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**Participative management style and learning at work:
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Participative management style and learning at work: mediating role of participative strategic planning processes and moderating role of supervisory communication

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Abstract: Fostering a learning environment at the workplace has developed as an indispensable growth facilitator. Drawing on the resource-based theory (RBT) and organisational learning theory (OLT), this research investigates the relationship between participative management style and learning at work with mediating role of participative strategic planning processes and moderating role of supervisory communication. A questionnaire-based survey method has been used to collect the data from 173 employees working in India's manufacturing and service sector organisations. This study employs structural equation modelling with R-studio and SPSS macro process (Model 14) to test moderated mediation effect. This study founds a positive relationship between participative management style and learning at work, and participative strategic planning processes significantly mediate the relationship. Moreover, supervisory communication plays a significant role as a moderator between participative strategic planning processes and learning at the workplace. The implication of this study, its limitation, and its future direction have been discussed.

Keywords: learning at work; participative management style; participative strategic planning processes; supervisory communication.

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1 Introduction

In today's world of fast, comprehensive, transformative, and paradigm environments, if an organisation does not reinvent and re-engineer itself with time, it is destined for a fiasco (Euske et al., 1993; Kloot, 1997; Tirkolaee et al., 2020). Formulating a conducive learning environment at the workplace is considered an indispensable facilitator of advancement. Employee learning refers to a process by which people acquire knowledge and insight to change their actions and behaviours (Kloot and Martin, 2007). Moreover, the process of learning can only occur when the learner recognises a problem and the learner has the motivation to learn. Learning is incorporated within day-to-day problem-solving (Greenwood et al., 1997; Valleala et al., 2015). The significance of learning through participation and interaction with co-workers has also been illustrated in research on learning at work (Wenger, 1998; Järvinen and Poikela, 2001; Valleala et al., 2015). Argyris (1990) claimed that management control can be used as a learning tool by offering a means of thinking, eliminating unrecognised bias, looking ahead, and thus enabling organisational change.

Thunnissen et al. (2013) argue that public and private sector organisations in India can enhance their profitability, service quality, market share, and customer satisfaction by engaging their employees in more learning and development activities. Therefore, it is essential to look at the aspects that can enhance learning while they are at work. It is a significant challenge for leaders as they look for ways to enhance learning at work. The effect of leadership style on learning at work is also examined in various studies (Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015). Participative management can be defined as a leadership style through which leaders include juniors or subordinates in decision-making and solving organisational problems (Kahai et al., 1997; Somech, 2006). Studies (e.g., (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000; Sverke et al., 2008; Valleala et al., 2015) have shown that one of the major elements contributing to a successful organisational change is participative management. Finding the best option from the reasonable options is the process of decision-making (Mahdavi et al., 2008). As it brings employees and workers together with a diverse range of experiences, skills, and knowledge. Participative management has a positive role in enhancing

learning (Felstead et al., 2010; Kitzmiller, Anderson and McDaniel, 2010; Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015).

There is mounting testimony to reveal that the participative management style stimulates a positive attitude of employees in the government sector (Kim, 2002; Wright and Kim, 2004). To accomplish results, organisations are needed to cultivate proactive strategies for confirming decent stocked organisational pools of talent (Mellahi and Collings, 2010; Schuler et al., 2011). Participative strategic planning processes are a consent-making approach that helps people to come together to elucidate how they would want their organisation or people to progress over the upcoming next years (Kim, 2002). The efficacy of in situ learning is emphasised in high-involvement literature (Felstead et al., 2010). The theoretical underpinnings for the connection are the notion that participation in organising, planning, and/or assessing the quality of one's work by employees enhances learning (Felstead et al., 2010). Therefore, we speculated that strategic planning processes play a mediating role between participative management style and learning at work.

Another purpose of this research is to examine the boundary condition of the association between participative management and learning at work. This study investigates the association between participative management style and learning at work mediated by strategic planning processes. Moreover, supervisory communication plays a significant role as a moderator between participative strategic planning processes and learning at the workplace, to the best of the author's knowledge this has not been empirically tested before in the Indian context. Supervisor transfers their requirement, expectations, and ideas more clearly, confidently, convincingly, and positively. They listen more actively to employees' notions, expectations, and needs. In an organisation, different levels of supervisory communication will respond differently to employee learning. The unique job of a supervisor is to work as a bridge between management and employees (Jablin, 1979; Kim, 2002). As per the study published in Harvard Business Review authored by Palmer and Blake (2018), about 55% of employees or team members first learn from their peers; second, they prefer to ask their supervisors.

