

The relationship between the dimensions of organizational structure with Psychological empowerment of Agricultural Jihad Department's employees in Kermanshah in 2013-2014

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Received: July 24, 2015

Accepted: September 31, 2015

ABSTRACT

This Research was done to study the relationship between the dimensions of organizational structure with Psychological empowerment of Agricultural Jihad Department's employees in Kermanshah. The research method was descriptive and correlational. The population was all employees of headquarter part of Agricultural Jihad Department of Kermanshah. 200 examinees were selected by using simple random sampling. Dimensions of Organizational Structure Questionnaire and Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire were used to gather the data. The validity was approved by management experts and the reliability of two components- Dimensions of Organizational Structure and psychological empowerment- was respectively 0.83 and 0.84 based on Cronbach's alpha. Single-group t test, Pearson correlation, multiple regressions, t-test for independent groups and ANOVA were used to analyze data by means of SPSS. Results show that the Dimensions of Organizational Structure mean was 2.07 and psychological empowerment mean was 5.12 that the first one was about average and the second one was more than average. The results of regression analysis in predictability of organizational structure for psychological empowerment show that 9% of psychological empowerment changes are explained by formality dimension and 12% by the focus of organization.

KEYWORDS: organizational structure, psychological empowerment, Agriculture Jihad department.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are faced with serious challenges when the complexity has penetrated of all walks of life and social system and when information and communication leads to the emergence of new patterns of business and social interactions. Organizations as social institutions affected by the changes and have been suffered from increasing complexity of their systems and interactions. So they require a review and planning in order to become accompanied or leadership in times of changes. Under these conditions, the Dimensions of Organizational Structure in the area of organization play an important role. Since organizational growth become one of the main concerns of organizations, appropriate growth of organizations need to design organizations. Bureaucratic organizational structures in a world of change and competition today are not responsive and professional employees are those factors that will deal with the structure. The organizational structure should not inhibit creativity and expression of opinions and ideas of employees in the organization; hence the organization structure should be designed in accordance with organizational goals and the rate of empowering employees. Organization structure in one hand created by the activities of employees and on the other hand is such a space for their activity and the results of the application of knowledge management process cannot be achieved without this space, and also having the best employees and substantial investments in the field of knowledge management has a little benefit for the organization [1]. Human resources are the most important investment in organizations. The more quality of this investment, the more likelihood of success and also the organization's survival enhances [2]. Empowering is a new ways for surviving the leading organizations in the competitive environment and the dimensions of organizational structures are the most important factors in empowering employees [3]. The proportionality between personality and job and organizational characteristics leads to more satisfaction, internal motivation, efficiency, creativity and responsibility in individuals. Also it has a deep effect on job performance that represents the psychological empowerment and job involvement among employees. Job involvement as Alport said is an attitude that is a very important variable which help the organizations to be more effective [4].

Theoretical Framework

Management paradigm has evolved through various stages. The organizational structure is at the center of attention in all these processes [5]. Employees work in organizations and some organizational factors can have

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an enormous effect on their ability to increase or reduce it. Organization structure is one of these factors which includes some variables as formality, concentration and complexity [6]. There was no significant relationship between the size of the organization, the scope of monitoring, business continuity and concentration with organizational commitment, while other researches show that there is no relationship between the size of organization and the scope of monitoring with commitment but there is a relationship between business continuity and concentration with organizational commitment. Morice and Estizer in 1987 believe that there is a relationship between the employee perceptions of decentralization and the rate of true participation. The employees also become more commitment to the organization through engaging in organization [7].

The organizational structure is the way or manner in which the activities of the organization become divided, organized and coordinated. Organizations created some structures to coordinate and control the activities of members. Organizational structure is a framework which governing the employment relations, systems, operational processes, and individuals and groups that try to achieve their goals [8]. Organizational structure is a complex ways that divided duties to specific tasks and create harmony among them [9]. Operations and activities inside the organization coordinates through organizational structure and the borders between responsibility and authority determines, too. Structure is a manifestation of systematic thinking [10]. According to Rezaeian [11] organizational structure is a system of informal relations which are approved formally and governing interdependent activities to achieve common goals. Miller and Droge [12] define structure as a form of concentration, formalization, complexity and coherence. Nahm *et al.* [13] consider organizational structure as a way dividing power, responsibility and working procedure between the members of the organization.

