The Relationship between Empowerment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Pedagogical Organization Employees

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Abstract

Employee empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior have very important roles in the process of accomplishment and continuous development of organizational performance. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to determine the relationship between these two variables in employees of Qom province pedagogical organization. Ninety nine statistical samples were selected from the population through classified sampling. The researcher-made questionnaire was used to measure the empowerment and its components and the Moorman and Black's standardized questionnaire was employed to measure organizational citizenship behavior and its components.

The components of empowerment are expertise, courage in action, work ethics, communicative skills, thinking, and experience gaining. The results of t-test showed that the situation of empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior were relatively desirable. But the results of Spearman's correlation coefficient and partial correlation coefficient showed that there was no relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees ($p<0.05$). However, the relation of communicative and behavioral skills to organizational citizenship behavior was significant.

Keywords:

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Introduction

Theories of management and organization began to develop in the early years of twentieth century. Initially, classical school of organization and management was recognized through hierarchy, the scope of monitoring, logical structure and labor division. The neoclassical school dealt with human relations movement. Finally, systemic and contingency school emerged in 1930s. Today, the latter is the dominating philosophy in management.

Classical school considered man as a machine that acted as a closed system and had to obey a set of rules and orders with no right to make decisions. In fact, freedom and authority had no meaning among employees. However, by the emergence of human relations movement, this attitude changed and managers gradually shared their authorities with employees and moved toward empowerment so that in 1990s they focused on team working. Managers paved the way for employees to release their potential forces in order to participate in the decision-making process. Human force empowerment was also recognized as employees' ability to participate in the process of making decisions. The empowered employees were able to learn and grow individually, to use communicational skills, to think systematically, to gain experience and to maintain work ethics. Empowered employees can change the organization to a learning one in such a way that it can increase its capabilities continuously and achieve its desired results.

Organizational citizenship behavior is a concept which organizations require to survive in the challenging and competitive environment of the contemporary age. If employees work in their own organization as good organizational citizens, they can both attract more customers to the organization in competition, and change it into an ambience full of trust and motivation.

Current period of human life is accompanied with marvelous transformations and developments. As a subset of human life, organizations must be ready to survive and grow facing such huge transformations and developments; otherwise, they would go out of business. By "readiness" we do not mean equipment and technological readiness; it rather means that organizations must prepare their staff as the main and valuable organizational capitals.

In such an ambience which is often defined by such terms as complexity, chaos, velocity and accelerated changes, employees should be flexible, self-command, entrepreneur, accountable, and seek invention and freedom of action. Organizational structures and managerial styles must change fundamentally in the manner that employees should contribute in decision-making process, working groups should be established, subordinates should be

entrusted with more power and authority, and hierarchical structures should be replaced by network organizational structures .However, organizations are not able to develop effectively without individuals' voluntary propensity to cooperate. The difference between voluntarily cooperation and compulsory cooperation is very important. Compulsorily, the person performs his/her tasks in line with organizational plausible laws, rules and standards and only meets them. Voluntarily cooperation, however, is beyond the tasks and individuals express effort, energy and vision to actualize their own capabilities in the favor of the organization (Tore, 2006, p. 24).

Pedagogical organization (educational organization) is an organization which has a very important and sensitive mission. It needs employees with high voluntary and responsible performance to achieve its objectives in educating and training students.

The present study tries to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and empowerment in Qom pedagogical organization employees?

2. Is there any relationship between empowerment components and organizational citizenship behavior in Qom pedagogical organization employees?

Literature Review

Kanger and Kanengo (1988) believed that the practice of empowering subordinates is an important part of organizational and managerial effectiveness. Imposed pressures on organization by global competition which makes them change and transform, and imposed pressures by new technologies and the change of customers' mindsets demand organizational rapid accountability. Since organizations should be flexible about inter-organizational and intra-organizational pressures and threats, they have to revise and rethink about managerial styles, methods and behaviors. Today, employee empowerment is recognized as one of the strategies to save organization and to increase performance and contribution (Abdullahi, Noah Ebrahim, 2007, pp. 14-21).