As per organisational learning theory (OLT), interaction among individuals with different knowledge and background benefits the organisation to learn and nurture (Cohen and Ledford, 1994). An organisation can acquire new knowledge by using organisational learning (Alikhani et al., 2013). To increase knowledge synergies, productivity, and performance, an organisation involves its employees and managers in collective learning (Peteraf and Barney, 2003; Teece, 2014). And as per resource-based theory (RBT), the resources that are valued, infrequent, hard to imitate, and non-replicable support an organisation for long-term success (Barney, 2000). In the current study, we have integrated the RBT with OLT to advance a theoretical framework of association between participative management style and learning at work with mediating role of strategic planning processes and moderating role of supervisory communication and testing hypothesis on data collected of Indian employees working in public and private sectors. This article is organised subsequently. The first theoretical background on participative management style, strategic planning, supervisory communication, and learning is framed to develop hypotheses followed by methodology, analysis and results. The discussion and theoretical and practical implications of the study are outlined, followed by limitations, future actions, and a conclusion.

2 Literature review and hypotheses development

Participative management may be defined as employees having the opportunity to participate in organisational decision-making (Miller and Monge, 1986; Behraves et al., 2020). To have a more distinct argument, we have confined the research to India's public and private sector organisations. We have linked RBT and OLT to discuss the participative management effect on learning. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between participative management, strategic planning processes, supervisory communication, and learning at work. . According to propositions, the hypotheses are proposed.

2.1 *Participative management style and learning at work*

The concept of participative management, also called employee involvement and participative leadership, was developed in the nineteenth century and has become the attention of researchers in topical decades (Cox et al., 2006; Lam et al., 2015; Salas-Vallina and Fernandez, 2017). In business studies literature, participative style is a well-known concept. In this management style, consultation is preferred instead of direction (Amabile et al., 2004), consensus focusing, and exhibiting behaviours that permit followers to survive (Wageman, 2001). The theme of participative management involves the interest, skill, and ability of employees in business decision-making. Everyday problem-solving incorporates learning (Valleala et al., 2015). The significance of learning through collaboration and interaction with co-workers and other networks have also been highlighted in research on learning at work (Wenger, 1998; Järvinen and Poikela, 2001; Billett et al., 2008; Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010). Participative management has been seen as strengthening learning because it brings people together with diverse knowledge, experience and skill (Kitzmiller et al., 2010).

Studies confirm that participation and learning have significant and positive relations (Felstead et al., 2010; Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015). thus, we hypothesise:

H1 There is a positive relationship between participative management style and learning at work.

2.2 *Participative strategic planning processes mediate the participative management style and learning at work relationship*

The strategic plan reflects the values and beliefs of not all stakeholders but their architects. It requires the participative environment to include the values and beliefs of all stakeholders. The primary drive of strategic planning is to foster change in an organisation (Liedtka, 2000b, 2000a). The logic behind the rationale involves employees; there is a high chance they would accept strategic change (Westley, 1990; Fiegenger, 2005; Elbanna, 2008). Some scholars have recommended that strategic planning would affect the accomplishment of the implementation of strategy and thus enhance the performance of an organisation (Grundy and King, 1992; Collier et al., 2004; Miller et al., 2004).

Learning is amalgamated within the day-to-day solving of different problems (Kaufman, 2001). The motive and way of learning profoundly stem from the objectives

of work itself, indeed rising because of the challenges and demands of the work and interaction with people at the place of work. Study on workplace learning has markable emphasised the significance of learning through interaction and cooperation with co-workers and networks (Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010). Participative management has been seen as strengthening learning because it brings people together with diverse knowledge, experience and skill (Kitzmilller et al., 2010).

Research confirms that direct participation and learning have significant and positive relations (Felstead et al., 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015). Different forms of participation of employees have distinct Effects on the specific type of learning. we might suppose participative management to engender learning in the workplace. and thus, we hypothesise:

H2 Participative strategic planning processes mediate the relationship between participative management style and learning.

2.3 The role of supervisory communication

For a long, the concern for all types of communication within the organisation has upsurged distinctly. Intuitively, many researchers believe that communication contributes to the organisation's effectiveness. There are supervisors and subordinates; however, these terms are not expressively used, even though fluid arrangements may occur whereby supervisor and subordinate roles might be reversible. The communication and interaction between the supervisor and subordinates become necessary to fulfil both organisational and personal growth. Organisational communication research over the past decades has regularly stressed the significance of communication between all members in the constitution of an organisation (Keyton, 2010). Studies in business communication are inclined to study the superior-subordinate relationship in a one-dimensional manner (Bisel et al., 2012), focusing almost mainly on downward communication. Communication between superiors and subordinates has a long journey in the management field and communication fields (Pelz, 1952; Jablin, 1979). The mum effect refers to some employees being reluctant to give a negative response (Tesser and Rosen, 1972). Communication between supervisor and subordinate is presently in a one-dimensional manner. The primary aim of the researcher is to enhance the superior's management of their associates (e.g., (Campbell et al., 2007). Participative management, the leadership style of management, allows the supervisor to encourage subordinates to share some extent of obligation in the workplace (Somech, 2003; Sauer, 2011). Participative management facilitates the involvement of associates in the managerial process by or through inspiration, support and influence, and resource provision. Research claims that organisations that encourage participative management perform better on employee well-being parameters than organisations that do not promote participative management (Blasi et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2019; Uribechebarria et al., 2021). A study conducted on college students concludes a significant association between classroom communication and student academic performance (Ndongko and Agu, 1985). According to Harris et al. (1980), communication is a bi-directional process in which there is an implied contract between the sender of the message and the receiver. It is also observed that by satisfying this contract, the educator predicts the students' needs and consequently recognises themselves correctly during teaching-learning. Based on the literature support and thus, we hypothesise:

