Can Psychological Empowerment improve the relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment?

Llorente-Alonso, Marta; Topa, Gabriela
UNED (National University of Distance Education); Madrid; Spain
E-mail: martallorentealonso@gmail.com; gtopa@psi.uned.es

INTRODUCTION

Psychological empowerment consists of a series of cognitive changes that allows creating proper conditions to improve employee motivation (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Conger & Kanungo (1998) defined this term as a motivational concept that enables employees to take the initiative through developing a strong sense of self-efficacy.
This has been related to a wide range of organizational results, such as job satisfaction, engagement, or performance (Seibert, Wang & Courtright, 2011). Avolio, Zhu & Bhatia (2004) suggested that empowered employees seemed to have a higher commitment to their organization. A meta-analysis showed that psychological empowerment is related to satisfaction in a meaningful and positive way (Li, Shi, Li, Xing, Wang, Ying, Zhang and Sun, 2018).
On the other hand, research has been carried out on the action of empowerment as a mediator (Meng, Jin & Guo, 2016) or moderator (Nederveen, Van Knippenberg, Schippers & Stam, 2010) between different organizational variables.
This work intends to test the moderating action of psychological empowerment. With empowerment being present, the relationship between job satisfaction and commitment will improve; therefore the levels of commitment will increase (Figure 1).

GRAPHS

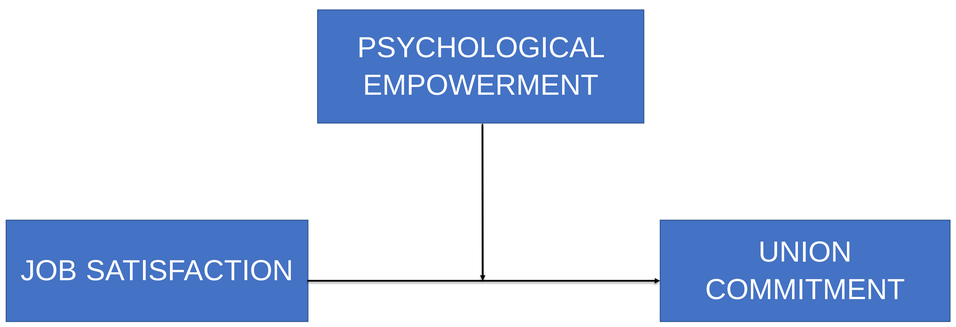


Figure 1. Hypothesized model

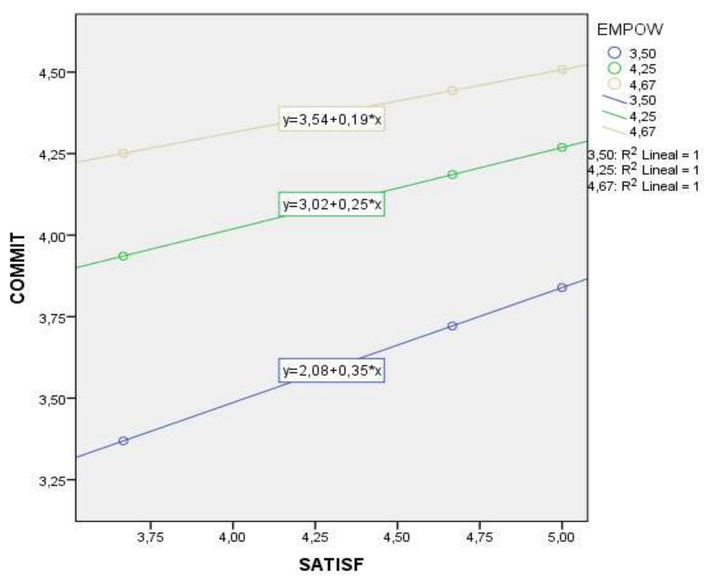


Figure 2. The conditional effect of satisfaction on the commitment in presence of different empowerment values

