

Effective indicators in employee empowerment with knowledge management implementation approach

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ABSTRACT

Human resources are the center of knowledge creation and sharing in the organization. Therefore, their management is very important. One of the ways to acquire new knowledge and capabilities in the organization is to accept people who have the skills required by the organization. These people can combine practical and theoretical knowledge and create new knowledge assets for the organization. The purpose of this study is effective indicators in employee empowerment with a knowledge management implementation approach. In the present study, after studying the relevant thematic literature in the field of employee empowerment with the knowledge management implementation approach, characteristics such as cultural factors, capacity building, organizational creativity, organizational learning, organizational motivation, interpersonal factors, environmental factors, individual factors, technology Information and training were identified and each of these characteristics has sub-components that are addressed in this article.

Key Words: Employee Empowerment, Knowledge Management

Introduction

All employees have powerful but unknown mental knowledge. Intrinsic knowledge is usually unwritten and is based on mental and oral transfer, and the oral transfer distorts knowledge. It should be noted that this knowledge should be documented and used where necessary. The importance of knowledge for survival in a business environment has caused organizations to emphasize on activities such as organizing, creating, transferring, searching and sharing knowledge under knowledge management (Ramazani, 2015). The advantages of using knowledge management have caused most organizations to make efforts to implement this process. In recent years, knowledge management has been one of the most interesting and challenging topics in business management and its scope is always expanding with other topics in the area of management. Given what was stated and considering the importance of human resource empowerment in

the organization and its management, the present study was an attempt to identify and rank the effective indicators in employee empowerment with an emphasis on implementation of knowledge management.

Environmental challenges in the present age have forced organizations to always look for ways to maintain and survive. In this regard, using the potential capabilities of human resources and actualizing these amazing forces and talents has a great advantage for any organization. Organizations also need more capable employees to respond to environmental changes. Thus, it can be stated that employee empowerment, as one of the important strategies to adapt to external changes has become an important issue in the management and leadership of organizations. Today's world faces challenges that arise from the changes resulting from development of science and technology and the emergence of new organizational and social needs. One of the most important of them is challenges of government in meeting people needs. Also, in today's changing world, the role of government and its responsibilities will be different. Governments alone will not be able to meet new needs. They must increase their ability to respond to new needs by increasing their capabilities or empowering existing forces in the organization. It requires a new model that can use all the capacities of society in the public and private sectors to maximize the production and provision of public services.

Employee empowerment

The term empowerment has become part of the everyday language of management in recent years. It is related to known movements such as human resource management (HRM) and total quality management. Empowerment as a solution to old problem of bureaucratic organizations and companies in which creativity is ignored and workers are alienated both collectively and individually, by displaying meaningless behaviors.

Empowerment is a term used extensively in human sciences, but there is no consensus on its definitions. In fact, this term is used to refer to a group of almost related meanings. In the theoretical literature of management, the word empowerment is still widely used, but there is no available clear meaning of it due to reasons mentioned below (Chiu et al., 2014):

A. Not being included in a historical context:

Empowerment is generally viewed as a new phenomenon.

B. Lack of proper explanation on its required conditions:

In general, there are no explained details on the cases that are necessary for the successful implementation of empowerment or the effects associated with them. It is assumed that employees are optimistic about it and consider it useful for both themselves and the organization. Another incorrect assumption is that this approach is universal and appropriate for all organizations and in all conditions. Also, the multiple dimensions of this term make it to be difficult to define. Sullivan stated that before 1990s, empowerment was only possible through participatory management, quality control, individual development, and strategic planning. From the 1990s onwards, a small number of articles were used to describe it, since this term can be interpreted at both individual and organizational levels. Researchers have viewed empowerment from different perspectives, including personal work control, independence in doing task, teamwork, and performance-related payment systems. As these differences suggest, some of them focus on ability of individuals and their willingness to be empowered and some researchers define empowerment as job enrichment, payment for performance and employee stock ownership. These perspectives are not just personal, but are techniques that managers use to create an empowering or even facilitating "empowerment" environment. An approach of leader that empowers subordinates and makes them a key component of management and organizational effectiveness is also called employee empowerment. Researchers also considered an organization working on the topic of "self-alienation" as pioneers of the idea of empowerment. Some authors also define empowerment based on its "dynamic interactions" (Vedadi and Mehrara, 2013). Lee and Kooh also consider empowerment as the intersubjective nature of employees and supervisors. Based on them, empowerment is a combination of cognitive states of subordinates influenced by the empowering behavior of supervisors.

Empowerment approaches

In general, there are two types of general attitudes towards employee empowerment in the literature.

Relational or multidimensional approach

In the literature, this approach is defined as a top-down and machinery process and one's power reflects his or her pure dependency in relationship with others. Accordingly, the use of new processes and distribution of power empowers employees. From this perspective, the act of "being empowered" is to give power or authority or to give spiritual or legal power. Thus, empowerment of people requires examining the role of managers / leaders, since they have a significant and inevitable effect on employees' psychological perception of empowerment and play different and important roles. These roles include (Mirkamali, 2015):

- Creating a common goal
- Promoting employees' feelings about their capabilities
- Emphasizing the efforts of employees and praising their role in contributing to the goals of the organization
- Focusing on strategies that encourage group autonomy and independence in decision making.

