

**IMPACT OF EMPLOYEES' EMPOWERMENT ON
ORGANIZATIONAL LOYALTY
– CASE STUDY ON ALGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY-**

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Abstract

This Study sought to determine the impact of employees' empowerment on organizational loyalty, employees empowerment have been identified through its four dimensions were in (meaningfulness, self determination, competence of employees, impact on job).

To achieve the above objectives, questionnaire was developed and distributed to a sample consists (71) subjects and then descriptive statistical technique such as (mean, standard deviation) and analytical statistical technique such as (multi-regression) were used to analyze the data. the study has reached the following conclusions:

1. there was a statistical significant impact of employees' empowerment on organizational loyalty.
2. there was a statistical significant impact of (Meaningfulness, Competence) on organizational loyalty.
3. there was no statistical significant role of (self-determination, Impact) on organizational loyalty.

The study has recommended the followings: the need to address the development of perceptions of the four dimensions of empowerment, especially in the first level management by encouraging them to take responsibility and look at mistakes as opportunities to learn in order to increase the overall level of loyalty.

Key words : organizational loyalty, Employees' Empowerment , Employees Competence, Meaning fullness, Self- Determination, job Impact.

1. Introduction:

In a competitive environment in which organizations must be faster, leaner, provide better service quality, be more excellence, an empowered and proactive service worker is thought to be essential (Bowen and Lawer, 1992; Fulford and Enz, 1995; Bowen and Lawler, 1995).

However, delegation of authority for a long period of time in the past, dominated the management field. In fact, this view changed into the “empowerment” concept as mentioned by Kocel (1998). It covers the participation and delegation of authority along with the motivation of the employees.

While discussion of employee’ empowerment has been prevalent in the popular literature for many years, theoretical research on psychological empowerment has been appearing only recently in scholarly journals. Empowerment is a concept that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems and proactive behaviour to social policy and social change.

On the other hand, organizational loyalty is an essential practice where the employee has found its identity in a particular organization and apply their maximum involvement and participation to optimal perform of their duties (Steers al el., 2003).

Since communication sector is one system that is responsible for the development of any country, also Algerian communications company staff is as permanent forces that are affecting in the stability and harmony of this role. Thus, the researcher is seeking to investigate the impact of employees’ empowerment on organizational loyalty in Algerian communications company employees by underlying factors such as feelings of competence, meaningfulness, impact and choice as a component of empowerment.

2. LITERATURE REVEIW

2.1. *Employees' Empowerment*

The definitions of empowerment itself vary widely across scholars. Many studies define empowerment as intrinsic task motivation (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990) or motivation reflective of the person–environment fit (Zimmerman, 1990). In other literature, empowerment has been defined as perceptions (Parker & Price, 1994) and as commitment-based designs (Spreitzer, 1996). Researchers have also defined empowerment in terms of job structure the transfer of power or authority (e.g., Burke, 1986; Kanter, 1977).

Empowerment has become an important theme within general management over the course of recent years. There is general encouragement to give employees sufficient latitude in their work-definition and authority to be able to apply the full breadth of ability to the overall aims of the company. Recently, the usefulness of empowerment has started to become recognized in the different environment of Project Management (Williams, 1997). Rutland discusses its importance both between companies, leading towards an increase in structures such as partnering (which implies a level of trust between the companies), and, more relevantly to this paper, for individuals within a firm: he discusses the importance of employee motivation as a differentiating factor between companies (Rutland, 1994).

