

Psychological empowerment and how it impacts job satisfaction and organisational commitment of staff members at the University of Namibia (UNAM).

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ABSTRACT:

The ability of organisations to be innovative and to empower their employees would lead to the organisation gaining that competitive edge. Psychological empowerment can be defined as the understanding about your work with regards to meaning, competence, self-determination and impact (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Job satisfaction can be defined as the positive/negative feelings based on the interaction an employee has with the working environment and organisation in relation to his/her expectations. Robbins (2003) defined organisational commitment as a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organisation and its goals, and wishes to be part of that organisation. A cross-sectional survey design was used, employing questionnaires to collect data on the biographical antecedents of employees, psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. The aim of this study was to assess the relation between psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. This study found that PE- 2 (Impact) predicted SAT- 1 (Autonomy), SAT-2 (Social), and SAT- 4 (Advance). PE- 1 (Attitude) and PE- 2 (Impact) predicted SAT- 3 (Intrinsic), PE- 2 (Impact) and SAT-1 (Autonomy) predicted Normative commitment, SAT- 2 (Social) and SAT- 4 (Advance) predicted Affective Commitment. This study found that when employees become more psychologically empowered, they would also experience higher levels of job satisfaction and become more committed towards the organisation and this will help organisations thrive instead of trying to survive in a competitive environment. If managers are empowered they are able to build capacities, resources, competencies and strategies to respond pro-actively to the environmental pressures caused by economic liberalisation.

Key words: Psychological empowerment, job satisfaction, organisational commitment.

INTRODUCTION:

“The hard and competitive work conditions in the 21st century force organisations to be willing to re-evaluate themselves and make changes to reach their objectives” (Özel, Bayındır, Inan, & Özel; 2009, p. 358). During the past 25 years many organisations have experienced changes including institutions of higher education. It was found that not only does traditional academic roles change, sometimes the working conditions have become unfavourable and unsupportive of staff’s efforts to pursue the mission of higher education (Mapesela & Hay, 2006).

A study in the United Kingdom found that university staff members are underpaid, demoralised and demotivated (Tytherleigh, Webb, Cooper, & Ricketts, 2005). Coetzee and Rothmann (2004) stated that changes in the environment have direct impacts on job attitudes (job satisfaction and organisational commitment). This is no different at the University of Namibia with constant changes taking place, having to compete internationally with reduced resources.

Psychological empowerment is not an enduring personality trait generalisable across situations but rather a set of cognitions shaped by the working environment. Psychological empowerment is a continuous variable; people can be viewed as more or less empowered instead of being empowered or not at all (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) defined psychological empowerment as a set of four cognitions reflecting an employee’s orientation to his/her role in terms of meaning (the value of his or her work), competence (his or her capability to perform the work), self-determination (choice in initiating and regulating actions) and impact (the ability to affect or influence organisational outcomes). Conger and Kanungo (1988) suggested that psychological empowerment is important for stimulating and managing change in organisations. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) posited a link between psychological empowerment and individual flexibility, which may contribute to innovative behavior. Being able to identify these factors influence productivity of the organisation and improved job attitudes for employees (Bhatnagar, 2007). Considering the importance of psychological empowerment with regards to change management and productivity within the organisation, this study aims to assess the relation of psychological empowerment and how it relates to other positive job attitudes.

Menon (2001) found that the higher the level of psychological empowerment of employees, the higher their level of their job satisfaction. The following hypothesis has been developed;
Hypothesis 1: Psychological empowerment is positively related to job satisfaction.

Organisational commitment can be defined as the psychological link with the organisation, identifying with its values and goals, wanting to remain with that organisation and exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Luthans, 2005; Robbins, 2003). A committed employee identifies with the organisation, makes personal sacrifices, performs beyond normal expectations, works selflessly and contributes to the organisation's overall effectiveness (job satisfaction). Making use of cross-sectional survey design, the researcher will try and assess the relation between psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Psychological empowerment

Conger and Kanungo (1988) defined empowerment as a process of enhancing the feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members, which would also include that the employees perceive themselves to be empowered. To empower means to give power to (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Defining power from a legal point of view, power means authority, to empower could also be authorization. Spreitzer (1995) somewhat changed what Thomas and Velthouse (1990) found by defining psychological empowerment as manifested in four cognitions reflecting an employee's active orientations to his/her work that included meaning (the value of the work in relation to expectations); competence (the ability to skilfully execute tasks); self-determination (deciding on the method, pace and effort when completing tasks) and impact (ability to influence outcomes at work).

Meaning is the value of a task goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideal standards. *Competence* can be defined as the feeling of accomplishment after skilfully completing a task. Feeling competent after completing a task, employees would also be more open to confront difficult tasks instead of refraining from engaging in these activities. Self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Banduras' theory of self-efficacy plays a major role in how you approach goals, tasks and challenges (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). *Self-determination* is another key component of intrinsic

motivation that is a key determinant of satisfaction. Competence and self-determination is also key component and an essential ingredient for intrinsic motivation (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). *Impact* is the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative and operating outcomes of work. It can also be defined as the degree to which behavior can influence the overall outcome of the task (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997).

