Participation in decision-making and work outcomes: evidence from a developing economy

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Abstract

Purpose – Although there is general agreement that employee participation in decision-making (PDM) has individual and organizational benefits, an important question remains about the possibility that it may also have certain individual and organizational costs as well. This article presents an "episodic process model" that accounts for both the bright and possible dark sides of participation. The model explains how PDM might boost employee hope and self-efficacy, which in turn may lead to two distinct work outcomes–job satisfaction and behavior.

Design/methodology/approach – In order to test the model, data ($n = 269$) were collected from bank employees in two waves. A variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was utilized to analyze the data.

Findings – Results from variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) show that employee PDM indeed exerts a positive impact on positive psychological resource capacities: hope, self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Hope, in turn, has a positive influence on job satisfaction and a negative influence on job-search behavior. Bias-corrected bootstrapping analysis demonstrated that the relationship between employee PDM and job satisfaction is mediated by hope.

Originality/value – Insights for practitioners in a developing economy and possible areas of future research are highlighted.

Keywords Employee participation, Decision making, Job satisfaction, Job search behavior, Hope, Self-efficacy

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Banks generally take a results-oriented approach and use the level of customer satisfaction as an indicator of their overall service performance (Schneider and Chung, 1994). However, this approach may cause them to overlook the vital role played by employee attitudes and behaviors which are critical antecedents of customer satisfaction (Janssen *et al.*, 2010). Nevertheless, bank employees are expected to simultaneously provide service excellence for customers and also satisfy internal organizational requirements. Meanwhile, in the current banking environment characterized by intense competition, employees often experience challenging and stressful interactions with customers and suffer from burnout. Therefore, design and implementation of human resource (HR) practices and strategies to retain motivated and committed employees and to reduce negative work outcomes are critical factors for customer satisfaction and retention (Yavas and Babakus, 2010).

Over the last decade, a rich body of literature has emerged on how HR practices influence employee well-being and outcomes (Huselid, 1995) and work processes (Guest, 2011). One of the main aspects of high-performance work practices (HPWP) is employee participation (Topcic *et al.*, 2016). Employee participation in decision-making (PDM) is a shared responsibility in making decisions among employees to reach the organizational goals (Knoop, 1995). A participative work environment will allow modern organizations to utilize their educated and technologically oriented workforces more effectively (Connell, 1998). Recently, there has been considerable expansion in different schemes to improve participative decision-making process in an effort to increase organizational performance.

Employee participation can be viewed as a "ladder" ranging from no power given to the employees to models where large amount of control is delegated (Li *et al.*, 2015). Participation and involvement can potentially benefit both workers and firms (Heller *et al.*, 1998). Employee participation influences changes in working conditions, and these are correlated with affective commitment and satisfaction motivation and empowerment. By allowing employees to control and influence their work activities, organizations can improve competitive advantage of human resource (Rowden, 2002). Employees who are involved in making decisions that influence them during the planning process by generating alternatives and evaluating consequences tend to be more satisfied and engaged. When they are given greater control over their work lives, employees are more eager to apply their skills and knowledge, share information (Li *et al.*, 2015) and are less likely to look for other job opportunities.

At the personal level, employee PDM enhances job satisfaction (Zhu *et al.*, 2015), organizational commitment and motivation (e.g. Huang *et al.*, 2019), job performance (Groen *et al.*, 2017), empowerment (Kappelman and Prybutok, 1995), sense of ownership or job identity and job control (Benkhoff, 1997) and organizational citizenship behaviors (Youssef and Luthans, 2007). Furthermore, organizations can also benefit from PDM through improved performance because at the organizational level employee PDM improves information flow, decision-making and teamwork (Anderson and McDaniel, 1999) and improved quality and service (Scott-Ladd *et al.*, 2006). Additionally, employees who feel that they are empowered through participation are more open to organizational change efforts (Seijts and Roberts, 2011). However, there is still doubt whether improvement of personal and organizational outcomes is a direct outcome of PDM or due to improved training, skills, technology, involvement or due to a combination of different factors (e.g. Scott-Ladd *et al.*, 2006). Thus, in order to attain desired employee outcomes, we need to have a better understanding of which "facets of psychological needs" and "forms of personal resources" play a central role (Jernigan *et al.*, 2002). This means it is crucial for policymakers and managers to ensure that the participatory process and expectations are aligned with employees' resources and capabilities and congruent with the organizational context (Drehmer *et al.*, 2000).

Hope and self efficacy are positive psychological resource capacities (Simons and Buitendach, 2013). Self-efficacy is defined as the perception of the ability to achieve a goal, and hope is defined as people's perceptions of being able to control their lives through the presence of goals and strategies to attain them (Farran *et al.*, 1995; Duggleby *et al.*, 2009). While self-efficacy relates to both present and future, hope is related to the future. These two similar but distinct concepts have been investigated together in several settings such as the health-care service context (Duggleby *et al.*, 2009). The previous literature calls for research to investigate if similar relationships between hope and job satisfaction and self-efficacy can be found in other service sectors (e.g. Duggleby *et al.*, 2009).