- H3 Supervisory communication will moderate the relationship between participative management style and learning. Specifically, the positive effect of the participative management style on learning at work will be more substantial among employees with higher supervisory communication.

2.4 *An integrative moderated mediation model*

The first hypothesis depicts a transitional process in which the participative management style enhances learning with the mediating effect of the participative strategic planning process. Participative management is also concurrent with enhanced openings for personal learning and development and a greater probability that people share knowledge with their co-workers. As also shown in research (Felstead et al., 2010; Kitzmiller et al., 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015) the direct involvement of employees significantly improves learning at the workplace concerning both informal learning and training (Felstead et al., 2010). Then there is a theorisation about the interaction effect of strategic planning and supervisory communication on learning at work (i.e., Hypothesis 3). Therefore, a second stage moderated mediation model was proposed to stipulate that the indirect effect of participative management on learning at work via participative strategic planning would increase when there is more supervisory communication. Supervisory communication would be the second stage moderator to increase the positive association between participative management style and learning at work. Thus,

- H4 Supervisory communication moderates the indirect effect of participative management style and learning at work through participative strategic planning processes.

3 **Research design**

For this research data has been collected with the help of a questionnaire survey from the employees working in IT, service and manufacturing organisations in India. Administration of the survey was done online mode only. The seven-point Likert scale has been used, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, for collecting employees' responses. About the purpose of the study, the respondents have been informed. Google Forms was used as a medium for distributing the questionnaire, and through email, the link to the form was provided to the respondents. The questionnaire survey form link was sent to 451 employees through email. The best appropriate answer from the list of alternatives shown to the respondents was to be selected. Respondents were assured confidentiality and anonymity and informed about the mechanic of the survey, and asked to fill out the questionnaire. 173 responses were received, with no missing responses in the datasheet. The sample size of 173 obtained, which represents a 39.58% response rate, is adequate for the research guideline provided by Hair et al. (2010) that the size of the sample should range from 5 to 10 times the number of observations used in the study., which are to be taken into analysis.

Among the respondents, 61 (35.33%) were females, and 112 (64.67%) were males. In terms of the respondents category-wise, 167 (96.5%) were in the 21–35 years of age, and 6 (3.5%) were in the category of 36–50 years of age. Regarding the respondent's

organisation status, 114 (65.9%) worked in a private organisation, and 59 (34.1%) worked in a public organisation. In terms of job position, 25 (14.5%) were at a junior level position, 81 (46.8%) were at a middle or intermediate level position, and 67 (38.7%) were at a senior level position.

3.1 Measures

The following measures have been used for data collection.

3.1.1 Manager's use of participative management style

The Manager's use of a Participative Management style was measured with a scale of four Items developed and validated by Kim (2002). Sample items are "within the last two years, managers in my department have attempted to allow employees to improve our work process" and "managers in my department have made an effort to increase employee involvement in decision making." The seven-point Likert used for this study ranges from ('strongly disagree' = 1 'strongly agree' = 7). The (alpha coefficient) internal consistency for manager's participative management style was 0.86.

3.1.2 Participative strategic planning processes

Participative strategic planning processes have been measured with a scale of three items developed and validated (Kim, 2002). A sample item for participative strategic planning processes is "I feel that I had input in developing my department's strategic planning process" and "I understand my role in accomplishing the goals in my department's strategic plan." The seven-point Likert used for this study ranges from ('strongly disagree' = 1 'strongly agree' = 7). The (alpha coefficient) internal consistency for the strategic planning processes was 0.78.

3.1.3 Supervisory communication

Supervisory communication has been measured with a scale of three items developed and validated by Kim (2002). A sample item for supervisory communication is "If I have a suggestion to make, my supervisor (the person I directly report to) will listen, even if he or she does not agree with me." And "I clearly understand what is expected of me in my work." The seven-point Likert used for this study ranges from ('strongly disagree' = 1 'strongly agree' = 7). The (alpha coefficient) internal consistency for the supervisory communication was 0.80.

3.1.4 Learning at work

Learning a sub-scale (a nine-item scale) developed and validated by Porath et al. (2012) has been taken to measure learning. A sample item for learning is "I am experiencing considerable personal growth", "I enjoy seeing how my views have progressed", and "I have not grown much recently". The Likert scale with a seven-point response scale was taken in this study ('strongly disagree' = 1, 'strongly agree' = 7), and higher scores indicated higher learning. This scale's internal consistency (alpha coefficient) was recorded at 0.88 for this study.

The Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency) for all the focused measures was more than the threshold limit of 0.60 (Sekaran, 1992); thus, considering the cutoff limits, the scale was apt for further examination. Descriptions of items and respective factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha of constructs are given in

Table 1 Item description

<i>Items</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Loadings</i>
<i>Participative management style</i>		$\alpha = 0.86$
Participative management style 1	Managers allow employees to improve the process of work	0.750
Participative management style 2	I have observed a positive change in the style of management	0.787
Participative management style 3	Managers made an effort to improve communication	0.842
Participative management style 4	Managers are making efforts to enhance employee involvement in decision-making	0.870
<i>Participative strategic planning processes</i>		$\alpha = 0.78$
Participative strategic planning 1	I understand the strategic vision, mission and goal of my department	0.772
Participative strategic planning 2	I give input to the department	0.858
Participative strategic planning 3	My role is essential to the organisation	0.717
<i>Supervisory communication</i>		$\alpha = 0.85$
Supervisory communication 1	My supervisor listens to my views	0.776
Supervisory communication 2	My supervisor and I frequently communicate with each other, and I understand what the supervisor expects from me	0.914
Supervisory communication 3	I know what supervisors expect from me	0.875
<i>Learning at work</i>		$\alpha = 0.88$
Learning 1	I am experiencing substantial personal growth	0.783
Learning 2	I am making growth in positive ways	0.861
Learning 3	I enjoy seeing how my views have progressed	0.823
Learning 4	I consistently learn more as time goes by	0.859
Learning 5	I am finding new options to develop	0.889
Learning 6	I am developing myself a lot	0.767
Learning 7	I find myself learning often	0.656
Learning 8	I see myself constantly improving	0.835
Learning 9	I think I am continuing to develop	0.865

3.2 *Common method bias*

Harman's single factor test has been employed to estimate and check for common method variance, as the data for studied variables were collected from the same source. Unrotated factor analyses were tested in SPSS software version 27.0. The maximum variance explained by a single factor was 45%, lower than the recommended criterion of 50% (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Findings demonstrated that common method bias (CMB) was not an issue in this study.

3.3 *Analytical procedure*

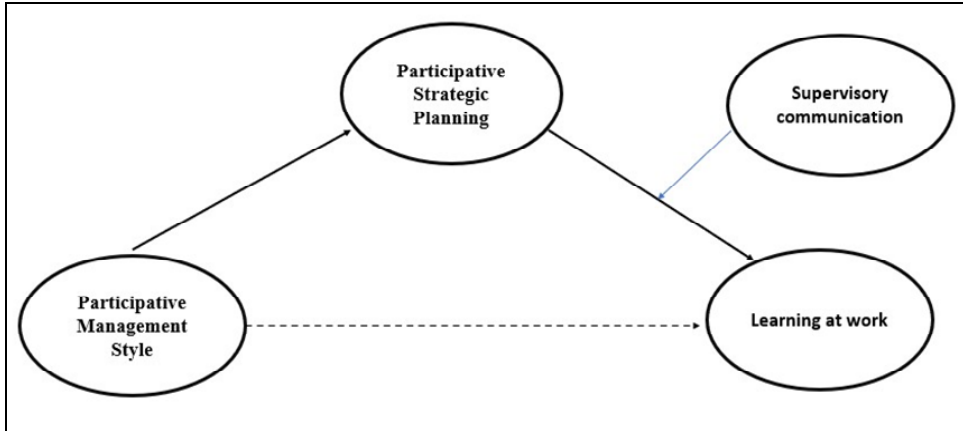
We implemented a three-step approach to test the four hypotheses in our study. Firstly, we have checked the effect of participative management on learning at work (H1). Secondly, to evaluate the strategic planning mediating role in the association between participative management style and learning at work (H2), We have used the Bootstrap method (Preacher and Hayes, 2004). As it provides a direct approach to the mediation effect as compared to the stepwise approach (Baron and Kenny, 1986), the bootstrap method has advantages over the Sobel (1982) test and Baron and Kenny (1986) method. In comparison to the (Sobel, 1982) test, it also has a high statistical power. Furthermore, to accurately measure the mediation effect, MacKinnon and Luecken (2008) recommended using a bootstrapped confidence interval test. Using the PROCESS macro and the bootstrapping method, the data analysis was carried out to determine the significance of the indirect effect. Third, we investigated the role of supervisory communication as a moderator between strategic planning processes and learning at work (H3). testing the hypothesis, we examined if strategic planning's effect on learning at work is moderated based on the level of supervisory communication. fourth, we combined the result of hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 and tested a moderated mediation model that includes strategic planning processes as the mediator and supervisory communication as the moderator between participative management style and learning at work. The overall moderated-mediation model of the study is illustrated in Figure 1. The conditional indirect effect of supervisory communication as a moderator between participative management and learning via strategic planning was investigated by PROCESS macro in IBM SPSS software (SPSS) and bootstrapped results.

