The Impact of Job Characteristics on Empowerment
Case Study: Second Period Teacher of High School in District Five of Tehran

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Abstract
The present study aims to investigate the impact of job characteristics on teacher empowerment. The research methodology is practical and is based on descriptive-survey. The population of the study includes 650 high school (2nd period) teachers in Tehran province region 5. The sample size (242 teachers) were chosen based on krejcey & Morgan table and the sampling method was cluster sampling. For data collection, two standard scales were used. First, the standard scale of job characteristics by Hackman and Oldham (1980), second, the standard questionnaire of psychological empowerment by Spritzer (1995). Data analysis was performed in two parts, measurement model and structural section, by structural equation modeling using Smart PLS. In the first part, the Technical characteristics of scale including reliability, validity, convergent and divergent validity were assessed and in the second part, significant coefficients of software were used for testing the hypothesis. The result of the study indicated the verification of the study hypothesis. It means that the job characteristics and its components influenced on teachers empowerment.

Key words: Job characteristics, empowerment, feedback, task identity

Introduction
The quality of empowerment of human resources is of important determinant of survival and the vitality of organizations. On other word, the importance of human resources is more financial and material resources far from new technologies. The empowerment of human resources, as a new approach to job intrinsic motivation, means releasing internal power in staff, providing required infrastructures and creating opportunities to efflorescence of talents, capabilities and competencies in individuals. In fact, it consisted if one’s realization of his own role in his job and organization (Abdollahi and Nave Ebrahim, 2006). In the management literature, the ideas of the empowered employees are considered as the main component of promotion of innovation, organizational adaption, improvement of customer relationship and employee satisfaction (Hasanpour et al., 2009). Hence, paying special attention to the concept of empowerment and related factors can contribute significantly to the development and implementation of empowerment in the organization. Job characteristics are of factors that are considered for identifying and evaluating the concept of empowerment. Moreover, job characteristics are one of the structural components that affect employees' empowerment (Maynard et al., 2012). Job characteristic nowadays is considered as an effective factor in employees’ life. Job characteristic refers to the job content. Job characteristics refer to the activities, tasks, duties and different dimensions of a job. Employees generally look for a job that is faced with challenge and they are completely responsible for that job and have sufficient authority to perform it (Bakhtiar Nasr Abadi et al., 2009). The job characteristics model firstly developed by Turner and Lawrence (1980). Then, Hackman and Laurence reviewed the model and the final version of the model was presented by Hackman and Oldham (1980) in five dimensions including skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback.

Skill variety: skills variety refers to the development of employees’ job requirements that utilize several skills or talents in order to carry out the job successfully (Dehghan et al., 2010). Hackman and Oldham (1980) stated that variety of skills consisted of the amount of work needs to perform various activities in order to use one’s different ability and skills in line with the job.
Task identity: It means carrying out a job from initiation to the end with an observable conclusion. In other words, job identity means that job assignments are determined in a way that the job is specified for the employee from initiation to the end, and the person has a comprehensive picture of the job assignments, so he is considered as an important part of the job (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

Task significance: The importance of job, which is known as job values in some of the researches, refers to the contact (collision) of a person with others (Dehghan et al., 2010). Job values are personal information that explains individual differences in behavior and work environment (Blickle et al., 2011).

Autonomy: It is the extent that the job can give freedom, independence and authority to a person during work planning and determination of work procedure. Degree of freedom means dependence and involvement of the person in setting the related working tables and method of work implementation (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). One of the challenges in our management is lack of delegation, means lack of autonomy in employees and its limitations and authority towards subordinates, which in some cases, especially absence of managers in the organization, leads to problems for the employees and clients (Hatami, 2012).

Feedback: It is the amount of work activities to obtain the results of one’s work through clear and direct information on its effectiveness (Faraji et al., 2008). Feedback is the level and degree that gives to the person as a result of doing his duties, and information on his performance effectiveness will be given to him directly (Pounder, 1999; Banai and Reisel, 2007).