In short, the relational aspect of empowerment tests the relationship between managers and subordinates before and after empowerment.

Psychological approach

In the past, organizational researchers focused on the relational aspect of empowerment and on empowering management practices, including delegating authority, decision-making at top and bottom levels, and increasing access to information and resources for the lower levels (Wellins, 2014). More recently, they follow alternative approaches that make a distinction between these situational characteristics (such as management practices) and job perceptions about them (including employees' perceptions of power, competence, control, and self-efficacy). Thus, management practices are just a set of conditions that are involved in empowerment and do not necessarily lead to such a process. This approach focuses on employees' perceptions of empowerment and explains how subordinates and employees perceive empowerment. In other words, based on this perspective, the distribution of power does not necessarily result in empowerment of employees, as employees may not have such an idea. Such an assumption turns this approach into an organic and bottom-up process according to which empowerment occurs when psychological states create the perception of empowerment in employees (Mohammadi, 2013). Accordingly, there are three basic dimensions of power that underlie the empowerment process:

1. Perceived control (inner desire to influence and control others)
2. Perceived competence (people belief in self-efficacy to use intuitive and motivational resources or scientific and necessary measures needed to meet environmental requirements).
3. Internalization of goals (as an energizing element that can be a goal, value reason or meaningful program)

From this perspective, empowerment means "enabling."

Thomas and Walthouse have investigated six key variables that affect these cognitive states (Wang et al., 2015). These factors include the following cases:

1. Environmental accidents
2. Job evaluations
3. General evaluations
4. Interpretive styles of individuals
5. Behaviors
6. Interventions

Feeling meaningful

It is the value of job goals that are judged in relation to individual standards or ideals. In fact, being meaningful involves consistency between the requirements of the role and the job on the one hand and the beliefs and values and behaviors on the other, without considering organizational compulsions and people desire and willingness to achieve the goals that make sense or meaning to them. In fact, employees prefer to work with people who share their values. Similarly, when subordinates face meaningless goals, they begin to defend their short-sighted and limited interests (Ghoshchi, 2014).

Feeling of self-efficacy

Competence or self-efficacy is people belief in their ability and capacity to perform skillful tasks. Competence is something like the beliefs of the agent, personal ability, or expectation of performance effort. Based on Spritzer, this dimension should not be confused with "self-respect", since this dimension is specifically related to people efficiency in his work, not to efficiency in general. In fact, self-efficiency is "one's belief in changing motivation, sources of intuition and a chain of actions according to the effects of a particular situation." It can be considered as the opposite of helplessness and inability. Hence, people need information based on self-efficacy. There are generally four sources of information about self-efficacy (Goodman, 2013):

- 1-Active acquisition: arises personally from performing a task.
- 2-Representative experience: involves observing similar people who successfully perform a certain task.
- 3-Linguistic victory: involves positive feedback and encouragement.
- 4-Emotional arousal state: involves removing stress and fear through techniques such as providing a supportive atmosphere and trust in the group and avoiding information bombardment and heavy tasks and works.

Feeling of influence

It is the extent to which a person has the ability to influence the strategic, administrative, or operational outcomes of his or her work. It is opposite of helplessness and inability. It is different from control center. Influence is related to content of job and influenced by it. The control center is a general personality trait that is constant in various situations (Howang, 2014).

People with higher influence do not believe in the limitation of their abilities by external barriers, but believe that these barriers can be controlled. They have a sense of "active control" that allows them to align the environment with their desires. Unlike "passive control" in which people demands are aligned with demands of the environment, people who have a feeling of influence and effectiveness try to maintain control over what they see instead of reacting to the environment (Zahedi et al., 2016).

Feeling of having trust in others

Empowered people have a sense of trust. They are sure that they will be treated fairly. They are sure that even in a subordinate position, the result of their actions will not be harm, but justice. It usually means that they are confident that those who are higher power will not harm them, and that they will be treated fairly and impartially. Empowered people somehow maintain a sense of self-confidence. In other words, they have a sense of personal security. Trust also implies that people put themselves in a risky position. However, empowered people believe that no harm will be imposed on them as a result of that trust (Razavi, 2015). Studies conducted on feeling of trust have shown that people who trust are more willing to substitute honesty and intimacy for pretense. They are higher level of honesty and adaptation than deception. They are also more research-oriented and self-disciplined, self-confident and eager to learn. They have a greater capacity for mutual relationships and show a higher level of cooperation and risk-taking compared to people with low trust. They try to make relationship with others and be a member of a group.

They are also more self-disclosing, more honest in their communication, and abler to listen carefully to others. They are less resistant to change compared to people with low levels of trust and are better able to adapt to unexpected traumas. People who trust others are also trustable and reliable people and have high

personal ethical standards. This dimension of empowerment entered the empowerment literature in 1992 by Mishra.

