

## **The Effect of Empowerment, Employee's Working Environment and Perceived Organizational Support on Loyalty and Citizenship Behavior of Employees (Case Study: Social Security Organization of Khuzestan Province)**

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**Abstract:** The aim of present research is investigate the effect of empowerment, employee's working environment and perceived organizational support on loyalty and citizenship behavior of employees. Present research is applied with regard to the aim. Also, present research based on the data collection method is descriptive-correlational research. With regard to the aim, this research has been conducted in the Social Security employees of Khuzestan province. Thus, Statistical population of this research includes Social Security employees of Khuzestan province. To analyze the data has been used descriptive and descriptive Statistics through SPSS22 and Smart PLS Software's. This research has been conducted by using the questionnaires. With regard to the Cochran formula, the sample size has been estimated 169 peoples. In order to evaluate the validity of the data achieved through instrument (questionnaire) readers, advisors and experts. The internal reliability of the items was verified by computing the Cronbach's alpha. Research findings are as follows: employee empowerment have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction; employees working environment have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction; perceived support have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction; job satisfaction have a significant and positive impact on citizenship behavior and job satisfaction have a significant and positive impact on employee loyalty.

**Key words:** Empowerment, employee's working environment, perceived organizational support, loyalty, citizenship behavior

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### **INTRODUCTION**

**Problem statement:** Today, employees in service organizations have an unmatched role on gaining the goals and competitive advantage (Ghasemi, 2014). In fact, today's world, especially the world of organizations, is undergone of dramatic and ongoing changes and all aspects of the organization such as internal environment, external environment, human and non-human factors rapidly are changing (Gorelick, 2005). In the past decade, the world is moving from an industrial economy to an economy based on the customer. Today's organizations can provides easily commodities and raw materials from other organizations in other countries and only readily non-tradable source is human resources and can be said the most important efficient and competitive capital of a country is standard human resources (Cascio and Aguinis, 2005). Achieving the economic, commercial, cultural, social and political goals on the macro-level, national and microenterprises levels requires the existence of people who are active in the form of

organization, office, company, institution and even family (Solemanihoseini, 2007). Human resource is one of the most valuable asset of organization and the most important competitive advantage on the knowledge-based economy and can be used empower employees to create brainstorm ideas and innovative insights and more effective response to large changes in the work place. Given the rise of powerful organizations in different competitive arenas, organizations in order to compete on the world stage, satisfy customer needs and expectations and in order to adapt with the changing nature of jobs, trying to select employees who act beyond defined job descriptions and roles in their work. In this regard, for the first time has been used the term of organizational citizenship behavior by Bateman and Organ (1983). Organizational citizenship behavior is a person's voluntary commitment within an organization or company that is not part of his or her contractual tasks. The practical importance of organizational citizenship behavior is that improves organizational effectiveness and efficiency through participation in the transformation of

human resources, creativity and adaptability (Chen and Carey, 2009). In total, organizational citizenship behavior defined as optional behavioral and beyond the job responsibilities that has been done by the person and are not supported by the formal reward system in the organization and can lead to an increase in organizational performance (Moorman *et al.*, 1993). Another important variable for organizations is employee's loyalty to organizations. Organizational loyalty and commitment of employees is a factor to ensure the health of organization and its survival in the transformed and competitive environment. There are many factors in order to have a more loyal employees with a higher citizenship behavior to the organization that Job satisfaction is one of this factors (Hassan *et al.*, 2014). Job satisfaction is an attitude towards the jobs and person perception about differences between the work done and perceived reward which can lead to the satisfaction (Sani, 2013). To be able to have a more satisfied employees, should be consider several factors. Variables such as employee's empowerment, organizational support and work environment are effective on employee satisfaction (Hassan *et al.*, 2014). Thinkers of change management and organizational development have introduced employee's empowerment as an affecting strategy on performance and improvement of human resources (Zare, 2006). Thus, many organizations have recognized empowerment programs as a solution and have tried with the implementation of this program over comes on the internal and external obstacles and creates the necessary grounds to educate the empower employees (Khalili, 2004). According to studies conducted, work environment is one of the affecting factors on job satisfaction and employees turnover. Finally, organizational support reflects the importance and value that organization gives to its employees (Hassan *et al.*, 2014).

