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**Self-engagement in employee suggestion systems:
an empirical study using a multilevel approach**

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Abstract

In recent years internal innovation projects have been implemented in a series of organizations. It has been shown that innovation projects raise employee satisfaction and sense of belonging to the firm and increase employees' serendipity. In addition, they stimulate the knowledge diffusion within the Company and between the operational function.

Some theories suggest that organizational structure can limit good communication or good implementation of some business practices.

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how the employees' choice to participate (and the quality participation) in the employee suggestion system is affected by different organizational circumstances.

We study two different phases of an employee suggestion system realized in an international company, through the identification of three different organizational levels and the comparison between them.

We conducted 23 in-depth interviews and classified employees based on their level of participation in the project. The employees' perceptions and the real implementation of the project were compared with the opinions of those who designed the project in order to determine whether the coherence between the organizational levels were adequate to understand the behavior of employees.

Our results show that proper communication between the various levels and a proper implementation of the project within the organization affects positively employees' participation in the employee suggestion system.

The research highlights the importance of certain organizational dynamics, and it advises to pay more attention to the handover in the communication phase and in

the implementation phase of an innovation project when participation is spontaneous.

Estratto Italiano

Ogni azienda ritiene fondamentale per la propria crescita la necessità di innovarsi ed evolversi. Tali aspetti divenuti sempre più oggetto d'attenzione ed interesse all'interno di molteplici realtà aziendali, hanno generato altrettanti metodi di studio volti a comprendere come creare qualcosa di nuovo che possa apportare un vantaggio competitivo all'impresa.

Relativamente all'ambito dell'innovazione, negli ultimi decenni, le aziende hanno frequentemente sottovalutato o impropriamente utilizzato uno dei più importanti strumenti di innovazione già presente all'interno della società stessa. Si fa riferimento ai dipendenti dell'azienda ovvero un potenziale umano disponibile e competente in grado di suggerire e proporre idee che possano migliorare l'attività aziendale.

Uno dei processi più frequentemente utilizzato e strutturato che permetta di raccogliere idee provenienti dalla forza lavoro, valutarne il potenziale e scegliere quali di queste attuare è sicuramente l'employee suggestion system.

Ad oggi la letteratura si è preoccupata di comprendere i reali meccanismi di funzionamento nonché gli eventuali pregi o difetti nel proporre ed implementare tale tipo di processo all'interno delle aziende cercando inoltre di individuare e descrivere i driver che incentivino la partecipazione, best practices e comportamenti da evitare.

La letteratura tuttavia dimentica che l'employee suggestion system è un programma aziendale e come tale potrebbe risentire di alcuni limiti tipici delle attività aziendali

volute e lanciate specificamente dal top management. Possibili limiti potrebbero ad esempio essere relativi alla comunicazione nell'azienda o ad una inadeguata attuazione e realizzazione del programma.

Volendo estendere lo sguardo oltre il filone letterario dell'employee suggestion system e facendo riferimento ad alcuni interessanti articoli inerenti l'SHRM, si può osservare come alcuni autori, studiando l'impatto della varianza organizzativa sul successo delle pratiche aziendali, dividano l'organizzazione in vari livelli descrivendone la variabilità non solo all'interno ma anche tra gli stessi. Queste ricerche dimostrarono che spesso le pratiche volute dai vertici aziendali sono percepite dagli impiegati in modo errato (Nishii e Wright, 2006, 2007, 2008).

Questa tesi, pertanto, intende studiare un caso di employee suggestion system realmente applicato in una realtà aziendale internazionale nelle sue principali sedi italiane attraverso un'analisi multi livello dell'organizzazione.

L'obiettivo è verificare se la coerenza di opinioni tra chi ha voluto e progettato il programma e chi vi parteciperà, possa incidere positivamente sul livello di partecipazione.

L'ipotesi prevede inoltre che nel caso in cui vi sia la coerenza percettiva di cui prima si è discusso e nel caso in cui vi sia anche coerenza tra ciò che si vuole proporre e ciò che è realmente proposto, gli impiegati siano motivati e la partecipazione sia intensa.

Ci si aspetta che nel caso in cui vi sia una adeguata percezione delle idee pensate e volute dal top management riguardo ai driver di partecipazione e nel caso in cui questi siano adeguatamente implementati, gli impiegati partecipino con coinvolgimento e interesse.

Al fine di verificare questa ipotesi, sono state condotte ventitre interviste al top management ed ai partecipanti di un caso di employee suggestion system lanciato nel 2011. Agli intervistati è stato chiesto un parere relativo a quattro driver di partecipazione presi in considerazione (Premio economico, Visibilità, Percezione di essere capaci, Esperienze passate).

I risultati ottenuti comprovano le ipotesi verificando inoltre che nel caso in cui una delle coerenze di cui sopra sia assente, il comportamento degli impiegati è di disinteresse nei confronti del progetto.

I risultati evidenziano inoltre un inaspettato risvolto: in maniera del tutto sorprendente è infatti possibile osservare come anche nel caso in cui le variabili del progetto fossero state mal implementate ed, in maniera contemporanea, gli impiegati coinvolti avessero una percezione opposta a quella del promotore del progetto rispetto a tali variabili, la partecipazione risultasse coinvolta e appassionata.

Questa inattesa conclusione può essere spiegata dal fatto che due errori si annullano a vicenda.

All'interno dell'ambito dell'employee suggestion system, i risultati di questa tesi vogliono sottolineare non solo l'importanza di una adeguata comunicazione tra chi propone un progetto e chi poi vi partecipa, ma mostra come il successo di tali progetti dipenda anche da un'adeguata implementazione delle variabili progettuali coerentemente attuate rispetto a quanto pensato dai vertici aziendali.

1 Introduction

Over the last fifteen years, academic research has rediscovered an increased interest towards the creation of innovation that comes from within the core of the company and potentially generated by all the employees of the company.

In contrast with a wide stream of research that aims to look for the sources of innovation outside the company, some authors have pushed worked out in order that the human potential in the company could express themselves and free their creativity to generate innovation and eventually give a contribution to the company. In these cases we speak of about Internal Crowdsourcing or if you want to be more specific Employee Driven Innovation (Kesting et al. 2008).

In 1999 Frese was one of the first to propose a model that can represent an employee suggestion system (Frese et al. 1999), i.e. a system that allows employees to forward their own views in order to improve internal work activities. The greater interest of the authors in this field of research was to understand what causes employees to collaborate in these activities that are not closely related to their business roles.

In this thesis I empirically study a case of an employee suggestion system through a point of view never used until now, that is, using a multilevel approach.

In 2006, Nishii and Wright introduced the concept of organizational multilevel and with regard to their field of study (SHRM) they divided the organization into levels theoretically. They supposed that within the organization, the variance existing between individuals is one of the reasons for divergence of perception towards HR practices and that the study of the organization divided into levels may facilitate the understanding of the reasons for the variance (Nishii and Wright, 2006).

I borrow this multilevel theory (which will be properly and thoroughly discussed in the next chapters) in order to determine whether differences between top management and employees will affect the behavior and the level of employee involvement. So it is possible to shed light into the projects seen as black boxes.

These studies will be carried out by means of qualitative analysis based on interviews with managers and employees of the company. The employee suggestion system realized in a company involved about 670 employees and obtained 28 different ideas from which were born 6 working groups whose aim was to implement the suggested ideas (the project was divided into the idea generation phase and an idea implementation phase).

The hypothesis wants to correlate the consistency of opinions about the drivers of participation between top management and employees and the good employees' participation and the consistency between the views of top management and employees needs to be complemented by the consistency between the initial ideas of the top management and the actual implementation of the project. The perception of employees (although it was adequate) should find a real implementation of the variables on which to rely.

This hypothesis stems from the deep analysis of the interviews, in fact, the analysis of interviews has often shown that some variables were not actually been implemented, then it was discovered that there was also a variance in the actual implementation of the variables.

For each participation driver, opinions between the two organizational levels are compared and I also observed inside the black box mentioned above by checking whether the initial idea of the project is actually realized.

The hypothesis is verified and it is possible to say that a good participation is achieved not only in the event that there is consistency between top management and employees and between top management and effective implementation of the project, but also in cases where the two just mentioned coherences there are not.

This unexpected result shows that in cases where top management has completely lost control (both in implementation and in communication) of the project it is possible to obtain positive outcomes paradoxically, although these are obtained without any awareness. This situation is very unstable, in fact it is enough that the project is well communicated or that it is well implemented to drastically change the participation in the project.

In the next chapter an extensive literature review with regard to the employee suggestion system and motivational theories will be conducted.

In the third chapter the research framework is introduced and discussed that arises from the merging of some of the theories presented in the literature review. Based on it the research hypothesis is proposed.

In subsequent chapters describes the method used to verify the hypothesis, introducing introduce the company and the project on which the data analysis are carried out and describing the sample and the data collection.

After which in chapter five, the data are analyzed and presented in order to deduce interesting results.

Finally, in the final chapters the obtained results obtained are presented and discussed. Interesting insights, possible managerial implications and future researches will be explained in details.

2 Literature Review

The main field of research on which the following thesis is based is the broad Innovation Management literature. Within this, you will look in more detail at the more specific field of research concerning innovation contest and employee suggestion system.

In this thesis I want to apply a motivation model to innovation management literature, reason for which a motivational model will be introduced.

In this chapter it will deepen with detailed the search concerning innovation management within the company and will be presented an important motivational model.

2.1 Systematic Literature Review

This thesis is based on a systematic review of the literature, carried out in order to secure coverage of relevant literature.

Adamczyk in 2012 created a comprehensive review and classification of the innovation contest, she suggested eight steps to follow in order to conduct a systematic analysis of the literature (Adamczyk et al., 2012).

As I explained, this thesis is based on two principal fields of research: motivation theory and employee suggestion system.

Regarding the motivation research, the core subject is the Theory of Planned Behavior of Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991); starting from this paper, I conducted some research aimed at improving the initial model and adding some findings that could have been useful to my study.

However, the focus of the thesis is innovation management, the following wide research concerns the theme of employee suggestion system.

The literature about innovation management is actually complex and it required a systematic literature review. The first step proposed by is "Screening of relevant literature to identify appropriate keywords as search terms". Starting from the reading of important and relevant papers such as the research work of van Dijk in which he proposes his model for the suggestion system, I found six relevant keywords used as search terms.

The first six keywords are:

- Idea Management System
- Idea generation
- Call for Ideas
- Employee Driven Innovation
- Close Innovation
- Suggestion System

These keywords were used as words for finding papers. In order to limit the number of papers not related to the field of research (innovation management), the research of the paper has been conducted on only a few selected journal.

In order to select the journals on which to conduct the research, I used the version 4 of the Association of Business Schools (ABS) Academic Journal Quality Guide, which gives a qualitative ranking of journals for each field of research.

"Innovation" is the most interesting field of research for this thesis, I reviewed in depth this line of research, and I carried out the research on all the journals recommended by the guide (Grade Four, three, two, one).

Regard to the following fields of research, I selected only the journal of grade four:

- General Management

- Information Management
- Operations, Technology and Management
- Organization Studies
- Strategic Management

Below there is a table that lists all the journals considered.

Field of research	Journal Grade	Journal	Impact Factor 2008
General Management	Four	Academy of Management review	2.1
		Academy of Management Journal	2.1
		Administrative Science Quarterly	0.3
		Journal of Management	0.5
		Journal of Management Study	0.2
		Harvard Business Review	-0.2
		British Journal of Management	-0.2
Information Management	Four	MIS Quarterly	3.6
		Information System Research	0.5
Innovation	Four	Journal of Product Innovation Management	1.1
	Three	R and D Management	-0.4
		Technovation	-0.7
	Two	International Journal of Innovation Management	
		Industry and Innovation	
	One	European Journal of Innovation Management	
		Creativity and Innovation Management IJEIM Journal of Technology Transfer	
Operations, Technology and Management	Four	Journal of Operations Management	2.1
Organization Studies	Four	Organization Science	1.3
		Organization Studies	0.5
		Leadership Quarterly	0.9
		Human Relations	0.0
Strategic Management	Four	Strategic Management Journal	1.6

Table 1 - Selected Journal

For each of the previous exposed journals, I carried out the research of interesting papers based on the six discussed keywords

The first collection of papers selected was conducted using the online database scopus.com and the total number of collected papers was 201.

Then, I used limiters in title, keywords and abstract in order to identify the most relevant papers and reduce the initial number. The number of papers became 50.

I later read the 50 papers interlay and I found some interesting citations from them, therefore I reviewed that publications and I selected 7 additional papers which were not identified in previous research.

The table below is borrowed from Adamczyk.

Review Steps	
Review Step 1	Screening of relevant literature to identify appropriate keywords as search terms: 6 Search Terms
Review Step 2	Collecting literature by keyword search in Scopus.com: 201 Publication identified
Review Step 3	Using limiters in title, keywords, abstract to identify shortlisted publications: 50 Publication identified
Review Step 4	Full text screening of shortlisted publications and selection of final publications: 33 Publication identified
Review Step 5	Reference analysis of publications to identify interesting publications and review of these additional publications: 7 Publication identified

Table 2 - Steps of Systematic Literature Review

As I just hinted, the literature review will be dealt first by analyzing studies of recent decades regarding employee suggestion system, and then I'll go into one of the most important models in the behavioral theory.

2.2 Employee Suggestion System

In this chapter from the study of crowdsourcing, I'll study the employee suggestion systems and their characteristics, subsequently I'll deepen what motivates the employee to choose to participate, discussing of Reward, Personal Characteristics Related Factors and Organization Related Factors.

As Simula explains in his recent work, companies' interest in crowdsourcing is increasing (Simula et al., 2012). Crowdsourcing is a term whose meaning is: take advantage of the "wisdom of the crowd" in place of depend on few internal experts. In 2006 Howe proposed a primary definition of crowdsourcing and since 2006 many authors suggest their examinations.

Many authors distinguish two different kinds of crowdsourcing: external and internal crowdsourcing. The first one refers to the actors that are external to the firm, i.e. trusted partners, pre-qualified participants and communities, general crowd. The second type of crowdsourcing consists of all the employees of the company (Simula et al., 2012; Stewart et al. 2009).

One of the most relevant potentialities of the crowdsourcing is to engage a wide group of people in order to generate new ideas and to find solutions to problems.

The last two decades, scholars have identified different types of internal crowdsourcing, someone called it as "Idea management system" that is an organized process for catching ideas from across the firm's employees and evaluating those ideas which are more interesting (Baumgartner, 2008), someone else called it as "Employee suggestion system" or more simply "suggestion system" that are essentially the same meaning.

The literature on this subject is still very varied, in 2012 Adamczyk found more than 20 different terms that all refer to the concept of "innovation contest" (i.e. idea contest, design competition, etc) (Adamczyk et al., 2012).

Suggestion system or in other words Idea Management System as you prefer, is a process whose purpose is to enable employees to generate ideas, to collect and to judge them, in order to implement them.

As described by Van Dijk, the suggestion system can be divided in three steps: idea extraction, idea landing and idea follow-up.

The first phase involves that the company must allow for employees to be creative, think to solutions and generate ideas. The second phase refers to the moment when the employee has to be supported to interface with the system in which he should insert his/her ideas.

Achieving this, however, is easier said than done and it is fraught with enormous complications. Participation in the suggestion system is optional or voluntary and the employees have to feel the right culture and the right motivation to submit their ideas.

In the third step, the proposed idea is transformed by means a process of selection, judgment and aggregation in a project to be implemented (Van Dijk et al., 2002).

Take ideas from employees can provide greater benefits such as the engagement of a wide group of employees able to increase transparency and to stimulate the knowledge diffusion within the company and between the operative function. Internal crowdsourcing means to address to all the firm's employees without any qualification or particular expertise, this fact help to increase serendipity (Simula et al., 2012). Moreover the employee, who participates in innovative projects, will perceive a sense of satisfaction and belonging to the company (Kesting, 2008).

The employees crowdsourcing can drive the company's culture to a more open and collaborative view (Simula et al., 2012). The employee who participates in innovative projects will perceive a sense of satisfaction and belonging to the company (Kesting, 2008). In the B2B market, it is necessary to preserve and protect own intellectual property and to ensure that there are no leaks about business innovative secrets; using employees as innovation source can reduce this kind of risk (Simula et al., 2012; Santos et al., 2011). The employees have an interesting point of view, because they are closest to the problems of consumers in the market and at last but not less important, the employees' innovation as crowdsourcing is cost-effective, more likely that the firm's employees are available and they are

certainly less expensive than an external resource (Simula et al., 2012; Santos et al., 2011; Kesting, 2008; Frese et al., 1999).

2.2.1 The Participation Reward

Where there are benefits, there are also barriers and challenges, first of all is necessary to encourage and motivate employee involvement, why should they participate? Remember that most of the internal crowdsourcing initiatives are initiatives with voluntary participation and if you don't motivate participation, probably people won't participate.

Mentioning Kesting, there are two different ideal-type groups: managers, who have the authority to make innovation decisions and carry out innovation activities and then there are people labeled employees. Employees have a narrow view on their performed activities and often they don't need to know the adopted firm's strategies. Consequently, in these cases, the employee may have difficulty to acquire information about innovation programs (Kesting, 2008).

According with several authors, companies have to find the correct ways to motivate the employees' participation. Authors proposed their own classification of the reasons why the employee decides to participate, with the aim of clarify and shed light on the topic. Over the years, many authors have proposed models that attempt to explain the relationships between variables and employees' actions in the suggestion systems.

One of the first researchers that dealt with the issue was Amabile, who described, in her pungent paper "How to kill creativity", the steps to follow to boost people creativity.

Incidentally, creativity can be considered as the initial part of an innovative behavior during which a gap is identified and people try to generate innovative ideas in order to solve it (West, 2002; Kesting, 2008).

In Amabile opinion there are two type of motivation namely extrinsic motivation (i.e. a motivation that arises from other or from outside) and intrinsic motivation (i.e. a motivation driven by desire to do or to perform an action), the second one is more needed for enhance creativity; the greater is the interest, the passion and the satisfaction, the greater will be the motivation of well perform. On the contrary extrinsic motivation (i.e. economic reward or recognition) will produce participation qualitatively less important (Amabile, 1998).

A few years later, Fairbank translated the concepts expressed by Amabile in the suggestion system research. The Fairbank's suggestion system proposal is an active system that motivates employees' participation by enhancing expectancy, instrumentality and valence. In Fairbank's opinion the employees should believe that they have the ability to submit their ideas (expectancy), the company should imply that, as a result of the submitting, will be an outcome (instrumentality), and the company should offer rewards for the participant (valence) (Fairbank et al., 2001).

Contrary to what Amabile stated, Fairbank believes that the rewards can be a good indicator of employees' ability. Many authors have been interested in the use of rewards on suggestion system, and many of them advised the use of rewards as driver of participation (Frese et al., 1999; Fairbank et al., 2001; Van dijk et al., 2002; Toubia, 2006; Fernandez et al., 2011). Van Dijk was sure that high financial rewards could change the perception of ideas, getting ideas with a significant financial impact on the company business, hence he proposes to use also non-financial rewards such as certificates of appreciation and small symbolic rewards (Van Dijk et al., 2002).

