



Investigating the factors affecting empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences and Health Services

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Abstract: Nowadays, among organizational resources, "human resources" are considered as the most valuable factor of production and the most important capital of any organization due to the important role that it plays in the growth and development of human communities. In other words, in new era, human in management is viewed as endless capital because the organization's managers have found well that reduction in human capital leads to decreased productivity and production. The present study examines the factors affecting empowerment of managers in Qom University of medical sciences and health services. The method of study is survey- descriptive and analytical and it is considered among applied studies. The population of research included of 200 employees of Qom University of Medical Sciences that 130 of them were selected as sample of study through simple random method and using Morgan table Cochran formula. Data collection tools included psychological empowerment questionnaire of Spritzer and Mishra, human resources empowerment questionnaire of Wotton and effective managers' skills questionnaire that has five point Likert scale. After collecting data and investigating the research hypotheses using Pearson correlation test and exploratory factor analysis test, it was found that components of collaborative management, leadership style, being significant, building trust, competence, reward system, giving independence for occupational groups, providing information, performance evaluation, organizational structure and having clear goals are the most important factors in empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences and Health Services, respectively.

Keywords: empowerment, organizational resources, endless capital, collaborative management, organizational structure

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, among organizational resources, "human resources" are considered as the most valuable factor of production and the most important capital of any organization due to the important role that it plays in the growth and development of human communities. In other words, in new era, human in management is viewed as endless capital because the organization's managers have found well that reduction in human capital leads to decreased productivity and production. Therefore, it should be stated that human capital is considered as a strategic source and the most important competitive advantage creating basic capabilities in any

organization. Therefore, one of the most important organizational planning is human resources planning. According to James Waker, it has been used in recent years as a tool that connects organizational goals and strategies desired human resources goals and planning. In fact, today's organizations are under much pressure under the influence of factors such as increased global competition, rapid changes, the need for quality and after-sales service and limited resources. After much effort, it has been found that if an organization wants to be pioneer in economy, it should use expert, creative, and motivated human resources. Human resources are real wealth of an organization.

There is a direct relationship between human capital and productivity in organizations. More importantly, one of the important concerns for successful firms in the world is collecting capable and educated human capital, which is able to create transformation in organization to which they belong. Therefore, each person will have a sense of ownership to organization and the task they do. The use of human resources potentials is created great advantage for any organization. In the individual productivity, organization makes use of a set of potential abilities and capabilities of individuals in order to advance the organization and turn the potentials and talents actual in line with individual progress and in line with organization. Therefore, the prerequisite to achieve organizational goals is the effective management of these resources. In this regard, growth, progress, prosperity and enhancing the capabilities of employees in recent years have been considered by experts of human resources management under title of empowerment of employees. As organizations confront with organizational challenges and give priority for continuous improvement, more need is felt for support and commitment of employees and making them involved. In general, it can be said that a successful organization is composed of a set of human beings with organizational culture, thought and common goals that by teamwork in the flexible organization system they provide their experiences and knowledge for management. Using of these abilities is considered a great advantage for any organization so that taking advantage of the talents and potential of people and actualizing them will have great impact on the development of the individual and the organization. Therefore, effective management of these valuable resources is necessary to achieve organizational goals. In this regard, growth, prosperity, and improving the capabilities of employees in recent years have been considered by experts of human resources management under the title of empowerment of employees. The concept of "empowerment" matches very closely with strategy of wisely use of human resources to achieve the goals of the organization and the individual. In other words, empowerment of human resources is a management practice which can be used to guide human resources in line with interests of the organization as well as creating a sense of pride in employees, leading to increased employee productivity and optimal use of individual and group capacity and abilities in line with organizational goals. It can be said that empowerment of human resources creates a win-win relationship between individuals and organizations (Rajaeepour, 2008). According to what was mentioned above, this study was conducted to investigate the factors affecting (organizational conditions, self-efficacy resources, psychological factors, management strategies) managers' empowerment in Qom University of Medical Sciences. Before referring to hypotheses of study, we provide a definition of independent variables affecting managers' empowerment.

