

The Relation between Psychological Empowerment and Performance of Employees

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Abstract:

The importance and necessity of human resources in organizations are not covered and High performance of manpower is, the undeniable need for organizations. In Today's organizations the manpower are expected as a guidance and they pay more attention to employees promotion and job satisfaction. During their investigation, the researchers have concluded that the most important factors that effect on the performance of the employee's psychological empowerment.

Keywords: psychological empowerment. Employees.

Introduction:

In today's turbulent world in which organizations compete more powerful, more all round, much of the energy is spent on the performance of employees. Because It is obvious that people within the organization are the main factor for survival in a highly competitive arena and a major factor in the productivity of their organizations. Today's organizations relying on human resources within the organization to further improve their operations and create different units within the organization such as the unit of planning resources, units of training and so on are important signs (Ayubi, 2004).

Indeed The performance is a set of measures and activities that are done by the staffs to achieve the set out goals of organization. This variable is formed of several factors which include: personal skills, managerial and technical skills thus the personnel performance of employees could be realized. (Shekari and Heydarzadeh, 2011). Performance as individual behavior, is a function of personality and situational variables (such as job demands, organizational, social, etc.) and in terms the result of the employee's activities of their duties in a certain time is the set of behaviors that people show on their jobs (Hosseinian et al, 2007).

In nowadays changeable situation there is no way for organizations except using manpower, because competitive advantages of organization in terms of the time are dependent on capable and qualified employee who is ready for these requirements. In recent years many efforts have been made to improve organizations that mostly focused on topics such as reduction of hierarchy and bureaucracy, forming active groups, participation in decision-making at the lowest level of organization and in other words empowerment of employees (Shelton, 2002).

In this atmosphere, empowering employees do not only work within the scope of their work and effort, but with commitment try towards organizational goal. The importance of human resources, one of the most effective techniques to increase employee productivity and optimal use of capacities and capabilities of individual and group in line with organizational objectives is empowerment. On the other hand, empowerment causes improvement of quality, the organization to ensure its effectiveness and increase employee motivation and commitment and

the organization with empower, committed and motivated employees, would be adapted to the changes and compete better (DashgrZad and Saremi, 2010).

Background of thread:

Chiang and Hsieh (2012), in a study that's done in Taiwan hotels, titled "The effects of organizational support and psychological empowerment on job performance: the moderating role of an organizational citizenship behavior", they concluded that both organizational support and psychological empowerment had a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, psychological empowerment has a positive effect on job performance, while the positive impact of organizational support on organizational performance, according to the results of the research have been rejected Chiang and Hsieh (2012).

Meyerson and Klein (2007) in a study titled "Environmental and psychological empowerment: preconditions and consequences", concluded that empowered better be divided into psychological and behavioral dimensions and each aspect predict the job's outcomes separately. The results also showed that environmental empowerment has better consequences than mental empowerment (Meyerson& Kline, 2007)

Mogholy and colleagues (2009) examined the relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment in nineteen separate areas of Tehran Education Organization concluded that there is connection between empowerment and organizational commitment and among different dimension of empowerment (feeling of competence, significant of job, effectiveness, Choice, trust on others) feeling of effectiveness and trust just effect on organizational commitment. (Mogholy and colleagues,2009)

Mirkamaly et al (2009) study the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction and organizational commitment among employees in Tehran University, and concluded that there is a positive relationship between the dimensions of psychological empowerment (meaningfulness, self-determination, competence, and effectiveness) and job satisfaction. And apart from the merits, other components of psychological empowerment have positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment (Mirkamaly et al, 2009).

Abdullahi (2006) study, "Psychological Empowerment: Dimensions and Validation on the basis of structural equation modeling" and concluded that Psychological Empowerment includes five separate structures that are competence, such as,competence,autonomy, influence, significance and trust. Cultural differences are related to dimensions of psychological empowerment (Abdullahi, 2006).

Furthermore, authors such as Spreitzer(1995), Thomas and Weldowz (1990), confirmed the effect of psychological empowerment on job performance and believe that if employees feel good about their job, useful, Also if the organization allows employees to make decisions and provide the flexibility, all these factors are likely to increase their job performance (Chiang and Hsieh, 2012)

Caberg and colleagues (1999) and Siebert and colleagues (2004),Also believe that feeling of capability in employees is leading to increase job satisfaction, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of staff performance and reduce the tendency to leave the organization (Meyerson and Kline, 2007) .

