

Employee Empowerment: An Empirical analysis

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Abstract

Employees whether in private/public undertakings or manufacturing /service sectors, where most of the work is performed by them demand empowerment where they do not have to wait for their managers to give them green signals for further initiations. The present paper is the outcome of a research study on the topic "A study of Employee Empowerment: A sectoral analysis." Empowerment is multifaceted and its essence cannot be captured in a single concept.

According to a pilot study conducted five dimensions of empowerment has been identified, they are trust, self-esteem responsibility, leadership practices and decision making. This paper attempts to find out sector and structurewise differentiation of empowerment in the manufacturing and service sectors. It is found that the perceived level of empowerment is better projected in the Manufacturing sector than that of Service sectors. It is high time our public utility providers realize the ultimate beneficiaries of empowerment: the entire society.

Keywords: *Employee Empowerment, Trust, Self Esteem, Responsibility, Leadership, Decision making.*

Introduction

As we entered the 21st century the structure and processes of organizations are going through a big revolution as they did a century ago. The industrial revolution brought along with it the bureaucratic form of organizing. It was much better way to organize than had previously existed, and it was the basis for successful business that grew to span the globe.

But bureaucracy has a big drawback, as a system it is slow to learn, innovate and adapt. It trades off flexibility for efficiency. And it wastes huge amount of human resources. Many employees' problem-solving abilities and creativity are stifled and their motivation and energy is squandered. That worked fine as long as companies did not need a lot of information or high level of commitment. As the pace of change and competition has increased, bureaucracy has not been able to keep up.

The last thirty years has seen numerous experiments of new forms of organizing that attempt to optimize both efficiency and

innovation to learn and adapt while still keeping costs down. It's become evident that any organizational design must simultaneously engender people striving, learning, and sense of belonging. And in turn requires a method of coordination not based on control but on people's willing participation. The new organization depend on everyone bringing their creativity and problem solving talents to the table, which means much more negotiations, co-operatives and a sense of partnership. All this can be found only in flat and empowered organizations.

The icon of wisdom, King Solomon is reported to have remarked that there is nothing new under the Sun. Everything in God's creation has always been around us. What changes is our perception and awareness of them. At any instant, we notice a few things and overlook many others. As time marches on, we stumble across (or discover!) facets of the universe, we had not noticed earlier. They may appear new to us, but infact, they are ageless as creation itself.

Empowerment is an example, though some may proclaim it to be a new management tool, its underlying principles are in fact timeless—albeit largely ignored in our day-to-day conduct. *“It was always known that among all the resources at management’s command, it is only people who are blessed with an extra-ordinary creative mind with infinite potential”*. There is no limit to what one can think of and accomplish, given the right environment they can overcome all challenges and excel at whatever they can undertake to achieve. In essence they are the real source of all competitive advantage. Furthermore, the power of their innate creativity is multiplied manifold when coupled with “*esprit de corps*”. Sharp thinking and high motivation is an explosively potent combination.

However we have not always acted according to this axiom. In practice, we appear to have been guided more often by deep rooted suspicious about the mental capabilities and potential of people. We have proceeded on the assumptions that are quite erratic in their ways, indolent by nature, incapable of assuming responsibility and sometimes even mischievous. Therefore, the only way to get them to perform reliably is to straitjacket in a traditional command-and-control structure. Tell them, what to do, and how; ensure compliance through ever watchful control mechanisms and a regime of incentives or punishments. McGregor labeled this approach as Theory X. It still has many confirmed followers (J. Singh, 2005).

Though our organizational designs are rapidly turning away from bureaucracy, our styles of leading and managing are not. We have not seen much of a radical change in leadership styles, but it will come, because to be really successful in these new organizations requires a different leadership style from bureaucracy. The process of perception generation and sense making, create a number of problems in organizations, such as fragmentations, sub-

culture, environment of distrust and cynicism. Bureaucratic organizations designed to work in spite of such problems can be still successful in slow-changing environments: organizations in rapidly changing environment which must quickly adopt and innovate, cannot. So they require leaders and followers who can manage perception generation and sense making process differently and instead of living in bureaucratic set up all along (Gervase R. Bushe, 2002).

