# The Role of Psychological Empowerment Factors in Enhancing the Creativity of Staff of Baqiatallah Medical Sciences University, Iran

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**ABSTRACT:** The authorities of human resources education at Baqiatatlah Medical have paid attention to the role of psychological empowerment factors in enhancing their staff's creativity; this research project investigates this issue through a descriptive-inferential methodology. The population for this study consists of two hours and staff working in five parts of this university. The sample for this research consists of 322 staff members selected based on Morgan Table. The data related to this sample were collected and then analyses. Spreitzer psychological empowerment questionnaire and Randeep creativity questionnaire are the instruments of this project. The reliability of these Instruments has been calculated by means of Cronbach's alpha which was significant. The validity of the questionnaires was confirmed in tight of content validity. The findings of this study indicated that there is a significantly positive association between the components of psychological empowerment and the staff's creativity.
**Key words:** Empowerment, Psychological Factors, Creativity, Staff.

## INTRODUCTION

Information and electronics revolution and the explosion of knowledge have made the prediction of necessary information to deal with environmental circumstances difficult. This has drawn scientists' attention to human creativity and mental abilities. Toynbee, famous philosopher, held that the life or death of societies lies in their creativity, and asserted that if a society fails to make use of its creativity or worse than that suppresses it, cannot be the best of creatures any more (Alavi & Qoreshi, 2007).

On the other hand, the most important factor of creativity for organizations and for the society at large is human resources. Without a shadow of doubt, the growth and success of a society lies in improving its human resources. Therefore, organizations pay utmost attention to the growth of their staff, using the help of human resources and creativity experts. One of the concepts related to the issue of human resources development is staff empowerment. It is a new way to motivate staff and is currently a hot management topic. Rapid changes, technological advancements, and hidden and manifest competitions in the world have highlighted the importance of empowerment more than ever (Hosseini, 1997).

Empowerment is a new topic in human resources development. However, the literature related to this topic enjoys great diversity. These studies fall into two groups:
1. Structural approach to empowerment
2. Psychological approach to empowerment
In the structural approach, empowerment is viewed as the result of a process, and deals with the instruments managers can use to empower their staff.

The proponents of the psychological approach contend that empowerment is an internal factor and is directly related to an individual's views, feelings, and perception of his environment. They believe that improving mental capacities leads to empowerment.

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) introduced the issue of staff's psychological empowerment for the first time. Psychological empowerment is the process of increasing internal motivation for the job. It has five cognitive domains:
1. Feeling of significance (perceiving job objectives as valuable and being interested to one's job).
2. self-efficacy (believing in ones abilities to carry out duties).
3. Self-dependence (having choice, freedom, and. independence in one's workplace).
4. Feeling of influence (being able to influence strategic, operational, or administrative consequences).
5. Trust (halving interest and trust in others) [3].
Empowerment has positive consequences both for the organization and for its staff. Mutual influence, power distribution, shared responsibility, increase of energy, democratic development, justice in the organization, and increase of job satisfaction and staff commitment are among this consequence.

There are many phenomena in our daily life that are the result of creativity. The progress of any society depends on the amount of attention authorities pay to creativity and its development and the attempts they make to find and improve capable and creative individuals (Adonisi, 2003). Gilford contends that creativity is types of mental ability in which information that are already stored converge to

produce a new product (Goodarzi et al., 2009).

There are two important points that have triggered this research to deal with staff's creativity and empowerment:
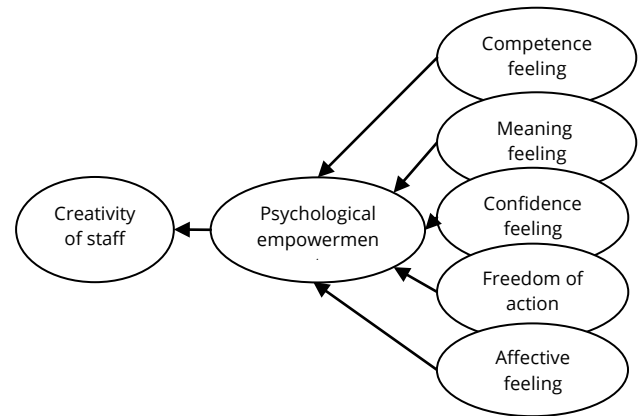
1. Human resource empowerment as an effective strategy to develop an organization and expand its activities

2. Creativity as a useful strategy to improve an organization

Nowadays, the role of empowerment in improving staff creativity is emphasized. Many experts focusing on the reasons of organizations' success and failure have come to the conclusion that factors such as structure, technology, and equipment are not the only factors leading to the organization's success. Organizations with minimum facilities have gained considerable success, and organizations with best equipment have failed. Therefore, non-material factors play an important role in organizational success (Hosseini, 1997).

