MAIN STAGES OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT STRENGTHENING IN PRODUCTION ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

As management strategies and organizational structures change, the aim is to discover ways that will help make the activities of each employee, as well as the entire production organization, more efficient. In each successful organization, the leader's and employee's ability to understand each other and to work together in a team is very important. At present, a new term is being emphasized and promoted- empowerment – the leader's actions towards the employee in order to successfully achieve the goals of the organization. Dimensions of structural empowerment: opportunities - the employee's perception of the extent to which he has opportunities to perform challenging work using existing abilities and at the same time acquiring new abilities, information - to the extent that, in the employee's perception, information is available to him in a wider context than his individual work, support - to the extent that the employee feels that he can receive advice or feedback during the performance of various tasks, resources - to what extent all the necessary resources are available to the employee to perform the planned tasks.

Empowerment is essentially a democratic process that allows employees to have more say in decisions that are currently made by managers in traditional command and control centers. A model for strengthening employee empowerment is presented, consisting of 3 stages, which allows identifying employee empowerment problems when making decisions on quality issues and providing solutions. The quantity of features and characteristics of a product reflects its quality. One of the most important aspects is that managers and executors (team members) must understand the importance of quality and know what factors affect it and what solutions take place with identified problems. Based on the identification of product quality from the point of view of managers and executives, problems are identified, and solutions are provided to change the situation. If they do not have a common understanding of product quality issues, the situation in production only worsens. Organizations must empower their frontline employees with the authority and training to make decisions related to equipment operation and maintenance.

The obtained results of a quantitative study carried out in a manufacturing company proved that employees partially feel empowered by managers to make decisions: especially in the second stage, which is associated with work performance, quality requirements, job satisfaction and efficiency. Recommendations are provided for management to develop a sense of personal efficacy through employee empowerment. The role of managers is to empower their subordinates to make decisions on their own, relying on established (approved) requirements.

This research about employee empowerment can be useful for organizations in assessing the effectiveness of measures, enabling leadership, and the innovations implemented, as well as in forming a holistic approach to the phenomenon of employee empowerment, combining the assumptions that make up empowerment into a common system and the consequences that are significant for work and the organization.

KEY WORDS: employee empowerment, management, quality, manufacturing company, leadership.

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Introduction

As management strategies and organizational structures change, the aim is to discover ways that will help make the activities of each individual, as well as the entire organization, more efficient. Empowering all employees, whether at the managerial or operational level, is essential to changing their behavior in organizations. In some cases, managers perceive empowerment as a motivational concept when the relationship between managers and employees changes little, but it aims to develop employees' sense of personal efficacy and commitment to organizational policies and goals. Although a personal and individualized reward system determines the bulk of the motivational package, an organization cannot allow individualism to become too dominant, as this can lead to a level of employee competition that can harm both output and employee satisfaction levels. To be effective in creating feelings of empowerment, empowered employees must value what they have been empowered to do and feel that their empowerment includes meaningful action.

In a rapidly changing economic situation, service recipients expect ever higher quality of service, so both public and private sector organizations are constantly trying to renew what can be done inside the organization by having employees who are characterized by innovative behavior (Echebiri, Engen, 2020). It is difficult to imagine employee empowerment being successful in an organization that is not fully committed to employee empowerment. For empowerment to be effective, it is necessary to create an appropriate atmosphere of trust. The ability to make own decisions increases employee motivation, which in turn contributes to higher levels of work and well-being. Empowerment requires managers to give their employees the tools they need to make high-quality decisions.

According to E. Jokubauskienė ir J. Lazauskaitė Zabielskienė (2015) from H. K. S. Laschinger (2001) distinguishes the following dimensions of structural empowerment: opportunities - the employee's perception of the extent to which he has opportunities to perform challenging work using existing abilities and at the same time acquiring new abilities, information - the extent to which, in the employee's perception, information is available to him in a wider context than his individual work, support - to the extent that the employee feels able to receive advice or feedback when performing various tasks, resources - to what extent all the necessary

resources are available to the employee to perform the planned tasks.

Empowerment encourages managers to work effectively through the wise use of human resources in the organization. As organizations seek employees who take initiative and who respond creatively to work challenges, empowerment becomes important at both individual and organizational levels (Ramos et al., 2014).

If the object is a production process, then product quality assurance is essential to the success of the organization. Product quality assurance has replaced quality control. Improving product quality occurs by meeting customer and stakeholder requirements Quality influences customers' perceived playfulness and flow, which in turn influences their satisfaction and purchase intention (Hsu et al., 2011). Perception will affect product quality (Shukla and Garg, 2017). Adequate continuous maintenance of product quality is required in order to accurately identify performance inconsistencies and their cause. Quality is a certain degree of craftsmanship and is one of the important factors in the implementation of the production process. Increasing product quality improves operational efficiency (Firli et al., 2017). Continuous improvement of product quality gives customers confidence in using the product.

According to Martinkienė, J., Giedraitis, A., Vaikšnoras, M. (2016) in the business world, it's important for business companies to be able timely respond not only to ongoing external changes, but also to internal ones.

