

Differences in Employees' Perception of Employee Empowerment Practices

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Abstract

Employee empowerment practices are a modern management approach which reorganizes organizations and enables them to be managed successfully. As global competition increases and sense of management rapidly changes, employee empowerment practices are seen as one of the most efficient ways of adaptation to changing conditions. For making use of change in the most efficient way in today's world, employee empowerment practices are no longer a need but have become an obligation. In this study, employee empowerment concept is discussed and, depending on some demographic variables, differences in the perception of employee empowerment are analyzed. It is detected that, among other demographic variables, position and income status create a difference in the perception of employee empowerment. Moreover, it is found out that, depending on behavioral and psychological factors, employees' perceptions of employee empowerment differ and psychological empowerment perception is higher than behavioral empowerment.

Keywords: Employee empowerment, behavioral empowerment, psychological empowerment, employee empowerment culture.

JEL Classification Codes: M54, C91, L20

1. Introduction

Employee empowerment is a modern management approach which emerged at the end of 1980s as a result of global competition and technological developments. It is required to empower employees for getting the highest efficiency from human resource, which is the most important tool of competition for business enterprises. For the sake of faster adaptation to changing business and market conditions and shorter response times, today, many business enterprises apply employee empowerment to their organizations. Employee empowerment refers to delegation of authority and explains the conditions under which employees are motivated, their confidence in their knowledge and skills increases, they can act independently, they can keep events under control and they act in line with organizational objectives.

Employee empowerment has behavioral and psychological dimensions (Pelit and Öztürk, 2011: 3). The first definition of employee empowerment is based on psychological point of view and points out the equal distribution of resources and authority. Psychological dimensions are analyzed in four groups: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. Analyzed in four groups, the dimensions in question are defined as follows (Spreitzer ve Doneson, 2005: 7-8):

- **Meaning** means the fit between the work that is performed and the beliefs, values and judgments of the employee;
- **Competence** means employee’s skill for and belief in fulfilling the requirements of the work that is performed;
- **Self-determination** means individual’s capability of making his/her own decisions, determining his/her own future and acting freely as well as his/her power of control on his/her work processes and behavior; and
- **Impact** means the degree of influencing work-related operating, strategic and administrative outcomes.

Bowen and Lawler (1992) define employee empowerment as enabling employees to make decision. However, for Pastor (1996), employee empowerment is to allow employees to take responsibility in their own activities. The former is related to employee empowerment culture practices and management possibilities while the latter highlights the significance of employees in a successful employee empowerment practice (Erstad, 1997: 325).

As a management concept, employee empowerment is defined as a process of increasing individuals’ rights (authority) to decide and developing individuals by way of cooperation, sharing, training and team work (Vogt and Murrell, 1990: 8). The primary reasons for the occurrence of empowerment practices are as follows (Koçel, 2007: 318):

- developments in information processing technology;
- increasing competition and, as a result, increase in the obligation of shorter response time;
- education level and expectations, rising staff structure;
- increasing trend toward democratization generally at social level and especially in organizations;
- determination of information and human as the most important source of “competitive advantage”.
- weakening hierarchy-based command-control philosophy in organizations;
- creation of a globalized and continuously-changing external environment.

Employee empowerment is both an administrative tool and a cultural system; it differs from a hierarchical organizational culture having a command-control structure. Such differences are summarized in Table 1 (Randolph, 2000: 98).

Table 1: Differences between Hierarchical Culture and Empowerment Culture

| Hierarchical Culture | Empowerment Culture |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Planning | Vision |
| Command and control | Making a partner in performance |
| Quality control | Self-control |
| Individual responsibilities | Team responsibility |
| Pyramid structures | Cross structures |
| Business processes | Projects |
| Managers | Coaches/team leaders |
| Employees | Team members |
| Participative management | Self-managing teams |
| Do as you are told | Have your own job |
| Obedience | Logic |

Source: Randolph, W. Alan (2000). “Re-thinking Empowerment: Why Is It So Hard To Achieve?,” *Organizational Dynamics*, 29 (2), s. 98.

In spite of numerous advantages provided by employee empowerment to an organization, there are some obstacles in its implementation. They can be listed as: inadequacies in management’s decisions, inadequate knowledge about empowerment, resistance to behavioral change,

misunderstanding of continuous learning, excessive bureaucracy and inadequate communication (Holt, Love and Nesan, 2000:50).