According to Sterling Livingston (2003), some managers always treat their subordinates in a way that leads to superior performance. But most managers unintentionally treat their employees in a way that leads to lower performance than they are capable of achieving. The way managers treat their subordinates is subtly influenced by what they expect of them. If managers’ expectations are high, productivity is likely to be excellent. If their expectations are low, productivity is likely to be poor. It is as though there were a law that caused subordinates’ performance to rise or fall to meet managers’ expectations. The powerful influence of one person’s expectations on another’s behaviour has long been recognized by physicians and behavioral scientists and more recently by teachers.

Need for the Study

Ever since Indian industries were opened to the world market forces (1991), many private entrepreneurs are finding India as a better place to do what they dreamed of doing, which they feared to do just prior to 1991 due to number of interventions. Since then gradually the private sector especially the manufacturing sector is empowering their employees, and the public sector undertakings are also realizing the importance of empowerment. Employees whether in private/public undertakings or manufacturing /service sectors, where most of the work performed by them demand empowerment in their work situations, where

they do not have to wait for their managers to give them green signals for further initiations. It is in this context the present study is focused to ascertain the extent of empowerment, enjoyed by the employees of manufacturing and service sectors both from the point of view of private and public sector undertakings.

Review of Literature

Literature on empowerment is quite replete with large number of theoretical speculations rather than empirically tested aspects of employees' empowerment. However, in recent times there have been some studies conducted to reemphasize the importance of empowerment. For instance empowerment is the process that transforms followers into effective self-leaders and it is a process of helping employees achieve job mastery, providing successful role models, using social reinforcement and persuasion, and giving emotional support. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) in their study highlighted that empowered workers have higher level of concentration, initiative and resiliency which make them effective on their jobs.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) defined empowerment as the motivation concept to self-efficacy. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) argued that empowerment is multifaceted and that its essence cannot be captured by a single concept. They defined empowerment more broadly as increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions reflecting an individual's orientation to his or her work role: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

Empowerment is an act of strengthening an individual's beliefs in his or her sense of effectiveness. In essence empowerment is not simply a set of external actions; it is a process of changing the internal beliefs of people. Individuals believe themselves powerful when they feel they can adequately cope with environmental demands- that are situations, events, and people they confront. They feel

powerless when they are unable to cope with these demands. Accordingly the following working definition would fit appropriately for the term empowerment: *"It is the creation of an environment in which employee's internalized cognitions are allowed to blossom in the working place by giving them more freedom and authority for performing the tasks in exchange for accepting responsibility for work outcomes, through trust, self-esteem, responsibility, leadership practices and decision making" ..*

Some of the significant outcomes of empowerment are, increased productivity, sense of responsibility, increased commitment, heightened work performance, greater control over decision about work, creative and innovation and customer and client satisfaction. (Wilkinson 1998, Duman 1993, Scott and Jafee 1992). While empowerment related cognitions were suggested to be positively related to increased effort on the part of an employee (Decci, et.al, 1989); it was found to have positive relationship with job satisfaction (Tray, 1994). Interestingly (Argyris 1998, Darraugh 1991) found consistently that it is organisational culture which correlates positively with empowerment.

The Study

The present study is focused on the extent of empowerment enjoyed by the employees of manufacturing and service sectors of both private and public sector undertakings.

This study is basically undertaken to evaluate the level of empowerment in Manufacturing and Service sectors.

Hypothesis

H₀: The degree of empowerment does not differ between Manufacturing and Service sectors.

H₁: The degree of empowerment differs between Manufacturing and Service Sectors

Tool Development

A pilot study was conducted to ascertain the significance of the statements on empowerment. The schedule was personally administered on 140 respondents. The statements were administered on a five point Likert scale wherein 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). These respondents were asked to judge each statement, whether these statements convey the meaning of empowerment or not.

On the basis of the responses received, the mean value was tabulated. The mean score was arranged from lower to the higher end in an ascending order. The highest mean value obtained was 4.48 and the least score was 2.54. Later on the highest mean of the third quartile were considered for the final version. In the final version 24 statements were tentatively considered. Pre pilot version constituted eight dimensions such as decision making, responsibility, reward and recognition, trust, self-esteem, leadership practices, working conditions, and customer satisfaction. Out of these dimensions the highest mean of the third quartile was considered. The statement related to reward has received only one statement which was automatically rejected and to make a uniform representation of statements, 3 lower mean of selected dimensions such as trust, self - esteem, leadership practices were rejected.

Thus 20 statements were finally considered as the dimension of empowerment and they are: trust, self esteem, responsibility, leadership practices and decision making.

