A STUDY OF THE RELATION BETWEEN EMPOWERMENT, JOB SATISFACTION, JOB STRESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF PETRO PARS COMPANY

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment is a mechanism to achieve participatory management and leads to the revealing of human potentials. Job satisfaction has been defined as the result of employees’ perceptions toward their job fields and descriptions. Job stress is an effective factor on proficiency; organization's efficiency and organizational commitment are views toward employees’ loyalty to the organization which are increased due to the employees’ participation. The aim of this research is to consider the relations among the mentioned variables and the relations among demographical characteristics (age, gender, and education level) with these four main variables of the research in order to improve the processes of empowerment, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, and decrease job stress in an organization. The statistical population of this research consists of the employees of the central office of Petro Pars Company (480 people) from which 270 people were selected as the sample, using simple random sampling method. Having been collected by several questionnaires, the required information has been analyzed using LISREL software, factor analysis statistical tests, regression model, one sample t-test, sign test, Friedman variance analysis, and Pearson correlation coefficient. The obtained results of this research showed that there was a significant relation between empowerment and organizational commitment; between empowerment and job satisfaction; and between empowerment and job stress. Besides, significant relations were observed between job satisfaction and organizational commitment; between job satisfaction and job stress; and between job stress and organizational commitment. In considering the relations of demographic characteristics (age, sexuality, and education level) with the variables, a significant relation was also observed between empowerment and organizational commitment with educational level and between job satisfaction and job stress with people’s ages.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Job stress, Organizational Commitment, Petro Pars Company

Competent and intelligent human task force is of the main indicators of an organization’s superiority over other organizations. The possession of specialized, loyal, and ambitious employees who are also consistent with values, parallel with organizational goals, and committed to maintain their membership in the organization are the growth and extension factors and of the main needs of every organization. The economists believe that human resources are the leading factors which determine the characteristics of social and economic progression trend of a society and an organization. Human resources are capable of causing change in the organizations, compressing the capitals, using natural sources and forming office, social, economic and political organizations. Human resources are an accumulative combination of general and specialized knowledge of the employees, leadership abilities, problem solving abilities, and risk taking; it can upgrade the visible assets of an organization with operational creativity and also activate the invisible assets.

Becoming away from traditional hierarchical structures and moving towards flexible and dynamic structures, current organizations have realized that human relations and social dynamisms are of great importance. Some organizations have recognized the solution as the implementation of empowerment programs and have attempted to set the education of empowered employees as their most important priority, besides correcting the effective variables on people’s feelings. Employees’ empowerment can be introduced as an effective strategy on performance and optimization of human force task. Empowerment, as a mechanism in reaching to participatory management, provides transferring responsibilities to teams and people. The power of knowledge and education and experience- oriented thinking can be effective in empowerment and play an important role in the prevalence of a learning culture. Involving the employees in work issues and allowing them to participate in management processes, focusing on creativity power and its employment, innovation, and the introduction of competent people and teams in most fields lead to the satisfaction of employees from their performances and their organizations.

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Considering the importance of human forces as the growth and progression factor of the organizations and the shortage of suitable human forces and also regarding the organizations’ needs to efficient human sources, organizations have to concentrate on issues such as empowerment, the creation of job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment of their employees in order to acquire the competitive advantage against their competitors and attracting their customers’ satisfactions. These are the issues whose ignorance usually leads to the creation of some major problems for the organizations. Those employees who regard themselves as the owners of the business feel the need to join the organization more than others. Many of the problems of the organization’s human resources can be solved through clearance an explicit attention to these kinds of problems.

RESEARCH VARIABLES

Empowerment

Empowerment is concept resulting from the existence or non-existence of empowering conditions and the multilateral learning of the employees in the organization which is revealed in the interpretation or the psychological reflection of the employees. In fact, empowerment is the perceptions and attitudes of employees towards workplace, colleagues, the organization situation and their organizational posts; it refers to the employees’ presences and participations in organizational decisions and work delegation which leads to the achievement of acceptable results in increasing proficiency (Bharnagar, 2007: 1782-1811).

Empowerment includes encouragement and skill progression to become self-reliant. Empowerment is an opportunity to become independent, create self-confidence, reach to excellence, and create the opportunity of improving the capabilities and skills of people. Empowerment concentrates on delegation from top to bottom in the organizational hierarchy, the provision of the necessary information and sources for the employees to join them with their activities, and the creation of a participatory structure in the organization (Sumi & Shreekumar, 2008: 148).

