Factors Influencing Human Resources Empowerment for Organizational Excellence

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ABSTRACT

Identification of the factors empowering employees has always been a concern to managers and organizations. However, mere attention to these factors and employee empowerment without considering its effect on organizational overall performance will be misleading. The present paper examines the factors influencing the human resource empowerment for achieving organizational excellence in Iran customs administration. In this research, firstly, using scientific resources and the opinions of the scholars of empowerment field and employing the content analysis approach, the factors influencing employees empowerment are identified and then the effects of these factors on employees psychological empowerment are measured and, finally, the psychological empowerment's effect on the organizational excellence is measured. To conduct the research, a sample of 243 individuals from headquarter employees of Iran customs administration was selected using random sampling method, and, after ensuring the reliability and validity of the research's questionnaire and normality of the data, simple and multivariate linear regression analysis were used for examining the effect of the variables, one-sample t-test was used for analyzing the present condition, and Friedman test was used for ranking the research's indices; finally, the fitness of the model is assessed. The results of the research show that among the factors influencing the empowerment, individual and organizational factors have influences on employees psychological empowerment, and the psychological empowerment affects the organizational excellence. This can provide a basis for developing proper human resources strategies for achieving organizational excellence.

KEYWORDS: empowerment – factors influencing empowerment – psychological empowerment – organizational excellence

1. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Empowerment is a vital element of organizations in the modern world. Objectives such as closeness to the improvement of services and the continuance of innovation are achieved through employees' empowerment. In fact, empowerment is a permanent movement and its significance is increasing (Smith, 20004: 94). Employees' empowerment enables the organization be more impressionable and accepting and make it achieve developments in organizational works as well as employees' personal works. According to today's competitive atmosphere that employees' awareness is more widespread and organizations move to more consistent organizational structures and decentralization, employees' empowerment is greatly suggested. For today's organizations, it is very important to response with higher speed to the environment's changes and employees' empowerment presents a logical accessing method to such objectives. On the one hand, employees' empowerment provides managers with greater time to examine wider programs and log-term objectives of the company, on the other hand, in order to access to empowerment, certain factors, which result in higher levels of empowerment, should be identified. Certainly, this issue is very complex and depends on the environmental and organizational conditions (Baird & Wang, 2010: 574). Furthermore, to make employees' empowerment programs purposeful, there should be a plan and structure to achieve long-term goals as well as approaches such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and Organizational Excellency (OE) (Thamizhmanii & Hasan, 2010: 206).

Considering empowerment of employees and human force for improving performance and reaching worldwide level is an indispensable issue. As Kinela (2008: 2) argue "empowerment has achieved a fundamental position in today's movements of the organization towards TQM and Permanent Improvement (PI) … it seems that empowerment is a kind of widely-accepted macro strategy for PI and is an abbreviation for types methods of applying individuals' merits in creative and new methods for all performance aspects in the organization. Almost in all scientific sources of TQM, empowerment is considered the vital element of TQM. Thomas and Velthouse consider employees' empowerment as one of the important components of TQM. In addition, Cardi (1996) showed that the programs of employees' empowerment have a close relation with QM in the US and maybe it is the vital element of the organization's success or failure (Abtahi & Abesi, 2007: 39). The role of empowered human resources in the models of OE that all are adopted from the philosophy of TQM, is more highlighted. OE can be considered the development and promotion of an organization's level in all its

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dimensions that includes human force. QE's model, that is introduced by European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) is a tool for helping organizations in identifying Excellency path, measuring the organization's position in this path, effective factors and parameters on the organizational productivity and consequently presenting appropriate solutions in order to improve the organization's performance. The approach of this model stresses on the effective use of self-evaluation process for a multilateral contemplation over the organization by the organization's individuals and as a result their practicality and dominance in evaluating themselves with the approach that aims at improving self not comparing and selecting strong and weak units (Vosoghi, 2009: 3). Generally, the improvement of organizational performance in EFQM is only achievable through improving processes as well as making employees involved (Auckland, 2007: 125).

In spite of conducting widespread researches concerning identifying effective factors in the employees' empowerment, investigations indicate that these researches have been conducted irrespective of general organizational improvement strategies. It should be noted that simultaneous attention to the employees' empowerment and OE is considered a "win-win" strategy, because it results in integrating organizational and personal goals and bring about employees' satisfaction and better organizational performance.

Therefore, this paper aims at identifying effective factors on the employees' empowerment for OE of customs and then seeks to answer that question that which of these factors affect OE.

Thus, first, the concept of empowerment is explained and its effective factors are identified then the impact of these factors on the psychological empowerment and OE is measured.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Empowerment of Human Force

The concept of empowerment has been taken into consideration by all ones who are involved in organizations' affairs in recent years and researchers always have employed employees' empowerment in the public and private sectors. Although organizational theorists have defined the concept of empowerment in different ways, have used empowerment as the concept of sharing power in which empowerment is considered synonymous with giving more organizational power to the employees, vesting authority and employees' collaboration in the workplace (Carthwrith, 2002: 106). These scholars believe that for employees' empowerment, power should be transferred from individuals in high positions to the individuals in very lower positions (Greasley & King, 2005: 354), but most of management theorists emphasize on the psychic and perceptive dimensions of empowerment. According to this group of experts, empowerment is an internal practice in the individual and has a direct relation with individuals' attitude, feeling or perception of the workplace. In their belief, creating or reinforcing ability feeling in the individual's mental dimensions results in empowerment (Perez, 2002: 6).