Barriers and benefits of empowerment

As managers try to empower their employees, they face many problems that may cause serious barriers in this process. These problems include:

Fear of employees

It was often assumed that employees were more interested in empowerment, since it brings tangible benefits for them. However, this assumption is not always true and one can find incompetent and unskilled employees who are afraid of high levels of responsibility and authority, so they resist empowerment. Also, employees may think that empowerment is a beautiful but meaningless terms and management tries to exploit them, since empowerment is implemented simultaneously with "downsizing", so employees may be suspicious of it (Shanahan et al., 2017).

A threat for management

Managers and leaders may also resist "empowerment", since they feel they are losing power. This issue becomes critical when the structure of the organization becomes smoother, many jobs are lost and as a result, their positions is endangered and threatened during the implementation of the "downsizing" process. In other words, managers in an empowered organization may not be called managers, since they are responsible for work teams and should achieve success through influence, not by controlling people. Managers who fail to adapt to this new role will lose their ability to survive in the organization (Shirley, 2015).

Management systems and institutions

People usually judge based on what they see, not based on what they hear. People are promoted since they are appreciated for their good performance. The criteria based on which one person is rewarded more than another person are potential symbols of management beliefs and values. Now, when the symbols do not meet the requirements for empowerment, such as promotion, result-orientation, or emphasizing short-term results, successful implementation of empowerment will be difficult.

Organizational structures

Organizational structures can also become a mechanism for disabling people. Control structures, characterized by functional constraints, dry hierarchies, and flexible job characteristics; define the limits of power and authority. The assumption of these structures is that the role of managers is "saying" people duties and "ensuring" that they are done. Managers also associate this role with the limits of authority in their position and cause inflexibility, which can create great challenge for empowerment process (Saif and Saleh, 2013).

Management uncertainty

Some managers are pessimistic on motivating their employees. They believe that employees will not responsible for interests of the organization if they have freedom of action, but such an assumption is not correct since if the desires of the people are aligned with the needs of organization, they will seek the best interests of their organization.

In an empowered organization, creating such a balance is under the responsibility of senior managers.

Management hopelessness

Empowerment is a problematic process. When it is implemented, the conflicts and problems that were previously kept secret by management become tangible and objective, making the situation very difficult and complex for managers.

Lack of sufficient resources and time

Overcoming problems is a time-consuming process. Employees require time to be involved in decision-making and to become knowledgeable about the organization to speak on applying their decisions. This requires dialogue between managers and employees and sufficient time to review these issues (Park, 2013).

Importance and necessity of knowledge management

In economically leading countries in the world, the importance of knowledge as a resource has increased compared to other resources, so that it is the most important determinant of life standards. Knowledge revolution plays a key role in reducing the gap between developing and developed countries (Hashemzadeh, 2015). To achieve success in today's competitive organizational environment; companies need to learn from their past mistakes and not repeat them. Knowledge management provides a measured and principled approach to ensure the full application of basic knowledge of the organization along with the potential force of skills and competencies, thoughts, innovations and individual ideas to create a more effective and dynamic organization (Haji Karimi, 2016).

Knowledge management has many benefits for organizations. The benefits of knowledge management in an organization have two levels:

At the individual level, knowledge management enables employees to improve their skills and experiences by working together and sharing their knowledge and learning to achieve professional growth. At the organizational level, knowledge management has four major benefits for an organization, including improving organizational performance by increasing efficiency, productivity, quality, and innovation. In fact, for today's organizations, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are steps of progress that must be taken with full knowledge and success (Lee and Choi, 2016). Results of some studies have shown that 56% of entrepreneurial businesses go bankrupt in the first four years of operation. In such conditions, knowledge management is considered a guarantor of success and survival of organizations (Ebrahimi Nejad et al., 2015). King et al (2013) defined knowledge management as a structured process for creating, acquiring, sharing, transferring, and applying tacit and objective knowledge as organizational assets to encourage innovation. In their research, they emphasized that knowledge management processes are chain strings that can result in innovation, performance improvement, and sustainable competitive advantage, if these indicators systematically support each other.

Knowledge management cycle

As stated in the definition of knowledge management, the creation, acquisition, organization, transfer and sharing of knowledge are the main components of knowledge management, which is identified as the process of knowledge management. Knowledge management is not a linear and static process, but a dynamic and cyclical process and requires employees who are constantly dealing with information and seek to acquire new knowledge and apply it. The knowledge management cycle includes the activities of acquiring, recording, transferring, creating and applying knowledge in the organization. Knowledge acquisition includes a set of activities performed to acquire new knowledge outside the organization. Activities such as level of involvement of members in scientific associations and the level of participation in training courses, the organization cooperation with universities and other scientific centers and the acquiring new knowledge for the organization show the level of effort to acquire new knowledge and enter that organization. Knowledge acquisition begins with the search of data, information, and knowledge and their validation through various sources.