Job satisfaction

Hirschfeld (2000) defined intrinsic job satisfaction as the way in which a person feels about the nature of the tasks itself and extrinsic job satisfaction as the way an employee feels about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks. Robbins (2003) found that the level of job satisfaction is influenced by the work itself, promotional opportunities, the ability of the supervisors to provide emotional and technical support, the extent to which fellow workers are supported, working conditions and the equitability of remuneration. Job satisfaction is defined as *“a state that depends on the interaction of employees, their personal characteristics and expectations with the working environment and the organisation”* (Pinikahana & Happell; 2004, p. 120). Considering that job satisfaction is regarded as a state, it can be altered and influenced depending on how the employees see/experience these interventions. Job satisfaction isn't only influenced by what the job can offer for the employees but also the expectations of the employees in relation to what the job offers. Even when in similar working conditions, job satisfaction could also be influenced by age, sex, race or educational experience (Robbins, 2003; Hirschfeld, 2000; Lu, White, & Barriball, 2005). Job satisfaction was also defined by Hausknecht, Hiller and Vance (2008) as the shared sense of enjoyment that individuals derive from their experiences on the job and within a work unit. Considering the support of colleagues, supervisors and how team members interact could also be influencing job satisfaction. This will only be the case for employees that value the support of colleagues and this was also supported by Robbins (2003); Hirschfeld (2000) and Lu, White and Barriball (2005), emphasising the unique expectations of employees. Buitendach and De Witte (2005) distinguished that job satisfaction can be categorised into two dimensions namely intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. “Extrinsic satisfaction refers to satisfaction with aspects that have little to do with the job tasks or content of the work itself, such as pay, working conditions and co-workers. Intrinsic satisfaction

refers to the job tasks themselves (e.g. variety, skill utilisation, autonomy)” (Buitendach & De Witte; 2005, p. 28). Zangaro and Johantgen (2009) found that employees who have opportunities for promotion will also be more satisfied with their jobs.

Academics level of satisfaction needs to be assessed regularly since there are constant changes in the environment but also to assess how the new requirements are enabled with the necessary support (Winter, Taylor, & Sarros, 2000).

Organisational commitment

Organisational commitment can be defined as the psychological link with the organisation, identifying with its values and goals, wanting to remain with that organisation and exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Luthans, 2005; Robbins, 2003). Organisational commitment has been defined by Lok, Westwood and Crawford (2005) as the identification, loyalty and involvement experienced by employees. A committed employee identifies with the organisation, makes personal sacrifices, performs beyond normal expectations, works selflessly and contributes to the organisation’s overall effectiveness (job satisfaction).

Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993), distinguished between three dimensions of organisational commitment. Firstly continuance commitment refers to an employee’s behavioral orientation, this would be related to the cost of leaving are too high or whether other alternatives doesn’t seem as favourable. They would be staying with the organisation more out of desperation rather than anything else. Affective commitment refers to the employees’ emotional attachment to, identifies with and is actively involved in the workplace. Normative commitment refers to when employees feel that they are obligated to stay, ought to stay (Meyer & Allen; 1991; Meyer et al., 1993).

It has been established that organisational commitment is “a multidimensional construct and that the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of commitment vary across dimensions” (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky; 2002, p. 21). Indicating that employees might be very committed overall although specific dimensions of commitment could be very low.

Psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment:

Employees would also feel in control of their work, having an influence on positive outcomes that include higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of job stress (Spreitzer, 1995). Gardner (2005) also stated that general well-being; levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment are decreasing as a result of the experience occupational stress.

The way that the leaders empower employees will impact positively on employees' attitude toward the job (job satisfaction) and want to remain with the organisation (organisational commitment). Buitendach and De Witte (2005) also found a statistically significant relationship between affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The following hypothesis has been developed. *Hypothesis 2: Job satisfaction is positively related to organisational commitment.*

Knol and van Linge (2008) also found that psychological empowerment was also statistically significant to innovative behaviour, emphasising that impact being the most important sub-variable. According to Stander and Rothmann (2009) indicated that leader empowering behaviour predicts job satisfaction, which in turn predicts organisational commitment. *Hypothesis 3: Psychological empowerment is positively related to organisational commitment.*

Considering the psychological empowerment has a positive relation with both job satisfaction and organisational commitment, job satisfaction a negative association with stress, this means that if organisations are able to enhance employees psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and commitment levels will increase and job stress will decrease (Buitendach & De Witte, 2005; Chiang & Jang, 2007; Menon, 2001; Pinikahana & Happell, 2004; Robins, 2003; Spreitzer, 1995; Stander & Rothmann, 2009).

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Research approach

A cross-sectional survey design was used, employing questionnaires to collect data on the biographical antecedents of employees, psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Making use of this design will ensure for a larger sample to be

assessed whilst making use of sufficient time instead of other methods that might take longer and not get the same large amount of respondents.

Research method

Participants

The participants were employees working at the University of Namibia (UNAM) main campus both administrative and academic staff members. The total population is made up of 778 employees, 389 academic and 389 administrative staff (Hangula, Mwandemele, Tjiramba, Fledersbacher, Aochamus, Murray, & Smit, 2008). The total employees from the main campus are 323 employees, 250 questionnaires were distributed and 218 returned (87.2% response rate). 114 participants were academic staff (52.3%) and 104 administrative staff (47.7%), 51 belonging to the age category of 22 to 32 years (23.4%), 67 from the age category of 33 to 42 years (30.7%) and 73 from the age category of 43 years and older (33.5%), with the average age being 40.39 years. Regarding the sex of the sample, 78 were male participants (35.8%) and 129 female participants (59.2%). In terms of educational qualifications, most employees obtained either degrees (60 = 27.5%) or Masters Degrees (62 = 28.4%), 9.2% (20) only having obtained grade 12, 5% (11) having obtained certificates, 16.5% (36) having obtained diplomas and 12.8% (28) having obtained their Doctorate degrees. The data is being presented in table 1.

