Urban Economics and Management, Vol. 5, No3(19), 95-109
www.iueam.ir
Indexed in: ISC, EconLit, Econbiz, SID, RICeST, Magiran, Civilica, Google Scholar, Noormags, Ensani.
ISSN: 2345-2870

The Role of Job Motivation on Organizational Learning and Empowerment of Municipal Staffs to Increase Economic Performance of Municipal Employees

Abasalt Khorasani
Associate Professor, Education Department, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran
Hamed Zamanimanesh*
Ph.D. Student, Curriculum Development, Faculty of Humanities, Shahid Rajaee Teacher Training University, Tehran, Iran

Received: 2016/02/07 **Accepted: 2016/04/10**

Abstract: Today, human resources management is one of the most important duties of organizational managers. They confront with issues such as job motivation, organizational learning and psychological empowerment. This study was conducted to investigate the impact of job motivation on organizational learning and psychological empowerment of municipal employees of Yasooj. In terms of purpose, research method is applied and it is descriptive –correlative in terms of data collection. The statistical population included all of Yasuj municipal employees among them 146 people were selected as a sample by using Cochran formula and simple random sampling method. The research tools consisted of three questionnaires: Herzberg Professional Motivation (1984), Neife's Organizational Learning (2001) and Spreader's Psychological Empowerment (1995). Their validity and reliability were confirmed. Regression test was used for data analysis. The most important findings show that job motivation illustrates 0.039 of organizational learning variance and 0.122 of the variance of psychological empowerment of employees, which indicates that job motivation has the ability to predict changes in organizational learning and psychological empowerment. Therefore, job motivation has significant impact on organizational learning and psychological empowerment of municipal employees.

Keywords: job motivation, organizational learning, psychological empowerment, economic performance, municipal employees, economic performance
JEL Classification: J61, I25, L32, L41

* Corresponding Author: Hzm64@yahoo.com

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[DOI: 10.18869/acadpub.iueam.5.19.97]

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1- Introduction

Today organizational environments face increasing changes and organizations have to react properly to these continuous changes in this competitive arena. In the meantime, the development of human resources of organizations as their most important capital is inevitable, and job motivation is one of the most important factors influencing the organization's performance. (Gharekhani et al., 2009). Motivation refers to the internal states of the organism that guides behavior to a particular purpose (Seyf, 2009). Job motivation indicates one's willingness to do work, help them with their material, spiritual and social environments, overcome obstacles and compete with others through much effort to do things better (Beykzadeh, et al., 2010). Employees who have high motivation, help to improve working conditions, increase job satisfaction, achieve organizational goals, and increase organizational performance, creativity, and innovation (Hanifi & Rahimi, 2009). Today, in order to take advantage of the excellent opportunities provided by specific global conditions, we need organizational flexibility, and for this purpose, managers usually try to develop the organizational learning process in organizations (Beikzadeh et al., 2010). Organizational learning as a competitive advantage is considered vital for organizations, and organizations that do not keep pace with inclusive changes will quickly become obsolete; therefore, for survival and success, organizations must abandon traditional practices and find knowledge, skills and strategies to succeed them in the future. Empowerment is also one of the important strategies for adapting the organization to external changes, and if it is used, it will not only increase employee commitment to the organization but also create a sense of trust that will result in a positive working environment (Gaminiyan, 2003).

2- Literature Review

a) Foreign Researches

Joo & Shim (2010) conducted a research entitled "Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Commitment: An Intermediary Function of Organizational Learning Culture". The results showed that psychological empowerment, organizational learning culture and demographic variables had a significant impact on organizational commitment of employees in the state sector of Korea, and staff members showed a higher organizational commitment when they have had high psychological empowerment and a high organizational learning culture.

Imran et al., (2011) conducted a research entitled "The Relationship between Organizational Learning and Job Motivation and Organizational Performance in Pakistani Banks." The results of this study showed that organizational learning leads to increase the employee's job motivation and these two factors have a positive effect on organizational performance.

