

**The Effect of Empowering Employees for Improving
Performance Efficiency: A Practical Study of a Sample of
Employees in Karbala University**

**أثر تمكين الموظفين في تحسين كفاءة الأداء؛
دراسة عملية لعينة من العاملين في جامعة كربلاء**

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المخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة العلاقة بين المتغيرين الرئيسين للبحث، وهما: التمكين، وكفاءة الأداء، مع معرفة تأثير تمكين الموظفين في تطوير المنظمات ونجاحها. تمثل الاستبانة الأداة الرئيسة للبحث والتي يتم توزيعها على عينة عشوائية مكونة من ٤٠ شخصا يعملون في رئاسة جامعة كربلاء.

من اهم الاستنتاجات التي تم التوصل إليها وجود علاقة بين تمكين العاملين وكفاءة الاداء لذلك اهتمت جامعة كربلاء بفكرة تمكين الموظفين لما لها من تأثير إيجابي في سلوك الموظفين وأدائهم، ونتيجة لذلك انعكست نتائجها الإيجابية على نجاح الجامعة وتطويرها. ومن أهم التوصيات التي جاءت بها الدراسة، هي تشجيع الإدارات على تبني هذه الطريقة لزيادة رغبة الموظفين في العمل، وتجاوز المشكلات، التي يمكن أن يتعرض لها الموظف، ويتم حلها دون اللجوء إلى الإدارة العليا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تمكين الموظفين، تحسين كفاءة الأداء، سلوك الموظفين وأدائهم.

Abstract

The present study deals with the relation between the two main research variables, namely; empowerment and efficiency of performance, with knowing the impact of empowering workers in the development and success of organizations. The questionnaire represents the main tool of the research, which is distributed to a random sample consisting of 40 people working in the presidency of Karbala University.

One of the most important conclusions which has been found is the existence of a relationship between the empowerment of employees and the efficiency of performance Therefore, the University of Karbala pays attention to the idea of empowering employees because of the positive impact on the behavior and performance of employees and , as a result, its favorable outcome on the success and development of the University. One of the most important recommendations is to encourage departments to adopt this method so as to increase the desire of employees to work overcome problems that can be exposed to and being resolved without resorting to senior management.

Key words: Empowering employees to improve performance efficiency, behavior and performance of employees.

Introduction

Organizations are an important tool in contemporary human societies where the human element is the most important resource among the resources of the organization through the different types of interactions that one may produce and through which one can judge the effectiveness of these organizations. Keeping pace with growth and development, there is an urgent need to apply modern management methods that enhance the ability of the human element to acquire knowledge, skill and managerial experience that enable him to achieve the goals of the organization and allow the individual to show his abilities and creative ideas in his field of work, the employee can exercise full authority and assume the responsibilities of his job, in addition to that It is considered the cornerstone on which the organization's strategies are based to meet the challenges of various developments. Therefore, organizations must work on all strategies in order to achieve excellence in their performance and competition based on their resources, especially human resources, as the main motive to raise the efficiency and performance of any organization and as one of the main sources of innovation and creativity, so empowerment has become an important topic within public administration over the years Last. There is a general encouragement to give employees enough freedom in their work by giving them empowerment in their work, Mohammad Safari Kahreh, et al (2011:27).

Proceeding from the above discussion, the paper aims to study the interest of officials at the University of Karbala in enabling employees to improve the efficiency of their performance through development to raise skills and creative

ideas to achieve the objectives of the research,

To validate the hypotheses of the present paper, theoretical and practical aspects were adopted. The study ends with a number of conclusions and recommendations.

Section One: Methodology of the Study

1. The Problem

In light of the changes taking place in business institutions and the increasing need for innovation and administrative development, there is a need to explain the impact of empowering employees in improving performance efficiency, by granting them independence in their work and delegating some powers to them, especially in the work performed by employees. Taking some decisions that help to complete the work quickly and without resorting to the higher management at the University of Karbala. This depends on the departments' awareness and understanding of the development in management and modern applications, especially in their conviction of the importance of delegating some powers that enable employees to complete their work at the required speed. This reflects the confidence of the heads of their affiliates to complete their work at Karbala University. Based on the above discourse, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- What is the effect of empowering employees on the efficiency of performance at Karbala University?
- What is the level of efficiency of the performance of employees at the University of Karbala?