Therefore, we believe that our study contributes to the current literature and to the HR practice by studying PDM in the banking sector where employees' *inner personal resources* can have prominent influence on their behaviors and performance in banks where employees have to work under many daily pressures of customer service as well as compliance to strict work guidelines. The current study examines whether hope and self-efficacy as *positive psychological resource capacities* can facilitate the relationship between participation in

decision-Making (PDM), positive attitude (job satisfaction) and job search behavior *(JSB)*. Most studies about employee PDM have been conducted in Western countries. Although, initially many practitioners and policymakers in developing countries imported approaches from Western cultures, many realized that these approaches may not fit their context and there is a need to better understand how the approaches may need to be modified. So far, in Iran, due to limited amount of research in managerial issues, we still see some practitioners attempting to shape their management systems based on findings in Western contexts (Karim and Noor, 2017).

Iran is an Islamic, developing country with a unique culture due to its religious, historical and cultural features (Yeganeh and Su, 2008). The culture of Iran is characterized by high collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and power distance and is very hierarchical structured (Hofstede, 2001). People are dependent on their supervisor or leader, are accustomed to a benevolent autocratic approach and expect to receive clear and specific job instructions for every situation. Generally, managers rely on centralized decision-making and do not provide empowerment and job enrichment to their employees. For their part, employees do not attempt to engage in decision-making or take responsibilities that have not been assigned to them. This contrasts with the individualistic cultures, where individual initiative and achievement are emphasized and desired.

Studying PDM and its outcomes in the Iranian context can have significant theoretical and managerial implications. For instance, empirical insights from an emerging, developing economy can allow us to test the applicability of the theory drawn from a Western context in a different culture. Iran is a country with a profound cultural heritage and large workforce with a median age of 30.1 years (worldometers.info, 2018). Although, employee PDM has been shown to lead to effective results in Western settings which have low power distance where those in higher status are not regarded to deserve higher privileges, there is still a need to investigate the impact of participation in high power distance cultures where employees are not as comfortable stating their opinions.

The aims of the current study are twofold. The study examines how employee participation (PDM) may influence employee attitudes (JS) and behaviors (JSB) and how employee *personal resources* and capabilities (hope and self-efficacy) may be the mechanism that facilitates this relationship. Furthermore, we examine these relationships in a specific non-Western societal context as suggested by prior research (e.g. Luthans and Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Studying these relationships in a different cultural setting can enrich our understanding of the relationship between employee participation, hope, self-efficacy, employee attitudes and behaviors.

Theory and hypotheses
Employee participation in decision-making, job satisfaction
Participative management styles assure employees that they are trusted and informed about organizational issues. Employees will reciprocate with positive attitude when they are provided opportunities to use their skills and authority to gain autonomy in their jobs (Kooij *et al.*, 2010). Employee participation in decision-making, specifically in issues related to their work, reduce employee misunderstanding about managerial decisions and policymaking because it enables them to better understand the rationale behind the decisions which in turn reduces discontent among employees (Zhu *et al.*, 2015). Previous studies provide evidence that employee participation and involvement are positively associated with higher levels of organizational commitment and satisfaction in European (Cox *et al.*, 2006) and Asian (Huang *et al.*, 2019) contexts. Since Iran provides a high-power distance cultural context and employees may not always have many opportunities to participate in decision-making, we

would expect to see that those employees who are given more opportunities to participate in decision-making will have higher levels of job satisfaction. Thus, we propose that:

H1. Employee participation in decision-making has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Numerous strategies have been recommended to prevent employee *intention to leave* and to reduce burnout. However, hope and self-efficacy as two main concepts of individual inner resources have not been well explored. According to social learning theory (Bandura and Walters, 1977) and "Hope Process Framework" (Farran *et al.*, 1995), hopeful employees feel that they are more empowered, in control of their lives and trust themselves to be able to cope with difficulties. Meanwhile, employees who have perceived self-efficacy believe that they have the required ability to achieve their goals. As we see from this definition self-efficacy is related to hope. Thus, hope and self-efficacy as positive *psychological resource capacities* can be associated together and have intervening effects within the organizational context. Therefore, in the current study we examine their causal mechanisms. Based on literature, the more *hope* employees have, the more positive feelings they have about their work (job satisfaction). Higher levels of job satisfaction and perceived hope improve employee retention and motivation while reducing burnout (Kheirkhah *et al.*, 2018).

Personal resources are facets of the self that refer to individuals' sense of ability to influence and control their environment (Hobfoll *et al.*, 2003), they are also related to resilience and emotional and physical well-being (Chen *et al.*, 2001). There are empirical studies that demonstrate the role of personal resources (e.g. Pierce and Gardner, 2004; Feldt *et al.*, 2000; Luthans *et al.*, 2006) in employee and organizational outcomes. Van Yperen and Snijders (2000) reveal that individuals self-efficacy moderates' the association between health symptoms and job demands. Cunningham *et al.* (2002, p. 379), reveal that "low level of employee participation, autonomy and control can compound the anticipated occupational risks of organizational re-engineering, lower self-efficacy and limit readiness for organizational changes". Hence, personal resources shape how individuals define their environment, comprehend it and react to it. Thus, employee's PDM can stimulate personal resources such as self-efficacy and hope. Employees with feelings of authority and control over their work will be more confident in their ability to accomplish their job. Thus, we propose that:

H2. Employee participation in decision-making has a positive impact on hope.

