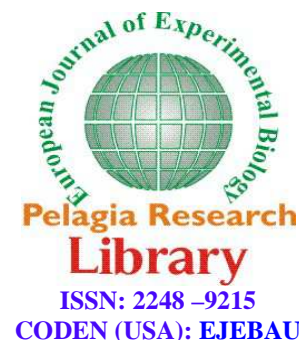




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The relationship between psychological empowerment and professional commitment of selected physical education teachers in Khuzestan province, Iran

¹Najaf Aghaei and ²Mostafa Savari

¹Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

²Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Izeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Izeh, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment and professional commitment of selected physical education teachers in Khuzestan province. The descriptive- correlational research method was used. Data were collected using demographic questionnaire, spritzer's psychological empowerment questionnaire (1995), and Allen and Meyer's professional commitment questionnaire (1993). The content validity of these questionnaires was confirmed by ten Physical Education professors who had expertise in the field of organizational behavior. Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the reliability of the questionnaires was obtained ($\alpha=0.87$) and ($\alpha=0.85$) for spritzer's psychological empowerment questionnaire and Allen and Meyer's professional commitment questionnaire, respectively. The study population consisted of 230 male and female physical education teachers across the Khuzestan province. Due to the limited population size, all teachers were selected as sample. The descriptive statistics, Kolmogorov Smirnov test, Spearman correlation test, and stepwise multiple regression were used for analyzing the research findings. The results showed that there was a significant and positive relationship between psychological empowerment subscales (meaningful sense $r=0.46$, competence sense $r=0.195$, self-determining sense $r=0.214$, impact sense $r=0.198$, trust sense $r=0.245$) and professional commitment ($p< 0.01$). Also, the results of regression analysis showed that psychological empowerment and meaningful sense subscale significantly predicted the professional commitment of selected teachers.

Keywords: Psychological Empowerment, Professional Commitment, Physical Education Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Today, organizations are dynamic, complex, ambiguous, and escape from tradition. The surrounding environment influences constantly them and they have accepted the change as inevitable necessity, hence, it is difficult to predict accurately the changes. Recognizing that the change is an important and integral part of today's organizations, adaptation and adjustment to recent developments in various economic and social fields have increased. One of the solutions to overcome these uncertain, complex, and dynamic situations in organizations is employees' empowerment through knowledge and skills. Thus, the capable and efficient manpower will have valuable benefits for organizations and companies (1).

However, without the centrality of human resources, activities may not be done in any organization and institution. Among the factors determining the success of an organization in today's changing world is employees' loyalty and commitment in parallel with the occurred changes (2). One of the issues that have attracted the attention of researchers in the area of commitment is various aspects of commitment, since the attachment and commitment of employees is associated with not only the organization, but also with other items such as career, family, direct supervisor, religion, and etc. Two aspects of commitment have been taken into consideration more than others: organizational commitment and professional commitment (3). Organizational commitment is the relative strength of individual identity in a particular organization. This definition includes the following three concepts:

- Strong belief to accept the organization's goals
- Willingness to do considerable efforts in organization
- The desire to maintain membership in an organization (4).

Professional commitment is the responsibility passion and interest to particular profession and its association (professional association). Professional association is a special generalization. The exterior vision of professional association may be found in career associations, business, labor unions, and etc. (5). Santos considers the professional commitment as a sense of identity and attachment to a particular profession. He emphasizes the willingness and interest in a career as professional commitment (6). The Wallace and colleagues' (1993) definition of professional commitment is similar to Allen and Meyer's (1990) definition of organizational commitment. This researcher and his colleagues proposed three dimensions for professional commitment as: affective, continuance, and normative. They defined the professional commitment as a sense of identification in a profession, the need for continuity in a job, and a sense of responsibility towards it. On the other hand, professional commitment is a cognitive state and psychological identification in a job (7).

However, employees' empowerment is one of the effective tools for increasing employees' productivity and using their individual capacities and capabilities for achieving the organizational goals. Developments in the organizations and especially sports organizations always create changes. Meanwhile, the organizations that are able to adapt effectively themselves with the changes are considered successful (8).

Psychological empowerment is a within-job motivation process that leads to effective functions and activities of the human resources. It consists of five cognitive domains as follows:

Meaningful sense: considering valuable the career goals and intrinsic interest to job.

Self- efficacy sense: a person's belief in his/her capacity to perform assigned tasks.