Baer settled things once and for all; he explained that the usefulness of extrinsic reward (financial and non-financial) on creativity and innovation depends of the type of employee which the extrinsic reward is addressed. The employees occupying simple jobs are more encouraged by extrinsic motivation than employees occupying complex jobs. A "complex job" employee is satisfied with the work

activities he carries out, and aims to do his/her job for the pleasure of it, he appreciates the challenge; we can deduce that an individual who works on complex jobs produces high intrinsic motivation.

Furthermore, among individuals who work on simple job, only employees with an adaptive style benefit from extrinsic reward, these are individuals who work according to some predefined patterns and they do not ask the reason why, their main goal is to be recognized for their efforts.

The companies should first identify the target of employees which to refer the innovative initiative and then to decide if or if not use extrinsic reward as motive of participation (Baer et al., 2003).

2.2.2 Personal Characteristics Related Factors

In order to explain the reasons that push employees to suggest their ideas in a suggestion system, many authors have introduced a study on the personal characteristics of employees.

In order to understand how personal characteristics affect an innovative behavior we can generalize by saying that some individuals are simply more interested in innovation than others, they have attitudes and working propensities (referred only to the working world) that will most likely stimulate interest in the suggestion system.

When the company proposes an innovative initiative of idea generation, it is more likely that these employees feel the need or desire to propose their own idea.

Frese et al. identified four different kinds of “occupational personality” namely subjective initiative, higher order need strength, control aspirations, and interest in innovation. Subjective initiative indicates the attitude of controlling a situation rather just responding to it, the attitude to put oneself to the test and therefore a greater tendency to actually think of ideas to change things that annoy them.

Similarity to the subjective initiative, higher order need strength indicates a strong involvement in work and a persistency in finding a solution to the problems (intrinsic motivation). Instead people with control aspiration tend to want to monitor and control all external factors and tend to find a solution to improve their working solution. The employee interested in innovation is focused on the future and he is interested in possible changes that might improve their work situation (Frese et al., 1999).

Buench introduced the concept of wellbeing in the suggestion system research as an increaser of motivation of participation in suggestion system (Buench et al., 2010). The wellbeing is the condition of being satisfied, in good health, or successful and under certain conditions, the wellbeing sets free the employee's resource, which can channel his/her free resource to supplemental or extra tasks. Buench demonstrated that the relationship between the positive attitude towards the suggestion system and motivation to participate is greater in cases in which the person is healthy and satisfied.

In 2012, Hutter tried to discover if a proactive approach to work and a tendency to challenge may contribute to increased participation. Her findings show that personal initiative is a main driver to actively engage in and contribute content to innovation communities (Hutter et al., 2012).

As described above, it is evident that the motivation for participation depends on the personal characteristics and on the psychological state of the employee. Nevertheless these are not the only lever to motivate the participation of the employee and therefore to influence his/her behavior.

The previous literature review concerning the influence of the individual characteristics on the innovative behavior can be applied to the study of close innovation suggestion system, but as pointed out by Van Dijk, the companies are not able to control many individual factors (i.e. educational background) although these are predictable (Van Dijk et al., 2002).

2.2.3 Organization Related Factors

Many of the participation drivers may be proposed and implemented by the organization (i.e. the above-mentioned economic rewards); above all, these levers can be managed by the company with greater accuracy and with greater awareness. Therefore the later studies will take into consideration only organization related factors.

For this reason, Van Dijk proposed a framework based on the importance of the organizational related factors. He identifies two different types of organizational related factors namely the organizational cultural and organizational structural factors. The first one has a higher incidence in the extraction phases of ideas and in the landing phase, the second one has a higher incidence in the landing phase and in the idea follow up. For each of the three phases Van Dijk identifies the appropriate organizational factors, along the stages of the process of suggestion system are identified:

- Encouragement
- Organizational Support
- Committed Resources

The encouragement refers to the activities that motivate the employees to be creative, to think of solutions to daily problems and therefore motivate employees to generate ideas. If the environment in which you work is an innovative environment and projected to continuous change, then the employees will feel more encouraged (Van Dijk et al., 2002; Simula et al., 2012). Jong described the importance of the behavior of the leaders as an example for all employees, and if the leaders show interest in innovation and act in a creative way, employees will tend to emulate and therefore increase the likelihood of idea generation (Jong et al., 2007).

In the same way, the organizational culture that welcomes innovative initiatives willingly and the possibility of a sounding board for their own idea encourage creative thinking and the desire to contribute with their participation (Van Dijk et al., 2002). The sounding board for the own idea is an evident type of extrinsic motivation, on the other hand the willing culture is a cultural predisposition of the company forged between people over time. It has been proved that an employee that believes in organization's honesty and that believes in a future probable implementation of the idea, will be more encouraged to create and submit the own idea (Frese et al., 1999).

The above mentioned factors could be the first motivations of our interest that push the employees to interest in innovation initiatives and that push them to the generation of ideas.

During the landing phase, the managers should support the employees showing their understanding and respect for the generated idea (Van Dijk et al., 2002; Frese et al., 1999). Jong resumes the broad topic of the organizational support as a key for influencing innovative behavior. For example, the managers should support their subordinates when problems arise, or support employees by using mistakes to encourage employees to do better (Jong et al., 2007). According to Frese and Amabile, the organizational support has a dual purpose, on one side the managers could influence the innovative climate of the company, on the other side, they could communicate their expectations and then steer the generation of ideas, or more generally creative behaviors, on the right track (Amabile, 1998; Frese et al., 1999). Frese also adds and describes the importance of a fair and comprehensive behavior towards submitted ideas (Frese et al., 1999).

In 2002 Nijhof proposed a new approach of management of the internal company innovation, named "exempting idea generators" and among other things, he asserted that if a manager is convinced of a generated employee's idea, he should grant freedom to the employee in order to let him to work on his idea, moreover it

is necessary that they create an environment of trust, trust in the potential of the employee, and trust that the freedom will not be abused (Nijhof et al., 2002).

Sanders provides evidence that if the employee's perception of the helpfulness of the manager is positive, the employee's attitude is inclined towards greater collaboration and innovative behavior (Sanders et al., 2010).

Zejniliovic described the attitude of some managers who encouraged and spurred participation in an Idea Management System, as a potential differentiating factor (Zejniliovic et al., 2012).

It is clear that the role of the leader is crucial, in this regard Jong dedicated a paper based on interviews in order to study how the manner of act of the leader can influence the innovative behavior of employees. He defined leadership as "the process of influencing others towards achieving some kind of desired outcome" and one of the most desired outcomes is the innovative behavior and the creation of new ideas, beyond doubt.

Jong found 13 relevant factors that influence idea generation and idea implementation. I just discuss the leadership as example for the employees, the importance of the rewards inside the organization and the importance of the organizational support and the supervisor encouragement. Other factors concern to the capacity of the leader to prod employees, to promote openness, to communicate a clear goal and in this regard, Simula too expressed the need to clarify the purpose of the project and the wanted type of ideas (Simula et al., 2012; Jong et al., 2007). According to Jong a good leader should also provide a response about the results of the submitted idea and helps to improve the quality or the appropriateness of the idea. If an employee doesn't receive a feedback, he will probably feel excluded and it will have a negative impact on his future participation (Jong et al., 2007; Simula et al., 2012; Arif et al., 2010).

The leader should delegate some activities to the employees, in so doing he ensures high-quality work results; many other authors express the same concept using the words freedom and autonomy. In conclusion of her empirical study, Hutter stated

that the concession of autonomy and independence has an important impact on innovative contribute (Hutter et al., 2012).

In a bid to debate behaviors which encourage creativity, Amabile said “Creativity thrives when managers let people decide how to climb a mountain; they needn't, however, let employees choose which one.” It transpires that is necessary to grant autonomy to employees in order to increase creativity, but it is essential to define the scope within which they will work (Amabile, 1998); in this respect Amabile also talked about task assignment, outlining the importance to match the right person with the right job in terms of type and number, the perfect match can stimulate the creativity and the innovative thinking (Amabile, 1998; Jong et al., 2007).

Amabile and Jong agree also with regard the correct assignment of resources to employees or teams that have to implement submitted ideas. When we talk about resources we refer to time and budget, because they are the main resources that affect directly to the creative and innovative work. On the one hand, little time can stimulate creativity, but on the other hand, too short deadlines can kill creativity; the discourse is similar to the assigned budget. The managers have to find a compromise (Amabile, 1998; Jong et al., 2007; Fernandez et al., 2011).

Going back to the framework proposed by van Dijk, according to his research, the system or the tool where the employees can enter their own ideas, has to be accessible (Van Dijk et al., 2002); in this respect, Arif studied the “accessibility factor” proposed by Van Dijk under another key of interpretation, Arif expressed the notion that an user friendly system facilitates participation, then again an easy system facilitates the understanding of the project and it can be learnt faster (Arif et al., 2010). A few years before, some authors in general terms spoke about suggestion inhibitors, referring to all those obstacles in which an employee comes across when he/she wants to submit his/her own idea (Frese et al., 1999; Zejnilovic et al., 2012). Among these inhibitors, it can insert the accessibility of the system obviously.

The companies can support the phase in which the idea is set down in the organization by means of a clear and wide definition of the scope of the required ideas (Van Dijk et al., 2002; Arif et al., 2010).

About the last phase called "Idea Follow up", Van Dijk proposed some factors able to manage the back office of the suggestion system adequately. In this latter phase, the organization dedicates resources with the aim of evaluate the proposed ideas, then the organization rewards the best employees and conducts initial actions to implement the idea (Van Dijk et al., 2002). According to Frese, also the idea processing can enhance the employees' perception that the organizations hold dear the innovative idea creation project (Van Dijk et al., 2002; Frese et al., 1999).

I have extensively described the model of transfer of the ideas proposed by Van Dijk, but just like him, many other authors have created their own models in order to describe the organizational motivations that encourage employees to participate in suggestion system.

Before Van Dijk, in 1999 Frese presented a general model of the theoretical variables relating to a suggestion system. This model is very similar to the model of Van Dijk because both identify the three phases of the suggestion system (having ideas, writing ideas and rewarded ideas), although the three phases proposed by Van Dijk seem to be more detailed. Differently from Van Dijk, Frese includes in his model the individual factors such as the self-efficacy that can be connected to Ajzen's Perceived Behavioral control, or such as occupational personality already studied in these pages. Interesting to note is the inclusion of a participation factor related to motivation to improve their own work situation, understood how to make the job easier or make the job safer; Frese found that motivation as better work is related to writing and submitting the idea (Frese et al., 1999).

In 2010, Buench underlined how the motivation is the basis for the participation in innovative idea proposals. In his opinion there are three main field of research about the motives of participation: work environment, characteristics of the suggestion system and individual characteristics. His model correlates the

perception of the employees to be well treated, the attitude to the suggestion system (similar to the Ajzen's attitude to the behavior) and the individual psychological condition (see above), with the motivation to submit ideas (Buench et al., 2010).

In order to detect all the drivers for participation in innovative business initiatives, it is necessary to go beyond the comprehensive model proposed by Van Dijk.

Hutter studied the impact of affective commitment on contribution behavior; affective commitment is defined as the "desire" component of organizational commitment, an employee who is affectively committed to the organization identifies with the goals of the organization and will remain into the organization because he/she wants to. According to Hutter, affective commitment does not imply the automatic and obvious participation in innovative projects and submitting the own ideas (Hutter et al., 2012). Similarly Sanders talked about employees' satisfaction as predictor of innovative behavior; Sanders explained that an employee that feel good about his/her job or work environment will engage with greater involvement (Sanders et al., 2010).

A further factor not fully revealed and studied by Van Dijk is Perceived job empowerment, the term empowerment is referred to a process of growth based on increasing self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-determination to bring the individual to take possession of his potential knowingly (this factor can be connected to Ajzen's Perceived Behavioral Control). Hutter proved the importance of job-empowerment for employee innovative behavior (Hutter et al., 2012). Other authors have referred to these values in their studies, noting that an employee who does not believe in himself/herself and that he/she does not believe to have appropriate skills, does not attempt to develop suggestion and share his/her idea (Frese et al., 1999; Simula et al., 2012; Fernandez et al., 2011). Fairbank stressed the issue and listed the features that a suggestion system should have to increase the employee's self-determination, in his opinion a suggestion system should be user friendly hence it should use company intranets or web pages, which inter alia, facilitates a collaborative approach to generating suggestions. A suggestion system should

always give a response to the participants in order to create a sense of fulfillment and it should accept all proposals, or at least ask for revisions of explanations of ideas; moreover he says that managers should communicate and publicize to all the best ideas in such a way as to give an example to employees that they too can succeed (Fairbank et al., 2001).

2.3 Motivation Theory

In the last decades many authors dedicated their study on Motivation Theories, however the two most important models are the “Motivation Opportunity Ability” and the “Theory of Planned Behavior”. The MOA model (motivation, opportunity, ability) tries to improve predictive power achievable by combining ability mainly seen as habit and knowledge, a concept of opportunity to perform the behavior and motivation which is a simplified version of Ajzen's model. The Theory of Planned Behavior is a predictive theory of behavior more comprehensive than the MOA because it also includes the attitude toward the behavior of the individual and considers the effect of social pressure that influence the choice of the individual intentions of behavior (Govindaraju et al., 2013).

Given its completeness, I will study and will use the Theory of Planned Behavior.

2.3.1 The Theory of Planned Behavior

A leading expert in the theory of behavior is Icek Ajzen, who in 1991 introduced the Theory of Planned Behavior, a theory which predicts deliberate behavior, because behavior can be planned.

Theory of planned behavior is the successor of the similar Theory of Reasoned Action of Ajzen (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980); Ajzen discovered that behavior

appeared to be not 100% voluntary and under control. Given this finding, he decided to add perceived behavioral control to the theory and framework.

With the theory of planned behavior, Ajzen intends to assert that any behavior depends on the intentions to perform it, clearly the stronger the motivation and willing to perform the more likely will be the performance of a controlled behavior; but it is necessary to consider that not necessarily a behavior is under control, sometimes a person doesn't have the required opportunities and the needed resources.

According to the thought of Ajzen, it is evident the importance of the behavioral control, however the perception of the behavioral control is much more impactful on behavior. A person can believe that he/she has needed ability, that he/she has the skill or capacities to well behave o, more simply, that his/her effort will be adequate. These beliefs are stronger than the ability or effort itself. Moreover, the perceived strength of each control factor to impede or facilitate performance of the behavior, share in bringing about to perceived behavioral control in direct proportion to the person's subjective likelihood that the control factor is real.

In general, we can say that in those cases where an individual's behavior is under control, the behavior can be predicted directly from the intentions. An example is proposed by Ajzen: political vote of the electorate is strongly correlated with the voting intentions.

To complete the diagram, we describe the last two predictors: Attitude to the behavior and subjective norms.

Faced with the choice to behave or not to behave, the person assesses the hypothetical expected return that can be negative or positive. These beliefs stem from the characteristic that every individual associates to a particular behavior.

It is very likely that a person, wishing to lose weight, avoid eating dessert after a meal, because he/she believes that the dessert has a high calorific value (intention of behavior and negative outcome). The concerned person automatically acquires an Attitude to The Behavior.

According to Ajzen, people are affected by the influence of the social group to which they belong. People that daily surround an individual have an obvious influence on behavioral choices.

Normative beliefs refer to the perceived behavioral expectations of such important individuals or groups as the family, consort, friends, or also teacher, manager and coworkers. I mean, if all the classmates of a boy get a specific brand name shoes, very probably the boy himself will buy the same above-mentioned brand name shoes, rather than buy another type of shoes. Obviously the approval of the reference group influences the behavior of the individual.

Ajzen's Subjective Norms is proportional to the multiplication between the strength of each normative belief and the motivation to comply with the referent in question (Ajzen, 1991).

Over the years, the authors studied and investigated the TPB. In 2002, Ajzen himself studied the residual effects of past on later behavior, trying to understand the conditions under which past behavior can be useful to predict the future behavior (Ajzen, 2002).

Many scholars accepted the invitation of Ajzen to identify other predictors and to investigate the construct already identified. Sheeran and Orbell introduced the anticipated regret theory and descriptive norms (Descriptive norms describe what is typical or normal and motivate action by providing evidence as to what is likely to be effective, adaptive, and appropriate action) in order to identify other predictors of intentions (Sheeran et al., 1999).

In an interesting article in 2009, White and colleagues enter into the details of subjective norms and they identified three different dominant approaches studied by other researchers in the course of a decade (White et al., 2009).

Many are the areas of study that depart from Theory of Planned Behavior and affect many researchers, obviously it would be impossible to mention them all but although it is now dated, the Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior remains a cornerstone for anyone who wants to approach to behavioral studies.

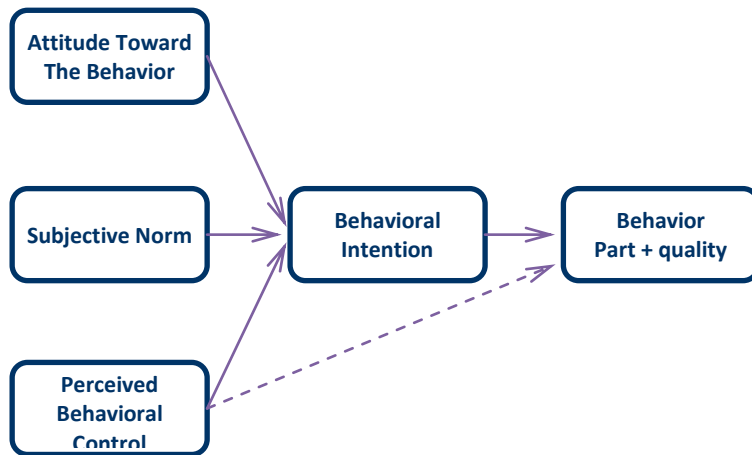


Figure 1 - The Theory of Planned Behavior

2.4 Research Gaps

In the field of employee suggestion system studies have been strongly focused on what motivates employees to participate and consequently on the characteristics that the suggestion system should have, over the years, in this regard, many interesting models have been created.

Some authors have focused their efforts in trying to understand how to generate ideas of good quality.

The academic literature currently available shows some gaps. One of the gaps is to implement the present studies on the motivations of participation with the behavioral theory proposed by Ajzen, so as to predict the future behavior of employees associated with the varying conditions of the drivers of participation.

An important gap in the current literature is undoubtedly the absence of a study that examines in detail the organizational aspect in which the employee suggestion system is created.

Like so many other programs proposed by senior management, an employee suggestion system project might encounter typical difficulties of implementation and communication of the project within the organization.

the current literature has often studied the employee suggestion system as a black box observing what happens to vary certain factors without take care of what is happening within the organization and between the different levels of the organization.

3 Research Framework

In this chapter I'll discuss the research framework on which I will base my future studies. Following the discussion conducted in the previous chapter about the gaps in the literature, I will introduce an organizational theory created in the context of SHRM and used to study the perceptual gap within the different levels of the organizations. This theory is the multilevel approach proposed by Nishii and I will insert it in my research framework. Based on the multilevel model I'll pose my Research Question and starting from the research gaps, I'll discuss how I connected the different theories in order to create my research framework. Finally, based on the built framework, I will propose a hypothesis that will be useful to guide my future data analysis.

