



The Role of Psychological Empowerment on Organizational Agility at Zabol University of Medical Sciences

Mehdi Fanodi¹, Hamid Okati^{2*}, Alameh Keikha³

¹Department of Management, Zabol Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zabol, Iran

²Co-Author, Department of Management, Zabol Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zabol, Iran

³Faculty member, University of Zabol, Zabol, Iran

ABSTRACT

It is an undeniable fact that, during the last decades, empowerment as a perspective towards developing human resources has caused many positive changes in the performances of the employees. In the ever-changing conditions, it is inevitable for the organizations to utilize their human resources in an appropriate way. Given that, the only factor contributes to the organizational balance is to empowerment the employees. The purpose of the current study was to investigate the effect of the role of psychological empowerment on organizational agility at Zabol University of Medical Sciences. This study, due to the its applied nature and the descriptive data collection procedure, was a survey one. To collect the necessary data for examining the hypotheses, a questionnaire was used whose validity was assured by the experts and its reliability was computed using Cronbach's alpha. A total of 200 employees of Zabol University of Medical Sciences were the research population of this study. Using Cochran formula, 130 employees were randomly selected as the research sample. To analyze the data descriptive statistics was used. Moreover, inferential statistics such as correlation coefficient and linier regression were used. The questionnaires validation was done using Cronbach's alpha. Finally, hypotheses testing was conducted by using correlation coefficient and linier regression in SPSS. The results indicated that psychological empowerment and its components had positive and significant effect on organizational agility at Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

Key words: *psychological empowerment, organizational agility, Zabol University of Medical Sciences, employees*

Corresponding author: Hamid Okati

INTRODUCTION

Work force do not only need specialized training related to their jobs, but also They require other skills such as planning, acquiring and analyzing information, appropriate using of up-to-date electronic technologies and professional software, to improve the techniques relating to their occupation. In addition, they require being familiar with foreign languages, behaving well with managers, colleagues and clients, establish proper relationships, negotiation and responsibility techniques and accountability, self-training and study. In other words, to have an all-round organization development, employing workforce that acquires knowledge and skills in a way that not only have concentration on their profession affairs but also they have cultural development, creativity and exploring spirit. Unfortunately, absence of abovementioned factors i.e. "having knowledge and ability" and "desiring" is evident in most organizations, institutions, ministries, manufacturing companies and government agencies. Most expert forces and middle managers in public organizations only use incomplete instructions and technical jargons and participate in unproductive meetings, so it leads to low productivity. In other words, neither related organizations nor employees are

beneficial to one another, Just they keep up appearances. Due to this long-lived defective cycle, it is accepted as a fact. It is as if the low productivity of Iranian workforce and low production efficiency and low rate of Iranian useful working hours below 2 hours a week, compared with Japanese 8 hours a day and Korean 10 hours a day is something natural. In researcher's opinion the solution of this big problem which its negative consequences has led Iran to continuous backwardness, is the agility of the organization through proper, permanent and purposeful training of workforce in governmental departments and abovementioned goals should be achieved in a midterm period. Empowering the staffs in Department of Roads and Urban Development under the supervision of Ministry of Roads is of great importance and due to the type of staffs' activities and duties, the organizational agility becomes vital. One of the organization's instruments for achieving agility is the workforce. In fact, the workforce as the main sector is an important instrument in making an organization agile. To achieve the purpose, organizations need empowered staffs. Staffs' empowerment includes systems, methods and practices which develops the competence and capability that improve productivity, development, growth and prosperity of the organization and workforce in line with its goals (Carter, 2010). In an article under the title of "empowering the staffs: a new strategy for improving the performance of workforce", It is emphasized that empowerment is the main part of organizational growth and development (Bagali, 2012).