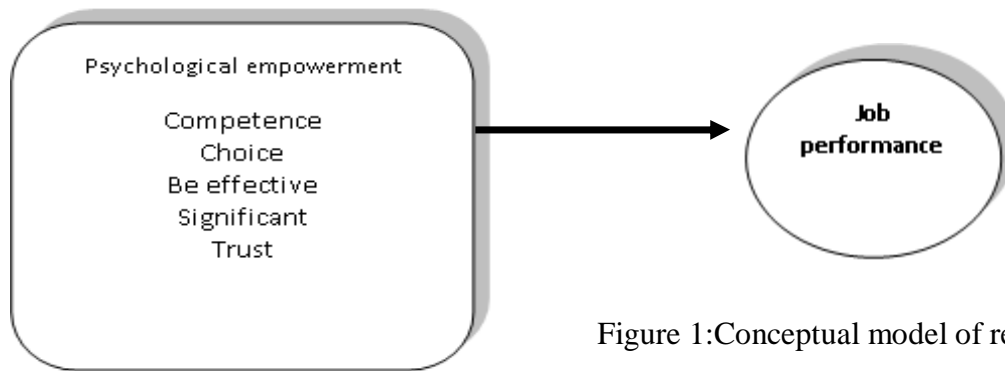


Figure 1:Conceptual model of research

Performance:

Without any clear definition of performance, it can't be managed and evaluated. Batz and Holtown in 1995 have stated that performance is a multi-dimensional structure that its variables depend on many factors. Camp Bell (1995) believes that in performance behavior exists and must be distinguished from the results because some of the systems can eliminate results. Holistic view of the performance obtained when including the behavior and results. This theory was proposed by BrownBarch: "Performance means behaviors and outcomes. Agent behaviors are derived from the operation and change the performance of the mind to turn. Behaviors not only are not just tools to achieve results, but in turn have consequences that are the product of physical and mental tasks, and they can be seen apart from the results "(Armstrong,2007).

Borman and Motowidlo (1993) in the areas of performance identified two broad categories of employees' behavior: Functional performance and contextual performance. Both of the performance has different ways of organizational effectiveness. Functional performance includes behaviors that are directly concerned with the production of goods, services, or activities that indirectly support technical processes of organizations. The criteria focus on the behavioral patterns of production of goods, services, or activities, based on the quantity and quality of performance. In contrast, contextual performance is defined as follows: individual efforts that are not directly related to their performance on the task, but because of the strengthening role that are needed in shaping the psychological, social and organizational context for the activity processes are important. Indeed simply it can be said that when employees help one of his colleagues to complete their work assignments or they find ways to improve the performance. (Kahya, 2007).

Today, most organizational researchers agree the overall performance of the job to be defined in three dimensions: Work function (directly and indirectly related to the organization's technical activities), Context-dependent functions (functions that shape the organizational context, social, and psychological functioning in what is happening, is effective. E.g. to help others, volunteer for overtime, passion) and counter-productive behavior (behavior of employees who hurts the organization and its members. E.g. to do things slowly and deliberately wrong, stealing, insulting and ignoring others, and obstruction) (Aghayousefi and Mirhosseini, 2011)

History of empowerment:

Empowerment concept was first introduced in 1980s. But in the 1990s a great interest of this concept came into existence among researchers, academics and practitioners of management and organization. Scholars and researchers of management on organization in the 1990s, recognized empowering the human resources related to management strategies and activities such as delegating decision-making powers to lower echelons of the organization, share information within the staff and their access to resources. This view of empowerment is called mechanical

approach. But from the 1990s onwards, theorists and experts in organizational psychology know human resource empowerment as a complex and multi-dimensional concept and they put differences between the features of situation (the management actions) and employees' perceptions. As Conger and Kanungo (1988), have suggested that management actions are just a set of conditions that can empower employees, but not necessarily, and delegating the power of decision-making and authority by superior to low-ranking employees is not meant to be empowerment. Recently, researchers in terms of employees' beliefs and emotions are considered. This approach of empowerment is called the organic approach. In The organic approach, managers are not going to empower the employees, but also is the attitudes of employees about their role in the job and the organization. (Abdolahi,2006).