Organizational conditions: it is a set of conditions, forces, and external factors and components that affect the performance of organization, and organization has less control on them.

Management strategies: strategy is a concept rooted in military area and it was later used in other areas such as economy, commerce, and so on, especially in politics area. Strategy means commanding and leadership. The simple definition of strategy is an operational plan to coordinate and organize actions to achieve the goal.

Self-efficacy resources: self-efficacy was derived from known social cognitive theory of Albert Bandura (1997), which refers to beliefs or judgments of a person to his ability to perform tasks, duties and responsibilities. It is

a constructive capability by which cognitive, social, emotional and behavior skills are organized effectively to achieve the goals of the organization. Self-efficacy through determinants has a major role on human behavior. These include: the successful experience: fostering the experience of personal control is one of the resources to strengthen and create efficiently. Modeling experiences: (modeling): it refers to observing the behavior of others while performing duties as a model. In many activities, people compare their abilities with others. Supporting: it is the third source to strengthen and create self-efficacy, verbal persuasion or messages one perceives them from social environment (Sprietzer, 1996, 488). Motivation: personal efficacy expectations of a person under the impact of emotional and physiological states .Psychological factors: according to definition of Thomas and Velthouse (1990), psychological empowerment is occupational intrinsic motivation with four significant factors of being significant, competence, trust, and effectiveness.

Research hypotheses

- 1- There is significant relationship between organizational conditions and empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences.
- 2- There is significant relationship between self-efficacy resources and empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences.
- 3- There is significant relationship between psychological factors and empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences.
- 4- There is significant relationship between management strategies and empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences.

2- Theoretical principles of research

2-1- Definitions and concepts of empowerment

Empowerment of employees means that people will be able develop all their capabilities and knowledge and use them to achieve personal and organizational goals (Ghouchani et al., 2012). Empowerment refers to the delegation of authority to people enabling them to make decision in lower layers of organization. Empowerment is associated with trust, decision making, motivation, and breaking internal boundaries especially between employees and management. Empowerment means allowing employees to adopt decisions in the process of providing the service that prediction of all of them within practices and regulations is difficult. Empowerment of human resources means creation of a set of necessary capabilities in employees to enable them to create value added in the organization and to play the role entrusted for them along with efficiency and effectiveness (Babaei et al., 2002).

2-2- Capable organizations' characteristics

Capable organizations are those organizations in which a group of people works together and participate in performing the tasks. This type of organization is different from competitive organization where each employee competes with each other in performing the tasks. In capable organizations, team or group work is very important and people while helping each other cooperate with each other in solving the complex problems. In capable organization, employees implement their good inventions and thoughts with excitement and honor (Shahrkany, 2002). In fact, in empowered organization, an environment governs in which employees are the main driving force. In the empowered environment, empowerment culture grows, the exchange of information and views can be done easily, goals are defined clearly, decision boundaries are clear, works are divided, competence flourishes in the form of obtaining experience and teachings, and adequate sources (money, materials, equipment, manpower) are provided for employees.

Senior management supports culture of empowerment adequately and employees are encouraged to take risk. Empowerment creates an environment in which employees can work with more authority and play role in the process of change and improvement, their need for direct supervising decreases and take participate in realizing the organizational goals (Aghajani, 2006).

According to (Ripley and Ripley, 1992, 20), organizational empowerment results are as follows. By increasing motivation, it reduces errors and increases accountability of people in their works.

- it increases the opportunity for growth and innovation
- It helps in continuous improvement of process, product, and services.
- It increases customers' satisfaction by making the employees close to customers to adopt fast and proper decisions.
- It increases loyalty of employees by reducing their work shifting, absence, and disease.
- it enhances the productivity by increasing the self-respect and self-value of employees.
- Autonomous teams are used to control the employees.
- it saves the middle managers from "guardian dog" and gives them opportunity to deal with more valuable affairs such as strategic planning, concentration on business, more market, and customer satisfaction.