2. Employee Empowerment

Employee empowerment is a new sense of management arising from global change and competition. It refers to power distribution in the organization. Employee empowerment increases efficiency, performance and job satisfaction in the organization, provides competitive advantage to the organization and decreases employee turnover rate. Employee empowerment is a new sense of management requiring not only freedom in behaviors but also taking high level of responsibility (Ongori, 2009: 9-10).

Employee empowerment is to enable employees to make their own decisions, be responsible for the consequences of their decisions, have autonomy in achieving management goals by taking initiative, increase level of knowledge and skills by means of the training offered by their managers and efficiently communicate with the persons around them. Here, information is shared in an open communication environment in the business enterprise, managers' approach to their employees as a coach and a guide and encourages them to make innovations and show their creativity and provide their employees with the resources they need, and employees act in cooperation. However, implementation of employee empowerment requires a fundamental change in business structures and cultures (Doğan and Demiral, 2007: 283).

Employee empowerment is one of the most significant tools that can be used against global and local threats. Thanks to employee empowerment, managers lay more burdens on their employees and thus ensure job enrichment. Employee empowerment changes employee perception in the organization and affects quality initiatives in the organization (Menon, 2001: 154).

Employee empowerment helps personal development and professional life development and enables employees to adopt their jobs more. All employees and managers are able to successfully achieve the common goal of the organization through employee empowerment. Employee empowerment also allows employees to be self-sufficient and self-confident. Employee empowerment develops employees' creativity and promotes innovation activities in the organization (Huq, 2010: 17).

Due to the fact that employee empowerment underlies business strategy, it should be developed and implemented. Employee empowerment offers to the organization a more participative and democratic sense of management. Changes in social, economic and political factors make employee empowerment practices inevitable. Employee empowerment practices increase workplace democracy and employee freedom. Empowerment-related management approach allows employees to take part in management. Thus, new business methods and procedures develop and business-related problems are solved more easily. In the business enterprises that make employee empowerment an organizational culture, costs lower and efficiency increases. Furthermore, in such organizations, it is seen that more innovations occur, employee skills develop and organizations get competitive advantage (Potterfield, 1999: 9-17).

Employee empowerment is one of human resources management practices. Empowerment means power distribution and responsibility sharing, using existing skills and capacities, being more motivated, personal interaction, information and authority sharing. Employee empowerment reduces the stress and conflicts between employees in the organization and breaks standard thoughts (Murrell and Meredith, 2000: 1-4).

Employee empowerment is an unprocessed potential value in terms of human resources. Employee empowerment refers to modern organizations' management structure and direct participation in management. Thanks to this structure, employee empowerment provides flexibility advantage to the organization. Employee empowerment represents advanced thought in the sense of management. Employee empowerment expands the area of freewill in the workplace and reduces

official dependence on management instructions. Employee empowerment adds a wide vision to the management (Beirne, 2007: 1-2)

Employee empowerment offers the authority of independent decision-making and a different point of view to employees. Employee empowerment enables employees to actively take part in business-related decisions and offers the opportunity to judge the decisions taken and thus allows them to have more power. The primary objective of employee empowerment is to turn the organization into a simple organization that prioritizes customer demands. Thanks to employee empowerment, a shorter response time is ensured and decisions are taken more rapidly in the organizations and thus the organization gains competitive advantage. Employee empowerment promotes creative thinking, independent behavior and employees' taking more responsibility in the organization. Employee empowerment expresses the transfer of power of decision from a higher level to a lower level. Employee empowerment is comprised of several steps: distributing the responsibility, guaranteeing the responsibility, maintaining the communication and feedback. Employee empowerment strengthens employees' development, commitment to the organization, ability to take risks, entrepreneurial behavior, relationship with the management and areas of interest. Owing to employee empowerment, customer complaints are reduced. In employee empowerment activities, top management plays a significant role (Durai, 2010: 431-436).

Employee empowerment increases business enterprises' market share and enables them to save time. Employee empowerment adds new employee behavior to the organization and makes employees trustworthy in the organization. Employee empowerment has psychological, sociological and organizational dimensions. Employee empowerment is realized in the organization in three different ways. The first one is individual empowerment and refers to the authority and responsibility given to employees. The second one is team empowerment by means of which problems are solved and processes are developed via a temporarily created team. In the third one, employee empowerment is realized as the team manages itself. In that case, employees are organized as a team and a team coach is assigned instead of a manager (Ginnodo, 1997: 4-5).

