

Strategies for Empowering Human Resources in Educational Organizations

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Abstract: This study is conducted with the purpose of investigating and determining strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations on the basis of descriptive method, Survey. The population contains all the school managers in Alborz Province in 2011 that are 2498 and the sample comprises 331 who are selected according to the stratified random sampling on the basis of Morgan's Formula for determining sample size. The tool for gathering data is a questionnaire which is prepared by the researcher himself and its validity is confirmed by 38 experts. Also the questionnaire's reliability is calculated on the basis of Cronbach's alpha and it is 0/77. The obtained results indicates that the most significant strategies for empowering the human resources in educational organizations can be categorized in five aspects which include the management styles in organizations, creating a spirit of competitiveness, creativity and innovation, motivational factors and practical and public training of the human resources in educational organizations.

Key words: Human Resources • Educational Organizations • Empowerment • Self-efficacy • Collectivity • Competition

INTRODUCTION

Life and survival of any organization largely depend on the abilities, skills, awareness and different skills of the human resources, especially the managers in that organization. The more the human resource knowledge, awareness and abilities will be, the better they will be able to promote the efficiency level of that organization. Today with development of technology and wide range of changes, the role and place of education in promoting of managers and employees' abilities is so important that the success of an organization in fulfilling the assigned duties and pre-determined goals is largely dependent on the maturity level and the human resource abilities of that organization. Most of theologians in the field of management and economics believed that among the different types of investments that are performed for promoting the beneficiary and subsequently the social and economical development, empowerment of human resources as an effective element involved in being successful is considered as the most important and profitable factor in development.

It is the powerful and updated human resources that could help to organization in achieving the goals by his knowledge and skills and could help the organization in producing new products and replying to society and client's needs by his creativity and innovation [1].

The empowerment of human forces means the creation of necessary capacities set in employees for enabling them to create increased value in organization and playing their roles and do their responsibility in the organization effectively and practically. In other words, the empowerment includes designing and constructing the organization in a way that not only do the human resources can control themselves but also they can be ready to take more responsibilities. The empowerment includes empowering the employees in applying their detection and analysis power, having insight in performing duties and full participation in making decisions which affect their life. The empowerment in organizational concept includes changes in culture and daring in creating and running an organizational environment [2].

Empowering the human resources is a new method for increasing their productivity through rising the employees' commitment to the organization and organization commitment to the employees. Although the empowerment of the employees leads to delegation of authorities, it requires fundamental changes in the attitudes of employees in relation to the responsibility, commitment and how to perform duties accompanied with preparation of organizational culture. Empowering the employees, in fact, refers to giving responsibility and authority on behalf of managers to the employees and also the participation of employees in making the main decisions, paying attention to employees' viewpoint and respecting those viewpoints. The employees' empowering includes the natural conversion of power to knowledge and intellectuality without any attempt keeping and maintaining the power [3].

Generally the empowering concepts of human resources can be classified as what follows:

The Empowering as Delegation of the Authority: The empowering is a different essentially method for humans to work together. It means that the employees feel that in addition to their own responsibilities, they play a crucial role in improving the organization performances. The organization structure was designed in a way that people know that in order to achieve the desired results and what its awareness is a necessity, they should work not just do the duties and receive the salaries and rewards [4].

The Empowering as Motivation: Motivate people respectfully to their personalities. It means that to give them confidence and entrust them, to give them information and make them participate in making decisions [5].

The Kanger and Kanango [6], consider the empowerment model in as an approach which contains five stages:

First Stage: Identification and conditional omission which lead to psychological powerlessness in employees. The factors which lead to employees' self-efficacy reduction include:

- Organizational Changes, 2- Organizational Structure, 3- rewarding system, 4- the nature of the job.

Second Stage: Utilizing techniques and management strategies. Leadership strategies or enabling management includes:

- Participative management; 2-meaningful and specified goals; 3-feedback system, 4-modeling, 5-rewards based on the competencies and enrichment of job.