Previously acquired knowledge is used for better classification and planning of knowledge acquisition resources, especially external sources. Knowledge recording and documentation involves a set of activities that are performed to record existing knowledge in the organization. The generated and existing knowledge must be able to be stored in a form that is accessible to all people and can be cited, since in this case, knowledge may be in the minds of employees, founders of the organization and other people and if they leave the organization or in the event of their death, knowledge will be lost. Activities such as using a database to record organizational knowledge, coding knowledge, documenting successful and unsuccessful experiences are among the knowledge recording activities in the organization (Hashemi, 2014).

Knowledge management concepts

In this section, we explain the concept of knowledge management, data, information, knowledge, and the process of converting data into knowledge. The concept of knowledge management has been used in a practical but informal manner for a long time. Thus, for better understanding of the concept of knowledge management, we first examine the concepts of data, information and knowledge and the differences and relationships between them. Knowledge is neither data nor information, although it relates to both, and the difference between them is not necessarily related to their nature, but they differ only in hierarchy. Data, information and knowledge are not concepts that can be used interchangeably. Understanding these three words and the way of reaching from one to another is crucial in the success of scientific works.

Data

Data is a fact or a case of a particular context without relating to other things. Data are raw facts and realities. The data reflect complete, unified, and coherent interactions and exchanges, referred to as a minor component. These components are stored and managed in databases. Data have minimum text and do not convey the meaning of a larger subject until they are processed. Data are a series of objective and abstract facts about events. From an organizational perspective, data are considered as a series of orderly recorded transactions (Adli et al., 2015).

Information

Information is a set of data that creates meaning in the mind of their recipient. The information must provide something to recipient so that he or she did not know or could have predicted. In other words, information is data that are processed, converted, and combined to take on a meaningful form and convey more knowledge to the person. Adding context and interpretation to the data and their relevance with each other creates information. Information is combined and related data with context and interpretation. Relevance of data may represent information. Data relevance alone may not lead to information, unless it results in understanding their concept. Information in fact includes summarized data grouped, stored, refined, organized, and analyzed to clarify the context. Decisions can be made by examining the information. Information is usually in the form of numbers and figures, words and propositions and presents numbers and propositions in a concise form (Ghorbani, 2015).

Knowledge

Adding comprehension and memory to information leads to natural development after information. Summarizing of basic information as much as possible results in knowledge. Knowledge in this case can be defined as insights derived from information and data that can be effective and divisible in different ways and in different situations. Knowledge is minimizing the collection and reading of information, not increasing access to information. Efficient knowledge helps to eliminate unwanted information and data. Knowledge is a perception that is gained through experience, reasoning, direct understanding and learning. When people share their knowledge, the knowledge of each of them increases and new knowledge is obtained by combining the knowledge of one person with other people. Rampersed considers knowledge as a function of information, culture, and skills (Elliott et al., 2015).

Schools of knowledge management

One of the experts refers to three types of knowledge management schools. He believes that the school pursues a certain point of view and there is no evidence that one is better than the other. These three schools include economic school, organizational school and strategic school.

Economic school

This school focuses on revenue and aims at exploiting the organization's knowledge assets. In other words, this school explicitly preserves and exploits the company's knowledge or intellectual assets to generate revenue. This school considers knowledge as an asset. Knowledge or intellectual assets include

patents, brands, and technical know-how. Thus, this school is more concerned with exploitation of knowledge than its creation.

Organizational school

This school considers the use of organizational structures or networks of relationships to share or store knowledge. In this school, experience sharing groups are used. These social groups include people within or between organizations with common interests, issues, or experiences, designed and formed with a specific organizational goal. Studies suggest that people often share their experiences freely and informally.

As a result, organizations must create and strengthen these types of environments. In other words, experience-sharing groups consist of people who informally work together to create and exchange knowledge, and during this process, they develop capabilities of their members. These groups are different from project teams whose members are appointed by management.

Knowledge management and strategic management

This school considers knowledge management as a competitive strategic dimension. In fact, knowledge management in this school is considered as the essence of the company strategy. The strategic school focuses on competitive advantage, aimed at identifying, exploiting and creating knowledge capabilities (Aligholi et al., 2014).

Model of knowledge management processes in the present study

Bukowitz and Williams model was used in the present study to select the dimensions related to knowledge management processes. This model has seven steps.

1. Acquiring knowledge: Using different tools to gain knowledge and library and the documentation section are examples of these tools.
2. Applying knowledge: Using the acquired knowledge if it is useful and appropriate.
3. Learning: Learning from the gained experiences.
4. Knowledge sharing and exchange: The transfer of knowledge of members of the organization to each other, so that the culture of "knowledge sharing is power" replaces "knowledge is power".
5. Knowledge evaluation: Assessing the status of knowledge and knowledge assets of the organization.
6. Creation and consolidation of knowledge: ability of the organization to create and generate knowledge and its consolidation and protection in the organization
7. Optimal use of knowledge: Full and optimal use of existing knowledge of the organization when a new opportunity and situation is created for the organization, before using external resources.

Knowledge management infrastructure models

Various models have been used in studies related to infrastructure and knowledge management implementation and we will refer to some examples of these models.