When employees are not used to making decisions, they are not given more responsibility for making decisions, and they often try to figure out problems on their own without clear guidance or support. Even the most capable and enthusiastic employees wonder if they are doing the right thing. It can be risky, they worry about the consequences if things go wrong. Regardless of whether employees are frustrated that the promise of more power and autonomy isn't followed through on and they don't see an opportunity for improvement. Therefore, the problem is that *managers failure to understand the purpose (nature) of empowerment, and organizational policies tend to create overly optimistic expectations of employee empowerment, and existing power structures often remain unchanged.* Therefore, the aim is to look for more opportunities to strengthen the empowerment of employees.

The problem. Construct stages of employee empowerment to identify empowerment issues in a manufacturing company and provide solutions.

Research methodology. *The research participants-respondents are* 128 employees of the manufacturing company, divided into 12 groups .

The research instrument is a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 4 blocks: STATUS OF EMPOWERMENT OF EMPLOYEES - 13 statements; CHANGING EMPLOYEES' BEHAVIOR (-IS) - 12 statements; RESULT - EMPOWERING EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE - 12 statements; DEMOGRAPHIC DATA: about participants' gender, age, education, length of service in the organization, duties. fifteen-item version of the scale.

Assessments of the statements were carried out according to the Likert scale from 1 (" completely disagree") to 5 ("completely agree").

The research sample was created using the convenience sampling method, the survey was conducted during a break in the rest room.

Data analysis. EXEL and *IBM SPSS statistics 22.0* and *AMOS 23.0* programs were used to analyze the data, the internal consistency of the subscales was assessed with Cronbach's α indicators from 0.7 to 0.9.

The research is conducted in a large production company in the Klaipeda region, in 2023 , in the months of June-August.

Theoretical background

Some definitions of empowerment begin with a discussion of empowerment. One definition of 'empowerment' in the Oxford English Dictionary suggests that it means 'legally or formally invested with authority: to authorize, to license', which reinforces the delegation of authority. The authors, Chinomona et al., (2017) argue that empowerment is a form of employee involvement initiative that refers to how employees are encouraged to make certain decisions independently and is emphasized as an organizational dynamic, but on the other hand, empowerment is initial, fundamental and an extraordinary aspect of the success and growth of any organization that increases productivity and can be used as a tool to help achieve the company's goals and key objectives. Some authors, Senge et al., (1999), define empowerment as persuading employees to take full responsibility for their job satisfaction. The main goal of employee empowerment is to redistribute power between management and employees, usually by increasing employee authority, responsibility, and influencing commitment (Potnuru et al., 2018). Empowerment is a relational construct that describes how managers in an organization share power, information, and resources with organizational employees (Potnuru et al., 2018). Employee empowerment is important because it increases employee responsibility, confidence, reduces stress and improves work-life balance (Ahmad, Manzoor, 2017). It is important that employees feel empowered in an environment characterized by equal opportunities, a sense of organizational support, and access to necessary information and resources (Yasmeen et al., 2020). When employees are empowered and given autonomy and flexibility, they are likely to be more motivated and take full responsibility, finding new ways and developing new skills in response to new challenges (Potnuru et al., 2018). And the most important thing is that employee empowerment is created by creating a work environment where employees are allowed to make their own decisions according to certain work-related conditions, and precisely because of this, an empowered employee, applying his knowledge and skills, will develop competence to actively perform his work tasks (Hanaysha, 2016).

Organizations must empower their frontline employees with the authority and training to make decisions related to equipment operation and maintenance (Giedraitis et. al., 2023).

According to Martinkienė, J., Valackienė, A., Vaikšnoras, M. (2021), analysis of the concept of empowerment explicitly shows that human resources in the organization are empowered by the leader; empowerment depends on management style, character of impact on employees and style of behavior. Employee empowerment in the organization should be a continuous process depending on the management traits and qualities of the leader and through various tools provided by the leader to employees: required information, various trainings, employee promotion and motivation would develop an empowered employee, who is able to address various encountered problems much more promptly in a self- directed way, to offer various problem solving methods and to strive for the aims and objectives set by the organization.

Beyond products, services, and new revenue streams, leaders are integrating societal impact into their core strategies. Executives said they have been Success personified in the Fourth Industrial Revolution particularly effective preparing for the impact that Industry 4.0 solutions will have on society (Deloitte, 2019).

The proliferation of cyber-physical systems introduces the fourth stage of industrialization, commonly known as Industry 4.0. The vertical integration of various components inside a factory to implement a flexible and reconfigurable manufacturing system, i.e., smart factory, is one of the key features of Industry 4.0 (Wang et. Al., 2016l).

Analysis of research publications allows noticing that on the background of new changes in organizations and in the human resource management process, use of a term of managerial competence – empowerment has become increasingly common (Jokubauskienė et al., 2015).

According to Martinkienė, J., Vaikšnoras, M. (2019), successfully implement the aims and objectives of organization it shall be led by the leader, who possesses managerial competencies, i.e. – the leader, who predicts and clearly formulates the direction to be pursued by the organization.

Empowering leader behaviour manifests itself through four major dimensions, i.e., enhancing the meaningfulness of work of the organization's human resources, fostering participation in decision making, the leader's confidence in high performance of employees and provision of autonomy to employees (Valiulė, et al., 2018).

