

The effect of psychological empowerment on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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Nowadays, empowerment is considered as a useful tool for employees' qualitative enhancement or growth and as one of basic factors in increasing employees' productivity. This descriptive study aimed to investigate the effect of psychological empowerment on nurses' productivity in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas. The statistical population of this research included 508 nurses of private hospitals in Bandar Abbas, which finally 217 of those nurses were selected as statistical sample through using stratified random sampling and Cochran's sample size formula. To collect data, two validated questionnaires including Spreitzer Standard Questionnaire (1995) and Hersey-Goldsmith Questionnaire (1980) were used to measure psychological empowerment and productivity, respectively. The results revealed that there is a significant positive correlation between competency, confidence, impact, and autonomy and nurses' productivity and there is a reversed significant relationship between significance and productivity.

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In the present competitive world, productivity as a philosophy of life and a viewpoint based on improvement strategy is considered as the most common and important objective of any organization. Productivity like a chain contains the activities of all parts of society. In fact, the main objective of managers in an organization is the effective use of various resources and facilities such as labor force, capital, materials, energy, and information. In all countries, productivity and effective use of production factors such as goods and services have national priority and all societies believe that they cannot survive without productivity. Since

productivity is the most valuable human force, ignoring this factor will not only reduce the organizational efficiency but also increase waste and losses and create dissatisfaction in the human force (Vaziri, Mansouri, & Adiban, 2010).

The Literature Review

The developments of the present era have challenged the previous methods or approaches of human resource management and have prepared the ground for expressing modern attitudes towards human resources. The optimum use of human resources is the result of these revolutions. Today, skilled and powerful human force is considered as the most important factor in the dynamism of societies and organizations. Therefore, organizations must prepare, reserve, and manage powerful and efficient human resources in order to develop their activities. In fact, smart managers know that if they invest in developing and promoting human resources, they will virtually guarantee the competitive success, efficiency, and superiority of their organization.

Due to great developments, the most effective way of gaining a competitive advantage in the present conditions is empowerment of organizations' human resources (Mohammadi, 2009).

Since empowerment is one of the approaches that in the recent decades has led to positive developmental effects on the employees' activities, in today's changing world, the organizations must properly utilize their human resources, thus empowering employees can provide a balance within the organizations. In fact, empowerment as a tool sets its personal goals into line with the organizational goals, discovers potential capacities in humans, provides an array of benefits for organization, and fosters a sense of ownership and honor among employees. There are many factors which can affect on employees' productivity and psychological empowerment is one of these factors. Psychological empowerment as internal motivational construct is defined as individuals' internal power and releasing forces which provide the grounds and create opportunities for discovering employees' talents, abilities, and competencies. Moreover, psychological empowerment helps employees have a positive impact of their job satisfaction. Training motivated managers allows the organizations to react properly dealing with the dynamism of the competitive environment (Abdollahi & Naveh Ebrahim, 2007). Since empowerment, wide environmental changes, and flexibility are essential for the survival of every organization, giving employees the freedom is one of the fundamental strategies which increase the productivity for surviving today's organizations (Goudarzi & Gaminian, 2002).

Internal and external motivations encourage the organizations to empower their employees. *Internal motivation* is one of the most important keys to success and achieves productivity and employees' empowerment is one of the most effective techniques for increasing employees' productivity in order to use their individual and collective capacities and abilities in line with organizational objectives (Hodavand & Sadeghian, 2007). Productivity as a dynamic term which is always exposed to the development guarantees the survival of organizations in the current competitive world, prepares the ground for using all facilities and equipments properly within the organizations, and finally discovers the potential abilities, talents, and facilities of the organization.