2. The Value

The significance of study comes from the importance of the two variables, especially the main variable (empowerment), which is one of the modern concepts in the science of management that is one of the competitiveness criteria of any educational institution which can improve the level of success and continued development by determining the relationship in the variables (efficiency of performance) the topic under investigation, which depends on the existence of contemporary administrations with ideas that are consistent with developments at the level of social, technological, information and administrative. Thus, empowerment plays an important role in making staff with the abilities, skills and high capabilities to assume responsibilities and raising the efficiency of performance.

The significance of study can be summarized as follows:

- a. The theme of empowering workers is the interest of management scholars and management professionals as it is one of the contemporary intellectual developments in the business world.
- b. Highlighting the vital impact of empowering the achievement of high performance development by making employees with high skills, abilities and qualifications to take responsibility in the work.

3. Aims of the Study

The current paper aims at:

- a. Determining the relationship between the concept of empowerment and efficiency of performance at Karbala University .

- b. identifying the dimension of empowerment in Karbala University.
- c. Outlining the dimensions of the efficiency of performance at the University of Karbala.

4. The Hypothesis

- a. There is a close impact relationship between employee empowerment and performance efficiency.
- b. It is expected that there will be a statistically significant relationship between employee empowerment and performance efficiency.

5. The Procedures

The following approaches will be adopted the following:

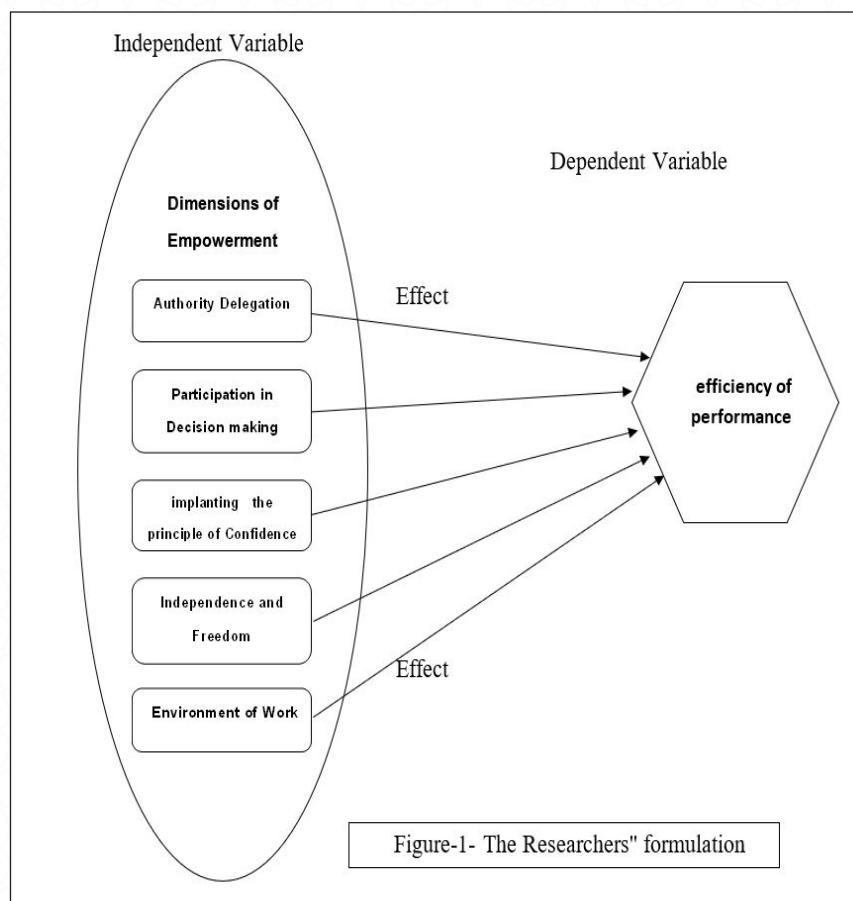
- a. Analytical descriptive approach: Through references and sources, the research is based on books, scientific research, magazines, articles, research and websites and using the questionnaire to obtain the data required. It includes the practical method. The questionnaire is used to collect and analyze data, including (40) items, as well as relying on some Arabic and English references related to the topic under investigation .
- b. The Practical approach: The researcher adopts the questionnaire which is distributed to a random sample consisting of a group of employees, academicians and heads of administrative departments. It includes (40) persons of various managerial levels to measure (the level of empowerment of workers in improving the efficiency of performance) and after the questionnaire is distributed and