Each organizational structure follows two main goals. The first goal shows that who get together to perform a duty effectively and the second goal shows that who reports to which level in the organizational hierarchy [14]. The organization is composed of elements, the relationship between the elements and structure of the relationship as a whole that form one unit [11]. The organizational structure is not only composed of hard elements such as individuals, groups, teams and organizational units, but also involved soft elements such as the relationship between organizational elements [11].

Management scientists believe that changing in human resources is the root of all successes in organizations. The empowering process is a tool that can help managers in this field. Modern organizations which work in a knowledge-based, competitive, customer-orientation, accountability, quality-oriented, participatory and development-oriented entrepreneurship atmosphere, requires rapid access to capable, happy and committed human resources as competitive tools [15]. Empowerment means strengthening. This means that we should help people to feel confident and improve their sense of powerlessness and can beat their helplessness [16]. Psychological empowerment is being defined as employees' perceptions about their role in the organization. It is the increase in the intrinsic motivation of employees to perform duties which includes four dimensions - competence, autonomy, effectiveness, meaningful jobs- based on Spreitzer's model [17].

Cognitive theorists' approach, which is headed by Thomas and Volthous defined empowerment as the process of increasing the intrinsic motivation to do the tasks that are manifested on a set of cognitive characteristics [18]. Empowerment is used as a management technique in response to the needs of business organizations in the world [19]. So the only sustainable competitive advantage of the organization is its employees and their role in the success of any organization [20] that this is possible through the empowering and job satisfaction [21].

Until the 1990s, empowerment mean measures and management strategies such as delegation of authority and decision-making power to lower levels of the organization [22] and sharing information, knowledge, power and rewards by employees [23]. From the 1990s onwards, theorists were considered empowerment in terms of beliefs and feelings of employees. However, it can be accepted that empowering means giving the power, participation in decision-making, appropriate information, autonomy, creativity and innovation at work, having the necessary knowledge and skills and responsibility [24] which is applied at the individual and organizational levels. The process of cognitive empowerment at the individual level means providing such opportunities to work with others, learning skills, decision-making and resource management and at the organizational level means shared responsibility and leadership and opportunities for participation in decision-making [25, 26]. Empowering employees is one of the effective techniques for improving employee productivity and optimal use of their capacities and capabilities in the field of organizational goals [27].

Research questions

- 1- What is the employee's perspective of dimensions of organizational structure status of Agricultural Jihad in 2013?
- 2- What is the employee's perspective of empowering status of Agricultural Jihad in 2013?

Hypotheses

- 1- There is a relationship between complexity of the organization and psychological empowering of employees.
- 2- There is a relationship between formality of the organization and psychological empowering of employees.

- 3- There is a relationship between concentration of the organization and psychological empowering of employees.
- 4- Psychological empowering of employees can be predicted by the dimensions of the organizational structure.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is an applied research and its method is a survey correlation. In this study, dimensions of the organizational structure is considered as an independent variable and the psychological empowering of employees as a dependent variable. The population was 419 Diploma to PhD employees of headquarter part of Agricultural Jihad Department of Kermanshah. The sample size- 200 examinees- were selected by stratified random sampling that 166 male and 34 female were selected by using Kerjciec and Morgan table. In this research, 23-item dimensions of organizational structure questionnaire and 12-item psychological empowering questionnaire were used. Both of them were standard and have been used in many studies at home and abroad. Their high reliability has been confirmed in various studies. The reliability of the questionnaires was conducted on a sample of 50 examinees (male and female employees) and statistical estimates through Cronbach's alpha for dimensions of the organizational structure was 0.83 and 0.84 for psychological empowering. Descriptive Statistics was used to analyze the data and single group T- test, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, T-test for independent groups and ANOVA were used to inferential analysis of data by means of SPSS.

Table 1. Reliability of the gathering tools

| Variable | | The number of samples | The level of significance |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Organizational structure | Complexity of the organization | 50 | 0.820 |
| | Formality of the organization | 50 | 0.761 |
| | Concentration of the organization | 50 | 0.753 |
| | Organizational Structure | 50 | 0.830 |
| Psychological empowering of employees | Competence | 50 | 0.771 |
| | Effectiveness | 50 | 0.767 |
| | Meaningfulness | 50 | 0.720 |
| | Confidence | 50 | 0.819 |
| | Empowering | 50 | 0.842 |

Demographic findings

The sample was 200 employees of Agricultural Jihad that 166 of them (83%) were male, 34 persons (17%) female. Age series of 21 persons (10.5%) were under 30 years, 42 persons (21%) between 31 to 40 years, 109 persons (54.05%) between 41 to 50 years, 25 persons (12.05%) 50 years and over and 3 persons (1.5%) did not mentioned their age. The level of education of 4 persons (2%) were high school diploma, 13 persons (6.5%) diploma, 34 persons (17%) associate degree, 102 persons (51%) bachelor, 45 persons (22.5%) master degree and over and 2 persons (1%) did not mentioned their level of education.