Today, productivity and identifying its contributing factors are considered as management concerns at the micro and macro levels in the products and services sections. In fact, most experts believe that increasing productivity is one of the most important goals in any organization (Paktinat & Fathizadeh, 2008). Employees' team synergy plays a fundamental role in increasing the productivity of the organization and improving and maintaining the quality of services and products (Karroubi & Matani, 2009). The survival of countries which human resources are considered as their sole resource depends greatly to their maximum capacities to produce output in exchange for per unit of input. This paper tried to increase the nurses' productivity in hospitals and clinics through surveying the psychological empowerment in nursing employees. To this end, the managers can utilize their employees' individual and collective capacities and abilities in line with their organizational goals. Moreover, authorities will be aware of the current situation of empowerment and its effect on nurses' productivity and find solutions for overcoming weaknesses and reinforcing strengths through making conscious decisions. The present study aimed to investigate the effect of psychological empowerment on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas. An overview of this study is presented in the conceptual framework given in Figure 1. The conceptual framework formed based on some theoretical relationships between a number of factors which are considered important for this study.

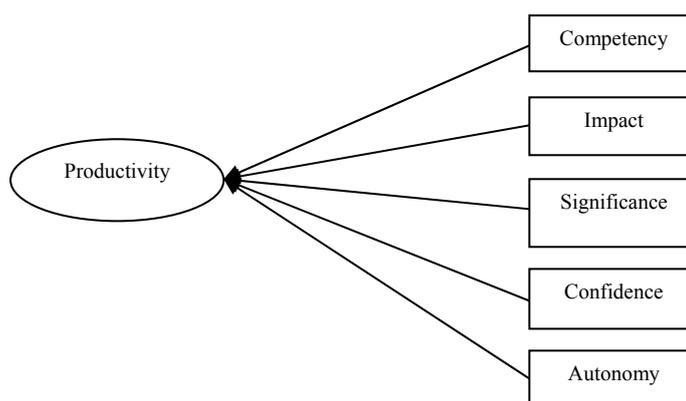


Figure 1. The conceptual model of the research based on Spreitzer's model (1992)

Research Hypothesis

In line with the discussion above, the following main research hypothesis and sub-hypotheses were formulated:

H₀₁: Psychological empowerment has a significant positive effect on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas.

H_{01a}: Competency has a significant positive effect on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas.

H_{01b}: Impact has a significant positive effect on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas.

H_{01c}: Significance has a significant positive effect on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas.

H_{01d}: Autonomy has a significant positive effect on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas.

H_{01e}: Confidence has a significant positive effect on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas.

Method

Participants

The initial population of this study was consisted of 508 nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas. To estimate the sample size, Cochran's sampling formula has been conducted. Therefore, 217 nurses who were working in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas were selected as statistical population of this study through using stratified random sampling and Cochran's sampling formula. Then this selected sample was categorized into different groups according to their key in-group features. The sub-groups of present study were homogenous based on their geographical location which divided into four sub-groups of Social Security hospital, Khatam-Ol-Anbia Hospital, Emam Reza Hospital, and Saheb-Al-Zaman Hospital. Table 1 depicts the sub-groups' sizes within the total population.

Table 1
The Size of Sub-Groups in the Statistical Population

Names of Hospitals	Population	Sample Size
Social Security	265	112
Khatam-Ol-Anbia	23	10
Emam Reza	90	39
Saheb-Al-Zaman	130	56
Total	508	217

Instrument

In order to collect the data and to test the hypotheses of the study, two validated questionnaires including Spreitzer Standard Questionnaire (1995) and Hersey-Goldsmith Questionnaire (1980) were distributed among participants to measure psychological empowerment and productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas. The participants were instructed to rate themselves using a five point Likert-Scale where responses range from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Design

Based on the available literature about empowerment and studying the empowerment models such as Bowen and Lawler (1992), Gao (2001), Laverak (2003), Mc Lagan and Nel (1997), Noller (1991), Robbins, Crino, and Frenal (2002), competency, impact, significance, confidence, and autonomy were considered as independent variables and productivity was considered as the dependent variable.

