The impact of new technology on employee empowerment of Islamic Azad University branch of Zahedan

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ABSTRACT
Our main goal in this study is to investigate the effect of modern technology on empowerment of the staff in Zahedan branch, Islamic Azad University. Organizations should be run nowadays in a completely competitive environment and the one with remarkable developments. Under such circumstances, the directors do not have much chance to control their staff and should spend most of their time and energy to identify external and internal environments of the organization and leave the rest of the routine tasks with the staff. The staff can fulfill their duties well when they have the required skill, knowledge and ability and know the goal of the organization well. Since research method has a close and direct relation with the research topic and the research methods should be adopted according to the research needs, quantitative method was used in this study. The statistical society of the study is all the staff of Azad University, Zahedan. The adopted sampling method for the study was probable sampling method. The volume of the sample obtained through Morgan sampling method is 356. In this direction, about 186 questionnaires were distributed among the staff of Islamic Azad University and due to the elimination of some incomplete questionnaires, 180 questionnaires were left that were analyzed in the study. To analyze data and information, spss statistical software was used. Using inferential statistics, particularly correlative tables, statistical tests of information were explained. To do higher analysis, multi-variable regression and sequential logistic regression were used. Then the level of significance to study H0 was calculated, i.e., 0.05>0.00. When the level of significance is less than 0.05, H0 is rejected and H1 is confirmed. This means that modern technologies have significant effect on empowerment of staff.

KEY WORDS: Modern technology, Empowerment, Staff, Organization

INTRODUCTION
In the era of changes and speedy environmental developments information technology (IT) has a vital role in helping the organizations survive. Information technology provides the directors with the possibility to process information quickly and to be able to control and coordinate the more complicated structures. In addition, information technology causes the performance of organization and management to be shown by quick integrity and feedback (Otarkhani, 2001). Meanwhile use of IT increases the ability of individuals or organization to establish easier, more precise and less costly communication. The staff in this way will have access to more information and conclude their works more quickly (Vares, 2001). On the other hand, the staff like information is also one of the important and vital resources of the organization and the organization will not achieve its objectives without information, so do it without human resources to fulfill its duties and to each its goals. Thus information resources and human resources in organizations are supplementary to each other. Organizations need individuals that keep their knowledge up-to-date, train knowledgeable experts and specialized forces to resolve the problems of the world of today and educate the central ability in the organizations (Vatan and Cameron, 2002). There are numerous environmental stimuli that encourage the organizations to empower their staff. Among them, the most important stimuli are the effects of IT on work environments because the rapid growth of technology has influenced all aspects of the organizations in a way or another. Scientists and theoreticians of management agree on this concept that correct and suitable application of IT increases the effectiveness of staff and management in the organization. Thus it makes the responsibility and responsiveness of the staff and directors more transparent for provision of better services. In fact IT has created more intensive changes in the type skills required by the staff and members of the organization (Robins, 1995). The role of IT in the current world is very remarkable and complicated so that the current era is called the era of information explosion (Aqayar, 2006). On the other hand, for the same reason the application of IT is also rapidly expanding and the organizations need using IT to reach their objectives. Nowadays the number of

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educated and expert staff is increasing. The second reason is the need for organized innovation and progress that exists in the essence and nature of intelligent tasks and thirdly the organizations of today should coordinate with IT. An organization should realize what information it needs to run its affairs; otherwise it will be drowned in a sea of confusing data (Drucker, 1999).

Statement of the issue:

Nowadays the organizations should be run in a completely competitive environment and the one with remarkable developments. Under such circumstances, the directors will not have much chance to control the staff and should spend most of their time and energy to identify the external and internal environments of the organization and leave the other routine tasks with the staff. The staff can fulfill the assigned duties to them well when they have the required skill, knowledge and ability and know the objectives of the organization well. The tool that could help the directors in this regard is the empowerment process (Abdeollahi, 2006). The most important and vital asset of every organization is its human resources. Quality and ability of the human resources is the most important factor for survival and being of the organization. A capable human resource can establish a capable organization. According to Drucker, economic growth strongly depends on empowerment of the trained staff. An empowered organization is the environment where the staff of different age groups cooperate with each other to do activities. Empowerment is a mixture of welfare, equality and anti-poverty theories and the only difference is that supporters of these theories should not remain only hopeful to start and establish it at higher levels of decision-making of governmental organizations in order to materialize the long-term changes (Behnaz, 2003). To empower the society, the activities and actions taken by different groups of the society should be supported and the discriminations and inequalities should be removed and people should be given freedom to decide and take action so that through correct decision-making they could protect their health and the health of the society (Poursalami, 2003). Empowerment of the staff is one of the effective techniques to improve the productivity of the staff and to optimize their capacities and abilities in line with the organizational objectives. Different definitions have been presented for 'empowerment' by the experts. Empowerment is a word which is easy to present a definition for. Everybody develops a meaning of it in his mind, but in real terms few people are completely aware of it (Azaimerman, 1995). Rapid growth of technology has affected all aspects of the organizations in a way. In this study we face the question how much modern technologies could affect empowerment of the staff.

Importance of the issue:

Organizations are currently affected by factors such as increased global competition and sudden developments and they need after-sale quality and services and they are under many pressures because of limited resources. After years of experience, the world has found out that if an organization wants to be the forerunner in economy and its task affairs and not to be left behind as far as competition is concerned, it should have highly expert, creative and motivated human resources. Human resources are the main wealth of an organization. There is a direct relation between human resources and productivity of an organization. One of the important concerns of a successful economic firm is to collect educated human resources and their wisdom is the factor that could create development in the organization where they belong to. A successful organization is a set people who have organizational culture, thoughts and common goals and provide their management with their experience and knowledge and love for the increasing progress of the organization by teamwork in the flexible system of the organization. Hence everyone would feel the owner for the duty he has to fulfill toward the organization (Verdinejad, 2008). Use of the potential abilities of human resources in every organization is considered as a huge advantage. In individual productivity, the organization uses a set of potential talents and abilities of individuals in order to develop the organization and it will lead to the development of the individual and organization by putting the potential forces and remarkable talents into action in line with construction goals. Thus the necessity to achieve organizational objectives is effective management of these valuable resources. In this direction the growth, development and promotion of abilities of the staff have been paid attention by the specialists and experts of the human resources management in recent years under the tile of staff empowerment. As the organizations intend to confront organizational challenges and give priority to regular improvement, they feel more inclined to support and undertake the staff and get them involved at work. Empowerment is a modern and effective technique to promote productivity of an organization by using the ability of the staff. The staff has hidden power due to their knowledge, experience and incentive and in fact empowerment releases that power. This technique provides the potential capacities that are not used completely for making the best of the human's origin of ability and offers a healthy organizational environment in a balanced method by applying full control by the management and freedom of action of the staff (Verdinejad, 2008). Considering the former studies conducted in this area, there is a research gap and this study intends to respond to it as no study has been conducted in the past at this scale, thus we want to study the role and importance of empowerment and effect of modern technologies. The importance of this issue justifies the importance of the study in this area.
Review of the conducted studies:

As the findings of the current study and former studies showed, IT and communication play an important role to empower the staff. Thus it is necessary that the organizations and their directors provide grounds to use these technologies more effectively and to use their abilities in order to empower the staff and eventually the organization by preparing suitable programs and correct strategies to make the best of these facilities. The findings indicate that use of information technologies and communication in professional organizations of Sistan-Balouchestan province has direct and significant effect on all aspects of empowerment of the staff of the organization and chance of one standard deviance in the variable of "application, feeling of IT and communication in organizational activities" will increase the degree of deviance of significant feeling standard of the staff by 0.415 and the independence feeling of the staff by 0.328, the qualification feeling of the staff by 0.19, the effectiveness of the staff by 0.286 and having trust in others among staff by 0.442. The findings of the current study show that there is a positive and significant relation between application of IT & communication and staff empowerment and in addition, all aspects of staff abilities are affected by application of IT and it shows that in all variables, this effect is less affected than the Beta of communication in the organization (Habibollah Salarzehi, 2013). In the recent two decades, empowerment of staff was one of the most important concerns of the directors of the organizations. Intensified competition in the global markets caused creation of relative advantage in organization to depend on resistance, persistence and also ownership of a higher share of the markets. To hold this advantage in comparison with the competitors, the organization should maintain the satisfaction of the customers, continued quality of services to supply the products and services with better competitive conditions. Based on this fundamental assumption, it is seriously believed that organizational survival and development happens when the organization uses knowledgeable, creative and motivated forces that are able to resolve the issue and do self-management. Relying on this fact, empowerment means to create the required capacities in the staff to empower them to establish added value and to fulfill the duties that they hold and have higher efficiency and effectiveness. There is no doubt that materialization of this issue will be possible in light of knowledge, experience, transfer of authority and eventually the effective element of incentive. It means that empowerment is an interacting and dependent process that brings about decision-making, determination of work strategies, presentation of suitable methods at critical times, power to fulfill new roles and the ability to present new innovative plans that create coordination among directors, staff and eventually leads to the nice sound of development to be heard in the organization (Pusiant Albert). Acquisition of necessary skills with regard to using information technology and informing the staff and directors are inevitable to empower them in their tasks. Empowerment is a modern and effective technique to promote productivity of the organization by using the ability of the staff. The staff are the owners of hidden power due to their knowledge, experience and incentive and in fact empowerment is to release that power. This technique provides a potential capacity to use the origin of human abilities that is not used completely and in a healthy organizational environment it provides a balanced method for the management to control and to present freedom of action of the staff. On the other hand, when the organizations intend to empower the staff, IT and information systems can be considered as important elements in this regard and can provide more access to the information for the low levels of the hierarchy. For example, teamwork which is an important element in the organizations based on teams is strongly supported by the IT. Maybe the most important support of IT for empowerment is to supply correct and timely information with high quality and suitable costs and in addition the IT can provide new tools to also increase the productivity and creativity of the staff and the quality of their works. These tools can include applied and special programs to increase creativity and computational abilities, softwares, databases, saving tools to increase productivity and or communication technologies and networks to ameliorate communication (Queen, 2004).

Research method:

The research method, tools to collect and analyze data, theoretical definition and operational definition, variables including dependent variables and independent variables, statistical society, method of sampling and determination of the volume of sample and assessment of validity and reliability were taken into account. Temporary quantitative method aiming at description and explanation will be used. At the level of description, the goal is to show an image of the conditions or phenomena under study to understand the existing conditions in the statistical sample better. At the level of analysis and explanation, the goal is finding the relations between independent and dependent variables and trying to explain the changes and variance of the dependent variable considering the independent variables. The adopted sampling method for this study is random sampling. In this type of sampling, the sampling is also called random. Selection of individuals is not according to a controlled rule and relies on the principle of 'a handful indicates a mass'. The used formula to estimate the sample volume in this study is Morgan table. The table which is known as Morgan table is one of the most applied methods to calculate the volume of the statistical sample. Morgan table is in fact the result of attempts made by Kejersi and Morgan. The sample was estimated according to different amounts of the society size using Cochran's formula. It means that if each of the figures of this table is put in Cochran's formula, the same volume of sample will be
calculated. In this direction, the obtained sample volume through Morgan sampling method is 356. On this basis, about 186 questionnaires were distributed among staff of Islamic Azad University and considering the elimination of some incomplete questionnaires, eventually 180 questionnaires remained that were analyzed in the study.

**Research results:**

**Testing the research hypotheses:**

The level of significance to study H0 is calculated which is $0.05 > 0.00$. In table number 4.9., the level of significance is less than 0.05. Thus H0 is rejected and H1 is confirmed. It means that modern technologies are effective on staff empowerment.

**First hypothesis:** Modern technologies are effective on self-effectiveness of the staff.

The correlation coefficient: It is always a figure between -1 and 1. Correlation coefficient here is a figure equal to 0.669.

Determination coefficient and adjusted determination coefficient: They are figures between -1 and 1. Generally if in a regression, the determination coefficient is higher than 0.017, the model is a suitable one and here in this model, the determination coefficient is 0.448; thus our model is a suitable model.

ANOVA table: This table tests the model sufficiency. If the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model could be used, but if the level of significance is higher than 0.05, the obtained model is insufficient and cannot be used. Since the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model can be used. Its regression is also an acceptable amount. Thus modern technologies are effective on self-effectiveness of the staff and the hypothesis is approved.

**Second hypothesis:** Modern technologies are effective on self-control of the staff.

The correlation coefficient: It is always a figure between -1 and 1. Correlation coefficient here is a figure equal to 0.712.