Gold research model

In a study conducted by Gold (2014) under the title of "Designing a model for effectiveness of knowledge management", he identified three classes of factors influencing the success of knowledge management. These three classes of factors are: prominent factors, infrastructure and knowledge processing capacity. Knowledge management infrastructures include three components of organizational culture, information technology and organizational structure. The results of the study revealed that among the factors of knowledge management infrastructure, organizational culture has the highest effect on knowledge management (Abtahi and Salavati, 2013).

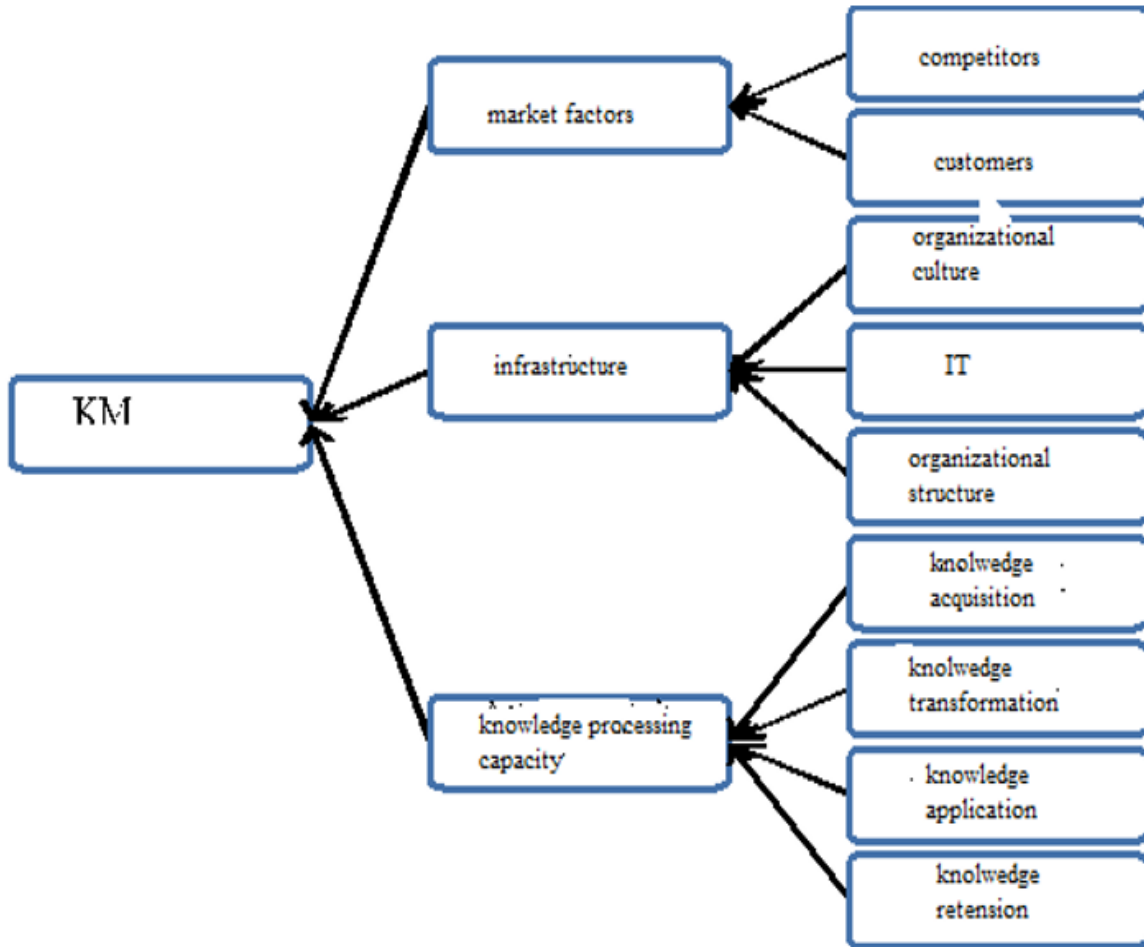


Figure 1- Factors affecting the success of knowledge management (Gold, 2014)

*Ye and Lai and Hu model (2015)

In this model, as shown in Figure (2-2), knowledge management infrastructures influencing organizational effectiveness are divided into four general classes, including participatory culture, IT human resources, strategy and leadership. The results of the study indicated that for the infrastructure of strategy and leadership, the most important factor is the support of senior managers of the organization. In the infrastructure of participatory culture, the most important factor is the creation of a culture of knowledge sharing and information technology can be an important tool to achieve this goal. In human resource infrastructure, in addition to holding training courses, incentive programs for employees are a key factor for human resource infrastructure. In the IT infrastructure, in addition to digitizing documents and files, providing the conditions for users to search fast is crucial (Hashemi, 2014).