Dimensions of Empowerment

Trust

The trust dimension is related to employee's beliefs and characters, which influences interpersonal relationship and confidence of handling any situation in an organization. Trust is an important component required for empowerment. Trust is the base for all relations and it is the life blood of

empowerment. In an organisation where employees demonstrate high level of trust, such organisation is said to be empowered.

Self Esteem

It refers to self respect an employee has about himself. It is the tendency of the employee to exhibit the confidence. Employees with high degree of confidence tend to exhibit better individual performance and it is a part of empowerment, it indicates that empowered groups need to have high self esteem. This reflected behaviour tends to lead enhanced empowerment and in return leads to organisational performance.

If the higher level employees treat their subordinates positively, human resource development program will enhance the self-esteem of employees.

Responsibility

The responsibility dimensions of empowerment is related to the attitude of workforce to be responsible and accountable to do what they are supposed to do in respect of decisions they take, how they implement their decisions, and the accountability they have towards ultimate results of their actions.

Leadership Practice

The leadership practice dimension of empowerment refers to the climate under which employees are working in an organization. It is the style and attitude of higher level of Managers/officers of management towards their subordinates that inspires and assists the team members to achieve targeted goals. It is also about the leadership practices exhibited by the middle level employees. If there is high degree of leadership practices it is inferred that the organisation reflects high empowerment. The nature leadership practices inspire employees and better leadership behaviors when they are empowered.

Decision Making

The decision making is another dimension of empowerment. Decision making refers to the freedom given by organization to take any decision in order to execute their work and to gain advantage of the circumstances and situation prevailing. It is also to the freedom given to implement the decisions according to the vision of the organisation. An empowered team is armed with responsibilities and authority to utilize the resources. Such action results into the quick handling of the problems which will result in saving of cost /time and derive other related advantages attached to the issue. Thus decision making is ability of employees' leads to high degree of empowerment.

Sample

In order to accomplish the above objective the data for present study was collected through primary sources. Three manufacturing units agreed to carryout the study. They were: Kirloskar Electricals, Spicer India Ltd and Nectar and Beverages Pvt Ltd. And the service sectors included were public sector Banks, Communication, Power, Transportation, Media, Insurance, and Health sectors. On getting necessary permission, the researcher personally approached the members of the staff in the selected organisations. In all there were 630 respondents. The empowerment scale was personally administered on the staff of the organisation constituting managers and supervisors. The above sample constituted 10% of the universe of the sample of each unit. The samples were identified on the basis of random selection. Based on the random table, respondents were identified and research tool was administered on them.

Analysis

2 x 2 factorial designs ANOVA was used to find out the sector wise and structure wise differentiation.

Sector-wise includes: a) Manufacturing sector and b) Service sector.

Structure-wise includes two managerial levels a) Higher level and b) Middle level

Empowerment is considered as a dependent variable and other variable such as information and organisational performance have been treated as independent variable. The out come of the dependent variable is organisational performance.

Anova to establish relationship between dimensions of empowerment with sector/structure:

The next part of the analysis is Anova related to various dimensions of empowerment, information and organisational performance of manufacturing and service sectors. The objective of the analysis is to find out which sector and structure enjoys higher level of empowerment, information sharing and organisational performance.

Trust refers to employees belives and characters which can influence human relations in an organisation. On analysis it is found that their is no significant difference in the trust dimensions of empowerment either with respect to sector or structure. This has been shown in Table No. 1.

Self esteem refers to self respect an employee has about himself. It is the tendency of the employee to exhibit their confidence, employees with high degree of confidence tend to exhibit better individual performance and it is a part of empowerment. It indicates that empowered groups need to have high self esteem. This reflected behaviour tends to lead enhanced empowerment and in turn better organisational performance.

Table 2 is related to self esteem dimension of empowerment. At the sector level F value is .758 which is not significant. But at the

Table - 1
Anova Related to Trust Dimension of Empowerment

Sources of variation	df	Means square	F	Significance
Sector	1	1.560	.516	Not significant
Structure	1	5.959	1.970	Not significant
Sector x Structure (two way interaction)	1	6.487	2.144	Not significant
Residual	626	3.025	-	
Total	630	-	-	

- The obtained F values are not significant

Table - 2
Anova Related to Self-Esteem Dimension of Empowerment

Sources of variation	df	Means square	F	Significance
Sector	1	2.50	0.758	Not significant
Structure	1	23.56	7.134	1%
Sector x structure (two way interaction)	1	10.39	3.146	10%
Residual	626	3.30	-	
Total	630	-	-	

structure level 'F' value is 7.134 which is significant at .01 level of confidence. It means the self esteem dimension of empowerment is largely dependent on the structure than on the sector.

