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## Study Effective Factors on Employees' Empowerment by a Model Based on Conger & Kanungo Model; Case Study: Social Security Organization of Bandar Abbas (Iran)

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#### **Abstract**

This research follows studying the effect of effective factors on empowerment that includes organizational conditions, management strategies and self-efficient resources on employees' empowerment in Social Security organization of Bandar Abbas. Goals of the research include: a) recognizing and prioritizing effective factors on employees' empowerment b) providing conditions to develop employees' empowerment c) presenting some solutions for employees' empowerment. In this research a questionnaire compiled based on Conger and Kanungo model is used. Three factors of organizational conditions, management strategies and self-efficient resources are as independent variables and employees' empowerment as dependent variable. Statistical society of the research includes 215 employees in Bandar Abbas Social Security organization. Performing statistical analysis on gathered data from statistical society and studying relationship between independent and dependent variables one by one it is determined that all factors of organizational conditions, management strategies and self-efficient resources effect on employees' empowerment directly and positively and finally increase organizational function.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Management Strategies, Self-efficient Resources, Organizational Factors

#### Introduction

Skillful and efficient human force is considered as the most important capital in all organizations. There are some reasons that show while having full natural resources in many countries they aren't able to use them for lack of deserved and capable human force; where as some societies in spite of inadequacy of natural resources follow the way of development for having efficient and empowered human force. In an organization human factors play role

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in improving function and performing organizational duties more than other factors and promoting quality and productivity, organizational growth and development depend on human factors. Human resources are considered as the most valuable factors of production, the most important capitals and the main resource of competitive advantage and producers of basic abilities and real wealth of every organization; so it is necessary to invest in order to recognizing talents, choosing and using deserved human forces in several levels of organizational jobs, function reliability, increasing skill, using effective policies and correct guidance of human force.

#### **Literature Review**

Developing human resources aren't resulted just by technical and specialized trainings, but several ways and strategic programs should be used in the area of human resources management. Successful organization is a combination of people with common organizational culture, thoughts and goals who share their experiences and knowledge with their manager by a group work in flexible system of organization and by a desire to develop organization increasingly; so everyone feels ownership to organization and what he/she performs as a duty. In individual productivity organization uses a set of one's potential talents and abilities to develop organization, so achieving organization goals needs to manage these valuable resources effectively (Agayar, 2007).

The fact is that if organizations lack creative, knowledgeable, on time and problem-explainer people, many opportunities and positions are lost. To promote organization and achieve its goals, employees' empowerment is a managerial necessity. Empowerment is a process in which improving function is helped continuously by developing and progressing people and teams, influence and abilities and it is followed by many important results for organization.

Conger and Kanungo present following reasons for paying more attention to empowerment:

- 1. Studying management skills show that subordinates' empowerment is an important part of organizational and managerial effectiveness.
- 2. Analyzing power and control in organizations show that sharing employees in power and control increases organizational effectiveness.
- 3. Experiences of forming group in organization show that employee' empowerment strategies play an important role creating and surviving group.

In Conger and Kanungo empowerment model several components are presented in the frame of organizational triple factors (organizational conditions, managerial strategies and self-efficient resources) affecting on employees' empowerment. According to this model empowerment factors are explained as following:

- 1. Organizational conditions: Rewarding system, determining goals, organizational structure and accessing employees to resources as organizational conditions (factors) should be designed in the way that provide some conditions in which employees are empowered.
- Clear goals: Having clear and challenged goals is a factor of preparing employees. Empowerment theorists (Queen & Spreetezr, 1997; Wetten & Cameron, 1998; Kanger & Kananga, 1998; Tomas & Lethos, 1990) in discussing organizational characteristics which facilitate employees' empowerment point to having clear and challenged goals as the first factor.