Results

Before testing the hypotheses, the validity of the structure by means of confirmatory factor analysis test was tested. According to goodness of fit in confirmatory analysis, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was less than 8 per cent, the index of $\frac{\chi^2}{df}$ was less

than 3 per cent, and GFH, CFL, IFI, and NNFI were higher than 90 per cent. The results showed that the *t*-value of each variable is greater than 1.96 and smaller than -1.96; therefore, the model was considered as a good fitting one. Table 2 presents the abbreviations of variables as a guide.

Table 2
A Guide to the Abbreviations of Variables

Index	Question	Abbreviation
Significance	1-4	Significance
Competency	5-8	Competency
Autonomy	9-12	Autonomy
Confidence	13-16	Confidence
Impact	17-20	Impact
Productivity	21-29	productivity

Table 3 and Table 4 indicate the dimensions of empowerment in the standard and significance modes and their factor loadings. The findings revealed that all hypotheses of the study were confirmed.

Table 3
The Measuring Model of Empowerment Dimensions by Means of Factor Analysis in the Standard Mode

Dimensions	Questions	Factor loading	Results (Factor Loading > 0.3)
Significance	Q1	0.83	Accepted
	Q2	0.81	Accepted
	Q3	0.65	Accepted
	Q4	0.64	Accepted
Competency	Q5	0.72	Accepted
	Q6	0.78	Accepted
	Q7	0.72	Accepted
	Q8	0.72	Accepted
autonomy	Q9	0.62	Accepted
	Q10	0.82	Accepted
	Q11	0.78	Accepted
	Q12	0.65	Accepted
Confidence	Q13	0.80	Accepted
	Q14	0.67	Accepted
	Q15	0.68	Accepted
	Q16	0.34	Accepted
Impact	Q17	0.67	Accepted
	Q18	0.55	Accepted
	Q19	0.64	Accepted
	Q20	0.68	Accepted

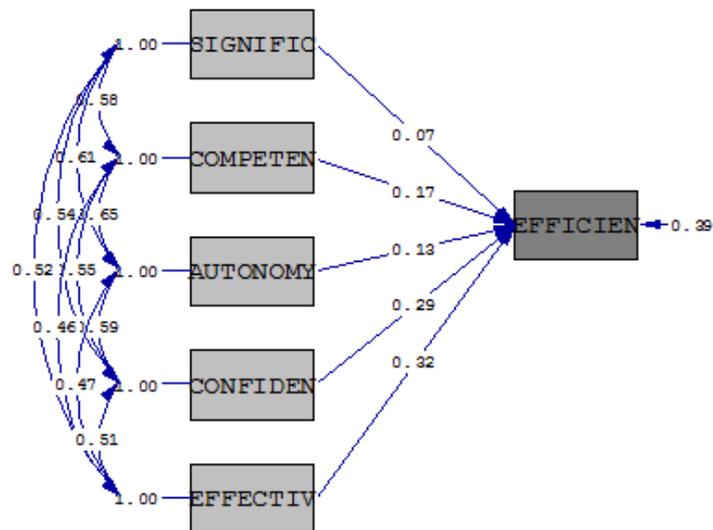
RMSEA= 0.07/ P-Value= 0.03916/ df= 2/ Chi-Square= 1.71

Table 4
The Measuring Model of Empowerment Dimensions by Means of Factor Analysis in the Significance Mode

Dimensions	Questions	Factor Loading	Results (Factor Loading > 0.3)
Significance	Q1	10.37	Accepted
	Q2	10.14	Accepted
	Q3	7.63	Accepted
	Q4	7.45	Accepted
Competency	Q5	8.60	Accepted
	Q6	9.13	Accepted
	Q7	9.67	Accepted
	Q8	8.72	Accepted
autonomy	Q9	7.16	Accepted
	Q10	10.14	Accepted
	Q11	9.57	Accepted
	Q12	7.58	Accepted
Confidence	Q13	8.80	Accepted
	Q14	7.35	Accepted
	Q15	7.49	Accepted
	Q16	3.55	Accepted
Impact	Q17	7.07	Accepted
	Q18	5.67	Accepted
	Q19	6.74	Accepted
	Q20	7.19	Accepted

RMSEA= 0.07/ P-Value= 0.03916/ df= 2/ Chi-Square= 1.71

Figure 2 and Figure 3 illustrate the results of testing hypotheses through using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).