Since the structure level is significant it becomes necessary for further investigation as to which level of structure is significant. Table-3 shows the structurewise analysis of self esteem dimension.

According to Table-3, the mean value of higher level is 16.92 and that of middle level is 16.63. It means higher level of employees enjoy better empowerment.

The table further indicates that the 'F' value at the interaction level (Sector x Structure) is 3.146 which is significant at 1% level of confidence. This means there is difference between manufacturing and service sectors as well as there is difference in structure as well. This has been shown in Table No. 4.

Table-4 indicates sector wise analysis of self esteem dimension of empowerment. This tabulation is carried in order to further investigate as to which sector enjoys more influence on the self esteem dimension of empowerment.

Table - 3
Structure-wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Self Esteem Dimension of Empowerment

Structure	No of Cases	mean	S.D	Mean difference
High level	308	16.92	1.74	0.29
Middle level	322	16.63	1.84	

Table - 4
Sector wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Self Esteem
Dimension of Empowerment

Sectors/Structure	Higher level			Middle level			Mean diff
	Cases	Mean	S.D	Cases	Mean	S.D	
Manufacturing	65	17.30	1.68	60	16.5	1.59	0.80
Service	243	16.82	1.80	262	16.66	1.90	0.16
Total	308	16.92	1.79	322	16.63	1.84	0.29

The mean value of manufacturing sector in respect of higher level is 17.30 and that of service sector is 16.82. It means that the higher level employees of manufacturing sector have more perceived empowerment than service sector organisation.

Similarly Table-4 indicates that the middle level employees of service sector are more empowered as their mean value is 16.66 than that of manufacturing sector for which the mean is 16.5.

The *responsibility* dimension of empowerment is related to the attitude of workforce to be responsible and accountable to do what they are meant to do in respect of decisions they take, how they implement their decisions, and the accountability they have towards ultimate results of their actions. Higher degree of responsibility indicates higher level of perceived empowerment in the organisation.

Responsibility dimension of empowerment is shown in Table No.-5. The obtained F value at

the sector level is 6.631 which is significant at 0.10 level of confidence. This means that there is difference between the sectors as regards to the responsibility dimension of empowerment is concerned.

Since there is sectoral difference as regard to responsibility dimension of empowerment, to identify the sector having high empowerment it is further analyzed and is presented in Table No-6.

It shows sector-wise analysis of responsibility dimension of empowerment. Mean value of manufacturing sector is 17.39 and service sector is 16.86 respectively. It means the employees of manufacturing sector at the individual level have more strategic empowerment than service sector organisation. However the F value at structure level (in Table No.-5) is 2.617, which is not significant. Similarly the F value at interaction level is 1.873 is also not significant

Leadership practices refer to the climate under which employees are working in an

Table - 5
Anova Related to Responsibility Dimension of Empowerment

Sources of variation	df	Means square	F	Significance
Sector	1	26.21	6.631	0.10
Structure	1	10.34	2.617	Not significant
Sector x structure (two way interaction)	1	7.40	1.873	Not significant
Residual	626	3.95	-	-
Total	630	-	-	

Table - 6
Sector-wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Responsibility
Dimension of Empowerment

Sector	Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference
Manufacturing	125	17.39	1.620	0.53
Service	505	16.86	2.070	

Table - 7
Anova Related to Leadership Practices Dimension of Empowerment

Sources of variation	df	Means square	F	Significance
Sector	1	165.742	23.14	0.01
Structure	1	16.849	2.35	Not significant
Sector x structure (two way interaction)	1	.478	0.067	Not significant
Residual	626	7.161		
Total	630	-	-	

organization. It is the style and attitude of higher level of officers towards their subordinates that inspires and assists team members to achieve targeted goals. It is also about the leadership practices of middle level employees. The nature of leadership practices inspires and better leadership behavior makes the employees empowered.

Table-7 is related to leadership practice dimension of empowerment. At the sector level 'F' value is 23.14 which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence; it means the leadership dimension of empowerment differs between manufacturing and service sectors. However, the F values at structure and interaction level are not significant.