Table 2. Distribution of the sample in terms of demographic data

| Variable | | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | male | 166 | 83 |
| | female | 34 | 17 |
| Age | Under 30 years | 21 | 10.5 |
| | 31 to 40 years | 42 | 21 |
| | 41 to 50 years | 109 | 54.5 |
| | 51 years and over | 25 | 12.5 |
| | Not mentioned | 3 | 1.5 |
| Level of education | high school diploma | 4 | 2 |
| | diploma | 13 | 6.5 |
| | associate degree | 34 | 17 |
| | bachelor | 102 | 51 |
| | master degree and over | 45 | 22.5 |
| | Not mentioned | 2 | 1 |

Parametric statistical tests

According to the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Table 3) it can be stated that organizational structure and empowering variables and their subscales are normal because the level of significance of all Z values were bigger than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that parametric tests can be used to analyze the questions and hypotheses.

Table 3. The results of Kolmogorov – Smirnov test for the normal distribution of data

| variable | | The number of samples | Z value | The level of significance |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| Organizational structure | Complexity of the organization | 200 | 1.331 | 0.058 |
| | Formality of the organization | 200 | 1.268 | 0.080 |
| | Concentration of the organization | 200 | 1.236 | 0.094 |
| | Organizational Structure | 200 | 1.003 | 0.266 |
| Psychological empowering of employees | Competence | 200 | 1.346 | 0.056 |
| | Effectiveness | 200 | 1.338 | 0.056 |
| | Meaningfulness | 200 | 1.344 | 0.054 |
| | Confidence | 200 | 1.184 | 0.121 |
| | Empowering | 200 | 1.351 | 0.052 |

Analysis of research questions

1- What is the employee's perspective of dimensions of organizational structure status of Agricultural Jihad in 2013?

Based on table 4 results, the mean of organizational structure of Agricultural Jihad from the perspective of its employees was obtained as 2.97 and standard deviation of 0.34 which is almost equal to the statistical average (3). Thus, we conclude that the organizational structure of Agricultural Jihad from the perspective of its employees is about average. It can be concluded that the complexity of Agricultural Jihad Organization is lower than average by considering the mean of the complexity of the organization (2.87) with standard deviation of 0.05 and 99% insurance. It is clear that the formality of Agricultural Jihad Organization is also lower than average by considering the mean of the formality of the organization (3.10) with standard deviation of 0.58 and 95% insurance. The mean of the concentration of the organization (2.95) with standard deviation of 0.68 reveals that it is almost equals to the statistical average. Thus, we conclude that the concentration of Agricultural Jihad organization from the perspective of its employees is about average. As can be seen, the most mean belongs to the formality of the organization and the least mean belongs to the complexity of the organization. Based on table 4 data, 107 persons (53.05%) believed that the organization has no complexity but 93 persons (46.5%) have conflicting comments. 83 persons (41.5%) believed in lack of formality while others 117 persons (58.5%) believed in formality and from the perspective of 90 persons (45%), the organization doesn't have concentration but 110 persons (55%) believes in concentration.

Table 4. The organizational structure and dimensions of Agricultural Jihad from the perspective of employees

| variable | | Observed mean | Standard deviation | Statistical mean | T-statistics | Degrees of freedom | The level of significance |
|--|---------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Organizational structure | | 2.97 | 0.34 | 3 | 1.028 | 199 | 0.305 |
| Dimensions of organizational structure | complexity | 2.87 | 0.50 | 3 | 3.615 | 199 | 0.000 |
| | formality | 3.10 | 0.58 | 3 | 2.483 | 199 | 0.014 |
| | concentration | 2.95 | 0.68 | 3 | 0.986 | 199 | 0.325 |

Table 5. The dimensions of organizational structure in Agricultural Jihad

| variables | | frequency | percentage |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| complexity | Lack of complexity | 107 | 53.5 |
| | Have complexity | 93 | 46.5 |
| formality | Lack of formality | 83 | 41.5 |
| | Have formality | 117 | 58.5 |
| concentration | Lack of concentration | 90 | 45 |
| | Have concentration | 110 | 55 |

2- What is the employee's perspective of empowering status of Agricultural Jihad in 2013?