Table 1: Biographical Information of sample (N=218).

| Item: | N | Category: | | Percentage: |
|-------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Academic/ Administration | 114 | Academic | | 52.3 |
| | 104 | Administration | | 47.7 |
| Age: | 51 | 22 to 32 years | 51 | 23.4 |
| | 67 | 33 to 42 years | 67 | 30.7 |
| | 73 | 43 years and older | 73 | 33.5 |
| | | Average age | 40.39 | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|------|
| Gender: | 78 | Male | 78 | 35.8 |
| | 129 | Female | 129 | 59.2 |
| Qualifications: | 20 | Grade 12 | 20 | 9.2 |
| | 11 | Certificate | 11 | 5.0 |
| | 36 | Diploma | 36 | 16.5 |
| | 60 | Degree | 60 | 27.5 |
| | 62 | Master's Degree | 62 | 28.4 |
| | 28 | PhD | 28 | 12.8 |

Measuring instruments

Four instruments were used in this study, a Biographical questionnaire, the Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire, Revised Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire.

The *Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire* (PEQ) developed by Spreitzer (1995), making use of different questionnaires to develop a measure to assess the four dimensions of psychological empowerment as conceptualized by Thomas and Velthouse (1990). This questionnaire has 12 items; three items per factor (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) with a response format from very strongly disagree to very strongly agree (7-point Likert scale). The sample items include “The work I do is meaningful” (meaning), “I am confident about my ability to do my job” (competence), “I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job” (self-determination) and “My impact on what happens in my department is large” (impact) (Spreitzer, 2005). In this study the data supported a two factor model namely Attitude ($\alpha = 0.84$) and Impact ($\alpha = 0.76$). Exploratory factor analysis was conducted, the data didn't fit the proposed four-factor model in the literature, six items loaded positively on Attitude, five loaded positively for Impact and item number 4 didn't add significantly to any of the two factors.

The *Revised Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire* has been used to measure job satisfaction within the workplace (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). This instrument measures intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, 20 items, 11 items for intrinsic job satisfaction and 9 items for extrinsic job satisfaction. It makes use of a five-point response scale (very dissatisfied to very satisfied). The sample items include “how you get along with colleagues and supervisors, is the pay satisfying, how is conflict handled with the organisation”. Literature suggested a two-factor model although the data supported a four-factor model for job satisfaction namely Autonomy ($\alpha = 0.75$), Social ($\alpha = 0.75$), Advancement ($\alpha = 0.70$) and Intrinsic ($\alpha = 0.77$). Four items loaded significantly on the factor for Autonomy, four items for Social, three items for Advancement and six for Intrinsic. Item number 1, 10 and 17 didn’t load significantly to any of the four factors.

The *Organisational Commitment Questionnaire* (OCQ) was developed by Porter and his colleagues, measuring continuance (“One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternatives”), affective (“I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation”) and normative (“I would feel guilty if I leave my organisation right now”) commitment and it consists of 18 items. The questionnaire makes use of a 5-point Likert-scale response format (1-strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree). The data supported the three-factor model as proposed in the literature namely continuance ($\alpha = 0.71$), affective ($\alpha = 0.71$) and normative commitment ($\alpha = 0.71$). For continuance commitment five items loaded significantly, three items for affective commitment and five items for normative commitment. Item number 1, 4, 6, 13 and 17 didn’t add significantly to any of the three factors. Considering that these instruments have been used in previous studies in Namibia and South Africa with a similar context, having obtained exemplary reliability results, having been used multiple times by other researchers, this study will also be making use of these instruments.

Statistical analyses

The statistical analysis was carried out by using SPSS program 17.0 (SPSS, 2009). In the first step descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the data. Effect sizes were used in addition to statistical significance to determine the significance of the relationships (Cohen, 1988). A cut-off point of 0, 50 (medium effect) were set for practical significance of difference between

means (Cohen, 1988). Pearson Correlations were done in order to describe the distribution of the data (Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire, Job Satisfaction Questionnaire and Organisational Commitment Questionnaire). Regression analysis was also used to investigate the relationships between the variables (psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment).

RESULTS:

Descriptive statistics and correlations

The mean, standard deviation (SD), Skewness and Kurtosis, Cronbach alpha were analysed and recorded in Table 2.

The two factors for Psychological empowerment, Attitude recorded a mean of 36.73 and 25.56 for Impact. The four-factor model for Job satisfaction measured means of 15.52 for Autonomy, 13.80 for Social, 12.98 for Advancement and 24.02 for Intrinsic. Means for the Three-factor model of Organisational commitment were recorded for Normative (13.51), Continuance (15.65) and for Affective (7.36). Standard deviation for Attitude 5.03, Impact 5.44, Autonomy 2.84, Social 3.63, Advancement 3.20, Intrinsic 3.80, Normative 3.18, Continuance 4.09 and Affective 2.83 were recorded.

Skewness for the two factor model of Psychological empowerment were measured, Attitude (-1.91) and Impact (-0.77). Kurtosis for Attitude (6.60) and Impact (1.29) were also recorded. Skewness for the four-factor model of Job satisfaction were recorded, Autonomy (-1.12), Social (-0.60), Advancement (-0.55) and Intrinsic (-1.00). Kurtosis for Autonomy (1.60), Social (-0.40), Advancement (-0.22) and Intrinsic (1.90) were also recorded. Organisational commitment recorded skewness for Normative (-0.10), Continuance (-0.15) and Affective (0.17). Kurtosis for Normative (-0.50), Continuance (-0.16) and Affective (-0.04).

(Please insert table 2 here).

