

**The Applicability of the Workforce Empowerment Approach to Human Resource Management in the Public Sector**

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**Abstract**

In conjunction with changing expectations and improvements, the importance of the human resources has increased more and more, human factor has loomed large in organizations. One of the recently arising methods in human resources management, in both private sector and public sector, is empowerment. The successful results obtained from empowerment applications, which we can express as “the person doing the job should also be the one deciding on it”, is already available among many research findings.

**Keywords:** Public Sector, Human Resources Management, Empowerment

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## Introduction

Human resource management is one of the most prominent topics, which has become increasingly important in recent years. The changes in the world have highlighted the fact that some practices in public administration, as well as in the private sector, need to be changed.

The difficulty experienced in adopting a transformative and innovative understanding in the field of administration has begun to be felt in public administration. There is a tendency to maintain the current situation in public administration for many reasons such as political gain, positive perception of resistance to innovation, traditionalism and legislation.

In order to eliminate these tendencies that stand in the way of a modern and innovative view of public administration, the concept of personnel empowerment, which is treated under the title of human resources, constitutes the main topic of our study.

Although for a long time researchers have not been able to conclude a consensus on the definition of the concept of personnel empowerment, we can explain personnel empowerment in the simplest definition as the person who performs the work has the decision-making competence. The necessity to obtain approval from a senior manager even for routine and minor details of the work done by employees in the organization increases the burden on the person performing the work in the functioning of the organization.

### 1. Definition and Scope of Personnel Empowerment

As with many social concepts, we see that there is no consensus on the concept of empowerment among researchers. Although there were common views on some points by the authors, it is not possible to speak of a complete consensus.<sup>2</sup> Shihet se disa autorë e kanë përkufizuar fuqizimin duke e përqasur atë përsa i përket detyrave që bien mbi menaxhmentin. On the other hand, it is understood that definitions have been made by another group of authors, taking into account the perceptions of employees about what has been done for empowerment.

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<sup>2</sup> Peccei, R. And Rosenthal, P. (2001:833). Delivering Customer-oriented Behavior Through Empowerment: An empirical test of HRM assumptions. *Journal of Management studies*, 38(6), 831-857. Wilkinson, A. (1998:40). Empowerment: Theory and practice. *Personal Review*, 27(1), 40-56.

Some of the definitions of the authors that take into account the duties and responsibilities of senior management in relation to the concept of empowerment are;

□ Hales dhe Klidas e përkufizojnë fuqizimin si ndarje të njohurive, informacionit dhe pushtetit me vartësit.<sup>3</sup>

□ According to Cunningham and colleagues, empowerment is the redistribution of decision-making power to include those who do not have this power.<sup>4</sup>

□ According to the definition made by Erstad, empowerment enables employees to make decisions about their work, provides opportunities and an environment for them to take responsibility for their activities.<sup>5</sup>

□ According to Appelbaum and his colleagues, empowerment is a vision that provides a significant increase in the impact that low-level employees will have in a business that adopts this philosophy.<sup>6</sup>

Some of the definitions made about how empowerment practices are perceived by employees are;

□ There is a definition of increasing the self-efficacy and feelings of organizational members. Conger and Kanungo describe empowerment as a motivational concept. According to these authors, to increase the sense of self-efficacy, the conditions that foster weakness must be eliminated.<sup>7</sup>

□ According to the definition made by Spreitzer, empowerment is a construct with four perceptual dimensions: meaning, competence, autonomy and influence.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hales, C. And Klidas, A. (1998:1989). Empowerment in five-stars hotels: choice, voice or rhetoric? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 10(3), 88-95.

<sup>4</sup> Cunningham, I. Hyman, J. And Baldrige, C. (1996:144). Empowerment: The power to do what? *Industrial relations Journal*, 27(2), 143-154.

<sup>5</sup> Erstad, M. (1997:325). Empowerment and organizational change. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 9(7), 325-333.

<sup>6</sup> Appelbaum, S.H., Herbert, D., Leroux, S. (1999). Empowerment: Power, culture and leadership-a strategy or fad forth the millennium? *Journal of workplace Learning: Employee Counselling Today*, 11(7), 235-239.

<sup>7</sup> Conger, Jay A. And Kanungo, Rabindra N. (1988:474). The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice, *The Academy of Management Review*, 13(3), 471-482.

<sup>8</sup> Spreitzer, G.M. (1995:1444). Psychological empowerment in the workplace: dimensions, measurement, and validation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(5), 1442-1465.