Third Stage: The self-efficacy resources, for the empowering factors mentioned in the second stage to be effective, enough information should be provided for the human resources regarding their self-efficacy.

Bandura [7] also has identified the empowerment strategies in this section as what follows:

Enactive Attainment: This resource refers to the successful experience of person directly related to the job. When the subordinates perform the complicated duties or when they have more responsibilities, they have the opportunity for learning self-efficacy. The first successful experience causes the person to feel more competent and to be empowered [4].

Vicarious Experience: Empowering also occurs by observing others' experiences that perform their duties successfully. There we use the occupational trainings and modeling techniques for the empowering.

Verbal Persuasion: Persuasion and verbal feedback and other social persuasion forms by leaders, managers and members of group will lead to empower the subordinate and colleagues.

Emotional Arousal: The expectations of personal competence are under effect of emotional arousal mood of other person. The emotional arousal moods arising from stress, anxiety and depression and ..., could decrease the expectations of self-efficacy. Employees feel competent that when they don't feel the negative emotional arousal. The empowering techniques and strategies that provide the emotional support for subordinates and create a type of trust could be effective in strengthening the self-efficacy belief.

Fourth Stage: The results of subordinates empowering experience lead the person to feel enabled and self-efficient and it enhances the expectation of his effort-operation [4].

Psychological Empowerment: Thomas and Velthouse [8] by completing the Kanger and Kanango [6] motivating pattern, consider the empowerment concept not only for increasing motivation, but also they consider it as an increasing of intrinsic task motivation and present a

complete definition for psychological empowerment as a set of cognitive area of motivation. In addition to self-efficacy, the other three areas of cognitive consists of: Choice (Self-Determination) and Meaning and impact and finally in their pattern, they focus on cognitive processes. Spreitzer [9] by using Thomas and Velthouse psychological pattern [8] as the first experimental and research Study, measured and evaluated the psychological empowerment. He measured, evaluated and recognized the dimensions of psychological empowerment in his studies that were executed in two industrial and insurance American superior companies. These dimensions include: 1-competency 2- Self-Determination (Choice)-3- impact 4-meaning of the job.

Abdollahi [10] in studying the level of experts` ability of Ministry of Science, according to the psychological empowerment dimensions and designing of psychological empowerment pattern of human resource presents the effective factors on psychological empowerment as follows:

- Management strategies, includes: providing information, giving authority, delegation of authority, participative management, giving independence and freedom of action and formation of group.
- Organizational conditions, includes: rewarding system, organizational structure and accessing to the resources.
- Self-efficiency resources , includes: modeling, supporting and emotional arousal.

In a research conducted by Gholifar *et al.* [11], they investigated the effective factors on faculty members` psychological empowerment in Iran`s colleges. The findings of their study, however, are not in line with other studies. The result exhibited that organizational culture and professional skills had a great impact on faculty members` psychological empowerment. In contrast, the findings showed that the management organizational factors have no positive effect on faculty empowerment. However, it was suggested in this study that the faculty members are better get involved in decision making process and education planning in colleges.

Salimian [12] in a research studied and identified the effective factors in empowering the human resources. the obtained results indicates that there is a positive relation between the management styles, motivation, knowledge and experience of managers and also organizational commitment, decentralization in making decisions and the empowerment of human resources.

Mohammadi [13] in a research entitled with “the evaluation of Employees` empowerment methods”, revealed that human resources empowerment methods include: Job Enrichment, delegation of authority, reward based on performance, participative management, suggestions system and formation of work groups and participation in setting goals.

Farehi Bouzanjani [14] in a research entitled with “introduction of Management Abilities Development Pattern Required for State Administrative Managers”, presented one of the dimensions and components of management abilities required for state administrative system managers, scientific abilities which includes the following cases:

Education: Having university education specially related to the job

Experience: Experience and work records, assessment of vital incidents and emergence of its doing.