Most leading organizations and institutes have made great efforts to make their staff creative and empowered. Due to the growing activities of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in the areas of medicine, education, and research, having an efficient organization to improve the scientific level of the Guards is essential. The Iranian Revolutionary Guards have played an important role in all economic, social, cultural, and military domains in Iran. Baqiatallah Medical Sciences University belongs to the Revolutionary Guards. Creativity and empowerment of the staff of this university is rather unexplored. If the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, which is the most important holding in Iran, attaches importance to the education of its staff, we can hope to achieve what we have targeted for the year 2025. In order to reach this end, staff creativity and empowerment is an utmost necessity in this hugely competitive age. Gharli Ronizi (2009), Miri (2008), Zare et al., (2007), Seyyed Naghavi (2010), Golparvar et al., (2010), Miri (2008) and Gillford (1992) have all come to the conclusion that the subscales of empowerment and those of creativity are positively correlated. They suggested that in-service educational programs, professional enrichment, and adapting staff's work with their values and abilities can enhance their sense of empowerment.

**The conceptual model of the research:**

The conceptual model of a study is a foundation upon which all research is grounded. This framework is a logical and descriptive network that is drawn upon the literature and incorporates the relationships among the variables of the study (Sakaran, 2001) the conceptual model of this research is shown in Figure 1.



**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Research methods in behavioral sciences can be classified according to two criteria: A. the goal of the research B. data gathering. This research is applied with regard to its goal and correctional with regard to data gathering. According to Samad et al, (2005) population refers to a group of things, individuals, variables, concepts, or phenomena that have at least one common feature. The population of this study includes all those who work at Baqiatakah University, who are two thousands.

The size of the sample of this study has been calculated according to the following formula. This sample consists of 322 staff members. Due to the fact that this sample is rather homogenous and that all members have had an equal chance of being selected, random sampling has been utilized.

In order to gather theoretical information, library resources, books, and theses have been used. Questionnaires have been administered to gather data with regard to research hypotheses. Five - point Lickert scale has been used in this study, in which 1 represents the lowest amount and 5 represents the highest amount. There are two questionnaires used in this study:

1. Spritzer psychological empowerment questionnaire (Spretitzer, 1995), has 18 items. The reliability of this instrument in this research is 0.63. The reliability of this questionnaire in Mirkamali & Khorshidi (2009) has been 0.75.

2. The creativity questionnaire adapted from Randseep's standard questionnaire. It measures creativity holistically and its reliability in this project has been 0.71. The reliability of this instrument in Ghahraman Tabrizi (2005) has been 0.94.

The reliability of the subscale of merit with four items is 0.60, that of the subscale of significance with three items 0.66, that of the subscale of trust with four items 0.68, that of the subscale of self-regulation with

three items 0.57, that of the subscale of being influential with three items 0.62, and finally that of psychological empowerment with seventeen items 0.66.

## RESULTS

Referential statistics have been calculated to investigate the research hypotheses. In order to examine the relationship between creativity and the subscales of psychological empowerment, Pearson correlation coefficient has been run. Table 1 indicates that the correlation coefficient between creativity and psychological empowerment is 0.54, showing a significantly positive relationship.

The correlation coefficient between creativity and sense of significance is 0.37. The correlation coefficient between creativity and sense of merit is 0.52. Moreover, the correlation coefficient between creativity and sense of being influential is 0.68. The correlation coefficient between creativity and self-regulation is 0.46. Finally, the correlation coefficient between creativity and sense of trust is 0.70. All these associations are significantly positive.

**Table 1.** Pearson correlation coefficient for the main hypothesis

| Variable | Correlation coefficient | Sig. |
|---|---|---|
| Creativity and psychological empowerment | 0.54 | 0.01 |

**Table 2.** The relationship between creativity and the subscales of psychological empowerment

| Variable | Meaningfulness | Merit | Being influential | self-regulation | Trust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Creativity | 0.37** | 0.52** | 0.68** | 0.46** | 00.70** |

**=$p<0.01$

Golparvar et al. (2010) investigated a model for the enforcement of the staff's sense of energy, empowerment, and creativity through ethical leadership. They conclude that ethical leadership directly leads to the enforcement of empowerment and sense of energy in the workplace. Moreover, they found that sense of energy enhances empowerment. In a process analysis, sense of energy and psychological empowerment improve staff's creativity through ethical leadership.