Table 6 shows that the obtained mean and standard deviation of empowering employees in Agricultural Jihad was respectively 5.12 and 0.91 that was more than the statistical average (4). Also the mean of competence, effectiveness, meaningfulness and confidence were respectively 5.55, 4.88, 5.12 and 4.92 and their standard deviation were respectively 0.87, 1.36, 0.58, 1.26, and 1.39 that all of them were more than the statistical average (4). So we can conclude with 99% insurance that the empowering rate and all its components are more than average that the most empowering was in competence and the least one was in confidence.

Table 6. The status of empowering employees in Agricultural Jihad

| Variable | | Observed mean | Standard deviation | Statistical mean | T-statistics | Degrees of freedom | The level of significance |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Empowering | | 5.12 | 0.91 | 4 | 17.31 | 199 | 0.000 |
| Dimensions of empowering | competence | 5.55 | 0.87 | 4 | 25.24 | 199 | 0.000 |
| | effectiveness | 4.88 | 1.36 | 4 | 9.18 | 199 | 0.000 |
| | meaningfulness | 5.12 | 1.26 | 4 | 12.62 | 199 | 0.000 |
| | confidence | 4.92 | 1.39 | 4 | 9.37 | 199 | 0.000 |

Analysis of the hypotheses

- 1- There is a relationship between complexity of the organization and psychological empowering of employees.

On the basis of the data in table 7 and considering the correlation ($r=0.082$) and the level of significance ($p=0.248 > 0.05$) it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between complexity of the organization and psychological empowering of employees in Agricultural Jihad. Also there was no significant relationship between complexity of the organization and job involvement among agricultural Jihad's employees ($r=0.066$ and $p=0.352 > 0.05$).

Table7 correlation coefficient between the complexity of the organization and the psychological empowering of Agricultural Jihad's employees.

| variable | | number | Correlation coefficient | The level of significant |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Complexity of the organization | Psychological empowering | 200 | 0.082 | 0.248 |

- 2- There is a relationship between formality of the organization and psychological empowering of employees.

According to the data in table 8 and considering the correlation ($r=0.310$) and the level of significance ($p=0.000$) it can be concluded by 99% insurance that there is a positive significant relationship between formality of the organization and psychological empowering of employees in Agricultural Jihad. In other words, by increasing the formality of the organization, employees' psychological empowerment increases and vice versa. Also the 9.6 percent of the variance of psychological empowerment of employees can be predicted by the scores of organization's formality.

Table 8. correlation coefficient between the formality of the organization and the psychological empowering of Agricultural Jihad's employees.

| Variable | | Number | Correlation coefficient | The level of significant |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Formality of the organization | Psychological empowering | 200 | 0.310 | 0.000 |

- 3- There is a relationship between concentration of the organization and psychological empowering of employees.

On the basis of table 9 data and considering the correlation ($r=0.162$) and the level of significance ($p=0.022$) it can be concluded by 95% insurance that there is a positive significant relationship between concentration of the organization and psychological empowering of employees in Agricultural Jihad. In other words, increasing the concentration of the organization leads to increasing the psychological empowering of employees in Agricultural Jihad and vice versa. Also the 2.6 percent of the variance of psychological empowerment of employees can be predicted by the scores of organization's concentration.

Table9. correlation coefficient between the concentration of the organization and the psychological empowering of Agricultural Jihad's employees.

| variable | | Number | Correlation coefficient | The level of significant |
|--|--------------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| concentration of the organization | Psychological empowering | 200 | 0.162 | 0.022 |

- 4- Psychological empowering of employees can be predicted by the dimensions of the organizational structure.

