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ORIGINAL PAPER

Relationship Between Psychological Empowerment and Productivity of Medical Librarians

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Psychological empowerment is really important and has remarkable effect on different organizational variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity, etc. So the aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity of Librarians in Isfahan Medical University. **Methods:** This was correlational research. Data were collected through two questionnaires. Psychological empowerment questionnaire and the manpower productivity questionnaire of Gold. Smith Hersey which their content validity was confirmed by experts and their reliability was obtained by using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, 0.89 and 0.9 respectively. Due to limited statistical population, did not used sampling and review was taken via census. So 76 number of librarians were evaluated. Information were reported on both descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation coefficient tests Pearson, Spearman, T-test, ANOVA), and analyzed by using the SPSS19 software. **Findings:** In our study, the trust between partners and efficacy with productivity had the highest correlation. Also there was a direct relationship between psychological empowerment and the productivity of labor ($r = 0.204$). In other words, with rising of mean score of psychological empowerment, the mean score of efficiency increase too. **Conclusions:** The results showed that if development programs of librarian's psychological empowerment increase in order to their productivity, librarians carry out their duties with better sense. Also with using the capabilities of librarians, the development of creativity with happen and organizational productivity will increase.

Key words: Psychological Empowerment, Productivity, Human Resources, Medical Librarians.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the concepts that have been proposed for the development of human resources is empowerment of employees. Empowerment concept was first introduced in the 1980s. Experts to the 1990 knew Employee empowerment as a measures and management strategies such as authority and decision-making authority to lower levels of the organization. This view to empowerment is called mechanical approach (1). But after 1990s, theorists and scholars of organizational psychology have proposed the new concept of empowerment (2). This approach focuses on perception of people on empowering and explains how would be the perception of subordinate and staff about empowerment. In other words, according to this view, the distribution of power does not necessarily lead to the empowerment of human resources because may have not such idea and this theory convert this approach to the organic and bottom-up process and so empowerment occurs when the conditions of psychology, creates the impression of empowerment between staff (3). Psychological empowerment as motivational structure, is an urgent need for autonomy or it is an opinion, or view in their individual effectiveness. Based on the concept of power, it plays an important role in the motivational readiness (4). Conger and Kanungo argue that empowerment, increases responsibility of staffs towards their effectiveness of their work (5). Thomas and Velthouse believe that this concept cannot be defined by one dimension. They know psychological empowerment as an inner job motivation that included four psychological domain: Feel

of effectiveness, competence, a sense of the significance and right of choice and introduce them to the literature of management for the first time (6). Concerning to the pattern of Thomas and Velthouse, Spritzer defined the psychological empowerment as a motivational concept (7).

Whetten & Cameron while emphasizing to the multifaceted nature of empowerment and confirmed four of the above, also has added the Trust to the above (8). In this study, these five dimensions has been considered as dimensions of psychological empowerment. These dimensions represent a personal orientation to the role of employees in the organization. So the psychological empowerment provides potential capacity for use of the origins of human ability, that it has not been used and it is a process in which via development and expansion the ability of individuals and teams, helps improvement of continuous performance (9). Nowadays, with the rapid developments in the field of environmental organizations, such as the use of information technology and global networks, the increase of competition in access to jobs, services and products from other countries, creativity and knowledge as an element of competitive advantage has been posed. All these factors have led to the increasing importance of the empowerment process in the organization. Some studies showed that there is a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational variables such as labor productivity. Fook and his fellow found a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and job motivation (10). In 2011 Safari and his colleagues found significant re-

relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational learning (11). Song in his study concluded that if and service and calls of social workers based on customer requirements increase, the potency increases (12). Smith-King and his colleagues were engaged in research to investigate the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction and the results of this study showed that psychological empowerment has remarkable effect on job satisfaction of nursing faculty (13). Salehnia in his study entitled "study effect of psychological empowerment on employee productivity" concluded that psychological empowerment of staff in Esfahan medical university is low (14).