Empowerment is often defined as the act of giving people the opportunity to make workplace decisions by expanding their autonomy in decision making (Vogt, 1997). Also, empowerment has been described as the breaking down of traditional hierarchical structures (Blanchard, 1997). From a service perspective, empowerment gives employees the authority to make decisions about customer service. In industrial and organizational psychology and management, empowerment is the enhancement of the autonomy of employees in their work or increased involvement that results in increased decision making more generally within the wider agenda and interests of the organization (Wall et al, 2004). Geroy et al. (1998)

emphasized the organizational aspect of empowerment, calling it the process of providing employees with the necessary guidance and skills to enable autonomous decision making (including accountability and responsibility for making these decisions within acceptable parameters) that is part of an organizational culture. An empowered and committed workforce is generally claimed to be essential for the effective functioning of modern organizations (Bowen et al, 1992; Sparrowe, 1995; Kirkman et al, 1999). Empowerment have been proposed and found to facilitate a worker's commitment to the organization (Kirkman et al, 1999; Locke et al, 1979). Empowerment can be measured through two constructs. One is psychological empowerment construct which has received much attention from researchers in many business fields (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995).

The focus of psychological empowerment is an individual's psychological empowerment state. The other construct is empowerment climate which focuses on work environment. Concept of empowerment climate proposed by Scott and colleagues (2004) is a shared perception regarding the extent to which an organization makes use of structures, policies, and practices supporting employee empowerment. It refers to work environment. Blanchard et al. (1995) and Randolph (1995) identified three key organizational practices associated with empowerment climate: autonomy through boundaries, information sharing, and team accountability. As the focus of our study is on work environment we take the empowerment climate construct. Moreover, organizational climate perceptions are related to individual attitudes and behaviours (Schneider et al, 1980; Hofmann and Stetzer, 1996; Glisson and James, 2002), we, therefore, study its relationship with leadership behavior in projects (Shazia et al, 2010). Based on the prior literature this paper take the three dimensions autonomy through boundaries, information sharing, and team accountability as the organizational practices associated with the empowerment climate of project teams having varying degree of virtuality. Autonomy through boundary dimension (Shazia et al, 2010).

2.2. Employees' Empowerment Dimensions

Building upon the seminal work by Conger and Kanungo (1988), Thomas and Velthouse (1990) define empowerment as increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions (task assessments) reflecting the individual's orientation to his or her job role: meaningfulness, impact, competence, and choice. Let's take a careful look at each of these cognitions.

Specifically, **meaningfulness** is the individual's intrinsic caring about a given task, and is concerned with the value of the task goal judged in relation to the individual's own value system, ideals, and/or standards (Thomas and Velthouse 1990, p. 672). In other words, feelings of meaning, or purpose, emerge out of a fit between the needs of one's work role and one's beliefs, values, and behaviors (Spreitzer 1995a). Lack of meaningfulness is believed to result in apathy and feelings of detachment (Thomas and Velthouse 1990) that are detrimental to job motivation and quality of job performance (Hackman and Oldham 1976).

Competence is "the degree to which a person can perform task activities skillfully when he or she tries" (Thomas and Velthouse 1990, p. 672). It can be understood as self-efficacy (Bandura 1986) specific to one's work, and should be distinguished from self-esteem as the former is confined to a work role in contrast to the latter being construed as global efficacy (Spreitzer 1995). Indeed, self-efficacy, the central variable of socialcognitive theory (Bandura 1986), has proven to be "one of the most focal concepts in contemporary psychology research" (Judge, Jackson, Shaw, Scott, and Rich 2007, p. 107; Stajkovic and Luthans 1998), as demonstrated by the evidence that it has been studied in more than 10,000 investigations over the past 25 years (Judge, Jackson, Shaw, Scott, and Rich 2007). Accumulated evidence attests to a positive relationship between self-efficacy and work-related performance (Stajkovic and Luthans 1998). Research suggests that self-efficacy, as a

positive psychological strength underlining the recently emerging core construct of positive psychological capital (Luthans, Norman, Avolio, and Avey 2008), can be enhanced and promoted in four very specific ways: Task mastery, modeling, persuasion and/or feedback, as well as physiological and/or psychological arousal and wellness (Bandura 1997). In sum, in Bandura's (1986) terms, competence is tantamount to agency beliefs, personal mastery, or effort-performance expectancy.

