

Empowerment Theory For Performance Improvement: A Literature Study

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Abstract

Empowerment is a construct that connects individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems and proactive behavior with organizational policies and changes. Empowerment refers to the provision of authority, strength and knowledge needed by a person as a worker to help him/her overcome obstacles experienced in the organization. If a person as a worker or member of an organization has good Empowerment, it can encourage his/her enthusiasm to gain abilities or competencies and knowledge enabling him/her to overcome obstacles in the life of the organizational environment as a place to work and help develop himself/herself or his/her organization in the future. This study aims to determine the variables related to Empowerment. This study also presents a literature study using a systematic literature review of relevant publications and as a result of this process, 10 journal articles were included, then, checking bibliographic references to validate questions and avoid potential omissions. Empowerment was found to be a moderating variable. There are several prominent variables that influence Empowerment such as training, incentives/rewards, delegation of authority, and managerial experience. In addition, other variables influenced by Empowerment such as trust, leadership style, and organizational policies. The implication for practitioners is to be able to understand things related to Empowerment in order to further improve organizational performance.

Keywords: Empowerment, Literature Study, Performance.



INTRODUCTION

Empowerment has been the subject of a wide range of research especially in terms of organizational studies. Empowerment is a construct that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems and proactive behaviors with organizational policies and changes. In theory, the construct links a person's mental state as a worker to help each other and strive to realize a responsive organizational environment. Empowerment is also defined as a deliberate, ongoing process centered on the local community of the organization involving mutual respect, concern, and participation of organizational members or a process where a person as a worker gains control over his/her life such as democratic participation and critical understanding in his/her organizational environment (Perkins, 1995). Empowerment refers to the granting of authority, strength and knowledge needed by a person as a worker to help him/her overcome obstacles experienced in the organization. With Empowerment, collective decision-making and joint leadership can be carried out from someone with higher authority to someone with lower authority for the development of organizational networks, better organizational growth and policies and easier access to resources (Spreitzer, 1995; Perkins, 2010). A person as a worker or member of an organization can make choices and decisions for themselves and have the power to accept or be able to create change with education and communication as the key to Empowerment. If a person as a worker or member of an organization has good Empowerment, it can encourage their enthusiasm to gain abilities or competencies and knowledge enabling them to overcome obstacles in the life of the organizational environment as their place of work and help develop themselves or their organization in the future (Canadian Counseling and Psychotherapy Association, 2012). Greater Empowerment in a person as a worker can also instill greater trust in leadership, encourage motivation and increase retention so that the organization can generate better profits (Wibowo, et al 2020). Empowerment can improve individual performance which ultimately improves organizational performance. Empowered employees will have a positive perception of the organization, create a bond with the organization and feel appreciated by the organization.

THEORETICAL STUDY

Employee empowerment is identified with many characteristics in various literatures. Empowerment can be identified as motivation, commitment to work, initiative, and focus on completing work (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). Spreitzer (1995) added

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IJEBIR, Volume 03 Issue 02, 2024



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that employee empowerment is a valuable asset for the organization. Many also equate empowerment with employee involvement, as stated by Conger and Kanungo (1988). Employee empowerment is giving employees the authority to plan, control, and make decisions about the work that is their responsibility, without having to get explicit authorization from the manager above them (Hansen and Mowen 2007).

Empowerment as a process that makes individuals have the power to participate directly to control and influence an event that has a direct effect on their lives. Gibson et al., (2015: 508) defines employee empowerment as providing opportunities and encouragement to employees to utilize their talents, skills, resources, and experiences to complete work on time. Carver and Keel's view (2012), empowerment is a process of forming a good environment and structure so that someone can contribute fully through their best skills. According to Robbins and Judge (2015: 251), the concept of empowerment is basically an effort to make a just and civilized human atmosphere more effective structurally, both in family life, society, country, regional, international, and in politics, economics and others. According to Conger and Kanungo (1988), empowerment as a motivational concept of self-efficacy. Empowerment can also be interpreted as a process to increase feelings of self-efficacy among members of an organization through identification that encourages powerlessness and eliminates these things through formal organizational practices and informal techniques by providing information.

Hur (2006) stated that empowered employees will work for themselves without feeling ordered by their superiors and are responsible for their results and careers. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) argued that empowerment is something multi-faceted whose essence cannot be covered in a single concept. Empowerment implies the need for freedom for individuals to act and at the same time be responsible for their actions according to the tasks they are entrusted with. The concept of empowerment also means that a person will be able to behave independently and responsibly.

Empowerment is an effort that must be followed by continuing to strengthen the potential or power possessed by each community. Thus, more positive steps are needed in addition to creating a climate and atmosphere. This strengthening includes real steps and involves providing various inputs and opening access to various opportunities that will make the community more empowered.

Empowerment is a term that is quite popular in the field of management, especially human resource management. There are many interpretations of empowerment. One interpretation that is generally known is empowerment as the delegation of authority from



superiors to subordinates. Empowerment is an effort to actualize the potential that is already owned by the community. The community empowerment approach is expected to provide a role for individuals not as objects, but as actors who determine their own lives.