Empowerment refers to the quality of education to work with others in order to lessen the amount of dependency on the managers and is a function of authority, sources, information, and responsibility (Tubbs & Moss, 2000).

Empowerment = F (A, R, I, A)^2

Empowerment is an inner incentive state which is defined in relation with jobs and professions including 4 inner imaginations which show people’s desires towards their professional roles. These inner imaginations are: meaning, competency, effectiveness, and choice (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990: 666-681).

Empowerment is risk taking, growth, changes, understanding employees’ needs, team making, the encouragement of proper relations among colleagues, and trusting others in performing tasks; empowerment is the process of increasing personal, inter-personal, or political powers which enable them to improve their lives. In moving from indifference towards action four changes are required which include the increase of self-proficiency, the increase of awareness, the decrease of self-humiliation, and responsibility taking.

Empowerment as a process of power transfer improves people’s self-esteem through enabling them to recognize their capabilities, abilities, and powers and includes the recognition of the value of themselves and others (Ccubbin & Cohen, 2003: 126).

Empowerment Goal

The goal of empowerment is to transfer power to them and convert their potential abilities to actions, using the environmental elements, the employees’ characteristics and perceptions (Zimmerman, 1990: 169).

The goal of the employees’ empowerment is to make them know themselves as the owners of the business and understand completely the need to organizational belonging and dependency (Tannenbaum et al., 1991).

Empowerment Pivots

Empowerment pivots are 1) the direct relationship between the person and those they have to deal with; 2) colleagues, group members, persons in charge of supplies, and other people in the workplace; 3) high-level managers, especially the leadership methods, direction, and their attitudes; and 4) organizational systems, structures, and policies (Moheq, 1375: 68).

Empowerment Process

The employees’ empowerment is a process through which an empowerment culture improves and the ideals, goals and boundaries of decision making and the
results of their efforts will be shared in the whole organization. The process of empowerment can be summarized in 3 phases:

- Information sharing: information sharing starts with entrusting in the organization and breaking the traditional hierarchical thinking which results in the increase of the employees’ responsibility.
- Autonomy and independency in the whole organization
- Replacing the hierarchies with self-conducted teams: the advantage of self-conducted teams is in providing job satisfaction, attitude change, job commitment, the establishment of better relationship among the employees and managers, more proficiency in decision processes, the operation improvement, the reduction of costs, and organization proficiency (Fox, 1998)

Of the effective factors on empowerment, the following cases can be mentioned: delegation, access to information and sources, leadership method, responsibility, encouragement, the revealing of goals and views, control, team work, communications, organizational commitment, choice, job importance, competency, job meaning, trust, job enrichment, and participation (Hunjra et al., 2011).

**Empowerment Strategies**

Regarding the existential philosophy of the organizations and their characteristics, the employees and their roles, these kinds of strategies can be implemented. The three important strategies in employees’ empowerment are: the strategy of increasing the awareness through storytelling, the strategy of educating the skills of problem solving, and the strategy of educating supporting and resource equipment skills (Chadih et al., 2004: 97).

Empowerment leads to the creation of a distance between classic management implementations and results in the management styles and organizational cultures in which empowerment has been influential. The classic organizational culture which is based on empowerment has been presented and compared on the basis of different features in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From a Classic Hierarchical Culture</th>
<th>To an Empowerment Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>Demonstrating the perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command and control</td>
<td>Collaborative success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Team responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work trend processes</td>
<td>Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>Educators / Team Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Team Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing What Is Said</td>
<td>Possessing Their Own Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical Activities</td>
<td>Horizontal Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Current Skills</td>
<td>Improving the Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty- Orientation</td>
<td>Progression-Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having the Responsibility of Employees in a Limited Number</td>
<td>Having the Responsibility of Employees in a Large Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is defined as positive feelings expressed by people towards their professions; in fact, it is the amount of people’s positive and negative feelings about their professions. In other words, the concept of job satisfaction is considered as a personal feeling reaction to a job versus physical and social conditions (Keskin & Ceylan, 2007: 37).

Job satisfaction can become an auxiliary factor in the organization in order to maintain the consistency and continuance of the employees’ attempts create fair promotion systems, recognize the necessary management methods, measure the organization success amount in the current situation, and the employees’ empowerment (Newsome et al., 2008: 65).