Islam et al., (2016) conducted a research on organizational learning culture and psychological empowerment in reducing the intention to leave a job and increase citizenship behavior. The results indicated that organizational learning culture and psychological empowerment had a direct impact on the behavior of Malaysian government officials in order to reduce the intention to leave the job and increase the transactional behaviors.

Sarros et al., (2014) conducted a study entitled "Leaders and their use of motivating language". The results show

that leaders who motivate their employees are more successful in the workplace, and their employees are more motivated against organizational problems and have more incentive to learn in the workplace.

Panagiotakopoulos (2014) conducted a research with title "Enhancing staff motivation in "tough" periods: implications for business leaders". The main findings indicated that "fear motivation" is more likely leads to increase performance in poor firms and in the long-run "inspirational motivation" leads to decrease staff absenteeism and increase financial turnover and recommends business leaders that empower employees, encourage them to learn, increase organizational commitment, and so on in order to increase the their employees' motivation.

Dimas et al., (2015) have done a study entitled "Learning conditions, members' motivation and satisfaction: a multilevel analysis". Overall the results showed that shared learning beliefs and team learning support – had a significant positive effect on members' satisfaction and motivation.

Bhatti et al., (2016) conducted a research entitled "Employee motivation an Islamic perspective". The results show that significantly, Islamic spirituality, reward and punishment, and justice act more compellingly, empowerment and motivating to learning will improve employee's motivation.

Bui et al., (2016) conducted a research on "Perceptions of HR practices on job motivation and work-life balance: Mixed drives and outcomes in a labor-intensive sector". Experimental results show that the adoption of various human resources practices (organizational learning, organizational commitment, organizational justice, empowerment, etc.) can increase job motivation and help to correct the work-life imbalance in the perceptions of human resources.

b) Iranian Researches

Shafi (2006) studied the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational learning at the National Oil Products Distribution Company. The main results indicate that there is a significant relationship between employee's empowerment and organizational learning, and the more an organization has empowerment staffs, the organizational learning will be higher.

Sheikhi (2007) investigated the relationship between empowerment and employees' motivation to perform their job tasks. The findings show that there is a direct linear relationship between human resources' empowerment and the motivations to perform tasks, in other words, the more powerful the employees are the more incentive they have for the activities.

Khanalizadeh et al., (2010) did a research entitled "Investigating the effect of organizational learning on empowerment of employees" and the main results suggest that organizational learning had a direct effect on the sense of competence, independence, effectiveness, significance, and trust among staff members.

Marashian & Safarzadeh (2013) conducted a research on the role of organizational learning and job motivation in predicting occupational self-efficacy and organizational entrepreneurship. The results of this study indicated that organizational learning and job motivation predict occupational self-efficacy and organizational entrepreneurship as well as job motivation has direct relationship with organizational learning.

Hosseini et al., (2013) conducted a research entitled "Factors Affecting Job Motivation of Faculty Members: The Application of Herzberg's Motivation

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Theory". The main findings show that factors associated with job security, salary and wages, work environment, job status and promotion, learning progress, job development, empowerment and accountability are among the most important factors.

Jalilvand (2013) did a research entitled "the study of the effect of job motivation on organizational learning and empowerment of Bank Sepah employees." He concluded that job motivation affects organizational learning and empowerment of employees.

Farmani & Ravangard (2014) have done a research entitled "The Relationship between Empowerment and Organizational Learning among the Staffs." The results show that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning and empowerment.

Forutani et al., (2014) investigated the relationship between job motivation and its effective factors with self-development behaviors. They concluded that there is a significant relationship among the need for success, the need for learning, self-efficacy, empowerment, organizational support and supervisor support with job motivation.

Ahmadi Chegni et al., (2015) investigated the relationship between personality and organizational variables with job motivation. The main results showed that to be conscientiousness, job characteristics, organizational justice, person-job adjustment, organizational learning, empowerment and organizational justice explain the variance of job motivation.