Chi-Square=7.51, df=4, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.067

Figure 2. Measuring the general model and the results of hypotheses in the standard mode

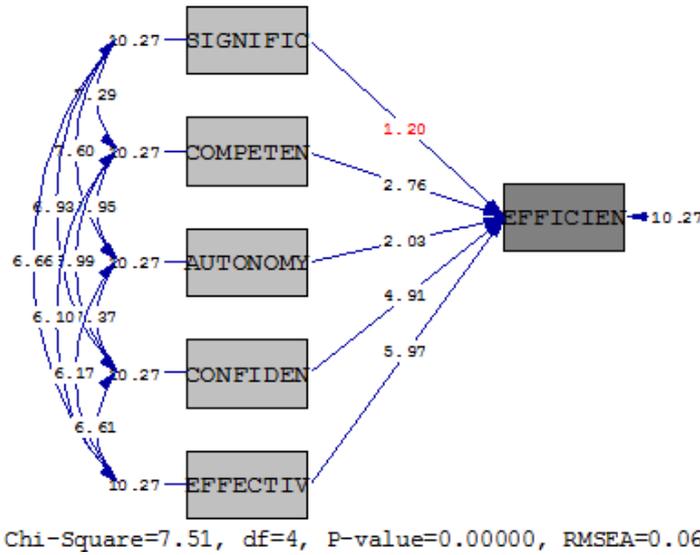


Figure 3. Measuring the general model and the results of hypotheses in the significance mode

In order to study the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables and confirm the whole model, we have used path analysis. Path analysis has been conducted through LISREL 8.5 Software. The results of this software indicate that the ratio of Chi-square to degree of freedom (df) is less than three and other fit indices confirm the fitness of the model. Table 5 summarizes the fitting indices of the conceptual model.

Table 5
The Fitting Indices of the Conceptual Model

	X ² /Df	RMSEA	RMR	GFI	CFI	NNFI	IFI
Indices of the Research	1.87	0.067	0.039	0.99	0.95	0.94	0.96
Standard Indices	<3.00	<0.08	<0.05	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90

According to Table 6, if the value of significance coefficient is higher than 1.96, the hypothesis will be confirmed; otherwise, it will be rejected.

Table 6
The Results of the Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Standard	Significance	Result
Significance has a significant effect on productivity.	0.07	1.20	rejected
Competency has a significant effect on productivity.	0.17	2.76	confirmed
Autonomy has a significant effect on productivity.	0.13	2.03	confirmed
Confidence has a significant effect on productivity.	0.29	4.91	confirmed
Impact has a significant effect on productivity.	0.32	5.97	confirmed

Discussion and Conclusion

Today, human resources are considered as the most valuable assets of an organization. In fact, investment and placing a value on these assets greatly increase the competitive ability of the organization. In this research, empowerment was considered as an internal mechanism to increase organizational productivity. The results of variance-covariance matrix estimation through applying Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) between empowerment and

productivity indicate that among five dimensions of empowerment only significance did not have significant impact on the productivity of nurses in private hospitals of Bandar Abbas. The rejection of this hypothesis showed that the disproportion between work requirements, values, and beliefs within the person's ideology. In fact, the person might think that the illustrated organizational and occupational goals were not in line with his/her value system. The findings of this research were in line with the results of previous study which was conducted by Chang, Shih, and Lin (2010). However, the findings are not in line with the results of research conducted by Beyginia, Sardari, and Najjari Nejad (2010).

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