Several researches showed the effect of staffs' empowerment on improving their performance and promoting the organization functionality. Empowerment may have important behavioral consequences; for example Gicas found out that the feeling of competency leads to innovation, attempt and perseverance in challenging situations. According to researches done by Deci and Ryan (1998), employees' freedom of actions leads to immediate feedback in case of troubles in workplace. In addition, the relationship between freedom of action with efficacy is confirmed by cognitive and motivational approaches. Cognitive theorists believe that because employees have more information than their heads, so they can have better planning, higher ability of barriers recognition and better performance. From motivational point of view, Thomas and Timon found that empowering the staffs with freedom of action stimulate the adequate motivation for performance improvement.

Continuous changes in technology and the change of clients' mentality has created the need for continuous changes in strategies and organizational planning. So the organization must be agile and flexible in facing the barriers and use of opportunities. The presence of flexible structures, multi-skilled workers, giving importance to competent programs and finally creating related culture are important tools to adapt to new conditions in changing situations. The purpose of this study is to introduce staffs empowerment as a tool and a pattern for improving the index of organizational agility. The study investigates whether empowerment and its components has an effect on organizational agility.

THE CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH MODEL

In this study, the conceptual models designed by Spreitzer (1999) to examine independent variable (psychological empowerment) and the one designed by Sharifi and Zhong to express dependent variable (organizational agility) were used.

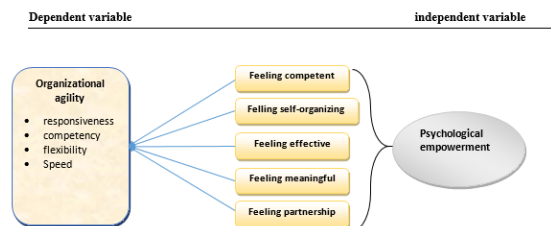


Figure 1. Conceptual model (Spreitzer, 1999; Sharifi & Zhong, 2006)

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses include a major hypothesis and five minor hypotheses.

The main research hypothesis:

Psychological empowerment has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

The sub-hypothesis:

1. Feeling competent has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.
2. Feeling self-organizing has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.
3. Feeling effective has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.
4. Feeling meaningful has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.
5. Feeling partnership has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to explain the effect of employees' psychological empowerment on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences. Due to nature of the issue, the study is descriptive in terms of correlation and it has a practical purpose. This study adopts a survey method and aims at determining the effect of empowering staffs on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences. To collect the required data for conducting this study, library research and field methods (inventories of Psychological Empowerment by Spreitzer (1999) and Organizational Agility by Zhang & Sharifi (2006)) are employed. Statistical society include all staffs in Zabol University of Medical Sciences in 2016 which equals to 200 employees. Sampling is done by Cochran test and 130 people is chosen. Distribution of questionnaires were random to have an equal chance of being a participant to each employee. To analyze the data, SPSS software is used. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the frequency, mean and standard deviation of demographic variables and main variables. Inferential tests including Pearson Correlation, Linear and Stepwise Regression and Friedman Test will also be used.

FINDINGS

Hypothesis Testing

Main hypothesis: Psychological empowerment has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

To determine the effectiveness, goodness-of-fit in regression model was analyzed which was discussed below. To propose the model of the relationship between Psychological Empowerment (Y) and Organizational Agility (X) after investigating its adequacy indicators in below table, the model is presented.

Table 1. Goodness of fit of regression model between empowering and agility

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.557	0.310	0.305		0.311

The relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable equals to 0.557 R Square is .310 which shows that 31 percent of variation in psychological empowering is predicted by organizational agility. Because this measure do not consider the degree of freedom, adjusted R Square was used which equals to 30.5 in this study. According to the indices, the model was adequate.

Table 2. Regression equation of organizational agility

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	1	Constant	2.10	0.252		
	empowerment	0.466	0.061	7.59		
Dependent Variable: organizational agility						

The inserted variable in regression equation is the core of regression analysis which can be seen in Table 2 the regression equation is provided by unstandardized coefficients.