Safari et. al, (2011) did a research entitled "The Relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Learning". The results showed that psychological empowerment and self-efficacy have a direct effect on organizational learning.

Rvangard et al. (2014) have done a study entitled "The Relationship between Organizational Learning and Employee's Empowerment." The findings indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning and employee's empowerment.

Afzali et al., (2014) investigated the effect of perceived organizational support, psychological empowerment and organizational learning on job performance. The results indicate that perceived organizational support affects psychological empowerment, organizational learning and job performance, and psychological empowerment and organizational learning have a positive effect on job performance.

Ghafari et.al., (2014) did a research entitled "The Relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Learning among the Staff." The results indicated that psychological empowerment and self-efficacy have a direct impact on organizational learning.

3- Theoretical Framework

Job Motivation

Motivation is one of the effective factors on behavior that has always been of particular importance in psychology. Steiner considers his motivation to be an inner state that is energizing, activating, and directing, and driving behavior toward goals. Steiner considers motivation an inner state that is energizing, activating, and directing, and driving behavior toward goals (Mirkamali, 1999). The word motivation, taken from the Latin word Movere; means moving (latham, 2012). Pinder (1998) argues that job motivation is a set of energetic forces that originate from within and beyond the psyche of a person. In fact, by studying job motivation,

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one can identify potential talents, strengths and weaknesses and improve them.

The importance of job motivation in the equation that has been published more than half a century by Meyer has been characterized:

Job Performance= ability*motivation

The above equation shows why motivation is one of the fundamentals of human resources management, industrial and organizational psychology, and organizational behavior. In order that organizations achieve their goals, employees must deliver their performance to an effective and efficient level (Latham, 2012). This is true in relation to government organizations, in which poor performance is considered to be a failure in the provision of public services, and in private companies where poor performance can mean bankruptcy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Spector (2006) believes that employees can have a high performance if they have the necessary ability and motivation. The issue of job motivation plays a pivotal role in the field of management, both practical and theoretical, and managers consider motivation as an integral part of the performance equation at all levels while organizational researchers consider it as a cornerstone in developing useful theories regarding effective management practices.

Organizational Learning

Learning means enhancing knowledge through the experience and the learner will be enabled to be effective in dealing with different behavioral situations. (Sobhaninejad et al., 2006). Organizations adopt different learning styles based on the characteristics of the industrial environment, adopted strategies, business culture, technology, available resources, company's history, and competitive constraints. Depending on the different levels of the organization, learning is also possible at three levels of person, group and organization:

a) Individual Learning: A process in which knowledge is acquired through the transformation and transfer of experience, which expresses the change of skills, beliefs and insights, the transformation of individual knowledge (Senge, 1996).

b) Group Learning: To structure and expand the group's capacity to create the desired and expected results of the group, it is said that by creating open mindedness, the participation of individuals and the creation of the field of interaction between individuals and interactions is formed.

c) Organizational Learning: This learning is created by sharing the insights, knowledge, experience and mental models of the organization's members (Pawlowsky, 2001). Simon (1991) defined organizational learning as the growth of insight, refinement and successful review of organizational issues by individuals whose results are reflected in structural factors and organizational outcomes. Organizational learning is an activity and process that ultimately transforms organizations into learning organizations (Finger & Brand, 1999). Miller (1996) defined organizational learning as acquiring new knowledge by factors that are capable of applying that knowledge to decisions or influences on other people in the organization. Huysman (2000) considered organizational learning as a process by which an organization develops knowledge or rebuilds current knowledge. Jacobs & Coghlan (2005) defined organizational learning as organization's capacity to discover the need for change, adaptation, and targeted activities.

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The Dimensions of Organizational Learning

According to Neefe (2001), organizational learning has seven dimensions, which include:

Shared Mission and Vision: shared vision for individuals and organizations, like the stars of the sky, is to find a route and is the focus of energy and mobility for common learning.

Organizational Culture: When the group, organization and society are created, the foundations of their culture are also laid. Therefore, culture is always present everywhere, and on this basis, individuals, groups, and organizations are faced with common problems that require common culture to solve them.