Impact is understood by the degree to which the individual "can influence strategic, administrative, or operating outcomes at work" (Spreitzer 1995a), and is the converse of learned helplessness (Martinko and Gardner 1982). Conceptually, impact is different from locus of control; the former is determined by the work context (Zimmerman 1995) whereas the latter is regarded as a global personality characteristic that endures across situations. Recently (Dur and Glazer, 2008) find that the impact motive can make it profitable for an employer to give employees autonomy in effort or task choices.

Choice involves "causal responsibility for a person's actions" (Thomas and Velthouse 1990), and is a sense of autonomy over the initiation and continuation of work behavior and processes (e.g., deciding on work methods, pace, and effort) (Spreitzer 1995a). It should be noted that impact and choice represent different perspectives on the notion of control the former is control over one's work unit whereas the latter is control over one's work (Spreitzer 1995b). Some favorable consequences of choice have been documented in the literature; for example, Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, and (Kaplan 2003) find that autonomy is positively related to psychological well-being. Recently, (Jaramillo, Locander, Spector, and Harris 2007) suggest that initiative has a significant direct effect on objective salesperson performance. In an attempt to better operationalize the construct "psychological empowerment," (Spreitzer 1995a) builds on the theoretical model constructed by (Thomas and Velthouse 1990) to develop a four-dimensional scale to measure meaningfulness.

impact, competence, and choice. In her highly referenced work, (Spreitzer 1995) renames meaningfulness as meaning and choice as self-determination. Together, these four dimensions should be conceptualized as neither antecedents nor consequences of psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, Kizilos, and Nason 1997), but rather comprise its very essence (Spreitzer 1995a), reflecting a proactive self-orientation of an individual in relation to his or her work role (Spreitzer 1995b). As a whole, the approach adopted by Conger and Kanungo (1988), Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and Spreitzer (1995a) is predicated on the "perception aspect," viewing empowerment as the "psychological state of a subordinate" resulting from his or her supervisor's empowering (Lee and Koh 2001, p. 686) and/or organizational empowering structures, policies, and practices (Seibert, Silver, and Randolph 2004, p. 332). The four dimensions delineated previously are considered "the essential prerequisites for the motivation to engage in empowered behaviors in the work environment" (Robbins, Crino, and Fredendall 2002, p. 422), and provide the initiative for individuals to proactively undertake behaviors necessary for goal achievement (Peterson, Lowe, Aquilino, and Schneider 2005). Theorized to be negatively associated with powerlessness (Zimmerman 1990b), the four specific dimensions of psychological empowerment combine and culminate in an overall gestalt of the experience of empowerment in the workplace (Spreitzer 1995).

2.3. Organizational Loyalty

organizational loyalty (typically synonymous with commitment) to the organization has sometimes been viewed as an attitude. However, it is not so much an attitude (or thought component) that is important in organizations, but rather it is the bottom-line action component (Meyer & Allen, 1991). organizational loyalty is the willingness to remain with the organization (Solomon, 1992). organizational loyalty can be defined as employees being committed to the success of the organization and believing that working for this organization

is their best option. Not only do they plan to remain with the organization, but they do not actively search for alternative employment and are not responsive to offers (The Loyalty Research Center, 1990). organizational loyalty is an organizational citizenship behavior that reflects the allegiance to the organization to the promotion of its interests and image to the outsiders. (Bentten Court, Gwinner and Meuter, 2001). organizational loyalty is a manifestation of organizational commitment, the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Porter and Steers 1982), Based on internalization and identification (O'Reilly and Chatman 1986). This behavior's can be characterized by three related factors. They are strong belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. (Mowday, Porter and Steers 1979).

2.4. Dimensions of organizational loyalty

There are many studies that have tried to search in the interpretation of the phenomenon of organizational loyalty, whether with respect to its reasons, results, subjects or a combination of all that, but these studies could not develop a specific model for the study of organizational loyalty. The researcher selected (Allen & Mayer, 1990) model which is known as the three-factor-model of organizational commitment because it is based on three dimensions:

2.4.1. Emotional or influential loyalty: This dimension is influenced by the extent to which an individual realizes the distinctive characteristics of his work in terms of the degree of independence, its importance, the required skills, the availability of supervision and guidance. It is also influenced by the degree of employee's sense of loyalty that the environment in which it operates allows active participation in the course of decision-making both in terms of work or its own thing.