H3. Employee participation in decision-making has a positive impact on self-efficacy.

PDM enhances employees' feeling of control over their jobs (Crawford *et al.*, 2010) and thus lead to a sense of self-determination and encouragement (Jensen *et al.*, 2013). Employee PDM is conducive for creating a supportive environment, to diminish stress and reduce emotional instability (Xing and Liu, 2016). Since PDM is negatively related to burnout (Bakker *et al.*, 2003) participation improves employee well-being (Huang *et al.*, 2019). Perceived control through autonomy and participation in decision-making have been shown to reduce intentions of quitting and actual turnover (Spector, 1986).

According to HOOFT *et al.* (2004), the first step toward turnover is the quest for alternative or new employment which is referred to as "Job Search Behavior" (JSB). JSB is defined as "behavior through which effort and time are expended to acquire information about labor market alternatives and to generate employment opportunities" (Boswell *et al.*, 2012, p. 129). In other words, JSB entails the exploration of job market intelligence, e.g. information about alternative jobs, identifying job opportunities and preparing applications (Abubakar *et al.*, 2018; Barber *et al.*, 1994). The current study proposes that providing opportunities for employees to participate in decision-making can motivate employees to be more engaged, committed and stay with their current organization. Thus, employees who participate in the

decisions and exercise authority, discretion and control over their job will not be likely to search for other job opportunities. Thus, we propose that:

H4. Employee participation in decision-making has a negative impact on job search behavior.

Hope, self-efficacy, job satisfaction and job search behavior
Hope as a positive psychological resource capacity has a significant influence on an individual's willingness and desire to acquire knowledge, adapt, adjust and overall sense of well-being. Scholars have shown that hope is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, productivity, job performance and intention to remain (Luthans and Jensen, 2002). In Adams *et al.* (2002) study on firms with employees ranging from 8 to 40,000, it has been revealed that hope is associated with higher level of retention, job satisfaction and commitment. This explains why Luthans *et al.* (2007) declared that by setting up clear goals, clear pathways for employees and redirecting them, organizations can achieve greater sense of job satisfaction for employees with high level of hope. Previous research have also revealed that hope can boost organizational commitment, well-being and happiness among workers and serves as a buffer for burnout (Youssef and Luthans, 2007). Additionally, the positive and significant effect of hope has been found within different work settings in different countries. For example, in China (Luthans *et al.*, 2005), Nigeria (Ahiauzu and Asawo, 2012) and trade organizations in Iran (Etebarian *et al.*, 2012). Thus, we propose that:

H5. Hope has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

H6. Hope has a negative impact on job search behavior.

The theory of self-efficacy was developed by Bandura and Walters (1977), who defined self-efficacy as an individual's personal belief that he/she possesses the ability to successfully complete the required tasks that are necessary for goal attainment. Improving their confidence would boost employee morale, which in turn encourage them to devise various strategies and pathways to achieve stated individual or organizational goals. It has been consistently shown that self-efficacy is associated with job satisfaction among employees (e.g. Aldridge and Fraser, 2016; Karabiyik and Korumaz, 2014; Li *et al.*, 2017; Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2014; Wang *et al.*, 2015); specifically, among workers in Western countries (e.g. Chang and Edwards, 2015; Gountas *et al.*, 2014; Hirschi and Jaensch, 2015; Pisanti *et al.*, 2015). Thus, we propose that:

H7. Self-efficacy has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

According to Bandura's thesis, two expectancies shape individual behavior. The first one is the "expectancy of self-efficacy". It denotes the belief of an individual about his/her capacity to carry out assignments in a desired manner. The second thesis is "the expectancy of outcome". It designates the belief of an individual about his/her capacity to come-up and produce the expected outcome and meet the expectations (Bandura and Walters, 1977). Individuals with self-efficacy exhibit high confidence in workplace. They are more likely to see obstacles as challenges that should be or can be overcome and are more committed to the goals. They also exhibit high recovery skills in case of setbacks (Schwarzer and Hallum, 2008), they prefer to explore new environments, strive to uncover new information and opportunities. Stohl and Cheney (2001) discuss paradoxes of participation and suggest that as gains are achieved the employee expectations for further participation grow. However, the organization may not be able to provide the level of participation that empowered employees with high self-efficacy desire. Employees with higher level of self-efficacy have confidence that their capabilities will produce the desired outcomes (i.e. better working conditions, pay rise, reward, recognition and promotions). Thus, they are more likely to engage in job search

behavior if the employers cannot meet their expectations. Based on these theoretical and empirical arguments, we propose that:

H8. Self-efficacy has a positive impact on job search behavior.

The complete hypothesised model can be seen in Figure 1.