Sense of autonomy: having choice, freedom, and independence in the work environment.

Sense of impact: the ability to influence the strategic administrative and operational implications in the work.
Trust: interest, competence, and confidence to others (9).

A lot of research has been conducted on psychological empowerment and professional commitment as well as the relationship between these two variables in inside and outside of the Iran. For example, in a research entitled (the relationship between psychological empowerment, organizational spirituality, creativity, spiritual intelligence, occupational stress, and job satisfaction of employees), Azad Marzabadi et al (2012) concluded that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational spirituality, psychological empowerment, job stress, and creativity. Also according to the results, there was a significant relationship between work experience of employees and organizational spirituality (10). Also in a research on motivational effects of empowerment on employee commitment, Kim et al (2012) concluded that trust management fully mediated the relationship between impact senses – a dimension of empowerment- and commitment partially mediated the relationship between attitude senses- another dimension of empowerment (11). Omid and colleagues (2012) studied the relationship between participation motivation, psychological empowerment, and affective commitment among employees of sport organization. Their findings showed that participation motivation have a direct (0.16) and indirect (0.15), positive and significant impact on emotional commitment. In addition, psychological empowerment has a direct and significant impact on affective commitment (0.26). As a result, much of the variance in psychological empowerment (0.26) and emotional commitment (0.52) is due to participation motivation of employees (12). Esmaili and

colleagues (2011) studied the relationship between empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior of employees in Physical Education office in Tehran province. The results of their study showed that there is a significant relationship between empowerment of employees and its components and their organizational citizenship behavior with confidence of 0.99. The results of the regression analysis show that of five components of empowerment, the competency sense, meaningful sense, and impact sense are significant predictors of organizational citizenship behavior (13). Baker (2011) found that the employees of public organizations have fewer professional commitment and job commitment than the employees of private organizations. He showed that if the staff has higher levels of education, their professional commitment and job commitment will be increased. As a result, there is a significant and positive relationship between the empowerment of employees and their job commitment and emotional commitment (14). Esmaili and Seyedamery (2010) studied the relationship between empowerment, organizational commitment, and job commitment of employees in Physical Education office of Tehran province. The results of their study showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between employee empowerment and their organizational commitment and job commitment. The results of multiple regression showed that of the five dimensions of employee empowerment, the meaningful sense and effectiveness sense are significant in predicting the job commitment of employees (15). In a research on the relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational commitment of teachers in secondary schools of Urmia city, Hosseini nasab et al (1389) found that there is a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and its components and organizational commitment. It seems that paying attention to psychological empowerment of teachers to be useful in the formation of their organizational commitment (16). Moreover, Chang et al (2009) suggested that psychological empowerment cannot play a significant role in mediating the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, because organizational commitment has a strong and direct impact on job satisfaction. Also, they pointed out that job satisfaction might influence the relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment (17). In a research entitled backstage management, Ongori and Shunda (2008) stated that employees empowerment is necessary to organizations that need to respond quickly to environmental changes and also it is necessary to reduce staff's organization abandonment (18). In a study on the relationship between psychological factors of empowerment and organizational entrepreneurship of experts in sports organizations of public universities in Tehran, Farahani and Falahati (2007) showed that there is a significant and positive correlation between the five key factors of organizational psychology and organizational entrepreneurship. The highest score was related to the sense of competence. Other factors of empowerment including the sense of self-determination, trust, meaningfulness, and effectiveness were in next ranks, respectively (19).

In his study, Ozaralli (2003) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and psychological factors of empowerment and team effectiveness in various industries of Turkish including the Banking Sector. For this purpose, the comments of 152 employees were examined. The results showed a significant relationship between transformational leadership and each psychological factors of empowerment (meaningfulness, sense of competence, effectiveness, and sense of having the freedom of choice) and effectiveness of team (20).