Analyzing the data for psychological empowerment, making use of principal axis factoring, three factors recorded eigenvalues ($> 1, 00$), which suggested that a three-factor model would not suit the data best. The percentage of variance ranged from 10.18 to 41.96. With some closer scrutiny on the different items it made more sense to use a two-factor model that suited the data even better. The first factor presents *Attitude* and the second factor *Impact*. The two-factor model recorded cumulative percentages of 37.33 and 47.77 respectively. The correlation between attitude and impact was recorded at 0.50^{*++} (practically significant large effect- the higher the attitude the higher the impact). Cronbach alpha was recorded for Attitude 0.84 and Impact 0.76.

For job satisfaction, when doing principal component analysis, six factors recorded eigenvalues ($> 1, 00$). After looking closely at the different items on the questionnaire it made better sense to use a four-factor model that explained the data even better. Cumulative percentages for the four factors ranged from 27.28 to 42.22 respectively.

Considering organizational commitment, making use of Principal component analysis it seemed best make use of a three-factor model. Three factors recorded eigenvalues ($> 1, 00$), which was also supported by the literature and a three-factor model explained the data best. The three factors would be Normative, Continuance and Affective commitment. Cumulative percentages ranged from 19.74 to 41.46 respectively.

In Table 2, Pearson Correlation was recorded for Attitude and Autonomy recorded correlation of 0.35^{*+} (practically medium effect), Attitude and Social 0.19^{*} (statistically significant), Attitude and Advancement 0.14^{*} , Attitude and Intrinsic 0.52^{*++} (practically significant large effect), Attitude and Affective -0.08^{*} (statistically significant), Attitude and Normative 0.13^{*} (statistically significant) and Attitude and Continuance -0.5^{*} (statistically significant).

Impact and Autonomy recorded correlation of 0.53^{*++} (practically significant large effect), Impact and Social 0.33^{*+} (practically significant medium effect), Impact and Advancement 0.32^{*+} , Impact and Intrinsic 0.47^{*+} (practically significant medium effect), Impact and Affective -0.10^{*} (statistically significant), Impact and Normative 0.18^{*} (statistically significant), Impact and Continuance 0.02^{*} (statistically significant). The higher their levels of impact the more they would experience autonomy (making decisions), the better their relations with co-workers and managers (social), and they would also feel internally more satisfied (intrinsic).

Autonomy and Affective -0.19^* (statistically significant), Autonomy and Normative 0.14^* (statistically significant) and Autonomy and Continuance -0.10^* (statistically significant). The more employees are able to make decisions or are satisfied with the way their superiors make decisions they would be more committed to the organisation because they want to instead of out of desperation or feeling that they ought to stay.

Pearson correlation reported correlations for Social and Normative 0.28^* (statistically significant) and Social and Continuance -0.07^* (statistically significant). The more satisfied employees are with the relations with their colleagues they would be committed to the organisation since they feel they owe it to their colleagues or due to the cost of leaving.

Advancement and Normative 0.29^* (statistically significant) and Advancement and Continuance -0.03 . Pearson correlations were recorded for Intrinsic and Normative 0.28^* (statistically significant) and Intrinsic and Continuance -0.02^* (statistically significant). If employees are satisfied because of the chances for advancement or they are intrinsically satisfied, they could also feel committed to the organisation since they feel they owe it to their colleagues or due to the cost of leaving.

Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model that was analysed used Normative commitment as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1) and SAT autonomy, SAT social, SAT intrinsic and SAT advancement (model 2). The results are reported in Table 3.

Table 3:

Multiple Regression analysis with Normative commitment being the dependant variable and Attitude, Impact, SAT autonomy, SAT social, SAT intrinsic and SAT advancement being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>R</i> ² | ΔR^2 |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 3.87 | 0.04 | 0.03 |
| (Constant) | 10.02 | 1.60 | | 6.27 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.63 | 0.53 | | | |
| Impact | 0.10 | 0.05 | 0.16 | 2.04 | 0.04* | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | 5.95 | 0.15 | 0.12 |
| (Constant) | 7.012 | 1.71 | | 4.11 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | -0.012 | 0.05 | -0.02 | -0.23 | 0.82 | | | |
| Impact | 0.034 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.70 | 0.49 | | | |
| SAT_Autonomy | -0.174 | 0.10 | -0.16 | -1.80 | 0.04* | | | |
| SAT_Social | 0.153 | 0.07 | 0.17 | 2.28 | 0.23 | | | |
| SAT_Intrinsic | 0.185 | 0.07 | 0.22 | 2.56 | 0.22 | | | |
| SAT_Advance | 0.170 | 0.08 | 0.17 | 2.25 | 0.25 | | | |

* $p < 0, 05$ – statistically significant

As can be seen from Table 3, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,214)} = 3, 87; p < 0, 04$), accounting for approximately 3% of the variance. Impact ($\beta = 0, 16; t = 2, 04; p < 0, 04$) predicted normative commitment. In the second step of the regression analysis, job satisfaction was entered. Job satisfaction added at this step made a statistically significant contribution to the model, ($F_{(6,210)} = 5.95; p < 0, 00$), which explained an additional 12% of the total variance. Looking at this

together with job satisfaction, SAT Autonomy ($\beta = -0,16$; $t = -1.80$; $p < 0,04$) predicted normative commitment.

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model that was analysed used Affective commitment as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1) and SAT autonomy, SAT social, SAT intrinsic and SAT advancement (model 2). The results are reported in Table 4.