According to material presented and impact of organizational citizenship behavior and their loyalty to organization on final performance of organizations and emphasis on the role of empowerment and suitable working environment and appropriate organizational support on incidence of organizational citizenship behavior and with regard to the lack of research on Social Security Organization in this issues; the aim of present research is investigate the effect of empowerment, employee's working environment and perceived organizational support on loyalty and citizenship behavior of employees.

**Indicators for measuring employee's loyalty:** The most prominent indicators for measuring employee loyalty are considered as follows: employee productivity, retention

in the job, rate of demand for employment in the organization, amount of suggestions and comments employees, volunteer to oversee the organization in the events, return of work (benefit) within the trial period and the first year of employment, formal complaints, unjustified absences, employees failure in the competition, rates of return against the former employees (Ineson *et al.*, 2013).

**Organizational citizenship behavior:** Organizational citizenship behavior is an important concept in the field of management; therefore it has received a great attention in the literature (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). According to Organ (1988), organizational citizenship behavior is an important issue that contributes in the survival of an organization. Therefore, it is essential to know the factors that significantly and positively help in creating this good behavior within the organization. In addition, higher levels of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) lead to increased productivity and, consequently, higher success.

Organizational citizenship behavior leads to increased employees productivity and working groups, encouraged teamwork, communication, increased cooperation and assistance between employees, decreased mistakes rate, increased participation and engagement of employees in the organization. Also, organizational citizenship behavior leads to an increase in job satisfaction, reduced turnover intentions, reduced absenteeism, reduced job malicious behavior, customer satisfaction, service quality and customer loyalty and an increase on the quality of job performance (Naderi and Miraki, 2014).

**Employees job satisfaction:** Job satisfaction or employee satisfaction has been defined in many different ways. Some believe it is simply how content an individual is with his or her job in other words, whether or not they like the job or individual aspects or facets of jobs such as nature of work or supervision.

Job satisfaction has been defined as a positive emotional state resulting from the pleasure a worker derives from the job (Locke, 1976; Spector, 1985) and as the affective and cognitive attitudes held by an employee about various aspects of their work (Kalleberg, 1977; Wright and Cropanzano, 1997; Wong *et al.*, 1998); the later implying that satisfaction is related to the component facets rather than the whole job which is consistent with view. This definition suggests job satisfaction is a general or global affective reaction that individuals hold about their job.

**Working environment factors**

**Physical factors:** All components and the physical elements of the work environment includes

health-welfare facilities, aesthetic aspects, number of parts employees, occupational and equipment safety.

**Psychological factors:** Refers to working environment elements that influenced behavior of employees and includes elements of job satisfaction, interpersonal relationships, commitment, stress, dignity and freedom of action.

**Making the factor:** Making the factor is related to various aspects of organizational structure and includes elements of leadership style, administrative hierarchy, rules and circulars, job promotion, job roles, service training, formality, participation in decision-making and evaluation.

**Work:** Refers to a set of related features to the work and includes diversity of work, salary and benefits, meaningful work, volume and intensity of labor.

**Employees empowerment:** Employee empowerment is giving employees a certain degree of autonomy and responsibility for decision-making regarding their specific organizational tasks. Empowerment means giving the power, freedom, knowledge and skills to employees to decide on works effectively.

Empowerment is reinforcement of beliefs, an increase in knowledge and skills, improvement of employee's psychological characteristics and improvement of organizational and environmental status so that people can work with maximum of efficiency and effectiveness in the organization (Soltan Hoseini *et al.*, 2013).

**Perceived organizational support:** The theoretical foundations of organizational support is social exchange theory. Social exchange theory posits that human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives. Researchers believe that social exchange between employees and employers is underway because the organization is a resource that meets the needs of employees and the reciprocity relationship in the relationship between employees and employers is true. Perceived organizational support is a result of the relationship between employees and the organization.