Long life of a company is based on employee empowerment activities. Positive results are obtained in the organizations that implement employee empowerment. Employee empowerment results in fast growth for organizations (Timmerman and Lytle, 2008: 503).

Employee empowerment is a modern sense of management in relation to human resources practices. Employee empowerment means that employees gain power on business processes. Employee empowerment is based on team spirit. Employee empowerment establishes labor peace in the organization and makes employees trust each other. Employee empowerment improves the quality of business life and lessens manager control in the organization. Moreover, it makes employees embrace the business and provides financial gains to the organization. Employee empowerment increases the dynamism and success of the organization. Employee empowerment creates significant changes in managers' behaviors. Employee empowerment boosts employees' morale and consequently makes them healthier and happier. Employee empowerment changes not only manager-employee relationship but also the society (Doughty, 2004: 2-4).

In a business enterprise where employee empowerment is implemented, the most important element is managers' leadership ability. New roles of leaders in employee empowerment are explained in more detail by means of the "UKKEBI" model. According to this model, leaders increase the efficiency of both individuals and teams. Leaders help individuals develop themselves by equally distributing powers and responsibilities in the organization, providing the equipment and tools needed by employees, creating a business environment where information is shared and making employees take risks. On the other hand, leaders contribute to the development of teams by listening to them, supporting each team member, encouraging cooperative learning and common information sharing and developing fiduciary relationships in the team (Carroll, 1994: 14-16).

In addition to numerous advantages, employee empowerment has some disadvantages that occur if it is not implemented correctly. Such disadvantages include contradictions in managers' and

employees' definition of power, time-consuming and costly empowering practices, high employee costs, loss of tight control by managers, high expenses for employee selection and training, giving an undesired responsibility to an employee, slow and inconsistent service delivery, treating employees unfairly and violation of rules (Luthans, 1995: 41).

3. Methodology

3.1. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to reveal perception differences in relation to the demographic characteristics of Turkish Coal Institution employees and two dimensions of empowerment (behavioral and psychological empowerment) practices. Thus, this study aims at determining whether or not there are perception differences related to behavioral empowerment practices expressed as the provision by managers of necessary working environment for their subordinates and psychological empowerment practices expressed as how employees perceive such practices and showing to managers strengths and weaknesses of the organization in relation to both behavioral and psychological empowerment and helping them in this regard.

3.2. Target Population and Sampling of the Study

Target population of the study is made up of white collar employees working in the General Directorate of Turkish Coal Institution. The reasons why blue collar employees are not included in the scope of the research are the geographical distribution of the business enterprise operating in the mining sector, difficulty encountered in working conditions and employment of many workmen. Due to the fact that including blue collar employees creates problems such as time and cost problems in reaching the entire target population, the research is conducted on this target population by selecting only white collar employees. Within the scope of the study, a questionnaire form is sent to 646 white collar employees and 176 of them send it back. As a result of a review, 2 questionnaire forms are disannulled and 174 questionnaire forms are evaluated.

3.3. Methodology and Technique Used in the Study

Questionnaire method is used in collecting data. The questions of the questionnaire are prepared based on some literature studies performed on the subject. In determining behavioral empowerment, the empowerment scale developed by Niehoff et. al. (2001:103) is used while, in determining psychological empowerment, the empowerment scale developed by Spreitzer (1995:1464-1465) is used. The questionnaire form is comprised of 25 questions including both behavioral empowerment and psychological empowerment dimensions. The questionnaires which are used as a data collection tool in the research are prepared in line with 5-point Likert scale. Degrees of agreement in relation to each answer given to empowerment in line with 5-point Likert scale are “Strongly Disagree” (1), “Disagree” (2), “Slightly Agree” (3), “Agree” (4), “Strongly Agree” (5). The questionnaire includes questions measuring participants' empowerment perceptions as well as questions about their personal and professional qualifications.

4. Findings

Under the title “findings”, first participants' personal and professional qualifications such as age, gender, marital status, education level, number of years worked, position and income status are put forth. Then, the effects of such demographic characteristics on empowerment perceptions are analyzed.