The satisfactory feeling of establishing communication with others and job satisfaction have a close relation with the person’s life. A person who is able to establish a friendly relation with others feels more relaxation, happiness, and comfort. Working provides the person with conditions through which they can feel independency and competency (Twenge & King, 2005: 336).
Job satisfaction is a kind of mental understanding; in fact, it is defined as the quality of a person’s feeling towards the job factors related with job satisfaction (salary and benefits, promotion, communications, supervision, collaboration, etc.) (Rowden & Conine, 2005: 215).

Job satisfaction is the person’s total feelings toward a job, which is different in different people and times (Chung et al., 2003: 294).

Regarding productivity, job satisfaction causes a behavior in the person which influences the human performance and improves it (Rowden & Conine, 2005: 215).

The Effective Factors on Job Satisfaction

Considering the different categorizations in the field of the effective factors on job satisfaction, some of the most effective factors are mentioned below:

Wage: the results of different studies show that salary and wage are of the effective factors on people’s job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2003: 176).

Personal growth and promotion: usually, the employees prefer the jobs through which they can use the present opportunities to increase their skills and abilities (Robins, 1382: 46).

Management: making people productive, maintaining the proper working conditions and keeping the resources together are of management skills in creating productivity in the organization (Dennis, 2002: 14).

Supervisory: all the organization’s employees need supervisory and they expect to be guided in their performances. The relations between the managers and the employees are established through supervisory (Mahdad, 1381: 105).

Relationship with colleagues: as most employees believe, the workplace must satisfy the social needs of the people. Therefore, it is not surprising to say that having close and friendly colleagues can increase job satisfaction (Robins, 1381: 298).

There is a close relation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Since the profession is one of the important aspects of a person’s life, the acceptance of the fact that their lives are influenced by their job experiences seems logical. Low job satisfaction is not only considered in organizational viewpoint, but also it can go beyond organizational borders and influence people’s life satisfaction and self-confidence (Saari & Gudge, 2004: 399).

An overview of the performed researches in this field reveals that those who are satisfied with their lives experience fewer conflicts in their personal and professional lives; have less job stress and more job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2004: 632).

Job Stress

Eastern philosophers have defined stress as the lack of inner peace, while western philosophers have defined it as the loosing or lack of control (Seaward, 002:4).

Generally, stress refers to the person’s experimental quality which results from the environmental reactions. The person suffers from psychological and physical troubles due to over stimulation or low stimulation (Ornish, 1990: 67).

The mutual actions between job conditions and the person’s personal characteristics are such that the workplace expectations (and therefore, their related stress) are more than what a person can tolerate (Khajepour, 1377: 21).

The Effective Factors on Job Stress

The first category of role stressors: as Kan et al., (1964) and Beehr (1987) believe, role stressors are role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, skills non-employment, the non-sufficiency of the resources, and the lack of participation (Scheib, 2004:2).

French and Caplin (1973) believe that these stressors are: quantitative overload, qualitative overload, role underload, role conflict, and role ambiguity (Carlisle, 2003: 3-4).

The second category of working conditions which result in stress includes the lack of proper job design and the creation of opportunities to express creativity, management style, inter-personal relations, job roles, professional concerns, and environmental conditions (NIOSH, 1999:7).

Stress Management

Harmful stresses are inevitable, therefore, people can resort to some actions in order to avoid and decrease these stresses. Stress management has 3 phases:
Phase 1: the primary avoidance

In this phase, the stressful factors such as job demands, role, and personal mutual relations are recognized and the necessary attempts will be performed.

Phase 2: the secondary avoidance

This is a phase in which people’s or organizations’ reactions towards stressful factors are balanced or changed.

Phase 3: avoidance in the final phase

In this phase, regarding the personal or organizational harmful stress signs, some attempts are done to improve the situation.

The personal harmful stress signs are behavioral, physiological and treatment problems and organizational harmful stress signs are direct and indirect costs imposed on the organization (Moqimi, 1385: 440).

**Organizational Stress Management**

The following attempts are useful to avoid organizational stress: job redesign, goal setting, and social support systems (Moqimi, 1385: 441).