Table 4:

Multiple Regression analysis with Affective commitment being the dependent variable and Attitude, Impact, SAT autonomy, SAT social, SAT intrinsic and SAT advancement being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>R</i> ² | ΔR^2 |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 1.22 | 0.01 | 0.00 |
| (Constant) | 9.29 | 1.43 | | 6.51 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | -0.03 | 0.04 | -0.05 | -0.60 | 0.60 | | | |
| Impact | -0.04 | 0.04 | -0.08 | -0.95 | 0.34 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | 4.85 | 0.12 | 0.10 |
| (Constant) | 12.30 | 1.53 | | 8.06 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | -0.02 | 0.05 | -0.04 | -0.53 | 0.60 | | | |
| Impact | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.08 | 0.92 | 0.36 | | | |
| SAT_Autonomy | -0.07 | 0.09 | -0.07 | -0.76 | 0.45 | | | |
| SAT_Social | -0.13 | 0.06 | -0.17 | -2.17 | 0.03* | | | |
| SAT_Intrinsic | 0.01 | 0.07 | 0.01 | 0.15 | 0.88 | | | |
| SAT_Advance | -0.20 | 0.07 | -0.22 | -2.86 | 0.01* | | | |

* $p < 0,05$ – statistically significant

As can be seen from Table 4, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis didn't produce a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,214)} = 1.22; p < 0, 00$) and percentage of variance explained was not statistically significant. In the second step of the regression analysis, job satisfaction was entered. Job satisfaction being added at this step made a statistically significant contribution to the model, ($F_{(6,210)} = 4.85; p < 0, 00$), which explained an additional 10% of the total variance. Taken together, it appears that significant predictors of Affective commitment were SAT social ($\beta = -0, 17; t = -2.17; p < 0, 03$) and SAT Advance ($\beta = -0, 22; t = -2, 86; p < 0, 01$).

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model that was analysed used Continuance commitment as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1) and SAT autonomy, SAT social, SAT intrinsic and SAT advancement (model 2). The results are reported in Table 5.

Table 5:

Multiple Regression analysis with Continuance commitment being the dependent variable and Attitude, Impact, SAT autonomy, SAT social, SAT intrinsic and SAT advancement being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | t | p | F | R ² | ΔR ² |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|------|----------------|-----------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 0.41 | 0.00 | -0.01 |
| (Constant) | 16.846 | 2.077 | | 8.11 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | -0.057 | 0.064 | -0.07 | -0.89 | 0.38 | | | |
| Impact | 0.034 | 0.059 | 0.05 | 0.57 | 0.57 | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | 0.82 | 0.02 | -0.01 |
| (Constant) | 18.12 | 2.34 | | 7.76 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | -0.06 | 0.07 | -0.08 | -0.90 | 0.37 | | | |
| Impact | 0.08 | 0.07 | 0.11 | 1.25 | 0.21 | | | |
| SAT_Autonomy | -0.22 | 0.13 | -0.15 | -1.67 | 0.10 | | | |
| SAT_Social | -0.05 | 0.09 | -0.05 | -0.57 | 0.57 | | | |
| SAT_Intrinsic | 0.08 | 0.10 | 0.07 | 0.76 | 0.45 | | | |
| SAT_Advance | -0.00 | 0.10 | 0.00 | -0.01 | 0.99 | | | |

* $p < 0, 05$ – statistically significant.

As can be seen from Table 5, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis didn't produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,214)} = 0.41; p < 0, 00$) and account for 10% of the variance. In the second step of the regression analysis, job satisfaction was entered. Job satisfaction being added at this step also didn't make any statistically significant contribution to the model, ($F_{(6,210)} = 0.82; p < 0, 00$), which explained an additional 10% of the total variance. Taken together, it appears that there are no significant predictors of Continuance commitment.

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model was analysed used SAT autonomy as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1). The results are reported in Table 6.

Table 6:

Multiple Regression analysis with SAT autonomy being the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | t | p | F | R^2 | ΔR^2 |
|------------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 44.45 | 0.29 | 0.29 |
| (Constant) | 6.83 | 1.22 | | 5.61 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | 0.64 | 0.04 | 0.11 | 1.71 | 0.89 | | | |
| Impact | 0.25 | 0.04 | 0.48 | 7.20 | 0.00* | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

* $p < 0, 05$ – statistically significant

As can be seen from Table 6, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,215)} = 44.45; p < 0, 00$) and account for 29% of the variance. It appears that the only significant predictor of SAT autonomy were Impact ($\beta = 0, 48; t = 7.20; p < 0, 00$).

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model was analysed used SAT social as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1). The results are reported in Table 7.

Table 7:

Multiple Regression analysis with SAT social being the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>R</i> ² | ΔR^2 |
|------------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 12.96 | 0.11 | 0.10 |
| (Constant) | 7.60 | 1.75 | | 4.35 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.47 | 0.64 | | | |
| Impact | 0.21 | 0.05 | 0.31 | 4.17 | 0.00* | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

* $p < 0, 05$ – statistically significant

As can be seen from Table 7, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,215)} = 12.96; p < 0, 00$) and account for 10% of the variance. It appears that the only significant predictor of SAT social were Impact ($\beta = 0, 31; t = 4.17; p < 0, 00$).

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model was analysed used SAT intrinsic as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1). The results are reported in Table 8.

Table 8:

Multiple Regression analysis with SAT intrinsic being the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>R</i> ² | ΔR^2 |
|------------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 52.62 | 0.33 | 0.32 |
| (Constant) | 8.56 | 1.58 | | 5.42 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | 0.28 | 0.05 | 0.38 | 5.82 | 0.00* | | | |
| Impact | 0.20 | 0.05 | 0.29 | 4.44 | 0.00* | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

* $p < 0, 05$ – statistically significant

As can be seen from Table 8, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,214)} = 56.62; p < 0, 00$) and account for 32% of the variance. It appears that the only significant predictors of SAT intrinsic were Attitude ($\beta = 0, 38; t = 5.82; p < 0, 00$) and Impact ($\beta = 0, 29; t = 4.44; p < 0, 00$).