Multivariate regression analysis was done to study the effectiveness of dimensions of organizational structure on psychological empowering of employees. In the beginning, psychological empowering was considered as the dependent variable and dimensions of the organizational structure (complexity, formality and concentration) as independent variables. The formality of the organization had the most impact on the multivariate regression, so it entered the model as well as the concentration of the organization but the complexity of the organization

exited from the model. The results of table 10 indicates that 9% of the psychological empowering changes can be predicted by the formality dimension as well as 12% by the concentration dimension. The final results of multivariate regression analysis along with affecting variable factor in the model are mentioned below. The final model is:

$$\text{Psychological empowering} = 0.483 (\text{complexity}) + 0.207 (\text{concentration}) + 3.015$$

Table 10. The results of multivariate regression analysis about the effectiveness of dimensions of organizational structure on psychological empowering of the employees

| model | | R | R square | Adjusted R square | | |
|---|---------------|-------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| Relationship between the dimensions of organizational structure and empowering of the employees | formality | 0.310 | 0.096 | 0.091 | | |
| | concentration | 0.346 | 0.120 | 0.111 | | |
| Model | | B | The mean of standard error | Beta | t | The level of significance |
| Fixed value | | 3.015 | 0.419 | | 7.187 | 0.000 |
| Formality | | 0.438 | 0.105 | 0.306 | 4.582 | 0.000 |
| Concentration | | 0.207 | 0.089 | 0.155 | 2.322 | 0.021 |

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The mean of organizational structure of Agricultural Jihad was 2.97 from the perspective of its employees that is roughly equal to the statistical average (3), so the organizational structure of Agricultural Jihad from the perspective of its employees was about average which is not in line with the results of studies of Zabihee et al. [3] and Monavarian et al. [5]. The mean of the complexity and formality of the organization was respectively 2.87 and 3.10 so by the 99% insurance it can be concluded that the complexity and formality of the Agricultural Jihad was about average that this result is in line with the study of Jamshidi [7] and Zabihee et al. [3]. The rate of formality was low and the result is not in line with Jamshidi [7] Monavarian et al. [5] and Zabihee et al. [3]. The mean of the concentration of the organization was 2.95 that was almost equal to statistical average of (3) that is in line with the results of Jamshidi [7] study but is not in line with Monavarian et al. [5] and Zabihee et al. [3].

The mean of empowering employees of Agricultural Jihad was obtained 5.12 that was bigger than statistical average of 4 and the mean of competence, effectiveness, meaningfulness and confidence competence were obtained respectively 5.55, 4.88, 5.12, 4.92 that all of them were more than average of 4. The rate of empowering and its components of Agricultural Jihad employees was more than average that the result is in line with Nafari & Omidfar [2] Afshar poor et al. [28]; Mirkamalee et al. [29] and Abilli and Nastee zae [30] that the most empowering was about competence component that is in line with Abilli and Nastee zae [30] and the least component was about confidence that is in line with Turani et al. [31] and Abilli and Nastee zae [30] and is not in line with Sheltoon [32] study.

The results show that there was no significant relationship between the complexity and psychological empowering of Agricultural Jihad's employees that is in line with Zabihee, et al. [3] study and is not in line with Nafari & Omidfar [2] and Robbins [14]. Hatam [33] showed the significant relationship between complexity and dimensions of the organization with organizational creativity. Broumand and mousavi [34] showed the effectiveness of complexity on productivity. Researchers concluded that behavioral and attitudinal factors of leadership impacts dramatically on the comprehending of empowering. Hence it is related to the success or failure of the empowering initiatives. There was a positive significant relationship between the formality of the organization and the psychological empowering of Agricultural Jihad's employees that is in line with Jamshidi [7] study but is not in line with Zabihee et al. [3], Nafari & Omidfar [2], Spreitzer & Quinn [35] and Vaezi & Sabzikaran [36] studies.

There was a positive significant relationship between the concentration of the organization and the psychological empowering of Agricultural Jihad's employees that is not in line with Vaezi & Sabzikaran [36], Nafari & Omidfar [2], Vogt & Murrel [37], Denton et al. [38] and SAJ M [39] studies. The author beliefs that it is necessary to consider the three dimensions of organizational structure in order to increase the empowering of employees. If these dimensions are not being considered, they would lead to weakness in employees and inefficiency of empowering programs. The present study has theoretical and practical applications. It helps

managers and organizational executives to consider special programs in order to promote empowering of employees through improving structural aspects of the organization. As organizations seeking increasing their performance by using less resources, they should consider those behaviors which encourage the empowering of employees.

Other organizational factors which affecting empowerment such as setting goals, reward systems and providing resources can be measured in future researches. The effects of management strategies such as leadership, information, participative atmosphere and delegation of authority can also be studied on empowering employees and its rate on increasing organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

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