2.4.2. Moral loyalty (normative): It means the sense of commitment of the employees towards staying with the organization, and often this is enhanced by good support by the organization for its employees, allowing them to participate and positively interact, not only in the manner of implementing procedures, but to contribute to the development of goals, planning and policy-making for the organization.

2.4.3. Continued loyalty: The degree of loyalty of the individual in this case is controlled by the investment value that can be achieved if it continues with the organization or what it may lose if decided to attend another organization. In the view of (Al-Hajri, 2002) that these three components of the organizational loyalty affect the expression of a common bond between them represented by considering organizational loyalty as a psychological condition that reflects the relationship between the employee and the organization in which it operates, and varies depending on the nature of the loyalty ,where the employee who has emotional loyalty remains in the organization motivated by the desire, but who has an ongoing loyalty remains in the organization because it needs that. It is expected that an individual can get a better understanding of his relationship with the organization.

3. Research Model and Hypotheses

Based on the main research questions and aims, in this section of the paper the research analytical framework is presented in Figure 1.

1. Employees' Empowerment for organizations are encompasses the four main dimensions as follow: meaningfulness, self determination, competence of employees, impact on job.
2. Organizational loyalty and its impact on employees' empowerment.

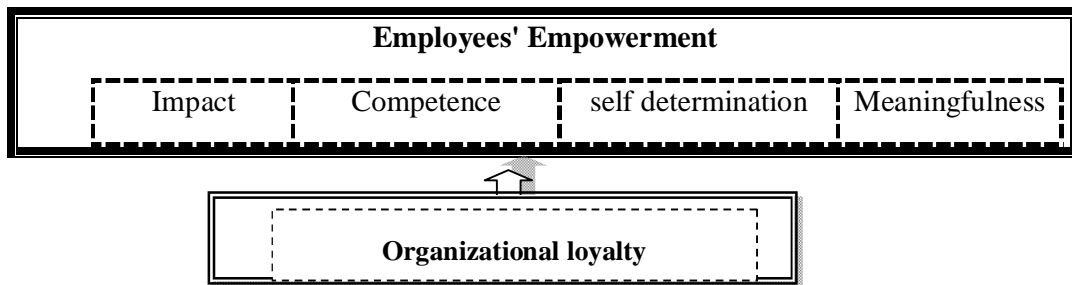


Figure 1. The Research Analytical Model

Table 1 describes the main research hypotheses that highlight the impact of employees' empowerment and its dimensions on organizational loyalty

Table 1: The Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Description
H.1	there was a statistical significant impact of employees' empowerment on organizational loyalty.
H.1a	there was a statistical significant impact of meaningfulness on organizational loyalty.
H.1b	there was a statistical significant impact of self determination on organizational loyalty.
H.1c	there was a statistical significant impact of employees competence on organizational loyalty.
H.1d	there was a statistical significant impact between impact of job development on organizational loyalty.

4.Methodology

The method of this research are Applied Research in goal, and in the view point of data gathering is Descriptive-Analytic (non-experimental) that is implemented with the research format. The main contribution of this research is the novel model in the field of empowerment management and organizational loyalty that is very useful and applicable for companies. This model presents the demonstrated relationship between the research variables and shows the clear insights for the both academic researchers and practitioners of the field.

5. Reliability of the Research

Table 2 show the results for reliability test for each variable tests. As mentioned in the table 2, the questionnaire for each of the variable has been reliable. The Alpha Cronbach for these hypotheses is 0.881.