As was stated, nervous stress is a physical and mental situation which influences proficiency, profitability, person’s health, and working quality. The quality of professional life and job satisfaction of those who suffer from professional nervous stress or job stress will be decreased. The harmful and costly results of job stress make the determination and the recognition of the required strategies of limiting the sources of nervous stress factors necessary. Those companies who do not design and implement the required strategies to avoid the occurrence of nervous stress make their employees search for better opportunities (Savery& Luks, 2001: 104).

**Organizational Commitment**

There have been many definitions on organizational commitment. It is often recognized as:

1- A strong desire to survive in a special organization
2- A desire to perform too much effort for the organization
3- The possibility of accepting the organization’s values and goals (Cohen, 2005: 5-31).

Organizational commitment is of great importance in organizations. The employees attempt to maintain the quality and optimally use the resources in workplaces; they tolerate the imposed challenges by the renewal of the organization with high emotional commitment; and those employees who have more emotional commitment show more tolerance against professional fatigues and unfriendly conditions of the workplace (Laschinger et al., 2001: 7 – 23).

**The Effective Factors on Organizational Commitment**

The effective factors on the organizational commitment have been investigated by many researchers, some of which will be stated below:

A- Personal factors: such as age, sexuality, education level, job background, comfortability, competency, job satisfaction, etc.

B- Professional factors: such as job dependency, role ambiguity, role conflict, job nature, job challenge, etc.

C- Organizational factors: such as socialization, organizational culture, participation, leadership style, communicational structure, etc.

D- Over-organizational factors: such as the alternative job opportunities, job and organization social bases, social relations, family interests, the geographical location of the job, etc. (Asgari, 1381: 252 – 257).

**Knowing Petro Pars Company**

Petro Pars Company has been registered by the Oil Investment Company following the enactment of the supreme council in 1376 and formally starts its activities in the fields of engineering and the provision of specialized human resources; the implementation of constructions and oil and gas installations; coast and over coast excavations; exploration; the improvement and the production of gas and oil; conjecturing; seismology; and petrochemical activities. Its central office is in Tehran and its oil and gas operational units are in Asalouye. Petro Pars is an efficient, economic and specialized company which performs in harmony with the stabilization of the universal position of exploration and exploitation of oil and gas resources. Currently, 100 percent of the shares of Petro Pars Company belong to Nikoo Company, which is a dependent company of the national oil company of Iran (Petro Pars Company, talents, capabilities, achievements, 66:81).
The Theoretical Framework of the Research

Considering the importance of the recognition of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, organizational commitment, its function and their influences on the organization’s employees, the following model has been designed and presented:

![Model Diagram]

**Figure 1: The Presented Model in the Present Research**

**RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

The hypotheses of the present research are made up two parts:

- **A)** The hypotheses related to the present variables in the research model
  1. There is a significant relation between empowerment and organizational commitment.
  2. There is a significant relation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.
  3. There is a significant relation between job stress and organizational commitment.
  4. There is a significant relation between empowerment and job satisfaction.
  5. There is a significant relation between job satisfaction and job stress.
  6. There is a significant relation between empowerment and job stress.

- **B)** The hypotheses related to the descriptive statistics part

Considering the demographic parameters (age, sexuality, and education level) with the parameters of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment creating 12 relations, we will have the following hypothesis:

There is a significant relation between demographic characteristics (age, sexuality, and education level) with the parameters of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment.

**The Aim of the Research**

The aim of this research is to investigate the relation between empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment of the employees of the central office of Petro Pars Company in Tehran.

**The Domain of the Research**

Time domain: the process of data collection for this research started in Azar, 1387 and ended in Aban, 1388. It must be noted that the used data of this research is related to Tir, 1388 until the half of Mordad.

The Location Domain: this research was performed in the central office of Petro Pars Company in Tehran.

The Topic Domain: the topic of this research is to investigate the relation between empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment.

**REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**

Considering the performed researches and studies of the journals, books, internet sources and local theses (regarding the possible time and location possibilities), no literature or document stating the study of this topic was observed. It is hoped that researches on integrative issues interest the interested researchers and become a source for future researches. As was mentioned, it is the first time that the four variables of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment have been simultaneously considered in an integrative model. Unlike what students may believe that many of the old topics such as job satisfaction cannot be worked on, this belief must be internalized that new innovations and ideas can be created for researches, using creativity and innovations, and acceptable results can also be made.