Team Work: It is a process in which the capacity of team members is developed and matched in a way that the results are what everyone really wanted.

Sharing Knowledge: This dimension emphasizes on the transfer and distribution of knowledge, organizational and technological transfer of data, information and knowledge.

System Thinking: System thinking is the use of systematic methods in analyzing affairs and paying attention to the impact of organizational factors on each other by clinging thinking.

Leadership: Participatory leadership is the feeling of employee participation in the organization's affairs, and in such a space, employees feel they need them and their existence is beneficial.

Employee Skills and Competencies: It is a set of measurable and visible knowledge, skills and behaviors that is effective on the success of a job or post.

The Difference between Learner organization and Organizational Learning

Organizational learning, in the sense of learning individuals and groups within the organization and learning organization, means learning the organization as a general system. In other words, learner organization is the result of organizational learning. Organizational learning is used to describe certain types of activities in the organization, while the learning organization refers to a specific type of organization (Tsang, 1997). Marquardt (2000) believes that the learning organization focuses on what it is, but in organizational learning, it refers to how to learn the skills and processes of building and using knowledge. In this sense, organizational learning is just one dimension or element of the learning organization. In fact, learning organization is the place where organizational learning takes place and the process of production and acquisition of knowledge starts from the individual level and reaches an organizational level.

Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment refers to a set of motivational techniques that seek to increase the level of employee participation in order to improve their performance, and the main feature of employees' psychological empowerment is adjusting individual and organizational goals (Vecchio, 2002). Psychological empowerment means allowing employees to make decisions in their servicing process, which is difficult to predict in terms of procedures and regulations (Rahnavard, 2003). Kapplman and Richards (1996) state empowering employee increases their motivation and reduces their resistance to organizational change by giving them the opportunity to make decisions. According to Harrison et al. (2006), empowerment is not a long-term personal characteristic that can be revealed in different situations, but a set of cognitions created by the workplace. In fact, empowering means

simply encouraging individuals to play a more active role in their work and take responsibility for improving their own activities (Wallace, 2007).

The Benefits of Empowerment

Empowerment of employees has positive effects on employees' attitude and behavior, and this changing leads to increase job satisfaction, stress reduction, decrease job ambiguities and so on. Empowerment also creates the power of decision-making, independence at work and freedom in decision-making including:

- Empowering employees creates the feeling that the organization's success is critical to them, and they give them the feeling that they can engage themselves in organizational goals and interfere with the progress of the organization.
- The obligation to implement empowerment in an organization leads to a sense of belonging and ownership to the employees, which requires every human being who has created a sense of belonging from his workplace, which will result in job satisfaction.
- Empowerment attracts to work, mobility, enjoyment and active communication towards the development of the organization.
- Empowerment is highly effective on reducing the costs, improving efficiency and increasing the effectiveness of staff health and promotion.
- Empowerment enhances decision-making power in the organization and proposes to improve and speed up the delivery of services, maintaining capital and accuracy in the organization.

Empowerment Approaches

There are two different approaches to empowerment that are briefly explained below:

a) Mechanical Approach: Based on this view, empowerment means empowering low-level employees. Empowerment is a process in which senior management develops a clear vision and outlines the program and tasks for achieving it in the organization. In this approach, the results of work and activity are more under the control of management, and the simplification and clarification of work and duties are emphasized.

b) Organic Approach: According to this approach, empowerment means risk-taking, growth, change, trust in employees, and tolerance of their mistakes. In fact, capable employees should seek pardon and forgiveness in order to be easy, and they must be entrepreneurial and risk-taking as well as a sense of ownership of the organization. They must challenge each other in a creative conflict, and to reveal and resolve differences in order to create a coherent one (Abbasi & Abtahi, 2007).

Conceptual Model of Research

Researches have shown that appropriate theoretical and empirical studies have been conducted on the effect of job motivation on organizational learning and psychological empowerment. From former theoretical and empirical studies, it can be concluded that job motivation directly influences organizational learning and psychological empowerment and the conceptual model of research has been designed as follows by using the findings of former researches (Fig. 1).