Educational Courses: The courses held as unofficial and short-term.

Research: Performing scientific and applied research in job.

Compilations: Essays, books and writings that published in different scientific societies.

Being Efficient in English Language: Speaking ability, hearing, correspondence, reading and English Language contents comprehension.

Being efficient in Computer and Internet Network: Using computers and soft wares and also computer networks.

Azizi nejad and Abbaszade [15] in their study attempted to investigate the relationship between knowledge management and empowering managers and it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between them. In their research, they highlighted the role of knowledge as one of the best types of power by which managers can bring some changes in their management. They suggested that variables of knowledge management such as participation in group work, mutual reassurance among working groups, having enough power and freedom to do organizational work can empower managers to access functions and to do the tasks better. Also, for empowering the managers on the basis of increasing capabilities and efficiency, they mentioned the following variables of knowledge management: permanent

promotion of skill and educational level of the staff, sharing knowledge, transferring and using knowledge, documenting knowledge together with coworkers' experiences and perception of information value. Finally, to empower the managers in order to create new ideas, participation in decision making process of the organization and administration of confirmed decisions, creating new ideas and using innovations and experiences of those retired are mentioned as the variables of the knowledge management.

In a research by Nooritajer and mahfozpour [16] the relationship between the employees' participation level in decision making, which is seen as one of the empowering strategies and their job satisfaction and productivity was analyzed and it was concluded that when managers and leaders offer opportunities to their staff to take part in decision making process, subsequently the level of productivity and their satisfaction with their job will be increased.

Morales [17] in his doctorate thesis entitled "Planning of Society Empowerment", achieved the results that we should have for empowering of human resources by using instruments of empowerment plan (research: Education, mobilization of forces, organizing, supporting, replying and presenting services (Consultation).

In the study conducted by Abtahi [18], the role of job empowerment in vocational curriculums for trained mentally retarded students in Iran was investigated. It analyzed the relationship between the curriculum elements (objectives, content, time and evaluation process) and elements of job empowerment skills and how these job empowerment elements are affected by the curriculum elements. The obtained results in this study revealed that there is a great difference between what the current curriculum have acquired and what it was to acquire. In contrast to education specialists and curriculum planning experts who believed that the curriculum has a high capacity to improve the job empowerment skills, teachers and employers believed that it failed to meet the goals for empowering the trainable mentally retarded students. As a result, it is necessary for the educational system to design a curriculum which can fully meet the goals of empowering students for the future. Also they should take into consideration different elements and disabilities of the trainable mentally retarded students in their planning so that these students can gain the required job skills to lead an independent or at least dependent life for themselves.

Fox. J [19] in research with the title "empowerment of employees and presentation of training model" examined the empowerment of the employees and provided a pattern for performing it. In this study, the empowerment defined as a process by means of which the empowerment culture develops, information will be shared, competencies will be developed and the resources and support are provided.

In a research by Ghorbani [20], they studied the relationship between the dimensions of empowerment and improving the creativity and they found that there is a positive relationship between the empowerment dimensions and creativity increase which subsequently make the managers and directors of organizations should try to empower their employees more so that in turn their creativity and innovation will be improved. It was discussed that by empowering the employees the performance will be increased which is possible by participative leadership, nurturing the competencies such as critical thinking, mutual learning, flexible decision making and etc, removing the barriers to self esteem, making employees feel meaningful, making them feel confident and secured about their job, creating a mutual confidence among managers and employees and finally making the employees feel efficient. All the strategies mentioned for empowering the employees increase their creativity and innovation in the organization.

However, In another study conducted by Hamzah and *et al.* [21], which was investigating what inhibits the teachers creativity and how they can maintain teachers creativity at schools, it was discussed that empowerment which can be both sharing and delegation of power to subordinates in organizations contains the key elements of knowledge, discretion, meaning and reward and it was mentioned that what only happens at schools is the delegation which in turn decreases the teachers creativity and innovation.

