

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT OF INDUSTRIAL FIRMS IN ARDABIL

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Abstract

The present study is to analyze relationship between short-term training (in-service) and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. The study is correlational. The population of this study is Ardabil city industrial firm's employees that were 2000. We determined the amount of the sample size with the used of Cochran sampling method which the statistical sample is 218 of these employees which have been selected through the Stratified random sampling in 24 classes. To gathering of data, we used a questionnaire. All the reliability and validity of measures has examined. Questionnaires reliability was estimated by calculating Cronbach's Alpha, it was 0.72. In order to analyze the data resulted from collected questionnaires deductive and descriptive statistical methods are used, and to display some statistical data we used column diagram and in deductive level to test the hypothesis of the research we used Pearson correlation coefficients. Findings show that the perceptions of short-term training (in-service) and its dimensions (Justification Training, Career Education, General Education and Improve management) have coefficient relationship with employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

Keywords: Justification Training, Career Education, General Education, Improve management, employee empowerment

INTRODUCTION

Training is one of the most complex duties in administration of any organization and especially in human resource management. After the absorption system, there is the improvement system and the proper use of human resources. In fact, education is one of the most important actions and programs of any organization; and education system is the complementary for employment system, leads to staff empowerment, and guarantees the future successes.

Training and improvement leads to deeper insights, higher knowledge, and more abilities and skills in people working in the organization to do their duties, and as a result leads to achieving the organizational goals with much more efficacy and output. Nowadays no organization is able to improve itself without training its employees. Both the small and large organizations devote their main sources to training and improvement of human resources, and for some companies education is a continual activity, which all the employees are interested in, and all the employees enjoy different forms of training during their tenure.

As a matter of fact, effort and money spent on education, raises three questions. First of all, what is education for? Second, what is the purpose of education? Third, how are the results of education evaluated? In learning psychology, education is an important mental process. This process, as a change agent and as an agent of new attitude and orientation, could effectively

improve the performance of an organization's employees and restructuring the procedures and practices applicable in the administrative system (PourAman, 1998).

Human Resource Management, training and development is the field which is concerned with organizational activity aimed at bettering the performance of individuals and groups in organizational settings. It has been known by several names, including human resource development, and learning and development. Some commentators use a similar term for workplace learning to improve performance: "training and development". There are also additional services available online for those who wish to receive training above and beyond that which is offered by their employers. Some examples of these services include career counseling, skill assessment, and supportive services (Harrison, 2005). One can generally categorize such training as *on-the-job* or *off-the-job*:

- On-the-job training takes place in a normal working situation, using the actual tools, equipment, documents or materials that trainees will use when fully trained. On-the-job training has a general reputation as most effective for vocational work
- Off-the-job training takes place away from normal work situations — implying that the employee does not count as a directly productive worker while such training takes place. Off-the-job training has the advantage that it allows people to get away from work and concentrate more thoroughly on the training itself. This type of training has proven more effective in inculcating concepts and ideas.

A more recent development in job training is the On the Job Training Plan, or OJT Plan. According to the United States Department of the Interior, a proper OJT plan should include: An overview of the subjects to be covered, the number of hours the training is expected to take, an estimated completion date, and a method by which the training will be evaluated (Torrington et al, 2004).

Empowerment of employees in firms is a necessity in view of the nature of industry itself. Without empowerment in the delivery of intangible-dominant like industrial firms, employees would be bounded, lacking confidence, creativity which could lead to under-performance during service encounters.

Scholars have made significant headway in developing the construct of employee empowerment. They have failed, however, to reach consensus on what employee empowerment actually means (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990).

During the 1980s and 1990s, many American firms adopted employee empowerment programs to help maintain their competitive edge in the face of rising global competition (Potterfield, 1999). In the private sector, empowerment has been linked to improved performance (Spreitzer, 1995; Neilsen and Pedersen, 2003; Kirkman and Rosen, 1999) and increased employee job satisfaction (Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford, 1995) and organizational commitment (Guthrie, 2001). Empowerment also gained currency among government reformers, having figured prominently in the New Public Management (NPM) reforms undertaken in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, Sweden and Norway (Kettl, 2005; Wise, 2002; Matheson, 2007). A growing number of public management studies indicate employee empowerment is positively related to job satisfaction (Wright and Kim, 2004; Lee, Cayer, and Lan, 2006), organizational commitment (Park and Rainey, 2007), and performance (Lee, Cayer and Lan, 2006; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2011) in the public sector.