Table 2: Personal and Professional Characteristics of the Participant White-Collar Employees

| Variable | Defining Statistics | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| | Number | Percent (%) |
| Age | | |
| 35 and younger | 48 | 27.6 |
| 36 and older | 126 | 72.4 |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 26 | 14.9 |
| Male | 148 | 85.1 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 138 | 79.3 |
| Single | 36 | 20.7 |
| Education Level | | |
| Primary and secondary education | 72 | 41.4 |
| Higher education | 102 | 58.6 |
| Number of years worked | | |
| 0-10 years | 47 | 27.0 |
| 11 years and more | 127 | 73.0 |
| Position | | |
| Managers | 46 | 26.4 |
| Subordinates | 128 | 73.6 |
| Income Status (TL) | | |
| 2000 and less | 78 | 44.8 |
| More than 2000 | 96 | 55.2 |

Given the personal and professional qualifications of the participants, of the participants, 72.4% are 36 years old or older, 85.1% are male, 79.3% are married, 58.6% have a higher education degree, 73.0% have been working for 11 years or more, 73.6% are subordinates and 55.2% have an income higher than 2000TL.

Factor analysis is implemented in the questions of the 2nd part of the questionnaire which is about empowerment. KMO and Bartlett’s tests results are used for determining whether or not the data is suitable for factor analysis. Concerning behavioral empowerment scale, KMO and Bartlett’s tests results are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Barlett Sphericity and KMO Compliance Test Results

| | |
|---|------------------|
| KMO Compliance Criterion | 0.910 |
| Bartlett’s Sphericity Test χ^2 statistic [Significance] | 1792.278 [0.000] |

Regarding psychological empowerment scale, KMO and Bartlett’s tests results are given in Table 4.

Table 4: Barlett Sphericity and KMO Compliance Test Results

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| KMO Compliance Criterion | 0.735 |
| Bartlett’s Sphericity Test χ^2 statistic [Significance] | 226.358 [0.000] |

The results demonstrate that the relevant data is suitable for factor analysis. Table 5 gives the results of the factor analysis performed in this direction. 2 factors covering 25 judgments included in the questionnaire in relation to employee empowerment explain 47.024% of the total variability. Behavioral empowerment dimension is the factor which explains variability at the highest level by

37.374%. On the other hand, in psychological empowerment dimension, rate of explaining variability is 9.650%.

Table 5: Employee Empowerment Practices Factor Analysis Results

| Factor | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Derived Quadric Weights Total | | | Converted Quadric Weights Total | | |
|--------|---------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| | Total | Variance (%) | Cumulative (%) | Total | Variance (%) | Cumulative (%) | Total | Variance (%) | Cumulative (%) |
| 1 | 9.344 | 37.374 | 37.374 | 9.344 | 37.374 | 37.374 | 8.656 | 34.625 | 34.625 |
| 2 | 2.412 | 9.650 | 47.024 | 2.412 | 9.650 | 47.024 | 3.100 | 12.399 | 47.024 |
| 3 | 1.366 | 5.465 | 52.489 | | | | | | |
| 4 | 1.241 | 4.964 | 57.453 | | | | | | |
| 5 | 1.107 | 4.427 | 61.880 | | | | | | |
| 6 | 0.987 | 3.949 | 65.829 | | | | | | |
| 7 | 0.859 | 3.438 | 69.267 | | | | | | |
| 8 | 0.773 | 3.090 | 72.358 | | | | | | |
| 9 | 0.715 | 2.860 | 75.217 | | | | | | |
| 10 | 0.680 | 2.719 | 77.936 | | | | | | |
| 11 | 0.606 | 2.424 | 80.360 | | | | | | |
| . | . | . | . | | | | | | |
| . | . | . | . | | | | | | |
| 25 | 0.120 | 0.478 | 100.000 | | | | | | |

Table 6: Employee Empowerment Practices Factor Loads

| | F1 | F2 |
|-----|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | (Behavioral Empowering) | (Psychological Empowering) |
| X22 | <u>0.791</u> | 0.166 |
| X24 | <u>0.772</u> | 0.115 |
| X12 | <u>0.736</u> | 0.244 |
| X9 | <u>0.736</u> | 0.061 |
| X11 | <u>0.733</u> | 0.108 |
| X7 | <u>0.726</u> | 0.188 |
| X20 | <u>0.725</u> | 0.247 |
| X16 | <u>0.719</u> | -0.014 |
| X23 | <u>0.685</u> | 0.231 |
| X5 | <u>0.681</u> | 0.040 |
| X6 | <u>0.681</u> | 0.127 |
| X21 | <u>0.675</u> | 0.303 |
| X25 | <u>0.652</u> | -0.022 |
| X13 | <u>0.625</u> | 0.317 |
| X4 | <u>0.588</u> | 0.210 |
| X8 | <u>0.583</u> | -0.139 |
| X15 | <u>0.500</u> | 0.201 |
| X2 | <u>0.465</u> | 0.007 |
| X18 | -0.136 | <u>0.784</u> |
| X17 | -0.022 | <u>0.737</u> |
| X14 | 0.002 | <u>0.678</u> |
| X19 | 0.173 | <u>0.551</u> |
| X10 | 0.421 | <u>0.457</u> |
| X3 | 0.240 | <u>0.457</u> |
| X1 | 0.373 | <u>0.425</u> |