Lee [22] in his studies suggested the following strategies for improvement of employees' performances for their empowering:

- Performance of different sections of human resources Management.
- Educating of managers and empowering skills and creation of this kind of perceptions in them.
- Editing of plans for creation of self-esteem includes, increasing of sense of individualism, vicarious for creation of pride and honor in job, making them feel good, fairly and justly sense at work environment and making them control by themselves.

- New efforts for a renewed job design.
- Establishing suitable reward systems.
- Steps for making the managerial environment political
- Comprehensive Communication with all employees for achieving to “Dream of a “ Western” Quality of work Life.

Furthermore, Jahanian [23], [24] in his study with different sample analyzed the different aspects of empowering education managers and he concluded that they can be categorized in three approaches as what follows:

- Interactional Approach which contains the aspects of developing collectivity, Information technology, management strategies and providing common insights and clarification.
- Motivational Approach which consists of self-management, patterning, commitment and interactions of human resources.
- Cognitive and meta-cognitive approach which contains meta-cognitive and cognitive aspect, self-efficacy and appreciation.

Smith and Greyling [25] in their study tried to investigate the perceptions of educational managers of the different aspects of empowerment which may include the empowerment of managers themselves, empowerment of teachers and staff and empowerment of learners and they suggested that empowerment should filter through the school system: from the department of education down to education managers, teachers, staff and learners and in this long way the role of managers are fully highlighted who will undergo a profound shift in their roles so that they can nicely apply the empowerment strategies in their educational centers.

Hobbs [26] in a research presented the 6-dementions of empowerment of employees includes: educating, guiding, consulting, supporting, participating and designing.

Davis & Newstorm [27] deduced in a research that was done in the field of Empowerment of the employees, that encouraging employees to learn new contents, participation of employees in educational courses and development of professional knowledge and skills lead to the empowerment of human resources.

In another research by Alkahtani and *et al.* [28], it was investigated that there is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction amongst the managers in the Malaysian organizations and it was shown that employee empowerment is positively correlated with the job satisfaction. It was shown that employees will be got empowered by getting involved in

the process of decision-making which in turn which result in their job satisfaction. In this study, firstly, it was recommended that there should be greater empowerment by everyone in the organization which includes company involvement, continuous learning and participative leadership. Second, the organizations should establish new goals and directions for the company in order to highlight the role of the leaders in enhancing empowerment by directing the subordinates toward achieving those goals and finally it was suggested that the leaders should trust their employees and they should have sufficient knowledge and skills to handle the process.

In a study which was conducted in a hospital Nasiripour *et al.* [29] were to investigate the strategies for empowering the patients there by nurses. Although the context and the human resources for empowering were different, the strategies applied for empowering the patients as human resources here not all but some of them were the same as the strategies used in other organizations for employee empowerment. The results of this study listed the strategies useful for empowering the patients among which providing the required sources for them and training them how to take care of themselves and participate in self-care are highlighted. Comparing the results of this study with others can reveal that in every context with different conditions, training and participation can be seen as two important strategies of empowerment.

Methodology: The present study is carried out with the aim of investigating and determining strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations on the basis of descriptive method, Survey. The population contains all the school managers in Alborz Province in 2011 that are 2498 and the sample comprises 331 who are selected according to the stratified random sampling on the basis of Morgan's Formula for determining sample size. The tool for gathering data is a questionnaire which the researcher has prepared on the basis of Alvani's Pattern for productivity of human resources [30]. Its validity is analyzed and confirmed by 38 experts and its reliability is estimated by Cronbach's alpha which is 0/77. This questionnaire contains 42 five-choice questions according to Likert's Scale and it includes five aspects of management styles (Questions 1-6), Competitiveness (Questions 7-14), creativity and innovation (Questions 15-26), motivational factors (Questions 27-38) and training human resources (Questions 39-42). In order to determine the strategies for empowering the human resources in educational organizations, the factor loading analysis test is applied.