Association among factors showing up to be bivariate is much more complex. Various other factors display as confounders that account for the connections between the two elements (MacKinnon et al., 2000). These variables ought to be included as per their mediating or moderating role. Moderation and mediation tests were applied differently in earlier research but tested simultaneously in many recent and evolved research studies. The existing research was conducted to measure the simultaneous effect of all the variables on the bivariate relationship (MacKinnon et al., 2000; Preacher et al., 2007); based on the above principle, a simultaneous moderated mediation has been implemented.

To abate the chances of multicollinearity and to refine our interpretations, we performed mean centring of the variables as recommended by Toothaker et al. (1994) with the help of PROCESS macro (Hayes) in SPSS (IBM). Mean-centring is known to reduce the chances of multicollinearity in social science research. The research questions usually focus on the impact of individual influences on the dependent variable and the significance, i.e., the micro-level of multicollinearity (Iacobucci et al., 2016). Each

model's unique contribution to the proposed criterion variable was checked using the squared semi-partial correlation values. The mentioned process demonstrates the unique variance percentage on the criterion variable.

Figure 1 Conceptual model



4 Preliminary findings

The analysis of the data with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). To determine whether the study's model fit, the latent components were measured and analysed. A CFA at the dimension level was performed. The four factors participative management style, strategic planning processes and learning at work and supervisory communication model fitted the data well with values (χ^2 [146] = 393.370 N = 173, p-value > 0.001, CFI = 0.990 GFI = 0.987, RMSEA = 0.099, SRMR = 0.067) as compared to the three-factor model which assumes which assume strategic planning and participative management style as a predictor of one factor (χ^2 [149] = 450.818, N = 173, p-value > 0.001, CFI = 0.987 GFI = 0.985, RMSEA = 0.109, SRMR = 0.073) or single-factor model which assume all the factor to predict single factor (χ^2 [152] = 977.595, N = 173, p-value > 0.001, CFI = 0.965 GFI = 0.968, RMSEA = 0.178, SRMR = 0.110) (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Hooper et al., 2008). The CFA results to assure the four constructs' empirical uniqueness, i.e., participative management style, strategic planning, supervisory communication, and learning at work.

Then we tested different reliabilities and validities of our model, and in line to do so, firstly, we calculated the average variance extracted (AVE) of the four constructs (see Table 2). We also calculated the Composite reliability of the measurement model to check for convergent and discriminant validity. AVE for all constructs was greater than 0.50, and the composite reliability of all constructs was above 0.7 (see Table 2), which is the threshold limit as suggested by Harley et al. (2009). Also, both the conditions, i.e., AVEs > 0.50 and CRs > 0.70, implied the convergent validity of the model. After that, the model's discriminant validity was assured by checking if AVE for each construct is more than the square of correlation of that respective construct with other constructs in the model. This model also fulfilled discriminatory validity conditions (see Table 2).

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlations

Factors	α	CR	Mean	S.D.	Correlations									
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Gender			---	0.479	---									
2 Age			0.03	0.184	-0.074	---								
3 Education			1.66	0.603	0.251**	0.158*	---							
4 Job position			0.76	0.690	-0.179*	0.021	0.013	---						
5 Experience			0.03	0.168	0.017	0.722**	0.154*	0.111	---					
6 Organisation status			0.66	0.475	-0.0158	0.003	-0.117	0.225**	0.051	---				
7 PMS	0.86	0.889	5.28	1.29	-0.018	-0.152*	-0.041	-0.201**	-0.091	0.053	0.66	0.400	0.275	0.253
8 PSPP	0.78	0.826	5.53	1.10	-0.100	-0.083	0.027	-0.208**	0.022	0.048	0.631**	0.62	0.292	0.261
9 SC	0.85	0.892	5.86	1.10	0.099	-0.071	-0.111	0.078	-0.019	0.077	0.525**	0.541**	0.76	0.315
10 Learn	0.91	0.948	5.84	0.90	-0.124	0.095	-0.188*	0.229**	-0.046	0.104	0.503**	0.511**	0.562**	0.70

Notes: M = mean, S = standard deviation. N = 173; CR = composite reliability of the measurement model; and α = Cronbach alpha. The average variance extracted from each construct (No. 7, 8, 9, 10) is represented in bold along the diagonal. Values above the diagonal (i.e., AVE) are squares of correlations; values below the diagonal represent inter-construct correlations. * $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed). ** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

4.1 Results

First, we applied Hayes PROCESS macro to check hypothesis 1, the effect of participative management on learning at work, which shows a significant result at $p < 0.01$. Second, we applied Model 4 of Hayes' process (Hayes, 2018) macro for checking hypothesis two, which demonstrates significant results at $p < 0.01$. Third, we checked hypothesis three using Model 1 of Hayes's process macro, which offers a significant effect at $p < 0.01$. Fourth, we checked hypothesis four using Hayes' process macro model 14, which demonstrates a significant result at $p < 0.01$. The mean, standard deviation, and correlation among the study's main factors were shown in Table 2. Also, the correlation table displays that the hypothesised variable was related to one another in the study.