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- Accessing employees to resources: Necessary supports from official, technical, space, time and equipments points of view and providing several organizational resources which help people to do their tasks (Spreetezr, 1996).
- Function-based rewarding system: To empower employees in a proper rewarding system everyone's share should be determined. The aim of setting reward system is making motivation of development in one person or a group in order to improve their functions.
- Organizational structure: includes a set of methods based on which organization divides its work (job) to distinctive tasks and then incorporates them. In other words organizational structure is a framework of relationship between jobs, systems, operational processes and people and groups that try to achieve goal. Management authorities such as Scott & Jaffe (1991); Blanchard (1995); Conger & Kanungo (1998); Queen & Spreetezr (1997) consider organizational structure as an important effective factor on employees' empowerment.
- 2. Managerial strategies: Managers' measures and behaviors in the phase of providing information, delegate, participating in making decision, forming a team, making employees independent, ensuring, leading style, training and evaluating functions are called managerial strategies. Managers should make some conditions in which employees can do everything they want desirously and intentionally.
- Function evaluation: Function evaluation points to the process of evaluating and measuring systems' functions in certain periods as judged expectations and indexes for evaluated system are clear and pre-notified for it.
- Education: A continuous and permanent and also main and basic process by which manager can coordinate and compose employees' efforts using organization physical and material facilities and achieve organization goals.
- Delegate: a process by which manager sends decision makers the power of making decision. It is impossible that a manager can do all the works lonely to achieve organization goals. So he should donate them to employees; in this way employees should be empowered. Managers can't be successful for a long time without delegate and empowerment.
- Partnership management: means that employees share in the processes of making decision, programming, performing and the result of organization activities (Scott & Jaffe, 1991).
- Providing information: Obtaining information specially some information which play the main and strategic role in organization and can be used to make a power station, influencing and being followed by a person. In other side as managers give more information for employees, they feel empowered more (Wetten & Cameron, 1998).
- Team work (doing group works): Doing works in group is considered as the highest degree of appearing partnership management and is the main factor of empowerment (Scott & Jaffe, 1991).
- Independency: points to participate in making decision, influence and control job positions and freedom of action, explain idea and have right of vote (Denton et al., 2001).
- 3. Self-efficiency resources: Self-efficiency is derived from Albert Bandera's social cognition idea –famous psychologist- which points to one's beliefs and judges about his abilities to do tasks, duties and responsibilities. In other words self-efficiency is an effective power by which human cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral skills are organized to achieve goals effectively. Self-efficiency plays role by some determinants on human behavior. Following resources are described to make and change the system of important self-efficiency beliefs.

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- Modeling: points to observe others behaviors as models while doing tasks; in many activities people evaluate their abilities comparing others development.
- Supporting: is the third resource of making and reinforcing self-efficiency, verbal encouragement and/or one's received massages from social environment. It means that he is capable to do certain behaviors. Supporting means approving and accepting by managers and employees in organization and usually membership in organization networks (Spretizer, 2006:488).
- Emotional motivation: Personal self-efficient expectations of one person are influenced by his emotional motivation states and physiological states. People judgments about their abilities follow global states which are influenced by one's emotional and physiological states (Bandura, 2007:107).

Generally this research follows to study and prioritize the effective factors on employees' empowerment in Bandar Abbass insurance company by Conger & Kanungo empowerment model and presenting some solution to empower employees.

In this regard some research is presented as following:

Balnchard *et. al,* (1999) regard empowerment as one of the most hopeful meanings of business world. In their viewpoint empowerment allows managers to use knowledge, skill and experience of all organization people. Blanchard classifies empowerment to three stages: (Blanchard, 25:2003).

- 1. Information share;
- 2. Job autonomy and independency through organization;
- 3. Replacing self-directed teams instead of hierarchies.

A research was done by Queen Baird and Hivin Wang (2010) as "effective factors on employees' empowerment in trade unite of Australian factories. Every factor includes some subset that their effects on empowerment are studied. Results of the research explain that employees' empowerment rate in these units is average; cultural and organizational factors affect empowerment and finally he suggested some solutions to increase empowerment (Baird and Haiyin, 2010:574:599).

Mark Siegall and Suzan Gardner, in a research as "Structural factors of psychological empowerment" study the relationship between for structural factors related to empowerment (communication with director, general relation with firm, team work and paying attention to function) and four components of psychological empowerment (meaningfulness, effect, independence and merit) recognized by Spretzer. In this research 203 employees in a production company are studied. Results of the study explain that structural factors relate to dimensions of psychological empowerment differently. Communication with director and general relation to the firm relate to the aspects of empowerment, meaningfulness, autonomy and influencing. Being worried about function relates to meaningfulness and autonomy. Relationship between these components kind of job is different. Finally this research suggests several guidelines to empower employees (Siegall & Gardner, 2009:703-722). Bagali (2006) in a paper as "employees empowerment: a new strategy to increase function of workforce" emphasizes that empowerment and human resource management is regarded as abig part of organizational growth and development. Generally this paper is following to change theories of human resources management to empowerment culture and employees' ownership (Bagali, 2001:11-109).

"Leadership, empowerment and governmental organizations" is the title of David Pitts' paper that is going to design a model which explains why some managers follow employees' empowerment and some of them avoid it. He emphasizes that empowerment occurs as a part

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of general management reforms in public and private organizations. Research hypothesis about the role of individual and organizational variables is in examination phase. Results of the research provide some evidences about the relationship between race, education, human resources, job severity and empowerment (Pitts, 2005: 15-28).