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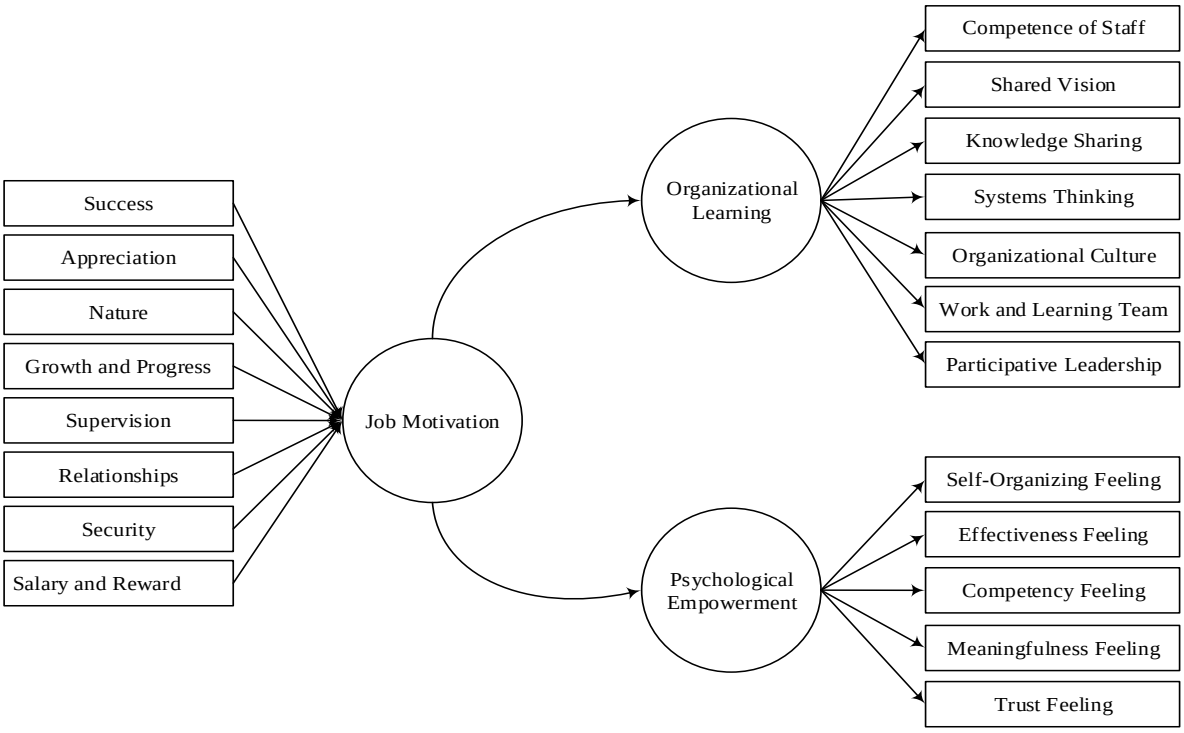

Fig1. Conceptual Model of Research

4- Research Method

In terms of purpose, this research is applied and in terms of data collection, it is descriptive -correlative. The statistical population included all of Yasuj city municipal employees among them 146 people were selected as a sample by using Cochran formula and simple random sampling method was used. The research tool consisted of three questionnaires (Herzberg's job motivation, Neife's learning organization and Spreader's psychological empowerment) based on five point Likert scale. The Herzberg Job Motivation Questionnaire included eight indicators (success, appreciation, nature, growth and progress, supervision, relationships, security, and salary and rewards), The Neife organizational learning questionnaire included seven indicators (shared perspective, organizational learning culture, group work and learning, knowledge sharing, systemic thinking, participatory leadership and employee's competency development), and the Spreader's Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire consisted of five indicators (sense of competence, sense of independence, feeling of effectiveness, sense of job's meaningfulness, and trust among colleagues). The Validity of the questionnaires was confirmed by five academic experts and reliability of the questionnaires that obtained by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for Herzberg's job motivation questionnaire, Neife's learning organization, and Spreader's psychological empowerment were 0.845, 0.857, and 0.891 respectively which were acceptable. Finally, a simultaneous statistical regression test was used for data analysis.