Empowerment is considered among new concepts in human force development. Therefore, due to the variety of conducted researches and studies in this field, it has a wide literature particularly due to the fact that different approaches are studied concerning. However, variety in the literature of empowerment has reinforced its content, it caused inaccessibility to the consistency and presentation of a comprehensive model of empowerment (Littrell, 2007: 88). What has made experts have different views in the operational definitions of empowerment, is their different view of empowerment. Spreitzer and Doneson (2005) have enumerated three approaches for the empowerment and have analyzed the origin and nature of these approaches. In Table 1, a summary of the work of these two experts is presented.

Table 1: Empowerment Approaches

Approach	Origin	Nature of Approach
Social / Structural	Democracy and sociology principles	Power division and making decision
Psychological	Social psychology and internal motivation theory	Paying attention to merit, choice right, effectiveness and employees' significance
Critical	Postmodern theory and Iconoclasm	Understanding that who controls formal power structure

Source: Spreitzer & Doneson, 2005: 25

Factors Affecting Empowerment

Some experts believe that for employees feel empowered, necessary conditions and backgrounds should be provided in the organization. Organization, management and employees should be ready. Scott and Jaffe (1991) consider some factors as the empowerment factors in employees such as changing hierarchical organization into circle one, changing employees' attitude, creating motivation through granting power and esteem, participatory management, establishing facilitating leadership and forming empowered groups. Quinn and Spreitzer divide attitude into empowerment into two views. In static view, the empowerment of vesting decision is in a clear frame, but in the dynamic view, the empowerment of accepting risk, development, and changes, understanding employees' needs, forming teams, encouraging collaborative behavior, encouraging intelligent riskiness and

trusting others in doing works. Finally, they consider four factors important movement from dynamic viewpoint. These factors include creating clear perspective, accessing information, order and exercising control and organizational support (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997: 41). According to Tubbs and Moss (2000: 256), in empowerment, employees need not only authority, but also sufficient training, budget and basic information and then are responsible in their decisions. Ken Blanchard in the book "three keys to empowerment" states that the basis of empowerment is individuals' knowledge, deed and motivational power (Grtwright, 2002: 3). Pardo Del Val and Lloyd (2003: 103) in their suggestive model, consider factors affecting empowerment including cooperation, formalization, honesty and influence degree.

In this research, the researcher has dealt with factors affecting empowerment by content analysis method. For this purpose, after compiling the list of effective factors from the viewpoint of experts by distributing Delphi questionnaire, the researcher has attempted to classify and identify the components and then using another Delphi questionnaire, the indices of these factors are confirmed by academic and organizational experts. In Table 2, a summary of these factors is presented:

Table 2: Identification of Factors Affecting Empowerment

Effective factors of Empowerment	Components	Experts
Personal Effective Factors	1- Individuals' attitude 2- Motivation 3- Organizational commitment	1-Macher(1988);Scott & jaffe(1991);Quinn & Spritzer(1997);Sharafat(1997);Sasiadek(2006). 2- Bandura(1986); Conger & Kanungo(1988); Thomas & Velthouse(1990); ;Scott & jaffe(1991). 3-Carrol(1995); Somers & Birnbaum(2000);Robbins,crino&Fredendall(2002).
Interpersonal Effective Factors	1- Team work 2- Communications 3- Participation	1Blanchard(1985);Daft(1989);Kinlaw(1995);Kirkman & Rosen(2000). .2- Scott & jaffe(1991);Mclagan(1997);Stainer(2000);Keef(2004). 3-Daft(1989);Sanders(2001);Bonder(2003);Val & Loyd(2010).
Organizational Effective Factors	1- Organizational structure 2- Organizational culture 3- Leadership style 4- Vesting authority 5- Training 6- Clarity of perspective and goals 7- Job enrichment 8- Reward	1- Blanchard(1985);Scott & jaffe(1991); Kinlaw(1995);Vogt & Murrel(1998); Robbins(2002). 2- Blanchard(1985);Daft(1989);Fax(1998);Lok & Crawford(2004). 3-Fullam & lando(1998); Blanchard, Carlos & Randolph(1999). 4-Schoell , Dessler & Reinecke(1993); Comrron &whetten(1999) 5- Bandura(1986); Kinlaw(1995);Tubbs &Moss(2000);Mathieu(2006) 6- Kinlaw(1995);Quinn & Spritzer(1997); Comrron &whetten(1999);Okland(2000) 7- Daft(1989); Speritzer(1995); Koberage(1999) 8- Conger & Kanungo(1988); Speritzer(1995); Kinlaw(1995);Bragg(2000); obbins,crino&Fredendall(2002)

Source: Researcher

Psychological Empowerment

Three dominant approaches are suggested regarding empowerment. In communicative approach, empowerment is studied as the result of a process and this issue is more considered that what tools and means managers provide to empower employees by them or through creating a necessary background in the physical work environment (Spritzer & Doneson, 2005: 34). In addition, in motivational approach, the goal is empowering and its strategy is reinforcing self-sufficiency. Empowerment as a motivational construct that encourages them to mobilize motivation, cognitive resources and a group of necessary measures for exercising control in the events by increasing individuals' self-sufficiency (Perez, 2002: 26-27).