retrieved, it is found that (38) valid for statistical analysis and retrieved forms are (2). Statistical methods used in research are as follows:

- * The arithmetic mean: to find the level of research variables.
- * Standard Deviation: to determine the extent to which the responses from the arithmetic mean are absent.

6. The Model of the Study

The independent variable in this study is the dimensions of empowerment, which are (delegation of authority, participation in decision-making, confidence building, independence and discretion, the work environment), and the dependent variable is (efficiency of performance). This can be summarizes as follows:



Section Two:Theoretical Framework

2. Empowering Employees

2.1. The Concept of Empowerment

Empowerment is one of the most modern terminology in the science of management which has received the attention of organizations and managers. It reflects the process of giving individuals greater authority to exercise, control and take responsibility and use their abilities, by encouraging them to make decisions seriously. However, McShane and Glinow (2000: 115) note that empowerment is the sense of self-control and efficacy that arises when individuals are given the

power to act in the situations they face. Empowerment means empowering workers with the power and freedom to work in order to make them able to do so. Mustafa (2006: 16) states that empowerment is the transfer of responsibility and authority equivalently from the managers to employees. It is also a process of supporting employees to the authority and a sincere invitation to the employees of the organization to participate in the decision-making authority in which the employee may be responsible for the quality of what he decides or perform.

Slack, et al., (1998: 298- 340) remark that empowerment is one of the approaches to the design of behavior-based work, referring to it as the ability to make changes in the work itself as well as the way it performs. He represent differences between the methods used in the design of work by balancing oversight and cooperation. Abul-Majd (2008:33) points out that empowerment is the participation of subordinates in their decision-making bodies in a framework of responsibility, mutual trust, training and support in order to achieve the goals of the organization and its employees. And constantly improving them.

2.1.2 Goals of Empowerment

Empowering employees aims at making the organization more responsive to the environment of variables and more appreciative to support innovation, as well as to enable the employees to be able to adopt innovative ideas and abandon the traditional methods of communication with the organization. It is also able to find leadership in the organization (Arif,2004: 21).

Job empowerment also aims to overcome bureaucracy by creating high functional integration. It also helps employees to participate in decision-making, in addition to take the risks of their work effectively. Moreover, it helps the workers to solve the problems they face without waiting for their solution by their managers (Bowen and Lawler, 1995: 18).

2.1.3 Approaches of Empowerment

Strategies

Several scholars state that the existence of a number of approaches to the process of

empowerment can be addressed to some of them and according to what some have addressed, including (Duvall, 1999: 204), which between the entries as follows:

a. *Individual Empowerment*: - It is intended as an individual process or personal stems from the individual and his motivation and the amount of his ability to influence in the work environment.

b. *Organizational Empowerment*: It an activity that the organization seeks to create an empowering environment for empowering any configuration factors and the dimensions that encourage the empowerment of its members and make them able to accomplish the right action in the appropriate positions. Erstad (1999:327) mentions that there are two other entries:

1. *External Empowerment*: the organization's working mechanism and the means used to enable individuals to formulate decisions.

2. *Internal Empowerment*: This is the extent to which individuals are responsible for self-sufficiency and the ability to assume responsibility and behave in the immediate situations of the organization with tangible returns. The literature shows that the empowerment strategy has multiple entrances as a self-input as a state of mind or social status.

Zobaie (2010:88) says that this includes the following :

a. *Structural approach* in which power and decision-making are transferred down the organizational hierarchy while giving employees the ability to influence organizational outputs.