The basis of this relationship is in a variety of interactions between employees and the organization. According to social exchange theory, exchange relationship between the two usually go beyond economic exchange and includes social interaction as well. Organizational support theory states that employees shape a holistic view about amount of organization's

support about themselves. In other words, when organization consider the employee welfare, employees compensate this attention with a greater commitment and better performance.

**Literature review:** Nwibere (2014) in research entitled "Interactive relationship between job involvement, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Commitment in Nigerian Universities" examined the interactive relationship between job involvement, job satisfaction, Organizational Commitment Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and organizational commitment among employees of Nigerian universities.

The findings revealed that job involvement had a strong positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment and OCB. Although, the relationship between job involvement and employees job satisfaction was also positive, it was however weak. Similarly, job satisfaction was revealed to have a positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment and OCB. Finally, organizational commitment was revealed to have a positive and significant relationship with OCB.

Hassan *et al.* (2014) in research entitled "Measuring the Impact of Perceived Organization Support, Psychological Empowerment and Rewards on Employee Satisfaction: Testing the Mediating Impact of Employee Engagement" investigated the effect of perceived organization support, psychological empowerment and rewards on employee satisfaction through the mediation of employee engagement in five big banks of Pakistan.

The results showed that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between Perceived Organization Support, Psychological Empowerment and employee satisfaction and fully mediates the association between the rewards and satisfaction.

Wu and Liu (2014) in research entitled "Perceived organizational support, organizational Commitment and Service-Oriented organizational citizenship behaviors" examined the relationships among perceived organizational support, organizational commitment and service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors. The results indicate that perceived organizational support is positively related to three types of service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors-loyalty, service delivery and participation and that organizational commitment fully mediates the relationships between perceived organizational support and service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors.

Karavardar (2014) in research entitled "Perceived Organizational Support, Psychological Empowerment,

Organizational citizenship behavior, job performance and job embeddedness: A research on the Fast Food Industry in Istanbul, Turkey” provided empirical evidence on the relationships among psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, organizational citizenship behavior, job embeddedness and job performance. This research represented a strong relationship between psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, organizational citizenship behavior, job embeddedness (as a moderator) and job performance of the employees in fast food industry in Istanbul, Turkey.

Karim and Rehman (2012) in research entitled “Impact of Job Satisfaction, Perceived Organizational Justice and Employee Empowerment on Organizational Commitment in Semi Government Organizations of Pakistan” examined the impact of organizational justice, employee’s job satisfaction and employee empowerment on organizational commitment of semi government organizations employees. The findings of this study explained that has been a strong correlation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Similarly, perceived organizational justice has been proved strongly correlation between organizational commitment

Kasemsap (2013) in research entitled “Innovative Human Resource Practice: A Unified Framework and Causal Model of Psychological Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Performance” determined a unified framework and to construct a causal model of psychological empowerment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior and organizational performance of glass manufacturing plant employees in Thailand. Research findings indicated that dimensions of psychological empowerment, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior have mediated positive effect on organizational performance. Organizational citizenship behavior positively mediates the relationships between psychological empowerment and organizational performance and between job satisfaction and organizational performance. Furthermore, psychological empowerment is positively correlated with job satisfaction.

Sani (2013) in research entitled “Role of procedural justice, organizational commitment and job satisfaction on job performance: The Mediating Effects of Organizational Citizenship Behavior” examines the impact of procedural justice, organizational commitment, job satisfaction on employee performance and the potential mediating role played by organization citizenship behaviors in that process. The study results showed that both procedural justice and organizational commitment positively affected organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational commitments do positive influence job performance. Job satisfaction did not positively influence organizational

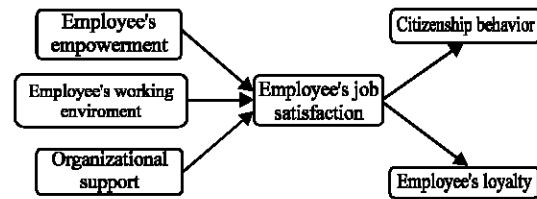


Fig. 1: Research conceptual model (Hassan *et al.*, 2014; Javed *et al.*, 2014)

citizenship behavior and job performance and organizational citizenship behavior positively influences job performance.