This study aims to study the role of psychological empowerment and professional commitment in the development of physical education teachers' capabilities and promoting the sport of schools. Considering the results of similar studies are conducted within and outside the Iran, we try to find new vision to the teachers' empowerment in sports schools and promotion of their level of professional commitment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is an applied- correlational research. The data were collected through field method using a standardized questionnaire. The population consisted of all physical education teachers in Khuzestan in the academic year 2012-2013 (N=230, female=110, male=120). The sample was considered equal to population. The questionnaire was distributed among all participants and finally 200 usable questionnaires were returned. The demographic questionnaire was used for obtaining data about the age, sex, education, and work experience. The sprietzer's psychological empowerment questionnaire (1995) which included 18 questions on competency sense, sense of autonomy, effectiveness sense, meaningfulness sense, and trust sense was used. It has five values including completely disagree, disagree, no opinion, agree, totally agree with scores of 1 to 5. Also, the Allen and Meyer's professional commitment questionnaire (1993) which included 18 questions on affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment was used. It has five scales including completely disagree, disagree, no opinion, agree, totally agree with scores of 1 to 5. The content validity of the questionnaires was approved by ten professors of sport who had expertise in the field of organizational behavior. Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the

reliability of the questionnaires were obtained ($\alpha=0.87$) and ($\alpha=0.85$) for sprietzer's psychological empowerment questionnaire and Allen and Meyer's professional commitment questionnaire, respectively. The descriptive statistics was used for classification of raw scores, the designing the frequency distribution table, and calculating distribution parameters such as mean, median, and standard deviation. Also, the inferential statistical methods, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (to verify data normality), Spearman correlation coefficient (to investigate the relationship between variables), and stepwise regression (to evaluate the impact of criteria variable on multiple prediction variables) was used.

Findings

Table 1: Age of respondents

Index Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
30-20 years old	115	57/5	57/5
40-31 years old	72	36	93/5
50-41 years old	12	6	99/5
51 years and older	1	0/5	100
Total	200	100	100

As shown in Table (1), 57.5% and 0.5% of respondents are in age group 20-30 years old and 51 years and older, respectively.

Table 2: Gender of respondents

Index Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Male	110	%55	55
Female	90	%45	100
Total	200	%100	100

As shown in Table (2), 55% and 45% of respondents are men and women, respectively.

Table 3: Work experience of respondents

Index work experience	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Up to 5 years	105	%52/5	52/5
10-6 years	43	%21/5	74
15-11 years	23	%11/5	85/5
20-16 years	15	%7/5	93
21 years and over	14	%7	100

As shown in Table (3), 52.5% and 7% of respondents have 5 years and 21 years and higher work experience, respectively.

Table 4: Education of respondents

Index Education degree	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Associate	30	%15	15
Bachelor	128	%64	69
Masters	42	%21	100
Total	200	%100	100

Table 5: Description of data related to psychological empowerment score and its subscales

Index Subscales	Minimum score	Maximum score	Mean score	Standard deviation	variance
Competency Sense	3	5	4/55	0/43	0/19
Sense of autonomy	1/25	5	4/19	0/69	0/47
Sense of influence	1	5	4/07	1/45	2/12
Meaningfulness sense	1/75	5	4/50	0/53	0/291
Sense of trust	1	5	3/46	0/91	0/84
Psychological Empowerment	2/32	5	4/16	0/54	0/29

As shown in Table (4), 64% and 15% of respondents have Bachelor and Associate Degree, respectively.

Table 5 indicates that the highest mean is related to competence subscale. Also, the psychological empowerment mean is 4.16.

Table 6: Descriptive data related to professional commitment score and its subscales

Index Subscales	Minimum score	Maximum score	Mean score	Standard deviation	Variance
Emotional	1/17	5	4/10	0/76	0/58
Continued	1/83	5	3/42	0/67	3/42
Normative	1/83	5	3/80	3/80	3/80
Professional commitment	1/89	5	3/76	3/76	0/297

Table 6 indicates that the highest mean is related to emotion subscale (4.1). Also, the professional commitment mean is 3.76.

Table 7: Assessing the distribution normality of psychological empowerment data and its subscales

index Subscales	Smirnov – Kolmogorov test scores	significance level	Conclusion
Competency Sense	2/691	0/000	The data are not normalized
Sense of autonomy	2/149	0/000	The data are not normalized
Sense of influence	3/635	0/000	The data are not normalized
Meaningfulness sense	2/557	0/000	The data are not normalized
Sense of trust	1/231	0/097	The data are normalized
Psychological Empowerment	1/644	0/035	The data are not normalized

As is shown in Table (7), none of the distributions of psychological empowerment subscales -except trust subscale- are not normal. Also, the distribution of psychological empowerment data is not normal.

Table 8: Assessing the distribution normality of professional commitment data and its subscales

Index Subscales	Smirnov – Kolmogorov test scores	significance level	Conclusion
Emotional	0/614	0/007	The data are not normalized
Continued	1/681	0/173	The data are normalized
Normative	1/107	0/109	The data are normalized
Professional commitment	1/206	0/845	The data are normalized

As is shown in Table (8), the distributions of all professional commitment subscales -except affective commitment subscale- are normal.