Cook Alice (2009), based on his researches, has expressed three major empowerment branches by the title of individual empowerment, group empowerment and autonomous work groups. In his researches, while conducting interviews with hundreds of managers and supervisors of 120

organizations during these 11 years, he has expressed some of the values and beliefs that underlie the synergy on individuals and groups.

In this regard, by reviewing the evolutionary process of the integrated quality management style over the last 20 years, he began to provide effective methods for changing organizational processes, and to enable organizations to optimize utilization of the personnel action. In the following, Cook Alice based on the results of his researches, has presented 12 principles of management to empower the organization. Some of these principles are as follows:

- 1) Empowerment is serving a purpose to help the employees to help their organization.
- 2) Empowerment works best when it is based on values.
- 3) Trust and commitment are two key points to consider in order empowering the organizations.
- 4) Managers and supervisors must also be empowered as well as the employees.
- 5) Empowerment Training is more than just corrective actions.
- 6) Empowerment process is difficult and time consuming (JavadPoor et al, 2013).

Empowerment is at both the individual employee level and the organizational level. The employees experience a high degree of autonomy in their work; they specify the schedule of their work but in accordance with the organizational policy. They are competent and have the skills needed to deal with necessary requirements of product delivery. And Looy et al (2003:143) describes empowerment is a means of providing service employees with enough autonomy to allow them handle unforeseen situations such as complaints (Silvia and Elham 2008).

Looy et al (2003:232), points out that the most important reason for empowerment at the individual employee level is the belief that autonomy motivates people, they further argue that people are willing to take initiatives and make decisions rather than being dictated to regarding their jobs. With reference to Looy et al (2003: 233), there are five dimensions as a driving force behind individual work motivation:

Meaning: the extent to which an individual experiences a task as personally meaningful.

Competence: the extent to which an individual feels confident about his/her capabilities to perform the task.

Self-determination: the degree of influence that an individual has on how to perform the job.

Strategic autonomy: the degree of influence an individual has on the content of the job.

Impact: the degree of influence an individual has on the direct work environment.

Also, Looy et al (2003:237), points out that employees cannot be empowered without the necessary organizational support that are required to stimulate actions such as taking initiatives and acting independently. For employees to be successfully empowered, the organization needs to create the environment where such attitudes and behaviors can be developed.

According to Looy et al (2003:238), “empowered organizations have everything in place to facilitate the pushing down of information, knowledge, rewards, and power”.

Sharing information: empowerment of employees would be unsuccessful if they have no access to information about the (a) service concept(b)the service delivery process a whole(c) past and current performance of the organization as a whole and (d) setting of goals in the organization by knowing what needs to be done, not what is allowed to be done.

Knowledge and competence development: the competence base of employees need to be developed continuously, and should not be limited to only hiring competent employees for a short-term result. Over time organizations should train, and educate the employees to have an extended range of skills.

Rewards: going hand in hand with employee empowerment is responsibility and rewards for taking such responsibilities. While increasing competencies is beneficial in itself, monetary rewards is a justification for it

However, both of the dimensions are related to independence of the employee regarding work and service, and are all aimed at achieving organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction as a way of achieving the organization's objectives.

Moreover, the employees feel that they are a "part and parcel" of the organization, and put in their best to see that the objectives of the bank are met. They have the autonomy to make decisions regarding customer service. This is in accordance with what Looy et al (2003:232) argued that the most important reason for empowerment at the individual employee level, is the belief that autonomy motivates people, and make them more willing to take initiatives and make decisions, than being dictated to regarding their jobs (Silvia and Elham 2008).

Staff training and their development and professional growth are the basic part of empowerment programs. In different countries, in order to empower organizations, one way of training for staff, is to increase their individual skills and in other words to empower them. In this regard, nowadays, this method has been implemented in Iran, too. But, the important thing is that: "Can job training really increase the employees' skills in various sectors?" And if it can, how much this effect is? Considering the matters mentioned above, with regarding the research aims and in order to investigate this question "Is there a significant relation between in-service training and psychological empowerment of the employees of Industrial Firms?" The purpose of this research is to ascertain the extent to which industrial firms in Ardabil practices short-term training in their organization, and its relationship with employee empowerment.