It must be reminded that the individual consideration of these variables is possible and many researches have been performed on them. The combination of these four variables with the proposed model, however, has not been observed. The literature review of more than two of these variables can rarely be found in Iran and there are no local similar studies in this regard. It must also be noted that the considerations and investigations of the researchers found no similar foreign...
sample of this research with this integrative model, whose relations are considered mutually.

RESEARCH METHOD

Since this research aims at the determination of the mutual relations between empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment, it is an applied research in terms of its goal, and is a correlation descriptive one, in terms of data collection.

The Population and the Statistical Sample Size

The statistical population is the total of people or units having at least 1 common feature (Sarmad et al., 1376: 178). In other words, the population consists of all the elements by which the research topic is formed. The statistical population of this research includes all the employees of the central office of Petro Pars Company (except the managers and personnel of the services part) in Tehran, which is 480 people. In determining the sample size, having studied different statistical sources and research methodologies in social sciences, Cochran’s guideline was used, regarding the logicity of the formulation (Rafi’pour: 377, 383). Therefore, the sample size was calculated as 270 people using simple random sampling.

Data Collection Methods

The required data for this research has been collected in two ways:

1- Qualitative information: this data has been collected by referring to research centers, libraries, publications, and research findings.

2- Quantitative information: this data has been collected through questionnaire, which is one of the main tools of data collection. In this section, the questionnaire has been distributed to collect data and analyze the gathered information. In order to formulate the research questionnaire, four kinds of questionnaire have been used which are:

- Empowerment questionnaire of the model presented by Kachiop (1998)
- Job satisfaction questionnaire of the model presented by Minesota
- Job stress questionnaire of the model presented by Rizo et al. (1970)
- Organizational commitment questionnaire of the model presented by Mir Vey Alen (1984)

Having consulted with the managers of human resource unit which has defined the selective measures of the employees of this organization within 10 years and also having discussed with some of the employees and distributed these four questionnaires individually and analyzed the variances of the obtained data, the questions of the main questionnaire were formulated on the basis of the questions which had more chance of being selected.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is one of the technical features of measurement; it tells us to what extent the similar results will be obtained under similar conditions (Bazargan, 1376: 167). In other words, reliability is a measuring instrument to re-measure the feature in question with the same instrument (or a similar and comparable one) under the same conditions to see to what extent the obtained results are similar, precise, and reliable (Homan, 1374: 228). The accuracy of the obtained results cannot be trusted without the awareness of the reliability of the measuring instrument.

In the present research, Cronbach Alpha method has been used in order to calculate the reliability of the questionaire. This method is used in order to calculate the inner coordination of the measuring instrument such as questionnaires or the tests which measure different features. Having used Cronach Alpha method, the research reliability was determined as 8.53 using Lisrel software. To do so, the primary sample included 30 pre-test questionnaires; then, the amount of reliability coefficient was calculated as 92 for all the questions and for every variable of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment, the values of 80, 83, 85, and 85 were calculated respectively, using the obtained data and the statistical software. These values show that the used questionaire had the necessary reliability.

The validity of the questionaire means that the measuring instrument can measure the feature in question, and not other features. There are different ways to measure the validity, from which the researcher has used content validity. Validity of a test’s content is usually determined by specialized people in the related fields; therefore, the content validity depends on the judges’ judges (Bazargan et al., 1376: 170).
The content reliability of this questionnaire has been confirmed by the supervisor and some of the experts in the field and its reliability have been proven.

**Statistical Analysis Methods**

In this research two methods of descriptive and inferential have been used in order to analyze the collected data. In the descriptive method, central index frequency test (mean, frequency, frequency percentage, tables, and diagrams) has been used. In the inferential statistics, factor analysis and the inverse matrix were used to interpret the factors of the four variables of the research.

Then, regression test was used to present a model to find out about the role and position of empowerment, job satisfaction, and job stress on the organizational commitment; and one-sample t-test was used to investigate the conditions of the research variables. Besides, the investigation of the variables and their parameters was performed through Friedman variance analysis and ranking mean. In addition, Pearson Correlation Coefficient and the significance test of the correlation coefficient were used to investigate the research hypotheses and the correlation amount of the demographic variables (age, sexuality, and education level).

**THE RESEARCH RESULTS**

Having analyzed the exploratory factor analysis of the first phase, the following results have been obtained:

Eight variables were selected for the empowerment variable whose names have been detected by the concept and names of the questions in the factor in question. The obtained factors are delegation, access to information and sources, responsibility, leadership method, encouragement (reward), participation (team work) and communications. Moreover, these eight factors demonstrate about 70 percent of the empowerment variance which in fact, shows the validity percentage of empowerment questions.