Studying empowerment and the modifying impact of organizational citizenship behavior on personal hygienic activities in food industries, Cushman (1984) found that there is a positive relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior. He stated that there is partial relationship between meaning sense and personal initiative, selection sense and personal innovation, and impact sense and organizational support.

Bateson (1991) pointed that expecting bonuses, avoiding punishment, and sensing nervous pressures would cause self-orientated motivation for

individuals to help each other. Therefore, helping other people increases independency and self-esteem sense which are rooted in self-organization and is a kind of incentive expectation. The impact means that individual influences official, operational and strategic outcomes of his/her working unit. Individuals with such feelings are more likely to go beyond their job requirements (Watt and Schaffer, 2003).

Studying the relationship between monitoring the employees and organizational citizenship behavior in service organizations, Nihoff and Moorman (1993) proved that monitoring the employees has a positive impact on understanding the organizational justice while it has a negative impact on organizational citizenship behavior (Cushman, 2000, p. 12).

Nykodym (1994) found that conflict and ambiguity are less seen in empowered employees' roles, since they are able to control their ambience. Additionally, empowered employees have more job satisfaction as well as higher motivation and organizational loyalty.

Padsakoff and McKinsey (1994) explained that organizational citizenship behavior has a positive impact on sale performance in insurance companies (Yoon 2009, p. 422).

Studies by Robinson and Morse (1995) clarified that those employees who violate fair conceptions are less likely to express organizational citizenship behavior (Watt and Schaffer, 2003, p. 410).

Morrison (1996) found that empowered employees have the ability to invent and express organizational citizenship behavior. Empowerment increases self-efficiency feeling among the members of organization and results in organizational citizenship behavior (ibid, p. 410).

Ahearn (2000) investigated the impacts of leadership empowerment behaviors and organizational citizenship behavior on sale team performance in India. His research showed that there is a relationship between leadership empowerment behaviors and employees' involvement in organizational citizenship behavior; that is leadership empowerment behavior influences organizational citizenship behavior and team performance, contribution in decision-making partially influences generosity, trust increase and independence influences supportive behaviors, generosity and civil prestige (Ahearn, 2000, p. 84).

Watt and Schaffer (2003) studied the relationship between mental empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior in Hong Kong Investment Bank and confirmed the assumption that empowerment influences the organizational citizenship behavior. Their research proved that meaningfulness feeling is a major factor for courtesy and respect, competency

is the major factor for conscientiousness and generosity, self-organization is the major factor for philanthropy, and impact is a factor for conscientiousness. In order to explain such findings, it can be said that meaningfulness feeling involves people in works which are compatible with their values, ideas and standards. Therefore, people with high level of meaningfulness feeling can get involved in behaviors which prevent other working problems, since they are committed and have accepted organizational goals. In other words, the impact of competency on conscientiousness means that those people who believe in their own capability to achieve the aims would do everything necessary. Generosity means that employees tend to tolerate less ideal conditions. Self-organization and impact also influence philanthropy and conscientiousness. Self-organization causes learning, interest in activity, and improvement in hard times. Also, more flexibility leads to creativity, invention and self-discipline.

Yagil investigated the relationship between empowerment and burnout and customer satisfaction in service organization employees in both public and private sectors. He showed that empowerment has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and a negative relationship with affective burnout and the feeling of no personal characteristics (Yagil, 2006).

Sandhu and Bhatnagar (2005) studied the relationship between mental empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior among the managers of Indian IT sector and showed that those mangers who feel mental empowerment express organizational citizenship behaviors. In addition, mental empowerment causes organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, the research indicated that the relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior in men is stronger than in women. Partially, there is no mutual relationship between competency and self-efficiency and organizational citizenship behavior variables. However, it turned out that those employees who understand meaningfulness and effectiveness feelings, express organizational citizenship behaviors.