Table 2: Reliability test results

Variables	Number of questions	Alpha cronbach
Employees' Empowerment	12	0.78
Meaningfulness	3	0.84
self determination	3	0.76
Competence	3	0.90
Impact	3	0.81
Organizational loyalty	6	0.84
#	$\Sigma = 18$	Average = 0.881

6.Statistical Analysis:

In this section of the paper the statistical analysis for sample research and for test the research hypotheses are investigated and presented.

7.Sample Analysis:

For sample analysis we used descriptive statistical as (frequencies, percents, mean, standard deviation).

Table 3: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	51	71.83
Female	20	28.17
Total	71	100.00

As shown in the table 3, there is a considerable percentage of male workers in the labor force working in the Algerian communications company.

Table 4: Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
25 or less	06	8.45
26 – 35	10	14.08
36 – 45	18	25.35
46 – 55	25	35.21
56 or more	12	16.90
Total	71	100.00

As shown in the table 4, By examining the Age, it is found that the higher percentage of the labor force is composed of between 46-55 years old.

Table 5: Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 3 years	08	11.26
3 - 6 years	16	22.53
7 - 10 years	11	15.49
11 years or more	36	50.70
Total	71	100.00

Data concerning experience, shown in the table 5, is consistent half of the labor force has 11 years or more of experience.

Table 6: Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Middle school	06	08.45
High school	25	35.21

Diploma	31	43.66
Higher studies	09	12.67
Total	71	100.00

It is shown by the table 6 data that the bigger portion of the sampled workers carries a diploma degree.

Table 7: functional level

Functional level	Frequency	Percent
Front line	65	91.54
Manager	06	08.46
Total	71	100.00

In light of the chosen course of data collection for this research, the table 7 result is a highly desirable one in terms of that the questionnaires are aimed at viewing the opinions of front line employees.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics for the independent variable (Empowerment)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Employees' Empowerment	3.81	0.73
Meaningfulness	4.27	0.41
self determination	3.03	0.74
Competence	4.31	0.35
Impact	3.66	0.65
Organizational loyalty	3.41	0.74

8. Regression Analysis

For investigation the impact of each one of the dimensions of the Employees' empowerment on the organizational loyalty, we are used the multi-regression model.

Table 9: The results of Multi-Regression model for hypotheses 1 and it's sub hypotheses

Hypotheses	Beta	T Calculated	Sig*	Confirm / Reject
H.1	0.789	08.907	0.000*	Confirm
H.1a	0.607	8.026	0.000*	Confirm
H.1b	0.09	1.74	0.431	Reject
H.1c	0.397	6.931	0.000*	Confirm
H.1d	0.13	2.03	0.163	Reject

* $\alpha=0.05$

As clear in the table 9, the two dimensions of Employees' Empowerment including (Meaningfulness, Competence) are positive impact on organizational loyalty in Algerian communications company. And the rest two variables (self determination, Impact) has no significant impact on organizational loyalty in Algerian communications company.

9. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Empowerment is a concept that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems and proactive behavior to social policy and social change. In other words, empowerment links the individual and his or her well-being to the wider social and political environment in which he or she functions. From a psychological perspective, empowerment links mental health and well-being to mutual help and to the creation of a responsive community. Indeed, personal and social change relies extensively on various methods of empowerment.

In the other hand, achieving organizational loyalty that activate in the turbulent internal environment and is so important and vital. This paper investigates the impact of employee's empowerment on organizational loyalty in Algerian communications company.

In this research the 4 main dimensions of Employees' Empowerment has been consider and the impact of the dimensions of empowerment on organizational loyalty has been investigated. These 4 main dimensions were including: Meaningfulness, Competence, self determination, Impact.

Results of data analysis has been showed that employee's empowerment is positive impact on organizational loyalty and also positive impact on two sub-dimensions (Meaningfulness, Competence) on organizational loyalty for the company that activated in the communication sector.

It is highly recommended that Algerian communications company that especially activated in service sector for gaining excellence should attend to the empowerment of employees in the appropriate form. Empowerment enables both employees and managers to gaining updated knowledge and abilities to feel the loyalty in their work.

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