- It enhances the lower levels of organization by methods such as reduced waste and creating quality simultaneous with meeting the needs of customer
- It increases the time of senior managers for high level development.
- It reduces excess need for quality guarantee personnel, legal counselors, and accountants
- It keeps and increases the competition

2-3- Empowerment approaches and models

Empowerment is a term used widely nowadays in organizational sciences. However, what are obvious in literature of empowerment are definitions that are not comprehensive and according to Thomas and Velthouse, they focuses more on explaining the set of special methods and its impact on empowerment rather than defining this term (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). What caused experts not to reach an agreement in operational definition of empowerment is different view to empowerment. In fact, they used three different relational, motivational, and cognitive approaches. In this section, we tried to explain each of these approaches. To explain and more familiarity with each of these empowerment approaches, we introduced several model for each of these approaches.

A- Relational approach

This approach is defined a top down approach and it indicates the power of the person in making relationship with others (Sprietzer, 1996). According to this view, empowerment is a process through which one leader and manager tries to divide power among his subordinates (Conger and Kanungo,1988). As power in organizations manifests within legal authorities, empowerment means delegation of authority.

Bowen and Lawler model

In Bowen and Lawler model, access to information plays important role in decision making that causes empowerment. These experts consider empowerment in four organizational components:

- Information on performance of organization
- Reward based on performance of organization
- Power in adopting effective decisions in organization

Results of study show that when empowerment is present, companies distribute power, information, knowledge, and rewards in organization. When one of these elements is lost, empowerment will reduce (Bowen and Lawler, 1995).

B- Motivational approach

Conger and Kanungo believed that power is not the only way for empowerment of employees and it alone cannot lead to empowerment of employees. Therefore, we should look at empowerment from motivational concept angle that Mac kale Land focused on it (Mohammadi, 2002). Therefore, this approach was developed based on the Mac kale Land motivation theory and classifies the basic needs of managers in three groups of need for power, need for success, and need for belonging.

Conger and Kanungo model

From the perspective of these two experts, when employees feel powerless, the need for empowerment will be felt more. Therefore, they believe that empowerment is the process of strengthening the competence among employees of the organization through identifying conditions that make powerlessness in them and an effort to solve them with the help of official actions and making use of non-official techniques, and procurement of information (Conger and Kanungo, 1988).

Therefore, according to their view, strategies and techniques lead to empowerment when associated with fostering the self-efficiency of the employees. Conger and Kanungo in his model considered the empowerment process in five stages, including:

First stage) identifying the conditions which cause powerless in organization

Second stage) management strategies and techniques to solve these problems

Third stage) providing information related to self-efficiency of employees to make them ready

Fourth stage) results of empowerment of employees by providing information

Fifth stage) Outcomes of empowerment behaviors that are considered special signs for organization leaders

C) Cognitive approach

Thomas and Velthouse in their paper entitled cognitive elements of empowerment in 1990 introduced new dimension of power and empowerment. They believe that power has several meanings. In legal term, power means authority and power may be used for explaining the competence (ability and capacity to do work) or adequacy considered by Conger and Kanungo. In addition, power means energy. Therefore, empowerment means increasing the energy (Thomas&Velthouse, 1990).

Spritzer model

Focusing on cognitive approach, Spritzer developed a regulated framework of empowerment in the organization environment. In his model, empowerment is viewed not as a result of process, but as a factor that is affected by environmental, personal, and organizational factors and it can act as effective factor in organization effectiveness.

From this perspective, empowerment has organizational function affected by culture of society, and can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. Spritzer based on the Thomas and Velthouse model examined the relationship between four dimensions of psychological empowerment (being significant, sense of competence, sense of self-determination (right of chose) and empowerment. Then, he examined the relationship between organizational and social factors and cognitive empowerment (Spritzer, 1995). In the present study, according to the theoretical model of Conger and Kanungo (1988), the theoretical framework of this study was assumed so that organizational conditions and self-efficiency resources and management strategies and psychological factors are correlated directly with empowerment and they develop a systematic model.