The outcome of the mediation analysis is shown in Table 3. Hypothesis 1 states there is a positive relationship between participative management style and learning at work. Thus, H1 is supported by respondents' responses ($B = 0.266$, $LLCI = 0.132$, $ULCI = 0.399$) at $p < 0.01$. Hypothesis 2 states participative strategic planning processes mediate the relationship between participative management style and learning. Thus, H2 is supported by respondents' responses ($B = 0.142$, $LLCI = 0.064$, $ULCI = 0.242$), $p < 0.01$. Bootstrapping results also confirmed that the indirect effect of participative management on learning through strategic planning was significant, as zero is not included between the lower and upper limits of the confidence interval.

Figure 2 Moderation plot

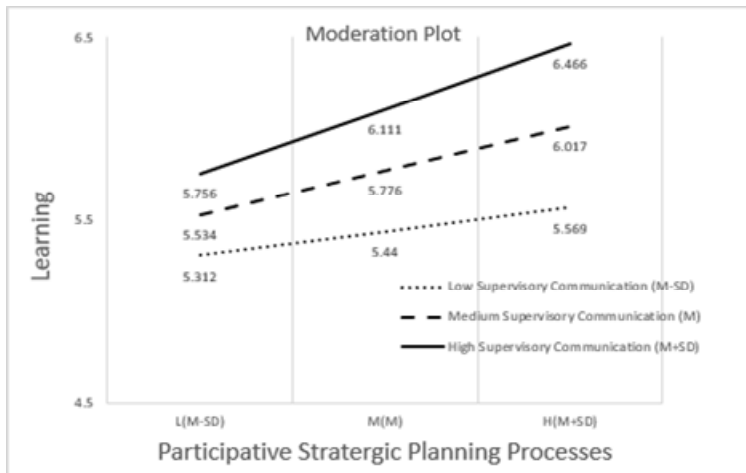


Table 3 Mediation testing for Hypothesis 1

Directions	B	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
PMS → PSPP (a)	0.536	10.634	0.000	0.436	0.635
PSPP → learning (b)	0.266	3.935	0.000	0.132	0.399
PMS → learn (total effect)	0.353	7.619	0.000	0.262	0.445
PMS → Learn (direct effect)	0.211	3.674	0.000	0.097	0.324
PMS → PSPP → learn (Indirect effect)	0.142	-	-	0.064	0.242

Table 4 reported the moderation test for Hypothesis 3. We hypothesised that the association between strategic planning and learning at work would be moderated by the level of supervisory communication (H3). We have applied model 1 of Process macro with one standard deviation and below the mean value of supervisory communication for testing the hypothesis. The interaction effect of strategic planning processes and supervisory communication was significant (refer to Table 4). To visualise the result of this hypothesis, we draw the moderation plot, which signifies that there exist different indirect effects for different values of supervisory communication as a moderator.

Table 4 Moderation analysis through Hayes process model 1 finding (N = 173)

<i>(Dependent variable→)</i> <i>Independent variables ↓</i>	<i>Learning</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
Constant	5.790***	0.058	5.675	5.905
Strategic planning	0.255***	0.059	0.138	0.371
Supervisory communication	0.381***	0.063	0.257	0.505
Strategic planning*supervisory communication	0.075**(0.033)	0.035	0.006	0.144

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, B = unstandardised path coefficients
SE= structural error.

The result was significant at the mean level of supervisory communication (B = 0.255, SE = 0.059, LLCI = 0.138, ULCI = 0.371), $p < 0.01$ and at one SD (standard deviation) more level of supervisory communication (B = 0.337, SE = 0.073, LLCI = 0.192, ULCI = 0.482), whereas the effect was not significant for one standard deviation less level of supervisory communication (B = 0.172, SE = 0.067, LLCI = 0.040, ULCI = 0.305), $p < 0.01$ (refer Table 5). To comprehend the role of strategic planning as a moderator in the association between participative management style and learning at work among employees through supervisory communication, we checked the construct through Model 14 of Hayes process macro and the interaction effect was found to be significant (refer Table 6).

Table 5 Moderating effect of supervisory communication between strategic planning and learning at work

<i>Strategic planning → learning at work</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
Low supervisory communication (−1.095)	0.172	0.067	0.040	0.305
Medium supervisory communication (0)	0.255	0.059	0.138	0.371
High supervisory communication (1.095)	0.337	0.073	0.192	0.482

Note: B = unstandardised path coefficients SE = structural error.