On the other hand, empowerment is known as a tool that leads to the creation of motivational and behavioral behaviors and also leads to productivity (Ansari Ranani and Sabzi Ali Abadi, 2009). Empowerment is called to a process that managers help others through it in order to gain necessary power to make decision on affairs related to them and their work (Chang and Liu, 2008). Empowerment is related to different work behaviors including loyalty to the organization, efforts based on insights and employees' ultra-social behaviors (Chenevert and Tremblay, 2009). In fact, empowerment is a continuous and permanent process and is analyzed in a dynamic environment at different levels. Empowerment helps to leaders who want to create key changes in their organizations to exploit from the knowledge, skills, experiences and motivation of all of their employees (Zhang and Bartol, 2010). There are two different concepts for empowerment in the literature, structural and psychological. Structural empowerment is in connection with job design and job characteristics. In other words, structural empowerment emphasizes on organizational circumstances, while physiological empowerment concentrates on self-efficiency that is in connection with the realization of employees (Leach et al., 2003). In the case of psychological empowerment, the multidimensional model of Spritzer (1995) at individual level is more significant than the other models and its components are listed in the following.

Feeling significant: To valorize the objectives that are persuaded and these objectives are in conformity with the beliefs of employees, in other words, congruence between work objectives, beliefs and values of the employees.

Feeling of competency: Individuals' beliefs considering their skills in doing work activities

Feeling of self-determination: One’s sense of autonomy, behavior control and work procedures that reflects with choosing proper reaction.

Feeling of being effective: The amount of affecting environment and operational results (Hochwalder, 2008). The relationship between job characteristics and empowerment have been conducted in many researches, which are mentioned in the following briefly. Izadi Yazdan Abadi and Noushevar (2010) concluded in their investigation entitled “job characteristics of teachers and its relationship with empowerment” that there is a significant and positive relationship between empowerment and job characteristics. The results of a research conducted by Rajab Beigi et al. (2009) demonstrated that variables in relation with five factors of job identity, managers' leadership style, organizational culture, individual characteristics and organizational structure affect empowerment of scholars. Ebrahimpour et al. (2011) demonstrated in their investigation that there is positive and significant relationship between main psychological modes and organizational citizenship behavior, and job characteristics with combining two components of main dimension and sensitive mental conditions and organizational citizenship behavior. Shaemi Barzaki et al. (2013) studied the relationship between organizational culture and empowerment of employees and concluded that if the organizational culture is in line with the promotion of empowerment of employees, individuals do their duties more enthusiastic and with more motivation. Moreover, if we use the abilities of the employees, there are more possibilities for creativity and initiative. In similar foreign researches, Gange et al. (1997) in an investigation entitled “Proximal Job Characteristics, Feelings of Empowerment, and Intrinsic Motivation: a Multidimensional Model” concluded that job characteristics have positive and significant effect on the empowerment of employees. Kraimer et al. (1992) came to similar conclusion in their research and stated that job characteristics have direct relationship with the
empowerment of employees. Whetten and Cameron (2005) studied the factors affecting on psychological empowerment and stated that factors such as delegation, involvement, team-making, available information, modeling, appreciation and protection, trust and providing freedom in activities have significant effect on the empowerment of employees. Ugboro (2006) studied organizational commitment, job design and empowerment of employees. The result demonstrated that organizational commitment has direct relationship with empowerment. Debnath et al. (2007) studied the job design for educational courses in a school in order to develop motivation in the students based on Hackman and Oldham’s job characteristics. They stated that application of the model is effective in the design of the courses, and presentation of educational strategies leads to increase in the motivation of the students and appropriate realization of educational objectives. Pollack et al. (2000) and Wang and Lee (2009) declared that job characteristics affect empowerment and these two constructs lead to job satisfaction in the employees. According to Seibert et al. (2011), the impact of factors such as characteristics of self-assessment, field factors, job identity and job performance on empowerment is obvious. According to Asag-Gau and Dierendonck (2011), one’s conditions and his job characteristics play an important role in their psychological empowerment. Eventually, the results of a research conducted by Eib et al. (2014) demonstrated that realization of organizational justice and job characteristics have increased and multiple effects on work attitudes and health of employees. During the last two decades, the necessity of creation and development of job attitudes and empowerment of teachers has had significant importance in the ministry of education. Since teachers are people who have important impact of the development and progress of students and society, it is needed to provide strategies to have empowered teachers using job characteristics. Therefore, we are looking for answering to the following question in the present investigation. Has job characteristics impact on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran?