Chiang and Hsieh (2012) in research entitled “The impacts of perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment on job performance: The mediating effects of organizational citizenship behavior” assessed how hotel employees perceive organizational support, psychological empowerment, organizational citizenship behavior and job performance; and examined the causal relationships among these variables. Results indicated that perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment both positively affected organizational citizenship behavior. Perceived organizational support did not positively influence job performance. Psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior positively influenced job performance. Organizational behavior acted as a partial mediator between perceived organizational support and job performance as well as between psychological empowerment and job performance (Fig. 1).

#### Research hypothesis:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Employee empowerment have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction
- H<sub>2</sub>: Employees working environment have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction
- H<sub>3</sub>: Perceived support have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction
- H<sub>4</sub>: Job satisfaction have a significant and positive impact on citizenship behavior
- H<sub>5</sub>: Job satisfaction have a significant and positive impact on employee loyalty

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The aim of present research is investigate the effect of empowerment, employee’s working environment and perceived organizational support on loyalty and citizenship behavior of employees. Present research is applied with regard to the aim. Also, present research based on the data collection method is descriptive-correlational. With regard to the aim, this research has been conducted in the social security

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha coefficient foreach of research variables

Factors	No. of questions	Cronbach's alpha
Working environment	30	0.70
Employees empowerment	30	0.82
Perceived support	30	0.76
Job satisfaction	30	0.81
Citizenship behavior	30	0.77
Employee loyalty	30	0.72
Total reliability	-	0.80

employees of Khuzestan province. Thus, statistical population of this research includes social security employees of Khuzestan province. With regard to the Cochran formula, the sample size has been estimated 169 peoples. To analyze the data has been used descriptive and descriptive statistics through SPSS22 and Smart PLS Software's. This research has been conducted by using the questionnaires. In order to evaluate the validity of the data has been used the readers, advisors and experts opinions. Also, by using the confirmatory factor analysis has been confirmed discriminant validity of the questionnaire through LISREL Software. The internal reliability of the items was verified by computing the Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha values was obtained for total of questionnaire factors is higher than 0.70 which shows that our research variables are reliable and there exists internal consistency between them. Reliability of research questionnaires has been presented in Table 1.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Descriptive data

**Educational background:** The educational background of the participants includes; 19 people (11.1 %) have diploma and under degree, 28 people (16.6 %) have super-diploma degree, 74 people (43.8%) have Bachelor degree, 120 people (28.4%) have master and higher degree (Table 2).

**Age of respondents:** Age of respondents includes: 19 people are under 25 year (11.2%), 84 people are 26-36 years (49.7%), 54 people are 36-45 year (32%) and 12 people are over 46 year (7.1%) (Table 3).

**Gender of respondents:** Gender of respondents are; 101 people man (59.8%) and 68 people female (40.2%) (Table 4).

**Experience of respondents:** Experience of respondents are: 25 people under 5 year (14.8%), 50 people 6-10 year (29.6%), 56 people 11-15 year (33.1%), 22 people 16-20 year (13%) and 27 people 21-30 year (9.5%) (Table 5).

**Pearson correlation test:** To investigate the existence of relationships as well as intensity of the relationship between two quantitative variables is used Pearson

Table 2: Educational background

Educational background	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma and under	19	11.1
Super-diploma	28	16.6
Bachelor	74	43.8
Master and higher	120	28.4
Total	169	100.0

Table 3: Age of respondents

Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage
Under 25	19	11.2
26-35	84	49.7
36-45	54	32.0
Over 46	12	7.1
Total	169	100.0

Table 4: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Man	101	59.8
Female	68	40.2
Total	169	100.0

Table 5: Experience of respondents

Experience (years)	Frequency	Percentage
Under 5	25	14.8
6-10	50	29.6
11-15	56	33.1
16-20	22	13.0
21-30	27	9.5
Total	169	100.0