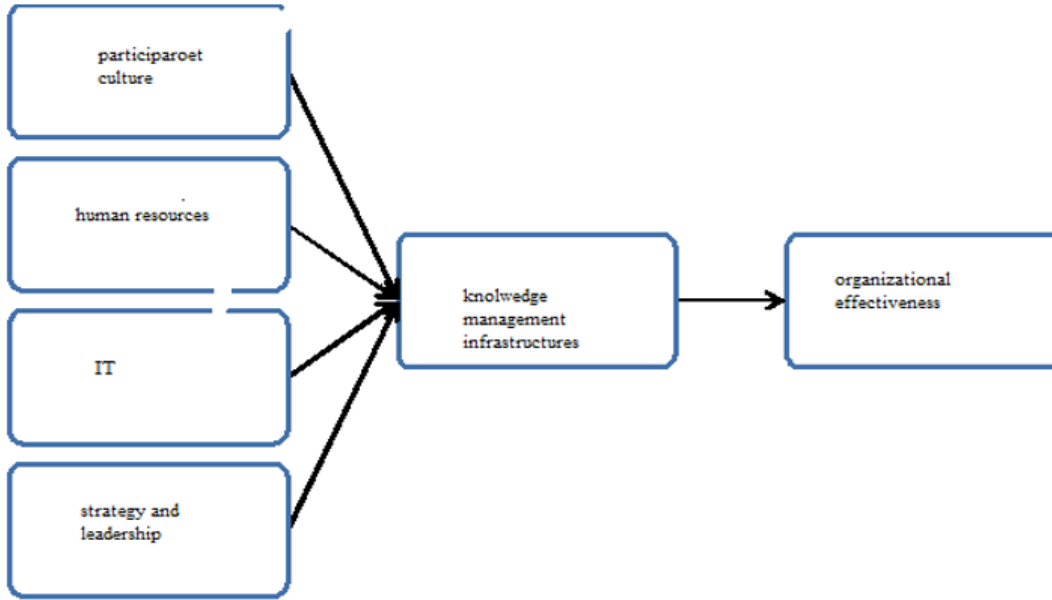


Figure 2: Ye, Lai, and Hu Knowledge Management Infrastructure Model (2015)

*Lee and Choi research Model (2013)

In this model, as shown in Figure (2-3), the infrastructural factors influencing knowledge creation processes include organizational culture, human resources, and information technology. In this research, organizational culture is defined as one of the most important factors for success in establishing knowledge management as a set of common values and beliefs among members of the organization.

Lee and Choi (2013) believe that organizations should create an appropriate culture that encourages people to create and share knowledge. In their research, they focus on participation, trust, and learning as the three basic elements of organizational culture. Participation is defined as the extent to which people in a group activity help each other in performing their works. Trust in the organization means the complete mutual trust between people about their behaviors and goals. Learning is also defined as acquisition of new knowledge by people who want and can apply knowledge in their decisions. Level of learning in the organization is determined by the extent to which this issue is encouraged in the organization. Organizational structure in an organization may facilitate or prevent knowledge management. In the present study, formality and focus are emphasized as two key factors of structure. Focus is the extent to which a decision-making power is concentrated in a unit of the organization and formality refers to the extent to which decisions and employment relationships are based on formal rules, standard policies, and specific procedures.

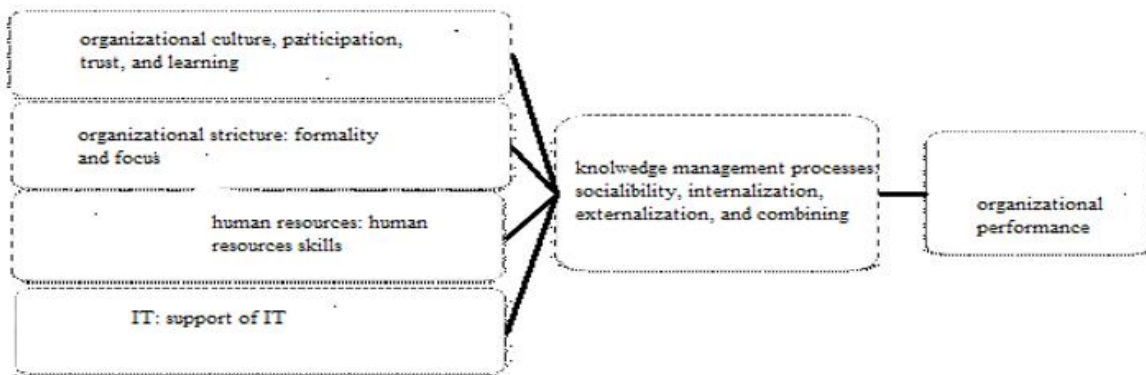


Figure 3- Lee and Chui model (2013)