Organizational agility = 2.10 + (0.466) psychological empowerment

It can be said that with increase of one unit of each independent variable depending on the written coefficient, the dependent variable is increased. In other words with increase of one unit in empowerment, the standard deviation 0.466 unit of organizational agility is increased, so they have positive relationship. T-test relating to regression coefficients are displayed in the table for independent variable as well. The sig. value equals to .000, so psychological empowerment has a meaningful effect on organizational agility.

Sub- hypothesis1: Feeling competent has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

To determine the effectiveness, goodness-of-fit in regression model was analyzed which was discussed below. To propose the model of the relationship between Staffs' feeling of competence (Y) and Organizational Agility (X) after investigating its adequacy indicators in below table, the model is presented.

Table 3. Goodness of fit of regression model between Staffs' feeling of competence and agility

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.425	0.180	0.174		0.340

The relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable equals to .425 R Square is .180 which shows

that 18 percent of variation in Staffs' feeling of competence is predicted by organizational agility. Because this measure do not consider the degree of freedom, adjusted R Square was used which equals to 17.4 in this study. According to the indices, the model was adequate.

Table 4. Regression equation of organizational agility

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error			
1	Constant	2.84	0.222	0.425	12.83	0.000
	Staffs' feeling of competence	0.273	0.051		5.30	
Dependent Variable: organizational agility						

The inserted variable in regression equation is the core of regression analysis which can be seen in Table 2 the regression equation is provided by unstandardized coefficients.

Organizational agility = 2.84 + (0.273) Staffs' feeling of competence

It can be said that with increase of one unit of each independent variable depending on the written coefficient, the dependent variable is increased. In other words with increase of one unit in Staffs' feeling of competence, the standard deviation 0.273 unit of organizational agility is increased, so they have positive relationship. T-test relating to regression coefficients are displayed in the table for independent variable as well. The sig. value equals to .000, so Staffs' feeling of competence has a meaningful effect on organizational agility.

Sub- hypothesis2: Feeling meaningful has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

To determine the effectiveness, goodness-of-fit in regression model was analyzed which was discussed below. To propose the model of the relationship between Staffs' feeling of meaningful (Y) and Organizational Agility (X) after investigating its adequacy indicators in below table, the model is presented.

Table 5. Goodness of fit of regression model between Staffs' feeling of meaningful and agility

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.463	0.215	0.208		0.332

The relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable equals to .463 R Square is 0.215 which shows that 21.5 percent of variation in Staffs' feeling of

meaningful is predicted by organizational agility. Because this measure do not consider the degree of freedom, adjusted R Square was used which equals to 20.8 in this study. According to the indices, the model was adequate.

Table 6. Regression equation of organizational agility

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	2.60	0.240	0.463	10.82	0.026
	Staffs' feeling of meaningful	0.340	0.057		5.91	
Dependent Variable: organizational agility						

The inserted variable in regression equation is the core of regression analysis which can be seen in Table 2 the regression equation is provided by unstandardized coefficients.

Organizational agility = 2.60 + (0.340) Staffs' feeling of meaningful

It can be said that with increase of one unit of each independent variable depending on the written coefficient, the dependent variable is increased. In other words with increase of one unit in Staffs' feeling of meaningful, the standard deviation 0.147 unit of organizational agility is increased, so they have positive relationship. T-test relating to regression coefficients are displayed in the table for independent variable as well. The sig. value equals to 0.026, so Staffs' feeling of meaningful has a meaningful effect on organizational agility.

Sub- hypothesis3: Feeling effective has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

To determine the effectiveness, goodness-of-fit in regression model was analyzed which was discussed below. To propose the model of the relationship between Staffs' feeling of effectiveness (Y) and Organizational Agility (X) after investigating its adequacy indicators in below table, the model is presented.

Table 7. Goodness of fit of regression model between Staffs' feeling of effectiveness and agility

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.271	0.073	0.066		0.361

The relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable equals to .271 R Square is .073 which shows that 7.3 percent of variation in Staffs' feeling of effectiveness is predicted by organizational agility. Because this measure do not consider the degree of freedom, adjusted R Square was used which equals to 6.6 in this study. According to the indices, the model was adequate.