As the F values at sector level is significant, it signifies that the leadership practice

dimension of empowerment differs between the sectors. As such it becomes necessary to investigate as to which sector demonstrates higher leadership practices dimension of empowerment.

Table-8 indicates sector wise analysis of leadership practice dimension of empowerment. This tabulation is carried out to find out which sector has better practices of leadership. The mean value of manufacturing sector is 16.58 and that of service sector is 15.31. This indicates that, leadership practice dimension of empowerment is high in manufacturing sector. As such manufacturing sector enjoys high degree of empowerment than that of service organizations.

Decision making is another dimension of empowerment. Decision making refers to the

Table - 8
Sector-wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Leadership
Practice Dimension of Empowerment

Sector	No of Cases	Mean	S.D	Mean difference
Manufacturing	125	16.58	2.29	1.27
Service	505	15.31	2.76	

Table - 9
Anova Related to Decision Making Dimension of Empowerment

Sources of variation	df	Means square	F	Significance
Sector	1	175.32	23.167	0.01
Structure	1	39.39	5.206	0.05
Sector x structure (two way interaction)	1	0.91	0.121	Not significant
Residual	626	7.56		
Total	630			

freedom given by organization to take any decision in order to execute their work and to gain advantage of the circumstances and situation prevailing. It is also about the freedom given to implement the decisions taken according to the vision of the organisation. An empowered team is armed with responsibilities and authority to utilize the resources. Such action results into the quick handling of the problems which will result in saving of cost /time and derive other related advantages attached to the issue. Thus decision making ability of employees' leads to higher degree of empowerment.

Since the sector level is significant it becomes essential to further investigate as to which sector has higher level of empowerment in respect of decision making dimension.

Table-9 is related to decision making dimension of empowerment. At the sector level F value is 23.167 which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. It means that decision making dimension of empowerment differs between manufacturing and service sectors.

Similarly at the structure level F value is 5.206 which is significant at 5% level of confidence. This means there is difference in respect of decision making dimension of empowerment at the structure level. However the F value obtained at interaction level is not significant.

Table-10 indicates sector-wise analysis of decision making dimension of empowerment. The mean value of manufacturing sector is 15.77 and that of service sector is 14.42. Thus it indicates that the manufacturing sector enjoys higher level of empowerment as its dimension reflects higher mean value.

According to the Anova table-9 value of structure is 5.206 which is significant at 0.05 level this, indicates difference in structure with regard to decision making dimension of empowerment. Table-11 is examined to ascertain which structure has the freedom to take decision.

Table-11 indicates the mean value of decision making at the higher level of the structure as 15.00 which is higher than middle level

Table - 10
Sector-wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Decision Making Dimension of Empowerment.

Sector	No of Cases	mean	S.D	Mean difference
Manufacturing	125	15.77	2.10	1.35
Service	505	14.42	2.90	

Table - 11
Structure-wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Decision Making Dimension of Empowerment

Sector	Mean	S.D	Mean difference
Higher level	15.00	2.642	0.60
Middle level	14.40	2.938	

structure. It means higher level employees enjoy higher level of empowerment in respect of decision making dimension.

Empowerment is the authority of the employees to execute or perform their job without any direction from their superiors the employees who don't have any fear of reprisal. Empowerment can be described as the increased motivation found in five dimensions of individual's orientation to his/her work role. They are: Trust, self esteem, responsibilities, leadership practice and authority to make decision together will lead to empowerment.

Table-12 is related to all the dimension of empowerment put together. At the sector level the obtained F value is 16.142 which are significant at 0.01 level of confidence. This indicates that empowerment depends largely on sector than on structure. It also shows that empowerment differs between manufacturing and service sector. The two way interaction of sector and structure, the F value is not significant and the F value of structure 2.606 is also not significant.

The obtained F value is significant at .01 level of confidence at sector level. It means that the total perceived level of empowerment differs between manufacturing and service sector organisation. The multiple component of empowerment such as responsibility, leadership, and decision making are significant at 10%, 1%, and 1% respectively. This signifies that there is difference between manufacturing and service sector in respect of empowerment.

Table-13 indicates sector wise analysis of empowerment. The mean value of Manufacturing sector is 84.048 and that of Service sector is 80.84. This indicates that employees of manufacturing sector have got more authority to do their jobs without any direction or interventions from superiors. They are capable of taking decisions regarding any matter concerning their own work. Empowerment is a combination of trust, self-esteem, responsibility, leadership practices and authority to make decision.