3.1 Multilevel Approach

Up to this point, I have exposed an analysis of the literature on innovation management and more specifically call for ideas addressed to employees.

Another very interesting field of research for my thesis research is Strategic Human Resource Management. Talking about Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), Nishii (Nishii et al., 2007) said "It involves all of the activities that are implemented by an organization to affect the behavior of individuals in an effort to implement the strategic needs of a business."; this definition shows that the SHRM can give an interesting contribution to research on idea generation and suggestion system.

From that point of view, the paper of Nishii named "Variability Within Organizations: Implications for Strategic Human Resource Management" is one of the most interesting. In 2006 and 2007 (Nishii and Wright, 2006 and 2007), Nishii sought to tackle some of the gaps and limitations in the SHRM literature, for example she noticed that in the much of the literature on this subject, the authors analyzed the organization and HR practices as if they were a black box, then analyzing the value of output to vary the input.

The most important criticism expressed by Nishii was the little attention dedicated to the variability in research SHRM, that is the probable divergence of opinion and perception of individuals towards HR practices; in fact, each individual within the company has his/her own career path, their characteristic and their own experience and on this basis, he/she will respond to HR practices. Every employee has his/her own perception and according to it, he/she will behave in response to each HR practice, the sum of these behaviors is the company's performance (This concept is very similar to the behavioral theory proposed by Ajzen). Given this, Nishii supposed real effect of HR practices may be different from expected effects of HR practices on the basis of perceptions of HR practices. In order to shed light on how HR practices impact performance, Nishii introduced a multilevel analysis.



Figure 2 - Multilevel Theory

The first level is the intended HR practices that represent the HR strategy of top management. After a detailed analysis of the company, top management believes that some kind of HR practices can be implemented in order to improve business

performance. For initial assumption, practices are intended to be uniformly dedicated to employees. As already said, the organization includes different types of people and consequently different types of perceptions and attitudes; all that practices have to be implemented in a harmonious way in order to obtain the desired results. Some new practices require a great implementation effort, some practices constrain employees to learn new behaviors and this may create resistance in the implementation. Not all the intended HR practices are actually implemented, hence it introduces the concept of Actual HR practices and that represent the practices that are implemented in a different way from the initial intention.

There are many reasons for this apparent inefficiency, such as the lack of uniformity of implementation among the different individuals that are supposed to Implement practices.

After, actual HR practices are communicated and transmitted towards all the employees, who perceive and interpret their practices according to their personal characteristics. At this level variability is high because the large number of employees to which the practices are conveyed is large too.

The linkage between the actual HR practices and the perceived HR practices is the “communication challenge”. The difference between actual and perceived practices depends on several factors, first of all the individual cultural background and the individual characteristics. Another important factor is represented by past experiences, not entirely unknown practices or familiar behaviors are more likely accepted and interpreted from the right point of view.

Also the social context in which a person works can influence the way in which a person perceives news. In this regard, co-workers play a crucial role; the way in which they describe or perceive practices influences the practices' perception of their peers. The direct analogy between these last concepts and the Subjective Norms of Ajzen is evident (Ajzen, 1991).

Based on how the employee has received the HR practices, he/she will react in some way, the reaction can be cognitive, affective or behavioral.

If the process of implementation and communication of practices has been well performed, then behaviors will be positive and constructive, otherwise the behaviors will be counterproductive.

The linkage between perceived HR practices and employee reaction is named “moderation” and its purpose is to study the variation across individuals.

Finally, the organization will get a result at the level of job group, defined “performance”. The transition from employee reaction to performance is also a transition from individual level to job group level; in fact the reactions of the individual employees have an impact on the entire company.

Inside the organization, the positive or negative impact on the whole company of the individual’s reaction depends on the level of coordination and interdependence among work activities. For example, there are cases in which the input of one individual depends on the output of the previous. Therefore the aggregated outcome is limited by the lowest performer (bottleneck concept).

The theory of multilevel Nishii is briefly shown in the figure below. The HR practices designed by the Intended level follow the path previously explained, from Actual to the Perceived level, then the level of coordination across the individual behaviors may positively impact on organizational results.

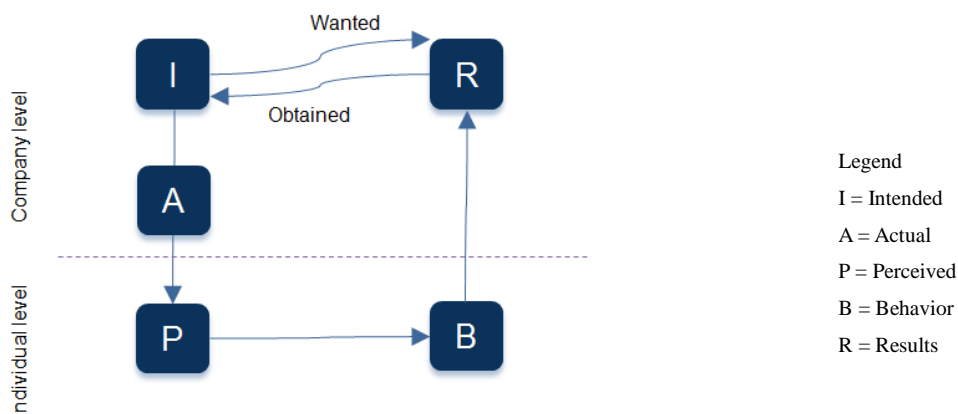


Figure 3 - Multilevel Model

In 2008, Nishii leads an interesting study in a supermarket chain whose objective is to observe and correlate intended practices and employee reaction (Nishii et al., 2008). This study demonstrates not only the obvious existence of levels within the organization, but also the importance of variability to achieve the desired results. The model proposed by Nishii is very interesting for the study that I intend to lead. With the model of Nishii, I can introduce a multilevel approach into the study of employee suggestion system together with innovative behavioral studies.

3.2 Research Question

The specific objective of this research is to verify whether the multilevel theory just explained in the previous chapter can be applied to innovation projects created by companies for their employees. To achieve this goal I'll study the case of the ESS project employee suggestion system.

Research Question: what is the impact of organizational levels on participation in the employee suggestion system?

3.3 Research Framework

The Research Framework that will be exposed arises from attempting to merge three different research fields: Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), motivations in the employee suggestion system and multilevel approach (Nishii and Wright, 2006).

The objective of the research is to implement the Multilevel Approach in an Employee suggestion System case and to verify if the absence of any variability of perception and of communication between the three different levels (Intended,

Actual and Perceived level) will entail a positive behavior. In the academic literature available today you do not have at all a study like the one I have just presented.

To achieve this, I'll borrow Multilevel Approach and correlated findings of Nishii, Theory of Planned Behavior in order to predict behavior and different studies and findings about the drivers of participation in Employee Suggestion System.

Theory of Planned Behavior is the Ajzen's theory with which he predict behaviors from the study of evaluation of self-performance of a particular behavior (Attitude to the behavior), the individual's perception of how a behavior is appreciated by significant others (Subjective Norms) and the individual's perception of the own ability and of the difficulty of performing a behavior (Perceived Behavioral Control).

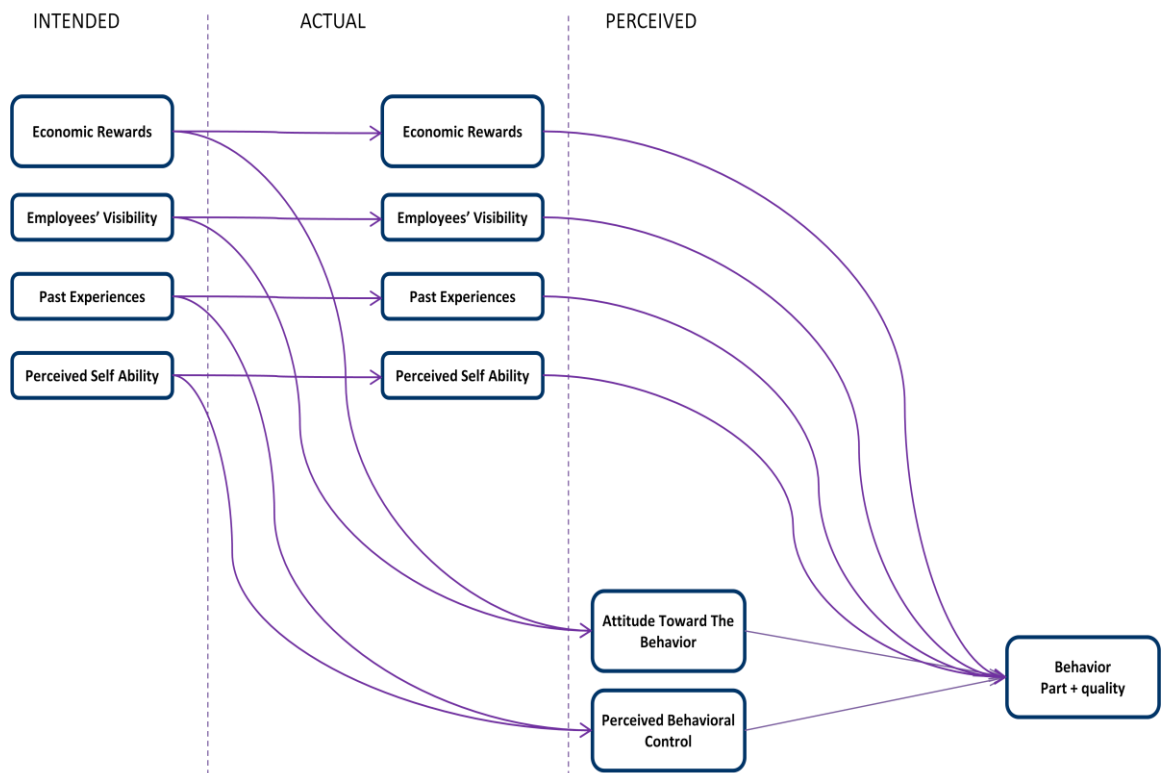


Figure 4 - The Research Framework

The image above shows the research framework used in this thesis.

This research framework is built on the multilevel theory presented by Nishii and Wright in 2006. The last levels that they identified represent the transition from the reaction of the employee to HR practices to the business performance. In my research, this part of the Nishii's model is partially replaced by the motivation and behavioral theory proposed by Ajzen.

In order to carry on my study, the focal point of the Nishii's model is the relationship between Intended, Actual and Perceived level.

These relationships are studied through two different ways: on the one hand we study the direct relationship between the Intended and Perceived level through the observation of the consistency or lack of consistency in the opinions of the two levels; on the other hand, we study the relationship between the Intended and Actual level through the objective and indisputable observation of the implementation of what is wanted by the Intended level.

These two different ways of study are jointly used for the final determination of the behavior of employees. therefore In this thesis we want to study the impact of different organizational levels on employee behavior through two different ways of study.

At the Intended level the research framework shows four variables, they are the four drivers of participation on which studies will be carried out.

The first two are the main extrinsic motivations to the participation in employee suggestion system identified through the literature review: the Economic Reward and the Employees' Visibility. Extrinsic motivation occurs when an employee engages in an activity for purposes that are extrinsic to the activity itself, such as, for example, receive praise, recognition, financial rewards or to avoid unpleasant situations.

The Economic Reward is the driver of participation associated with the recognition of a financial award for participation and for the victory of the employee suggestion

system. As has already been said the Economic Reward is one of the more discussed drivers of participation, the researcher have performed many studies about it and their opinions were often divergent, for example, Amabile believed that the economic prize is not actively promoted a good quality participation (Amabile, 1998).

Other authors wrote about non-financial rewards such as promotional titles and certificates of appreciation (van Dijk et al., 2002) and in this regard the variable Employees' Visibility is here considered as non-financial rewards. It means that the possibility to receive congratulations or recognition by senior management may be a reason for participation. An employee more likely to participate in the employee suggestion system if he/she can interact with the top management and get it just a compliment or an handshake for his/her working effort.

The perception of the importance of these two drivers of participation in the project have a direct impact on the evaluation of the individual employee about the possible outcomes that he/she could gain from participating, then the two drivers of participation are directly connected with the Attitude toward the behavior.

The other two drivers of participation on which studies will be carried out are: Past Experiences and Perceived Self Ability.

Past Experiences is the driver of participation representing the push for participation on behaviors already known. Nishii in her paper (Nishii and Wright, 2006) stated that employees will be more likely to accept behaviors that they already know and the same way, in this thesis, Past Experiences will be used as driver of participation. An employee who already knows how to behave or what activities will have to deal with, he/she most likely participates in the employee suggestion system, otherwise Behaviors that are unknown to employees, can create resistance and hindrance to the participation and it can represents a contextual constraints to perform the behavior.

According to Fairbank (Fairbank et al., 2001) who stated "employees who believe that they have the ability to submit good suggestion will be more inclined to make

submissions.”, in this research Framework the “Perceived Self Ability” expresses exactly the same concept.

The Perceived Self Ability is the perception to possess the ability to complete tasks and solve problems. An analysis of the literature shows that an employee who believes he can perform a given task, more likely he/she will and he/she will do well (Hutter et al., 2012). Acting on this lever also means adequately communicate to employees that the project does not require any special skills or abilities. on the other hand, however, the top management may also assume that by focusing on a "difficult project" and communicating that it is complex, it may engage a small group of employees who have a great motivation.

These two additional participation drivers directly impact on the employees' perception about their opportunity or ability to participate in the employee suggestion system, they are directly connected to the Perceived behavioral control.

Each of the four variables in the Intended level is connected with the respective variable in the Actual level that represents the real implementation and realization of each of the four driver participation just discussed.

The actual implementation of the four variables, together with the perception of them by employees, has a direct impact on the employees' behavior.

In this research framework, the model of the Theory of Planned Behavior will not be fully utilized, but only a part of it will be borrowed.

At the individual level the variables that directly influence the behavior are the Attitude toward the behavior and the Perceived behavioral control. Attitude toward the behavior is the positive or negative evaluation of the behavior determined by the total set of behavioral beliefs linked to the various behavioral outcomes (Ajzen, 1991). The employee who has the subjective perception that participation in the employee suggestion system can produce a specific positive outcome, will have a greater propensity to participation. For example, as already mentioned, the economic prize recognized for participation in the employee suggestion system directly impacts on the Attitude toward the behavior.

The Perceived behavioral control refers to the employee's perception of ease or difficulty of performing that particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). All those variables that allow the employee to perceive more control over the behavior directly affect the Perceived behavioral control, for example to believe to possess the right skills impact on the Perceived behavioral control.

As you can see the Theory of Planned Behavior lacks of some parts and here the reasons are explained.

As already mentioned, in order to verify the results of Nishii on a case of Employee Suggestion System, I will compare the opinion about drivers of participation of those who wish to promote and implement the suggestion system (Intended level) with the perceptions and opinions of those who participate (Perceived level) and with the real implementation of the drivers of participation (Actual level). It is therefore necessary that I use the drivers of participation on which the promoter of the innovation project (Intended level) may have an active role.

For example, if the intended level believes that a sense of freedom and autonomy can stimulate creativity and participation, then it will try to communicate to the organization to grant freedom and working autonomy to the participants and it will try to adequately realize it. This intended level activity is not trivial, but the intended level may have a direct influence and a direct impact.

As Ajzen explained, if the influential people of an individual (friends, parents, etc..) have a good opinion of a given behavior, then it is more likely the individual will engage that given behavior.

When we talk about employee suggestion system, the most influential people of an employee are colleagues with whom he/she works every day and his/her manager. If colleagues that surround me every day think that participate in the project of placing my own ideas is a big waste of time and that it has no utility, then I will probably not participate (social pressure).

Thus, the most important variable that influences the Subjective norms (namely colleagues) is not a variable on which the intended level can directly act so I will leave out the study of the Subjective norms.

Moreover, I won't study the employee's goodwill and readiness to behave in a given way and I'll simply study the behavior as a direct function of Attitude to the behavior and Perceived Behavioral Control.

The employee suggestion system that will be investigated was launched in 2011 and it ended in the same year, the used data were collected from interviews conducted in 2013 and so due to the chosen methodology I can't see the intention of behavior of the employees.

3.4 Hypothesis

On the basis of the above, I can structure the hypotheses to be tested in my future analyzes. According to what was stated by Nishii, if the views of the Intended level (whatever they are) are appropriately perceived by the Perceived level, then it will be possible to say that the communication flow between the Intended, Actual and Perceived has been successful, and it is possible to affirm it, regardless of whatever the Actual level activities and regardless of what were the ways in which this activity have been carried out.

In the event that there is consistency between the opinions of the Intended level and the opinions of the Perceived level, then the behavior or the reactions of the Perceived level will be very similar to what the intended level wanted to achieve when it thought initially to implement those practices.

Also the Actual level will be included in the case study. Together with the consistency just discussed above, it will be observed if the implementation of the variables of participation consistent with what was wanted by the Intended level can positively influence employee behavior.

Then the Actual level will be studied from the point of view of the objective and unbiased implementation of the variables and not from the point of view of communication of the variables themselves.

In the studied employee suggestion system project (namely ESS project) the initial intention was to involve as many employees as possible. As explained in the previous section, in order to achieve this result, the Intended level has a set of variables or drivers of participation and it can decide which ones to use or not use (only four of these variables will be studied) and which ones can adequately spur a greater participation in the project.

***HP:** If there is consistency of opinions between the Intended and Perceived level about the drivers of participation, and there is consistency between the Intended level and the real implementation of the drivers of participation, then the single employee will more likely participate and his/her participation will be of good quality.*

4 Methodology

In this chapter I'll introduce the company within which I realized my study. I will outline some of the history of the company and then I will discuss the implemented employee suggestion system, identifying characteristics and evolution history. Then I will discuss the type of chosen methodology and its general characteristics that are the chosen sample, the chosen questionnaire and the data gathering activities. The method of research is then adapted to the different phases of the ESS project.

4.1 The Empirical Field

The case study is an employee suggestion system created in 2011 by an Italian company (from now on, it will be named "the Company"). The Company is a big Italian enterprise and it was founded in the mid-twentieth century as a public company and recently it has been converted in S.p.a..

Through the years, the Company has operated in a broad number of fields including refining/extraction , nuclear, power and energy.

This multinational group works in 90 different country and more than 78.000 employees work in it. The Company's headquarter is in Rome and another historical site is located in Milano.

Today the Company is one of the world's largest oil group and in 2013, it is ranked as the first Italian company and 17th in the world by revenue.

The Company is currently organized into three main operating divisions:

- Exploration and Production
- Gas and Power

➤ Refining and Marketing

then there are 15 different companies headed to the group held by the Company.

Today the Company has a corporate governance similar to other private companies; it has a board of nine members and a CEO.

My thesis work was carried out within the "Information and Communication technology" corporate function, which is directly headed by the Chief Corporate Operations Officer.

The direct manager of ICT corporate function is the Corporate Information Officer (CIO).

The ICT corporate function has a complex organization chart and it is divided into 10 departments in a typical tree diagram, the 10 departments are further subdivided until getting simple organizational units that consist of a few employees.