Table 8. Regression equation of organizational agility

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	3.52	0.157	0.271	22.44	0.002
	Staffs' feeling of effectiveness	0.117	0.037		3.18	
Dependent Variable: organizational agility						

The inserted variable in regression equation is the core of regression analysis which can be seen in Table 2 the regression equation is provided by unstandardized coefficients.

Organizational agility = 3.52 + (0.117) Staffs' feeling of effectiveness

It can be said that with increase of one unit of each independent variable depending on the written coefficient, the dependent variable is increased. In other words with increase of one unit in Staffs' feeling of effectiveness, the standard deviation 0.117 unit of organizational agility is increased, so they have positive relationship. T-test relating to regression coefficients are displayed in the table for independent variable as well. The sig. value equals to .002, so Staffs' feeling of effectiveness has a meaningful effect on organizational agility.

Sub- hypothesis4: Felling self-organizing has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

To determine the effectiveness, goodness-of-fit in regression model was analyzed which was discussed below. To propose the model of the relationship between Staffs' feeling of having a choice (Y) and Organizational Agility (X) after investigating its adequacy indicators in below table, the model is presented.

Table 9. Goodness of fit of regression model between Staffs' feeling of having a choice and agility

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.450	0.203	0.196		0.335

The relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable equals to .450 R Square is 0.203 which shows that 20.3 percent of variation in Staffs' feeling of having a choice is predicted by organizational agility. Because this measure do not consider the degree of freedom, adjusted R Square was used which equals to 19.6 in this study. According to the indices, the model was adequate.

Table 10. Regression equation of organizational agility

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error			
1	Constant	3.10	0.161	0.450	19.23	0.000
	Staffs' feeling of having a choice	0.242	0.042		5.70	
Dependent Variable: organizational agility						

The inserted variable in regression equation is the core of regression analysis which can be seen in Table 2 the regression equation is provided by unstandardized coefficients.

Organizational agility = 3.10 + (0.242) Staffs' feeling of having a choice

It can be said that with increase of one unit of each independent variable depending on the written coefficient, the dependent variable is increased. In other words with increase of one unit in Staffs' feeling of having a choice, the standard deviation 0.242 unit of organizational agility is increased, so they have positive relationship. T-test relating to regression coefficients are displayed in the table for independent variable as well. The sig. value equals to .000, so Staffs' feeling of having a choice has a meaningful effect on organizational agility.

Sub- hypothesis5: Feeling partnership has effect on organizational agility in Zabol University of Medical Sciences.

To determine the effectiveness, goodness-of-fit in regression model was analyzed which was discussed below. To propose the model of the relationship between Feeling partnership (Y) and Organizational Agility (X) after investigating its adequacy indicators in below table, the model is presented.

Table 11. Goodness of fit of regression model between Feeling partnership and agility

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.388	0.151	0.144		0.346

The relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable equals to .388 R Square is .151 which shows that 15.1 percent of variation in Feeling partnership is predicted by organizational agility. Because this measure do not consider the degree of freedom, adjusted R Square was used which equals to 14.4 in this study. According to the indices, the model was adequate.

Table 12. Regression equation of organizational agility

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error			
1	Constant	2.94	0.226	0.388	13.04	0.000
	Feeling partnership	0.262	0.055		4.76	
Dependent Variable: organizational agility						

The inserted variable in regression equation is the core of regression analysis which can be seen in Table 2 the regression equation is provided by unstandardized coefficients.