For these two factors obtained, Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient is (Cronbach Alpha) $\alpha=0,938$ for behavioral empowerment and (Cronbach Alpha) $\alpha=0,713$ for psychological empowerment. However, reliability coefficient calculated for the overall scale (behavioral and psychological) is α

=0,927. These results indicate that the questionnaire study has an internal reliability coefficient at desired level.

4.1. Employees’ Perception of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Practices by Demographic Variables

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of discovering whether or not there are differences in employees’ perception of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by demographic variables. Thus, it shall be possible to analyze if having different demographic characteristics creates a significant difference in employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment. In conducting the t-test, Levene test is used to investigate whether or not group averages variances are equal. According to the test result, if group averages variance is not found to be equal, results are reported according to changing variance status.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of age. Table 7 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Age does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H₁: Age has a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 7: T-Test Results Showing Employees’ View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Age

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----|------------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | 35 and younger | 48 | 0.0814584 | 0.98470011 | 0.662 | 0.509 |
| | 36 and older | 126 | -0.0310318 | 1.00791805 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | 35 and younger | 48 | 0.1091158 | 0.92949398 | 0.888 | 0.376 |
| | 36 and older | 126 | -0.0415679 | 1.02607879 | | |

According to the result of the t-test, H₀ hypothesis is accepted while H₁ hypothesis is rejected (p>0.05). As a result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is found that, among other demographic characteristics, age does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of gender. Table 8 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Gender does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H₁: Gender has a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 8: T-Test Results Showing Employees’ View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Gender

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|--------|-----|------------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | Female | 26 | -0.1964127 | 1.05841572 | 1.086 | 0.279 |
| | Male | 148 | 0.0345049 | 0.98910621 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | Female | 26 | 0.1488525 | 0.77402230 | -0.822 | 0.412 |
| | Male | 148 | -0.0261498 | 1.03458871 | | |

According to the result of the t-test, H_0 hypothesis is accepted while H_1 hypothesis is rejected ($p > 0.05$). As a result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is found that, among other demographic characteristics, gender does not have a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of marital status. Table 9 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Marital status does not have a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H₁: Marital status has a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 9: T-Test Results Showing Employees' View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Marital Status

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|---------|-----|------------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | Married | 138 | -0.0140886 | 1.02049794 | -0.363 | 0.717 |
| | Single | 36 | 0.0540062 | 0.92880275 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | Married | 138 | -0.0071523 | 0.98829319 | -0.184 | 0.854 |
| | Single | 36 | 0.0274173 | 1.05768979 | | |

According to the result of the t-test, H_0 hypothesis is accepted while H_1 hypothesis is rejected ($p > 0.05$). As a result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is found that, among other demographic characteristics, marital status does not have a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of education level. Table 10 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Education level does not have a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H₁: Education level has a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 10: T-Test Results Showing Employees' View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Education Level

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|------------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | Primary and secondary education | 72 | 0.0058200 | 0.96141696 | 0.064 | 0.949 |
| | Higher education | 102 | -0.0041082 | 1.03104742 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | Primary and secondary education | 72 | -0.0396006 | 1.05261447 | -0.438 | 0.662 |
| | Higher education | 102 | 0.0279534 | 0.96544036 | | |

According to the result of the t-test, H_0 hypothesis is accepted while H_1 hypothesis is rejected ($p > 0.05$). As a result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is found that, among other demographic characteristics, education level does not have a significant effect on employees' view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of number of years worked. Table 11 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Number of years worked does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H₁: Number of years worked has a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 11: T-Test Results Showing Employees’ View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Number of Years Worked

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----|------------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | 0-10 years | 47 | 0.0451760 | 1.00339237 | 0.362 | 0.718 |
| | 11 years and more | 127 | -0.0167187 | 1.00220373 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | 0-10 years | 47 | 0.1300775 | 0.88797183 | 1.044 | 0.298 |
| | 11 years and more | 127 | -0.0481389 | 1.03754795 | | |