Employees who work in the ICT department of the Company are about 950 and they represent just over 1% of all employees. 700 of these are distributed in Italy and the rest are scattered around the world. In Italy, the largest concentration is in Milan where they work almost 500 people, 160 employees work in Rome, 20 employees work in Genoa, 20 employees work in Verona and finally some employees work in establishments disseminated to Italy.

employees working abroad are about 250 and are spread around 80 countries worldwide, with a higher concentration in Kazakhstan and Nigeria.

This complex but necessary dispersion, carries some organizational difficulties such as cultural differences, linguistic or problems related to the time zone.

4.1.1 The ESS Project

In a work context such as the one just described, the organizational structure and working interdependencies were stiff and not very direct. In the opinion of the CIO

the rigid organizational structure limited the communication, and it also inhibited the individual creative expression and spontaneous collaboration between people.

The need to streamline the organizational structure along with the need to not rest on one's laurels, have prompted the CIO to create the employee suggestion system project (from now on, it will be named ESS).

In 2010, the ESS project was created with the aim of stimulating the employees to give oneself a challenge and to acquire new skills.

The CIO declared “to stimulate people to take possession of a portfolio of skills moving from one culture essentially based on get someone to do something, to a culture of doing” and also “going from outsourcing or if you want, to dependence on suppliers for the production of certain activities to a better balance therefore leading people to gradually develop the ability to insourcing within the organization”.

Hence, the ESS project phase one was launched in 2010.

The first edition of the project was dedicated to the management level of the Company's ICT department, it directly involved about 100 people in the early stages. The managers were reunited and they were asked to generate new ideas that could improve their business processes. Some techniques of brainstorming facilitated the phase of idea generation. In these early stages of the project, participants were chosen following a vote, so their participation is not entirely voluntary.

As a result of idea generation phase, 7 ideas were selected and chosen for the creation of five working groups, whose aim was to implement the ideas in business processes. Every working team had a well-defined goal and it should highlight the objectives and expected benefits of the own team, how to implement the main features, the description of the activities and a description of a plan work.

Every stage of the project was communicated to the entire ICT population and at the end of the project, the best working group was awarded. A little recognition was

given to all participants in the working teams, the engagement in activities that were in addition to the normal daily activities were rewarded.

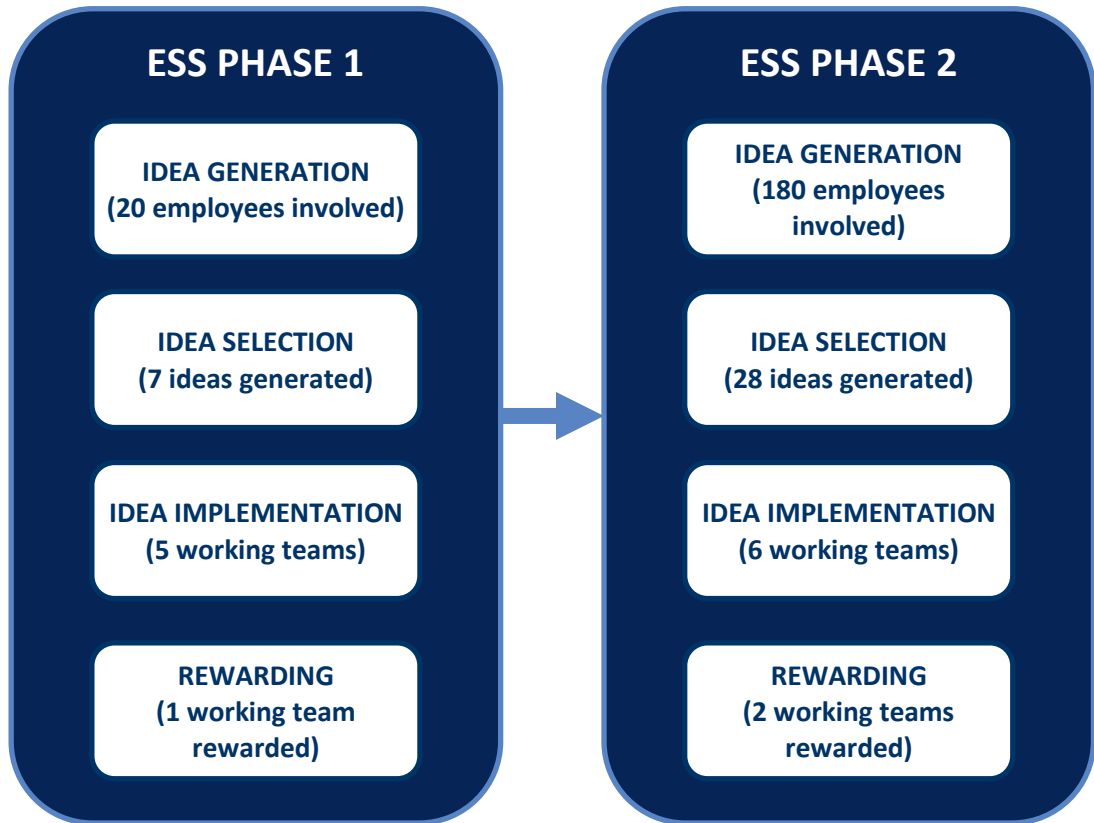


Figure 5 - The ESS Phase 1 and the ESS Phase 2

At the end of 2011, Phase 2 of the ESS project was created with the goal of broadening participation in the idea generation phase to all the ICT population, while in phase 1 the question "What would you do to improve the ICT?" has been asked to 20 people, in phase 2 the question has been asked to 600 people.

The purpose of idea generation of Phase 1 was the improvement of operational processes, otherwise, the goal of generating ideas of phase 2 was to increase the motivation and involvement of employees, the goal was to find new skills.

To this end, during 2011, the Company for the first time introduced a company social network (from now on, it will be named ESS TOOL). The Company social network is a suitable tool for engaging a large number of people.

The employees could put their ideas into the social network, discuss them and show their appreciation through the use of the "+1".

Registered users to the social network were approximately 670, 180 employees were active participants and they created and proposed 28 different ideas.

Following a process of aggregation and selection, six working teams started with the same rules of the previous teams. Employees who had commented on a single idea more than others, created the working group whose objective was to develop that specific idea. Each of any components of the working group searched for colleagues who had knowledge and skills appropriate to the work to be carried out (the recommended number of components for each team was 10).

The components of each of the six working groups organized themselves independently, they elected two team leaders and they divided the many work activities.

It should be emphasized that the members of the working groups had to perform daily business activities and find time to carry out the ESS project activities. In addition, the working groups did not have a budget to use to carry out the activities to implement their ideas, but they could only use the internal resources of the Company and their own ability.

During the period of 6 months, the working groups presented their working progress to a steering committee chaired by CIO. Working groups were helped by a selected group of managers (known as ESS Team) whose objective was to advise, encourage and hence play the role of tutor; these managers were the participants in the ESS project phase 1.

Each working group created their own page within the social network ESS TOOL in order to discuss and communicate the progresses of the work to the whole ICT population and to try to involve colleagues in the activities of the working group.

At the end of the 6 months, the steering committee identified two winning teams. The first winner team was deemed the better on the basis of the results obtained, the other team instead received the prize winner's why, through the social network ESS TOOL , it succeeded in involving the largest number of colleagues. Each participant in the working groups was rewarded for his efforts with a petrol coupons.

in the next chapters I will apply my studies and I will try to verify the hypothesis by analyzing the ESS project phase 2. it is a project that involves many employees and differently from the ESS project phase 1, the employees involved do not perform important corporate roles.

In addition, the project is organized in such a way as to allow the employee to decide freely whether to participate in the project or not. Differently, in the project ESS phase 1 the twenty people involved in the project were elected after a vote of their colleagues and therefore participation was not totally voluntary.

4.2 Sample

I'm not the first to analyze a project of employee suggestion system, but as already mentioned, many authors have already dealt with the subject based on a real case. In my specific case, the goal is a better understanding of the influence of organizational levels within the company that creates the innovation project employee suggestion system.

The study of a real case has the great advantage of approaching to certain (more or less complex) topics, from the point of view of someone who has actually lived the experience or who has designed, built and promoted the project. So it is possible to identify problems or opportunities based on real experiences and not on abstract data.

As most of the case studies, even mine is an inductive study, in fact, from the single special case (ESS project took place in 2011) I seek to establish a universal model.

In order to analyze the case study several methods can be used, both qualitative and quantitative, observation, interview, focus groups, etc.. (Cassel et al., 2004).

To conduct this thesis's analysis, qualitative research interview will be used. The goal of the interviews is to observe the research topic from the perspective of employees and try to understand why they have that particular perspective, in order to identify features that may be generalizable for similar cases.

There are different classification of qualitative research interview, based on the depth of analysis, there are "depth" or "exploratory", interviews can also be "semi-structured" or "unstructured" depending on the type of more or less open asked questions. In any case, the qualitative research interview is characterized by informal and relaxed relationship between interviewer and interviewee, the interviewee should feel comfortable with the interviewer and should not feel as one of the many respondents to complete a questionnaire, the interviewee must believe that his personal contribution is crucial; in this way, the value added will be greater. For this reason, in order to conduct the interview is recommended to use a direct channel, such as face-to-face or by telephone (Cassel et al., 2004).

As is evident, the major advantage of the qualitative research interview is that the respondents are more likely to open on a one-to-one.

In addition, the interviews are flexible and so you can modify the questionnaire according to each individual respondent in order to discover new insights by going deep into the questions.

On the other hand, it is necessary that the interviewers have the appropriate skills necessary to conduct the interviews, for example the person who realizes the interviews should ask questions that give the opportunity to the interviewees to give long answers and develop their ideas; interviewers should ask many follow-up questions. Due to the characteristics mentioned above, the interviews cannot be short and thus they are time-consuming. For these reasons, the interviewers usually conduct few interviews.

In order to study the ESS project proposed and implemented by the Company, it was decided to carry out twenty three interviews with different people working for the Company.

The twenty three interviewees belong to different organizational levels, but above all, they belong to different levels of the ESS project. In this regard, I want to remind you that the organizational levels of the normal working activity are different from the levels of the ESS project, an employee in the ESS project pertaining to a low organizational level, could play the role of Team Leader and then interface directly with the CIO.

All interviews conducted in order to verify the semi-structured and in depth interviews.

The type of interviews is diversified according to the belonging organizational level; given the importance of the role, the interviews posed to the Intended level were conducted face to face. for the interviews to Perceived level was used the telephone channel.

To better understand the role of each of the twenty three interviewees, I will proceed with a discussion of the various phases of the ESS project and the dynamics of participation in the project.

As previously described, the ESS project, as well as most of the employee suggestion system, is divided into two main macro phases, that are idea generation and idea implementation.

The idea generation phase begins with the involvement of the population of the Company ICT in generating new ideas and it ends with the placing and the gradual improvement of the ideas within the social network. The idea implementation phase instead begins with the assessment and aggregation of ideas and it ends with the awarding of the winning teams.

According to the Nishii's multilevel theory, within an organization, there are various levels and individuals can be classified based on their role in relation to HR practices. Similarly, within the ESS project, it is possible to identify three levels

based on the role that employees play during the ESS project: Intended level, Actual level and Perceived level.

The Intended level is that person or that group of people who conceived and designed the ESS project. The Actual level are those that implement and carry out the project wanted by Intended level. The Perceived level represents the entire ICT population that participates in the phases of the ESS project.

For each of the two phases of the ESS project you can apply this multilevel approach by classifying the actors of the two phases in the three levels described above.

The project was conceived by the Chief Information Officer who is directly responsible for the ICT business function. The CIO has designed the project in cooperation with a committee of people with strategic decision-making tasks, which directly reports to the CIO. The project was then implemented and communicated to the entire ICT population by the ESS Team which is a group of twenty high-level managers and that represent the Actual level, who already had directly participated in Phase 1 of the ESS project. The Perceived level is represented by all those to whom the project was dedicated, that are, those who participated (more or less) to the project and those who did not participate.

In the implementation phase, the CIO gives way to the ESS Team which represents the Intended level. They play a role of tutoring, they help and direct the working groups on the right track. The employees who actively participated in the idea generation phase, were invited to create a team whose goal was to create and implement in the organization the ideas inserted in social network (named ESS TOOL). In most cases, these employees were nominated Team leader and they represent the Actual level of the idea implementation phase.

All the remaining employees represent the Perceived level of the idea implementation phase.

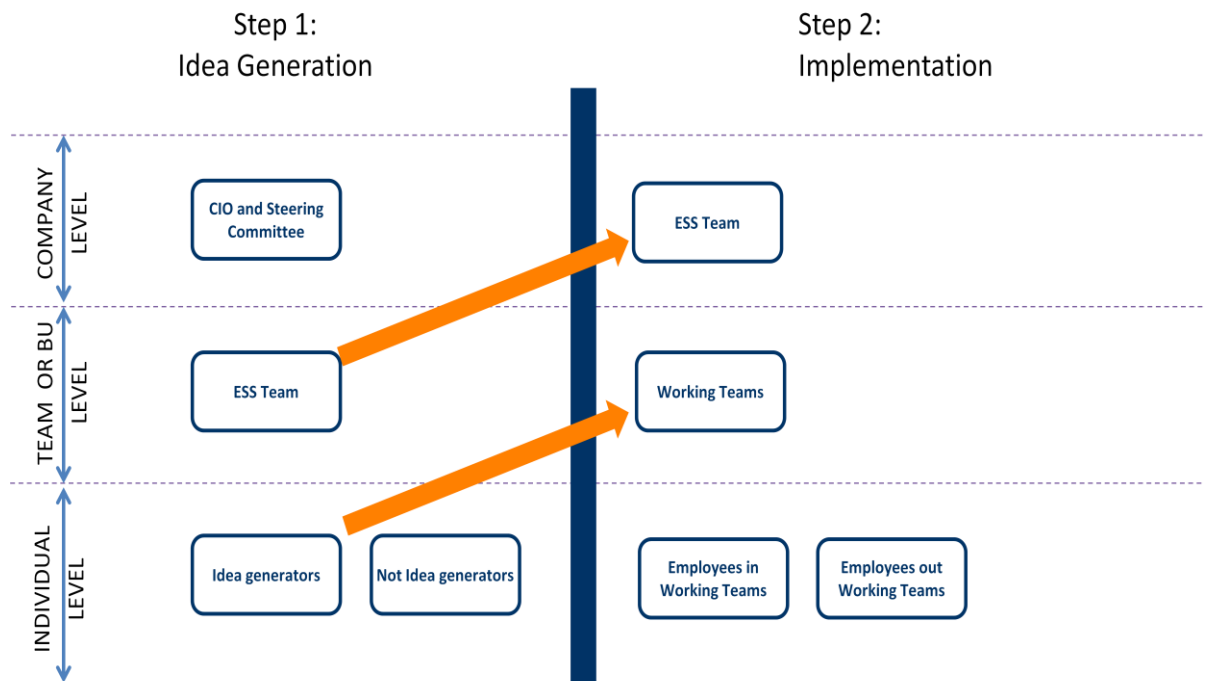


Figure 6 - The ESS Project through the Multilevel Approach

In order to verify if the assumptions described in the previous chapters are valid or not, I interviewed people who belong to the Intended level and the Perceived level. The interviews about the idea generation phase and the idea implementation phase are briefly exposed in the tables below.

Who	Number (15 tot)	Program Phase	Role
Process Owner: CIO	1	Idea Generation	Intended
Employees	14	Idea Generation	Perceived

Table 3 – The idea generation interviews

Who	Number (8 tot)	Program Phase	Role
ESS Team	2	Idea Implementation	Intended
Employees	2	Idea Implementation	Perceived

Table 4 - The idea implementation interviews

4.2.1 The Questionnaire

For each of the two organizational levels to which we did interviews (Intended level and Perceived level), we created a table containing the questions to ask to the respondents.

The created table is based on theoretical notions expressed by Nishii in her articles, in which she outlines the multilevel approach (Nishii and Wright, 2006, 2008) and on the theoretical notions expressed by Ajzen in his Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

One of the objectives of the interviews is to obtain the perceptions of each of the respondents regarding the linkages between the different level. in this way, it is supposed to better understand the phases of the project and eventually identify the perceptual gaps between levels.

The questionnaire contains questions about what really happened during the ESS project, it contains questions that spur the interviewee to analyze what happened and then to give advice and improvements, and finally, where possible, there are questions whose purpose is to identify any gaps within the group of people who have had the same role in the stages of the project.

The interviewee responds to an initial set of general questions about their role during the two phases of the project and provides a summary of the ESS project from his/her own point of view. Thus, the interviewee gives his/her opinion on the type of required ideas, the target to whom the project was dedicated and give his/her opinion regarding satisfaction with participation, the reason for the success

of the project, etc. This type of initial questions also helps to make the conversation more informal and then to let the respondents give their perceptions freely.

The other questions investigate on the studied key variables proposed by Ajzen: attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

The questions used for verifying whether the three key variable proposed by Ajzen have influenced the behavior and if the perceptions between the levels (so a 'high care or low attention to these issues) may be the cause of the success or failure of the project. Some examples of questions: What was the effort required? According to employees what is the meaning of the program?

In addition to these questions, the interview focused on the motivations, was also asked what were the motivations for participate and what motivations hinder the participation.

Each type of question was placed both in reference to the stage of idea generation and both to the implementation phase of idea, because the two phases have been studied separately.

The questionnaire just described contains a summary of all the questions posed to both the intended level, or the level perceived. it is necessary to point out that the questionnaire is adapted to different organizational role and the different position within the ESS project, but despite this, the setting of the questionnaire and the questions are basically the same.

For further details, see Appendix 6 and Appendix 7.

4.3 Data Gathering

The next step is the collection of data necessary to attempt to verify the assumptions made. Each of the described in the previous sections participation drivers will be analyzed for each of the three organizational levels: The level Intended will give its opinion about the possible efficacy and the need to use for

each of the selected participation drivers; at the Perceived level, every interviewed employee will give their own opinion about the drivers of participation and how each of these has been an incentive to participating in the employee suggestion system; at Actual level, it will verify if and how the participation drivers have been implemented in the organization.

The data will be collected as regards both the idea generation phase both the idea implementation phase.

4.3.1 The Intended Level's Opinions

As already explained, there are two different Intended levels, the first refers to the idea generation phase and the second refers to the idea implementation phase.

About the idea generation phase, the Intended level (i.e., the chief information officer) believes that the economic reward should not be the reason for which employees participate, rather he believes that the true meaning of the ESS project and the real reason for participation should be the "game" and the "put himself to the test". This can be evidenced by the citation below:

"I like to think that they have developed a genuine desire to contribute, stimulated by the fact that they probably have seen that those who have this business logic has no achievements, no prize money and not necessarily even career growth, however, he/she becomes a reference element, he/she is classified as the good ones, and this is important. The second thing, I think we were able to build a little playful context and therefore you do serious things while having fun, and at the same time you have fun while you produce serious things. Having fun while working and working while having fun, I think that many of these Working team have gone in this direction." Intended level idea generation phase

I want to emphasize that the CIO as well as represent the Intended level for the idea generation phase is also the promoter of the whole project, which is why in the interview he also refers to the working group. Nevertheless, as he stated, his knowledge of the idea implementation phase is limited.