Empowering leader behaviour – leader's actions enhancing employee empowerment: enhancing the meaningfulness of work perceived by an employee, encouraging participation in decision making, allowing employees to act autonomously, expressing confidence in employees and their capability to perform a job (Tvarijonavičius, 2014). Empowerment is about the limits of what the 'empowered' can do, that the 'empowered' operate within the boundaries set. Decisions about what "authorities" are allowed and not allowed to do indicate potential differences in perception between those who decide the "boundaries" and those who must work within them - the boundaries. Second, the existence of subjective actions implies that there may be subjective differences between individuals. Both of these aspects require much more research and discussion than usual.

According Çuhadar, S., Rudnak, I. (2022) well-being and feelings of employee are the essential for managers. Organizational profit: it is essential to drive a business for success. Employee's engagement: it is associated with how strong commitment employee have for organization.

Knowledge sharing culture: it implies organizational culture that supports free exchange knowledge, information between employees and it is essential to drive a business based on sustainable leadership criteria.

From employee behaviour related to empowerment, comes the response it causes to the employee's performance. Even if employees feel that the changes introduced are empowering and improve their sense of personal worth, does this lead to changes in work behavior? Do more engaged employees increase their effort or just feel better about their work? Finally, even if empowered employees are committed to the organization, its goals and policies, and work harder, deliver better quality, and other requirements, what impact does this still have on the organization's performance? If the underlying premise is that empowered employees are more committed, these issues need to be addressed. Empowerment is therefore an ongoing and ongoing process in which an individual is given the power to act independently by using their abilities to develop or maintain pre-existing skills.

Companies whose employees and managers listen carefully stay informed, meet deadlines, and avoid problems. Managerial perceptions and expectations of the perceived benefits of employee empowerment are critical, as the organization's line management will judge the success or otherwise of the initiative depending on whether the empowerment experience meets expectations. Empowering managers act as authority figures for empowered employees. In order to be effective, the leader must motivate the followers properly by adapting the leadership style to the maturity level of the employees. From a motivational perspective, power is fundamentally based on the need for self-determination. Therefore, managers should employ methods that enhance employees' needs for self-determination and personal efficacy. This managerial focus on the motivational concept of empowerment allows us to consider the possibility for employees to develop a sense of personal efficacy, even in situations where relational power has not changed. Empowerment can help change employees' attitudes toward the organization, thereby increasing employee commitment to the organization.

As Conger and Kanungo (1988) emphasize, strengthening the psychological empowerment of employees may not always be directly related to better achievements at work, because the purpose of empowerment is to form and strengthen the employee's "can do" feeling, and not to unilaterally emphasize the significance of specifically planned increasingly better work results. But how do you know if an employee is empowered? The presented model of strengthening the empowerment of employees (Fig. 1) consists of 3 stages of strengthening, which aim not only to strengthen but also to maintain the level of empowerment.
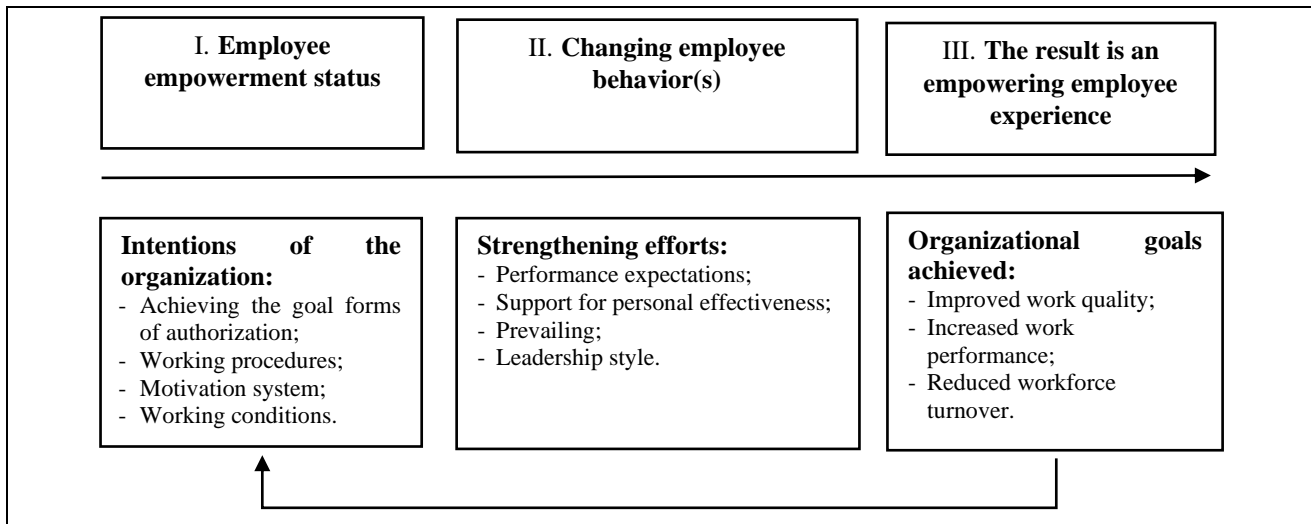
Fig 1. A Model for Strengthening Employee Empowerment

The model focuses on empowering employees at the individual level to solve internal problems within the organization. Each stage of employee empowerment has its own statements related to each element of the process:

STAGE I - EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT STATUS. Conditions leading to a state of impotence are identified. Conditions include those aspects of organizational performance that make employees feel powerless. This may include a number of bureaucratic procedures, an excessively high organizational structure that limits their ability to make decisions, or a command and control culture that imposes decisions from above. In other situations, the reward system limits initiative because such a system is arbitrary and does not reward effective employees. The nature of the work itself may be restricted and standardized in such a way as to limit discretion or to make the worker feel empowered to make a difference.