Tore (2006) studied the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational performance. He selected six factors as the main factors of organizational citizenship behavior: conscientiousness, devotion, loyalty, respect, tolerability and contribution. According to Freedman's test, employees' conscientiousness and their tolerability had the highest and lowest ranks in successful and unsuccessful organizations respectively.

Grassley et al. (2008) studied the meaning of empowerment in employees' opinions through interviews. They found out that employees were not familiar with this concept. Although most employees did not know the meaning of empowerment, they were able to explain the concepts in their jobs which were

related to empowerment. For example, decision-making ability in work helped them to feel independence. Furthermore, they tended to be empowered by managers to a certain extent and through different methods.

Kakhaki, Ahmad (2007) studied the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational performance of the customers. Contrary to expectations, the results did not confirm a positive and significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and factors related to customer's loyalty. He mentioned two reasons: the impacts of organizational citizenship behavior on factors related to customer's loyalty are not similar in products and services range. The rate of the interactions between employees and customers in various industries are different. It means that the rate and nature of employees' interaction in some systems have more impacts than others on customer's perception of service quality. The impact of organizational citizenship behavior and customer's loyalty factors on service organization employees is remarkably more important.

Various aspects are mentioned for empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior in management literature. The present research investigated the aspects of empowerment model (Zarei Matin, 2009) along with organizational citizenship behavior concept. The conceptual model of the research is presented in Figure 1.
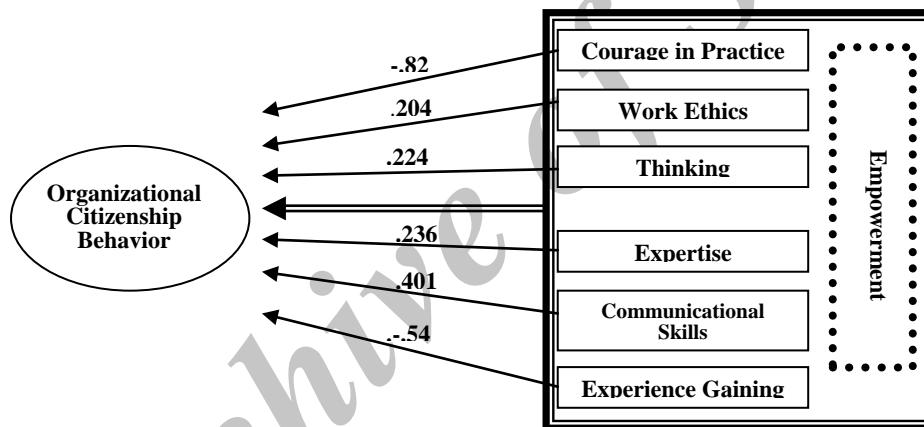

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model of Research

Methodology

The statistical universe includes four hundred and thirty four Qom pedagogical organization employees in Zones 1, 2, 3 and 4. This statistical universe is divided into four groups. Members of each group are

homogenous but there is not complete homogeneity among groups. Ninety nine statistical samples were selected through classified sampling. The empowerment was predictor and organizational citizenship behavior was the criterion variable. To measure the empowerment, the researcher-made questionnaire was designed and used according to relevant literatures. It was a twenty-five-item questionnaire that encompassed six components of the variable. To measure the organizational citizenship behavior the Moorman and Black Lee's questionnaire (1998) was used. This questionnaire includes twenty five items. By skipping similar items and culture-based variables, the questionnaire decreased to nineteen items.

Content validity was confirmed by polling the experts such as university professors and reliability of questionnaires was tested using Chronbach coefficient alpha.

Findings

To determine the relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior, first Spearman's correlation coefficient and then partial correlation tests were used. The results showed that there was no relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior. But the relation of communicative and behavioral skills to organizational citizenship behavior was significant.