The previous statement also allows me to check what is the opinion of the intended level of idea generation phase regarding the participation driver Employees' Visibility, in fact, in his opinion the employees should participate in order to be recognized as the good ones.

With regard to the idea implementation phase, the intended level states that there is an Economic Reward but it believes that it is not the reason for a good participation, the idea behind the project is that the participation would serve to promote their passions and make them profits within the Company.

"I think the economic prize was not the main factor, however, I think in part it helped to ensure that participating in the project, even if it goes wrong, however, they obtained something"

"(The main motivation that drove people to participate) is the possibility to do something that is enjoyable to do, I do it because I like it, then I do it willingly and I can apply it at work, then all those who had a passion beyond work, such as video maker (...). Their passion in terms of talent working " Intended level idea implementation phase

Employees' Visibility is instead described as one of the main reasons of participation, according to the intended level employees participated to get noticed or committed themselves to avoid a poor figure.

"I think the visibility is important, I do it in order to get noticed by the leaders and the director, I make everyone see what is the value that I can bring into the ICT." Intended idea implementation phase

With respect to the variable Perceived Self Ability, the message of the intended level of idea generation phase is very clear:

"I do not believe that only geniuses can do great things and good things within the Company, you need the common intelligence supplied to each individual, but must be able to work in an environment that should enjoy three characteristics, it should be challenging, collaborative and open to the outside." Intended idea generation phase

Regarding the ESS project, the opinion is that everyone can participate and that, in the event that the Company allows it, the perception of being able, may well encourage them to participate.

Also for the idea implementation phase, the opinion about the variable Perceived Self Ability, is similar. The intended level believes that the previous stage (idea generation) has encouraged the participation in the next phase, in their opinion, in some cases, potential participants of some Working team were too many. In cases where it was necessary, the attitude of the intended level was of incentive for those who feel of not being up:

"in my area, I was one of those who urged the participants to be less shy and to move forward." Intended idea implementation phase

To point out that the level intended believed that "believe in themselves" was an important driver of good participation, you can read the following statement regarding a Working team that, at the end of the project, did not get the desired results:

“they did not feel entitled to think outside the box, they have always thought to have some limitations (...) they were a bit timid from this point of view.”
Intended idea implementation phase

Regarding the variable Past Experiences, the Intended level believes that similar projects carried out in the past may have pushed to the participation:

“I like to think that keeps on hitting and to launch projects etc., in the Company has developed a culture of contribution to the spontaneous participation.” *Intended idea generation phase*

The opinion of the intended level of idea implementation phase is similar to the previous statement, it focuses on the past developed ESS Project 1:

“If those of phase one had their success, their visibility and their reward, now I can participate, so I will not be indifferent to the project, I participate because it is ultimately a good thing.” *Intended idea implementation phase*

As you can see, the opinions of two different Intended level are the same.

The table below summarizes the views for each variable. “YES” indicates that the Intended level believes that the given participation driver should be used in the ESS Project, on the other hand “NO” indicates that the Intended level does not believe that the given participation driver should be used in the ESS Project.

Variable	Idea Generation	Idea Implementation
Economic Reward	NO	NO
Employees' Visibility	YES	YES
Perceived Self Ability	YES	YES
Past Experiences	YES	YES

Table 5 - Intended level's opinion

For Further details see Appendix 3, Appendix 4 and Appendix 5.

4.3.2 The Perceived level's Opinions

The next step is the collection of all the perceptions and opinions of the employees to whom the ESS project was dedicated, which thus represents the Perceived level. The selected employees were all interviewed regardless of their type of participation, in fact, among the interviewees there are employees who participated in the project, employees who did not participate in the project, employees who won the ESS project etc.

So what I have done for the intended level, is now being done for the Perceived level, for each of the four variables studied I'll try to figure out whether the respondents believe that they are or are not the drivers of participation.

Differently from what has been observed in the Intended level, in the Perceived level is unlikely that the views of the respondents are consistent each other, it depends on the fact that the Perceived level respondents are a greater number than Intended level respondents (14 versus 1 in idea generation and 6 versus 2 in idea implementation), it also depends on personal characteristics, but especially on the attitude towards the ESS project (a non-participant employee is unlikely to have had the same enthusiasm of the winner).

As regards the economic reward, both for the idea generation phase both for the idea implementation phase, the opinions are very discordant.

Some interviewees stated that initial participation in the project (idea generation phase) depends on the curiosity and the desire to try something new. There are those who believe that the economic prize as incentive to participate also depends on seniority: those who work from a long time, maybe they want a financial return, but those who are younger probably lived the experience in order to put himself to the test.

Some people did not know there was a prize, in fact, the communication regarding the probable economic prize was not clear, though, given the previous experiences, they would have been able to imagine the presence of an economic prize.

I quote below some interesting statements:

"No, I do not think you should participate for the economic prize, what is lacking in some way in the big companies like ours and that exists in the internet based enterprises, it is the idea that work can be fun and enjoyable"
Employee Idea generation

"I have spoken several times with my colleagues, certainly there was not an economic discourse, it was not something like "I create an idea and you give me the prize"" *Employee Idea generation*

"there was a final prize money, among other things, the prize was also substantial. maybe these things were in the minds of those who participated in the ESS project" *Employee Idea implementation*

With respect to the variable Employees' Visibility, from the interviews it is clear that the respondents were aware of the great interest of top management towards the ESS project and in some ways, this aspect has driven the participation, in other respects it seems to be rather been an obstacle to participation. Other interviewees

however, in line with the initial objectives of the project, participated just for fun and so were uninterested in the visibility factor.

Some citations below:

“There is a reason related to the visibility to top management and the fact that we could be part of this ESS project that had a visibility with the director, with his staff, with the ESS team composed of middle managers, is not a matter to be neglected” Employee Idea implementation

“I would push on the visibility and therefore make people understand that what they're going to do will then be evaluated very seriously at all levels, so give the opportunity to do something that will give them an acknowledgment because it will be adequately assessed. maybe this is the main lever” Employee Idea generation

“I almost wrote my ideas on one go, I mean ESS TOOL was available to me and then I emitted them there” Employee Idea generation

With regard to the Perceived Self Ability variable, we asked the participants an opinion about the complexity of the project and the opportunity to be involved, it was also asked whether in their opinion the feeling of "not being up" may have limited participation.

Even this case, the obtained opinions were different among them, both for the idea generation phase, both for the idea implementation phase:

“The feeling that we have had, in some way, is that it was not permeable the possibility of joining, I was actually called (...) at a later stage by a person of the team.” Employee Idea generation

"if you ask me, "the fear of not being able to give a good idea, it can be an element that drove maybe even people close to me or not close to me, to not participate?" I tell you, yes, absolutely yes." Employee Idea generation

"I think (some employees decided not to participate) for fear of what I had in the beginning when my colleague brought me within the project, I said, "but if I then do a bad impression?" it was the fear of not being able to integrate themselves or be able to bring some ideas to the project, the fear of not being useful to the project" Employee Idea Implementation

Finally, with regard to the Past Experiences, the questions posed to the respondents aimed to understand if previous projects similar to the ESS project had been an incentive to participate or not. It should be remembered that a few years before the launch of the ESS project, the CIO had launched several innovative projects including a call for ideas called "ESS project phase 1." It was very similar to the ESS project discussed here, and this project was made known to the entire ICT population.

Only on six out of twenty interviews, the interviewee stated that the ESS project phase 1 limited his participation.

"The decision not to participate in the second edition was connected to a personal perception of the results that have been achieved in the first edition"
Employee Idea implementation

"the first edition (ESS Project phase 1) started a bit on the sly and like all new things, we did not know well yet, then gradually we have seen colleagues

who worked on, they were more or less engaged and they were satisfied, but more satisfied than no less. So when then the year after the ESS project was revived, maybe we knew it better and me first, I was interested in it”
Employee Idea generation

"actually the ESS project phase 1 was very important from the motivational point of view for all of us. When we started, we knew there was the possibility of creating ideas and we also knew that there was a phase 1 upstream that had been launched by the director himself (the CIO), then certainly with a sponsorship of a certain type." Employee Idea generation

4.3.3 The Implementation Of The Variables

The in-depth study of the interviews allowed me to understand what were the reasons or obstacles to participation and to instill doubts about certain processes and certain dynamics of the ESS project.

One of the most interesting defects of the ESS project emerged from the interviews is related to the enterprise social network named ESS TOOL.

The idea generation phase was completely designed on the use of social network ESS TOOL. Any activity (the insertion of the own ideas, posts or likings) was through the use of the enterprise social network. Even the corporate communication related to the ESS project was done through the ESS TOOL.

It is necessary to point out that the ESS TOOL was the first enterprise social network ever implemented in the Company .

Therefore the employee who wanted to participate in the ESS project was forced to interact with a new tool that could create a first hurdle.

Some interviewed employee stated that, in their opinion, the social network was difficult to use and not very functional:

"ESS TOOL was our internal social network and actually it was embryonic and very rigid and also with certain fundamental functionality missing and we were constrained to the use of this tool (...) there was not the possibility of having statistics, it was not possible to create newsletters, is not gave us the ability to easily share things, it was not flexible in the management of the comments (...) it was also a block for those who wanted to participate because it was difficult to use" Employee Idea generation

These perceptions were common among employees, but they were not just perceptions. From the interviews it was found that the version of the social network proposal for the ESS project was really very basic. The social network had never been tested within the organization and, as declared by the creator of the social network itself, it needed to be launched as a test and the ESS project seemed to be the best chance to put it to the test:

"ESS TOOL was a prototype of a social network that has now become an official project, but at that stage (idea generation phase), it was still a prototype that was looking for a customer, I thought that the ESS project would be the appropriate customer and therefore it became the platform on which the ESS project has had all its life cycles with the aim of creating involvement and motivation." Actual level idea generation phase

Reading other statements it was possible to note that these real absence of functionality and accessibility represented defects and significant restrictions on the activities that employees had to play in the idea generation phase, and then severe limitations to the participation itself.

in some cases the ESS TOOL was defined as an inaccessible tool:

“ESS TOOL at the beginning did not have the characteristics of easy accessibility and immediate communication both for objectives and the opportunity to participate in and I think this was a bit a brake.” Employee idea generation

These observations about the enterprise social network show that the instrument on which was built the idea generation phase had the objective technical limitations that restricted the participation of employees. The Social Network ESS TOOL instead facilitate participation, limited it. it had not been implemented in the organization according to what was the initial thought of the CIO, in other words, it seems that the difficulty of use and the inaccessibility of the ESS TOOL have reduced the perception that all employees would be suitable to the ESS project and that all of them were able to participate.

In 2006 Khiiji stated that a frequent and inadequate implementation of Intended HRM could reduce the employee satisfaction and perhaps even to reduce the organizational outcome. It might be interesting to observe whether within a innovation project the same results can be seen (Khiiji et al., 2006).

The observations about the social network and the limitations placed by it can be generalized and it is possible to affirm that an improper implementation of the ESS project features could influence the reactions of the employees.

From the point of view of this study “an improper implementation of the ESS project features” means to implement and to carry out in the organization the participation drivers in a different way from what the Intended level wanted.

After this introduction the next step to do is to check how the four variables have been implemented in the organization. This is not about perceptions of individual interviewees but real and impartial observations.

For two of the four studied variables this task is rather simple. In fact, it is simple to affirm whether the Economic Reward variable has been implemented or not. Consistently with the views of the Intended level was not provided any economic prize for participating in the phase of idea generation. No idea no posts nor likings were remunerated.

Instead in the idea implementation phase the participation was rewarded with the petrol coupons and the two winners "Working team" were rewarded with money. Regardless of the type or value of the economic prize it can be said that in the idea generation phase the economic rewards were not present while it was present in the idea implementation. In addition, each person has their own personal perception of the value of money but now the only interest is to observe the unbiased implementation of the variable so the perceptions of employees will be avoided.

About the Past Experiences variable, the project called "ESS project phase 1" has already been discussed. Although it was dedicated to a smaller group of employees, the ESS project Phase 1 consisted of a first generation of ideas and a phase of implementation of the generated before ideas. Wanting to exaggerate, the ESS project studied here is nothing more than a replica of the previous project actually.

Regarding the Employees' Visibility variable, it was necessary to borrow some of the statements of Van Dijk. Talking about awards for the suggested ideas, he stated that in addition to the financial award it may be useful to assign a non-financial recognition such as "promotional titles, certificates of appreciation and small symbolic rewards" (Van Dijk et al., 2002). in the case of the ESS project, participation in the idea generation phase was not compensated in any way by top management and was not expected any recognition in terms of visibility.

Instead the idea implementation phase was substantially different. The effort of each working group was acknowledged by top management, in fact each working group had the opportunity to exhibit the results of their work directly to a committee chaired by the CIO periodically. The role played by the CIO is the highest within the hierarchy of the Company.

About the variable Perceived Self Ability many observations have already been made, now I want to check if those initial observations are supported by the literature.

In 2001 Fairbank stated “employees who believe that they have the ability to submit good suggestions will be more inclined to make submissions” and he also proposed a set of features that each employee suggestion system should have to enhance the ability expectancy (Fairbank et al., 2001).

According to Fairbank the ESS project had the characteristic to enable collaboration among the participants, in fact, by means of the social network it was possible to exchange opinions. In addition, the participation was encouraged by the ESS Team (Actual level) which urged employees to bring their own idea:

“I think that if I had not spurred a person to post his idea, he would not have done, that if I had not said "come on Mirko, try" he would not do that because he is a shy person. So I do not know how much each of us has spent time in this activity, but we were told that it was definitely a thing to do, we were committed to doing so” Actual level idea generation

This statement is proof that some employees were encouraged to participate, although we cannot say that all the ESS Team acted similarly.

These two positive aspects, however, are obscured by the absence of some important characteristics.

First, the social network ESS TOOL did not acknowledge all suggestion inputs immediately in fact 56% of the submitted ideas didn't receive a comment by Actual leaders and 24% of the submitted ideas didn't receive not even a “+1” by Actual leaders. Afterwards, all employees could write whatever they thought, but only a small part of the proposed ideas was chosen for the next phase (many ideas were aggregated between them, there were 25 initial ideas and the working groups were 6), according to Fairbank this decreases the self confidence.

Above all, the ESS project did not have the most important feature, it did not "provide a simple clear electronic suggestion form". As already discussed, the social network ESS TOOL did not have the features of easy usability and this has limited the participation severely.

With regard to the Perceived Self Ability variable in idea implementation phase, were borrowed some of the statements of an article that is primarily of employee empowerment and offers a useful construct to increase it (Honold, 1997). Although the topic is broad, to some extent it is very close to the concept of Self-Perceived Ability exhibited here. The author talks about of teams and collaborative working arrangements, job autonomy and meaningfulness of the job that is exactly what you can find in the idea implementation phase.

To summarize what has been said in this section, it is proposed the following summary table in which you can see if the variables has been implemented in line with what the Intended level wanted.

“OK” means that the participation driver has been implemented in line with what the Intended level wanted, otherwise “NO” means that the participation driver has not been implemented in line with what the Intended level wanted

Variable	Idea Generation	Idea Implementation
Economic Reward	OK	NO
Employees' Visibility	NO	OK
Perceived Self Ability	NO	OK
Past Experiences	OK	OK

Table 6 - Consistency between Intended level opinion and real implementation

5 Data Analysis

According to what the hypothesis states, in the event that the employees to whom the ESS project is dedicated (Perceived level) have the same opinion about the participation drivers of the person or persons who wanted and designed the innovation project (Intended level) and in the case in which the drivers of participation have been implemented in line with what the top management wanted, then the behavior of the employees will be similar to the behavior desired by the Intended level when it has decided to act or not on specific participation drivers.

In a nutshell, if about the participation driver, there is a perceptual consistency between the Intended and the Perceived level and there is an implementation consistency between the Intended and the Actual level, then the employees will participate in the project and will produce good outcomes (good outcomes mean a high number of new ideas and comments made in the social network in the phase of idea generation and a large work effort within the working groups in the stage of idea implementation).

As can be seen, the focal point of future analysis is not the verification of how much or if certain drivers of participation are adequate, but check whether a proper alignment among organizational levels can positively influence the success of the innovative project.

In this chapter the collected data will be analyzed in order to verify the made assumptions.

The first step is the breakdown of the sample of respondents in sub-sample according to the criterion of the level of performance shown during the execution of the project.

The respondents belonging to the perceived level were classified according to their participation in the project. The used classification divides the interviewed employees in: High Performer, Low Performer and Not Performer.

In the idea generation phase, the level of participation assigned to respondents varies according to the participation within the social network ESS TOOL. Each participant had the opportunity to put their ideas within the social network (New Idea), to comment the ideas of other employees in order to improve them (Posts), to assign their own approval to the ideas of other employees using the "+ 1 " button (+1 button).

The employees who produced a new idea or who at least commented on an other people's idea, are classified as High Performer; those who have not participated in the idea generation phase in any way, they are classified as Not Performer; the remaining employees, namely those who participated only by pressing the "+1" liking button, are passive users and they are classified as Low Performer.

Hereunder lies the table of the respondents for the idea generation phase:

Perceived Level	Posts	+1 Button	New Idea
High performer	0	10	1
High performer	14	2	0
High performer	7	7	1
High performer	1	5	1
High performer	5	0	1
High performer	5	10	1
High performer	10	5	1
High performer	6	5	2
Low performer	0	2	0
Low performer	0	7	0
Low performer	0	1	0
Low performer	0	1	0
Not performer	0	0	0
Not performer	0	0	0

Table 7 - Level of employee involvement in the idea generation phase

The performance classification, which is used for idea generation phase, it is also used for idea implementation phase, though the criterion of classification is different. At this stage, an objective criterion for participation does not exist. While in the idea generation phase it was possible to classify based on the number of new ideas, posts, or "+1" click (data available from social networks), the idea implementation phase does not allow a similar objective classification.

Therefore, in order to classify the idea implementation respondents, we asked for an opinion to a Company manager, he played an important role within the ESS project, he was the program manager and he was the one who called the shots and who kept everything under control. He proposed a list of employees, classified according to his personal perception of the expressed commitment during the implementation phase idea.

Perceived Level	Participation
High performer	High Performance Employee in Working Team
High performer	High Performance Employee in Working Team
Low performer	Low Performance Employee in Working Team
Low performer	Low Performance Employee in Working Team
Not performer	Not Participating Employee
Not performer	Not Participating Employee

Table 8 - Level of employee involvement in the idea implementation phase

Afterwards, all the collected declarations are gathered together and summarized in the table below. The table shows the opinions of all respondents belonging to Perceived level and belonging to each performance level. The views expressed in any interview are shown from the point of view of consistency with the views of the of the intended level.

The sign "X" means that the respondent has an opinion consistent with the intended level opinion regarding the considered variable.