2-4- Review of literature

Regarding the role of empowerment in organizational commitment of employees, Hedayati (2014) stated that committed employees have better performance and less likely they will leave the organization and they are involved more in organizational civil behaviors easily. In fact, organizational commitment is an attitude on loyalty of employees to organization and it is a continuous process through which members show their interest in organization and its continuously success and efficiency. Thus, managers with strategies such as providing information, delegating authority, partnership management forming teams and giving independence to employees should provide necessary conditions to perform organizational tasks wit needed motivation. According to Talebian and Vafaei (2010) in a study entitled a comprehensive model of human resource empowerment, continuous change in market demands, customer strategies, technology and knowledge should move to learning and learning is done through analysis of human resources and empowerment. Therefore, empowerment is necessary because workers in today's organizations require freedom of action to create creativity and creative teams and changing the customers' demands. Today's organizations require flexibility, agility, and ability of employees. Therefore, planning in line with empowerment of human resources is among the strategic plans and underlying for empowerment of human resources is recognizing the models affecting the organizational decisions. Chung Chan et al. (2010) in a descriptive and cross sectional study entitled the moderating role of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction and organizational commitment of school health nurses showed that organizational empowerment direct and strong impact on organizational commitment through job satisfaction.

3- Methodology

3-1- Method of study

This study is a descriptive and survey in terms of data collection and nature.

3-2- Population and sampling method

Population of study included 200 employees of Qom University of Medical Sciences and Health Services. As the population of study is fixed and considering lack of difference in samples, simple random sampling method was used to determine the sample size and sample of study was obtained 130 people using Morgan Table and Cochran formula.

3-3- Research tool

To evaluate empowerment, Wotton and Cameron empowerment questionnaire (1994) was used. This questionnaire was developed by Wotton and Cameron to assess capability of employees and translated by Uraee Yazdani (2003). Spritzer and Mishra psychological empowerment questionnaire was used for asses the psychological empowerment, and effective managers' skills questionnaire (Moqimi, 2009) was used to measure the empowerment.

These questionnaires included two major parts:

1-Attached letter: in this section, the goal of data collection by questionnaire and the necessity of participant cooperation on the needed data have been expressed. For this purpose, the value of data obtained by questionnaire has been emphasized so that respondent to answer the questions properly.

2- Question questions (items): this section of the questionnaire has two parts:

A) General questions: general questions deal with general demographic information of the respondents. This part has 5 questions.

B) Specialized questions: this part includes 60 questions. In designing this part, we tried to make the questions of the questionnaire understandable as possible. To design this part, 5-point Likert scale was used that is one of the most common measurements.

3-3-1- Tool validity and reliability

All three questionnaires are standard and researcher was ensured of the validity of measurement tool (questionnaire) by referring to views of experts and supervisors and advisors in assessing the research variables.

For more investigation on reliability of the questionnaires used in this study, questionnaires were distributed among 20 samples of study and they were scored and corrected and it was obtained 91.6 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient that is considered acceptable value.

3-4- Data analysis

Questionnaires included two parts. In the first part that included descriptive information of society, we tried to explain the demographic information using tables and Excel software.

In the second part, using SPSS software, data of questionnaire were entered to questionnaire and scaled using five-point Likert scale. Then, items and components of each section were separated and divided to different factors. Then, we examined the hypotheses using explanatory factor analysis and Pearson correlation test.

4- Findings

4-1- Descriptive statistics of general and demographic data

According to analyzing and describing the general data of respondents of 13 questionnaires distributed, most of them (56%) were male. According to information obtained, most of respondents aged between 30 and 40 years, which included 43% of the population. In terms of marital status, 70 % of them were married and rest of them was single. In terms of education level, most of employees had bachelor degree (43%), followed by master degree (25%) and PhD (23%). In terms of organizational position, most of respondents (57%) were expert and 22% of them were responsible expert.

4-2- Investigation of research hypotheses

A) There is relationship between organizational conditions and empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences

H0= lack of relationship

H1: presence of relationship

After Pearson correlation test analyzing in SPSS software, we have:

Table 4-1- Pearson correlation test of organizational conditions and empowerment

Correlations			
organizational conditions	Empowerment of managers		
0.756	1	Pearson Correlation	Empowerment of managers
0.023		Sig. (1-tailed)	
130	130	N	
1	0.756	Pearson Correlation	Organizational conditions
	0.023	Sig. (1-tailed)	
130	130	N	

According to results obtained from table above, Pearson correlation of 0.089, and P-value ≤ 0.05 , it can be concluded that at the 5% level, there is direct, positive, and significant relationship between organizational conditions and empowerment of managers and H0 hypotheses on lack of this relationship is rejected. Therefore, it is can be stated that research subjects agree that components of organizational conditions affect the empowerment of managers.