Research literature

Jamshidi (2019) carried out a research entitled "The effect of empowerment on organizational commitment and job satisfaction of employees in the General Directorate of Roads and Urban Development of Markazi Province". Considering the positive effect of empowerment on organizational commitment and job satisfaction of employees in the General Directorate of Roads and Urban Development of Markazi Province, the right to choose, freedom of action and independence of employees and participation in decision-making in such organizations can increase organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Zarabi (2015) conducted a study entitled "The relationship between organizational empowerment and good governance in Iranian insurance" at the Humanities Department in Mazandaran University to obtain a master degree in management. The research results revealed a positive relationship between employees' sense of effectiveness, employees' sense of competence, employees' sense of having right to choose, and sense of meaningful job of Iranian insurance employees and good organizational governance. Bahrami (2017) conducted a study entitled "Investigating the relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance in the hotel industry" at the University of Isfahan to obtain a master degree in management. The highest correlation was found between knowledge management and employees' employees' results and the use of knowledge and organizational performance. Knowledge management variable showed a direct and significant effect on customers' results, employees' results, community results and key performance outcomes. Also, knowledge creation, knowledge storage, knowledge sharing and applying knowledge had a direct and significant effect on organizational performance. In general, analysis of research data showed that knowledge management with its impact on hotels improved organizational performance.

In a study entitled "Empowerment is an effective step towards achieving good governance" to obtain a master degree in business management in the Faculty of Management, University of Tehran, Ghanbarnejad (2016) showed that the status of indicators of good governance and empowerment in the target community was improved and organizational empowerment had a direct impact on good governance.

Amiri et al (2015) carried out a research entitled "Investigating the effect of knowledge management strategies on innovation and organizational performance (a case study of health centers in North Fars)". Knowledge personalization and knowledge coding had a positive effect on innovation and organizational performance and these variables showed a positive effect on organizational performance through innovation and there was a positive and significant relationship between innovation and organizational performance. Shakiba et al (2014) carried out a research entitled "Investigating the relationship between the dimensions of knowledge management and innovation: Case study: non-profit schools in Tehran province". The results showed a significant relationship between the dimensions of knowledge management and innovation.

Young et al (2019) carried out a research entitled "Investigating the effect of empowerment, job satisfaction and job stress on organizational commitment." Empowerment of employees increased job satisfaction and decreased job stress, which in turn increases employees' organizational commitment. Among the dimensions of psychological empowerment, two dimensions of feeling of being competent and feeling of being effective affected employees' job satisfaction, and among these two variables, only the dimension of feeling of being competent affected and reduced the level of job stress of employees. Among the types of organizational commitments, continuous commitment was the dominant type of commitment and emotional commitment had the lowest intensity of impact among other commitments in employees. Golliose et al. (2018) carried out a study entitled "Investigating the indirect effect of job satisfaction, empowerment and organizational commitment of employees of insurance companies in Turkey". Their research reported a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment among the employees. Budamusi (2017) conducted a study entitled "examining the effect of employee empowerment on organizational commitment" on a sample of 400 employees and the research results showed that empowerment affected organizational commitment.

Hanaysha (2016) carried out a research entitled "Investigating the effect of employee empowerment, teamwork and employee training on organizational commitment". Employee empowerment had a positive effect on organizational commitment. Also, teamwork had a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment. Finally, the results revealed that employee training had a positive effect on

organizational commitment. Michelson (2015) carried out a research entitled "investigating and explaining of the role of customer knowledge management in improving organizational performance." The results showed data acquisition, knowledge development and customer relationship management affected the improvement of organizational performance. Data acquisition, data processing, and customer knowledge development also affected customer relationship management. Also, data processing affected development of customer knowledge and knowledge development affected the data acquisition. Taregh et al (2014) carried out a research entitled "Social capital for knowledge management". Social capital affected the innovative performance of small and medium-sized enterprises by influencing the acquisition and assimilation of knowledge on the one hand and by transferring and using knowledge on the other.

Theoretical framework of research

Organizations that manage their knowledge achieve a high level of productivity. Organizations with more access to their employees' knowledge can make better decisions, optimize processes, reduce duplication and increase their innovation, and finally increase their integration and cooperation (Pan et al., 2017). Knowledge management is a process that helps organizations find, select, organize, and disseminate important information that is essential for activities such as problem solving, dynamic learning, strategic planning, and decision making. Aswan definition of knowledge management is considered as one of the best definitions. He defines knowledge management as any process or action of production, acquisition, promotion and socialization and its application. Wherever knowledge is established, learning and performance of the organization increases. Kwitz defines knowledge management as a process through which the organization creates capital from the thoughts and ideas of members and knowledge-based assets (Joorabchi and Khosravi, 2017). Information technology can act as a reinforcing factor in converting data into information but the problem of interpretation remains, and it is only humans who interpret information and convert them into knowledge and organization must quickly convert data into information and information into knowledge. However, the organization should not overemphasize its basic knowledge. As soon as a part of the knowledge does not comply with the existing conditions, the organization should immediately remove that part of the knowledge base (Ebrahimejad et al., 2015). Coping with barriers and performing effective work makes team members feel satisfied. An attempt to achieve the company's goals allows employees to feel a sense of belonging to the company. It creates loyalty, resulting in implementation of more knowledge management among employees. Teamwork is not only useful for employees, but also for employer in long term. Employees who have direct contact with their workplace are more likely to stay in the company. Although most employees leave their jobs often due to low wages and fees, some of them are complaining of non-importance of their presence and non-contribution in the company. Teamwork allows people to get involved in the company and provide a larger picture. When a conflict arises in teamwork, employees are forced to resolve it among themselves instead of referring it to management. Learning to resolve conflicts is the first skill employees can use to become effective managers. Working as a team makes team members to have higher level of risk-taking, since they believe in the support of whole team if they fail. In contrast, sharing success in a team is a rewarding experience. When a team achieves a success together, revolutionary ideas will be certainly created. A summary of studies carried out in literature resulted in identification of the following characteristics. Table 1 presents the characteristics and components of employee empowerment with an emphasis on the implementation of knowledge management (1).