		Economic Rewards	Employees' Visibility	Past Experiences	Perceived Self Ability
IDEA GENERATION	HP1		X	X	
	HP2	X		NA	X
	HP3	X			
	HP4			X	
	HP5	NA	NA	X	X
	HP6	NA	X		
	HP7	X	X	X	
	HP8	X		NA	
	LP1		X		X
	LP2		X	X	X
	LP3			NA	
	LP4	NA	X	X	X
	NP1	X			
	NP2	NA	NA	NA	

Table 9 - The Consistency Table about idea generation phase

		Economic Rewards	Employees' Visibility	Past Experiences	Perceived Self Ability
IDEA IMPLEMENTATION	HP1		X	X	
	HP2		X	X	X
	LP1	X			
	LP2			NA	
	NP1		X		X
	NP2	NA	NA	NA	

Table 10 - The Consistency Table about idea implementation phase

Legend

X = Consistency between Intended and Perceived level

NA = No Answer

HP = High Performer

LP = Low Performer

NP = Not Performer

The tables show how different are the opinions of each individual respondent, for each participation driver the variance among respondents is considerable. This variance is conforming with the Nishii's statements (Nishii and Wright, 2006).

Is also possible to observe that some of the respondents were less talkative than others and this can also be compatible with the level of performance of the interviewee (for example, note the interviewee NP2).

Although the previous tables give a good overview, they are not very useful because it cannot show some interesting results.

In the next steps, the statements are grouped according to the type of performance of the respondent, therefore all statements of the High performers are grouped in a single line, so you can focus on the sum of the statements are consistent with the views of the intended level and on the sum of inconsistent opinions. The statements of the Low performer and Not performers are grouped in the same way.

The sample of respondents is then divided according to a further criterion: opinion consistent or inconsistent with the opinion of the Intended level.

Each group of employees divided by performance level is in turn divided into employees who have an opinion consistent with the Intended level and employees who do not have an opinion consistent with the opinion of the Intended level.

		Economic Rewards	Employees' Visibility	Past Experiences	Perceived Self Ability				
IDEA GENERATION		C_{IP}	C_{IP}	C_{IP}	C_{IP}				
		OK	NO	OK	NO				
High Performer		4 80%	2 40%	3 50%	4 67%	4 67%	2 50%	2 40%	6 67%
Low Performer		0 0%	3 60%	3 50%	1 16%	2 33%	1 25%	3 60%	1 11%
Not Performer		1 20%	0 0%	0 0%	1 16%	0 0%	1 25%	0 0%	2 22%
IDEA IMPLEMENTATION		C_{IP}	C_{IP}	C_{IP}	C_{IP}				
		OK	NO	OK	NO				
High Performer		0 0%	2 50%	2 67%	0 0%	2 100%	0 0%	1 50%	1 25%
Low Performer		1 100%	1 25%	0 0%	2 100%	0 0%	1 50%	0 0%	2 50%
Not Performer		0 0%	1 25%	1 33%	0 0%	0 0%	1 50%	1 50%	1 25%

Figure 7 - Respondents' answers grouped based to performance level and consistency with Intended level

Legend

C_{IP} = Coherence between Intended and Perceived level

OK = exists consistency between Intended and Perceived level opinions

NO = does not exist consistency between Intended and Perceived level opinions

The data placed in this way make it possible to carry out a more detailed analysis for each of the selected drivers of participation. Remember that according to the hypothesis, the results derived from the study of "communication flow" must be matched with the results of the "implementation flow" whose summarized data are offered again in the table below

Variable	Idea Generation	Idea Implementation
Economic Reward	OK	NO
Employees' Visibility	NO	OK
Perceived Self Ability	NO	OK
Past Experiences	OK	OK

Table 11 - Consistency between Intended level opinion and real implementation

6 Results

In this chapter, starting from the analysis of the data carried out in the previous chapter, for each participation driver and for both phases of the ESS Project, we will observe the behavior of employees jointly with the actual implementation of each participation driver and we will try to derive a result suitable to verify the hypothesis.

So for every participation drivers the percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of the level of performance will be observed both in the subsample of respondents who have an opinion consistent with the view of the intended level and, for completeness of analysis, both in the subsample of respondents who have an opinion different from the opinion of the intended level. From this observation we infer a propensity to behave more or less close to "High Performance"; to simplify the results, we will attach a behavior defined "positive" when the percentage of high performers respondents is equal to or greater than 50%.

6.1 Idea Generation Phase

6.1.1 The Economic Reward

With regard to the Economic Reward, as has been seen the idea of Intended level was that this should not be a lever to be used to encourage participation and in fact the generation of ideas was not remunerated by any direct awards.

The views of Perceived level are divided as follows:

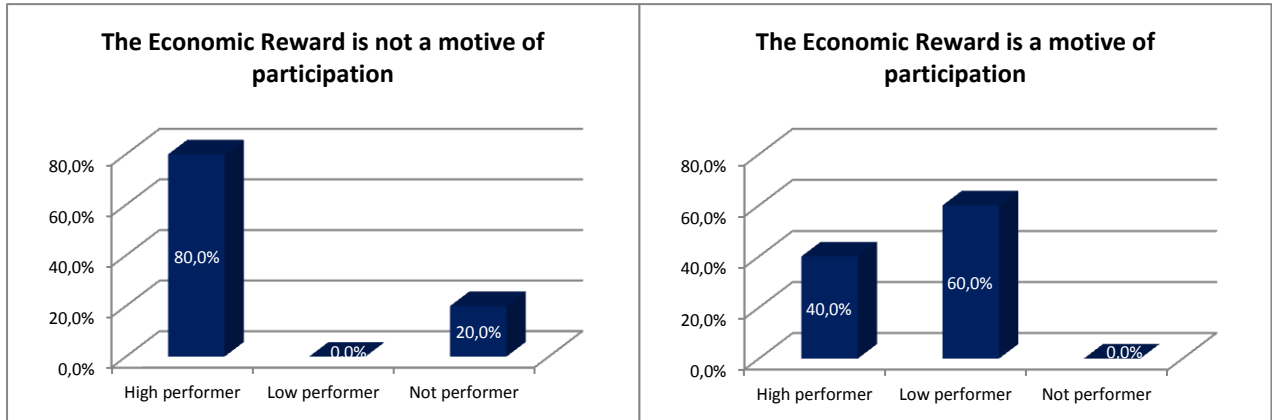


Chart 1 - The Economic Reward Perceived level opinions distribution in idea generation phase

It is possible to observe that in the case in which the opinion is consistent with the opinion of the Intended level (left chart), the percentage of High performer is 80%, this indicates that in this case the proper communication has resulted the desired behavior, after all the implementation of the Economic Reward was exactly the way the Intended level wanted.

On the other hand, in the another chart is observed that the predominant percentage is by Low Performer employees.

6.1.2 The Employees' Visibility

In this case the Intended level was assumed that one of the reasons the visibility of participation should be generated by participation, nevertheless there aren't provided promotional titles, certificates of appreciation or small symbolic rewards related to the visibility and to the submission of ideas in the ESS TOOL.

The views of Perceived level are divided as follows:

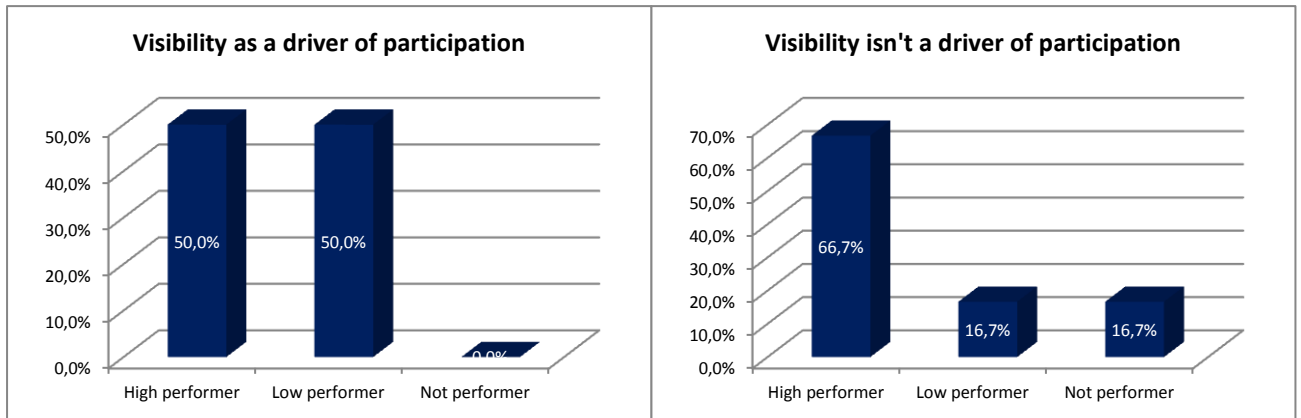


Chart 2 - The Employees' Visibility Perceived level opinions distribution in idea generation phase

Here the observable results are different from the previous, respondents who have opinions consistent with the views of the Intended level are High performer employees, but also those who have opinions that are inconsistent with the views of the Intended level are mainly of high performer employees. According to the rule defined previously in both cases, the observed behavior is defined as "positive", although in one of two cases the percentage of High Performer is greater than the other case, that is in the case in which the opinion is opposite to the opinion the Intended level.

6.1.3 The Perceived Self Ability

With regard to the Perceived Self Ability, the opinion of the Intended level was not actually implemented, in fact, as has been seen was the ESS TOOL (for multiple reasons) unfit to convey the perception of being able in the generation of ideas in the ESS Project.

About it, the views of the Perceived lever are as follows:

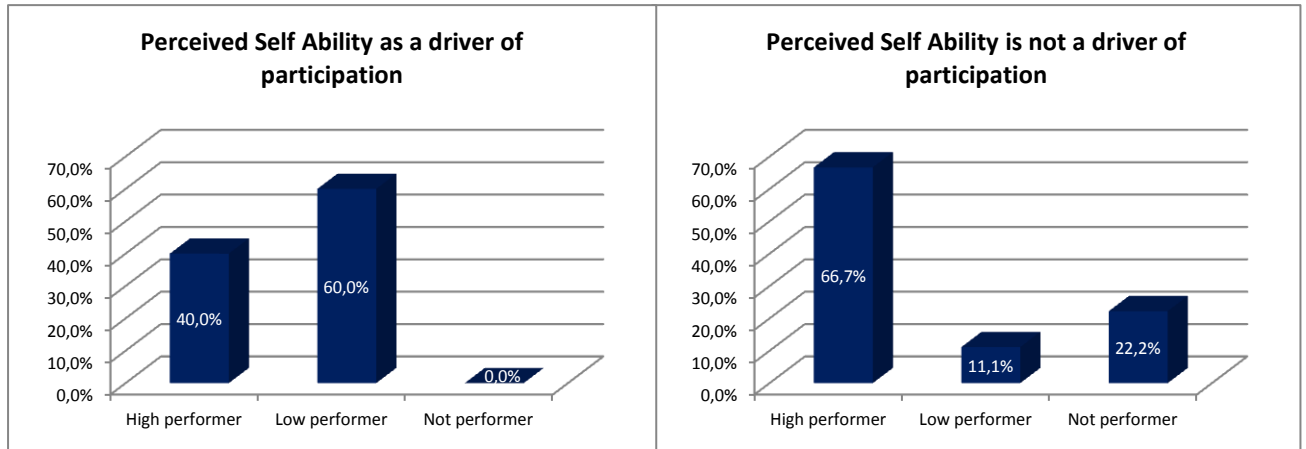


Chart 3 - The Perceived Self Ability Perceived level opinions distribution in idea generation phase

The percentage of High Performer employees is greater in the case in which there is not consistency of opinion between Intended and Perceived level (right chart). In this case, not only the communication was poor but also the implementation of the driver was incorrect. Nevertheless, the observed behavior is "positive." This is a special and unexpected case, it seems that the two errors (implementative error and communication error) are being canceled out each other, generating a positive behavior of employees.

6.1.4 The Past Experiences

With respect to variable Past Experiences, as has already been seen in the Company a project of employee suggestion system (here called ESS Project Phase1) was launched a few years before the launch of the ESS Project, and it was communicated to all employees. In fact the Intended level believed that the knowledge of that similar project could encourage participation and increase the involvement of employees in the ESS Project.

The reaction of the employees towards the ESS Project Phase 1 is shown below:

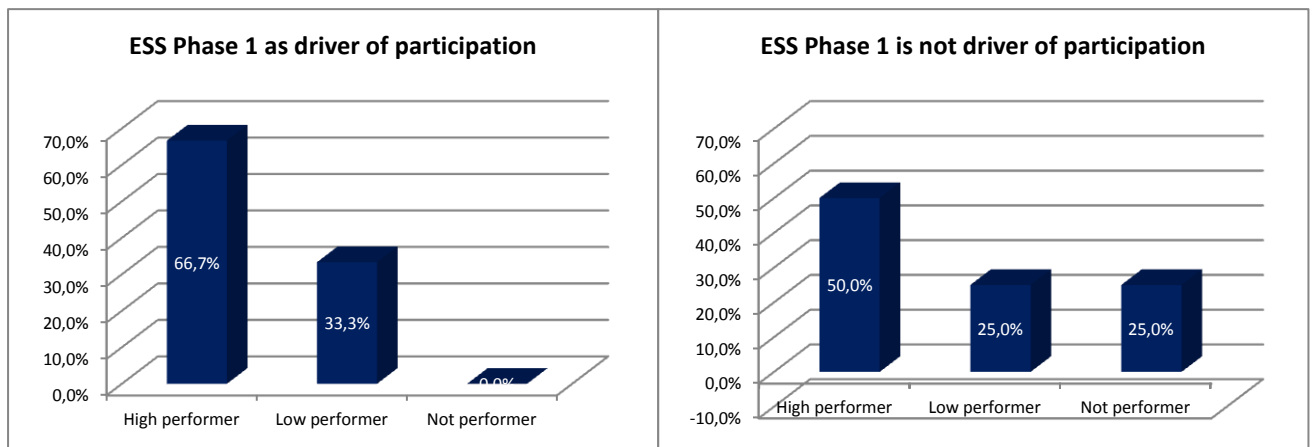


Chart 4 - The Past Experiences Perceived level opinions distribution in idea generation phase

Together with the correct implementation of the participation drivers, good communication and perception of the Driver allows to get a positive behavior. The chart on the left is the proof.

In this case as well as in the case of the variable B, in both charts we note a percentage of High performer greater than or equal to 50% and then by definition is observed a positive behavior. From the comparison of the two charts it is always possible to make interesting deductions, but these cases are anomalies.

This anomaly can be explained by recalling that the number of High performers respondents is greater than the number of Low performers and Not performer respondents.

6.2 Idea Implementation Phase

6.2.1 The Economic Reward

As well as in the idea generation phase even in the idea implementation phase, the intended level believed that employees should not participate in order to obtain a

monetary reward. Nevertheless, participation in working teams was remunerated with fuel coupons and the victory was remunerated with few thousand of Euros.

The views of Perceived level are represented by the charts below:

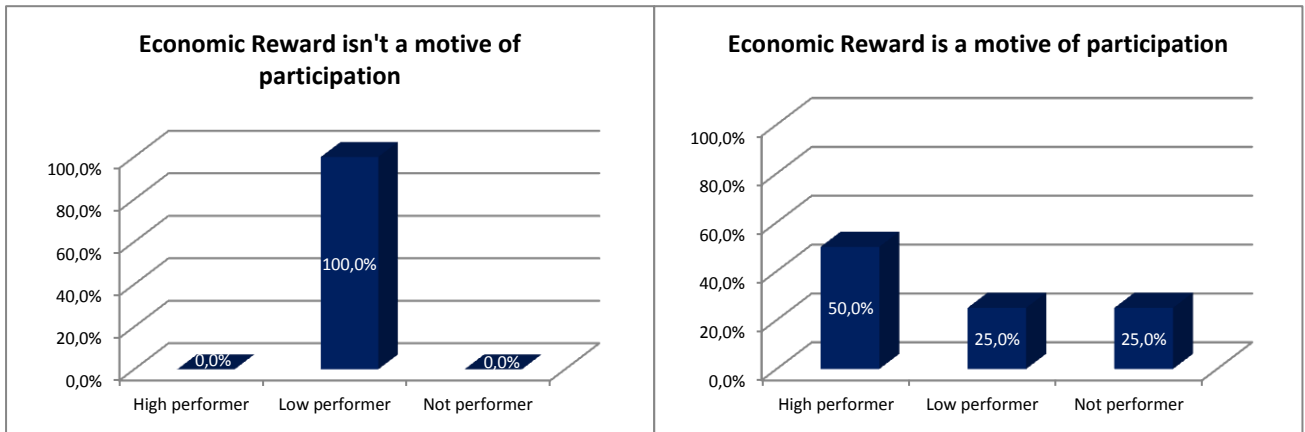


Chart 5 - The Economic Reward Perceived level opinions distribution in idea generation phase

The totality of the high performer employees believed that the economic prize was one of the reasons to participate in the ESS Project. The message of the Intended level has been misunderstood or neglected and yet the participation that you have gotten has been positive. This is justified by the fact that participation in the working teams were remunerated. This is an unexpected another case where the communication error and the error implementative have canceled mutually.

6.2.2 The Employees' Visibility

With respect to the variable Employees' Visibility, in the previous chapters it was explained how each working team had his long-awaited moment of visibility to senior management during the scheduled meetings to allow each group to exhibit their work results. This was consistent with the ideas of Intended level.

The views of Perceived level about this participation driver are represented by the charts below:

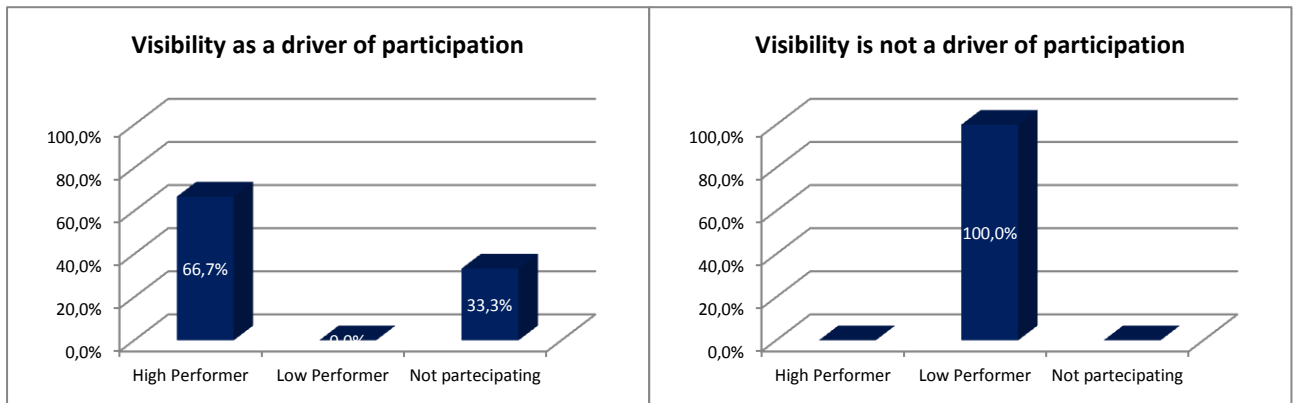


Chart 6 - Employees' Visibility Perceived level opinions distribution in idea implementation phase

In this situation respondents who have an opinion consistent with the vision of Intended level are mainly high performer employees.