Thomas and Velthouse (1990: 670) emphasizing intrapersonal cognitive processes invented a model for empowering employees. In this pattern, individuals for processing ambiguous information acquired from the environment, carry out an evaluation according to different duties. The four dimensions of this evaluation involving cognitive components of inner motivation include impact or personal consequence, competence (self-efficacy), meaningfulness and self-determination (choice).

Psychological approach of empowerment has changed traditional research of management works and in return has emphasized employee's observations and experiences of empowerment. In this approach, special attention has been paid to employees' beliefs and understandings of power, ability, control and personal efficiency. Conger and Kanungo's research (1988) is often remembered as the starting point of effects of psychological approach of empowerment. They argued that empowerment requires a motivational concept of personal efficiency. This belief was modified more by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) who presented the

cognitive model of empowerment. They defined empowerment as increasing inner motivation for work (Greasley et al., 2005: 356).

However, this was influential studies of Spreitzer (1995) that contributed to Psychological Empowerment (PE) to be recognized as a global attitude. According to Spreitzer, empowered individuals determine goal in the performance of their work, are able in doing their work, understand their abilities, feel independency according to particular goals for reaching to the expected results and believe that can have a serious impact on the organizational results. Different researches also have emphasized on the PE as the main criterion for distinguishing whether employees are empowered in their job or not (Garless, 2004: 29). According to Spreitzer, empowerment is as a inner motivational state and is involved with job as well as is defined with four dimensions of impact or personal consequence, competence (self-efficacy), meaningfulness and self-determination (choice).certainly Mishra (1992) added "trust" to them in his studies (Perex, 2002: 27).

In this research, this model, due to its more universality in relation to the other empowerment models, is used. The five dimensions of this model are described as follows:

1. **Impact or personal Consequence:** it includes individual's belief that to what extent his performance will be effective in achieving intended goals and duties (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990: 675). Empowered individuals feel personal control over the results. They believe that can make change by affecting the environment in which they work or produced results. Accepting personal consequence includes individual's beliefs in a certain point of time concerning his ability in making change in the desired direction. Empowered individuals do not believe that external obstacles control their activities, but believe that obstacles can be controlled. They feel active control that allows them to make the environment consistent with their desires. Accepting personal consequence is completely pertinent to self-control feeling. To make individuals felt empowered, they should feel not only what they do has a consequence, but also they can create that consequence (Vaten & Cameron, 2002: 28-30).

2. **Competence (Self-Efficacy):** it includes individual's belief in his own capacities for doing a task (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990: 675). In other words, individual's belief in being master, competent and able to do a work successfully is called self-efficacy (Spreitzer, 1996: 446). This feeling is referred to the individual's abilities for doing his own activities skillfully. These individuals feel that can do their duties with high skillfulness (Sigler & Perason, 2000: 12). Three conditions are required for individuals feel self-efficacy: 1- belief in being able to do work 2- belief in having capacity for making necessary efforts 3- belief in the fact that no external obstacle can prevent them from doing the intended work (Vaten & Cameron, 2002: 24-27).

3. **Meaningfulness**: this evaluation is concerned with the fact that how individual looks at the goal value of his task based on his own ideals or standards (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990: 676). Meaningfulness means the value rate of job or work goals, which are judged in relevance with individual standards or ideals (Spreitzer &Doneson, 2005: 29). Empowered individuals feel meaningful. They esteem purposes, goals or activity that are involved in them, their ideals and standards are seen homogenous with what they are doing, activity is considered important in their value system and they are meticulous regarding what they produce and believe in it (Orei, 2002: 30).

4. **Self-Determination (Choice):** it includes responsibility for consequences that the individual is the causer of creating them (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990: 676). Self-determination (choice) means employees' independency at the beginning and continuance of their job procedures and behaviors (Lee & Koh, 200: 98). This factor has a very direct consistency with having choice right concerning used methods in doing task, effort that should be made, work rapidity and period in which work should be done. Empowered individuals feel ownership regarding their works, because they can determine how works should be done and also the rapidity of ending works. In fact, having choice right is the main component of self-determination (Orei, 2002: 26).