Webster (2006) indicated that psychological empowerment is a tool to boost individuals' creativity and performance. Furthermore, psychological empowerment is a mediator between mutual use of creativity and performance. Azlin Ayob et al, (2011) examined the role of psychological empowerment in and its effects on creativity in the media industry. The findings encouraged managers to boost psychological empowerment because this mechanism dramatically increases staff's creative performance. Based on the findings of Table 2, the correlation coefficient between sense of significance and creativity is 0.37, showing a significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, organizational creativity increases when staff members feel better toward their work and its fit with their mental standards. This finding is in line with that of Mishra and Spritzer, showing that innovation and sense of empowerment are significantly correlated. Innovation and creativity are in turn integral parts of entrepreneurship.

According to the findings of Table 2, the correlation coefficient between sense of merit and creativity is 0.52, showing a significant relationship between the two variables. To put it differently, organizational creativity increases when staff members feel they are capable of successfully carrying out their work. Abdollahi (2006) found that Self-efficacy plays a decisive role in motivating employees. The reason is that self-efficiency affects choosing challenging goals, the amount of efforts made, the amount of resistance and perseverance in problems, and the amount of tolerance of pressure.

This result is also in line with that of Kuo (2010) showing that sense of merit in one's job and the amount of effort and perseverance in challenging situations are significantly related. On the other hand, taking moderate risks, making efforts to cope with them, and giving positive responses to challenges are the features of entrepreneurs. Spritzer (1995) suggested that empowered staff carry out their professional responsibilities in a creative and efficient manner. This lies in the fact that they perceive themselves as efficient.

According to the findings of Table 2, the correlation coefficient between sense of influence and creativity is 0.68, showing a significant relationship between the two variables. To put it differently, organizational creativity increases when staff members feel they can influence the consequences and their workspace. It is also supported by Azlin et al, (2011) that indicated a positive relationship between sense of being influential and team work. It is also in line with Adonisi (2003) that showed a significant relationship between change-producing leadership, the psychological factors of empowerment, and team

efficiency. Amabile et al, (2005) found a significant association between positive influence and creativity.

Based on the findings of Table 2, the correlation coefficient between sense of self-integration and creativity is 0.46, showing a significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, organizational creativity increases when staff have freedom and independence in their work-related decisions. This in line with Rezazadeh et al, (2004) who found a significant association between staff's freedom and organizational entrepreneurship. They suggested the if the experts of the organization are flexible in their organizational duties and have freedom to transcend traditional standards; we can have an entrepreneur organization. In general, when individuals are voluntarily engaged in their duties, they feel they have choice and freedom in their job. Empowered individuals have a sense of ownership towards what they do because they can determine how things are done and when they are finished [9].

According to the findings of Table 2, the correlation coefficient between sense of trust and creativity is 0.70, indicating a significant relationship between the two variables. To put it differently, organizational creativity increases when staff trust their colleagues, the membership, and the organization's decisions. This is supported by Mirzaei & Moghimi (2003) that indicated a significant association between the organizational culture and organizational. Trust and credibility, sense of commitment and loyalty providing opportunities for creative individuals. In this vein, Adonisi (2003) found a significant relationship between level of trust and organizational entrepreneurship. He suggested that a high level of trust between the members of the organization has a positive influence on innovation through information sharing.

## CONCLUSION

When staff has feelings of independence, merit, influence, importance, and happiness in their workplace, their cognitive abilities automatically improve, paving the way for triggering creative ideas. Empowered people have a sense of significance and attach value to the activities of their organization, because they think their ambitions are in line with what is done. These individuals invest their mental powers in their job and enjoy a sense of professional importance through engagement with their work. Activities triggering a sense of meaningfulness create a sense of purposefulness and excitement for people. Instead of their power and zest being wasted, a new source of power and zest is created. Empowered staff feels they can influence the consequences and their

workspace. In order for people to have a sense of empowerment, they should feel what they do is influential, and feel they are able to bear that influence. Finally, empowered individuals have a sense of trust and are confident they are treated honestly and fairly. They are sure that authorities are impartial towards them, leading to a sense of individual security and, in turn creativity, in them.

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