Materials and methods

The scale items used in this study were translated from English to Persian by professional translators using the back-translation technique. A pretest study with 25 employees was sued to aid modifications and adjustments in order to reduce ambiguity and enhance translation accuracy. Employees of two large banks in Iran were recruited. Bank A and B had 21,346 and 4,349 employees at the time of data collection. SurveyMonkey Sample Size Calculator was used to determine the appropriate sample size (99% confidence level and 5% margin level). The outcome suggests that a sample of 379 respondents is adequate. To enhance the accurate and reliability responses, the authors solicited participation from four hundred (400) participants using a simple random sampling technique (SRS). In essence, the HR departments provided the lists of employees working in the organizations, and the participants were chosen randomly. We chose SRS where all cases in the target population would have an equal probability of being included in the sample to ensure data collection would not be biased. At time I ($n = 326$), participants were asked to assess employee PDM, hope and self-efficacy. The participants were informed that the study's second phase will take place after four (4) weeks and their participation will be highly appreciated. At time II, the participants were asked to assess job satisfaction and job search behavior, which yielded only three hundred and two (302) responses out of which only two hundred and sixty-nine (269) valid responses were used for analysis. The use of time-lag design has been shown to abate common method variance in social science studies (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012).

Consequently, the researchers diagnosed the potential upshots of missing data and non-response bias by assessing the demographic features of the participants following guidelines suggested by Collier and Bienstock (2006). First, the participants' demographic
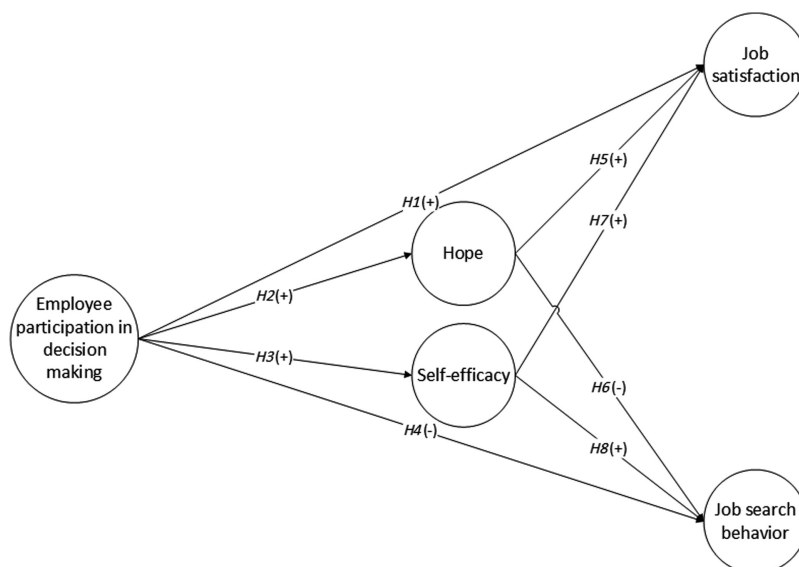

Figure 1.
Proposed model

properties do not contrast significantly with those of the general population. *Second*, a comparison of early and late responses showed that the participants as well as their demographic properties at time I and time II are not different. Building on this, we conclude that the sample is indeed a representative one.

A majority of the participants were male (58.7%), the mean age stood at 30 years (SD = 0.579). The participants had an average organizational tenure of eight years (SD = 0.755), and majority were married (74.0%). An overwhelming number of the participants have bachelor's degree (65.4%), with 27.1% having a graduate degree and the remaining have associate degrees and diplomas. With regard to monthly income, majority (57.2%) earn between 1m and 1.99m Toman (approx. 300–600 USD), a mediocre number of the participants earn between 2m and 2.99m Toman (approx. 600–900 USD), about 5.6% earn between 3m and 3.99m Toman (approx. 900–1300 USD) and others earn less than 1m Toman (approx. 300 USD) monthly.

Methods
Sample and procedures
Participation was simultaneously solicited from faculty members (i.e. referred to from this point forward as employees) and department heads (i.e. referred to from this point forward as authority figures) of four large universities located across the United States. Participating employees completed an online questionnaire assessing perceptions of justice within their department, whereas participating authority figures completed an online questionnaire assessing their personal feelings of occupational satisfaction, positive affect and exhaustion. The final sample consisted of 162 work units with 162 authority figures and 1,297 employees for an average number of responses per authority figure of 8.1 (SD = 5.8). Within-group response rates ranged from 20 to 100% with a mean of 59%. The gender breakdown of authority figures was 72% male and 28% female.

Employee PDM – was measured with four items adapted from Sun *et al.* (2007) study. Items included statements such as "*individuals in this job can make decisions*". Coefficient alpha equaled 0.707.

Hope – was measured with six items adapted from Luthans *et al.* (2007) study. A sample of item was "*at the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals*". Coefficient alpha was 0.690.

Self-efficacy – was measured with six items adapted from Luthans *et al.* (2007) study. A sample item was "*I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution*". Coefficient alpha equaled 0.784. Employee PDM, hope and self-efficacy were measured on 5-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree.

Job satisfaction – was measured with three items adapted from Netemeyer *et al.* (1997) study. Two items responses were recorded on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and the third item ranged from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied). An item included in the scale was "*I feel fairly well satisfied with my present line*". Coefficient alpha was 0.855.

