

Popular science summary

Internal crowdsourcing refers to any activity of an organization that consists in inviting and including its employees, in the form of an open invitation using a platform, to solve organizational problems, generate ideas, improvements and other activities in the field of shaping a friendly work environment. Internal crowdsourcing allows access to the comprehensive knowledge of all employees, in particular the knowledge about customers, products or services in order to overcome information silos and to use the full potential of the corporate crowd to improve efficiency and effectiveness and build an organizational culture based on cooperation, not confrontation or competition. In other words, internal crowdsourcing allows the organization for directing the ideas and knowledge of its own employees, and employees to interact dynamically with colleagues, proposing new ideas and suggesting new directions for the organization's development. It is therefore emphasized that it is the organization's employees who are the most valuable resource, source of innovation and ideas for new and improved products or services. This results from the fact that employees have comprehensive knowledge, especially tacit knowledge about customers, products and services, and also know the context and specifics of the organization, thanks to which they can offer solutions that can be further implemented. All this can ultimately lead to increased employee engagement.

While research on internal crowdsourcing has been intensively conducted over the last decade, the attention so far has focused mainly on its potential benefits, including benefits experienced while solving organizational problems, increasing employee engagement, cooperation and participation in the development of the organization, building a culture of cooperation, innovation and the adaptation of the organization to change or in the fields of knowledge management. In this context, there is a lack of research that would allow us for identifying factors influencing the decision of academic workers to participation for internal crowdsourcing. Importantly, unpacking the knowledge on this subject may be helpful in determining which factors promote or inhibit the implementation of internal crowdsourcing and how to effectively intensify such implementation and possibly overcome emerging barriers. Finally, the findings so far have focused mainly on business organizations, while there is a lack of research on internal crowdsourcing in the context of higher education institutions (HEIs). Moreover, it is noted that in the face of constant pressure to improve quality, universities are increasingly forced to implement strategic human resource management, as well as organizational and management methods to optimize decisions and use resources and seek ways to improve employee performance. Additionally, it is also important to look for ways to activate and invite employees to look for ways to improve the way HEIs function.

Taking the above into account, the research problem was formulated to ask the following research question: What influences higher education institutions workers' intentions to participate in internal crowdsourcing? The main objective of the research is to the identification and characterization of antecedents of higher education institution workers intention to participate in internal crowdsourcing.

Due to the early stage of development of knowledge on internal crowdsourcing and the recommended directions of further research in this area, the research planning will be of a mixed nature: both qualitative (focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews using an interview scenario) and quantitative (surveys).

The research will be conducted in HEIs. The conclusions formulated on their basis will be of a theoretical nature and will contribute to the development of theories of management sciences and quality. The need and innovative nature of the research results from two reasons. Firstly, recognizing the antecedents of internal crowdsourcing from the perspective of academic workers is a significant research challenge, a response to the recommendations contained in the literature on the subject and an interesting cognitive gap. Secondly, the relationships that occur between these variables have not been discussed in the field of broader research exploration so far. The proposed research project is a way to expand (reducing the limitations of previous research: lack of research combining quantitative and qualitative methods) and create new knowledge (filling the identified cognitive gaps: recognizing the antecedents of internal crowdsourcing) in the field of management sciences and quality.