In this case the positive behavior of employees is derived from a proper implementation and from an adequate communication of the ideas of Intended level.

6.2.3 The Perceived Self Ability

According to the statements of Intended level the goal of the project was to motivate and involve the largest number of employees and their opinion even though the project was challenging, it was also suited to the skills of all employees. In their view, this concept would have to be passed on to all participants.

As has been seen the working teams allowed job autonomy and meaningfulness of the job.

the perception of the employees about was:

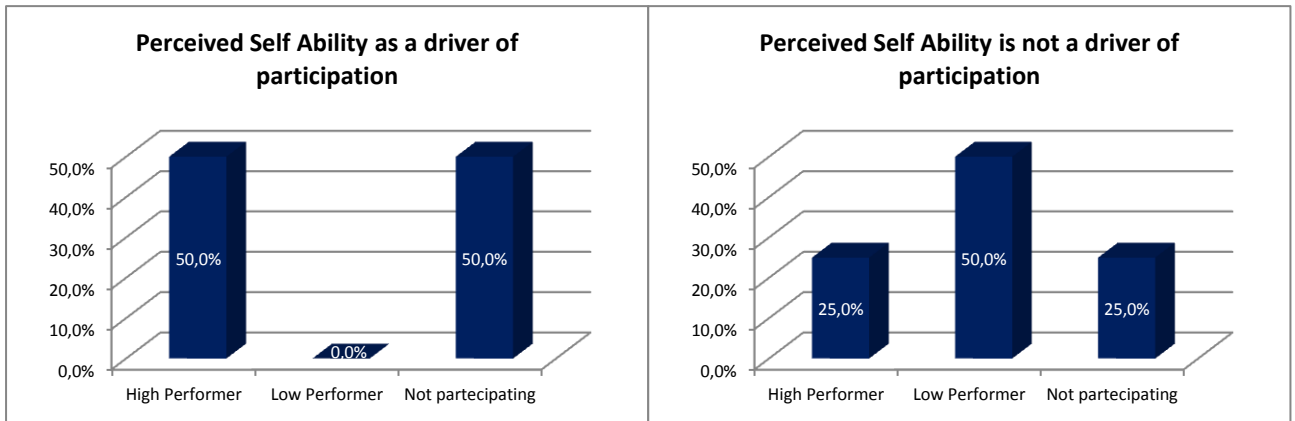


Chart 7 - The Perceived Self Ability Perceived level opinions distribution in idea implementation phase

The percentage of High Performer employees is greater in the case in which there is consistency of opinion between Intended and Perceived level (left chart).

Those who claimed to have felt limitations in participation in the ESS Project by the feeling of not being up were Not performer and Low Performer at 75%.

In this situation, both the communication flow both the implementative flow worked well enough and the observed behavior is positive about.

6.2.4 The Past Experiences

The ESS Project Phase 1 was launched in 2010 and it was a project whose aim was to build working groups that implemented the ideas generated and discussed in previous weeks. Basically ESS project here studied is similar and broadly included the same steps. The idea of the Intended level is that knowledge of certain behaviors, and the fact that some activities had already been explored could increase the involvement of employees.

The views of the Perceived level are aggregated in the graphs below:

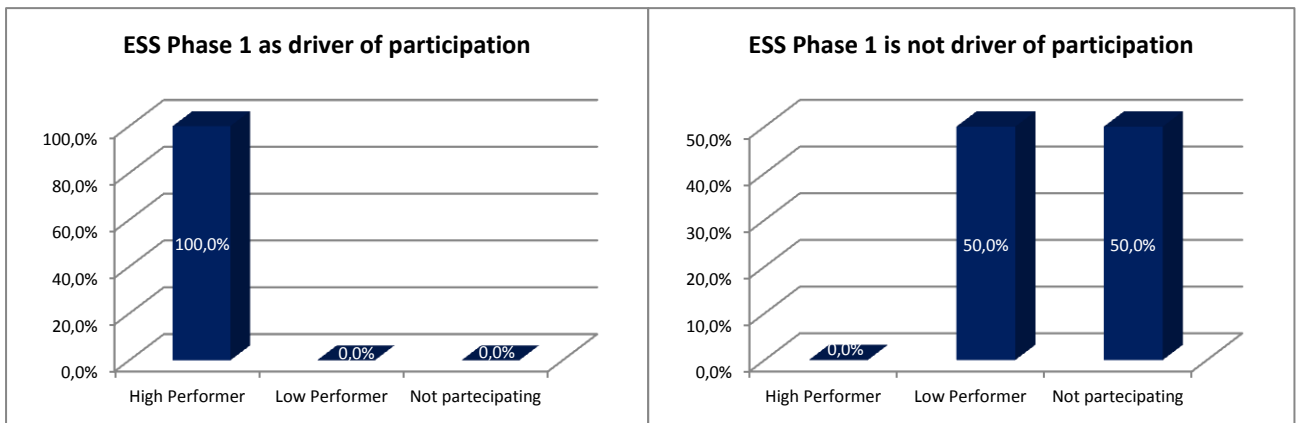


Chart 8 - The Past Experiences Perceived level opinions distribution in idea implementation phase

All the High performers employees respondents are in agreement that the first ESS Project has pushed their participation and involvement.

This case is a good example of how the union of good communication and a good implementation of driver participation has led to a good employee involvement.

7 Discussion

A few years ago, Nishii suggested to verify the theoretical importance of the "disconnect between intended HR practices as reported by managers and the actual effect of HR practices" (Nishii et al., 2008). As has already been stated in past researches, not all the practices desired by top management are realized and this is due to a complex set of reasons. Those who are required to implement these practices have their personal perceptions of what or how the practices should be implemented and each of these individuals will have perceptions that are different from the perceptions of other people. Likewise also the communication of the practices within the organization undergoes a similar effect, not all people communicate in the same way, not necessarily what is communicated is exactly what should be communicated, and so on. The clash with this complex variance is inevitable.

In a different context as the employee suggestion system, this research goes around the complex variance of the Actual level through the study of the real and undisputable implementation of the variables.

Together with this, the research has directly compared the Intended and the Perceived level, assuming that if the opinions of the Intended and Perceived level are consistent, the communication process (in which the Actual level has a main role) has been successful.

The results of the study of the actual implementation of variables carried out in the previous chapter are associated with the results obtained from the study of the consistency of the Intended level opinions and the Perceived level opinions.

The aim is to understand if in case there is a perceptive coherence, that is to say the views of the Intended level are appropriately perceived by the Perceived level, and

there is implementative consistency, that is to say the views of the Intended level are properly implemented, the behavior will be similar to the objective for which the innovation project has been created.

The goal is adapted to the case and expects in the event that the four variables are perceived by employees and they are implemented in the organization in line with the views of the Intended level, employees participate with greater involvement.

Note that to achieve the goal and to verify the hypothesis is not necessary to distinguish between the different studied variables, but they are merged. In fact, it is not necessary to distinguish between the types of the variables used to study the two types of coherence described above.

Regardless of the type and the name of the studied variables and regardless of the different project's phases, the previous discussed cases can be mapped into a matrix that shows a summary of what was stated before and allows you to better see the obtained results. One of the two axes of the matrix measures the consistency between the views of the Intended level and perceptions of Perceived level, the second axis (the measure on the columns) measures the presence or absence of coherence between the views of the Intended level and the actual implementation of the variables.

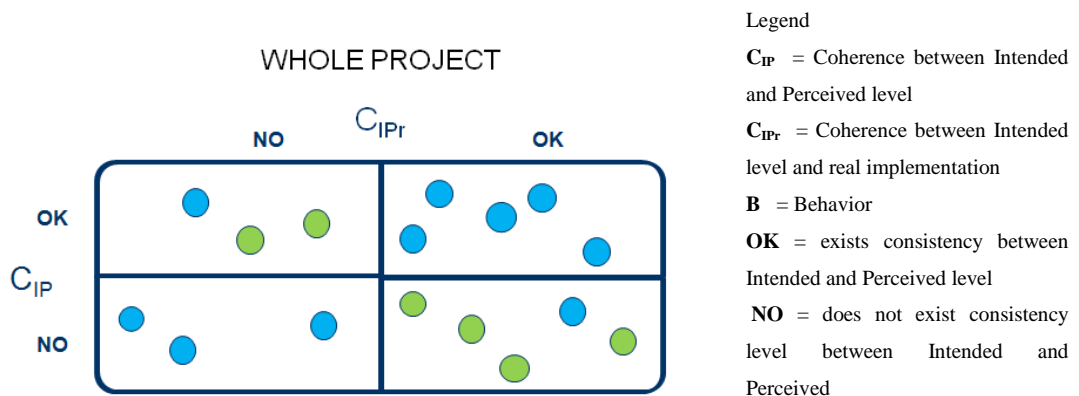


Figure 8 - Matrix Final Results

Each dot represents each variable studied in the idea generation or idea implementation phase indifferently and they are studied in the subsample where it is present or not present the perceptual consistency between intended and Perceived level (4 variables per 2 phases per 2 cases of consistency = 16 total dots). As you can see the dots are divided between the top line and the bottom line equally.

The color of the dots varies according to the type of behavior observed, the blue color means a “positive behavior”, the green color means a “negative behavior”.

To simplify and make the results more visible, it was decided to transform the "behavior" in a binary variable (note that the behavior is considered positive if the percentage of High performer employees is greater than or equal to 50%).

According to the hypothesis, it is expected that within the first quarter there are only blue dots, so in case there is a consistency between the views of the Intended level and perceptions of Perceived level the behavior is positive (the majority are High performer). Therefore it seems that the initial hypothesis is verified. however, it is possible to observe some other interesting phenomenon.

In the third quarter there are only blue dots which means in the event that there is not consistency between the Intended and Perceived level (perceptual consistency) and there is no consistency between the views of the intended and the real implementation of the variables (implementative consistency), the behavior is positive. This is an unexpected result.

If you want to be more practical, it can review and explain one of the three cases relating to the third quadrant, that is the Economic Reward Idea in the Implementation Phase: the Intended level thought that the economic prize, should not be a stimulus to participation, in contrast with Intended level employees believed that one reason for participation was the economic prize. In addition, the project provided a prize for participation and for the eventual victory. Given the

presence of an economic prize for participation or winning, employees who would participated in the project also to get the economic award, were most involved.

In this situation, it seems that two errors (implementative error and perceptual error) will be canceled each other allowing employees to perform well.

Using the same example, if the economic prize was not there, those same employees would not find a confirmation of their perceptions in the real project activities and they would not have had a real and tangible incentive for participation.

The totality of the green dots is inside the second and fourth quarter, for which there are one of two coherences: or perceptual consistency (second quarter) or implementative consistency (fourth quarter).

In the second and fourth quarter there are also two blue dots, these two cases represent outliers and they were introduced in the previous chapter. Notice the two cases more carefully:

IDEA GENERATION	Employees' Visibility		Past Experiences		Legend
	C _{IP}		C _{IP}		
	OK	NO	OK	NO	
High Performer	3 50%	4 67%	4 67%	2 50%	CIP = Coherence between Intended and Perceived level OK = exists consistency between Intended and Perceived level NO = does not exist consistency level between Intended and Perceived
Low Performer	3 50%	1 16%	2 33%	1 25%	
Not Performer	0 0%	1 16%	0 0%	1 25%	

Figure 9 - Deepening on two particular cases

In the figure above respondents who answered the questions relating to the two variables (Employees' Visibility and Past Experiences) are divided into a two-

subsample on the basis of consistency or lack of consistency with the opinion of the Intended level.

In each of the two sub samples (and for each of the two variables) it is observed that the largest number of respondents are High performer.

The two anomalous cases are represented by the two green columns. It can be noted that in these two cases the percentage of High performer respondents is equal to 50% and then, according to the chosen rule, in these cases the behavior is positive.

This anomaly is caused by the imbalance in the number of respondents, in fact the total number of High performers interviewees is eight the Low performers are four and Not performers are two.

Nevertheless it is possible to highlight an observation.

For each of the two variables, from the comparison between the two subsample one can observe that the anomalous case (shown in green) has a percentage of High performer respondents smaller than the equivalent alongside subsample. By comparison it could be argued that in one of the two subsamples, the behavior is more positive than the other subsample.

To conclude, momentarily forgetting the two cases described above, it can be said that the results verify the formulated hypothesis, but it has got another interesting result which arises from the observations made regarding the third quarter: employee behavior is "positive" in the case in which the two coherences (perceptual and implementative) are mutually consistent.

Double faults observed in the third quarter indicates a positive result, paradoxically. In this case, it is necessary to observe that the boundary between the positive and the negative result is rather labile.

Based on the results here obtained, in the case of the Economic Reward Idea implementation phase observed before, it would have been sufficient to realize the opinions of Intended level and not propose an economic prize (maybe focusing on other types of incentives) to modify the behavior of the employees and obtain worse results.

The results show that even in a context as an innovation contest with voluntary participation it is necessary to pay attention not only to how the communication takes place within the organization, but also to how the implementation of the project takes place within the organization.

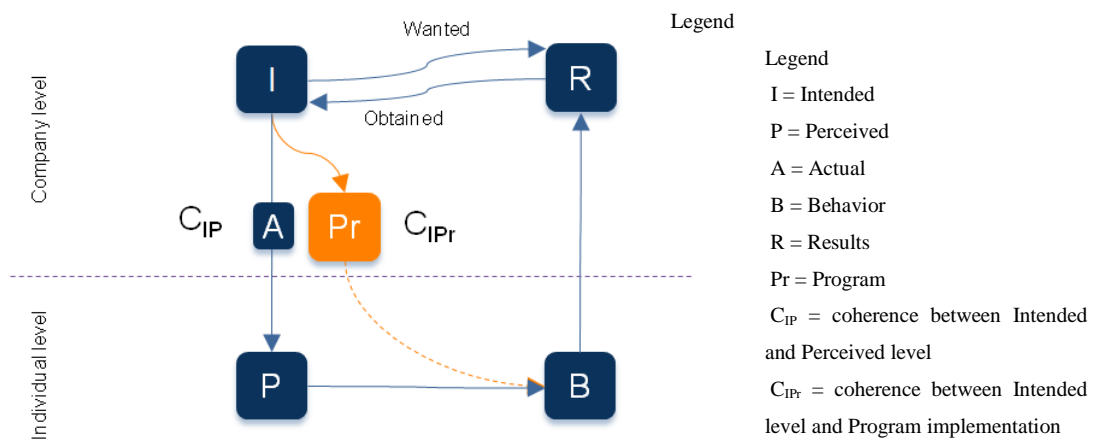


Figure 10 - Final proposed model

Therefore the picture shows the adding of the factor "actual implementation of the project" which directly influences the behavior of individuals and it deserves as much attention as the study of the appropriate employee perceptions deserves.

7.1 Managerial and Academic Implications

Regardless of the type of driver chosen to encourage participation and based on the assumption that top management makes decisions aimed at improving the Company, it should always pay attention to the way in which the drivers chosen are perceived and communicated within the organization and the way in which these

are implemented and proposed in the project. As seen, the success or failure of the employee suggestion system also depends on these attentions.

In addition, the voluntary nature of participation in these projects and the news often represented by them, are another critical issue for which you need to have to pay more attention.

As noted, leaving the project to their fate is quite possible to have a good involvement, but this is the result of the overlapping of two mistakes that cancel each other, in this case, the investment was obtained without any awareness and without any control.

From an academic point of view these results show the importance of multilevel analysis in organizations and suggest that the study of Actual level can be simplified by considering only the objective implementation of the practices desired by the Intended level and relating it directly to the expected behavior.

indeed it is easier to study the real and objective implementation of the practices instead of going to investigate the variance between individuals belonging to the Actual level.

7.2 Limitations and Future Research

Despite the contributions mentioned above, I admit that this study has several limitations.

First of all, the necessary data were collected following the conclusion of the project and the employees were interviewed when everything was over. Under these conditions the statements of the interviewees about the drivers of participation could be altered by time. It would be desirable to replicate a similar case study, before the employees participating in the employee suggestion system.

Second, although the qualitative nature of the used data was critical for obtaining the above results, the research could be conducted using quantitative data enlarging the used small sample size, that may provide a greater statistical validation.

This research was conducted within an employee suggestion system proposed by an international company, in which two different phases of the same project were analyzed and compared, respondents in both studied phases are then permeated by the same corporate culture. In the study of further cases, this aspect (as well as the satisfaction) should be taken into account

The research is also focused on only four important variables of the project (with a greater focus on extrinsic motivation). In the future it might be interesting to extend the study to more different case studies working on a greater number of different variables.