Multiple regression analyses were performed. The first model was analysed used SAT advance as the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact as the independent variables (model 1). The results are reported in Table 9.

Table 9:

Multiple Regression analysis with SAT advance being the dependent variable and Attitude and Impact being the independent variables.

| Model | Unstandardised Coefficients | | Standardised Coefficients Beta | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>R</i> ² | ΔR^2 |
|------------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | B | SE | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | 12.53 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| (Constant) | 2.12 | 0.39 | | 5.50 | 0.00* | | | |
| Attitude | -0.00 | 0.01 | -0.02 | -0.30 | 0.77 | | | |
| Impact | 0.05 | 0.01 | 0.33 | 4.48 | 0.00* | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

* $p < 0, 05$ – statistically significant

As can be seen from Table 9, entry of Attitude and Impact at the first step of the regression analysis produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,215)} = 12.53; p < 0, 00$) and account for 10% of the variance. It appears that the only significant predictor of SAT advance were Impact ($\beta = 0, 33; t = 4.48; p < 0, 00$).

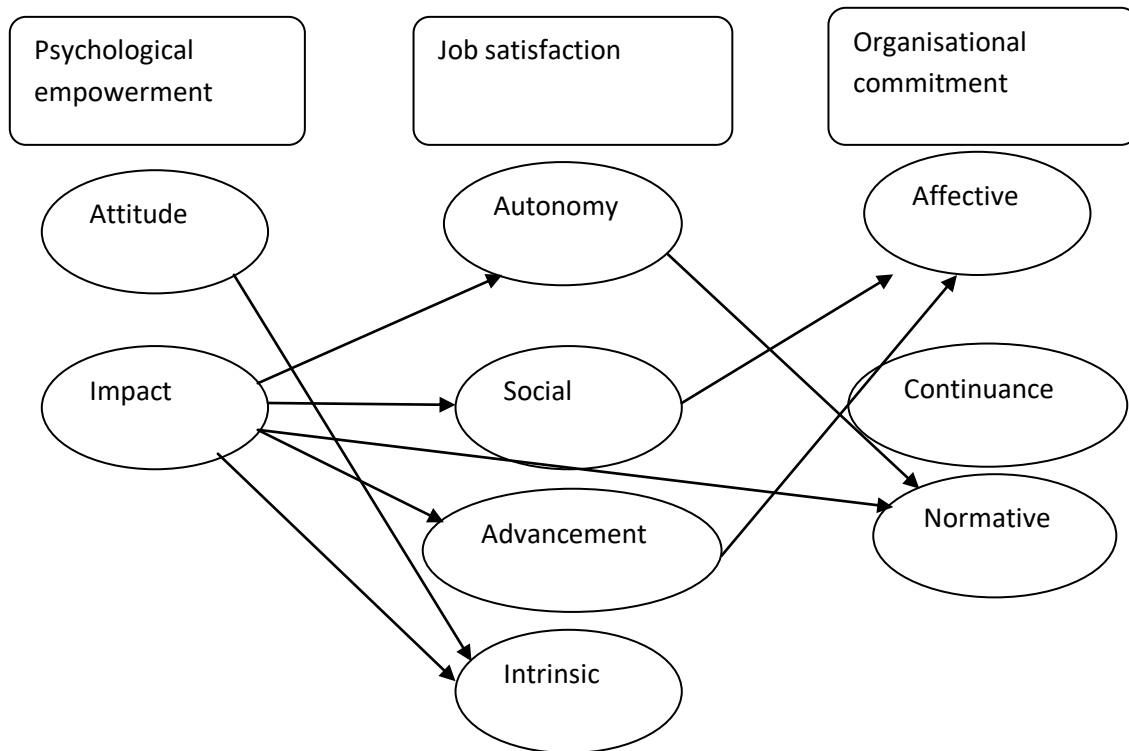


Figure 1: Analysis of the structural model.

- Attitude ($\beta = 0,38$; $t = 5.82$; $p < 0,00$) predicted SAT intrinsic.
- Impact ($\beta = 0,48$; $t = 7.20$; $p < 0,00$) predicted SAT autonomy and SAT Autonomy ($\beta = -0,16$; $t = -1.80$; $p < 0,04$) predicted normative commitment.
- Impact ($\beta = 0,31$; $t = 4.17$; $p < 0,00$) predicted SAT social and SAT social predicted Affective commitment ($\beta = -0,17$; $t = -2.17$; $p < 0,03$).
- Impact ($\beta = 0,33$; $t = 4.48$; $p < 0,00$) predicted SAT advance and SAT advance predicted Affective commitment ($\beta = -0,22$; $t = -2,86$; $p < 0,01$).
- Impact ($\beta = 0,29$; $t = 4.44$; $p < 0,00$) predicted SAT intrinsic.
- Impact ($\beta = 0,16$; $t = 2,04$; $p < 0,04$) predicted normative commitment.
- No significant predictors of Continuance commitment were found.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that psychological empowerment (Attitude and Impact) predicted job satisfaction (Autonomy; Social; Advancement and Intrinsic) which predicted organisational commitment (Affective and Normative)

DISCUSSION:

Psychological empowerment and job satisfaction

Menon (2001) explained that the greater the level of psychological empowerment the greater the level of job satisfaction. This was also evident with the regression analysis using the two factors (Impact as independent variables) having statistically significant relations with SAT autonomy ($\beta = 0,48$; $t = 7.20$; $p < 0,00$), SAT social ($\beta = 0,31$; $t = 4.17$; $p < 0,00$), SAT intrinsic ($\beta = 0,29$; $t = 4.44$; $p < 0,00$) and SAT advance ($\beta = 0,33$; $t = 4.48$; $p < 0,00$). Attitude proved also to be a strong indicator of SAT intrinsic ($\beta = 0,38$; $t = 5.82$; $p < 0,00$). The more employees feel that they have an impact in the organisation regarding tasks and decisions; they are likely to develop a more positive attitude towards the job resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction.