Figure 1. Empowerment analysis model in present research

#### **Research Hypotheses**

*First main hypothesis:* Organizational conditions affect employees' empowerment in Social Security organization of Bandar Abbas.

Secondary hypotheses related to the first hypothesis:

- 1. Having clear goals affects employees' empowerment;
- 2. Accessing resources affects employees' empowerment;
- 3. Rewarding system affects employees' empowerment;
- 4. Organizational structure affects employees' empowerment.

**Second main hypothesis:** Management strategies in organization affect employees' empowerment.

Secondary hypotheses related to the second hypothesis

- 1. Function evaluation affects employees' empowerment;
- 2. Training affects employees' empowerment;
- 3. Delegation affects employees' empowerment;

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- 4. Cooperative management affects employees' empowerment;
- 5. Providing job information affects employees' empowerment;
- 6. Forming work group affects employees' empowerment;
- 7. Giving autonomy for employees affects employees' empowerment.

**Third main Hypothesis:** Self-efficiency resources (modeling- support- emotional motivation) in organization affect employees' empowerment.

Secondary hypotheses related to the third hypothesis

- 1. Modeling for employees in organization affects employees' empowerment;
- 2. Supporting employees in organization affects employees' empowerment;
- 3. Emotional motivation in organization affects employees' empowerment.

### **Methodology of Research**

Regarding that this research considers developing application knowledge in a special field, it can be placed in range of application researches. Based on the quality of getting needed data it can be placed in range of descriptive researches. While this research focuses on analyzing variables relationship, research methodology is of correlation one.

Descriptive research methodology is of correlation one.

Statistical population of the research includes employees in Social Security organization of Bandar Abbas. Regarding that statistical population of the research is limited, so all the statistical population is considered as statistical sample. Statistical population of the research includes 215 employees.

Instrument of doing research is questionnaire. To do this research demographic questionnaire, effective factors questionnaires and empowerment questionnaire are used.

To study questionnaires validity, ideas of related experts are used. Questionnaires validity is supported by done evaluation and measurement. Cronbach alpha method is used to measure questionnaires reliability. Alpha coefficient of effective factors questionnaire is 0.87. SPSS software is used in two levels of descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze obtained results.

#### **Analyzing Research Findings**

First main hypothesis: Organizational conditions affect employees' empowerment in Social Security organization of Bandar Abbas.

In this regard following statistical hypotheses are formed.

Zero assumption: organizational conditions don't relate to employees' empowerment.

Opposite assumption: organizational conditions relate to employees' empowerment.

To examine this hypothesis regression test is used

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

		Un standardized S Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.176	.093		12.624	.000
	organizational conditions	.563	.033	.757	16.909	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

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As observed meaningfulness number is less than 5 percent. As a result zero assumption is rejected and opposite assumption is approved. It means that organizational conditions affect employees' empowerment in Social Security organization of Bandar Abbas. Following we have tables of tests related to secondary hypotheses of this main hypothesis respectively: First secondary hypothesis: Having clear goals affects employees' empowerment.

Second secondary hypothesis: Accessing resources affects employees' empowerment.

Third secondary hypothesis: Rewarding system affects employees' empowerment.

Fourth secondary hypothesis: Organizational structure affects employees' empowerment.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

		Un Coefficien		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.157	.096		22.587	.000
	clear goals	.194	.032	.386	6.116	.000
2	(Constant)	2.093	.101		20.819	.000
	Accessing resources	.218	.034	.404	6.453	.000
3	(Constant)	1.928	.076		25.384	.000
	Rewarding	.310	.028	.599	10.912	.000
4	(Constant)	1.480	.064		23.155	.000
	Organizational structure	.469	.023	.809	20.095	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

As observed meaningfulness number is less than 5 percent. As a result zero assumption is rejected and opposite assumption is approved. It means that organizational structure, rewarding system, accessing resources and having clear goals affect employees' empowerment.

Second main hypothesis: Management strategies in organization affect employees' empowerment.

In this regard following statistical hypotheses are formed.

Zero assumption: management strategies don't relate to employees' empowerment.

Opposite assumption: management strategies relate to employees' empowerment.

To examine this hypothesis regression test is used.

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#### **Coefficients**<sup>a</sup>

		Un standardized S Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.246	.153		14.673	.000
	Management strategies	.156	.050	.211	3.145	.002

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

As observed meaningfulness number is less than 5 percent. As a result zero assumption is rejected and opposite assumption is approved. It means that management strategies affect employees' empowerment in Bandar Abbass insurance company. Following we have tables of tests related to secondary hypotheses of this main hypothesis respectively:

First secondary hypothesis: Function evaluation affects employees' empowerment.