5. **Trust:** it is relevant to interestedness, competence, openness and confidence in others. Empowered individuals have trust feeling and are sure they will be treated fairly and truthfully. Furthermore, they are confident that authorities will treat them impartially. In other words, trust means having personal security (Mishra & Spreitzer, 1997: 326). Empowerment fundamentally "a continuous interpersonal relationship created from mutual trust between employee and employer. This dependency and relationship allows individuals to make effort in the direction of constant improvement of quality, production and presentation of distinct services with minimum cost and risk (Sasiadek, 2006: 24). Trust is the main element in developing constructive relationships among humans that consequently makes involved parties more empowered. Efforts for achieving an empowered organization require mutual trust between managers and employees (Tan & Tan, 2000: 245).

Organizational Excellency (OE)

Development and employment of the culture of TQM in the world date back to many years ago and it seems that today, the lifetime of this knowledge is outdated, but what is forgotten here is that "quality is an

endless way" and no end can be imagined for it according to the current competition conditions in the organizations and their globalization (Vosoghi, 2009: 2). Almost, all theories of OE have been developed based on the assumptions and the philosophy of quality management and the objective of all these quality theories are particularly achieving total quality (Miralles, 2007: 308). OE has founded access way to the performance of world class through presenting a practical framework for managers to be a guide the circumstance of improving performance in different organization (Oakland, 1999: 3).

OE's models were born since 1950s. OE's models have been able to present an appropriate framework for managing organizations in a competitive environment by patterning the world's successful companies. The outstanding feature of these models is the attitude type to the organization (Holism) allowing the management to both evaluate its organization and compare it with other similar organizations. Furthermore, models usually are designed in such manners that provide using different techniques for organization (Miralles, 2007: 328).

In fact, OE's models are an answer to this question that what is a superior organization, what are its goals and concepts and what are dominant criteria on its behaviors. Today, most of the world's countries, have created some nation-wide and region-wide prizes as incentives for organizations and businesses in the direction of elevation, development and wealth-creating relying on these models. Deming Prize in Japan, Baldrige Award in the US and European Quality Prize that is developed by European Foundation for Quality Management in the three great economic poles are the major samples of these prizes (Najmi & Husseini, 2009: 15).

Certainly, we should consider that suggested OE's models are not complete and have limitations, because are merely simplified forms of reality, while companies and organizations are being dynamic, changed and more complex. For this reason and solving new problems and knowledge, new and newer models are developing (Dahlgaard et al., 2007: 371).

According to the acceptability and use broadness of EFQM as well as implementing of this model in Iran's customs, we have used this model in the present research that is introduced shortly in the following.

EFQM's Excellency Model

European economy was exposed to threat of markets such as Japanese markets in the late 1980s. Thus, a group of managers of European organization, which were founded to contend against this threat, held a meeting to find a solution for it. Managers' efforts of fourteen organizations resulted in founding unaffiliated foundation for quality management. In 1989, European Foundation for Quality Management abbreviated as EFQM was founded and the European Commission ratified it (Moller et al., 2001: 255). In 1991, prize model of European quality of quality management was proposed that many of European and non-European countries obeyed it. In 1995, the edition relevant to the general part, and in 1995 and in 1996, model relevant to the small and medium enterprises (SME) was developed. Although this model has always been considered and revised by EFQM, but the most important revision, which resulted in some changes in the model was occurred in 1999. The most important changes include paying more attention to approaches that could bring about customers' results as well as paying more attention to the issue of knowledge share and management. In 2003, a new edition of EFQM's model was proposed that in relation to its 1999 edition has considerable changes in sub-standards and guide points (Najmi & Husseini, 2008: 16-17). In this model, standards have 1000 scores overall (500 scores for enablers and 500 scores for results). In other words, if an organization is successful in implementing this model in itself completely can obtain 1000 scores. Figure 1 shows this model:
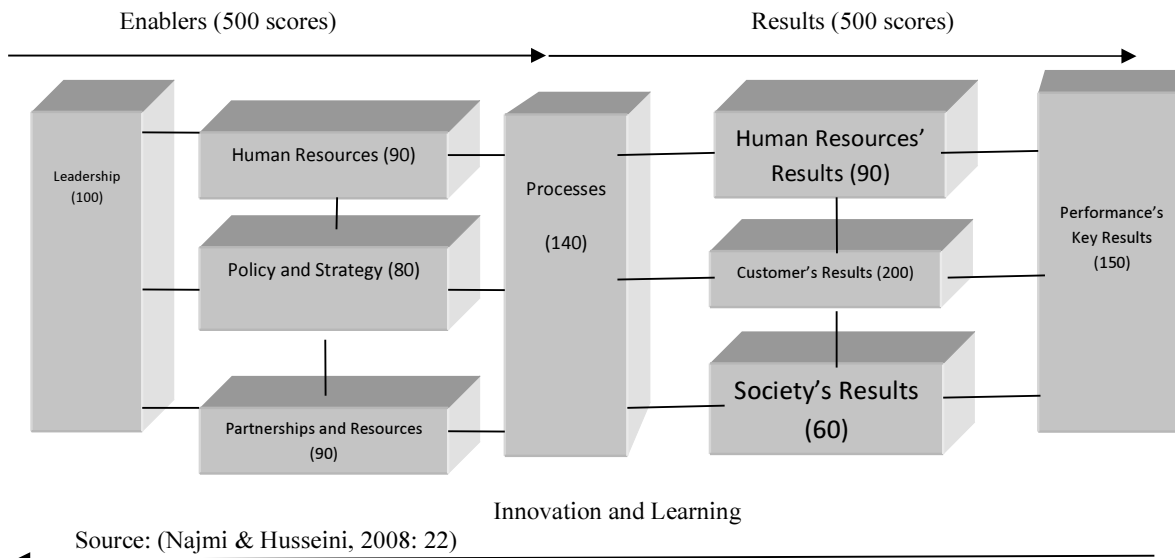