On the other hand, with regard to the changes in the field of different economic and social field and increasing competition between industrial and services, today productivity manpower has become decisive factor. Because human life and survival of any organization is appropriate to the attainment of productivity. Most experts believe that the creation higher productivity is human-centered issue, it means that, the organization is dependent on the human factor (15, 16). So the productivity of human resources is the most important measure of productivity, because human resources is as a key element in any effort to improve the productivity. Often the main reason that caused the failure of organizations to achieve their goals is Lack of productivity of human resources, thus the prerequisites of strengthening and improving is the most important issues in this field. The role of human resources and strengthening it as a main capital of the organization is a more prominent factor than other (17). Academic libraries, social institutions that due to the information technology revolution, faced with the need to increase efficiency, so it would be a change in the structure and its services, and greater participation of librarian in decision making, the necessary motivation provide to librarians in order to better serve clients. For this reason, one of the new approaches in the academic and scientific libraries is that librarians have been asked to share in the decisions, empowerment and the team (18). Accordingly, the directors of libraries through empowerment and participation librarian in decision making, use the ability of all of them and by reducing the hierarchy, and making a team of colleagues in decision-making of library, increase the productivity and effectiveness of the organization. Thus, with regard to the foregoing, as well as the importance of employee empowerment on many organizational elements (19, 20, and 21) like productivity of man power, the purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity of Librarians in Isfahan Medical University. We aimed to identify strength and weaknesses in this area and state them to the officials.

2. METHODS

This was correlational research. The population consisted of 76 subjects, that all of whom were selected. Required information were collected via two questionnaire: psychological empowerment consist to Spritzer model (1995) in the form of 20 questions based on the range of 5-Choice Likert (totally agree to totally disagree) that consists of 5 components (sense of meaningfulness, sense of self, a sense of competence, confidence, sense of efficacy) and the questionnaire manpower productivity consist to model of Achieve by Hersey and Gold.

Smith (1980), in the form of 26 items, based on the range of 5-item likert (totally agree to totally disagree) to 7 components (ability, understanding, organizational support, motivation, feedback, reliability, compatibility) (7). The face and content validity of the questionnaire were confirmed by academic experts in the field of psychological empowerment and productivity of human resources. In order to get reliability of the questionnaire, a preliminary study has been done on 30 librarians of medical university and with using the coefficient Cronbach's alpha, this value were 0/89 for psychological empowerment and 0/9 for Labor productivity. To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. For descriptive analysis of findings, the mean and standard deviation were used and for statistical analysis, the correlation coefficient Pearson, Spearman, T-test, ANOVA were used. Results were analyzed by using SPSS version 19.

3. FINDINGS

The data showed that 27 percent of respondents in the study were male and 73% female. 20% of respondents had high school diploma, 10 percent had an associate's degree, 58 percent had bachelor's degree, and 11 percent had master degree. 68.7 of them had a degree in librarianship and 31.3 were educated in non-library. 50.7 of them were employed in the public service sector, 25.4% in technical services, and 16.4% in management sector the owner, and 7.5 percent were employed in combination. Librarians age range was 25- 58 years, mean age 37.9 and SD was 8/8. The range of work record was 3-25 years, the mean of work record was 11.35 and SD was 7.12. T test showed that the mean score of psychological empowerment of women and men librarian was not significantly different (P-value = 0.36). In other words, there was no significant relationship between the psychological empowerment and gender. With regard to field, the mean and SD of librarian with Medical Library and Information Science field, was 79.2±12.7 and the mean and SD of librarians with other field was 74.8±9.7. T-test showed that there was not significant correlation between this scores and psychological empowerment. In terms of type of employment, the mean and standard deviation of official librarians was 78±13.9, librarians treaty 78/6±9 and other librarians 77.03±10.8. Spearman test showed there is not meaningful relationship between the type of employment and psychological empowerment (P-value=. /65). In terms of type of work, the mean and standard deviation of librarians working in public services was 80.7±9.3, in Technical Services 75.2±10.6, in Management 79.9±12.8 and the combination 63±19.5. One-way ANOVA showed a significant relationship exists between the type of work and psychological empowerment (P-value = 0.21). In terms of age, Pearson correlation test showed no significant

| Variables | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|---------------------------|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Psychological Empowerment | 77.8 | 11.9 | 42.50 | 100.00 |
| Meaningfulness score | 88.71 | 14.56 | 25.00 | 100.00 |
| Competency score | 83.89 | 11.14 | 62.50 | 100.00 |
| Efficacy score | 76.79 | 16.73 | 30.00 | 100.00 |
| Effectiveness score | 62.12 | 20.89 | 00.00 | 100.00 |
| Trust score | 66.41 | 25.20 | 00.00 | 100.00 |