- b. *Motivational approach* This concept of empowerment is based on psychic ability. Actually, it is a process in which the feeling or self-capacity among the organizing members is enhanced by determining the conditions that care or care for the force.
- c. *Conger & Kanunga 's approach*: This approach is based on the individual motivation of empowerment, which is to enhance the sense of self-efficacy of the employees by identifying the conditions that enhance the feeling of weakness and work on its survival and overcoming it through official regulatory practices and informal means that rely on providing information about self-efficacy .

2.1.4 The Relationship between Empowerment and Administrative Concepts

There are a number of concepts related to the concept of empowerment, but there are many differences between them, and these concepts are as follows:

- A. *Empowerment and delegation*: Authorization is to delegate part of the powers to employees to facilitate the implementation process, so delegation of authority does not cancel the responsibility of the commissioner for the final outcome, and the mandate is a temporary process ends up with the completion of the task for which the mandate is delegated (Amiri, 2006: 11)
- B. *Empowerment and participation*: Partnering is one of the main topics that contribute to improving the quality of decisions and solving the resistance of the implementers. It

also gives the employees an overall vision of the organization and its objectives. It works to increase mutual understanding among the members of the organization and contributes in the development of managerial subordinates and creating between managers and employees (Hafez, 2006: 22)

C. *Empowerment, authority and power*: The authority has the right to issue orders to others. It stems from the individual's status. Power is the ability to influence others to act in certain ways. While empowerment includes the right of the practitioner to exercise discretion in the process of providing the service and sharing information It has relevance to the return to the organization and the knowledge that enables employees to understand and share (Obaid, 2003: 11)

D. *Empowerment and Decentralization*: Decentralization is defined as the process of delegating the authority to make decisions down in the chain of command, which is a broader concept of delegation. Empowerment is a broader concept of decentralization and delegation, as the delegation of responsibilities, tasks, duties and information to employees. (www.businessdictionary.com).

2.2 Performance Efficiency

In Lisan Al-Arab Book, efficiency means *equivalent*. While in Al-Mugam Al-Waseet the word efficiency is derived from *efficient* which refers to a person who has scientific or academic qualifications. Linguistically, it implies the sense of equivalence.

In spite of being varied, the word efficiency

carries the sense of attaining better results with lowest costs and efforts. Productivity is different from technical efficiency, in the sense that the former means maximizing production with minimal input and lowest cost, while the latter indicates a measure of the ability of the factor to achieve the highest level of acceptance production quality with minimal input and effort.

The term efficiency has several definitions which are as follows:

According to Luis Daiio, efficiency is a group of social behaviors and psychological skill that allows to practice a certain role or action. Le Medef defines it as a mixture of theoretical and practical knowledge and experience which requires to be assessed and developed continuously. French Society of Industrial Standards state that it is the use of capacities in a professional position in order to achieve the real performance or activity. . depending on the forgoing discussion, it can be noted that efficiency can be as the process of comparing production which can be realized using the same resources, efforts and time (www.businessdictionary.com).

2.3 Features of Efficiency

Efficiency has several characteristics that contribute in determining them, among these features are :

a- Amiable through the investment of different knowledge

b-Acquired, this property means that e is not inborn, however it is acquired by training.

c- Aware, Efficiency which is not realized cannot achieve any benefit to the institutions.

d- Dynamic this means that collection depends on the interaction between various elements and dimensions over time.

e- Abstract, this indicates that it is invisible or intangible, however it can be observed through activities and outcomes.

f- Aging, once being abandoned, efficiency may be aged and failed to attain its roles.

2.4 Types of Efficiency

Scholars differ in classifying types of efficiency. However, Celile Dejoux classification is the most prominent one who labels three types which are as follows: (www.businessdictionary.com)

1- Individual Efficiency It is the skills and qualifications that a person possesses through personal, professional and training experience in which one can use them to achieve certain goals effectively.

2- Collective Efficiency: It is an efficiency that arises through the combined efforts of the individual and their cooperation, through effective communication among all members at work, providing the appropriate information to them. It is a link between the preparations, knowledge and capabilities that they have to form a professional team able to achieve the desired goals efficiently. It is worth mentioning that it can be defined by (Le boterf) as a result, or outcome arising from cooperation, and preference aggregation between individual competencies, and include a combination of knowledge, preparation of presentation, or a joint submission, knowledge of communication, and knowledge of cooperation, knowledge of taking, or teaching experience collectively.