Figure 1: View of EFQM's OE Model

Enablers: five first criteria are EFQM's Excellency Model and are factors that enable organization to achieve excellent results.

1- **Leadership:** excellent leaders set ideals and mission and create values and necessary systems for organization's lasting success to achieve them and put them into practice by their proper action and behavior.

2- **Policy and Strategy:** excellent organizations put their own mission and ideal through creating and setting a focused strategy on the benefits of interested ones as well as considering the part in which they are active.

3- **People (employees):** excellent organizations manage, develop and use all their employees' potential at personal, team and organizational levels. They disseminate justice and equity, makes employees participated and vest authority to them. These organizations pay attention to their employees, establish communication with them and encourage them so that motivation and commitment for using their skill and knowledge will be created in the direction of organizational interests.

4- **Partnerships and Resources:** Excellent organizations manage and plan their partnerships and external trade collaborations, providers and domestic resources in order to support policy and strategy and to perform their processes efficiently.

5- **Processes:** excellent organizations design, manage and improve their processes in order to gain complete satisfaction and create added value for their customers and interested ones.

Results: these are results that pioneer organizations achieve them in different fields and express achievements of appropriate execution of enablers.

1- **Customer Results:** excellent organizations widely measure important results pertinent to their customers and achieve them. What organization achieves regarding external customers.

2- **People Results:** excellent organizations widely measure important results pertinent to their employees and achieve them.

3- **Society Results:** excellent organizations widely measure important results pertinent to their society and achieve them.

4- **Key Performance Results:** excellent organizations widely measure important results pertinent to their main elements, policy and strategy and achieve them (Najmi & Husseini, 2008: 20-23).

The fundamental hypothesis in the EFQM's model is that Excellency in the enablers results in excellent results. Therefore, this model not only reflects consistency between components in each of areas, but also supposes that each of enablers has a direct effect on the results (Prabhu et al., 2000: 84).

3. **Hypotheses:**
1- Personal effective factors of empowerment affect employees' psychological empowerment significantly.
2- Interpersonal effective factors of empowerment affect employees' psychological empowerment significantly.
3- Organizational effective factors of empowerment affect employees' psychological empowerment significantly.
4- Employees' psychological empowerment affects organizational Excellency significantly.
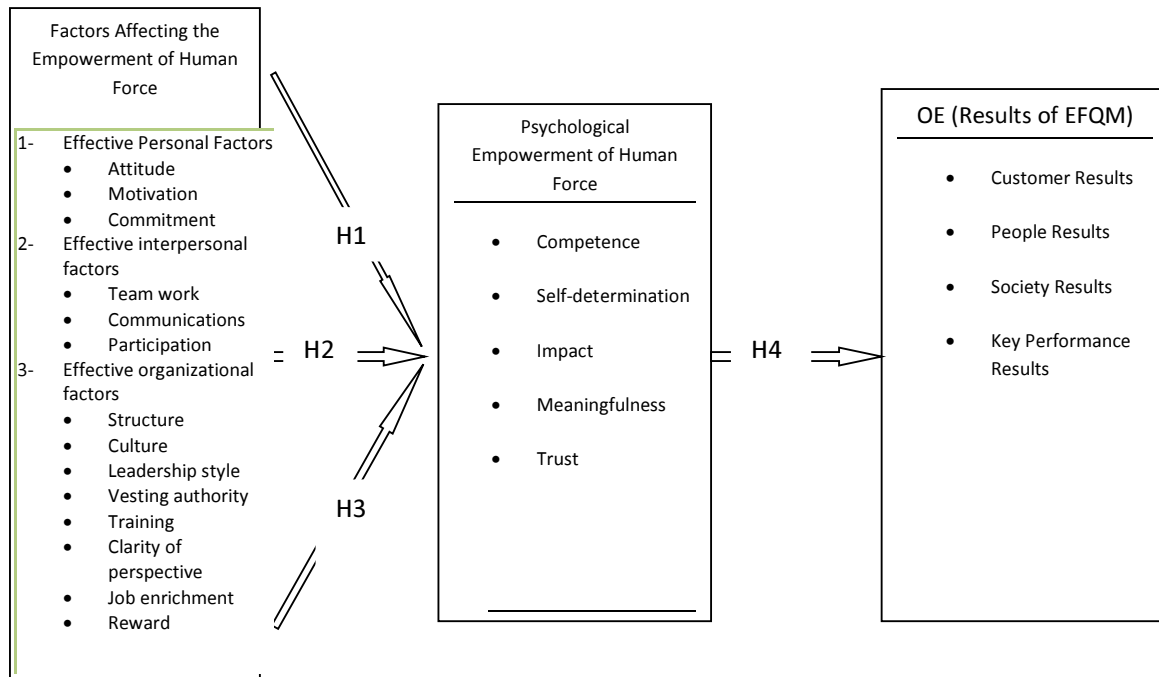
4. **Conceptual Model:**