According to the result of the t-test, H₀ hypothesis is accepted while H₁ hypothesis is rejected (p>0.05). As a result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is found that, among other demographic characteristics, number of years worked does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of position. Table 12 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Position does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H₁: Position has a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 12: T-Test Results Showing Employees’ View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Position

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|--------------|-----|------------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | Subordinates | 128 | 0.0058576 | 1.00267373 | 0.129 | 0.898 |
| | Managers | 46 | -0.0162994 | 1.00336491 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | Subordinates | 128 | -0.0908660 | 0.95861888 | -2.017 | 0.045 |
| | Managers | 46 | 0.2528446 | 1.07801962 | | |

According to the result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is seen that position does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral empowerment factor but has a significant effect on employees’ view of psychological empowerment factor.

An independent t-test is conducted for the purpose of detecting whether or not there is a significant difference in employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment practices by the demographic characteristic of income status. Table 13 gives the results obtained.

The hypothesis to be taken into account in this regard is as follows:

H₀: Income status does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

H1: Income status has a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors.

Table 13: T-Test Results Showing Employees’ View of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Factors by the Demographic Characteristic of Income Status

| Factors | Groups | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|----------------|----|------------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Behavioral Empowerment | 2000 and less | 78 | 0.0987957 | 1.06115272 | 1.176 | 0.241 |
| | More than 2001 | 96 | -0.0802715 | 0.94543014 | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | 2000 and less | 78 | -0.2056620 | 1.05539412 | -2.482 | 0.014 |
| | More than 2001 | 96 | 0.1671003 | 0.92482325 | | |

According to the result of the t-test (at a significance level of 0.05), it is seen that income status does not have a significant effect on employees’ view of behavioral empowerment factor but has a significant effect on employees’ view of psychological empowerment factor.

In order to determine participant employees’ perception of behavioral empowerment, frequency, percentage distribution and arithmetic mean values for each statement in the questionnaire are calculated. Table 14 gives the results obtained.

According to Table 14, first reward “our success in business is rewarded based on performance, \bar{x} =1.83” and then resource and information sharing “employees are supported materially and morally, \bar{x} =2.06; resources are equally distributed in the workplace, \bar{x} =2.13” are the leading items on which managers should lay emphasis in relation to behavioral empowerment, in other words, which they should empower.

On the other hand, it is seen that trust and support to employees are the leading items in which managers achieve success in the organization in relation to behavioral empowerment “supports in solving business-related problems, \bar{x} =3.15”. This case proves that the behaviors which managers have in the institution regarding trust and support to employees are in line with employees’ expectations.

“I have the skills necessary for my job, \bar{x} =4.16; I am sure that I have the abilities necessary for doing my job, \bar{x} =4.01; My job is very important for me, \bar{x} =3.98 and I have a considerable influence on the events that occur in my department, \bar{x} =3.17” are the leading statements that employees participate in the psychological empowerment practices carried out in the institution at the highest level. The statements which employees express positive opinion about constitute the competency, meaning and influence dimensions of psychological empowerment. Thus, it is possible to say that managers are very successful in the organization in terms of the competency, meaning and influence dimensions of psychological empowerment.

It is observed that autonomy dimensions such as “I decide how to conduct my work, \bar{x} =2.90 and I feel independent and free while doing my job, \bar{x} =2.93” are the leading statements where employees’ perceptions of psychological empowerment are at the lowest level. This case indicates that empowerment practices are not successful in terms of autonomy and managers have to give more autonomy to their employees so that empowerment practices succeed.

Table 14: Frequency Distribution of Empowerment Judgments

| Judgments | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree | \bar{X} |
|------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| X22 | %23.6 N=41 | %33.9 N=59 | %16.7 N=29 | %19.5 N=34 | %6.3 N=11 | 2.51 N=174 |
| X24 | %21.3 N=37 | %36.2 N=63 | %13.8 N=24 | %21.3 N=37 | %7.5 N=13 | 2.58 N=174 |
| X12 | %27.6 N=48 | %30.5 N=53 | %19.0 N=33 | %19.0 N=33 | %4.0 N=7 | 2.41 N=174 |
| X9 | %28.2 N=49 | %37.9 N=66 | %12.6 N=22 | %17.8 N=31 | %3.4 N=6 | 2.31 N=174 |