Job search behavior – was measured with items used by Abubakar *et al.* (2018). A 5-point scale was used to record responses where 1 indicated spending no time at all and 5 indicated spending lot of time. For example, "*How much time have you spent in the last four months on several preparatory and active job search activities such as Made inquiries/read about getting a job*". Coefficient alpha equaled 0.939.

Analytic strategy
Our analytic strategy was driven by previously established relationships among our independent variables.

Data analysis and results
Common method variance (CMV) has been widely associated with self-reported and cross-sectional surveys. To evade the potential threat of CMV, data were collected using a time lag design. Variance-based structural equation modeling also known as PLS-SEM has gained momentum in social science research (Kaya *et al.*, 2020) primarily due to it is less strict nature compared to covariance-based structural equational modelling (CB-SEM) and its ability to diagnose complex formative or reflective models, small samples, non-normal data and prediction-oriented (Hair *et al.*, 2013). These features make the technique suitable for this study. To assess reliability and convergent validity of the variables under investigation, we examined the outer model [i.e. item loadings, Cronbach's alpha, Rho, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR)].

The scale items loadings were above the 0.50 benchmark, while items below this point were discarded. The coefficients of alpha, Rho, CR and AVE presented in Table 1 are above or closer to the benchmarks of 0.70, 0.70, 0.70 and 0.5, respectively (Hair *et al.*, 2013). In this study, divergent validity was ensured following heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio and Fornell and Larcker approaches (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The square root of AVE of each construct for each construct is higher than its correlation coefficients with other constructs (in diagonal values). This satisfies Fornell–Larcker criterion, and the HTMT values fulfilled the condition of HTMT 0.90 (Table 2). Overall, the results demonstrate convergent and divergent validity and exhibit mediocre correlativity.

Table 3 presents a preliminary analysis of the associations between the variables under investigation and various demographic variables. This preliminary analysis suggests that variables under investigation are significantly related, however, the demographic variables have few correlations with the research variables. This implies that the demographic variables do not interfere with the nature of the association between the researched variables.

Figure 2 presents the inner model coefficients (i.e. direct effects), outer model weights (i.e. factor loadings) and R squares on the circles. This study employed bootstrapping analysis with 5,000 sub-samples. The "episodic process model" illustrated in Figure 3 presents beta estimates and their respective T-statistics in brackets for inner model and weights for the outer model. The present outcome shows that employees' PDM positively influences job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.26$, $\rho < 0.00$); hope ($\beta = 0.37$, $\rho < 0.00$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.22$, $\rho < 0.00$). Thus, hypothesis 1, 2 and 3 received empirical support. However, employee PDM exerted non-significant negative influence on job search behavior ($\beta = -0.02$, $\rho > 0.10$). Thus, hypothesis 4 was rejected (see Figures 2 and 3). Further, data analyses revealed that hope exerted a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.25$, $\rho < 0.00$). Similarly, hope exerted a negative and significant influence on job search behavior ($\beta = -0.19$, $\rho < 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis 5 and 6 received empirical support. Next, data analyses revealed that self-efficacy exerted a positive and non-significant influence on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.08$, $\rho > 0.10$) and job search behavior ($\beta = 0.12$, $\rho > 0.10$). Thus, hypothesis 7 and 8 were rejected (see Figures 2 and 3).

To uncover the underlying mechanism and nature of the relationships among the variables, the author(s) tested for possible mediation effects. Prior research (e.g. Abubakar *et al.*, 2018; Hayes, 2015) argued that bootstrapping is more robust in gauging mediation effect in comparison to Sobel test. A plausible reason is bootstrapping inference is based on an estimate of the indirect effects itself; as oppose to Sobel test, bootstrapping makes no assumptions about the shape of the sampling distribution. The current study utilized bootstrapping analysis with a simulated sample ($n = 5,000$). *First*, bootstrapping analyses suggest that hope mediated the relationship between employee PDM and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.091$, $p = 0.000$) with the following intervals (Bias = 0.005; 2.5% = 0.044; 97.5% = 0.143). This outcome suggests a partial mediation. *Second*, self-efficacy did not mediate the link between employee PDM and job satisfaction. *Third*, hope did not mediate the