B) there is significant relationship between self-efficiency resources and empowerment of managers

H0= lack of relationship

H1: presence of relationship

Table 4-2- Pearson correlation test of self-efficiency resources and empowerment

Correlations			
Empowerment of employees	self-efficiency resources		
0.089	1	Pearson Correlation	self-efficiency resources
0.325		Sig. (1-tailed)	
130	130	N	

1	0.089	Pearson Correlation	Empowerment of employees
	0.325	Sig. (1-tailed)	
130	130	N	

According to results obtained from table above, Pearson correlation of 0.089, and P-value ≤ 0.05 , it can be concluded that at the 5% level there is no significant relationship between self-efficiency resources and empowerment of managers and H0 hypotheses on lack of this relationship is confirmed. Therefore, the second hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it can be stated that research subjects agree that components of self-efficiency resources do not affect the empowerment of managers.

C) there is significant relationship between psychological factors and empowerment of managers
H0= lack of relationship

H1: presence of relationship

Table 4-2- Pearson correlation test of psychological factors and empowerment

Correlations			
Empowerment of employees	psychological factors		
0.799	1	Pearson Correlation	psychological factors
0.007		Sig. (1-tailed)	
130	130	N	
1	0.799	Pearson Correlation	Empowerment of employees
	0.007	Sig. (1-tailed)	
130	130	N	

According to results obtained from table above, Pearson correlation of 0.799, and P-value ≤ 0.05 , it can be concluded that at the 5% level there is positive and significant relationship between psychological factors and empowerment of managers and H0 hypothesis on lack of this relationship is rejected. Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, it can be stated that research subjects agree that components of psychological factors affect the empowerment of managers and these factors should be considered.

D) There is significant relationship between management strategies and empowerment of managers in Qom University of Medical Sciences.

H0= lack of relationship

H1: presence of relationship

Table 4-2- Pearson correlation test of management strategies and empowerment

Correlations			
		management strategies	empowerment of managers
management strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	0.815
	Sig. (1-tailed)		0.016
	N	130	130
empowerment of managers	Pearson Correlation	0.815	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.016	
	N	130	130

According to results obtained from table above, Pearson correlation of 0.815, and P-value ≤ 0.05 , it can be concluded that at the 5% level there is positive and significant relationship between management strategies and empowerment of managers and H0 hypothesis on lack of this relationship is rejected. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed. According to the research subjects, managers should pay special attention to components of management strategies that have the greatest impact on empowerment of managers among all other factors studies in this research.

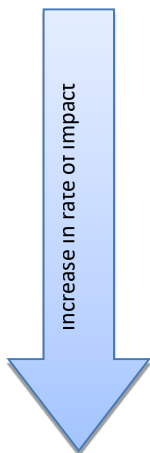
5- Discussion and Conclusion

According to analyzing and describing the general data of respondents of 130 questionnaires distributed, most of them (56%) were male. According to information obtained, most of respondents aged between 30 and 40 years, which included 43% of the population. In terms of marital status, 70 % of them were married and rest of them was single. In terms of education level, most of employees had bachelor degree (43%), followed by master degree (25%) and PhD (23%). Therefore, it could be concluded that most of employees have academic education and in terms of organizational position, most of respondents (57%) were expert and 22% of them were responsible expert. According to the results of demographic descriptive statistics of population of study that most of them are male and young and have bachelor, master, and PhD level of education, they have higher potential for empowerment.

In addition, according to results of examining the hypotheses and prioritizing the impact of hypotheses, the variables of management strategies, psychological factors, and organizational conditions, and self-efficiency resources have respectively the greatest impact on dependent variable that is empowerment.

As value of correlation coefficients and the values obtained for the variable of self-efficiency resources were very small, self-efficiency references variable can be removed from regression equation. Finally, components of our considered variables in terms of impact on dependent variable that empowerment were classified.