3- Organizational efficiency (strategy): It is attained through the integration of individual competencies, through the adoption of certain mechanisms to coordinate them, as defined by (Pahalad et hamel) as a combination of skills and technologies that contribute in an explanatory manner in value added to the final product. It is worth mentioning to say that the strategic competencies include several competencies according to the hierarchical level of the organization and its multiple functions, such as: planning, management, implementation and control; it is the efficiency of human relations, technical efficiency, technical management efficiency on the one hand, and the efficiency of planning, implementation and management, supervision, or evaluation, on the other hand. It also requires knowing that all this according to the institution itself, and the type of work, and the extent of awareness of its relations with the surrounding environment.

2.5. Methods of Evaluating Performance of Efficiency

Al-Taie (1992: 34) identifies several ways to evaluate the efficiency of work performance. Three methods will be focused on being basic and used in institutions and organizations:

1. *Ordinal Measurement*: It is intended to make the work in the form of certain grades and to give each grade a degree according to the importance of work, but the disadvantages of this method is how to give the grade for each work and what is the standard used to determine the importance or lack of importance of work.

2. *Gradual measures*: which uses both the first and second methods are considered one

complement to the other used for the purpose of distinguishing between the different work and the composition of the administrative system in organizations where there are a large number of work that can be classified in the form of grades or

3. *Point system*: it is one of the best ways to follow because it is specific and the method of technology or method is more useful so it is common use, practiced using a set of elements common to all work within organizations.

Section Three: Practical Part

It has been selected a random sample of (40) people working in the University of Karbala who distributed them to identify the paper, but it is received (38) questionnaire filled only, then the researcher using a number of statistical tools to reach the required results and based on the ready-made system software (ssps) to find out the impact of empowering employees to improve the efficiency of performance at Karbala University.

Table (1) shows the description of the sample members

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	24	63.2%
Female	14	36.8%
Total	38	100%

Table (2) Distribution of Sample Members by years of working

Year(s)	Number	Percentage
1-5	10	26.3%
5-10	13	34.2%
More than 10	15	39.5%
Total	38	100%

Table (3) - the educational achievement of the sample members

Academic achievement	Number	Percentage
Diploma	7	18.4%
Bachelor	18	41.3%
Master	2	%6
Higher Studies	13	34.3 %
Total	38	100%

Table (4) shows the distribution of the sample by career level

Career Level	Frequency	Percentage
Senior Management	4	10.5%
Central Administration	16	42.1%
Master	2	%5.2
Management	16	42.1%
Total	38	100%

The above- mentioned table shows the following:

- 1 - Most of the participants in the research are male.
- 2 - The largest number of participants who have a experience years between (10 years and more) and this makes reliance on their views is important for their long experience in work.
- 3 - Most of the participants hold the bachelor degree (47.3%) which means the high level of scientific participants.
- 4- The level of career participation levels are from the middle administrations accounted for (47.3%), which shows the role of departments and their experience.

The arithmetic mean and standard deviations of the performance and efficiency segments will be presented as follows:

Table (5) is related to the empowerment clauses and it reflects an arithmetic mean of the variable (powers) above the standard mean of (3.77) and by standard deviation (6.14) which shows a lower level of the upper management in the powers. The second variable (participation in decision making) includes a general mean of (3.43) and a suitable dispersion showing the consistency of the answers (4.74), which reflects the strength of the variable that makes the university believe in the participation of the decision and the principle of take and give (3.39) and an appropriate explanation shows the consistency of the answers (5.9) indicating that the educational institution contributes to the implantation. It is also clear that confidence in the level of the departments contributes in raising the efficiency of performance and note that the paragraph that represents *I can clearly determine what the senior management expected me and what I expect from the top of the middle of my account*, which amounted to (3.90) and a standard deviation of (5.2) as well as the rest of the paragraphs and according to the tables shown.