Organizational agility = 2.94 + (0.262) Feeling partnership

It can be said that with increase of one unit of each independent variable depending on the written coefficient, the dependent variable is increased. In other words with increase of one unit in Feeling partnership, the standard deviation 0.262 unit of organizational agility is increased, so they have positive relationship. T-test relating to regression coefficients are displayed in the table for independent variable as well. The sig. value equals to .000, so Feeling partnership has a meaningful effect on organizational agility.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The primary and secondary hypotheses were confirmed due to the strong correlation between "staffs' psychological empowerment" and "organizational agility". Confirmation of these hypotheses are in line with psychological empowerment models of Thomas and Vlthvs (1990), Cantor (1997) and

Spreitzer (1984). The result of statistical analysis showed that it is in accordance with the results of Counter, Riley, Bentley and Lane (2003) and Olive (2004) who declared that increasing the empowerment leads to staffs agility in organizations. Finally, These suggestions are proposed:

- Creating the feeling of self-efficacy in staffs, and the feeling that they have the ability to fulfil the job affairs successfully. The empowered people not only have the sense of competency but also feel confident that they can do duties properly so that the organizational agility is improved.
- Staffs participate in organizational decisions to believe that they can make a change in their working environments.
- Assigning tasks to working groups leads people to have innovative measures, to make independent decisions and to test new thoughts.
- Teaching of different technical and managerial methods in organizations enables them in conducting activities. Learning suitable skills through training programs helps employees to make accurate decisions with the least number of mistakes and the highest quality.

REFERENCES

- 1) Beer, V., Guerrilla. (1991) Tactics for employee empowerment. *Performance empowerment Quarterly*, 4(4), 62-70 131
- 2) Bottani, Eleonora. (2009). A fuzzy QFD approach to achieve agility. *International journal of production economics*.
- 3) Boven, David, E. & Edward, E. Lawler, (1992), *The Empowerment of Service Works: What, Why, How, and When?*, Sloan Management. Vol. 33, pp 31-39.
- 4) Boxell, C.T., (1996). The Strategic HRM debate & the resources based view of the firm. *HRM Journal*, 6(3) 59-75.
- 5) Canger Jay A., Kanungo Rabindra N. (1988), *The Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice*, Academy of Management Review, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 471-474.
- 6) Conger, Jay. & N. Kanungo, (1988), *The Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice*. Academy of Management Review. Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 471-482.
- 7) Conger, J.A & Kanungo, R.N., (1985) *The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice*. Academy of Management Review, 13 (3), 471- 482
- 8) Lalian Poor, Nooshin, Nahid Doosti and Azade Mohamad Zade, 1390, Investigating the Relationship between Empowerment and Organizational Commitment (Case study: an insurance company), Eighteenth National Congress of the Fourth International Seminar on Insurance and Development, Tehran, Insurance Institute.
- 9) Majibi, Tooraj, Somaye Kia, Somaye Hossein Zadeh Abandansray and Azade Changizi Mohammadi, 1392, Investigating the Relationship Between Employee Empowerment and Organizational Commitment (a case study), the second International Conference on Management, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, Qom, Payam Noor University.
- 10) Quinn, R.E & Spreitzer, G. (1997). "The road to empowerment: seven Question every leader should consider organizational Dynamic", v26, 2, pp 37-51.
- 11) Rappaport, J. (1995). Empowerment meets narrative: Listening to stories and creating settings. *Journal of Community psychology*, No 23: 795-821.
- 12) Russ, D.E. and Millam, E.R. (1995), "Executive commentary-empowerment a matter of degree", *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 9 No. 3, pp. 29-31.
- 13) Spreitzer, G. M., M. A. Kizilos, S. W. Nason, (1997), *A Dimensional Analysis of the Relationship Between Psychological Empowerment and Effectiveness, Satisfaction, and Strain*, *Journal of Management*, No. 23, pp 679-714.
- 14) Spritzer, G.M. (1995), *Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace, Dimension, Measurement & Validation*, *Academy of Management Journal*. Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 1372-1445.
- 15) Thomas Kenneth. W & Velthouse, Betty, A (1990) "Cognitive Elements of Empowerment: An Integrative Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation" *Academy of Management Review*. Vol 15. No. 4 pp: 666-681
- 16) Yar Ahmadzahi, Mohammed Hossein, (1391), *Accounting for the Model of Human Capital Development in Small and Medium Agencies with an Approach of the Organization Agility*, library of management faculty of Tehran University, doctoral dissertation.