Table 1. The mean score of empowerment and its components (100) between medical Librarians

relationship between psychological empowerment with age ($p = 0.19$ and $r = -0.16$). Pearson correlation test showed no significant relationship between work experience and psychological empowerment ($P = 0.41$ and $r = -0.102$). Spearman correlation test of Education also indicated that there was no significant relationship between psychological empowerment with education ($r = 0.15$ and $P = 0.23$).

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of psychological empowerment and its micro components from 100. The results indicate that the biggest mean respectively related to meaningfulness indicator (88.71), competence (83.89), efficacy (76.79) and in total can be said with regard to the magnitude of all the indicators of moderate, Librarians have good psychological empowerment.

| Variables | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------------|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Productivity score | 53.8 | 12.43 | 26.92 | 75.00 |
| Ability score | 71.01 | 16.30 | 25.00 | 100.00 |
| Adaptation score | 58.83 | 18.51 | 100.00 | 16.67 |
| Feedback score | 58.58 | 16.60 | 87.50 | 31.25 |
| Credit score | 56.43 | 18.71 | 93.75 | 6.25 |
| Social perception score | 53.91 | 11.19 | 31.25 | 68.75 |
| Social support score | 41.13 | 17.31 | 0.00 | 68.75 |
| Motivation score | 42.53 | 19.31 | 75.00 | 0.00 |

Table 2. The mean score of productivity and its components (100) between medical Librarians

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of productivity and its components. One sample T-test showed that the mean scores of productivity obtained 53.8 and there is no significant difference with moderate (p -value = 0.137). The mean of micro components, respectively ability, adaptability, feedback, reliability and social understanding obtained more than average. In general we can say that as mean score of psychological empowerment increase, the mean of productivity and its components would increase too.

| The psychological empowerment and its components score | The Productivity Score |
|--|------------------------|
| | r p-value |
| Total score of psychological empowerment | 0.204 0.04 |
| Meaningfulness score | 0.098 0.2 |
| Competency score | 0.139 0.13 |
| Efficacy score | 0.404 0.000 |
| Effectiveness score | 0.060 0.31 |
| Trust score | 0.194 0.05 |

Table 3. Pearson correlation coefficients between psychological empowerment and its components with the score of Productivity among medical Librarians

According to table 3, there is direct relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity. Pearson's correlation coefficient with respect to the relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity of librarians indicated that there was direct correlation between empowerment and productivity ($p = 0.04$, $r = 0.204$). Furthermore, there was direct correlation between productivity and micro components of self-efficacy. However, there was no significant correlation with other components.

4. DISCUSSION

Today's workplace requires employees to be able to decide, to find new solutions to problems, and creativity on the job, and be responsible against work (22). In addition, human nat-

urally desire to be useful in his work and have a fruitful life. Today, employees are seeking for meaningful job, ask honesty and openness and demand more self-discovery discovery and self-actualization from their work (12). Contemporary labor, has an extraordinary capacity for growth and development and in order to handle his future, is restless and impatient (2). Empowering human resources as a new approach, tries to provide beds and opportunities to blossoming talents and competencies has numerous benefits such as: creativity, flexibility, job satisfaction, problem solving, and mental health and as a result it would have higher productivity (13). Accordingly, the directors of university libraries through empowerment and participation librarians in decision-making and the library try to use the ability of all of them. And by reducing the hierarchy, and make a team of colleagues for decision-making in library, it can increase the productivity and effectiveness of the organization. On the other hand, the study of factors affecting the management and efficiency of university librarians and libraries of medical university could be one of the basic needs for the researchers and experts librarian. So we can give priority to the needs of librarian's psychological empowerment and productivity. The results showed that the average score of all components of psychological empowerment was significantly higher than the average hypothetical test. It can be concluded that the psychological empowerment of librarians are acceptable. The findings also show that the average size of 7-aspects of productivity is more efficient than the average hypothetical test. This indicates that empower librarians have a significant impact on rising the performance and productivity has been rising. On the other hand, in relation to its impact on psychological empowerment and productivity of librarians, the results showed that there is a direct relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity. Also, there is direct relationship between the dimensions of psychological empowerment and self-efficacy and efficiency, but there is not a direct and significant relationship between other dimensions of psychological empowerment and productivity.