Second secondary hypothesis: Training affects employees' empowerment.

Third secondary hypothesis: Delegation affects employees' empowerment.

Fourth secondary hypothesis: Cooperative management affects employees' empowerment.

Fifth secondary hypothesis: Providing job information affects employees' empowerment.

Sixth secondary hypothesis: Forming work group affects employees' empowerment.

Seventh secondary hypothesis: Giving autonomy for employees affects employees' empowerment.

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Following tables are secondary hypotheses tests outputs from software:

#### Coefficientsa

Ÿ		Un Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.760	.080		21.971	.000
	Function evaluation	.368	.030	.648	12.427	.000
2	(Constant)	2.437	.125		19.442	.000
	Training	.103	.044	.156	2.312	.022
3	(Constant)	2.658	.077		34.563	.000
	Delegation	.020	.024	.058	.854	.004
4	(Constant)	2.665	.074		36.202	.000
	Cooperative management	.018	.023	.055	.806	.021
5	(Constant)	2.700	.084		32.265	.000
	Providing information	.006	.025	.017	.244	.007
6	(Constant)	2.755	.124		22.190	.000
	Forming group work	.010	.034	.020	.291	.001
7	(Constant)	2.581	.092		28.141	.000
	Independency	.044	.028	.108	1.590	.013

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

As observed meaningfulness number is less than 5 percent. As a result zero assumption is rejected and opposite assumption is approved. It means that function evaluation, training, delegation; cooperative management, providing information, forming work group and giving independency for employees affect employees' empowerment.

Third main hypothesis: Self-efficiency resources affect employees' empowerment.

In this regard following statistical hypotheses are formed.

Zero assumption: Self-efficiency resources don't relate to employees' empowerment.

Opposite assumption: self-efficiency resources relate to employees' empowerment.

To examine this hypothesis regression test is used.

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### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

				Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.235	.126		17.735	.000
	Self-efficiency resources	.157	.040	.260	3.934	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

As observed meaningfulness number is less than 5 percent. As a result zero assumption is rejected and opposite assumption is approved. It means that self-efficiency resources affect employees' empowerment.

Following tables of tests related to secondary hypotheses of this main hypothesis are explained respectively:

First secondary hypothesis: Modeling for employees in organization affects employees' empowerment.

Second secondary hypothesis: Supporting employees in organization affects employees' empowerment.

Third secondary hypothesis: Emotional motivation in organization affects employees' empowerment.

Following tables are secondary hypotheses tests outputs from software:

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.590	.085		30.373	.000
	Modeling	.040	.025	.110	1.613	.008
2	(Constant)	2.496	.097	.163	25.745	.000
	Support	.074	.031		2.408	.017
3	(Constant)	2.218	.103	.327	21.568	.000
	Emotional motivation	.169	.033		5.051	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

As observed meaningfulness number is less than 5 percent. As a result zero assumption is rejected and opposite assumption is approved. Modeling, support and emotional motivation affect employees' empowerment.

#### **Discussion and Conclusion**

First main hypothesis: Organizational conditions effect employees' empowerment. Regarding the meaningfulness of T statistics it can be found that factors of organizational

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conditions effect employees' empowerment. As the results of research show this hypothesis is approved. This shows that managers regard some factors such as having clear goals, accessing resources, rewarding system and organizational structure specially. It is effective on achieving empowerment directly. Also using proper trainings for employees can be effective on empowerment increasingly; because, these conditions appear more in discussing organizational conditions. Behavior and behaving employees by managers are effective on empowerment and increasing their satisfaction and loyalty levels. Today, regarding the increase of organization customers' number and presenting the same services to customers and having same level of equipments in branches, employees don't involve depreciation and monotony and in several aspects are empowered (Mohagar & others, 2010). Other effective factor on employees' empowerment is presenting diverse services for employees. It seems that according to current economic conditions it is better to increase level of presenting modern services and presenting foreign services. Using communications services among unites and trying to present public services and using diverse services to increase benefits for customers can provide conditions to emerge better services for customers. Diversity of services in current system of country insurance company is so difficult so presenting complementary services such as information and insurance services for customers should be considered.

Other factor that has an effective effect on empowerment is rewarding system. As shown by beta coefficient it can be found that there is a prominent of percent of changes in organizational conditions in for which rewarding system is a subset. Paying attention to this important case is an effective factor on employees' mental level which can itself be a motive to increase cooperation among employees and is a useful factor to promote empowerment levels (Wilson, 1996:165).

