporations etc.

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