By using t-test, appropriateness or inappropriateness of empowerment components and organizational citizenship behavior in Qom pedagogical organization are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Status of empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior components

Components	Test statistics t	Freedom Degree	Significance Level	Average Difference	95% Confidence Interval for Average Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Expertise	11.079	98	0	.75337	.6184	.8883
Courage in Practice	20.659	98	0	1.7576	.9724	1.1791
Work Ethics	40.023	98	0	1.59360	1.51146	1.6726
Communicational Skills	23.706	98	0	1.17677	1.0783	1.2753
Thinking	25.428	98	0	1.27020	1.1711	1.3693
Experience Gaining	17.539	98	0	1.09764	.9734	1.2218
Empowerment	31.038	98	0	1.16122	1.0870	1.2355
Interpersonal Help	22.881	98	0	1.19444	1.0908	1.2980
Individual Innovation	16.329	98	0	1.02694	.9021	1.1517
Honest Support	9.579	98	0	.64444	.5109	.7779
Personal Hardworking	23.822	98	0	1.20303	1.1028	1.3032
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	22.654	98	0	1.01721	.9281	1.1063

According to Table 1, all components are at the 0.000 significance level and less than 0.05, and both higher and lower levels are positive. Therefore, the status of these components is acceptable. To rank the components of empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior, Freedman's test was applied. Table 2 shows the ranking of empowerment components and Table 3 indicates organizational citizenship behavior components.

Table 2: Prioritizing empowerment components

Priority	components	Average Rank
1	Work Ethics	5.98
2	Thinking	4.46
2	Communicational Skills	3.96
2	Experience Gaining	3.8
2	Courage in Practice	3.47
3	Expertise	3.84

Table 3: Ranking of organizational citizenship behavior components

Priority	components	Average rank
1	Personal Hardworking	3.76
1	Interpersonal Help	3.52
2	Personal Innovation	2.99
3	Honest Support	1.9

Discussion and Conclusion

One of the main aims of organizations is to enjoy empowered employees by whom they can achieve their own long-term and short-term objectives and goals. Employee empowerment can have positive impacts on other organizational aspects such as commitment, spirituality, customer satisfaction, organizational culture, organizational citizenship behavior, and finally productivity. All the researches mentioned in this study indicated a positive relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior. Oldham and Hackman (1975) introduced organizational citizenship behavior as a working outcome whose prelude is empowerment. Cushman (1984) showed that meaningfulness sense is related to individual innovation, and effectiveness sense is related to honest support. Nykodym (1994) found that

empowered employees have higher organizational loyalty. Ahearn's researches showed that there is a positive relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior, and that contribution in decision-making influences generosity, and trust increase and independence influences supportive behaviors, generosity and social prestige. Watt and Schaffer (2003) indicated that meaningfulness feeling is a major factor for courtesy and respect, competency is the major factor for conscientiousness and generosity, self-organization is the major factor for philanthropy, and impact is a factor for conscientiousness. Finally, Sandhu and Bhatnagar (2005) stated that those managers who feel mental empowerment show organizational citizenship behavior. In the meantime, the relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior in men is stronger than in women. They showed that there is no mutual relationship between competency and self-efficiency and organizational citizenship behavior. However, those employees who feel meaningfulness and effectiveness show organizational citizenship behavior. The findings of the present study contradicted with the findings of aforementioned studies. Probably that is because in this study the relationship between two variables was examined partially and by controlling six components whose result was not confirmed by partial correlation test and population of this study was different from those studies. However, there are relationships between organizational citizenship behavior and four empowerment aspects such as expertise, work ethics, communicational skills, and thinking, but they are not significant.

On the other hand, correlation coefficient of communicative and behavioral skills and organizational citizenship behavior is greater than other aspects of empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior. Hence, it can be concluded that communicational and behavioral skills are related to organizational citizenship behavior closer than other three aspects. Therefore, it will be necessary for managers to allocate more resources to develop such skills among their staff if they would like to increase organizational citizenship behavior.

So based on the relationship between the communicative skills and the organizational citizenship behavior, it is recommended to top managers and stockholder officials to enhance the communication skills to increase organizational citizenship behavior and eventually to reach the development of organizational performance.

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