RESULTS

In order to identify the strategies of human resource empowerment in educational organizations, the discovering factor loading analysis test is used and the results are as what follows:

- *What are empowerment strategies for human resources in educational organizations with respect to management styles?*

The results of factor analyses in Table (1) show that methods and strategies for empowering the human resources in educational organizations with respect to management styles comprises determining the Human resources' responsibilities, the Organization's Emphasis on preparing the instructions, paying attentions to works compared with the amount of staff attention, issuing instructions to staff with the necessary justification, involving employees in the process of decision-making and employees 'doing the works according to the their own discretions.

- *What are empowerment strategies for human resources in educational organizations with respect to competitiveness?*

The results of factor analyses in Table (2) indicates that that methods and strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations with respect to Competitiveness contains resistance to change, interactions with the environment inside and outside, organization's efforts to promote human resource jobs, staff sensitivity to the equipments of the industry, assessing the performance of the competitors, flexibility in order to win the competition, efforts to improve performance, enjoying the fight and trying to prove the superiority.

- *What are empowerment strategies for human resources in educational organizations with respect to creativity and innovation.*

The results of factor analyses in Table (3) demonstrates that methods and strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations with respect to creativity and innovation includes presenting new ideas and solutions, the establishment of proposing and suggestions system in educational organizations, welcoming new ideas and supporting ideas of theorists, being Non-resistant against creative movements, allocating specific budgets for innovation projects, strengthening the Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit and using entrepreneurial managers, efforts to institutionalize creativity in educational organizations, benchmarking of creativity and innovation in other organizations, developing creativity and innovation in service offering, developing creativity and innovation processes, creativity in attracting customers, holding creativity education courses

Table 1: The Results of the factor Loading Test with respect to the First Question

Row	Empowerment Strategies of Human Resources	Factor Loading rate
1	Determining the Human resources' responsibilities	785/0
2	The Organization's Emphasis on preparing the instructions	771/0
3	Paying attention to works compared with the amount of staff attention	760/0
4	Issuing instructions to staff with the necessary justification	689/0
5	Involving employees in the process of decision-making	677/0
6	Employees 'doing the works according to the their own discretions	657/0

Table 2: The Results of the factor Loading Test with respect to the Second Question

Row	Empowerment Strategies of Human Resources	Factor Loading rate
1	Resistance to change	725/0
2	Interactions with the environment inside and outside	720/0
3	Organization's efforts to promote human resource jobs	715/0
4	Staff sensitivity to the equipments of the industry	706/0
5	Assessing the performance of the competitors	685/0
6	Flexibility in order to win the competition	671/0
7	Efforts to improve performance	665/0
8	Enjoying the fight and trying to prove the superiority	647/0

Table 3: The Results of the factor Loading Test with respect to the Third Question

Row	Empowerment Strategies of Human Resources	Factor Loading rate
1	Presenting new ideas and solutions	702/0
2	The establishment of proposing and suggestions system in educational organizations	700/0
3	Welcoming new ideas and supporting ideas of theorists	698/0
4	Being Non-resistant against creative movements	692/0
5	Allocating specific budgets for innovation projects	687/0
6	Strengthening the Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit and using entrepreneurial managers	675/0
7	Efforts to institutionalize creativity in educational organizations	672/0
8	Benchmarking of creativity and innovation in other organizations	669/0
9	Developing creativity and innovation in service offering	665/0
10	Developing creativity and innovation processes	661/0
11	Creativity in attracting customers	658/0
12	Holding creativity education courses	653/0

being Non-resistant against creative movements, allocating specific budgets for innovation projects, strengthening the Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit and using entrepreneurial managers, efforts to institutionalize creativity in educational organizations, benchmarking of creativity and innovation in other organizations, developing creativity and innovation in service offering, developing creativity and innovation processes, creativity in attracting customers, holding creativity education courses.