Definition of empowerment:

In Webster's Dictionary, Empowerment is divided into three components: that "em" at the first of the name means putting in, going to work, going in and "power" allows people to persuade others Or change activities or discussions in the expected way And provides an opportunity for powerful to make others aware of the prior proceeding, or prevent the consequences. "Ment" is the status or condition arising from a particular action, such as starting, molding, developing and empowering. (Sudmand&Nasirzade, 2007).

Empowerment can be seen as a completely different way of working people. Research shows that in the traditional organizations that are following the strategy of leading and controlling the employees, only about 25 to 30 percent of the employee's ability is used.

Enabling is the process of giving employees the authority to control in the non-managerial level in the organization. Empowerment is a process of enabling the employees in order to use their maximum ability to help the group or organization. Empowerment allows employees to have more control and responsibility of their task. Enabling the staff is to teach things that they can do to be less reliant on the administrator (Aghayar, 2007).

Caner (1993) believes that empowerment is a person's ability to make independent decisions and make use of available resources to achieve the required goals.

Canger and Kanungo (1988) defined empowerment as a motivational construct; Empowerment in the comparative structures occurs when the power is moving from upper level to lower level and as a result employees experience a sense of ownership and control over their career. As a motivational construct, empowerment is referred to employees' perceptions of their independence and control. If these people are empowered, they will feel so much energy and control. In this sense of power determination of their own values and belief in self-efficacy is enhanced. (Matthews, et al., 2002)

Pastor (1996) sees empowerment as an individual phenomenon that individuals take responsibility for their actions that this definition focuses on the importance of individuals in the successful implementation of empowerment.

In Spreitzer's view(1995) Psychological empowerment is defined as a set of psychological states and focuses on how employees think about their work and gain experience, ,and how much they believe in their organization's role and influence, And makes employees feel more confident and have a willingness to succeed (Allahyari, 2011).

Psychological view of empowerment:

Researchers that are headed by Thomas and Volthous (1990), believe that empowerment is a multifaceted issue and cannot be examined based on a specific concept. They believe that empowerment is the process of self-motivation and tasks assigned to employees, and are manifested in a series of cognitive features below: Effectiveness, competence, meaningful, and choice (Abtahi and Absy, 2007).

According to research conducted by Spreitzer and Mishra (1992), Can identify 5 inner elements effective on self tend that are called inner empowerment-psychological. These variables include 1) a sense of competence, 2) the feeling of having a choice, and 3) a sense of efficacy, 4) sense of meaningfulness, and 5) a sense of trust on others.

It should be noted that these variables may influence the individual tendency, considering the individual's skills are defined as a spectrum, these enablers will determine how much a person can use their skills. As much as the level of these variables is high, there is higher willingness of employees to apply their skills. (Amin and Ramzani,2007)

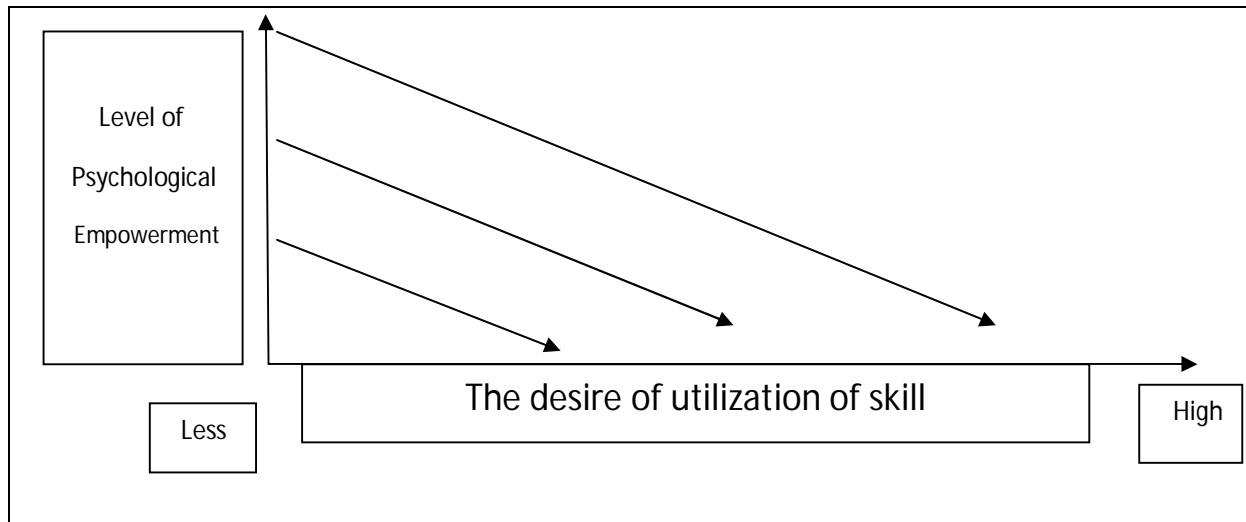


Figure2: The effect of one's inner desires on talent.