□ Lee and Koh, on the other hand, have adopted a definition as intrinsic task motivation, which is explained by four perceptual dimensions, reflecting an individual's orientation to the work role.<sup>9</sup>

Katër dimensionet e fuqizimit të personelit, të propozuara fillimisht nga Spreitzer dhe të pranuara më vonë nga shumë autorë, do të diskutohen më në detaje në një titull të veçantë.

## **1.1. Concepts related to Personnel Empowerment**

Staff empowerment is similar to many concepts in the literature. Although all the concepts are similar to staff empowerment in certain points, they are different in general terms. We will now examine these concepts under separate headings.

### **1.1.1. Strengthening and Expanding the Work**

To overcome the stress caused by excessive division of labor, a new arrangement should be made that allows an employee to do similar tasks to each other instead of doing a single, small job. With job expansion, the fact that the employee is given the opportunity to do many jobs reduces boredom at work and increases motivation. However, in job expansion there is no change in the authority of the employees. There is an increase in the direction of performing similar jobs only in the jobs that the employee performs. In empowerment there is a change and expansion with much wider dimensions in relation to the employee's work.<sup>10</sup>

### **1.1.2. Empowerment and Enrichment of Work**

In job enrichment, jobs of different nature are performed by the same person at a vertical level and new authorities and responsibilities are specifically assigned. In this case, people will have more words in the flow and control of the work and the desire to work will increase. Here too, there is an arrangement that partly resembles reinforcement. However, the main difference is that while job enrichment provides for changes and increases in some of the competencies related to the job, in empowerment the work and control are left entirely to the person doing the job.

While the primary goal is to eliminate boredom and provide motivation, in empowerment the authority and responsibility of the job are transferred to the person doing it.

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<sup>9</sup> Lee, M. and Koh, J. (2001:685). Is empowerment really a new concept? *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(4), 684-695.

<sup>10</sup> Sabuncuoğlu, Zeyyat ve Vergiliel Tüz, Melek (2005:90). *Örgütsel Psikoloji*. Furkan Ofset Bursa

### 1.1.3. Empowerment and Motivation

Empowerment is a motivational tool. However, it is different from motivation in terms of its implementation and scope. Its implementation requires a long process and training and implies bringing the organization into a form that can "absorb an empowered employee" with all its dimensions, from structuring to management style. Moreover, empowerment does not only occur when management and the organization give power and control to the employee. The employee, even if he does not have the ability to seek and manage this power and control, must be able to form it.<sup>11</sup>

The starting points of motivation and empowerment are also different. While the starting point of motivation is "command and control", the question it seeks to answer is "what should we give to staff or what should we do to make them behave in a way that is considered beneficial to the business?" The goal is to control and direct behavior. In empowerment the starting point is "what should the organization do to make staff as successful at work as possible and make decisions about work depending on the self-training and development of staff?" This approach also means approaching employees from a strategic human resources perspective rather than from a traditional personnel management perspective.<sup>12</sup>

### 1.1.4. Empowerment and Delegation

It is true that there is a very close relationship between empowerment and delegation of authority. But this closeness does not mean "equality". The essential thing in empowerment is that the superior temporarily transfers an authority he has to his subordinate in order to obtain better results. In empowerment, the person doing the work must become the owner of the business and the responsibility and control must be taken by the person doing the work.

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<sup>11</sup> Coskun, Recai (2002:220-221). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coşkun ve R. Altunışık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234.

<sup>12</sup>Coskun, Recai (2002:221). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coşkun ve R. Altunışık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234.

Therefore, there is no temporary transfer of authority here. Because the authority already belongs to the one doing the work.<sup>13</sup>

### **1.1.5. Empowerment and Participation**

Another concept with which empowerment is closely related is participation. Participatory management, participation in management or participation in staff empowerment are often used as the same term.<sup>14</sup> Participation is one of the prerequisites for empowerment, but it is not itself. The willingness and ability of employees to participate in the decision-making process and the level of encouragement and absorption of participation by the organization will determine the degree of participation. So, the two main variables of the participation function are the employee and the organization. Empowerment involves the active participation of employees in decisions related to their work and the acceptance of this by the organization. However, in empowerment, the employee can take an active role in the implementation of decisions by moving to a further stage of participation. In this regard, the concepts of the "empowered employee" and the "empowered organization" lie at the basis of empowerment. In the absence of these two elements, there can be no real empowerment.<sup>15</sup>

## **1.2. Key Elements of Staff Empowerment**

To talk about a healthy practice of employee empowerment in an organization, some basic rules need to be implemented in a disciplined manner. If we are to consider these rules;

### **1.2.1. Personnel Participation**

In addition to participation in the production of information and services, participation in decisions is important for staff. Instead of an organizational structure based on command and control, an organizational structure that allows the participation of all staff at all times and at all

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<sup>13</sup> Coskun, Recai (2002:221). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coğkun ve R. Altunısık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234.