Table 14: Frequency Distribution of Empowerment Judgments - continued

| | | | | | | |
|------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| X11 | %26.6 N=46 | %34.1 N=59 | %22.0 N=38 | %14.5 N=25 | %2.9 N=5 | 2.32 N=173 |
| X7 | %27.0 N=47 | %40.8 N=71 | %17.2 N=30 | %12.1 N=21 | %2.9 N=5 | 2.22 N=174 |
| X20 | %25.4 N=44 | %33.5 N=58 | %20.2 N=35 | %16.2 N=28 | %4.6 N=8 | 2.41 N=173 |
| X16 | %33.3 N=58 | %40.8 N=71 | %13.8 N=24 | %10.9 N=19 | %1.1 N=2 | 2.06 N=174 |
| X23 | %17.9 N=31 | %29.5 N=51 | %15.6 N=27 | %31.2 N=54 | %5.8 N=10 | 2.78 N=173 |
| X5 | %23.6 N=41 | %24.7 N=43 | %20.1 N=35 | %28.2 N=49 | %3.4 N=6 | 2.63 N=174 |
| X6 | %20.7 N=36 | %32.8 N=57 | %17.2 N=30 | %24.1 N=42 | %5.2 N=9 | 2.60 N=174 |
| X21 | %23.6 N=41 | %25.3 N=44 | %16.1 N=28 | %28.7 N=50 | %6.3 N=11 | 2.68 N=174 |
| X25 | %38.7 N=67 | %31.8 N=55 | %11.0 N=19 | %15.0 N=26 | %3.5 N=6 | 2.13 N=173 |
| X13 | %16.1 N=28 | %37.4 N=65 | %15.5 N=27 | %27.0 N=47 | %4.0 N=7 | 2.66 N=174 |
| X4 | %18.4 N=32 | %37.9 N=66 | %16.1 N=28 | %23.6 N=41 | %4.0 N=7 | 2.57 N=174 |
| X8 | %42.2 N=73 | %42.8 N=74 | %6.9 N=12 | %6.4 N=11 | %1.7 N=3 | 1.83 N=173 |
| X15 | %16.2 N=28 | %28.9 N=50 | %26.6 N=46 | %24.9 N=43 | %3.5 N=6 | 2.71 N=173 |
| X2 | %8.6 N=15 | %27.0 N=47 | %12.6 N=22 | %44.3 N=77 | %7.5 N=13 | 3.15 N=174 |
| X18 | %1.1 N=2 | %3.4 N=6 | %7.5 N=13 | %54.6 N=95 | %33.3 N=58 | 4.16 N=174 |
| X17 | %1.7 N=3 | %8.0 N=14 | %10.3 N=18 | %50.0 N=87 | %29.9 N=52 | 3.98 N=174 |
| X14 | %1.7 N=3 | %5.7 N=10 | %6.9 N=12 | %60.9 N=106 | %24.7 N=43 | 4.01 N=174 |
| X19 | %6.3 N=11 | %24.7 N=43 | %24.1 N=42 | %35.1 N=61 | %9.8 N=17 | 3.17 N=174 |
| X10 | %9.2 N=16 | %33.3 N=58 | %15.5 N=27 | %37.4 N=65 | %4.6 N=8 | 2.95 N=174 |
| X3 | %11.5 N=20 | %34.5 N=60 | %13.2 N=23 | %33.9 N=59 | %6.9 N=12 | 2.90 N=174 |
| X1 | % 12.6 N=22 | %33.3 N=58 | %10.3 N=18 | %36.2 N=63 | %7.5 N=13 | 2.93 N=174 |

The hypotheses which are developed in relation to this research for the purpose of determining differences in employees' perceptions of behavioral and psychological empowerment are as follows.

H₀: There is no difference between employees' behavioral and psychological empowerment averages.

H₁: There is difference between employees' behavioral and psychological empowerment averages.

Table 15 gives the results of the Paired Samples T-Test performed for comparing levels of employees' perception of behavioral and psychological empowerment dimensions.