1)Sense of competence

Causing the sense of competence in people makes them feel effective. Or feel that have enough capability to do a task successfully. The empowered individuals not only feel adorable, but they feel confident that they can do a task with good quality. They feel superiority and believe that they can learn more to face the new challenges. This feeling will determine whether people will try to do hard work or not. Bandura (1997), believe that people's strangle believe in the effectiveness, is likely to influence their effort to deal with specific situations. When people have the ability to organize the situation- otherwise would be threatening to them, they will get involved with the activity and behave confidently. Expectations of the effectiveness determine that how much effort will people make in adverse experience and how long will they persevere. Three conditions are necessary to make people feel merit:

- Believe to have the ability to do the job.
- Believe that they have the capacity to make the necessary effort.
- Believes that no external obstacle deter them from doing the work (Amin and Ramezani, 2007).

2) A sense of choice

Choice in empowered people cause self-assertive. Being organized in activities and having the experience of implementation is mean to be self-assertive. When people are involved to an activity voluntarily rather than being forced to do it or quit it, the feel having a choice at work, it has the result of freedom and personal authority, empowering people feel responsibility and ownership about their activities, they see themselves as a pioneer and creator, they are able to

carry out initiatives, to take independent decisions and examine some new ideas. These people instead of feeling the activities to be set out and being controlled or have a permanent and inevitable role, they see themselves as the center of control. Empowered People are very likely to have internal locus of control, a sense of what is happening to them is under control. Research has shown that choice accompany by sense of less alienation at work, more job satisfaction, higher levels of efficiency, more creativity, higher levels of job involvement and less pressure. (Amin and Ramzani,2007) Managers who are not sure about their roles certainly have high expectations and due to the uncertainty they will have no initiative and are less self-assertive (Hall, 2008).

3) A sense of efficacy

Ashfort(1989) explain effectiveness the same as one's influence on the strategic, executive and operational result of a task, and believe that effectiveness is associated with self-control. Empowered People have a strong sense of personal control on outcomes. They believe that they can make changes by influence the environment in which they're working or the results (Spreitzer, 2007)

In Tomas and Wolthous's mind (1990), this dimension refers to the level that one's behavior effect on the goals differently, which means that the expected results are obtained in job atmosphere. Empowered People have the feeling of controlling the environment and they make it as their favor. (Jha, 2011)

4) Sense of significance

Empowering people feel significant. They put value on the purpose of their activities. Their talents and aspirations are the same as what they're doing. Activities are important in the value system. Empowering people care about what they produce and believe it. They invested their mental energy on an activity and involving in their task make them feel self-importance. As a result of their employment in the activity, they experience solidarity; therefore significant is the attitude towards the value (Jha, 2011)

5) A sense of trust on others

Trust is a softener element that facilitates activities in organizational behavior. McElster (1995), was the first to provide empirical evidence that trust has two components: and trust on the basis of efficacy and trust on the basis of knowledge of the organizational environment (Ergeneli& et al., 2007: 45). Empowered people have a strong sense of trust and they are sure that they will be treated fairly and equally. Usually it means that they assure that employers will not harm them and they will be treated impartially (Mogholy et al, 2009).

Conclusions:

Studies suggest that a new era causes different conditions for the organizations. The employees of organizations become the main operator of job process and it's proved that a capable and competent manpower that are considered as foundation of national wealth and vital assets of organization, bring lots of benefits to the organization. Today's competitive environment and the efforts of organizations to achieve efficiency and effectiveness show the need of empowerment more than ever. Reviews conducted by researchers with evidence of the fact that organizations with empowerment employees, experience significant improvements in performance, particularly in economic performance. Successful organizations all over the world have reported that with the use of empowerment programs have been able to gain lots of success.

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