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) found that employees that experience competence are more likely to engage in challenging tasks and experience higher levels of job satisfaction. This was also supported by the data since Attitude and Autonomy recorded correlation coefficient of 0.35^{*+} (practically significant medium effect- the higher the levels of attitude the higher the level of autonomy). This was also the case with how Attitude correlated with SAT Intrinsic (0.52^{*++} , practically significant large effect) and Attitude and SAT Social (0.19^* statistically significant), when employees feel more competent about their abilities they also experience higher levels of job satisfaction. The higher their level of competence (attitude) the more they would experience autonomy (making decisions); they would also feel internally more satisfied (intrinsic) and the better their relations with co-workers and managers (social).

Impact and Autonomy recorded Pearson correlations of 0.53^{*++} (practically significant large effect), Impact and Social 0.33^{*+} (practically significant medium effect), Impact and Impact and Intrinsic 0.47^{*+} (practically significant medium effect), which is evident that when employees feel they have an impact in the organisation they will experience higher levels of job satisfaction. The higher their levels of impact the more they would experience autonomy (making decisions), the better their relations with co-workers and managers (social), and they would also feel internally more satisfied (intrinsic). This also confirm hypothesis 1.

Psychological empowerment and organisational commitment

According to Thomas and Velthouse (1990), Robbins (2003) and Luthans (2005), empowerment evokes organisational commitment because: (a) a meaningful job provides a suitable fit between the requirements and purposes of one's organisational work roles and one's personal value system; (b) a sense of competence gives workers the belief that they are able to perform their work roles with skill and success, stimulating them to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; (c) self-determination gives workers control over their work and a voice in work-related decision processes, leading to enhanced involvement in the organisation, and (d) having impact facilitates workers' possibilities to participate in shaping the organisational system in which they are embedded. Menon (2001) found that the greater the level of empowerment experienced by the employees, the greater the organisational commitment will be.

Considering the tables for the regression analysis, part of what was found by the above-mentioned authors is true whilst part of it was disproved by this study. Looking at psychological empowerment, Attitude didn't predict any of the three components of organisational commitment although Impact predicted Normative commitment ($\beta = 0,16$; $t = 2,04$; $p < 0,04$) but didn't record significant relations for the other two components of organisational commitment.

Pearson correlation coefficient for Attitude and Affective -0.08^* (statistically significant), indicates that the more competent (attitude) they feel about their abilities to do their jobs the lower their levels of affective commitment. However this doesn't mean that when employees feel competent (attitude) they will be in search of better opportunities since this relation between attitude and affective is statistically significant but not practically significant. This was also the same for impact and affective commitment (Impact and Affective -0.10^* , statistically significant). Correlation coefficient for Attitude and Continuance -0.5^* (statistically significant) were recorded meaning that the higher the competence (impact) the lower the level of continuance commitment. This relation is statistically significant although not practically significant.

Pearson correlations were also recorded for Attitude and Normative 0.13^* , statistically significant, regression analysis recorded ($\beta = 0.03$; $t = 0.63$; $p < 0.53$) indicating that even though there are statistical significant correlations, Attitude doesn't predict Normative commitment;

Impact and Normative 0.18*, statistically significant; Impact and Continuance 0.02, statistically significant, which indicates that the higher the competence (impact) the higher the normative commitment, the higher the impact the higher normative commitment and the higher the impact the higher the continuance commitment. Even though these are positive correlations, they are statistically significant but not practically significant. Hypothesis 3 was partially confirmed (Impact - Normative commitment) however Psychological empowerment through job satisfaction impacted on Affective commitment.

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment

Allen and Meyer (1996) defined organisational commitment as the psychological link between the employee and the organisation that makes it less likely for the employee to want to leave voluntarily. A committed employee identifies with the organisation, makes personal sacrifices, performs beyond normal expectations, works selflessly and contributes to the organisation's overall effectiveness (job satisfaction). Chiang and Jang (2007) also found that job satisfaction is positively associated with organisational commitment, the higher the levels of job satisfaction the higher the level of organisational commitment.

When doing multiple regression analysis it was found that SAT autonomy predicts Normative commitment ($\beta = -0,16$; $t = -1.80$; $p < 0,04$).

Robbins (2003) also found that opportunities for promotion, the ability of supervisors to provide emotional and technical support, the support from other employees, the working environment, the fair remuneration and the work itself would also influence the level of job satisfaction that would be experienced by employees. Furthermore, allowing employees in decision making and problem solving processes would improve job satisfaction and make them feel part of the organisation (organisational commitment). Doing multiple regression analysis it proved that SAT autonomy predicts Normative commitment ($\beta = -0,16$; $t = -1.80$; $p < 0,04$) and also that SAT social ($\beta = -0,17$; $t = -2.17$; $p < 0,03$) and SAT advance ($\beta = -0,22$; $t = -2,86$; $p < 0,01$) predicts Affective commitment.

They also found that “*job satisfaction is very strongly associated with stress (negatively) and commitment (positively)*” (Pinikahana & Happell; 2004, p. 120). Buitendach and De Witte (2005) also found that the relationship between affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction

show a statistically significant correlation, suggesting that the higher the level of job satisfaction the higher the level of affective commitment within the organisation (a statistically and practically significant relationship). Regression analysis indicated that SAT social ($\beta = -0, 17; t = -2.17; p < 0, 03$) and SAT advance ($\beta = -0, 22; t = -2, 86; p < 0, 01$) predicts Affective commitment.