The present findings are somewhat consistent with similar results. Because was not any study about the effect of psychological empowerment on productivity of labor in library of university so this study compared with other similar study in similar organization. These results were consistent with the results of Datta et al (23). Datta and his colleague stated that in order to more attention to the human resource and empowering them via providing human resources development programs, Management must be convinced that the productivity of human resources plays a vital role in creating value for organizations. It is certain that the empowerment of human resources program has a direct impact on the productivity of human resources (15). Salehnia in his study concluded that there was strong relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity of staff and so it is consistent with this study (14). The research of Safari and colleagues (10), Eskandari et al (21), Sharifzade et al (24) and similar researches showed that psychological empowerment has direct impact on many organizational variables such as organizational commitment, productivity and employee performance, organizational learning and so on. The results of study on efficacy of psychological empowerment showed that there was a sig-

nificant positive correlation with productivity of librarians. When people are empowered, they feel their efficacy, or they feel they have the necessary ability and skill to perform the job successfully. Capable people not only feel competency but also feel confident that they can work with efficiency, thus their productivity would increase (14). Study of the reliability and safety (Trust) aspect of psychological empowerment showed a significant positive correlation with the productivity of librarians. Empower people have a sense of confidence and assure that they will be treated fairly and equally. This usually means that they feel confident that the operators or owners of power, will not damage them and the other is that they will be treated impartially (25). Other findings of this study showed that there was no significant difference between the mean score of psychological empowerment librarians in terms of gender, age, years of work, and education and so it is partly consistent with the study of Rajab beige and his colleague (26). The main limitation of this study was that because the librarian were so busy, the questionnaire was completed for a long time.

5. CONCLUSION

Due to human resource development programs as a new approach, by providing beds to create opportunities for the blossoming talents and competencies of people, has many benefits such as: creativity, flexibility, job satisfaction, problem solving, health and mental health, and higher productivity, which is especially important. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity of the workforce. The results showed there was a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and productivity of librarians. Accordingly, as the librarians have higher levels of psychological empowerment, submitting of services and duties, or in other words the efficiency and productivity will increase. The mean of psychological empowerment with respect to the dimension was higher than average. In other words, the psychological empowerment of librarians was strong from their vision and staff productivity was considered. The correlation between psychological empowerment and productivity was +0/204. This indicates that psychological empowerment have a significant impact on performance and productivity of librarians. Therefore, it is necessary that officers and directors of libraries in Isfahan University of Medical Sciences consider the psychological empowerment of librarians as one of the basic strategies to enhance the performance and productivity of librarians and it is necessary to make program in order to get the higher level of psychological empowerment.

6. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, the below suggestion is offered to directors and librarians of Isfahan medical university:

* According to the main research question, administrators of central library and university must take heed the all aspects of psychological empowerment as variable in the best performance and efficiency of librarians.

* Based on theoretical principles to strengthen the sense of competence capability development and job skills for librarians is needed to meet the potential challenges of working. Therefore, in-service training in accordance with knowledge

can help librarians to feel efficacy.

* Definition the landscape of university libraries by administrator's cause that librarians feel their job and their activities is significant.

* By clarify the role of each librarian by administrators and strengthening a sense of control over their work, it can provide needed base to have a greater impact on business activities and reinforce feelings of effectiveness.

* Administrators via providing the atmosphere of contribution and allow the individual creativity, empower librarians in sense of self-sufficiency.

* Finally, in the case of open relationships with librarians and administrators to do things as a group can develop mutual trust. Creating an atmosphere of honesty and sincerity and free from any facade, librarians will trust each other and the organization.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS: NONE DECLARED.

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