Table 1- Characteristics and components of employee empowerment with an emphasis on the implementation of knowledge management derived from research literature

main criterion	components	references
cultural factors	Participatory leadership style	Fadaei et al (2016), Mathi (2004) Chong and Choi (2005)
	Managers’ support of employees	
	Accountability and knowledge management	
	Sharing power and delegating authority	
capacity building	Skills and specialized training	O’Dell ·Elliot ·and Hubert(2003), Vaezi and Moslemi (2009)
	Team building	
	Information sharing and feedback	
	Job Enrichment	
organizational creativity	Acceptance of changes	Okland(2000)Chong ·Chong ·and Yew)2006(
	Increasing tolerance	
	Search for new ideas	
	Paying attention to innovation strategy	
organizational learning	Knowledge policy	Crawford(2004) Tubbs Moss(2000); Mathieu(2006)
	Applying knowledge	
	Regeneration of knowledge	
organizational motivation	Organizational influence	Rosen(2000)
	Competencies and skills	
	Job Involvement	
interpersonal factors	teamwork	Blanchard(1985);Daft(1989); Kinlaw(1995), Kirkman &Rosen(2000) Scott& jaffe(1991); Mclagan(1997); Stainer(2000); Keef(2000) ·Daft(1989); Sanders(2001);Bonder(2003);Val & Loyd(2010).
	communication	
	participation	
environmental factors	environmental changes	Kim Y ·Chun J ·Song,2009) Jafari et al(2007) · Akhavan(2010) ·Moffett(1998)
	Social and cultural status	
	economic status	
	support of officials	
personal factors	Motivation and attitude	Daft(1989);Sanders(2001);Bonder(2003);Val & Loyd(2010)
	Skill	
	Knowledge	
	Security and peace of mind	
	Individual independence	
	Risk taking	
IT	information systems	Ray&Mebane (2003) ·Jafari et al(2007), Akhavan(2010) Ray & Mebane (2003) ·Jafari et al(2007) ·Akhavan (2010) ·Mentzas (1995)
	IT infrastructure	
	Hardware and software	
	Database	
training	Problem solving and creativity training	Gerin et all,2015 ·Biker,2015
	Participation in domestic and foreign training	
	Methods of supporting systemic thinking	
	Teaching methods to support group thinking	
	Training of knowledge transfer methods	

Conclusion

The present study was an attempt to examine the effective indicators in employee empowerment with an emphasis on the implementation of knowledge management. Based on the research results, it can be stated that with increasing employees' feelings about the work value of their activities and homogeneity of their subjective standards with what they are doing and with increasing their feeling that they have the necessary freedom to implement and systematize their job-related activities and the ability to influence the strategic, administrative or operational outcomes and if they are sure that they will be treated fairly and equitably and impartially, the level of their organizational knowledge management will be higher. It means that as people psychological empowerment increases, their knowledge management also increases. Also, training by empowering employees results in implementation of knowledge management of social capital in society, since when every employee of society is empowered, it is considered a part of social capital. Training is essential since it enables individuals to acquire some kind of general knowledge to play an active role as a member of a team in changing the system. This type of training includes leadership techniques, problem-solving skills, communication skills, and preparing employees to play team roles. It encourages employees to be proud of their involvement and participation. In many cases, the riskiest ideas are transformed to be the best ideas. Teamwork enables employees to think more freely, resulting in implementation of more knowledge management among employees. Individual feeling of having right to choose regulates the activities. In fact, self-determination or the right to choose reflects independence in the initiation and continuity of behaviors and processes. It also results in implementation of knowledge management and freedom of action in determining the necessary activities to perform tasks. Feelings of right to choose or less alienation in the workplace, higher job satisfaction, higher levels of performance, greater entrepreneurship and creativity, higher levels of job participation and reduced workload are associated with implementation of knowledge management. Effectiveness results in acceptance of more responsibilities by employees and in return, employees expect to receive higher wages and lack of its fulfillment affects the effectiveness of employees and continuous organizational knowledge management and can lead to reduced knowledge management. Feeling competent as a factor of intrinsic motivation increases the level of knowledge management implementation through increasing employees' self-confidence, feeling independent in doing work, personal control over results, valuing job goals and feeling trust in coworkers. Based on the results of this study, it can be stated that paying attention to the sense of competence to improve the implementation of their knowledge management seems to be necessary.

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