Five variables were selected for job satisfaction variable. The obtained factors are respectively working, supervisor, colleague, promotion, and payment. Besides, these five factors demonstrate about 74 percent of the job satisfaction variance which in fact, shows the validity percentage of job satisfaction questions.

Six variables were selected for job stress variable. The obtained factors are role ambiguity, role conflict, environmental conditions, role overload, role underload, and non-participation, respectively. In addition, these six factors demonstrate about 81% of the job stress variance which in fact, shows the validity percentage of job stress questions.

Four factors were selected for organizational variable. The obtained factors are personal factors, professional factors, organizational factors, and over-organizational factors, respectively.

In order to measure the significances of the variables of empowerment, job satisfaction, and job stress on the organizational commitment, regression model was used, on whose basis, three of the mentioned variables were measured as the independent variable and the organizational commitment variable was measured as the dependent variable. The obtained results have been presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Regression Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment</th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Job Stress</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.792</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td>-0.745</td>
<td>0.383</td>
<td>14.787</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

where

Independent Variables: empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress

Dependent variable: organizational commitment

Regarding the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05), the assumed model with the independent variables of empowerment, job satisfaction, and job stress and the dependent variable of organizational method is a significant model.

Regarding the obtained values, it can be said that the variables of empowerment, job stress, and job satisfaction, respectively had the most effect on the variable of organizational commitment.

Besides, regarding the positivity of the variables of empowerment and job satisfaction, it can be said that these two variables have a positive and direct influence on the organizational commitment. It should also be
reminded that the variable of job stress has an inverse relationship with the variable of organizational commitment, due to its negativity.

According to the obtained results in the investigation of the relation between organizational commitment as the dependent variable and empowerment, job satisfaction, and job stress as the independent variables, the following function is presented: Organizational Commitment = f (Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Job Stress)

In order to investigate the suitability or unsuitability of the conditions of the research variables, first, the numerical values’ mean of the research questions were calculated for each of the repliers and then, one-sample t-test was used.

Table 3: The Results of One-Sample t-Test in Investigating the Conditions of the Research Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error of Mean</th>
<th>T-Statistics</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>3.915</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>55.948</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>22.078</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>3.683</td>
<td>0.570</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>19.631</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>3.676</td>
<td>0.647</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>17.125</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the obtained significance levels of the variables (Sig < 0.05), it can be said with 95% of certainty that the central office of Petro Pars Company is in a suitable situation in terms of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress and organizational commitment.

Then, Friedman variance analysis test was used to investigate the priority of the research variables and the priority of their parameters.

Table 4: The Results of Friedman Variance Analysis Test to Prioritize the Variables and their Parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Comparison of the Conditions</th>
<th>The Amount of Chi-Square</th>
<th>Freedom</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Variables</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>39.101</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment Parameters</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>478.173</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction Parameters</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>386.219</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress Parameters</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>84.418</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment Parameters</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>151.717</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the obtained significance levels (Sig < 0.05) for the variables and their parameters, there are differences between the conditions of the four research variables; these factors can be prioritized in terms of the current conditions on the basis of the obtained ranking means of Friedman Test, which are 2.92 for empowerment, 2.42 for job stress, 2.36 for organizational commitment, and 2.30 for job satisfaction.

Regarding empowerment, the following prioritization was obtained: 5.96 for responsibility, 5.49 for education, 5.41 for access to information and sources, 5.21 for delegation, 4.11 for collaboration, 4.94 for reward, 3.00 for communications, and 2.87 for leadership method.

The related factors with job satisfaction are prioritized as: 4.18 for working, 3.48 for colleague, 3.13 for supervisor, 2.12 for promotion, and 2.09 for payment.

The related factors with job stress are prioritized as: 3.99 for role ambiguity, 3.79 for non-collaboration, 3.49 for role underload, 3.46 for environmental conditions, 3.44 for role overload, and 2.82 for role conflicts.

The related factors with organizational commitment are prioritized as: 3.97 for professional factors, 2.95 for organizational factors, 2.89 for personal factors, and 2.63 for over-organizational factors.
Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was used to test the research hypotheses whose results have been presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: The Results of Pearson Coefficient Test to Investigate the Relation between the Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Empowerment</th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Job Stress</th>
<th>Organizational Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress</td>
<td>-0.813</td>
<td>-0.720</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>-0.819</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the coefficients are significant at the certainty level of 95%.