In general, empowerment is defined as a multidimensional social process that helps people to monitor their own lives. Empowerment is a process that fosters power (the ability to implement) in individuals for their own lives and communities by acting according to the norms they determine (Page and Czuba, 1999: 3). Carver and Keel (2012) argue that empowerment is something that encourages and allows someone to take personal responsibility for improving or improving the ways of completing work so that it can increase contributions to achieving organizational goals.

Empowerment requires the creation of a culture that encourages employees at all levels to do something different and helps employees to be confident and able to make changes.

Based on the definition that has been presented, empowerment contains elements, namely the delegation of authority and responsibility to make decisions supported by adequate resources, the existence of control over the delegation of authority from management, and the creation of an environment so that employees can utilize their abilities or competencies to the maximum to achieve organizational goals.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a literature study based on internet searching with a systematic literature review and is described in previous studies such as Perkins (1995) and Perkins (2010) and includes 10 other studies as results or discussions. The type of research used is a literature study. The literature study method is a series of activities related to the method of collecting library data, reading and recording, and managing research materials (Zed, 2008:3). Literature study is a mandatory activity in research, especially academic research whose main purpose is to develop theoretical aspects and aspects of practical benefits. Literature studies are conducted by each researcher with the main purpose of finding a basis / foundation to obtain and build a theoretical basis, framework of thought, and determine temporary assumptions or also called research hypotheses. So that researchers can group, allocate, organize, and use variations of literature in their fields. By conducting a literature study, researchers have a broader and deeper understanding of the problems to be studied. Conducting this literature study is carried out by researchers after they have determined the research topic and determined the



problem formulation, before they go into the field to collect the necessary data (Darmadi, 2011).

DISSCUSION

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) explain that there are four dimensions of Empowerment, namely:

1. Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness refers to the importance of experiences or activities that provide meaning, purpose, and a sense of satisfaction to a person or member of an organization who experiences empowerment. In empowerment, the main goal is to provide strength, knowledge, skills, and other resources to a person or member of an organization to control their own life and make decisions that affect them. Meaningfulness is very important in empowerment because it motivates, provides a sense of ownership, improves quality of life and meets psychological needs.

2. Competence

Competence refers to the mastery, ability, skills and self-confidence of a person as a worker or member of an organization to overcome challenges, make the right decisions, and achieve desired goals. Competence is very important in empowerment because it provides a strong foundation for a person or organizational group to take control of their life.

3. Choice

Choice refers to the freedom and ability of a person or organizational group to make decisions that are relevant to their own life. Choice is one of the key elements in empowerment because it provides autonomy to control and influence desired outcomes.

4. Impact

Impact refers to positive changes resulting from empowerment efforts towards a person, group or community of the organization involved. Impact is one of the main goals of empowerment because it can create significant changes in the lives of people who experience empowerment.

Based on the four dimensions of Empowerment above, it is important to understand that Empowerment depends on many variables. Based on this, a literature study is needed on what variables influence the emergence of Empowerment in



organizations for the development of organizational networks, better organizational growth and policies, and easier access to resources.

This study presents several variables related to Empowerment. These variables influence and are influenced by Empowerment. Details of the results are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1 Research Related to Empowerment

Author	Variable	Result
		Its Influence on Empowerment
Javeed et al. (2022)	Organizational policies, individual or group participation in the organization, job opportunities, and social involvement in the organization.	Organizational policies have a positive influence on Empowerment, individual or group participation in the organization has a positive influence on Empowerment, job opportunities have a positive influence on Empowerment, and social involvement in the organization has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Natalia et al. (2022)	Clear responsibilities, delegation of authority, standards of excellence, training and development, knowledge and information, feedback, recognition, and trust.	Clear responsibilities have a positive influence on Empowerment, delegation of authority has a positive influence on Empowerment, standards of excellence have a positive influence on Empowerment, training and development have a positive influence on Empowerment, knowledge and information have a positive influence on



		Empowerment, feedback has a positive influence on Empowerment, recognition has a positive influence on Empowerment, and trust has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Aghavirdy (2015)	Individual/group attitudes, motivation, commitment, teamwork, communication, participation, organizational culture, leadership style, training, and rewards	The attitude of individuals/organizational groups has a positive influence on Empowerment, motivation has a positive influence on Empowerment, commitment has a positive influence on Empowerment, teamwork has a positive influence on Empowerment, communication has a positive influence on Empowerment, participation has a positive influence on Empowerment, organizational culture has a positive influence on Empowerment, leadership style has a positive influence on Empowerment, training has a positive influence on Empowerment and rewards have a positive influence on Empowerment.
Fotoukian et al. (2014)	Incentives, trust in the organization, status, experience, and awareness	Incentives have a positive influence on Empowerment, trust in the organization has