Items	Loadings	α	Rho	CR	AVE
Employee PDM		*0.707*	*0.717*	*0.818*	*0.530*
Item1: "Employees in this job are often asked by their supervisor to participate in decisions"	0.784				
Item2: "Individuals in this job are allowed to make decisions"	0.745				
Item3: "Employees are provided the opportunity to suggest improvements in the way things are done"	0.728				
Item4: "Supervisors keep open communications with employees in this job"	0.645				
Hope		*0.690*	*0.714*	*0.808*	*0.516*
Item1: "I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution"	_*				
Item2: "I feel confident in representing my work area in meeting with management"	0.722				
Item3: "I feel confident contributing to discussions about the company's strategy"	_*				
Item4: "I feel confident helping to set targets/goals in my work area"	0.789				
Item5: "I feel confident contacting people outside the company (e.g. customers) to discuss problems"	0.586				
Item6: "I feel confident presenting information to group of all colleagues"	0.761				
Self-efficacy		*0.784*	*0.844*	*0.843*	*0.519*
Item1: "If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it"	_*				
Item2: "At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals"	0.711				
Item3: "There are lots of ways around any problem"	0.683				
Item4: "Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful at work"	0.776				
Item5: "I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals"	0.767				
Item6: "At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself"	0.660				
Job satisfaction		*0.855*	*0.869*	*0.912*	*0.775*
Item1: "I feel fairly well satisfied with my present line"	0.916				
Item2: "I feel a great sense of satisfaction from my line"	0.893				
Item3: "All things considered (i.e. pay, promotion, supervisors, co-workers, etc.), how satisfied are you with your present line of work?"	0.831				
Job search behavior		*0.939*	*0.959*	*0.947*	*0.646*
Item1: "Made inquiries/read about getting a job"	0.745				
Item2: "Prepared/revised resume"	0.852				
Item3: "Read classified/help wanted advertisements"	0.849				
Item4: "Talked with friends or relatives about possible job leads"	0.648				
Item5: "Spoke with previous employers or business acquaintances about possible job leads"	0.691				
Item6: "Visited job fairs, contacted employment agencies"	_*				
Item7: "Looked for jobs on the Internet"	0.837				
Item8: "Made inquiries to prospective employers"	0.890				
Item9: "Sent out application letters/filled out job applications"	0.889				
Item10: "Gone on a job interview"	0.866				
Item11: "Listed yourself as a job applicant in a newspaper, journal or professional association"	0.745				

Note(s): *α*, Cronbach's alpha; AVE, average variance extracted; CR, composite reliability

Table 1.
Reliability and
convergent validity

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Fornell-Larcker criterion					
1. Employee PDM	0.728				
2. Hope	0.371	0.719			
3. Job satisfaction	0.370	0.370	0.880		
4. Job search behavior	−0.065	−0.154	−0.234	0.804	
5. Self-efficacy	−0.218	0.318	0.217	0.055	0.721
Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT)					
1. Employee PDM	–				
2. Hope	0.511	–			
3. Job satisfaction	0.461	0.458	–		
4. Job search behavior	0.156	0.188	0.263	–	
5. Self-efficacy	0.281	0.437	0.219	0.106	–

Table 2.
Discriminant validity

link between employee PDM and job search behavior. Fourth, self-efficacy did not mediate employee PDM and job search behavior. For details see Table 4.

Discussion
Improving employee organizational attitudes and behaviors is paramount priority of decision-makers in organizations. More often, decision-makers delegate authority and power to employees with an aim to achieve desirable outcomes. One of the controversial arguments, however, has been whether employee participation would be adequate to satisfy employees and help organizations to retain them (Kumar and Jauhari, 2016), or if improved self-efficacy through their increased involvement will paradoxically lead them to search for other alternatives. The current study develops an "episodic process model" that focuses on identifying the mechanism of employee participation in relation with JS as an attitudinal outcome and JSB as a behavioral outcome. This study reveals the employee PDM, hope and self-efficacy (as personal resources) as antecedents of job satisfaction and job search behavior. Generally, the employees seemed to be more satisfied with their jobs when they perceived participative environment.

Our findings did not support the argument that participation may lead to such high levels of self-efficacy that employee confidence can increase and cause these employees to be looking for better job alternatives in other companies. Employees' PDM positively predicted self-efficacy and hope; hope in turn predicted higher job satisfaction and lower job search behavior. Ensuring participation of employees did not only affect their job satisfaction directly but also resulted in higher level of hope among employees.

This study contributes to the models of relationships involving "hope", implying that hope as a personal resource serves as coping mechanism for incumbent workers. This is in line with Huen *et al.*'s (2015) argument that hope can act as a resilience factor. Thus, hope can help employees to deal with stress and job strain effectively. In other words, employees have high level of resilience regarding job and environment stressors (Yavas *et al.*, 2013) and are less likely to search for other job alternatives. In demanding situations, they can control their emotions, have more positive attitudes and general well-being, and subsequently, less negative outcomes.

Hope, therefore, was established to be an imperative condition in this study. Hope has significant consequences for an individual's perception of job resources such as providing opportunities to participate in decision-making. Hopeful employees use their positive personal psychology to carry out organizational functions effectively, and they tend to

Variables	M(SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	1.41 (0.49)	–										
2. Age	2.94 (0.58)	-0.078	–									
3. Marital status	1.74 (0.44)	-0.157**	0.228**	–								
4. Monthly income	2.45 (0.63)	-0.066	0.231**	0.151*	–							
5. Education	2.21 (0.56)	-0.055	-0.120**	-0.097	0.275**	–						
6. Work experience	3.41 (0.76)	0.191**	0.553**	0.285**	0.277**	-0.094	–					
7. Employee PDM	2.88 (0.68)	0.008	-0.006	-0.027	0.049	0.002	0.020	–				
8. Hope	3.55 (0.63)	-0.081	-0.001	0.056	0.084	0.022	-0.113	0.363**	–			
9. Job satisfaction	3.45 (0.83)	0.062	-0.100	0.002	0.074	-0.020	-0.065	0.358**	0.359**	–		
10. Job search behavior	1.77 (0.81)	-0.053	-0.108	-0.203**	-0.014	0.073	-0.210**	-0.015	-0.108	-0.191**	–	
11. Self-efficacy	3.82 (0.55)	-0.054	0.028	-0.060	0.044	-0.005	0.001	0.177**	0.315**	0.177**	0.066	–