Designing proper processes is another factor affecting empowerment levels. So, in this regard allocating suitable places for employees to present services should be pointed. This is as organization public relations which can be increasingly influenced by customer's mind and view. And based on customer satisfaction, employees' satisfaction of presenting services is regarded too (Wilson, 1996:166).

In viewpoints of some researchers such as Williams (2009); Mohavi (2001); David (2004) organizational conditions is an effective factor on employees' empowerment. In their researches these researchers indicate that organizational structure, function evaluation system and having organizational commission affect employees' empowerment. From the view point of them reward is in fact an instrument by which organization appreciates employees for their merit and encourage them to continue their job by appreciating and respecting them. Thrust and security is another effective important factor on empowerment that helps to employees' loyalty along with proper behavior with employees. Creating sense of security in employees and explaining criticisms in a responsible behavior by managers affects empowerment directly (Wilson, 1996:169).

Second main hypothesis: Management strategies effect employees' empowerment.

Regarding the meaningfulness of T statistics it can be found that management strategies effect employees' empowerment. This isn't so much, so instead of concentrating on management strategies which have a little effect on empowerment managers should pay attention to other problems to achieve high levels of empowerment in a short time. Making a suitable ground, management strategies provide some conditions in which managers can use employees' abilities and capabilities to do their tasks. Results of research show that these strategies are so effective on managers' empowerment.

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It is worth that organization assistant can review employees' and managers' commission and tasks in every level using ideas of experts and some managers in several levels and promote probable possibilities. Also some meetings and trainings are held by purpose of showing people job purposes and targets and the manner of doing them.

Providing resources is one of important management strategies.

Results of this research are across Bigali (2008); Beard (2010) research results. From their viewpoints managers who make big transitions get high degree of social support. In other words while having more social support, effectiveness is more. Empowerment strategies and techniques which provide feeling support for subordinates and crest a massive space of confidence and support will be effective on reinforcing belief.

Third main hypothesis: Self-efficiency resources effect employees' empowerment.

Regarding the meaningfulness of T statistics it can be found that self-efficiency resources effect employees' empowerment. Merit is a personal belief by which a person feels to do transformed tasks successfully; however three conditions needed for one's self-efficiency feeling include: (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficient people believe that they are able to do job; self-efficient people believe that are capable to try necessarily; self-efficient people believe that no external barrier prevent them from doing related job. In other words, as people develop self-efficiency feeling by having least skill and ability, being desired to do job and noting have big barriers for success, they will feel to be empowered.

Results of this research are along with research results of Andson (2006) and James (2007). In viewpoint of these researchers creating belief of self-efficiency in employees and transforming responsibilities to employees can increase employees' empowerment. But it is noticeable that training is of important necessities in organization employees and managers' self-efficiency.

#### Suggestions

Regarding all results of data analysis it can be accepted that results of this research are conformed to the results performed in and out of the country.

According to the effect of clear goals on employees' empowerment it is suggested that:

- a. Organization goals are compiled based on organization commission.
- b. Criteria related to achieving goals are compiled.
- c. Achieving goals rate is evaluated once six months.

According to high level effect of function evaluation on employees' empowerment following cases are suggested:

- a. Constancy of organization managers' behavior, speech and tendencies
- b. Using clear criteria to evaluate employees' functions.
- c. Using neutral criteria of evaluating employees' functions by managers.
- d. Manager's attention to employees' ideas and views.

According average and high level effect of function forming work group on employees' empowerment following cases are suggested:

- a. Improving environment for team function.
- b. Changing the role of middle managers from advisor and controller to the role of trainer aiming employees' growth and improvement.

Along with high level effect of employees' independency and freedom of action on employees' empowerment following cases are suggested:

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- a. Possibility of people participating in decisions related to job and job tasks in some cases such as choosing method of doing job and planning to do job
  - b. Possibility of employees' explanations about criteria of evaluating their functions.
  - c. Possibility of using personal creativity and judge to do job by employees.

According to high level effect of cooperative management on employees' empowerment as Spertizer points, in cooperative atmospheres employees' creativity, appreciation and freedom of action are high and in Conger & Kanungo's idea (19880, organizations that provide the possibility of employees' participation in making decision in several ways, their employees probably feel more empowerment.

So following cases are suggested:

- a. Necessity of manager's paying attention to employees' ideas, views and thoughts.
- b. Making the possibility of horizontal relationship among organization employees.
- c. Making the possibility of employees' participation in determining organization goals.
- d. Making the possibility of participating employees in improving methods of doing job and also possibility of evaluating transformed affairs development.

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