1- Having tested the first research hypothesis stating that there is a significant relation between empowerment and organizational commitment, the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05) proves that there is a significant relation between empowerment and organizational commitment.

Regarding the positivity of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be said that this is a direct relation; it means that the increase of empowerment in the central office of Petro Pars Company leads to the increase of organizational commitment. It must be noted however, that the relation between organizational commitment and empowerment was investigated due to the model’s emphasis on the reciprocity of the relations and the capability of LISREL software in measuring reciprocal relations. The objective similarity of the obtained values with those of the obtained table demonstrate a positive relation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which shows that the increase of organizational commitment leads to the increase of job satisfaction; therefore, the second hypothesis is supported.

2- Having tested the second research hypothesis stating that there is a significant relation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05) showed that there is a significant relation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Considering the positivity of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be said that this is a direct relation meaning that the increase of job satisfaction in the central office of Petro Pars Company leads to the increase of organizational commitment. It must be noted however, that the relation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction was investigated due to the model’s emphasis on the reciprocity of the relations and the capability of LISREL software in measuring reciprocal relations. The objective similarity of the obtained values with those of the obtained table demonstrate a positive relation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which shows that the increase of organizational commitment leads to the increase of job satisfaction; therefore, the second hypothesis is supported.

3- Having tested the third research hypothesis stating that there is a significant relation between organizational commitment and job stress, the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05) shows that there is a significance relation between job stress and the organizational commitment. Considering the negativity of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be said that this is a reverse relation meaning that the reduction of job stress in the central office of Petro Pars Company leads to the increase of organizational commitment. It must be noted however, that the relation between organizational commitment and job stress was investigated due to the model’s emphasis on the reciprocity of the relations and the capability of LISREL software in measuring reciprocal relations. The objective similarity of the obtained values with those of the obtained table demonstrate a positive relation between organizational commitment and job stress, which shows that the increase of organizational commitment leads to the decrease of job stress; therefore, the third hypothesis is supported.

4- Having tested the fourth research hypothesis stating that there is a significant relation between empowerment and job satisfaction, the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05) shows that there is a significant relation between empowerment and job satisfaction. Considering the positivity of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be said that this is a direct relation meaning that the increase of empowerment in the central office of Petro Pars Company leads to the increase of job satisfaction. It must be noted however, that the relation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction was investigated due to the model’s emphasis on the reciprocity of the relations and the capability of
LISREL software in measuring reciprocal relations. The objective similarity of the obtained values with those of the obtained table, demonstrate a positive relation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which shows that the increase of job satisfaction leads to the increase of empowerment; therefore, the fourth hypothesis is supported.

5- Having tested the fifth research hypothesis stating that there is a significant relation between job satisfaction and job stress, the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05) shows that there is a significant relation between job satisfaction and job stress. Considering the negativity of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be said that this is a reverse relation meaning that the increase of job satisfaction in the central office of Petro Pars Company leads to the decrease of job stress. It must be noted however, that the relation between job stress and job satisfaction was investigated due to the model’s emphasis on the reciprocity of the relations and the capability of LISREL software in measuring reciprocal relations. The objective similarity of the obtained values with those of the obtained table demonstrates a negative relation between job stress and job satisfaction, which shows that the decrease of job stress leads to the increase of job satisfaction; therefore, the fifth hypothesis is supported.

6- Having tested the sixth hypothesis stating that there is a significant relation between empowerment and job stress, the obtained significance level (Sig < 0.05) shows that there is a significant relation between empowerment and job stress. Considering the negativity of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be said that this is a reverse relation meaning that the increase of empowerment in the central office of Petro Pars Company leads to the decrease of job stress. It must be noted however, that the relation between job stress and empowerment was investigated due to the model’s emphasis on the reciprocity of the relations and the capability of Lisrel software in measuring reciprocal relations. The objective similarity of the obtained values with those of the obtained table demonstrates a negative relation between job stress and empowerment, which shows that the decrease of job stress leads to the increase of empowerment; therefore, the sixth hypothesis is supported.

In order to investigate the relation between demographic features and the research variables, Pearson correlation coefficient was used whose results have been presented in table 6.