Determination coefficient and adjusted determination coefficient: They are figures between -1 and 1. Generally if in a regression, the determination coefficient is higher than 0.017, the model is a suitable one and here in this model, the determination coefficient is 0.507, thus our model is a suitable model.

ANOVA table: This table tests the model sufficiency. If the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model could be used, but if the level of significance is higher than 0.05, the obtained model is insufficient and cannot be used. Since the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model can be used. Its regression is also an acceptable amount. Thus modern technologies are effective on self-control of the staff and the hypothesis is approved.

**Third hypothesis:** Modern technologies are effective on personal acceptance of the outcomes of the staff.

The correlation coefficient: It is always a figure between -1 and 1. Correlation coefficient here is a figure equal to 0.798.

Determination coefficient and adjusted determination coefficient: They are figures between -1 and 1. Generally if in a regression, the determination coefficient is higher than 0.017, the model is a suitable one and here in this model, the determination coefficient is 0.638, and thus our model is a suitable model.

ANOVA table: This table tests the model sufficiency. If the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model could be used, but if the level of significance is higher than 0.05, the obtained model is insufficient and cannot be used. Since the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model can be used. Its regression is also an acceptable amount. Thus modern technologies are effective on personal acceptance of the outcomes of the staff and the hypothesis is approved.

**Fourth hypothesis:** Modern technologies are effective on significance of the staff.

The correlation coefficient: It is always a figure between -1 and 1. Correlation coefficient here is a figure equal to 0.434.

Determination coefficient and adjusted determination coefficient: They are figures between -1 and 1. Generally if in a regression, the determination coefficient is higher than 0.017, the model is a suitable one and here in this model, the determination coefficient is 0.188, and thus our model is a suitable model.

ANOVA table: This table tests the model sufficiency. If the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model could be used, but if the level of significance is higher than 0.05, the obtained model is insufficient and cannot be used. Since the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model can be used. Its regression is also an acceptable amount. Thus modern technologies are effective on significance of the staff and the hypothesis is approved.

**Fifth hypothesis:** Modern technologies are effective on trust of the staff.

The correlation coefficient: It is always a figure between -1 and 1. Correlation coefficient here is a figure equal to 0.005.
Empowerment is something more than a mental approach. It is a manifestation of group and team behaviors and organizational policies. This collective move needs behavioral changes in management areas and systems. Meanwhile organizational management should be able to reduce the negative signs originated from individual and collective behaviors day by day such as weak communication, bureaucratic atmosphere, conservatism, lack of freedom of action, limited participation and inequality of opportunities that are part of the preventive factors and it has to encourage positive feelings in the individuals. Nowadays, organizations should be run in a completely competitive environment which is run by remarkable developments. Under such circumstances, the directors will not have much chance to control the staff and will be able to spend most of their time and energy to identify the external and internal environments of an organization as they have to leave the routine tasks with the staff. The staff can fulfill their duties in the best possible when they have the necessary skill, knowledge and ability and know the organizational objectives well. The tool that could help the directors in this regard is the empowerment process. Empowerment is a modern method for survival of developing organizations in a competitive environment. A successful organization is a set of human beings with thoughts, ideas and joint goals who have teamwork within the flexible system of organization to share their experience and knowledge willingly toward to the increasing progress of the organization. Hence an individual will have a feeling of ownership when he fulfills an organizational duty and using suitable potential abilities will be considered a huge advantage in every organization. Training and empowerment of the staff is one of the goals of organizations. The beliefs and promotions are always based on the same approach, and productivity depends on educated and capable staff. Organizations are nowadays under a lot of pressure affected by factors such as increased global competition, immediate changes, need for quality and after-sale services and existence of limited resources, etc. After many years of experience, the world has found out that if an organization wants to be a forerunner in economy and its task affairs and not to be left behind in the arena of competition, it should have expert, creative and highly-motivated staff. Human resources is the main component of the real wealth of an organization. An effective educational system makes the human resources more efficient by promoting the level of their work and

Discussion and conclusion:

As the findings of the current study and the former studies indicate, IT and communication have an important role in empowerment of the staff. Thus it is necessary that the organizations and their directors present suitable programs and correct strategies to make the best of the facilities in order to make an effective use of these technologies and their abilities to promote the staff and eventually the entire organization. Empowerment is not giving power to the individuals because the individuals have power due to their knowledge and incentive and in fact empowerment is to release this power. This empowerment is a feeling. Empowerment provides the potential capacity to use the original human abilities that have not been used. In an organization, empowerment of staff is considered as the main motor power. The staff implement their best innovations and thoughts by having emotions, feeling of ownership, pride and responsibility. Meanwhile the leaders cannot empower their followers, unless they are sympathetic and united with them and grant them morale and comfort by creating incentives and encourage them being correct, loyal and realistic. Thus empowerment requires a different type of ethical and social behavior by using teamwork, participation, easy access to information resources and using bilateral ethical relations among the staff. In one word management is based on honesty. Empowerment is something more than a mental approach. It is a manifestation of group and team behaviors and organizational policies. This collective move needs behavioral changes in management areas and systems. Meanwhile organizational management should be able to reduce the negative signs originated from individual and collective behaviors day by day such as weak communication, bureaucratic atmosphere, conservatism, lack of freedom of action, limited participation and inequality of opportunities that are part of the preventive factors and it has to encourage positive feelings in the individuals. Nowadays, organizations should be run in a completely competitive environment which is run by remarkable developments. Under such circumstances, the directors will not have much chance to control the staff and will be able to spend most of their time and energy to identify the external and internal environments of an organization as they have to leave the routine tasks with the staff. The staff can fulfill their duties in the best possible when they have the necessary skill, knowledge and ability and know the organizational objectives well. The tool that could help the directors in this regard is the empowerment process. Empowerment is a modern method for survival of developing organizations in a competitive environment. A successful organization is a set of human beings with thoughts, ideas and joint goals who have teamwork within the flexible system of organization to share their experience and knowledge willingly toward to the increasing progress of the organization. Hence an individual will have a feeling of ownership when he fulfills an organizational duty and using suitable potential abilities will be considered a huge advantage in every organization. Training and empowerment of the staff is one of the goals of organizations. The beliefs and promotions are always based on the same approach, and productivity depends on educated and capable staff. Organizations are nowadays under a lot of pressure affected by factors such as increased global competition, immediate changes, need for quality and after-sale services and existence of limited resources, etc. After many years of experience, the world has found out that if an organization wants to be a forerunner in economy and its task affairs and not to be left behind in the arena of competition, it should have expert, creative and highly-motivated staff. Human resources is the main component of the real wealth of an organization. An effective educational system makes the human resources more efficient by promoting the level of their work and

Determination coefficient and adjusted determination coefficient: They are figures between -1 and 1. Generally if in a regression, the determination coefficient is higher than 0.017, the model is a suitable one and here in this model, the determination coefficient is 0.000, and thus our model is not a suitable model.

ANOVA table: This table tests the model sufficiency. If the level of significance is less than 0.05, the model sufficiency is approved and the model could be used, but if the level of significance is higher than 0.05, the obtained model is insufficient and cannot be used. Since the level of significance is more than 0.05, the model sufficiency is not approved and the model cannot be used. Its regression is not an acceptable amount either. Thus modern technologies are not effective on the trust of the staff and the hypothesis is rejected.

Modern technologies are powerful tools to increase the ability and to improve the quality of work. Management should be active to provide the staff and also allow them to create self-effectiveness, accept outcomes personally, be significant and have trust in order to create a team which is able to make decisions actively. Sharing information is a fundamental skill in communication and this is often neglected by the directors. Empowerment is effective when information is exchanged and there are group and individual feedbacks. Feedback might be in form of regular assessment of the staff which is a good tool to improve ability in decision making of the staff that are directly in contract with the clients. The staff that are allowed to face clients should have freedom of action in decision making. The organization should help freedom of action by identifying the goal and mission of the organization. In addition, the rules and method that support empowerment should be defined. For example, the director should define the level of expectations of the clients so that the staff know to what extent they have to go ahead to make the client happy. Freedom of action is effective when there are specified instructions and framework within which the work area defines the customer service which is the knowledge of trust.
individual skills. If an educational system is not efficient and is not established according to the needs of time and business, the attempts of an organization to empower its human resources will not go anywhere close to the comparable outcomes of the countries that have suitable conditions.

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