Moreover, the significance of the conditional indirect effect was examined at various values of supervisory communication, i.e., one significance level above and below, along with the mean level of supervisory communication (refer to Table 7). Hypothesis 4 is supported by the finding of the study as the conditional indirect effect showed a significant result at one standard deviation above the mean of supervisory communication (B = 0.173, SE = 0.056, LLCI = 0.074, ULCI = 0.293), $p < 0.01$ and at the mean level of supervisory communication (B = 0.118, SE = 0.047, LLCI = 0.034, ULCI = 0.219), $p < 0.01$, whereas the association was not significant at one significance level low of

supervisory communication ($B = 0.063$, $SE = 0.050$, $LLCI = 0.026$, $ULCI = 0.166$), $p < 0.01$. Furthermore, we tested for the index of moderated mediation among the participative management style and learning at work while strategic planning is the mediator. Supervisory communication is the moderator among the variables, and it indicated a significant result (refer to Table 8). Thus, the findings are evidence to support our hypothesis 4, which confirms that supervisory communication significantly moderates the association between participative management and learning at work through strategic planning, i.e., the association is true when employees have a good level of supervisory communication, but the association does not work when the employees have low supervisory communication.

Table 6 Moderated mediation analysis through Hayes process model 14 findings ($N = 173$)

<i>(Dependent variable→)</i> <i>Independent variables ↓</i>	<i>Learning at work</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
Constant	5.113	0.299	4.523	5.704
Participative management style	0.129	0.056	0.018	0.239
Strategic planning	0.180	0.067	0.048	0.312
Supervisory communication	0.339	0.065	0.211	0.467
Strategic planning*Supervisory communication	0.071	0.034	0.003	0.139

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, B = unstandardised path coefficients
 SE = structural error.

Table 7 Direct and indirect effects of participative management style on learning at work in the moderated mediation model

<i>Directions</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
Participative management style → learning (direct effect)	0.054	0.054	0.040	0.255
Participative management style → strategic planning → Learning (indirect effect)		(Boot SE)	(Boot LLCI)	(Boot ULCI)
at Low supervisory communication (−1.095)	0.063	0.050	−0.036	0.166
at Medium supervisory communication (0)	0.118	0.047	0.034	0.219
at High supervisory communication (+1.095)	0.173	0.056	0.074	0.293

Note: B = unstandardised path coefficients SE = structural error.

Table 8 Index of moderated mediation

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>BootSE</i>	<i>BootLLCI</i>	<i>BootULCI</i>
Supervisory comm.	0.051	0.022	0.007	0.097

5 Discussion

This research examines the effect of the participative management style on learning at work while considering the mediating role of the strategic planning process and the moderating role of supervisory communication. This research contributes to the existing body of employee learning literature by looking at learning at work and participation (Felstead et al., 2010; Kitzmiller et al., 2010; Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015; Tian and Zhai, 2019). This research also explores the impact of supervisory communication on the relationship between strategic planning processes and learning at work. To the greatest of the authors' knowledge, this is one of the first studies to examine how strategic planning processes as an antecedent to learning at the workplace. In earlier studies, participative strategic planning processes have been observed as significant precursors to performance, productivity, and job satisfaction (Locke and Schweiger, 1979; Lam et al., 2002; Lam et al., 2015; Park et al., 2016; Park et al., 2016; Tian and Zhai, 2019). The findings of our research are in line with existing literature in that followers' actions at work are greatly influenced by leadership (Afsar et al., 2020). Participative management style through strategic planning processes was found to have a positive affiliation with learning at the workplace. Previous studies also advocate that subordinates are greatly influenced by participative management (Kahai et al., 1997; Kim, 2002; Dubihlela and Sandada, 2014), and participative management enhances the tendency of employees to involve in strategic planning processes of the organisation (Kim, 2002).

Participative management practices are used to stabilise the engagement of superiors and subordinates in making decisions, solving problems, and processing information (Wagner, 1994; Lam et al., 2015). The results of our study also indicate that strategic planning processes mediate the relationship between participative management and learning at work. The findings demonstrate that effective supervisory communication moderates the relationship between strategic planning processes and learning in the workplace. Thus, it can be said that improved supervisory communication would encourage employees to have higher levels of learning at the workplace.