Robbins (2003) found that the levels of job satisfaction are influenced by the work itself, promotional opportunities, the ability of the supervisors to provide emotional and technical support, the extent to which fellow workers are supported, working conditions and the equitability of remuneration. According to the regression analysis Impact predicts SAT social (satisfaction with co-workers) ($\beta = 0, 31; t = 4.17; p < 0, 00$) and also that SAT social predicts Affective commitment ($\beta = -0, 17; t = -2.17; p < 0, 03$).

Correlation coefficients for Autonomy and Affective -0.19^* (statistically significant), and Autonomy and Continuance -0.10^* (statistically significant), Intrinsic and Affective -0.15^* (statistically significant), Intrinsic and Continuance -0.02 , Social and Continuance -0.07^* (statistically significant) and were recorded. This indicates that the higher autonomy and intrinsic satisfaction experienced by employees the lower their level of affective and continuance commitment. The higher their level of social satisfaction experienced by employees the lower their level of continuance commitment. This relations was recorded although isn't practically significant but only statistically significant.

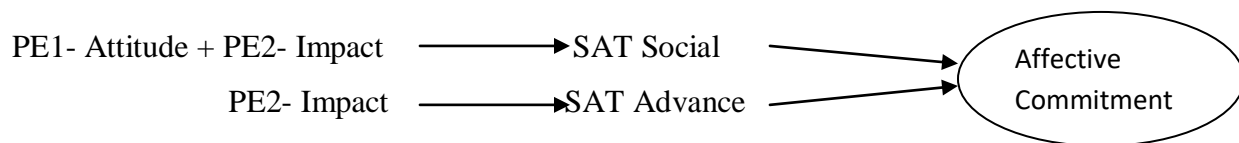
Autonomy and Normative 0.14^* (statistically significant), Intrinsic and Normative 0.28^* (statistically significant) were recorded. This indicates that the higher the level of autonomy and intrinsic the higher the levels of normative commitment experienced by employees. This relation is only statistically significant although not practically significant.

Pearson correlations were recorded for Social and Affective 0.27^* (statistically significant) and Social and Normative 0.28^* (statistically significant). This is indicative that the higher the levels of social satisfaction experienced by employees the higher their levels of affective and normative commitment. Based on these findings, hypothesis 2 is also confirmed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Empowering employees would thus involve decision-making being moved down the hierarchy of the organisation and granting employees the ability to significantly affect organisational outcomes (Menon, 2001). If employees can be included in the development of policies and procedures, it will not only be beneficial for the organisation since they get the necessary buy-in from employees, but also enhance the employees' level of psychological empowerment. Impact predicted job satisfaction (autonomy, social, intrinsic and advancement). This means that if organisations are being able to improve the way employees feel about their levels of Self-determination and Impact, being able to feel that what they are doing has immense impact on the organisation and is able to decide about how to complete their tasks, they would also be more satisfied in most aspects of their job (the ability to make decisions/ decisions being made by superiors; being satisfied with the relations they have with colleagues and co-workers; feeling satisfied with him/herself as a person; and satisfied about the possibility for advancement on the job). Employees experiencing Impact would be able to decide how to complete their duties, become involved with decision making and also feel that what they are doing in the organisation will have an impact leading to higher levels of job satisfaction.

It was also found that Job satisfaction (Social and Advancement) predict Affective commitment. Social (job satisfaction) would be how employees get along with colleagues and co-workers. Advancement (job satisfaction) refers to the opportunity for and the possibility for advancement on the job, whilst Affective commitment refers to the feeling of being committed to the organisation because you want to, being the ultimate commitment that employers would like foster. When employees perceive their relations with their colleagues to be fair and satisfied with it they would probably also believe that if they perform, the chance for advancement exists and depends on their work performance. This will also make employees develop affective commitment and want to go above-and-beyond their call of duty.



When making employees feel that they are able to complete a task successfully they would be more willing to attempt more difficult tasks. In situations when employees don't have the necessary skills, allow for skill development or training to acquire those skills. Reward employees for a job well done, a simple praise or even some form of incentive boost the level of self-determination and impact experienced by the employee. Feeling that you have an impact in what happens in your organisation you are likely to experience feelings of job satisfaction (autonomy- able to make decisions about ways to complete your duties; social- having better relations with colleagues and co-workers; intrinsic- feeling more satisfied with the work and giving internal satisfaction; and advancement- believing that you are able to be awarded an advancement if performance meets the expected standards) and initially leading to Affective commitment (being part of the organisation by choice and exerting higher levels of effort towards achieving organisational goals).

Kaarna, Polluste, Lepnum and Thrtloft (2004) also stated that if we attend to the factors that motivate employees it might also enhance their level of job satisfaction. If the organisation is able to identify what motivates employees, their jobs and activities could be structured in such a way that it enhances their level of motivation.

Recommendations for future research

This study was able to prove that psychological empowerment predicts satisfaction, although being satisfied doesn't necessarily mean that employees would also be performing. The researcher would encourage further research to possibly explore engagement and productivity.

Since some of the participants had some difficulty with different interpretations of the psychological empowerment questionnaire, future research could also try and standardize this instrument for the Namibian population. Some items on the questionnaires didn't load significantly to any of the factor thus require more investigation.

This study was only aimed at exploring the relations of the different constructs (psychological empowerment- attitude, impact; job satisfaction- autonomy, social, advancement, intrinsic; organisational commitment- affective, continuance, normative); another project could also try and develop some program to enhance employees' levels of psychological empowerment.

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