As for performance efficiency, the table shows that the efficiency of performance is high in the investigated organization. This is confirmed by the general mean of this variable of (2.88) and a standard deviation of (4.7), which reflects the consistency of the responses of the respondents. (2,3,4), which amounted to (3.2) and less dispersion of the answers from the paragraphs as (3.04).

The above results display that the researchers find out that the investigated organization take not of the efficiency of performance as a way to lead the organization to the best levels and achieve progress, success and distinction between organizations.

No.	Authorities	arithmetic mean	the standard deviation
1	I have clear vision of the university message	4.9	7..4
2	The university gives me full flexibility to behave in the work.	3.00	3..7
3	My work gives me the chance to make decision freely.	2.86	5..2
4	the university is sure of my abilities	4.34	8..1
Total		3.77	6..14
No.	Participation in decision- making	arithmetic mean	the standard deviation
1	I participate positively in improving works.	3.7	8.0
2	I have some power to achieve in my university .	4.1	4.03
3	I feel that I am effective in my work.	2.75	4.1
4	I have the chance to participate in decision making	3.17	2.7
Total		3.43	4..74
No.	Confidence	arithmetic mean	the standard deviation
1	I am keen on working in team work.	3.80	6..8
2	The managers' behaviors are characterized by cooperation and fairness.	2.88	4..6
3	I can clearly to decide what they expect from me and vice versa.	3.90	5..02
4	I feel confidence in dealing with my manger.	3.01	7..3
Total		3.39	5..9
No.	Freedom and Independence	arithmetic mean	the standard deviation
1	I have freedom to correct wrongs without consulting others.	2.23	3.4
2	I participate in planning strategies and achieving them.	1.88	5..1
3	I have full freedom to work and dismiss some points in the work.	2.55	4..7
4	Sometimes, I have my own background knowledge to solve problems.	3.3	6..1
Total		2.49	3..4
No.	Work Environment	arithmetic mean	the standard deviation
1	There are computer systems that help us in our work quickly and accurately.	3.70	4.7
2	There is a sense of respect and appreciation in work.	3.27	6.3
3	There is an agreement between the employee and his work.	3.75	4.9
4	There is an attention to the organizational structure which determines the other relations.	3.61	4.2
Total		3.58	5.08

No.	Efficiency of Performance	arithmetic mean	the standard deviation
1	Tangible and intangible rewards have impacts on efficiency of performance.	2.55	3.2
2	Training techniques contribute to raise the efficiency of performance .of employees.	2.11	5.0
3	The institution choose the person who have qualifications to achieve development.	3.2	3.04
4	The qualification is the cornerstone of promotion in the university. .	2.88	6.1
Total		2.88	4.7

(Reference : the researchers' formulation depending on calculator)

Section Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

5 - The existence of training programs for employees by the departments contributes to the efficiency of performance.

4.1 Conclusions

- 1 – depending on the data selected, it is found that there is a significant role of the administrative leaders in raising the level of efficiency of the performance of employees in the educational institution represented by the University of Karbala.
- 2 – There is an appropriate working environment that helps to raise the level of performance and efficiency of employees in the educational institution.
- 3 – It is also concluded that there is a contribution by the employees of the educational institution in decision-making and participation of departments contribute to the formulation of strategic plans and future plans.
- 4 – It is found that the sense of confidence in the staff are so clear in the educational institution that helps to raise the level of efficiency of performance.

4.2 Recommendations

- 1- It is recommended that the necessity of improving the performance of the employees by developing the working environment, providing an appropriate administrative, communication environment and developing strategic development plans for all employees.
2. The administration of the educational institution should take care to involve the workers with work related information to enable them to make appropriate decisions.
- 3 – it is also suggested to pay attention to cultivate employees to be lectured by professors specialized in management sciences to highlight the importance of empowerment and benefits for employees and senior management in the organization and encourage employees to adopt leadership roles.
- 4 - Accuracy in the selection of employees granted empowerment powers who have the skill,

experience and strength of personality to ensure their success.

- 5 - Directing the university for the need to attract qualified people of the degree holders with the appropriate competencies for the work of the university to appoint them and then rehabilitation and enable them to achieve better performance.

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