5- Research Findings

Regarding the frequency distribution of respondents according to the gender variable, the findings indicate that out of a total of 146 participants in the study, 27 were females and 119 were males (Figure 2).

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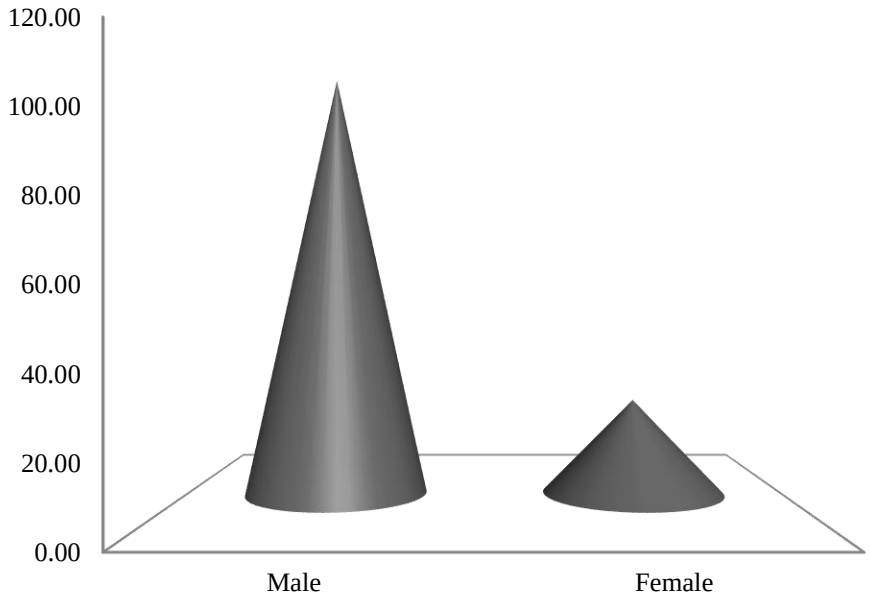

Fig2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents With Respect to Gender Variable

Frequency distribution of respondents with respect to education degree variable, the findings indicate that out of a total of 146 participants in the study, 46 cases had A.A. and lower degree, 72 cases were bachelor, and 28 had master and higher degree (Figure 3).

