

Investigating important factors on empowering human resources: A case study of food industry

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ABSTRACT

Today, human resources are considered as the most precious assets for any organization and it is important to empower them as much as possible to create competitive advantage and to cope with rapid changes in organizations. In this paper, we present an empirical study on one of food industries in province of Qom, Iran to determine important factors influencing empowering human resources. The proposed study uses factor analysis by choosing a sample of 380 people. Cronbach alpha is calculated as 0.88, which is well above the minimum acceptable limit of 0.7 and validates the overall questionnaire. Based on the results of this survey, there are three important factors including job related, personal related and organizational related issues. The study also uses Pearson correlation as well as Freedman tests to rank the factors and the results demonstrate that organizational factor plays the most important role in empowering human resources followed by job related factors and personal factors.

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1. Introduction

Today, human resources are considered as the most precious assets for any organization and it is important to empower them as much as possible to create competitive advantage and to cope with rapid changes in organizations (Jaffe & Scott, 1992; Bowen & Lawler, 1992; Kinlaw, 1995; Menon, 1995; Gary et al., 1998). There are literally different studies associated with the effects of various factors influencing empowering human resources. Azad and Sadeghi (2012) collected the necessary information from 200 employees who worked for custom organization in Iran using factor analysis and the results of factor analysis indicated that there were four factors impacting organizational commitments. The first factor was associated with cultural factor, the second issue was related to human resource based factors while the third factor indicated the behavior based factors and finally empowering based factors were the last item. They have also used structural equation modeling and the results demonstrated that the third factor, behavior based components, was the most important

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factor followed by the second factor, human resource factor. In addition, the third important factor was cultural issues followed by empowering factors.

Abdoli et al. (2012) presented an empirical investigation to detect important factors impacting the success of entrepreneurs who were active in food industry in Tehran, Iran. The proposed study selected a sample of 174 people out of 318 entrepreneurs who were involved in this industry and distributed a questionnaire, which consisted of two groups of questions among them. The first group of questions was associated with personal characteristics of the survey people and the second group of questions were associated with different financial, infrastructure and supply chain management categories. The study defined entrepreneurs' mental desirability of success in terms of 15 different questions and asked them to provide their insights in terms of five Likert based responses. The results of questions were analyzed using Pearson correlation test and the preliminary results indicated that, among personal characteristics, education and age played important roles on the success of a business plan. The other observation was that the easier entrepreneurs could get loans and financial support, the higher abilities to absorb new customers and the higher chance of success for absorbing new financial resources. Distributions of sales, compared with competing products as well as distribution of after sales service for customers were negatively associated with infrastructures. The rate of success in using new technologies and supply chain management were correlated, which means the better supply chain, the better achievement to information technology.

Bahramzadeh and Khosroabadi (2012) explained the importance of knowledge sharing as an important role on helping organizations reach their goals, it facilitates distribution of overall awareness among workers and it can create better environment for adding more value. They presented an empirical study in one of privately held universities located in city of Bojnourd, Iran. The proposed study selected a sample size 145 out of 236 people from both regular employees and university professors and they used various tests such as Pearson correlation test to investigate the results. The proposed model of the paper confirmed that there was a positive and meaningful relationship between these two components when the level of significance was set to five percent. The results of this survey also revealed that while ethical commitment and normative played important role on knowledge sharing, continuity had no significant effect on knowledge sharing within organization. The other observation was that while gender and age had no impact on knowledge sharing, higher educational background was an important factor on knowledge sharing.

Khodaei Valahzaghari et al. (2012) explained that one of the essential functions of human resource management is to take care of skilled employees. The process is classified into two categories. The first category incorporates various activities such as having health and safety in working centers, performing healthy and sport programs and some other similar activities to save and improve employees' physical characteristics. The second group incorporates other important factors called benefit packages, which includes good health insurance and retiring plans. Whenever a firm provides good benefit package and supporting programs, there is a better chance for job satisfaction among employee. Khodaei Valahzaghari et al. (2012) considered the impacts of related services to support employee to reach job satisfaction and employee activities in one of Iranian banks called Mellat bank is investigated using 276 random samples. The results demonstrated that employees were relatively satisfied from the benefit package of the bank and they were relatively happy on working for such organization. Mirabizadeh and Gheitasi (2012) investigated the organizational citizenship behavior as the outcome of organizational commitment. There were four hypotheses associated with this survey and the results indicated that educational opportunities, work-life policy, empowerment activities had strong positive relationship on organizational commitment and organizational commitment also influenced organizational citizenship behavior, accordingly.

In this paper, we present an empirical study on one of food industries in province of Qom, Iran to determine important factors influencing empowering human resources.

2. The proposed study

The proposed study of this paper uses factor analysis by choosing a sample of 380 people. Cronbach alpha is calculated as 0.88, which is well above the minimum acceptable limit of 0.7 and validates the overall questionnaire. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy yields 0.93, which means the sampling is sufficient for factor analysis. We have also performed Bartlett's Test and Chi-Square has been calculated as 1605.047 with 112 degree of freedom and Sig. value of 0.000, which validates the results of our factor analysis.

3. The results

Table 1 shows details of factor analysis after rotations is applied.

Table 1

The results of factor analysis

Attributes	Factors		
	Job related	Personal	Organizational
Job background	.353	.022	.465
Smooth and no change in Job	.165	.180	-.020
Conflict in involvement	.085	.117	.132
Group works and participation	-.016	.267	.752
Mental and organizational affiliation	.207	.553	.436
Recognize and appreciation	.317	-.094	.665
Knowledge, skills and information	.447	.313	.411
Having precise objectives	.792	.264	.097
Job enrichment and job promotion	.848	.130	.116
Reducing Inspection	.820	.124	.099
Service training	.802	.204	.212

Based on the results of Table 1, we understand that three factors including job related, personal related and organizational related issues impact empowering employee, significantly. In order to measure the effects of these components, we have used Pearson correlation test and Table 2 demonstrates the results.

Table 2

The results of Pearson correlation test

Variable		Job related factors	Personal factors	Organizational factors	Job performance
Job related factors	Correlation	1.000	0.438	0.562	0.490
	P-value	-	0.000	0.000	0.001
Personal factors	Correlation	0.365	1.000	0.861	0.905
	P-value	0.000	-	0.000	0.000
Organizational factors	Correlation	0.562	0.861	1.000	0.974
	P-value	0.000	0.000	-	0.000
Job performance	Correlation	0.490	0.905	0.974	1.000
	P-value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

As we can observe from the results of Table 2, there is a strong correlation between organizational factors and job performance (0.974) when the level of significance is one percent. There is also a

strong relationship between personal factors and job performance (0.905) and between organizational factors and personal factors when the level of significance is one percent. All these relationships are positive. Finally, we have performed Freedman test to rank different items on organizational performance and the results are summarized in Table 3 as follows.

Table 3

The results of freedman test for ranking different items

Component	Mean rank
Organizational factors	4.31
Job related factors	2.84
Personal factors	1.65

The results of Table 3 shows that organizational factors play the most important role followed by job related factors and personal factors.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented an empirical investigation to study the impact of different factors on empowering employees of a food industry located in province of Qom, Iran. We have designed and distributed a questionnaire among employee and used factor analysis to find our important factors influencing empowering them. The results of our survey have indicated that three important factors including job related, personal related and organizational related issues. The study also uses multiple regression analysis as well as Freedman test to rank the factors and the results demonstrate that organizational factor plays the most important role in empowering human resources followed by job related factors and personal factors.

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