Considering the obtained significance levels, relations with numbers of 3, 4, 7, and 12 (Sig < 0.05) out of the present 12 relations were accepted.

There is a positive and direct relation between empowerment and organizational commitment with education level, while there is a negative and inverse relation between job stress and people’s ages.

### Table 6: The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient Test to Investigate the Relation between Demographic Characteristics and Research Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Sample Number</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Age / Empowerment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>0.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sexuality / Empowerment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Education / Empowerment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Age / Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>-0.189</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sexuality / Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Education / Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Age / Job Stress</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>-0.138</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sexuality / Job Stress</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Education / Job Stress</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>-0.056</td>
<td>0.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Age / Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sexuality / Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Education / Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESEARCH LIMITTION**

There are some limitations to this research like other researches which should be taken into account.

The limitations of this research can be summarized as below:
• Limitations in generalizing the results to other populations

The results of this research are merely applicable on the population from which the sample has been selected; therefore, the generalization of the results to other organizations and centers must be performed with care.

• Limitation due to the validity of the research instrument

In this research, questionnaire was used in order to measure the research variables. These questionnaires were focused on collecting the repliers’ views; therefore, care must be taken in the interpretation of the obtained results due to the limitations of questionnaires’ validity.

• Limitation due to the main data collection instrument of the research

The problem of the main data collection instrument (i.e. the questionnaire) which exists in most of surveys may happen to this research. Being boring and considering the questionnaires shallow as a repetitive instrument for the participants of such researches are of other concerns of the researchers which were attempted to be compensated through pluralism in the research method and employing complementary methods (such as interview, observation, and library studies).

• Limitation due to the quality of answering the tests

The repliers’ loyalty and honesty in selecting the options are of other limitations which can influence the research results; it might result from the repliers’ concerns in the revelation of their opinions and secrets.

• Limitations due to the effect of interventionist variables

The researcher could not control the other variables; therefore, the researcher has some limitations due to the conditions of performing the research. In the present research, like other researches, problems such as time limitation, too much costs, and lack of equipments have existed.

CONCLUSION

The researcher formulated a conceptual model in investigating the research hypotheses whose variables were empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment.

In successful organizations, some investments are done on the employees in order to increase and improve their attitudes, abilities, and experiences to compete in today environment. As a result, it is concluded that the empowerment of human task force is an organizational necessity which must always be taken into account by the managers. Therefore, managers must properly detect their incentive factors to increase the productivity of the working task force and attempt to align this power with the organization’s goals. Paying attention to job satisfaction, the reduction of job stress, creating job security, etc. are the issues which are of great importance from employees’ viewpoints. The creation of organizational commitment is also a very important factor, since the committed human task force who feels belonging to the organization, regards the organization’s goals as their own, and does their best in achieving them. In this research, the researcher tried to investigate the relations between the variables of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, organizational commitment, and the reciprocal effects of these variables on each other. Besides, the relation of the demographic characteristics of the employees with the mentioned variables was also investigated, due to the importance of human resources as the most important asset of knowledge and thinking.

The research results show that the four variables of empowerment, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment are in a proper situation in the central office of Petro Pars Company.

The six main hypotheses of the research were supported and the relations between empowerment and organizational commitment with education level in a positive and direct direction, and job satisfaction and job stress with people’s ages in negative and reverse direction were also confirmed. Petro Pars Company can use modern management approaches to provide conditions to improve the research variables and their parameters.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES

The improvement of empowerment: the increase of the participation of all the employees in the process of empowerment, the creation of systemic thinking through the creation of an organizational collaborative perspective, paying attention to creativity and innovation in the workplace, goal- oriented management in order to recognize performance standards, the increase of employees’ capacities to enable them to create value.
added in the organization, and the prevalence of organizational learning culture on the basis of teamwork.

The improvement of job satisfaction: the creation of a measuring system and monitoring job satisfaction, paying attention to the employees with the aim of improvement and progression, paying attention to competency-centered system, strengthening the employees’ communications, the growth of employees’ self-control, and paying attention to the supportive leadership style from managers.

The reduction of job stress: the reduction of personal harms, the creation of a positive and desired organizational emotional environment, the creation of mutual collaboration among the employees and supervisors, and the improvement of job security.

The improvement of organizational commitment: paying attention to job enrichment, and the creation of the feeling of responsibility in relation with personal results in employees.

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