Note(s): M, mean; SD, standard deviation; **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
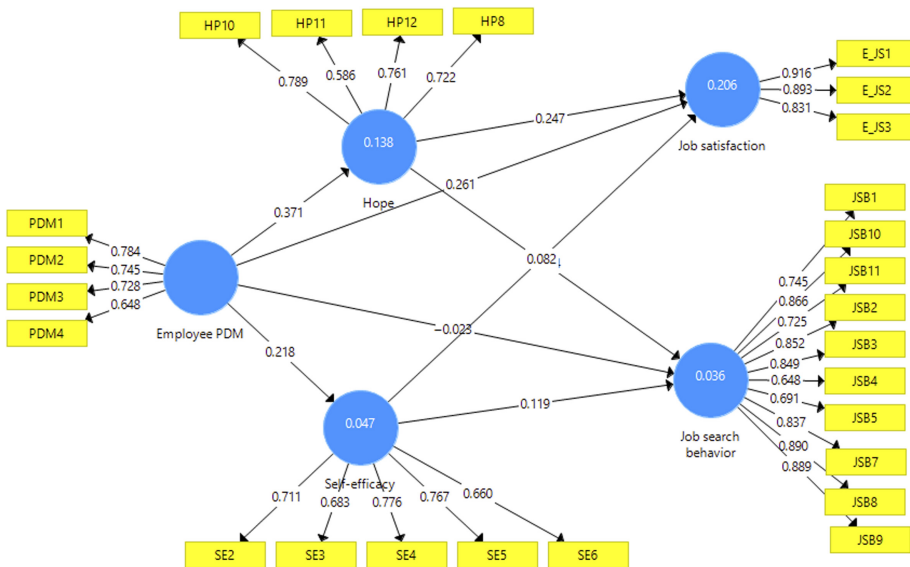
Table 3.
Correlation and
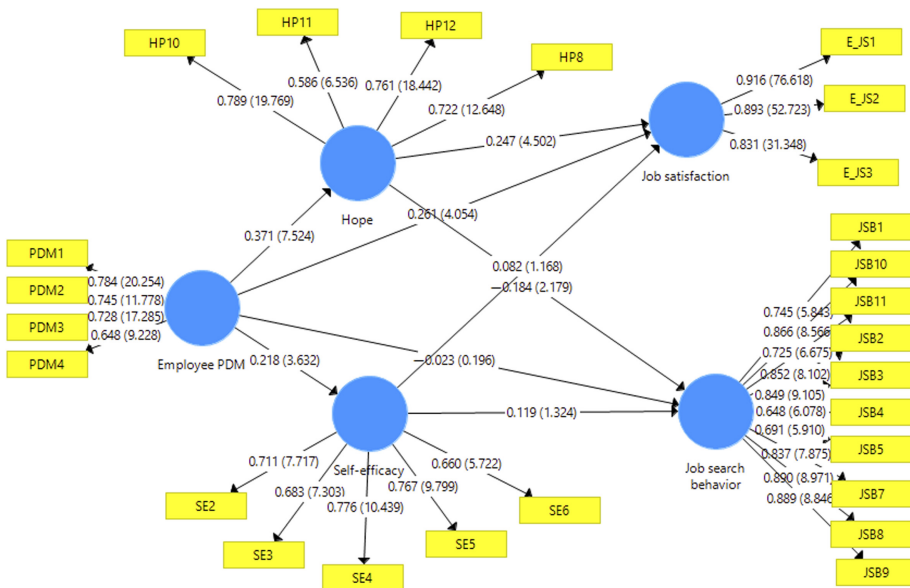descriptive statistics

Figure 2.
PLS model

Figure 3.
PLS model with
T-statistics

pursue their work-related goals enthusiastically. This diligence strengthens their work-related problem-solving capabilities, thus overcoming obstacles and challenges in the work environment, especially in competitive and stressful service-oriented jobs (Zablah *et al.*, 2012). Hope provides more positive work behavior and outcomes.

Consistent with previous scholars, employee hope and self-efficacy influence their job satisfaction. Logically, employees who have a feeling of control over their work and have

		O	M	SD	t	Bias	2.5%	97.5%	ρ-value
Employee PDM	- > Hope	0.091	0.096	0.026	3.532	0.005	0.044	0.143	0.000
Employee PDM	-> Self-efficacy	0.018	0.020	0.016	1.130	0.002	−0.019	0.046	0.258
Employee PDM	-> Job search behavior	−0.068	−0.072	0.035	1.935	−0.004	−0.131	0.013	0.053
Employee PDM	- > Self-efficacy	0.026	0.027	0.023	1.143	0.001	−0.028	0.066	0.253

Note(s): O, original sample; M, sample mean; SD, standard deviation; t, t-value; ρ, significance level

Table 4.
Indirect effects

clear career goals feel more satisfied through establishing pathways and can persevere with confidence (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2010; Youssef and Luthans, 2007). Individuals who have negative attitudes toward their work have high tendency to display negative job behaviors than positive ones (Abubakar and Arasli, 2016; Behravesh *et al.*, 2020). In light of the findings, a post hoc analysis has also been conducted. The results indicate that a participative environment improves employees' job satisfaction through hope; furthermore, employees with high level of hope are less likely to engage with job search behaviors. In other words, it diminishes organization's cost of losing employees, and it appears that hope plays an influential role in directing one's attitudes and behaviors.