Table 6: Pearson correlation test

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Error	Sig.	Correlation coefficient
Perceived support	Job Satisfaction	0.05	0.00	0.769
Working environment	Job Satisfaction	0.05	0.00	0.802
Employees empowerment	Job Satisfaction	0.05	0.00	0.643
Job satisfaction	Citizenship behavior	0.05	0.00	0.611
Job satisfaction	Employee loyalty	0.05	0.00	0.813

Table 7: AVE values and composite reliability

Variables	AVE	Composite reliability
Empowerment	0.514697	0.867312
Perceived support	0.643084	0.898964
Working environment	0.620046	0.890726
Job satisfaction	0.583012	0.906821
Citizenship behavior	0.634541	0.838920
Employee loyalty	0.529895	0.886212

correlation coefficient. This coefficient is between 1 and 1. Minus value indicates a reverse correlation and positive value indicates a direct relationship between two variables (Table 6).

**Diagnostic validity and composite reliability:** To investigate the diagnostic validity and Composite reliability has been used the AVE value and composite reliability index. In Table 2 the composite reliability of each variable was examined and coefficients for all variables is >0.7. Also, coefficients value of AVE for all variables is >0.05 (Table 7).

**Structural model:** Hypotheses were tested in the form of structural equation modeling and path of structural model

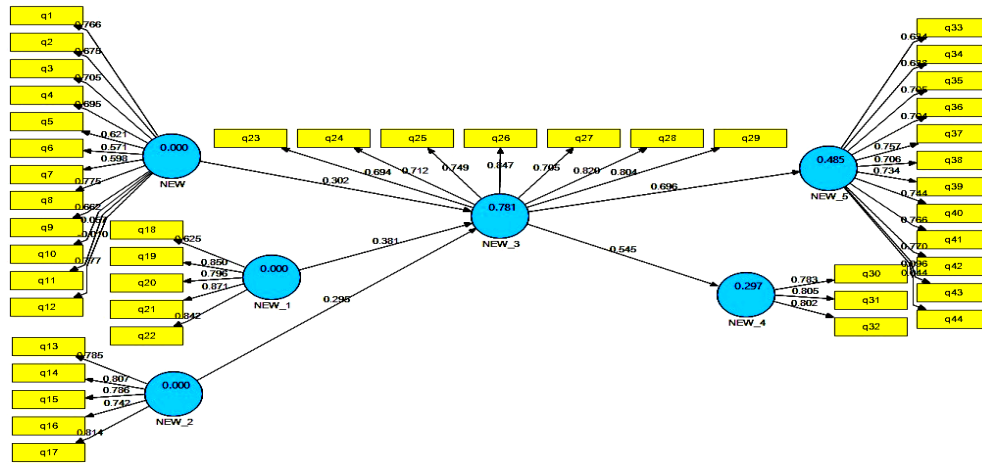


Fig. 2: Research model in the standard coefficient

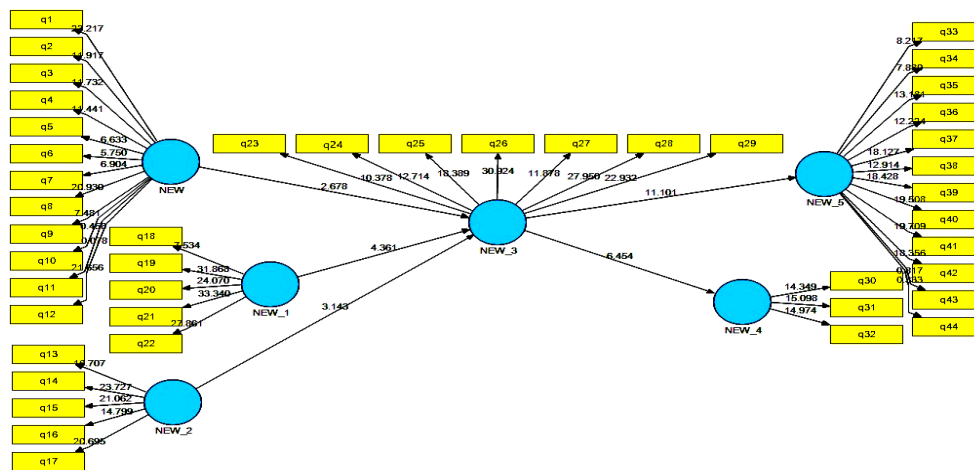


Fig. 3: The t-value

was evaluated. Each path is associated with one of the hypotheses of the model. In order to evaluate significant path coefficients or beta, significant amount of t-value should be considered for each path coefficient (Nounahali, 1997) (Fig. 2 and 3).