- *What are empowerment strategies for human resources in educational organizations with respect to motivational factors?*

The results of factor analyses in Table (4) demonstrates that methods and strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations with respect to motivational factors consist of fairing wages and benefits of human resources, paying according to degrees and experiences, providing facilities for employees, appreciating and thanking the employees among the other colleagues, providing information to individuals and notifying employees, employees' satisfaction of being a member of the organization, providing career development opportunities, increasing the employee's reliance on the organization for their personal life, paying attention to the employees' families by the organization, member participation in decision making, applying job rotation and career development techniques, strengthening a sense of self- efficacy in human resources.

- *What are empowerment strategies for human resources in educational organizations with respect to public and practical training of the human resources?*

The results of factor analyses in Table (5) demonstrates that methods and strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations with respect to public and practical training of the human resources which includes holding courses and research seminars, knowledge and education being in accordance with the related jobs, development of general and specialized studies of human resources related to their jobs, using computer technology and the Internet.

Table 4: The Results of the factor Loading Test with respect to the Fourth Question

Row	Empowerment Strategies of Human Resources	Factor Loading rate
1	Fairing wages and benefits of human resources	698/0
2	Paying according to degrees and experiences	694/0
3	Providing facilities for employees	691/0
4	Appreciating and thanking the employees among the other colleagues	687/0
5	Providing information to individuals and notifying employees	687/0
6	Employees' satisfaction of being a member of the organization	686/0
7	Providing career development opportunities	680/0
8	Increasing the employee's reliance on the organization for their personal life	678/0
9	Paying attention to the employees' families by the organization	670/0
10	Member participation in decision making	668/0
11	Applying Job rotation and career development techniques	665/0
12	Strengthening a sense of self- efficacy in human resources	662/0

Table 5: The Results of the factor Loading Test with respect to the Fifth Question

Row	Empowerment Strategies of Human Resources	Factor Loading rate
1	Holding courses and research seminars	797/0
2	Knowledge and education being in accordance with the related jobs	743/0
3	Development of general and specialized studies of human resources related to their jobs	741/0
4	Using computer technology and the Internet	735/0

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study is conducted with the aim of investigating and determining the strategies for empowering the human resources in educational organizations. The obtained results indicate that strategies of empowering human resources in educational organizations can be classified in five aspects of management styles in organizations which contains 6 components, creating a spirit of competitiveness in educational organizations which includes 8 components, creativity and innovation with 12 components, motivational factors with 12 components and public and practical training of human resources with 4 components.

The results of this study echoes the results of the studies conducted by Abdollahi [10] who emphasized the management strategies, organizational conditions and self-efficacy resources as the empowerment factors. It also goes on the same track with the studies conducted by Jahanian [23, 24] who also referred to three approaches in empowering strategies for education managers.

Also, the findings are in line with the study by Gholifar *et al.* [11] who indicated that professional skills and organizational culture are considered as effective factors for psychological empowerment of human resources in educational organizations. However, in their study, they revealed that management organization does not have a positive effect on psychological empowerment of faculty members. Of course, it was also discussed that participating the faculty members in the process of decision making and planning the educational programs can be seen as a method of empowerment.

Furthermore, the findings of this study comes in line with the results obtained by Salimian [12] who showed that there is a positive relationship between the management styles, motivation, knowledge and experience of managers and also organizational commitment, decentralization in making decisions and the empowerment of human resources. In this study, the role of manager and his knowledge experiences is highlighted in empowering the human resources.

In addition, this study confirms the results of the research conducted by Mohammadi [13] who investigated the empowerment strategies and named Job Enrichment, delegation of authority, reward based on performance, participative management, suggestions system and formation of work groups and participation in setting goals as the most important empowering strategies of human resources.

The results in this study is also in line with the study done by Davis & Newstorm [24] who exhibited that encouraging employees to learn new contents, participation of employees in educational courses and development of professional knowledge and skills lead to the empowerment of human resources.

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