Table 9: Correlations between components of psychological empowerment and professional commitment in subjects

Predictive variable	Criterion variable	Correlation coefficient	Significance level	Conclusion
Meaningfulness sense	Professional commitment	0/46	0/000 **	Reject the null hypothesis
Competency Sense	Professional commitment	./195	0/006 **	Reject the null hypothesis
Sense of autonomy	Professional commitment	0/214	0/002 **	Reject the null hypothesis
Sense of influence	Professional commitment	0/198	0/005 **	Reject the null hypothesis
Sense of trust	Professional commitment	0/245	0/002 **	Reject the null hypothesis
Psychological Empowerment	Professional commitment	0/381	0/000 **	Reject the null hypothesis

Table 10: Results of Durbin - Watson test for independence of errors

Model	Correlation coefficient, R	coefficient of determination R ²	Adjusted coefficient of determination R ²	Doorbin - Watson Test DW	Predicted standard error
Psychological Empowerment	0/381	0/146	0/141	1/61	0/504

Table (9) shows that there is significant relationship between the components of psychological empowerment and professional commitment of all subjects.

According to Table (10), the correlation coefficient between professional commitment and psychological empowerment variables is equal to $R = 0.381$ and the coefficient of determination is equal to $R^2 = 0.141$. It shows that about 14.1%, may predict the professional commitment criterion variable according to the prediction variable. Other changes are related to the variables that are not considered in this review. According to the Watson- Durbin base that is in the range of 1.5 to 2.5, it can be said that the assumption of independence of errors is confirmed.

Table 11: Stepwise multiple regression to predict the criterion variable of professional commitment according to the prediction variables of psychological empowerment

Model	Source of changes	Total Square	Degrees of freedom Df	Mean square MS	F Value	P Value
Psychological Empowerment	Total	8/594	1	8/594	33/723	0/000
	Remaining	50/46	198	0/255		
	Regression	59/054	199			

According to the regression analysis, the significance of determination coefficient or the linear relationship between psychological empowerment and professional commitment is confirmed. (**P=0.000,F=33.723**)

According to the results of table 10 - the Watson-Durbin test score is 1.61- and according to the results of table 11, preconditions of regression is met; therefore, regression use is confirmed.

Table 12: The analysis of regression coefficients for prediction variable of psychological empowerment

Model	Not Standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T Value	P Value
	coefficient rate B	Standard error coefficient	coefficient rate β		
Constant Value	2/172	0/277		0/854	0/000
Psychological Empowerment	0/382	0/066	0/381	5/807	0/000

As is shown in Table (12), the results of regression analysis indicate that psychological empowerment variable (**P<0.01=0/381 β**) positively and significantly predicts the professional commitment. Also, the impact factor of psychological empowerment is equal to 0.382. This means that for every one-unit increase in psychological empowerment, about 0.38 increase will be seen in professional commitment. According to the results in Table 12, the regression coefficients equation is as follows:

$$Y (\text{professional commitment}) = 2.172 + 0.382 (\text{psychological empowerment})$$

Table 13: Results of Durbin - Watson test for independence of errors

Model	Coefficient of correlation R	Coefficient of determination R^2	Adjusted coefficient of determination R^2	Doorbin – Watson test DW	Predicted standard error
Meaningfulness sense	0/514	0/264	0/261	1/58	0/46

According to Table (13), the correlation coefficient between professional commitment and meaningfulness variable is equal to $R = 0.514$ and the coefficient of determination is equal to $R^2 = 0.26$. It shows that about 0.26, we may predict the professional commitment criterion variable according to the meaningfulness variable. Other changes are related to the variables that are not considered in this review. According to the Watson- Durbin base that is in the range of 1.5 to 2.5, it can be said that the assumption of independence of errors is confirmed.

Table 14: Stepwise multiple regression to predict the criterion variable of professional commitment according to the meaningfulness subscale

Model	Source of changes	Total square	Degrees of freedom DF	Mean square MS	F Value	P Value
Meaningfulness sense	Total	15/612	1	15/612	71/157	0/000
	Remained	43/442	198	0/212		
	regression	59/054	199			

According to the regression analysis, the significance of determination coefficient or the linear relationship between meaningfulness and professional commitment is confirmed. (**P=0/000, F=33/723**)

According to the results of table 13 - the Watson-Durbin test score is 1.58- and according to the results of table 14, preconditions of regression is met; therefore, regression use is confirmed.