**Model fitness:** GOF index can be used to evaluate the measurement model fitness and structural equation model in the PLS analysis. The positive goodness fit index of GOF show overall fitness of the model. The index is calculated as the average of  $R^2$  and average of shared values. The following table shows the parameters of model fitness. The amount of 0.547310 for GOF confirms the appropriate fitness of model (Table 8).

**Hypothesis test:** To test the hypothesis has been used Boot Strap test (BS) and partial index of t-value. The

Table 8: Indicators of model fitness

Indicators	Communality	$R^2$	GOF
Empowerment	0.394697	-	0.547310
Working environment	0.643084	-	-
Job satisfaction	0.620046	0.781013	-
Citizenship behavior	0.583012	0.296837	-
Employee loyalty	0.634541	0.484810	-

Table 9: Results of hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	t-statistic	Sig.	Results
H <sub>1</sub>	0.302	2.678	0.05	Confirmed
H <sub>2</sub>	0.295	3.143	0.05	Confirmed
H <sub>3</sub>	0.381	4.361	0.05	Confirmed
H <sub>4</sub>	0.696	11.101	0.05	Confirmed
H <sub>5</sub>	0.545	6.454	0.05	Confirmed

t-value for the model is provided in Table 9. With regard to amount of significant coefficients, t-value must be greater than or  $<1.96$  or  $-1.96$  to confirm hypotheses. The results of the research hypotheses have been proposed in the following (Table 9).

## CONCLUSION

In first hypothesis; significant amount for this hypothesis is 2.678 and because this amount is not between -1.96 and 1.96 can be concluded this hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, Employee empowerment have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction. Result of this hypothesis is consistent with research results of Hassan *et al.* (2014). In second hypothesis; significant amount for this hypothesis is 3.143 and because this amount is not between -1.96 and 1.96 can be concluded this hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, employees working environment have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction. Result of this hypothesis is consistent with research results of Javed *et al.* (2014). In third hypothesis; significant amount for this hypothesis is 4.361 and because this amount is not between -1.96 and 1.96 can be concluded this hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, perceived support have a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction. Result of this hypothesis is consistent with research results of Hassan *et al.* (2014). In fourth hypothesis; significant amount for this hypothesis is 11.101 and because this amount is not between -1.96 and 1.96 can be concluded this hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, job satisfaction have a significant and positive impact on Citizenship behavior. Result of this hypothesis is consistent with research results of Nwibere (2014) and Kasemsap (2013). In fifth hypothesis; significant amount for this hypothesis is 6.454 and because this amount is not between -1.96 and 1.96 can be concluded this hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, job satisfaction have a significant and positive impact on Employee Loyalty. Result of this hypothesis is consistent with research results of Javed *et al.* (2014). With regard to the positive impact of job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behavior; it's recommended that investigated firm increase necessary measures to employee satisfaction for improving the organizational citizenship behavior. For example, firm managers have to examine the people qualifications in their election. Employees should be used in organizational policy making and decision making instead of placing the predetermined rules and regulations regardless to personnel comments and their participation in setting the rules. To increase employees confidence and ultimately increasing their job satisfaction, organization have to provide the honest and clear communications with all employees. Providing the specific recreation and tourism programs to face to face interactions of employees for promoting the employees confidence in regard to delegation of authority in making

decisions and appropriate training and their empowerment. The development of informal mechanisms such as corporate culture is a pivotal element to strengthen partnerships and enhance employee's involvement in workplace and ultimately, employee's loyalty.

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