Figure 2: Conceptual Model

In the presented conceptual model, to identify factors affecting empowerment, content analysis method was employed to examine the models, empowerment experts' views and scientific texts and after identification of effective factors, relevant components and indices were confirmed using Delphi technique by several academic and organizational professors. To measure human force empowerment and to measure OE, developed model of Spreitzer by Mishra and four criteria of results of the EFQM's OE were used respectively.

5. METHODOLOGY

The present research based on the objective and method is applied and descriptive respectively. The statistical population of this research is formal, agreed-upon and contractual employees of headquarter of Iranian customs that totally were 662 persons. From this population, a sample of 243 persons was obtained using random sampling method.

Necessary information and data to access to the theoretical principles of the research is collected through library studies (studying books and foreign and domestic publications as well as search in databases and the Internet) and benefitting from other researchers and experts' experiences. Investigation and study of documents of Islamic Republic of Iran's customs are another information sources. To collect organization employees' views, a questionnaire including 76 questions (42 researcher-made questions regarding factors affecting empowerment, 20 standard Spreitzer-Mishra questions concerning psychological empowerment and 14 standard questions regarding the results of OE) was employed. Furthermore, to determine the reliability of the questionnaires, first 35 persons of the statistical population were selected and the questionnaire was provided for them and then Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine reliability of the questionnaire that its alpha value was obtained 0.95 that it can be mentioned that the questionnaire has an acceptable consistency and reliability.

Kolmogrov-Smirnov test was used to ensure the normality of the population and after ensuring the data of the population, to determine the effect rate between independent and dependent variables, regression line was drawn and their effect rate was estimated. Finally, to grade independent and dependent variables from the viewpoint of importance degree and priority of their effect rate for components of dependent variable, Friedman test was used. In addition, sample t-test was used to examine the existing status of the organization.

6. RESULTS

In order to answer the hypotheses and the question that which factor affecting empowerment also affects OE significantly, first using ANOVA tests, regression linearity was confirmed, then Durbin-Watson tests were used to test autocorrelation in the component of obstruction and multiple common linear relation that finally was confirmed. Finally, the results of the hypotheses were obtained as Table 3 shows.

Table 3: Testing Hypotheses

Testing hypotheses	Sig Level	t-statistic	Standard Coefficient	Non-standard Coefficient	Result
Testing hypothesis 1	0.000	5.552	0.333	0.281	Significant Effect
Testing hypothesis 2	0.305	1.028	0.064	0.063	Insignificant Effect
Testing hypothesis 3	0.000	6.108	0.392	0.408	Significant Effect
Testing hypothesis 4	0.000	8.920	0.498	0.579	Significant Effect

One-sample t-test for examining the existing status:

Table 4: One-sample t-test

Dimensions	Test Value = 3					
	t-statistic	Freedom Degree	Sig level (two-way)	Mean Difference	Confidence Distance 95% for Difference	
					Low Limit	High Limit
Effective Personal Factors of Empowerment	5.462	242	0.000	0.2401	0.1535	0.3266
Effective Interpersonal Factors of Empowerment	-0.122	242	0.903	-0.0046	-0.0786	0.0695
Effective Organizational Factors of Empowerment	-8.342	242	0.000	-0.2970	-0.3671	-0.2269
Psychological Empowerment of Human Force	9.273	242	0.000	0.3436	0.2706	0.4166
Organizational Excellency (OE)	-4.113	242	0.000	-0.1770	-0.2618	-0.0922

In Table 4, the index of effective interpersonal factors of empowerment due to significance level greater than error value 0.05 and low negative limit and high positive limit is in a medium status. Furthermore, the variables of effective organizational factors of empowerment and OE with significance level smaller than error value 0.05 and negative low and high limits are in an undesired status. In addition, the variables of effective personal factors of empowerment and human force empowerment with significance level smaller than error value 0.05 and positive low and high limits, is in a desired status.