Table 15: The analysis of regression coefficients for prediction variable of meaningfulness variable

Model	Not Standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T Value	P Value coefficient rate B
	coefficient rate B	Standard error coefficient	coefficient rate β		
Constant value	1/426	0/279		5/108	0/000
Meaningfulness sense	0/519	0/062	0/514	8/435	0/000

As is shown in Table (15), the results of regression analysis indicate that meaningfulness subscale ($p < 0/01 = 0/514\beta$) positively and significantly predicts the professional commitment. Also, the impact factor of meaningfulness subscale is equal to 0.519. This means that for every one-unit increase in meaningfulness subscale, about 0.52 increase will be seen in professional commitment. According to the results in Table 15, the regression coefficients equation is as follows:

$$Y (\text{professional commitment}) = 1.426 + 0.519 (\text{meaningfulness sense})$$

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment and professional commitment of physical education teachers in Khuzestan province. Generally, the analysis of results showed a significant correlation between psychological empowerment and professional commitment of selected physical education teachers. The findings also showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between the psychological empowerment and professional commitment of physical education teachers. This is consistent with the research results of spritzer and colleagues (1997), Ozaralli (2003), Falahati and Farahani (2007), Hosseini-Nasab et al (2010), and Esmaili and colleagues (2011) (21, 20, 19, 16, and 13). The results of their study indicated the significant relationship of psychological empowerment; this was also confirmed in this study. Also, the findings of this study are not consistent with the findings of Wilson et al (2010). In their study entitled (Analysis of the relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational commitment of expert employees in Mellat Bank), they found that the aspects of competence, meaningfulness, and selection have no significant relationship with organizational commitment (22). One reason for this inconsistency may be due to the difference in population. On the other hand, Isao and Ogboro (2006) found that there is a significant and positive relationship between the meaningfulness and effectiveness sense and organizational commitment (23). In this study, also, this finding was obtained. Chang et al (2009) stated that the psychological empowerment cannot play a significant role in mediating the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, because organizational commitment has a strong and direct impact on job satisfaction. However, they pointed out that job satisfaction may influence the relationship between empowerment and organizational commitment (17). In a research on the relationship between organizational justice, psychological empowerment, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior, Najafi and colleagues (2011) found that organizational justice directly affected job satisfaction and psychological empowerment. Also, psychological empowerment directly and positively affected the job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational commitment directly affected the organizational citizenship behavior. Also, organizational justice and psychological empowerment positively and directly affected the organizational citizenship behavior. Also, it was found that psychological empowerment and meaningfulness component was the necessary predictor for professional commitment (24). This is consistent with the results of Abili and Nastizayi (2009). They showed that among the psychological empowerment variables, there is a significant relationship between only the meaningfulness sense and organizational commitment scores (25). Also, Esmaili and colleagues (2011) found that of the five components of empowerment, the competency sense, meaningfulness sense, and effectiveness sense were significant in predicting organizational citizenship behavior (13). Also in the present study, the psychological empowerment predicted the professional commitment. Esmaili and Seyed Amery (2010) showed that the meaningfulness and "effective" components in predicting organizational commitment and job commitment was significant (15). However in this study, among the components of psychological empowerment, only did the meaningfulness variable predict the professional commitment. In their research on the (Simple and multiple relationship between the characteristics and professional commitment of nurses in some hospitals in the city of Ahvaz), Jazayeri and colleagues (2006) concluded that extraversion, openness, and consensus had the greatest

role in explaining the variance in the three areas of professional commitment (26). Thus, according to the results, it can be concluded that meaningfulness component has a considerable role -more than other psychological empowerment components- in determining and predicting professional commitment variable. These two variables must be considered more than other factors of psychological empowerment and they should be strengthened. Since, there was a significant and positive relationship between all components of psychological empowerment and professional commitment in the present study, we suggest the directors of the Department of Education to enhance physical education teachers' professional commitment and they should use ways for strengthening the psychological empowerment factors. Also in the present study, it was showed that there was a significant and positive relationship between the psychological empowerment components and professional commitment. Therefore, it is recommended that the General Directors of Education Organizations have more confidence on physical education teachers to implement their objectives in education and training programs (schools).

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