II. STAGE: CHANGING EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR(S). This stage includes various management techniques that will help the employee to strengthen his sense of effectiveness. This may involve introducing more participatory management techniques, but again these must be set within a framework of analysis that recognizes the diversity of these tools. These include setting goals, creating appropriate feedback systems, reward systems that reward excellence, and supportive management styles, as well as creating workplaces that include diversity and diversity and allow for discretion.

III. STAGE: OUTCOME - EMPOWERING EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE. Empowered employees strengthen their efforts and develop expectations of personal effectiveness. This in turn leads to behavioral changes. This focus on the motivational concept of empowerment allows us to consider the possibility for employees to develop a sense of personal efficacy, even in situations where power relations have not changed. Continuous efforts are made to achieve organizational goals through reliance on personal effectiveness. At this stage, employees are constantly provided with information about their performance from a variety of sources. Providing information about how each individual's efficacy is developing is considered an important feature in developing an individual's self-efficacy perception and belief. Information about personal efficacy comes from personal assessments of their development, from observing others, from verbal feedback, and through a supportive emotional environment that emphasizes confidence and builds trust.

Research results

This research was conducted to empower employees and create a more productive work environment, so it is critical to understand the root causes of this reluctance and implement solutions to address them.

In STAGE I, the question "how are product quality problems identified?" is addressed. 13 statements were presented, the ratings of which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Stage I - Employee empowerment status (N-128)

STATEMENTS	Functional managers	Planning/logistics	Technologists	Quality Ch	Process Engineers	TAT	3rd floor varnishing	Example 3	2/1 p secondary+ primary	2/2 bedroom/pack	1/1 example	1/2 pam
1. I know how to recognize bad product quality	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.4	3.8	**4.5**	4.4	4.2	4.0	**4.5**
2. I am responsible for the quality of the product (parts, workpiece, product).	4.3	3,4	4	3.9	4.5	4	4.5	4.7	4.2	4.0	4.2	**4.7**
3.I am encouraged by the proper quality of the product	4.4	3.0	3.9	4	4	3,4	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
4. I determine the inappropriate quality of the product according to the requirements given to me and inform the manager about the inappropriate quality of the product	3.8	4.4	4.6	**4.9**	4.3	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.6
5. I determine the inappropriate quality of the product by evaluating it as a consumer	4.2	3,4	3.6	3.7	4.3	4.8	3,4	3.7	4.1	3.9	4.1	3.5
6. I determine the inappropriate quality of the product based on my knowledge	4.0	3.6	4.0	3.9	4.5	4.8	4	3.7	4.2	4.3	4	4.4
7. When identifying improperly used materials and raw materials, I can make decisions independently	4.1	**2.1**	4.1	3.6	3.5	3.8	**3.0**	**2.6**	3,4	**3.0**	3.1	3.5
8. I determine the inappropriate quality of the product based on the information and documentation provided by the manager	3.8	4.1	3.9	4.4	4	4.2	3.6	4.3	4.1	3.6	4.1	3.8
9. I determine the inappropriate quality of the product according to the requirements	4.1	**4.7**	**4.6**	4.4	4	4.6	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.4
10. I receive assignments on time and with quality requirements	3.7	3.9	3.1	4.4	4	3.6	3.9	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
11. I solve the inappropriate quality of the product after noticing the deviations of the technological modes	3.7	3,4	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.4	3.5	3.9	4.2	3.3	4	3.5
12. I stop malfunctioning technological equipment after noticing changes in product quality	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.9	4.3	4.2	3.8	4.4	4.4	4.2	3.9	3.9
13. I stop malfunctioning production equipment and wait for the manager's decisions	3.3	3.6	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.4	3.6	4.2	3.8	4.5	4.0	3.7

According to the data obtained in the first, second and ninth statements (Table 1) respondents claim that they know *how to recognize inappropriate product quality.* But not everyone knows how much (within what permissible limits) they are responsible for *the quality of the product (parts, workpiece, product)* - planning/logistics (3,4).

The respondents found that statement 7 " *I can make decisions independently when identifying inappropriately used materials and raw materials"* was the most does not support the planning/logistics ch. 2.1 and third shift (2.60). In a manufacturing plant, if employees are unable to make independent decisions to identify misused materials and raw materials, this can lead to inefficiencies, increased costs and quality problems. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach that empowers employees, clarifies decision-making authority, and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. Define roles and responsibilities, including the authority to stop production or address issues immediately if misused materials are found. Clear guidelines and protocols need to be developed to identify and address misused materials and raw materials. This should include standard operating procedures (SOPs) that detail the actions to be taken when a problem is identified. Specific criteria for what constitute material misuse need to be documented. Provide regular training on quality standards, materials management and decision-making skills. Recommend comprehensive training programs so that employees understand the standards of use of materials and raw materials, quality requirements and the importance of proper handling.

Summarizing Table 1, it can be said that by performing these corrective actions, managers of a manufacturing company can empower their employees to act independently by identifying improperly used materials and raw materials. This not only strengthens quality control, but also promotes a more engaged and responsible workforce.