Friedman test to grade factors affecting human force empowerment:

Table 5: Grading empowerment indices

Dimensions	Index	Grade Mean	Grading
Effective Personal Factors of Empowerment	Attitude	1.67	3
	Motivation	2.49	1
	Organizational Commitment	1.85	2
Effective Interpersonal Factors of Empowerment	Team Work	2.15	2
	Communications	1.60	3
	Participation	2.25	1
Effective Organizational Factors of Empowerment	Organizational Structure	6.42	1
	Organizational Culture	4.64	4
	Leadership Style	4.19	5
	Vesting Authority	5.30	3
	Training	3.88	6
	Clarity of perspective and Organizational Goals	3.65	7
	Job Enrichment	5.82	2
	Reward	2.10	8

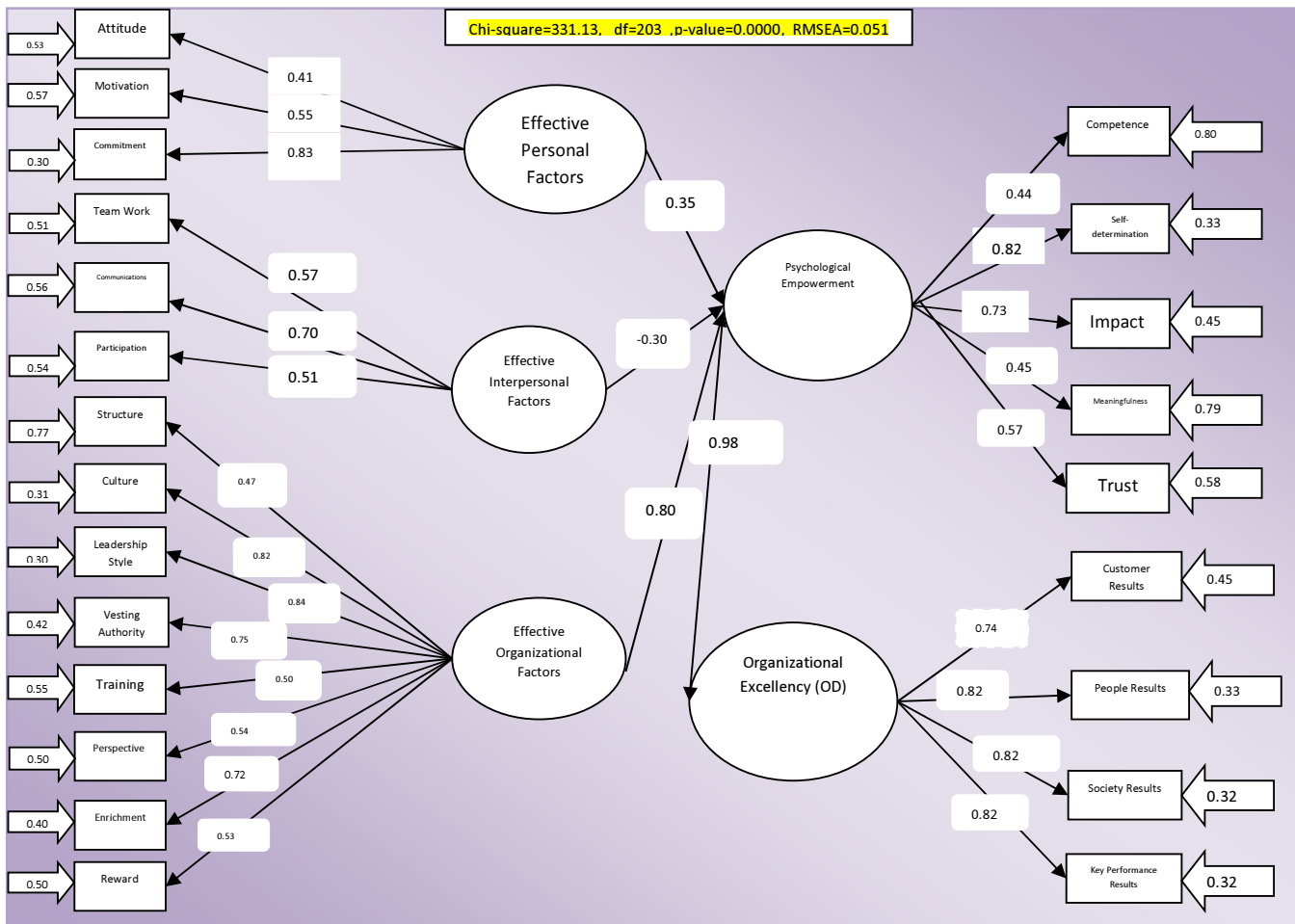## 7. Fitness of the Conceptual Model

Figure 3: Fitness of Conceptual Model

This analysis was carried out using structural equations as well as LISREL statistical software. According to the outputs of all indices had t-statistic greater than 1.96 value. Thus, none of them is excluded from the model. As observed in Figure 3, Chi-square value of freedom degree is smaller than 3. Furthermore, the value of RMSEA is 0.051 and smaller than 0.8 and indices AGFI, CFI, IFI, GFI, NFI and NNFI are greater or close to 0.90. The model has shown good fitness. Therefore, it is confirmed.

8.   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research was aimed at identifying factors affecting employees' empowerment in the direction of achieving OE. To achieve the aim, after studying scientific references and asking academic and organizational scholars, fourteen factors affecting empowerment were identified in the form of three general groups including personal, interpersonal and organizational factors using content analysis approach.