		a positive influence on Empowerment, status has a positive influence on Empowerment, experience has a positive influence on Empowerment, and awareness has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Tajuddin (2013)	Empowerment participation, delegation of authority, training and rewards	Empowerment participation has a positive influence on Empowerment, delegation of authority has a positive influence on Empowerment, training has a positive influence on Empowerment, and rewards have a positive influence on Empowerment.
Rastegar et al. (2013)	Goal setting, rewards, resources, organizational structure, and performance appraisal	Goal setting has a positive influence on Empowerment, rewards have a positive influence on Empowerment, resources have a positive influence on Empowerment, organizational structure has a positive influence on Empowerment, and work appraisal has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Cheung et al. (2010)	Managerial experience, delegation of authority, and willingness to entrust tasks to members of the organization.	Managerial experience has a positive influence on Empowerment, delegation of authority has a positive influence on Empowerment,



		and willingness to entrust tasks to members of the organization has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Iranzadeh dan Chakherlouy (2010)	Education, participation, motivation, authority, rewards, teamwork, and acceptance of responsibility	Education has a positive influence on Empowerment, participation has a positive influence on Empowerment, motivation has a positive influence on Empowerment, authority has a positive influence on Empowerment, reward has a positive influence on Empowerment, teamwork has a positive influence on Empowerment, and acceptance of responsibility has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Muthoni (2009)	Motivation, training and information sharing	Motivation has a positive influence on Empowerment, training has a positive influence on Empowerment and sharing information has a positive influence on Empowerment.
Thorlakson dan Murray (1996)	Power, managerial functions, leadership style, and motivation	Power has a positive influence on Empowerment, managerial function has a positive influence on Empowerment, leadership style has a positive influence on Empowerment, and

		motivation has a positive influence on Empowerment.
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The results in table 1 above show the variables related to Empowerment. The results are to find Empowerment as a moderating variable. There are several prominent variables that influence Empowerment such as training, incentives/rewards, delegation of authority, and managerial experience. In addition, other variables influenced by Empowerment such as trust, leadership style, and organizational policies.

Relationship between Empowerment and Performance

Indradevi (2011) conducted a study entitled Employee Performance through Psychological Empowerment. The number of samples used was 180 samples. The respondents of the study were employees of two private pharmaceutical companies in Chennai that were certified by WHO - GMP India for more than 3 decades. Respondents were selected according to the convenience of researchers from five departments, namely R&D, clinical research, operations, quality control, and business development. The analysis method used was regression analysis. The results of the study can be concluded as follows.

- There is a strong relationship between employee psychological empowerment and employee performance and job satisfaction. Employee performance is predicted through psychological empowerment and four other components of psychological empowerment.
- Researchers also found a high positive relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Strong relationships in autonomy are followed by meaningful work, competence, and impact.

Meyerson and Dewettinck (2012) conducted a study entitled Effect of Empowerment on Employees Performance. The purpose of the study was to explain the effects/consequences of implementing empowerment by considering three factors starting from delegation/delegation of authority over a job, implementation of a job, assisting the management process in carrying out a job, providing enthusiasm for work, providing awards for work achievements, and explaining the classification of priorities and the importance of the influence of each factor with the improvement of employee performance. The results of the study showed the following things.

- Empowerment has a significant effect on employee performance.



- b. The authority to delegate tasks causes performance improvements, awards become the basis for improving employee performance, and the proposal system improves employee performance.

Taktaz et al., (2012) conducted a study entitled The Relation Between Psychological Empowerment and Performance of Employees. The purpose of the study was to study the effect of psychological empowerment on employee performance by establishing psychological empowerment as an independent variable and performance as a dependent variable consisting of several factors, namely individual skills, managerial abilities, and technical abilities. Employees are the main drivers of the work process in it. Competent and skilled employees are important assets of the organization and are able to improve the welfare of the nation because they are able to provide benefits to the organization. The current condition of the work environment and the organization's efforts to carry out efficiency and effectiveness show that empowerment is very important. The results of the research conducted by the researchers prove that an organization that has employees who have received empowerment will have good and significant performance with increasing organizational income. Many organizations in the world state that employee empowerment in the organization helps the organization achieve success.

Kariuki and Murimi (2015) conducted a study entitled Employee Empowerment and Organization Performance of Tata Chemicals Magadi Ltd, Kenya. The number of samples used was 96 samples. The respondents studied were employees of Tata Chemicals Magadi Company, Kenya. Data analysis was carried out using the regression analysis method. The results of the study showed the following.

- a. Only gender variables contributed significantly to organizational performance and all models had a positive influence on organizational performance.
- b. Training and information sharing contributed to employee empowerment.
- c. Empowerment did not contribute significantly to organizational performance.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study indicate that the variables in table 1 are related to Empowerment. This study provides a contribution of variables that influence Empowerment. There are several prominent variables that influence Empowerment such as training, incentives/rewards, delegation of authority, and managerial experience. In addition, other variables influenced by Empowerment such as trust, leadership style, and organizational policies. The implication for practitioners is to be able to know things



related to Empowerment in the organization so that they can develop better organizational networks, growth and organizational policies and easier access to resources.

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