STAGE II aims to answer the question "HOW ARE DECISION-MAKING OPTIONS SELECTED?". 12 statements were presented, the ratings of which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 . Phase II: Changing employee behavior (-is), (N-128)

STATEMENTS	GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS											
	Functional MANAGERS	Planning/logistics	Technologists	Quality Ch.	Process Engineers	TAT	3/1 pam varnishing	3/2 p.m.	2/1 p secondary+ primary	2/2 bed room+pack	1/1 example	1/2 p.m.
1. I clearly understand when I do not have the right to make decisions	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.0
2. I know for which areas and tasks I am not responsible or related and I cannot make decisions	4.0	4.3	4.0	3.7	3.8	4.4	4.0	4.4	**4.6**	4.5	4.0	4.1
3. I do not make decisions if they do not meet the general requirements in the organization	3.7	4.4	4.1	**4.6**	4.0	4.2	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.1	4.2
4. I make decisions only when the established requirements are clear	**2.8**	4.7	3.6	4.0	4.3	3.8	3.9	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.2	3.8
5. I make decisions only by delegating to the manager with the necessary information in advance	**2.5**	3.7	**2.7**	4.0	3.8	3,4	3.9	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.0
6. I make decisions after obtaining the manager's permission in advance	**2,3**	3,4	**2.6**	3.1	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.9	4.4	3.8	4.3	3,4
7. I perform tasks while taking responsibility for the consequences	**4.6**	3.7	4.4	4.3	3.5	**4.8**	4.1	3.9	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.5
8. I solve the problems that arise by informing the manager about it	3.7	4	4.1	4.4	3.8	4.2	4.0	3.9	**4.7**	3.8	4.2	**4.6**
9. I make changes, after making them I inform the manager	3,4	3.6	4.4	**2.9**	4.3	3.8	**2.9**	**3.0**	3.7	3.5	3.1	3.8
10. I have permission to make decisions	4.5	**2.9**	4.0	3.6	3.5	**4.6**	3.6	**2.9**	3.6	4.0	3.3	3.5
11. I have the right to act regardless of the manager	3.9	**2,3**	3.7	**2.9**	**2.8**	3,4	**3.0**	**1.8**	**2.7**	**2.5**	**2,3**	**2.4**
12. I feel encouraged by the manager to make decisions independently	4.4	**2.9**	4.3	4.0	3.8	4.4	3.9	**2.8**	3,4	3.6	3.0	3,4

Respondents' ratings for statement 4 (Table 2) *"I make decisions only when the set requirements are clear"* shows that the functional managers themselves (2.80) have *insufficiently clear qualitative requirements.* As a result, functional managers may fear the consequences of making mistakes or feel insecure about their decision-making abilities. Company management should convince functional managers that their decisions are trusted and supported, and that there will be no negative consequences for well-considered decisions, even if they lead to mistakes. We need to promote a management culture in which mistakes themselves are viewed as learning opportunities rather than failures.

Another statement 5 rated by the respondents " *I make decisions only by delegating to the manager with the necessary information in advance* " shows that functional managers 2.5 and technologists 2.7 disagree the most. When employees in a manufacturing company are empowered to make decisions, but still fail to act despite having the information they need to do so, this indicates fundamental problems that need to be addressed. Employees may be *unclear about the scope of their decision-making authority* or may perceive that their authority is limited. Alternatively, if previous decisions made by employees are not followed or ignored by managers, employees may feel that their decisions are not important. Must be willing to adapt practices based on feedback and changing organizational needs. Create a matrix or diagram to guide decision-making processes and indicate when to escalate issues to higher management.

The statement 6 " *I make decisions after obtaining the manager's permission in advance* " rated by the respondents showed no support from functional managers (2.30) and technologists (2.60). They may *not have a clear understanding of their decision-making authority, or the processes involved.* Managers may not trust their employees' judgment or abilities, fearing that mistakes could have serious consequences. May also feel the need to control every aspect of the work process. In order to change the current situation, it is necessary to create and distribute clear decision-making systems that outline the scope and limits of workers' power. Regular updates to these systems are needed to keep everyone on the same page. Managers and employees can discuss ongoing solutions, address any concerns, and provide assistance as needed.

Statement 9 - " *I make changes, I inform the manager when I make them* ", did not receive approval from the quality sk and 3/1 painting shift after (2.90) and 3/2 shift (3.0). *This is a lack of communication and feedback.* Therefore, employees will be reluctant to take action. It is necessary to create feedback mechanisms where employees can discuss their decision-making experiences and receive constructive feedback.

Statement 10 " *I have permission to make decisions* " is not supported by the planning section. (2.90) and logistics ch. (2.90). This means that *employees may not fully understand the extent of their autonomy or be afraid to cross the line.* It is necessary to ensure that employees understand the scope of their decision-making authority. Clear communication and documentation should be used

to clarify what decisions they can make independently. In this case, regular meetings are held to discuss decision-making processes and increase the autonomy given to employees

The respondents found that statement 11 " *I have the right to act regardless of the manager* " was given the lowest rating by the shift gr. (1.80). Other respondents' evaluations of this statement were also low: planning and logistics gr. (2.30) and 1/1 shift (2.30). Therefore, there may be more reasons. There may be *cultural or structural barriers, such as hierarchical inflexibility or unclear role expectations.* A culture that values and encourages empowerment and decentralized decision-making needs to be created. This includes leadership commitment and possibly changes in organizational values. Assess whether organizational structures such as rigid hierarchies prevent employees from feeling empowered. Consider aligning hierarchies or reorganizing teams to increase autonomy.