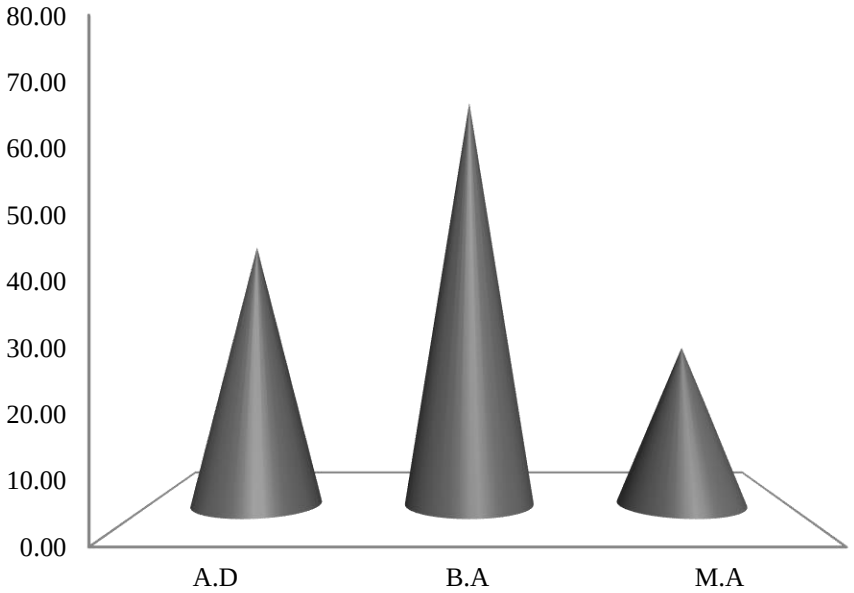

Fig3. frequency Distribution of Respondents With Respect to Education Variable

Regarding the frequency distribution of respondents according to job experience variable, the findings of the research indicate that out of a total of 146 participants in the study, 38 were less than 5 years experience, 40 were 5 to 15 years experience, 62 were 16 to 25 years experience and 6 cases were over 25 years' experience (Figure 4).

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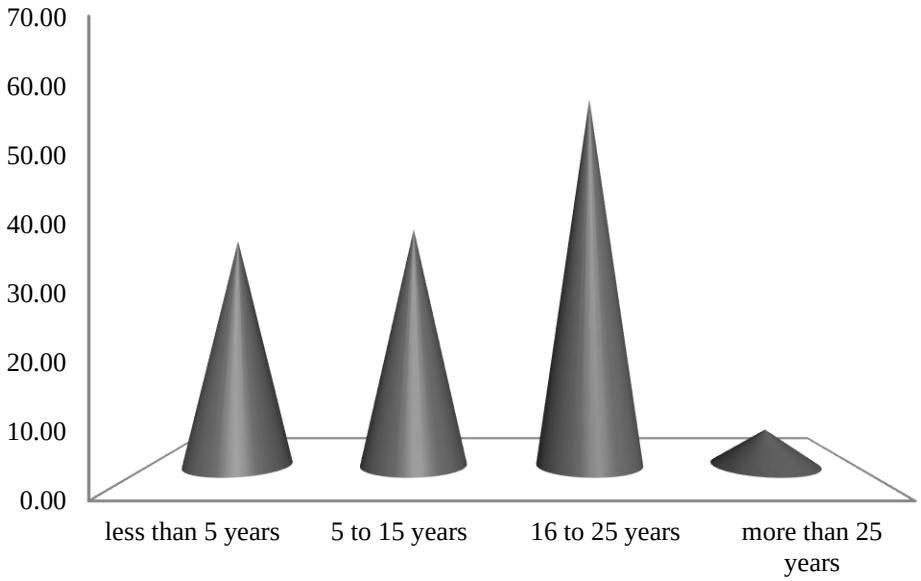

Fig4. Frequency Distribution of Respondents With Respect to Job Experience Variable

Job Motivation Affects Organizational Learning of Municipal Employees: Simultaneous regression analysis has been used in order to investigate the effect of job motivation on organizational learning of municipal employees. As it can be seen, job motivation has entered into the model and explained 0.039 of employee's organizational learning variance (Table 1).

Table1. Results of simultaneous regression of municipal employees

Statistical index / Regression model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Job Motivation and Organizational Learning	0.214	0.046	0.039	0.475

In order to test the significance of the regression coefficient, F tests are used and conducted based on the ratio between the mean square of the remaining regression. As shown by F tests, in the regression analysis, the effect of predictive variable of job motivation is significant at P <0.05 level (Table 2).

Table 2. The summary of variance analysis of predictive variable effect

Statistical index / Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	1.55	1	1.55	6.89	0.000
Residual	32.45	144	0.226		
Total	34.10	145	-		

Regression coefficients show t-test at a significant level of P <0.05. Here, regression coefficients of the variable predictive of job motivation show that this variable to some extent can explain the variance of the organizational learning variable of the municipal employees. The fixed coefficient of job motivation is (B =

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2.59) and job motivation with 0.95% confidence can predict organizational learning changes and show that job motivation effects on the organizational learning of the employees of the municipal of Yasuj (Table 3).

Table3. Regression and Beta Coefficients of Predictive Variable Effect

Statistical index / Model	Std. Error	B	T	Sig
(Constant)	0.418	-	6.21	0.000
Job Motivation	0.111	0.214	2.62	0.002

Job motivation affects the empowerment of municipal employees.