Therefore, positive psychological resource capacities and personal resources are likely to be necessary conditions for employee satisfaction with fulfillment of their needs. In other words, the ways employees assess the opportunity of participation in decision- making depends on their level of personal resources. For example, employees who benefit from valuable self-efficacy can find personal joy in their efforts, control their stress and engage in positive performance behavior (De Clercq *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, they will be more satisfied if involved in decision-making process and have greater control over their working lives.

According to previous studies, self–efficacy has a strong and positive effect on work-related outcomes (e.g. Bandura, 2000; Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998).

As explained earlier, we also carried on a post hoc analysis. The results indicated that the mediating role of self-efficacy on the link between employee PDM and job search behavior is insignificant. We can suggest two possible explanations. First, that in the specific societal context of our study, Iran, with a high preference for uncertainty avoidance, security is an important element for employees and risk taking and unorthodox behavior are mostly avoided. Even when the belief in ability grows, employees would still be less likely to search for alternative jobs. From a pragmatic point of view, culture again plays a key role in this relationship because collectivist societies tend to make group decisions. Even though, employee' PDM increases self-efficacy, this did not result in job search behavior in our study. Future studies may investigate factors causing JSB among service employees in collectivist societies.

PDM can be an incentive for both employees and managers. When employees are empowered with greater autonomy to accomplish their job, they tend to be more confident and effectual over their jobs. Iranian culture is characterized with high power distance where individuals are submissive to orders from the above without justification. More so, hierarchy in an organization reflects centralization and inherent inequalities, "employees expect to be told and ordered what to do and the ideal manager is benevolent autocrat" (Hofstede, 2001). However, our study shows that there is no incompatibility between high power distance environment and PDM. In our study, Iranian employees perceived participative practices as attractive and an effective incentive that resulted in their commitment, job satisfaction and retention.

Practical implications
The results of current study show that in participative work environments, employees possess greater level of hope, which is later translated into higher job satisfaction and lower job search behavior. What we drive from this finding is that, in participative work environment, job satisfaction is higher and employees are willing to stay with their work and are less motivated to search for other alternatives and job opportunities. Managers can have more free time to think, plan and focus on other organizational affairs as employees are more involved, satisfied, efficient and committed. The outcome of this study also suggests that despite significant dissimilarities between Western and developing countries which proclaim different human resource practices, managers should apply HRM practice and strategies to provide more opportunities for participation of employees in decision-making.

For example, workplace harmony, as part of HRM developmental agenda of "creating social harmony", self-managing teams, consultative groups, job design, formal participation in decision-making mechanisms and collective and individual voice employee satisfaction surveys has been developed in many western organizational settings to utilize potential talent (Zhu *et al.*, 2015). If we retain employees with high level of hope, such employees are more satisfied and less likely engage in job search behavior.

Also, as an individual's ability, inner psychological resource and personality can overcome unwanted organizational outcomes and their negative consequence (Yavas *et al.*, 2013), henceforth, personal positive psychological resource capacities of candidates during selection and hiring should be considered as hope score can serve as a selection tool (Peterson and Byron, 2008). Organizations and firms should strive hard to boost and develop their workers' personal resources through positive psychology seminars. Gathering ceremonies, humorous lectures and operating counseling rooms can boost the psychological well-being of workers and also help in fostering positive feelings (Abubakar, 2018).

The level of positive psychological resource capacities (self-efficacy, hope) can be improved by rewards system, promotions, teaching hopeful thinking and training programs. Also involving employees in decision-making processes, providing on-the-job programs designed to not only enhance their skills in new skills but also improve their beliefs as to what they can do with their current skills can help to enhance their self-efficiency. Finally, empowering employees by sharing information openly, involving them in problem- solving, treating them as colleagues, providing feedback to guide them through their task and motivating them are recommended for organizational success to retain their employee's hopefulness, perseverance and creativity.

Limitation and future studies

The paper has limitations associated with methods and design in several ways. First, due to the self-report nature of the data which has the tendency to inflate common method variance and/or bias. Thus, future researchers are encouraged to opt for multi-source and longitudinal designs to better explicate the HR practices and employee outcomes. Second, sample size, industry focus and single country may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader Middle East. Investigation of what causes job search behavior in collective societies will provide imperative additional information of practical and theoretical interest. Buffers for such behaviors should be observed by future studies, e.g. the moderating effect of characteristics of employees, personality type and work-related attitudes.

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Further reading

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