The ratings provided by the respondents for statement 12 " *I feel the manager's encouragement to make decisions independently* " were most disapproved by the third shift (2.80) and the planning/logistics section. (2.90). It is necessary to answer the question why motivational processes are disrupted when the consequences of decisions can be disastrous? The answer lies in the fact that *managers empowerment methods do not match subordinates' expectations* —for example, if they provide too much or too little autonomy and decision-making responsibility—subordinates may view such behavior negatively. It is necessary to improve the motivational system, which would harmonize the encouragement of all process participants for decision-

making - the pursuit of the same goals. Recognize and reward employees who take initiative and make decisions, even if the results aren't always perfect. This can be formal recognition programs, bonuses or simply verbal recognition. Different extrinsic motivation can lead to a degree of intrinsic motivation.

Summarizing Table 2, it can be said that employees have unclear quality requirements, unclear scope of decision-making authority, lack of clear understanding of their decision-making authority or related processes, communication breakdowns and lack of feedback, employees may not fully understand the extent of their autonomy or fear to cross boundaries, cultural whether structural barriers, such as hierarchical inflexibility or unclear role expectations, managers' empowerment methods do not align with subordinates' expectations. When employees do not make decisions despite having clearly defined requirements, receiving the necessary information, and even clearly being given permission by managers, this indicates deeper organizational and cultural problems. Implementation of empowerment improvement policies must clearly promote decision-making at all levels. This could include decision-making systems, empowerment initiatives and clear management communication. By addressing these issues, organizations can create an environment where employees feel empowered and confident to make decisions. This not only increases efficiency, but also increases employee engagement and satisfaction.

STAGE III aims to answer the question "what are the possible results of decision-making in order to achieve production quality?" 12 statements were presented, the ratings of which are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 . Phase III: Result - empowering employee experience (N-128)

STATEMENTS	Functional managers	Planning/logistics	Technologists	Quality Ch.	Process Engineers	TAT	3rd floor varnishing	Example 3	2/1 p secondary+primary	2/2 bed room+pack	1/1 example	1/2 p.m.
1. When making individual decisions, I follow the documentation and improve the quality of the product	4.0	4.0	**4.6**	4.0	4.3	4.2	4.0	3.7	4.2	3.9	3.9	3.5
2. I make appropriate decisions to improve product quality when the manager shares experience or other information with me	3.8	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.0	4.2	3.8	3.6	4.1	3.7	3.9	3.8
3. By making individual decisions, I strengthen my skills, which allows me to improve the quality of the product	3.8	3,4	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.1	4.3	3.6	3.5
4. I believe that all my decisions, working with various technologies in the production process, guarantee a good final result	3.8	3,4	3.9	4.1	4.0	4.2	3.9	3.7	4.2	4.1	3.9	4
5. I know that the permission given by the manager to make my own decisions guarantees a good final result - a quality product	3.7	3.6	3,4	4.1	4.0	4.2	3.8	3.3	4.1	3.7	3.9	3.5
6. I make appropriate decisions guaranteeing a good final result when the manager shares experience or other information with me	3.6	4.0	3.6	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.8	3.5	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.7
7. I feel inner satisfaction after making the right decisions	**4.6**	**4.6**	**5.0**	4.4	**4.8**	**4.6**	4.0	3.5	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.8
8. Various incentive measures are applied to me after proper decision-making and solving of production problems	3.8	**2.9**	**3.0**	3,4	3.3	3,4	3.6	**2.6**	3.3	3.2	3.0	**2.7**

9. For me, the manager helps me understand how my goals, activities and performance results relate to the goals of the organization and this increases the meaning of work	4.4	3.9	4.1	4.3	3.8	4.2	4.1	3,4	3.9	3.9	3.5	3.5
10. I improve by participating in the decision-making process	4.3	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.3	4.4	4.1	3.6	4.4	4.0	4.0	3.7
11. I am encouraged by the manager to be innovative and make decisions after assessing the risks	4.4	3.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	**2.9**	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.5
12. When I make decisions independently, I realize that the manager thus helps to improve my abilities	4.3	3.3	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.4	3.8	3,4	3.9	4.1	3.7	3.5

The highest approvals of the respondents are for statement 7 (Table 3) "I feel internal satisfaction after making the right decisions" - 3.8 - 5.0. This means that these employees (especially technologists) actively participate in problem-solving processes, which is why they feel inseparable from the company's success. By continuing to develop these strengths and practices, a manufacturing company can maintain and increase the intrinsic satisfaction of its employees, ensuring a motivated and productive workforce. The company fosters a positive work environment. It is necessary to further encourage employees to contribute to ideas and solutions, to identify and implement the best proposals, in which employees feel valued and respected, contributing to their internal satisfaction.

Statement 8 stands out the most: *"I receive various incentive measures after making appropriate decisions and solving production problems"* in which the majority of respondents gave a negative answer - from 2.6 to 3.0. When *employees are not incentivized to make decisions,* and managers are not encouraging decision-making, a comprehensive approach is needed to reshape company culture, improve communication, and align incentives with desired behavior. Employees may feel that incentives do not adequately reward their effort or risk. The company needs to ensure that incentives are closely aligned with the company's strategic goals, such as innovation, risk-taking, and problem-solving. Awards should be recognized not only for results, but also for process and effort. Offer a variety of incentives, including cash bonuses, recognition programs, professional development opportunities, and non-monetary rewards such as extra time off or flexible work options.