Based on the research literature and background, the research hypotheses and the conceptual framework of the research are mentioned in the following.

- Skill variety has impact on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran.
- Task identity has impact on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran.
- Task significance has impact on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran.
- Autonomy has impact on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran.
- Feedback has impact on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran.

![Figure 1: Conceptual model of the research (Oldham, 1980 & Spritzer, 1995)](image-url)
Methodology
Since the study tried to investigate the impact of job characteristic on teachers empowerment, so the purpose of the study is practical and the type of data collection is among descriptive-field studies. The participants of the study include 650 high school teachers (2nd training course) in Tehran region 5. According to Kerjcy & Morgan table, the sample size of 242 was chosen using cluster random sampling. The Hackman and Oldham’s scale (1980) with 18 items was used in order to measure the job characteristics and Spritzer’s scale (1995) with 20 items was used in order to measure the psychological empowerment. It should be mentioned that the measurement scale of both questionnaires is five points likert type (including very high, high, medium, low, very low). In present study, construct and content validity were used to determine the validity of questionnaires. The content validity was verified by scholars. Also to determine the construct validity, the structural equation model was used by Smart PLS. construct validity includes convergent and divergent validity, for convergent validity, AVE criterion (Mean, variance) was used and the results of AVE for each variable was above 0/5 which indicate that the convergent validity was verified. The calculated matrix indicated that the divergent validity verified too. Furthermore, to determine the reliability of questionnaires, Cronbach’s alpha and communality coefficient were used, the results of both indicators were above 0/7, so the reliability of the questionnaires was verified. The results of psychometric properties of variables shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>Ave</th>
<th>Cr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job characteristic</td>
<td>Skill variety</td>
<td>Hackman and Oldham (1980)</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Duty identity</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being meaningful</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Senses of being meaningful</td>
<td>Spritzer (1995)</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senses of competence</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senses of having the choice right</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senses of being effective</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senses of partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data were analyzed in the form of structural equation modeling by PLS software.

Findings
Here, the causal relationship between job characteristics and components of high school teachers’ empowerment in Tehran, region 5 are analyzed in the form of structural equation modeling. As shown in the bellow figure, the impact of job characteristics and its components on teachers’ empowerment is positive and significant. Following figure indicated the path coefficients for research variables.

Conclusion and Suggestions
The present investigation was aimed identify the Impact of job characteristics on empowerment in Second Period Teacher of high school in District Five of Tehran. Based on the results, it can be stated that there is a significant and positive Impact between job characteristics and empowerment of high school teachers. In other words, it can be expressed that more job variety, task identity, job value, job autonomy and job feedback in teachers, more motivation for learning in them and more empowerment consequently. It was demonstrated in many researches that individuals receive better feedback from jobs in which they have more authority and jobs that have greater diversity and they feel more responsible and significance in them. Therefore, they are more satisfied of those jobs and this leads to their empowerment and brings motivation for them (Izadi Yazdan Abadi and Noushevar, 2010). Hence, school administrations can consider job characteristics as important and effective factors in the empowerment of teachers and they can emphasize on them. The results of researchers such as Gang et al (1997), which concluded that different job characteristics can predict different components of empowerment, Kraimer et al. (1999), which stated that job characteristics including job significance, job autonomy and job feedback have relationship with psychological empowerment in different ways, Ugboro (2006), which concluded that there is significant
and positive relationship among job design, empowerment and organizational commitment, and also Wang and Lee (2009), Seibert et al. (2011) and Eib et al. (2014) who concluded that one of the factors affecting empowerment are job characteristics manage the hypotheses of the present investigation. Hence, the following suggestions are presented according to the obtained results of the research.

- Tasks should be combined in order to increase the variety of skills in teachers. It means that teachers should combine general and small tasks and create a new set of tasks, which is expanded and developed.
- It is proposed to the school administrations to walk towards the lack of uniformity and boredom in teachers’ works using their authorities.
- It is proposed to the school administrations to make the teachers familiar with empowerment and its prominent position in our society by holding related training courses.
- The school managers can provide the background of familiarity of teachers with occupational and organizational fundamental values by holding the related training courses.
- Occupational responsibilities should be delegated to the teachers so that they feel that they own their job.

References