Appendix

Author	Title	Year	Journal	Recap	Methodology	Employee	Motivation	suggestion system	Creativity	Quality	HRM	motivation allmodel	TPB
Nemeyer, Richard & Ryan, David	The theory of planned behavior	1991	Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes	TPB	Literature research								
Holland, India	Ability to self-activate: How to build creativity	1997	Employee Development and Training	How to build creative employee empowerment	Literature research		x		x				x
Klein, Robert & Street, Eric	Toward a multi-dimensional measure of individual innovation behavior	1998	Harvard Business Review	Amabile's creativity	Literature research				x				
Frasconi, Sergio & Schyns, Paul	How to improve suggestion systems: A prediction of their success	1999	Journal of Organizational Behavior	Study about 5 dimensions of innovative behavior	Survey	x							
Kozlowski, Paul	Suggestion systems: A transfer of training perspective	1999	Journal of Applied Social Psychology	Assessing the validity of suggestion systems	Experiment	x	x		x				x
Fairbank, James & Williams, Scott	Workplace innovation: A review of the literature	2001	Creativity and Innovation Management	How do you create a participative employee suggestion system	Literature research	x			x				
McAdam, Rodney	Employee suggestion systems: A review of the literature	2002	European Journal of Innovation Management	How to find an agile and participative employee suggestion system	Interviews, Survey				x				
McClain, John	Management innovation: A review of the literature	2002	Techonovation	How to change employee suggestion system	Case Study	x							
Nijhof, J. & Jaspers, J.	Suggestion systems: A transfer of training perspective	2002	Human Resource Management Review	A complete employee suggestion system model	Case Study	x			x				
West, Michael	Knowledge creation and organizational learning	2002	APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY: AN INTERNATIONAL REVIEW	The relationship between creativity and innovation in work groups	Literature research				x				
McAdam, R.	Knowledge creation and organizational learning	2004	Techonovation	Characteristics of a knowledge creation	Case Study					x			
Edmondson, Robert & Lehmann, David	Reputation effects in cross-functional working relationships	2004	Journal of Product Innovation Management	Behavior-based participative characteristics of a knowledge creation innovation generation	multiple case study								
Krause, Diana	Influence-based leadership and innovation-related behaviors	2004	The Leadership Quarterly	Leadership models in a case study	Survey								
Bondrouk, Ayvaz & Lounsbury, Ben	HR contributions to innovation implementation: Results of a networked creativity structure management framework	2005	Techonovation	How to implement a participative employee suggestion system	Literature research		x						
Janssen, Dore	The impact of perceived influence and perceived supportiveness on employee innovative behavior	2005	Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology	Dynamic between employee and supervisor innovation behavior	Survey	x							
Westaby, James D.	Intentional behavior	2005	Decision Processes	Extending the path through inclusion of their reasons factor	Experiment								x
Baker, James & Kegan, David	Creativity (ideas) management in a distributed & distributed organization	2006	Creativity and Innovation Management	Adaptability and creative suggestion systems	Case Study	x			x				
Krill, Justin & Wang, Xiyun	Intended and implemented HRM in a strategic HRM research	2006	The International Journal of Human Resource Management	The importance of alignment between intended and actual analysis of the creative contribution of ideas generation	Interviews, Survey					x			
Toulmin, David	Ideation, creativity, and incentives	2006	Marketing Science	Organizational culture approach	Experiment		x						
Wright, Patrick & Nishii, L.	Strategic HRM and organizational behavior: A review of the literature	2006	CHMS	Organizational culture approach	Literature research						x		
Jong, Jeroen & Hertzog, J.	How to change employee suggestion system	2007	European Journal of Innovation Management	3B behavior that the leader should have in order to influence employees	Interviews	x							
Nishi, L. & Wright, Patrick	Human resource management and organizational implications for strategic HRM	2007	CHMS	Anticipation of a theory	Literature research						x		
Wang, Xiyun & Camp, Brian	How to change employee suggestion system	2007	Creativity and Innovation Management	reliability and validity of a creative suggestion system	Literature research							x	

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Author	Title	Year	Journal	Recap	Methodology	Employee	Motivation	suggestion system	Creativity	Quality	HMM	motivation model	TBP
Bernstein, Boarding, and Prasad	Innovation generation process in public utilities: organizational model and conceptual framework	2008	European journal of Innovation Management	Ranking employee's behavior	Qualitative study	x	x						
Kosling, Perle, Weitzman, and Joffe	Employee involvement innovation: a theoretical framework	2008	Personnel Psychology	Antecedents of employee's innovative behavior	Literature research	x	x						
Nishi, Ikuhara	THE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE ON INNOVATION: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY	2008	Personnel Psychology	Relationship between attitude and innovation	Survey						x		
Bjorklinge	When does employee innovation occur? An exploratory study on the role of motivation and organizational context	2009	Journal of Product Innovation Management	Relationship between motivation and innovation	Casestudy						x		
Elmer, Jivraj, and Krcmar, Helmut	Community engagement for innovation: A conceptual framework	2009	R&D Management	Ideation process and innovation	Literature research								
Laimeser, Jank, and Krcmar, Helmut	Employee engagement for innovation: A conceptual framework	2009	R&D Management	Innovation process and innovation	Literature research								
Strategic Knowledge	Ahmed and Knowledge: Strategic Innovation	2009	Human Resource Management	Knowledge and innovation	Literature research								
Stewart, D'Sa, and Meyers, Verelst	Designing for innovation: A conceptual framework	2009	Proceedings of the IEEE	Design process and innovation	Experiment	x	x						
Witte, Jeanette, and Srinivasan, Prasad	Social influence and employee's innovative behavior: a conceptual framework	2009	The British Journal of Psychology	Relationship between social influence and innovation	Survey								x
Jank, Helmut, and Krcmar, Helmut	Employee engagement for innovation: A conceptual framework	2009	Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey	x							
Afari, Abo, and Hamed, Hanjeh, Kowalek, and Blaschke, Johannes	Suggestion systems and quality: A conceptual framework	2010	Journal of Engineering Technology	Quality management and innovation	Casestudy	x							
Bailey, Brian P.	When you're not a manager, you're not a manager: A conceptual framework	2010	CHIR 2010	Employee engagement and innovation	Casestudy								
Bloch, Lorenz, and Michael, Alexander	Suggestion systems and innovation: A conceptual framework	2010	European Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Interview, Survey	x	x						
Ballinger, Dwight, and Neyer, James, Keir, and Methe, Michael	Community-Based Innovation: A Conceptual Framework	2010	Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Interview, Survey	x							
Gruber, J., and Ruch, J.	Designing for innovation: A conceptual framework	2010	Management Science	Design process and innovation	Literature research								
Rietveld, Fred, and Wolfram	The effect of employee engagement on innovation: A conceptual framework	2010	British Journal of Psychology	Relationship between employee engagement and innovation	Interview, Survey	x							
Wolfram	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2010	British Journal of Psychology	Employee engagement and innovation	Interview, Survey	x							
Sander, S. K.	How to support innovation behavior? A conceptual framework	2010	Technology and Innovation	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey	x							
Moorkamp, Marjolijn, and Gooren, L.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2010	Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey	x							
Gooren, L.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2010	Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey	x							
Fernandez, Sergio, and Santos, Ricardo	Understanding employee innovation: A conceptual framework	2011	Australian Journal of Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Empirical study	x	x						
Santos, Ricardo	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2011	Australian Journal of Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Empirical study	x							
Scott, Suzanne, and Bui, Dung	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2011	R&D Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Casestudy	x	x						
Scott, Suzanne, and Bui, Dung	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2011	R&D Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Casestudy	x	x						
Burton, D.	Innovation contests and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey							x	
Frederic, Social, and Organizational, Roberto, Wong	Behavioral innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey	x	x						
Reber, D.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Blair, J.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Hitler, A.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Koch, J.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Simon, A.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Simon, A.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Simon, A.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Simon, A.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Zajonc, R.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2012	MIS Quarterly	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								
Rajan, P.	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2013	International Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey	x							
Chandra	Employee engagement and innovation: A conceptual framework	2013	International Journal of Innovation Management	Employee engagement and innovation	Survey								x

	INTENDED		PERCEIVED					
	High performer 1	High performer 2	Low performer 1	Low performer 2	Not performer 1	Not performer 2		
Past Experiences	but I think the result of phase 1 has a little influenced the participation	If those of phase one had their success, their visibility and their reward, now I can participate, so I will not be indifferent to the project, I participate because it is ultimately a good thing	it must be said that the phase 1 had a large visibility as meaning that phase one was under the attention of the Director, there were the representatives of the various Cantiers that were people with a certain seniority to which a certain value is recognized and then to participate in those Cantiers in phase one meant to be part of a company that was pulling group (...) all these things were maybe in the minds of those who participated in star phase two and even these led them to participate probably.	the first version of the site was described as an initiative in which the will of the people who took part generated innovation and a desire to improve that was born from the inside and it was very special initiative.	the first experience excluded us and from a point of view I felt it as a very top management project or related to organizational people, so the average population felt it as something reserved for the few	No Answer	The decision not to participate in the second edition was connected to a personal perception of the results that have been achieved in the first edition	No Answer
Perceived Self Ability	In my area, I was one of those who urged the participants to be less shy and to move forward	they did not feel entitled to think outside the box, they have always thought to have some limitations (...) they were a bit timid from this point of view	if you ask me, "the fear of not being able to give a good idea, it can be an element that drove me to participate?" I tell you, yes, absolutely yes	more than anything else, there are people opposed to those who participated and not to want to expose themselves	I think I can say that the inadequacy is perhaps 30%	I think (some employees decided not to participate) for fear of what I had in the beginning when my colleague brought me within the project, I said, "but if I then do a bad impression?" it was the fear of not being able to integrate themselves or be able to bring some ideas to the project, the fear of not being useful to the project	No, I would not say that (non-participation) is linked to the perception of not being up	One offers something new in the company and one shows off himself
Economic Reward	I think the economic prize was not the main factor, however, I think in part it helped to ensure that participating in the project, even if it goes wrong, however, they obtained something	(The main motivation that drove people to participate) is the possibility to do something that is enjoyable to do, I do it because I like it, then I do it willingly and I can apply it at work, then all those who had a passion beyond work, such as video maker (...). Their passion in terms of talent working	there was a final prize money, among other things, the prize was also substantial, maybe these things were in the minds of those who participated in the STAR project	According to me, the people who work here for a long time, the economic prize was one of the most fundamental drivers that passion at the end the person always expects a return of some sort	I did not know what was the amount, I did not know what would be the economic reward in case of participation	I encourage the participation monetarily	I think, to propose an economic aspect could increase participation in these initiatives, but in a manner outside the essence, I think to propose the premiums may be an incentive but you have the positive and negative aspects	No Answer
Employees' Visibility	At the meetings with the CEO, I have to make a good impression, I have to avoid making a poor figure.	I think the visibility is important, I do it in order to get noticed by the leaders and the director, I make everyone see what is the value that I can bring into the ICT."	There is a reason related to the visibility to top management and the fact that we could be part of this Star project that had a visibility with the director, with his staff, with the star team composed of middle managers, is not a matter to be neglected	(people) had a chance to have visibility in a short time with an initiative that does not last long and this helps	the upward visibility was not a driver of choice	if it were proposed a new project I would be more involved from the outset because the fear that I had at the beginning was not justified	the result of some Cantiers carried in Phase 1 where there was a great visibility (influenced)	No Answer

Appendix 3 - Answers of the interviewees table (idea implementation)

	INTENDED	PERCEIVED							
		High performer 1	High performer 2	High performer 3	High performer 4	High performer 5	High performer 6	High performer 7	High performer 8
Past Experiences	I like to think that keeps on hitting and to launch projects in the future. I think that the main element of contribution to the sponsors is participation.	It must be said that the phase 1 had a large visibility as meaning that phase one was under the attention of the Director, there were the representatives of the various Career that were people with a certain seniority to visit in those Career in phase one meant to be part of a company that was pulling group (...) and these things were maybe in the minds of those who participated in star phase two and even these led them to participate probably.	No Answer	I perceived the first phase as a quite distant project in the sense that (...) was very "high level", something very organized. Instead I perceived the second phase in a different way, we were the target and then I have different ways.	There were two sessions of these projects and I noted that time by time also being initiative, the first time it had in contact with people who had been successful in phase one more and more curious and participated had reported that why not, maybe they could it was an interesting and also decide to participate in positive the next initiative	High performer 5 I do not have examples (of people who did not participate because they felt inadequate)	High performer 6 absolutely yes, someone did not feel capable, I think partly because of the fear of making a bad impression or maybe bump someone	High performer 7 actually the STAK project phase 1 was very important from the motivational point of view for all of us. When we started, we knew there was the possibility of participating in phase one and there was a phase 1 impression that had been launched by the director himself (the CEO), then certainly with a sponsorship of a certain type	High performer 8 No Answer
Perceived Self Ability	I do not believe that only gamers can do great things and good things within the company, you need the common ingredients supplied to each individual, that must be able to participate in the project. The characteristics it should be challenging, collaborative and open to the outside	If you ask me "the fear of not being able to give a good idea, it can be an element that drove maybe people to not participate in phase one, to not participate" I tell you, yes, absolutely yes	there was not the problem of not being up, who did not participate simply did not participate - projects and not considered them useful	I contacted the people who at the time did not feel in	(someone did not participate because of a number, not talk about mental abilities because then we are all capable	High performer 5 I do not have examples (of people who did not participate because they felt inadequate)	High performer 6 absolutely yes, someone did not feel capable, I think partly because of the fear of making a bad impression or maybe bump someone	High performer 7 can happened, for someone to say "but I am not worthy of this thing"	High performer 8 the person who had decided to be part of the team had some fears (of not being able) so imagine the person who had decided to take the first step, they probably have a mountain of fears
Economic Reward	I like to think that they have developed a genuine desire to contribute, stimulated by the fact that they probably have seen that those who have this business logic has no achievements, nor prize money and not necessarily even the prize money. The prize money is an important element, besides is classified as the good ones, and this is important. The second thing, I think we were able to build a little playful context and therefore you do serious things while having fun, and at the same time you have fun while you produce serious things. Having fun while working and working while having fun. I think that many of these Career have gone in this direction.	there was a final prize money, among other things, the prize was also substantial, maybe these things were in the minds of those who participated in the STAK project	No, I do not think you should participate in the economic reward, because the prize money in the big companies like ours and that exists in the internet based enterprises, it is the idea that work can be fun and enjoyable	it was not clear that there would be an economic prize at the end	but I also consider that one (of the economic reward), why not?	No Answer	No Answer	High performer 7 I have spoken several times with my colleagues, certainly there was not an economic discourse, it was not something like "I create an idea and you give me the prize"	I do not participate for an economic reason absolutely no (...) I participate because I am intrigued I am stimulated and I want to try something new
Employee's Visibility	I like to think that they have developed a genuine desire to contribute, stimulated by the fact that they probably have seen that those who have this business logic has no achievements, nor prize money and not necessarily even the prize money. The prize money is an important element, besides is classified as the good ones, and this is important. The second thing, I think we were able to build a little playful context and therefore you do serious things while having fun, and at the same time you have fun while you produce serious things. Having fun while working and working while having fun. I think that many of these Career have gone in this direction.	There is a reason related to the visibility to top management and the fact that we could be part of this Star project that had a visibility with the director, with his staff, with the star team composed of middle managers, is not a matter to be neglected	we knew that the project did not go to our CIO, but you should participate because the work can be enjoyable and fun.	In my opinion, in some cases show off can be seen in a negative way, not explicitly but with quips	I almost wrote my ideas on a white board, I mean Moka was available to me and then I invited them there	No Answer	High performer 6 because it was an opportunity to be on the scene and because it was fun	High performer 7 the project was launched by the Director, so with a sponsorship definitely important. The people who had participated in this thing (the refers to the Star project phase 1) were well seen, in short, a sort of reward at least in terms of visibility and appreciation by the company so this was definitely a true stimulus	I participate because I am intrigued I am stimulated and I want to try something new

Appendix 4 - Answers of the interviewees table (idea generation 1/2)

	INTENDED				PERCEIVED			
	Low performer 1	Low performer 2	Low performer 3	Low performer 4	Not performer 1	Not performer 2		
Past Experiences	I like to think that keeps on hitting and to launch projects etc., in the company has developed a culture of contribution to the spontaneous participation.	the first edition (STAX Project phase 1) started a bit on the sky and like all new things, we did not know well yet, then gradually we have seen colleagues who worked on, they were more or less engaged and they were satisfied, but more satisfied than no less. So when then the year after the STAX project was revived, maybe we knew it better and me first, I was interested in it	No Answer	the Star project there was the year before and we know that our director cares a lot, (the project Star) was a candidate to become a success in all probability	the first experience excluded us and from a point of view I felt it as a very top management project or related to organizational people, so the average population felt it as something reserved for the few	No Answer		
Perceived Self Ability	I do not believe that only geniuses can do great things and good things within the company, you need the common intelligence supplied to each individual, but must be able to work in an environment that should enjoy three characteristics, it should be challenging, collaborative and open to the outside	But I think that out of those 8, 9 subjects in the end all they could find one in which they would be competent	I've had this fear at the beginning (...) and in my opinion other colleagues who did not participate had my own feeling	I think not, more than anything else there may be a brake to comment on moka	The feeling that we have had, in some way, is that it was not permeable the possibility of joining, I was actually called (...) at a later stage by a person of the team.	One offers something new in the company and one shows off himself		
Economic Reward	I like to think that they have developed a genuine desire to contribute, stimulated by the fact that they probably have seen that those who have this business logic has no achievements, no prize money and not necessarily even career growth, however, he/she becomes a reference element, he/she is classified as the good ones, and this is important. The second thing, I think, we were able to build a little playful context and therefore you do serious things while having fun, and at the same time you have fun while you produce serious things. Having fun while working and working while having fun, I think that many of these Cantiere have gone in this direction.	I think, to propose an economic aspect could increase participation in these initiatives, but in a manner outside the essence, I think, to propose premiums may be an incentive but you have the positive and negative aspects	the money would be a good lever easily encourage the participation monetarily, economically.	No Answer	I did not know what was the amount, I did not know what would be the economic reward in case of participation	No Answer		
Employer's Visibility	I like to think that they have developed a genuine desire to contribute, stimulated by the fact that they probably have seen that those who have this business logic has no achievements, no prize money and not necessarily even career growth, however, he/she becomes a reference element, he/she is classified as the good ones, and this is important. The second thing, I think, we were able to build a little playful context and therefore you do serious things while having fun, and at the same time you have fun while you produce serious things. Having fun while working and working while having fun, I think that many of these Cantiere have gone in this direction.	(some people) they participated because the manager asked him/her to participate, or perhaps people have interpreted the project as a way to have a little visibility	I would push on the visibility and therefore make people understand that what they're going to do will then be evaluated very seriously at all levels, so give the opportunity to do something that will give them an acknowledgment because it will be adequately assessed, maybe this is the main lever	(I had not participated in the first phase because of too much visibility)	all ICT management was involved, so clearly at a personal level if one does the job well there is a return in terms of visibility.	the upward visibility was not a driver of choice	No Answer	

Appendix 5 - Answers of the interviewees table (idea generation 2/2)

QUESTIONS	INTENDED LEVEL	Perceived (Motivation)	Perceived (Attitude to Behavior)	Perceived Behavioral Control/Opportunity and ability
AsIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe your role and your involvement in the ESS project? • What goals have pushed the Company to create the ESS project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think the participant actually get from participating in the initiative? (Personal satisfaction, recognition, improvement of the company, prize money, etc.) • How do you assess what motivates employees to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your opinion, why did the employees decide to participate? • In your opinion, why did the employees decide not to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how much was effort needed the workers who have decided to participate?
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you satisfied with the results? • Are you satisfied with the role you played in the initiative? • When the ESS project was created, did you expect such involvement? • Why do you think this happened? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to you, should they be motivated by anything else? • How do you assess what motivates employees not to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think employees should not participate? • Are there particularity of the initiative that could push the employee not to participate rightly? (criticality of the initiative for the worker) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you evaluate the effort required of participants? • Do you believe that the effort was consistent with the objectives and outcomes that the project had?
GAP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a gap between the perception of workers and their actual participation? • Does the perception of employees allow the participation of all the "types" of employees? • Is more likely to be involved a careerist or a worker less active? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think that workers are aware of the actual effort required to participate?

Appendix 6 – Questionnaire Intended Level

QUESTIONS	PERCEIVED LEVEL	Perceived (Motivation)	Perceived (Attitude to Behavior)	Perceived (Behavioral Control/Opportunity and ability)
As-is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe your role and your involvement in the ESS project? • What goals have pushed the Company to create the ESS project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • What is the target of the ESS project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Which type of ideas were sought after? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think the participant actually get from participating in the initiative? (Personal satisfaction, recognition, improvement of the company, prize money, etc.). • In your opinion, why did not some employees participate? (they did not want, they was not interested in, they did not care about the good of the company) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your opinion, what is the reason that led employees to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How employees perceived the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much was effort needed the workers who have decided to participate? • Do you believe that employees who did not participate could not feel up to the expectations of the program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you believe that the workers were aware of the actual effort required to participate?
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you satisfied with the results? • Why do you think this happened? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Would you expect that kind of ideas and participants? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to you, should they be motivated by anything else? • In your opinion, there existed some critical issues that was a constraint to participation? 		
GAP			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your opinion, is the perception of the program by employees uniform? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think that the required effort was the same for all the working groups?

Appendix 7 – Questionnaire Perceived Level

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