The theoretical implication and implications for managers are discussed below. This study integrates RBT with OLT to advance a framework bringing supervisors and employees together in decision-making and devising strategy through participative management and strategic planning processes to enable learning at work. First, there is numerous research on participative management and leadership (Locke and Schweiger, 1979; Miller and Monge, 1986; Lam et al., 2015; Tian and Zhai, 2019; UribeTxabarria et al., 2021), but research focusing on participation and learning is still not enough (Inanc et al., 2015). The existing study not only contributes to employee learning literature but also enhances the understanding of participative management by exploring the affiliation between participative management and learning in the workplace. Second, the study verified the boundary condition for finding the impact of the participative management style on learning at work. The extant research has used OLT with RBT to explain the process by which participative management enhances learning at work. Strategic planning processes are found to mediate the association between participative management style and learning at the workplace. Third, the result of the current study depicts that supervisory communication moderates the relationship between participative management and learning at work mediated by strategic planning. In other words, if

supervisory communication is high, then the relationship between participative management style and learning at work mediated by strategic planning is significant. At the same time, there is no significant relationship between low supervisory communication. Empowering employees and organisational cultural factors (e.g., strategic direction, adaptability, participation) can lead to increased job performance (Madadha et al., 2019; Jarrah et al., 2020).

The study supports all the proposed hypotheses. The empirical findings supported all the perceptions that understanding learning at work the better; it is advisable to concentrate on employee involvement through participation, strategic planning and supervisory communication. This study involves a statistical mechanism that connects the participative management style to learning at work. Participative management has been seen as strengthening learning because it brings people together with diverse knowledge, experience, and skills (Kitzmiller et al., 2010; Tian and Zhai, 2019).

5.1 Managerial implication

The finding of this study also has some implications for managers and employees. This study adds to the literature on participative leadership and employee learning. The result of the study demonstrates that the participative management style has a positive relationship with learning at work through participative strategic planning processes as a mediator in public and private sectors of India, therefore organisations should involve employees in strategic decision-making so that their learning can be enhanced. Our Results support the evidence that participative management style has a significant association with learning at work (Felstead et al., 2010; Kitzmiller et al., 2010; Poell and Van der Krogt, 2010; Hasu et al., 2014; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015). As demonstrated in this research, organisations need to embrace participative leadership that offers a place for managers and employees to share their ideas, thoughts, and knowledge. Moreover, Employee involvement in decision-making reduces the tendency of the employee to resist change by improving the understanding of why it was essential and by allowing for modifications in light of employee opinions (Weber and Weber, 2001; Inanc et al., 2015; Valleala et al., 2015). Additionally, it was found that involving employees through participative management was a crucial component of the requirements for enhancing performance (Boxall and Purcell, 2010). In addition to that managers can use a participative leadership approach to reduce employee stress in the work environment (Glavin and Schieman, 2012; Perlow and Kelly, 2014). and, the research also found that participative management can enhance employee commitment, productivity, and job satisfaction (Kim, 2002; Bhatti and Qureshi, 2007; Alikhani et al., 2013). Moreover, participative management is a long-term process that requires effort from both the employee and management sides.

5.2 Limitation and future research direction

This research has limitations too. First, this study is conducted in the public and private sectors of India; therefore, its result may not generalise employees working in varied organisational cultures. Second, the cross-sectional research design has been used in this study; thus, this design is not sufficient to determine the causal relationship between variables. As there might be another variable also that shares associations with given

variables. Hence, further studies are suggested to establish and identify the relationship between these variables. Third, this study only takes into consideration one mediator. Future studies may look into other possible mediating factors, such as trust, commitment, and engagement, to help to explain why participative leaders enable their followers to learn at work. Our study provides additional information on the applicability of ideas like participative management style or participative leadership and employee learning in India. We hope that it will encourage other researchers to persist in extending their knowledge of these ideas in different cultural contexts. For this study data from junior, middle, and senior-level executives have been collected, and it is dubious that the applicability of this research would be on lower-level employees (operational workers).

6 Conclusions

The primary aim of this research was to extend our understanding of the association between participative management style and learning at work. To deepen our understanding of the relationship between participative management style and workplace learning, the perspectives of strategic planning processes and supervisory communication were implemented. Second, since multinational corporations are expanding to these locations, South Asia is growing more prominent in the global economy.

Earlier studies have emphasised the role of participative leadership on job satisfaction and performance and productivity and innovation; and claim that the more involvement of employees in decision-making, the better. but little attention is paid to participative management style and strategic planning processes to enhance learning at work. This study integrates participative management style, participative strategic planning processes, and learning at work. Furthermore, this research contributes by submitting a pathway that connects the participative management style to learning at work, moderated by supervisory communication with empirical evidence and testing. The findings showed that participative management relates positively to learning at work via strategic planning. Moreover, the indirect effect is moderated by supervisory communication, indicating the significance of participative strategic planning processes and supervisory communication in elevating the creation and sustenance of learning at work. Hence, after summarising the finding, it can be concluded that this research complements the theoretical implications and studies on participative management style and learning.

Organisations need to design a Participative management style to involve employees and management people in learning and influence the valuable knowledge and education of both employees and managers and superiors to increase learning at the workplace with the help of strategic planning processes and supervisory communication. Moreover, the result provides evidence that if a participative management style is adopted and has strategic planning and efficacious supervisory communication, it enhances learning in the organisation.

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