METHOD

The present study is to analyze relationship between short-term training (in-service) and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. The study is correlational. The population of this study is Ardabil city industrial firm's employees that were 2000. We determined the amount of the sample size with the used of Cochran sampling method which the statistical sample is 218 of these employees which have been selected through the Stratified random sampling in 24 classes. To gathering of data, we used a questionnaire. All the reliability and validity of measures has examined. Questionnaires reliability was estimated by calculating Cronbach's Alpha, it was 0.72. In order to analyze the data resulted from collected questionnaires deductive and descriptive statistical methods are used, and to display some statistical data we used column diagram and in deductive level to test the hypothesis of the research we used Pearson correlation coefficients. The analysis has performed with SPSS.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

1- Demographical Analysis

Sixty-five percent are male and thirty-five percent are female. The responder's degree is 3.2 percent MA, 56.9 percent BA, 26.6 percent Associate Degree and 13.3 percent have DA degree or under. It means that the most of the responder have university degree. (Table 1)

Table1- Responders degree

		Responder's Degree	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Diploma	29	13.3
	Associate Degree	58	26.6
	Bachelor	124	56.9

MA	7	3.2
Total	218	100.0

Table 2 shows the Experience of the responders. According to table 2, from the precedence point of view about 34 percent of responders have less than 5 years of experience and 62.4 percent have between 6 -10, and only 3.2 percent have experience between 11-15. It shows that people experience is more than 6 years.

Table 2- years of experience

		Responder's Experience	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	5>	75	34.4
	6-10	136	62.4
	11-15	7	3.2
	<16	0	0
	Total	218	100.0

2- Hypotheses Analysis

In this paper we have one main hypothesis and four secondary hypotheses. The statistical way of analysis of hypotheses is two ways, H₁ is acceptance of hypothesis and H₀ is rejecting of hypothesis. In other words, it means that H₁ has positive meaning and H₀ has negative meaning.

The main hypothesis: there is relationship between short-term training (in-service) and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

Table 3: Results of Correlation coefficient between short-term training (in-service) and employee empowerment

Correlation coefficient			short-term training and employee empowerment
n	p	r	
218	0.000	0.699	

According to Table 3, the correlation between short-term training (in-service) and employee empowerment in the $p \leq 0.05$ has been significant, so there is a coefficient relationship between short-term training (in-service) and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. We can reject H₀ and accepted H₁ hypothesis with 95% confidence.

Secondary Hypothesis1: there is relationship between Justification Training and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

Table 4: Results of Correlation coefficient between Justification Training and employee empowerment

Correlation coefficient			Justification Training and employee empowerment
n	p	r	
218	0.000	0.629	

According to Table 4, the correlation between Justification Training and employee empowerment in the $p \leq 0.05$ has been significant, so there is a coefficient relationship between Justification Training and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. We can reject H₀ and accepted H₁ hypothesis with 95% confidence.

Secondary Hypothesis2: there is relationship between Career Education and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

Table 5: Results of Correlation coefficient between Career Education and employee empowerment

Correlation coefficient			Career Education and employee empowerment
n	p	r	
218	0.000	0.543	

According to Table 5, the correlation between Career Education and employee empowerment in the $p \leq 0.05$ has been significant, so there is a coefficient relationship between Career Education and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. We can reject H_0 and accepted H_1 hypothesis with 95% confidence.

Secondary Hypothesis 3: there is relationship between General Education and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

Table 6: Results of Correlation coefficient between General Education and employee empowerment

Correlation coefficient			General Education and employee empowerment
n	p	r	
218	0.000	0.579	

According to Table 6, the correlation between General Education and employee empowerment in the $p \leq 0.05$ has been significant, so there is a coefficient relationship between General Education and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. We can reject H_0 and accepted H_1 hypothesis with 95% confidence.

Secondary Hypothesis 3: there is relationship between Improve management and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

Table 7: Results of Correlation coefficient between Improve management and employee empowerment

Correlation coefficient			Improve management and employee empowerment
n	p	r	
218	0.000	0.502	

According to Table 7, the correlation between Improve management and employee empowerment in the $p \leq 0.05$ has been significant, so there is a coefficient relationship between Improve management and employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil. We can reject H_0 and accepted H_1 hypothesis with 95% confidence.

Findings show that the perceptions of short-term training (in-service) and its dimensions (Justification Training, Career Education, General Education and Improve management) have coefficient relationship with employee empowerment of industrial firms in Ardabil.

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