Table 15: Paired Samples T-Test Results for Comparing Levels of Employees’ Perception of Behavioral and Psychological Empowerment Dimensions

| Dimensions | N | \bar{X} | Standard Deviation | t | p |
|---------------------------|-----|-----------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| Psychological Empowerment | 174 | 3.4425 | 0.63269 | 16.776 | 0.000 |
| Behavioral Empowerment | 174 | 2.4761 | 0.79505 | | |

According to analysis results, 174 employees’ psychological empowerment average is $\bar{x}=3.4425$ and behavioral empowerment average is $\bar{x}=2.4761$. At the confidence interval of 95%, sig (2 tailed) value is below 0.05 (p=0.000). In other words, there is a significance difference between employees’ behavioral and psychological averages. In that case, zero hypotheses (no difference between averages) shall be rejected but alternative hypothesis (difference between averages) shall be accepted. These results demonstrate that managers’ behavioral empowerment practices are less successful than psychological empowerment practices, indicating that managers are not able to adequately provide necessary possibilities and conditions in the workplace environment to their employees.

5. Conclusion

Employee empowerment is a concept that emerged as a reaction to economic and technological developments in 1980s. For organizations, employee empowerment is regarded as one of the modern management approaches which can be used against internal and external threats. Among the modern management approaches that have emerged in recent years, employee empowerment has been widely accepted and started to be implemented because of a number of advantages it brings to the organization. The reason is to make use of human resource, which is the most important factor in getting competitive advantage, more. In order to benefit from human resource more, it is necessary to develop employees. The modern management approach expressed as the process of developing employees is employee empowerment.

This study, which is conducted on 174 persons in relation to the employee empowerment practices of the Turkish Coal Institution, discusses empowerment as two dimensions (behavioral and psychological) as mentioned in the study and analyzes whether or not demographic characteristics make any difference in employees’ perception of these two dimensions in question. It is seen that, among other demographic characteristics, age, gender, marital status, education level and number of years worked do not have any significant effect on view of behavioral and psychological empowerment factors. However, it is detected that position and income status have a significant effect only on psychological empowerment factors.

It is found that, in the behavioral-empowering-related part of the empowering scale applied to the employees, trust and support to employees are the two dimensions in which the employees participate at the highest level in the perception of behavioral empowering. However, reward, resource and information sharing are the leading items about which the employees express the most negative opinions in relation to behavioral empowering. It would be rather correct to state that the items about which negative opinions are expressed by the employees in respect of the behavioral dimension of empowering generally result from manager’s sense of management.

According to the findings related to employees’ perception of psychological empowering, it is seen that employees’ perception of psychological empowering is high in competency, meaning and influence dimensions within the scope of psychological empowering while their perception of empowering related to autonomy is negative. It is necessary to notice that employees have low perception related to autonomy, which is a sub-dimension of psychological empowering, and to take necessary measures in this regard. Furthermore, the aforementioned should be taken into account while structuring management policies.

Given the averages of both empowering dimensions, it is detected that employees' perceptions of psychological empowering and behavioral empowering are different and perception of psychological empowering ($\bar{x}=3.44$) is more positive than perception of behavioral empowering ($\bar{x}=2.47$), proving that managers are not capable of providing necessary working conditions to their employees.

Employee empowering is a concept related to the transfer of power to employees. Thanks to employee empowering, organizations and managers gain a number of advantages, including turning any success and failure in employee empowerment practices into opportunity to learn and making the organization a learning organization, providing excellent customer services and short response times, sharing responsibilities in the organization, developing employees' skill to take initiative, raising employees' commitment and loyalty to the institution, increasing labor productivity, ensuring high-quality works, revealing creative and innovative thoughts, increasing job satisfaction, offering more time to managers so that they can perform strategic business, providing cost saving and competitive advantage. As a result of the above-listed benefits of employee empowerment, many business enterprises implement empowering practices in their organizations and thus make their managers and employees change and their management pyramids reverse.

Being successfully implemented by many small-scale and large-scale business enterprises, employee empowering is becoming a part of management every other day. Employee empowering is a new sense of management used by different disciplines. Employee empowering is a human tool used for the purpose of creating a qualified business environment. Employee empowering creates dynamism and energy in organizations and make employees feel themselves better.

Employee empowering is a crucial concept in restructuring business processes. On the grounds of being based on democratic management, employee empowering offers a sense of participative management to organizations. Employee empowering is a management philosophy that can be implemented at every level of organizations. Thus, organizations grow, live longer and enable their employees to complete their personal development.

Employee empowering requires trusting employees' skills and being open to innovations at all levels. Employee empowering succeeds only in an environment where self-confident managers and employees exist. For a successful employee empowering, some key elements have to be incorporated into organizational culture and operational structure. Employees who are in direct contact with customers should be empowered so that organizations live longer in a changing environment.

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