The above analysis indicates that the employees of manufacturing sector enjoy more authority to do their works without any

Table - 12
Anova Related to all Dimensions of Empowerment

Sources of variation	df	Means square	F	Significance
Sector	1	996.55	16.142	0.01
Structure	1	160.87	2.606	Not significant
Sector x structure (two way interaction)	1	76.68	1.202	Not significant.
Residual	626			
Total	630			

Table - 13
Mean and Standard Deviation of Empowerment

Sector	Mean	S.D	Mean difference
Manufacturing	84.04	6.394	3.207
Service	80.84	8.181	

direction or intervention from their higher level superiors. They are competent to take decisions regarding any aspects of their work. The empowerment is a combination of the other dependent variable like trust, self-esteem, responsibility, leadership practices and authority to make decision. The hypothesis is tested "*The degree of empowerment differs between manufacturing and service sectors*". The hypothesis is accepted on the ground of obtained significance of 'F' value between Manufacturing and service sector organisations.

Findings

The analysis relating to various dimensions of empowerment leads to the following findings:

1. **Self-esteem** is one of the dimensions of empowerment, which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence at structure level indicating that there is difference between the higher level of officers and middle level of employees. Self esteem refers to self respect an employee has about himself. It is the tendency of the employee to exhibit their confidence; employees with high degree of confidence tend to exhibit better individual performance. The study reveals that the higher level of employees of manufacturing sector demonstrate high degree of self-esteem between the structures. Interestingly the study also reveals that there is significant difference at the interaction level indicating that, while higher level employees demonstrate high self-esteem in manufacturing sectors, it is found that middle level employees of service sector demonstrate higher degree of self esteem.

2. **Responsibility** is another dimension of empowerment which is significant. Employees of manufacturing sector has demonstrated considerable amount of responsibility over the employees of service sector. When employees take responsibility naturally they get more power intrinsically. Normally no one takes responsibility without authority. More power is given to those who take responsibility.

3. Another dimension of empowerment that is significant is **Leadership practices**, which is better projected in manufacturing sector. It is the style and attitude of leaders towards their subordinates that inspires and assists team members to achieve targeted goals. Leaders take the initiative in creating an empowering culture, they encourage for creativity and innovative ideas from employees. These practices undoubtedly lead to empowerment.

4. Manufacturing sector is better projected in respect **decision making** dimension, as the obtained value at the sector level is 23.167 which are significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Decision making refers to the freedom given by organization to the employees to take reasonable decision in order to execute their work and to gain advantage of the circumstances and situation prevailing. It is also about the freedom given to implement the decisions taken according to the vision of the organisation. An empowered team is armed with responsibilities and authority to utilize the resources. Such action results into the quick handling of the problems which will result in saving of cost /time and derive other related advantages attached to the issue.

The result indicates F value at the structure level is 5.206 which is significant at 0.05 level confidences, indicating the difference in structure with regard to decision making dimension of empowerment. It is found that the higher level of employees have more freedom and authority to take decision in respect of their work than that of middle employees. Decision making authority is vested with higher level of the organisational structure irrespective of the sectors.

Overall Perceived Level of Empowerment

The overall analysis of empowerment reveals that manufacturing sector exhibits and practices empowerment better than that of service sector. The present study agrees with the findings of Theodore Levitt (1972, 1976) described how service operations can be made more efficient by applying manufacturing logic and tactics, and the research findings of Babu Thomas and Shaju George (2002).

Overall the manufacturing sector understood the concept of empowering the employees well before the service sector realised the importance of empowerment. Moreover, the nature of work differs in service sector than that of the manufacturing sector. In most of the cases the service sectors have to deal with ultimate customers while executing their work, where the nature of operation differs from customer to customer, time to time, the nature of needs and wants, demand of the customers are not always the same, as such the employees may not able to deliver the service to the satisfaction of the customers. Moreover the service sector for our study are providing utility services and working on guidelines issued by bureaucracy. Hardly, the employees have a say, even though they wish to do beyond their capacity. The management needs to be more professional in the days to come if it really wants to survive and grow.

Our bureaucrats, heading the public utility services know empowerment can do really wonders, but are they willing to share their authority with their subordinate and concentrate on what the next challenge is? Whether subordinate employees are ready to take responsibility for what they are doing? The answer to these questions make the 'big' differences to the ultimate beneficiary.

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