METHOD

The participants of this study were 401 nurses' union representatives from a Spanish union. They filled in an online questionnaire as well as expressed their consent.
The average age was 47.82 y.o. (SD=7.86), 70.3% being women. A 99% were registered nurses.
In order to assess the Psychological Empowerment, Spreitzer's Psychological empowerment in the workplace scale (1995) was used.
Job satisfaction was examined using 3 items from the "The Michigan Organizational Assesment Questionnaire" job satisfaction scale (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins y Klesh, 1983).
The union organization commitment was assessed by two subscales from the questionnaire developed by Kelloway, Catano y Southwell (1992).
Score reliability of the scale items was α=.90 for Empowerment, α=.68 for Satisfaction and α=.74 for Commitment.

RESULTS

A simple moderation analysis was carried out with bootstrapping techniques (10000 Bootstrap samples) using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (nº1).
Regression results showed that the main effects of job satisfaction on commitment were meaningful (B=.83, p<.000), as well as the effects of empowerment on commitment (B=1.25 p<.000). Moreover, the effect of the interaction between satisfaction and empowerment turns out to be meaningful (B=.14, p<.000).
On the other hand, the conditional effect of the independent variable on the dependent one is examined in different moderator values (Figure 2). Job satisfaction effect on the commitment is statistically meaningful among people with medium (B=.35, p<.000), high (B=.25, p<.000) and very high (B=.19, p<.01) empowerment levels.

DISCUSSION

This research results support the moderation hypothesis.
Both satisfaction and psychological empowerment increase the commitment to the organization. Nurses representatives, in the presence of psychological empowerment, improve the relationship between their job satisfaction and the commitment to the organization. This increase in commitment levels takes place in the different levels of empowerment taken from the sample. Other authors have highlighted the role of empowerment as a predictor of proper organizational results, such as commitment and satisfaction (Lee & Nie, 2014).
This research supports empowerment theory as a motivational construct in order to improve employees' self-efficacy perception and therefore achieve the best results.

Limitations:
Due to its cross-sectional character, establishing causal relationships is not possible. The questionnaire can be demanding, therefore the validity is threatened. Furthermore, the empowerment levels that have been examined belong to the sample, and there are not low empowerment values. Therefore, it is not possible to know if with the existence of low levels commitment would worsen.

REFERENCES

Avolio, B.J., Zhu, W., Kom, W. y Bhatia, P. (2004). Transformational Leadershio and Organizational Commitment: Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment and Moderating Role of Structural Distance. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 25, pp. 951-968
Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, D. & Klesh, J. (1983) *The Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Harbor
Conger & Kanungo (1988). The empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice. *Academy of Management Review*, 13 (3), pp.471-482
Kelloway, E.K., Catano, V.M.,& Southwell, R.R. (1992) The construct validity of union commitment: Development and dimensionality of a shorter scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 65, pp.197-211
Lee, A.N., y Nie, Y. (2014) Undersanding teacher empowerment: Teachers' perceptions of principal's and inmediate supervisor's empowering behaviour, psychological empowerment and work-related outcomes. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 41, pp.67-69.
Li, H., Shi, Y, Li. Y, Xing, Z, Wang, S, Ying, Y, Zhang, M. & Sun, J. (2018) Relationship between nurse psychological empowerment and job satisfaction: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*.doi: 10.1111/jan.13549
Meng, L., Jin, Y. & Guo, J.(2016) Mediating and/or moderating roles of psychological empowerment. *Applied Nursing Research*, 30, 104-110
Nederveen, A., Van Knippenberg, D., Schippers, M. & Stam, D.(2010) Transformational and transactional leadership and innovative behavior: The moderating role of psychological empowerment. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 31 (4), 609-623.
Seibert, S.E., Wang, G. & Coutright, S.H. (2011) Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96 (5), pp.981-1003.
Spreitzer,G.M.(1995), Psychological Empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 1442-1465. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/256865
Thomas, K.W., & Velthouse, B.A. (1990) Cognitive elements of Empowerment: An "Interpretive" Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation. *The Academy of Management Review,* 15 (4), pp. 666-681.