Respondents also disagree with statement 11 " *I am encouraged by the manager to be innovative and make decisions after assessing risks* " - the lowest is 2.90. Reason: lack of communication about innovation decision-making processes and ways of setting incentives. Because managers who have assessed the risks do not encourage innovation and do not support employees in making decisions. If the organization has clear goals for innovation, the risk-taking associated with this activity becomes more acceptable and thus encouraged. The necessary supportive management attitude can help employees engage in uncertain innovation activities where there is a risk of failure. A key potential solution is to teach managers how to foster an innovative environment and help their teams take calculated risks. This includes encouraging creative thinking and being open to new ideas. This requires the creation of programs that specifically recognize and reward innovative ideas and the successful implementation of new solutions. It is important to emphasize that these achievements need to be developed in the company's communication to show the right examples. It is possible to create a system where employees can try new ideas without fear of failure. A mindset that sees failure as an opportunity for learning and growth needs to be fostered.

Summing up Table 3, it can be said that *the incentives for employees to make decisions are not adequate, there is a lack of communication about decision-making processes on innovation issues and ways of determining incentives.* Most importantly, criteria and processes for setting incentives need to be established within the manufacturing company. Ensure that all employees understand how their contribution is measured. Create opportunities for open dialogue between employees and management regarding incentives, challenges and expectations. These could be regular meetings, focus groups or suggestion boxes. Ensure that employees have access to the necessary resources, such as time, tools and training, to carry out innovative projects or solve problems. Foster cross-functional collaboration to bring diverse perspectives and experiences to bear on problems. This can lead to more innovative solutions and a broader understanding of the business. Reduce hierarchical barriers that can inhibit communication and decision-making. Empower employees at all levels to contribute ideas and solutions. Involve employees in decision-making processes, especially those that affect their job or department. This involvement can increase their investment in the results and make them feel more valued. Actions to support innovation should be implemented to encourage employees to engage in challenging innovation activities, highlight tolerance for mistakes, and offer rewards that encourage an active approach to innovation. By implementing these solutions, a manufacturing company can create a more conducive environment for innovation and decision-making, align incentives with employee and company goals, and foster a culture that values and rewards proactive problem-solving and risk-taking.

According to the research results, the reasons why employees think they lack empowerment (autonomy) and some of the most common solutions for improvement are presented (Table 4):

Table 4. Concepts of strengthening employee empowerment

		CAUSES OF FAILURES	SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
I. THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT		INFLEXIBILITY OF THE HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE: the organization has a strict hierarchy, decision-making authority is often concentrated at higher levels, so employees have little opportunity to act independently; unclear job descriptions and expectations can leave employees unsure of what they can and cannot do without their manager's approval.	Limit the number of subordinates with whom one boss can effectively work. Align the organizational structure and empower employees at all levels to make decisions based on their work area. Clearly define roles, responsibilities and decision-making boundaries. Ensure that all employees understand their authority.
		PROBLEMS OF OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT: managers who closely monitor and supervise every aspect of their employees' work can stifle initiative and make employees feel like they need approval for every action.	Encourage operational managers to delegate tasks and trust that employees will complete them independently. Provide guidance on when to seek approval and when to take initiative.
		IMPROPER MANAGEMENT OF EMPLOYEES: inconsistent messages or actions from management lead to confusion as to whether employees are encouraged to act independently; misaligned company policies and practices.	Ensure consistent management communication about the value of employee autonomy. Ensure that company policies encourage, not discourage, independents. Provide training to managers on how to effectively delegate, trust and empower their teams.
		DISADVANTAGES OF THE MOTIVATION SYSTEM: when employees only perform their duties, which in turn does not raise self-esteem; when employees perceive that they are not adequately rewarded for the decisions they make, they may feel demotivated.	Coordinate the promotion of all process participants for decision-making. Provide employees with individual opportunities for motivational tools. Create clear communication channels and feedback so that employees feel encouraged and confident in their decisions.
II. CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE		TRUST LACK: employees perceive that their managers do not trust their decisions or capabilities, so they feel they must always ask for permission.	Create a culture of trust by recognizing and rewarding employees' successful independent actions. Offer training and support to help managers build confidence in their teams.
		FEAR OF POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES: employees may fear making a mistake or facing negative consequences if they act without express approval from their manager.	Create a safe environment where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities. Encourage a growth mindset and provide constructive feedback.
		INSUFFICIENT TRAINING (-SIS): employees may feel unprepared or ill-equipped to make decisions for themselves if they lack the necessary skills or resources.	Provide comprehensive training and access to resources to empower employees to operate independently. Offer opportunities for continuous professional development.
		Imperfection of organizational culture: an organizational culture that values conformity over innovation can discourage employees from taking initiative.	To develop an organizational culture that values creativity, initiative, and problem solving. Celebrate the success of independent actions.