Simultaneous regression analysis has been used in order to investigate the effect of job motivation on empowerment of municipal employees. As it can be seen, job motivation placed into the model and explained 0.122 of the employee's empowerment variance (Table 4).

Table4. The results of Simultaneous regression of municipal employees

Statistical index / Regression model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Job Motivation and Psychological Empowerment	0.358	0.128	0.122	0.454

In order to test the significance of the regression coefficient, F tests are used and conducted based on the ratio between the mean square of the remaining regression. As shown by F tests, in the regression analysis, the effect of predictive variable of job motivation is significant at P <0.05 level (Table 5).

Table5. Summary of variance analysis of predictive variable effect

Statistical index / Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	4.38	1	4.38	21.22	0.000
Residual	29.72	144	0.206		
Total	34.10	145	-		

Regression coefficients show t-test at a significant level of P <0.05. Here, regression coefficients of the job motivation predict variable show that this variable to some extent can explain the variance of the empowerment variable of municipal employees. The fixed coefficient of job motivation is (B = 2.90), and job motivation with 0.95% confidence can predict changes in empowerment and indicates that job motivation effects the empowerment of Yasuj municipal employees (Table 6).

Table6. Regression and Beta Coefficients of Predictive Variable Effect

Statistical index / Model	Std. Error	B	T	Sig
(Constant)	0.175	-	16.60	0.000
Job Motivation	0.076	0.358	4.60	0.000

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6- Conclusion and Discussion

As stated earlier, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of job motivation on organizational learning and empowerment of municipal staff with an emphasis on increasing economic efficiency, which we will concluded the results below.

Based on the results of regression analysis, the relationship between job motivation and organizational learning of Yasuj municipal employees has been significant at P<0.05 level. Therefore, it can be said with 0.95 confidence that there is a relationship between job motivation and organizational learning of Yasuj municipal employees, and the job motivation has explained 0.039 of the employees organizational learning variance (adjusted r squared = 0.039) and consequently job motivation with 0.95% confident can predict organizational learning changes, indicating that job motivation affects the organizational learning. Therefore it can be said that there is a relationship between job motivation and the empowerment of Yasuj municipal employees and it explains job motivation 0.122 of employee's empowerment variance (adjusted r squared = 0.122); consequently job motivation with 0.95% confidence can predict the empowerment changes which indicates that job motivation influences the empowerment of Yasuj municipal employees' empowerment. In this regard, Shafi (2006) concluded that there is a significant relationship between employees' empowerment and organizational learning. Sheikhi (2007) argued that there was a direct linear relationship between the empowerment of human resources and the motivation to perform job tasks. Marashian & Safarzadeh (2013) stated organizational learning and job motivation were predictors of occupational self-efficacy and organizational entrepreneurship. Jalilvand (2013) acknowledged that job motivation had an impact on organizational learning and empowerment of employees. Farmani & Ravangard (2014) showed there was a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning and empowerment. Yakel (2009) indicated that organizational learning is a determining factor in the long-term performance of the organization, and there was a relationship between organizational learning and levels of self-efficacy and the activities that lead to the development of enterprise entrepreneurship. Imran et al. (2011) indicated that organizational learning enhances employees' job motivation. Ravangard et al. (2014) stated that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning and employees' empowerment. As it can be seen, the findings of this study are consistent with the related studies. In fact, according to the findings, and consistent with former studies, it can be concluded that the job motivation statistically and theoretically influence the organizational learning and empowerment of the Yasuj municipal employees. According to the findings, the following are suggested:

- It is suggested that municipality provides material and spiritual rewards for creative and innovative employees who facilitate the work.
- It is suggested that psychological tests used for selecting employees according their occupations and for establishing a context in order to boost employees' morale.
- It is suggested that municipality provides employees with salaries and rewards based on their important responsibilities so that they feel satisfied.
- It is suggested that self-criticism and self-assessment become customary

among employees and managers of the municipal and staffs do not any fear to express their criticisms to other colleagues.

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