Table 5-1- Classification of results of study



Variable	Beta standard coefficients
Modeling	0.002
Emotional arousal	0.006
support	0.008
Link with Results	0.012
delegation of authority	0.014
Having clear goals	0.014
Autonomy	0.026
Effectiveness	0.028
Organizational Structure	0.031
performance evaluation	0.033
To provide information	0.034
Forming job groups	0.036
Providing resources	0.044
Trust	0.046
Giving independence	0.063
Reward system	0.065
Competence	0.066
Building Trust	0.114
Being significant	0.134
Leadership style	0.181

Corporative management	0.184
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Empowerment should be examined from different angles. Organizations that tend to implement the empowerment should be aware of this concept. Most of managers perceive that they are aware of the concept of empowerment, while few of them know this concept and its application. By promoting and developing the culture of empowerment, managers can assign their everyday activities to capable groups. However, the goals should be stated before for employees and required tools of making decision such as information and resources should be provided for them, then, manager can find opportunity to perform most important and basic tasks. We examine the hypotheses. 1) According to correlation coefficient of 0.756, the first hypothesis was confirmed, and components of organizational conditions including rewarding system, providing resources, performance evaluation, and clear goals were the most important factors affecting the managers' empowerment with beta coefficients impact of 0.65, 0.44, .033, and 0.14, respectively. This result is in line with result of study conducted by Mohammadi (2002), Ansari et al. (2011), and Hedayati (2014). 2) The second hypothesis with correlation coefficient of 0.089 was not confirmed, and according to population of this study, components of self-efficiency resources had no significant impact on empowerment of managers, and this result is not consistent with results of study conducted by Mohammadi (2002) and Ansari et al. (2011), and Hedayati (2014).

3) According to correlation coefficient of 0.799, the third hypothesis was confirmed, and components of psychological factors including building trust, competence, and effectiveness were most important factors affecting the managers' empowerment with beta coefficients impact of 0.134, 0.114, .066, and 0.028, respectively. This result is in line with result of study conducted by Mohammadi (2002), Ansari et al. (2011), and Hedayati (2014), Talebian & Vafaei, 2010), and (Jazani et al., 2011).

4) According to correlation coefficient of 0.815, the fourth hypothesis was confirmed, and components of management strategies including collaborative management, giving independence, forming group, and providing information were the most important factors affecting the managers' empowerment with beta coefficients of 0.184, 0.063, 0.36, and 0.034, respectively. This result is in line with result of study conducted by Sprietzer (1996), Wotton and Cameron (2011), and Conger and Kanango (1988).

Finally, considering suggestions derived from research in relation with research variables, it could be stated that:

1) Management strategies: delegating authorities for employees at different levels, giving independence and freedom of action for employees indecision making related to their abilities and talents, giving work and responsibility for employees in organization, increasing self-control, and reducing direct control of employees and removing the redundant supervisions for self-control growth of employees in organization.

2) Organizational conditions: establishment of comprehensive communication system in organization, establishment of a performance evaluation system in organization, clarifying the role and tasks given for employees in the organization, modifying the organizational structure for flexibility and growing the self-confidence, providing resources (material, equipment, enough space) for employees in using what is required to perform task.

3) Psychological factors: according to priority of organizations based on improvement of human resources and education status of them in job areas, in order to increase the employees' participation, organizational commitment, job security, and job satisfaction of them, educational plans should be used to make these factors close to psychological empowerment. In addition, psychological empowerment of employees should increase the job satisfaction of people that in these conditions factors known in job satisfaction (wage, promotion,

leadership, and communication with coworkers) should be examined. For this purpose, managers and planners should regulate their executive plans so that they can guide their employees toward job satisfaction.

4) self-efficacy resources: removing negative emotions such as fear and concern and immortality from employees and creating positive emotions in employees, showing desired behaviors by managers of organization for modeling for example behavior of employees in organization, making employees aware of the rate of their success and transferring them to other employees. It is hoped that findings of this study can help in improving the effective strategies in empowerment of human resources and consequently organizations.

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