Obtained results of the study - the shortcomings of employee empowerment are grouped into two concepts:

I. The OV concept emphasizes the problems of increasing the productivity of individual workers with the structuring of work organization and monetary incentives as a motivation for higher levels of production. Large manufacturing organizations often face problems related to their management structure and management. Functional managers tend to control every aspect of their employees' work, leaving little room for independent decision-making. Managers may fear that employees will make mistakes that may reflect poorly on them or the team.

Each worker's work is divided into components, each part is planned, and all parts are rearranged into the most efficient way of working. But a key part of the organizational management concept in solving problems is developing an understanding of management. Understanding of decision-making can be more advanced when given the opportunity to influence and control the future. When solutions are effective and fit for purpose, better organizational performance is achieved. Motivational disturbances in a manufacturing company can occur at multiple levels of control, which is the case when there are many interacting participants. It is necessary to promote the professional development and growth of all employees (and bosses), as well as strengthen communication mechanisms aimed at strengthening employer-employee relations and communication between colleagues. Therefore, it is

useful to organize changes in the behavior of employees to something that encourages focusing on the development of the organization - empowering employees to make decisions.

II. The OK concept emphasizes the fact that the cultural factor is not sufficiently taken into account in the production organization. Imperfect organizational cultures often convey different meanings to employees. This includes not only working in different cultures, but also relationships between managers and executives with different organizational cultures. If the employees' personalities clash with the organization's culture, the organization is unlikely to thrive and the employees are unlikely to develop. Mistrust arises when leaders consistently fail to deliver on their promises. Managers need to show employees that they are trusted, delegate tasks, and give their team members as much autonomy as possible. Recognition not only helps build trust, but also makes employees feel valued as it motivates them to improve every day. Simplified, this process provides a framework that helps employees direct themselves toward creativity and autonomy in making decisions related to the improvement of organizational performance and progress. It is critical that managers support a culture of achievement by striving to deliver an unparalleled employee experience every day.

By addressing these empowerment issues and implementing these improvements through the stages of empowerment, organizations can create an environment where employees feel empowered to act independently,

fostering a more dynamic, innovative and resilient workplace. Changes are needed in the training of managers about the importance of delegation and trust. Encourage them to give employees autonomy in making tasks and decisions. Empower employees to make decisions within established boundaries, especially when they identify resources being misused. To achieve the goal, it is necessary to clearly define the powers of employees and the possibilities of decisions they have the right to make.

Conclusions

Although an analysis of the research literature on empowerment provides many meanings, the published literature largely assumes that empowerment is fundamentally related to the relationship between managers and employees. Empowerment is essentially a democratic process that allows employees to have more say in decisions that are currently made by managers in traditional command and control centers. Empowerment is a big change for managers who work in traditional, hierarchical organizations where decisions are made by a select few and many decisions are left unspoken. Employees cannot achieve the desired level of performance if they are not empowered to make decisions and understand how their role contributes to the overall success of the company. When employees are empowered to make decisions, it shows that managers trust them. By allowing employees to make decisions, managers free up time for work in other areas. Therefore, strengthening the empowerment of employees is an initiative of Management, which aims to enhance the responsibility of employees in making decisions to improve the quality of products. The model for strengthening employee empowerment is presented, consisting of 3 stages (1. EMPOWERMENT STATE; 2. EMPLOYEES BEHAVIORAL CHANGE(S); 3. RESULT – EMPOWERMENT EXPERIENCE OF EMPLOYEES) allowing to identify problems and choose solutions.

The results of a quantitative study conducted in a manufacturing company proved that employees partially feel empowered by managers to make decisions, which is associated with work performance, quality requirements, job satisfaction and efficiency. The data analysis gave several main results: *in the first stage,* the quality requirements are not clear enough to the employees therefore, employees cannot independently make decisions about improperly used materials and raw materials, which can lead to inefficiency, increased costs and quality problems; *in the second stage ,* employees does not make decisions when he does not have the necessary information in advance, does not make decisions without prior permission from the manager, does not make changes without informing the manager, does not have permission to make decisions, does not have the right to act without taking into account the manager, does not feel encouraged by the manager to make decisions independently - managers do not share their power; *thirdly ,* employees are not given various incentive measures after making decisions and solving production problems, managers are not encouraged to be

innovative and make decisions based on risk assessment - managers do not encourage employees to be creative. Managers would like their employees to be empowered based on their perception of the desired outcomes needed to meet expectations. But not all managerial initiatives that are empowering involve employees in the decisions that managers themselves make. Encouraging decision-making is a best practice when dealing with problematic quality issues. Incentive systems can effectively address these problems arising from inflexible enabling policies. It is important for managers to encourage employees with diverse thoughts and opinions so that more innovative solutions are constantly discovered. Therefore, managers must promote a "no-blame" culture that focuses on problem-solving rather than blame. When employees are more empowered at work - they feel a greater sense of autonomy or less control in their work, they feel that their work has meaning and is in line with their values, they feel that they are competent in their abilities and that they can change results.

Management must develop a sense of personal efficacy through employee empowerment. The role of managers is to empower their subordinates to make decisions on their own based on the established requirements. Empowerment must be carried out by involving employees in production processes, I aim to develop employees' sense of personal effectiveness through various consultative processes closer to colleagues and direct managers. Arguably, the empowerment aspect is necessary for operational effectiveness. The personal development of each employee is essential if managers and employees are to share a sense of personal responsibility in decision-making.

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