The results of this paper indicate that effective personal factors of empowerment affect psychological empowerment of human force significantly (confirmation of the first hypothesis). Some experts also have confirmed the effect of personal factors on the human force empowerment. For instance, the component of motivation by experts such as Bandora (1986), Conger and Cango (1988) and Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and the component of commitment by Carol (1995), Samres (2000) and Robbins (2002) and the component of attitude by Macher (1988), Jaffe and Scott (1991) and Quinn and Spreitzer (1997) were considered as factors affecting human force empowerment. Therefore and according to Friedman test' results for grading components of effective personal factors, it is suggested to the study organization that at the first stage, pay special attention to the motivational issues such as honoring active employees, granting organizational signs as well as rewards based on the performance in order to empower its employees. In the interview with customs' employees, disproportion between reward and performance as well as living conditions was the concern of most of them that should be taken into account by high-rank managers of the organization. Furthermore, the organization's managers should pay particular attention to job problems to increase commitment and organizational attachment feeling of the employees. In some units, the individual feel strange with his job and workplace and imagines that nobody pays attention to him as if he is not a member of the organization. Thus, responsible ones should compile regulations to receive and solve employees' job problems and should create organizational attachment and increase their commitment through making employees participated in solving these difficulties and developing strategies as well as making decisions. This issue, finally, results in changing individuals' attitude from "merely doing work" to "active presence in the work processes" and produces worthy results for the organization.

Results showed that effective interpersonal factors of empowerment do not affect psychological empowerment of human force significantly (non-confirmation of the second hypothesis).

Furthermore, results indicate that effective organizational factors of empowerment affect psychological empowerment of human force significantly (confirmation of the third hypothesis). Some of the experts also have confirmed the effect of organizational factors on the employees' empowerment. For example and according to the grading of effective organizational factors, experts such as Blanchard (1985), Jaffe and Scott (1991) Kinela (1995) considered organizational structure effective in human force empowerment. Therefore and according to results of Friedman test, it is suggested that customs organization should attempt to change organizational structure and move in a flexible structure. Renewed architecture of the organization and performing customs' preparation plan to integrate customs that are less active as well as renewed engineering many of the customs' processes results in eliminating many of the unnecessary units and lays the ground for the agility of the organization. In addition, due to the job variety of customs organization (considered as an opportunity) it is necessary that the responsible ones should consider job enriching programs and vesting authority to the employees. Increasing specialization and simplification of works in the customs through implementing Asikoda system have resulted in general monotony, tiredness, irritability and dissatisfaction. Thus, job circulation and vesting more authority to the experts in selecting evaluation path of goods can empower their mental capacity. To create empowerment feeling in the employees, they should feel that they are part of organization in which humanistic values are emphasized. Unfortunately, in spite of stating organizational values in the moral charter of customs' employees, there has been made no effort to implement it by some offices' managers. Managers of human resources management particularly, should make great effort in the publication of this culture among employees especially in ceremonies, introductions and more importantly at the beginning of their employment.

Finally, the results of the analysis showed that psychological empowerment of human force affect OE significantly (confirmation of the fourth hypothesis). Experts such as Kinela and Cardi have confirmed the relation of empowerment and constant improvement programs including TQM and OE and have considered the two as correlative for each other. In addition, Dawson (1998: 21) states that empowerment is the effective application of perceptions, empowering and encouraging employees for improving all processes and has a subtle relation with concepts such as Six Sigma and TQM. Thus, to achieve, OE of customs, it is necessary that dimensions of psychological empowerment should be reinforced using creating the feeling of effectiveness through specifying the role of each unit in achieving organizational goals, creating competence feeling through

honoring worthy services of creative and innovative employees, creating meaningfulness through maintaining a balance between job and job-occupying one, creating self-determinism feeling through granting independency to the employees in selecting job procedures and finally creating trust though the existence of consistence in managers' decisions.

Totally, the results of the research indicate that existing status of the organization regarding the variable of Excellency is undesired and the variable of psychological empowerment of human force is at a desirable level. Therefore, it is suggested that customs organization to move in the direction of Excellency take the following measures 1- developing strategy of human resources with the approach of psychological empowerment 2- improving customs' processes through renewed engineering of processes and creating e-customs and unified trade window 3- exchanging a protocol with neighbor organizations to facilitate in acquiring legal grounds of releasing goods through the customs 4- disciplined evaluation of satisfaction level of the customs' service-receivers 5- publication of information relevant to the taken measures in preserving of economic borders in Iran by Iranian customs.

Finally, it is suggested to the future researchers that due to the importance of the two issues of employees' empowerment and OE consider the feasibility of simultaneous implementation of employees' empowerment programs and OE in the governmental and private organizations. Furthermore, given that all empowerment models are presented irrespective of organizational change programs, it is recommended that presentation of empowerment model that results in OE should be taken into consideration in the future researches.

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