<sup>14</sup> Sharma, M.K. and Kaur, G. (2008:11). Employee empowerment: a conceptual analysis. *Journal of Global Business Issues*, 2(2), 7-13.

<sup>15</sup> Coskun, Recai (2002:221). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coğkun ve R. Altunısık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234.

levels will facilitate the empowerment of staff. A participatory organizational climate will help to reveal staff characteristics such as creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Thanks to these characteristics, staff will contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization and will enable the organization to survive in a competitive work environment.<sup>16</sup>

In general, instead of offering staff input into decisions, top managers see them only as people who must implement decisions. The main reason behind this is the fear of managers losing control.

### 1.2.2 Information Sharing

Knowledge is one of the elements that gives life to staff empowerment and is necessary for its implementation. If information is shared, employees will know the results of their activities and how to take responsibility for them. Also, if employees are given the necessary information, their willingness to use authority and cooperate will improve. Thus, employees will be more willing to take responsibility and will have trust in management. This environment of trust will take them further and will lead them to produce new ideas. Information sharing also includes feedback on employees' performance. This will be a factor that will increase their success in the future. Knowledge sharing enables empowered personnel to contribute to the performance of the organization.<sup>17</sup>

Employees want to know what is happening in the organization. If the top level does not provide information to employees, employees try to explain events by "filling in the gaps" according to their own knowledge and often arrive at incorrect information.<sup>18</sup>

Employee engagement increases when they endorse organizational goals and contribute to organizational success. Employee endorsement of organizational goals depends on their level of knowledge. Information empowers employees, and employees in their field want to be strong, proactive, and authoritarians.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Sahin, Nülüfer (2007:16). *Personel güçlendirmenin iş tatmini ve örgütsel bağlılık üzerine etkisi: Dört ve beş yıldızlı otel işletmelerinde bir uygulama*

<sup>17</sup> London, Manuel and Smither, James W. (1999:9). Empowered self-development and continuous learning. *Human Resource Management*, 38(1), 3-15

<sup>18</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:21). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

<sup>19</sup> Öztürk, Azim ve Özdemir, Fatih (2003:198). İşletmelerde Personel Güçlendirmeye Dayalı İş Doyumunun Arttırılması, *Atatürk Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 17(1-2), 189-202.

Information and management must be shared. If everyone is provided with access to the information they need, organizational decisions can be made faster and with higher quality. Sharing knowledge creates a common understanding and unity of purpose for the organization.<sup>20</sup>

### **1.2.3. Liability**

Managers need to stop putting all the responsibility on themselves. The responsibility for empowerment needs to be shared with employees. Employees are empowered to make decisions on matters that are believed to benefit the business, and they are held accountable for the results. The purpose of this accountability is not to punish or evaluate them in the short term, but to create an environment where they act responsibly towards each other, work towards agreed-upon goals, and do their best.<sup>21</sup>

### **1.2.4. The Reward and Resurrection of Faith**

If managers use the reward system to support staff empowerment, they will gain the trust and direction of their employees. The most important thing that emphasizes the trust of the manager and the organization, instead of money, is praise, recognition and reward. This is the best way to motivate the employee. Praise will increase the self-confidence of individuals. Thus, employees will focus more on their tasks rather than suspecting that they are making mistakes. In addition, employees will work more efficiently, as they will receive a sign from their leaders that they are on the right track. In this way, a trust-based cooperation between the manager and the employee will be created.<sup>22</sup> Mutual trust is an essential element in staff empowerment. Most of the definitions made on this topic are actually related to increasing employee trust in management. If we divide the issue of trust into employee trust in managers and managers in employees; employee trust in business management is the most important factor that determines staff performance, commitment to the business climate and organization.<sup>23</sup> The level of trust in

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<sup>20</sup> Atık, Selahattin (2001:66). Organizasyon Hiyerarşisi, *Kara Harp Okulu Bilim Dergisi*, (2), 66-74

<sup>21</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:22). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

<sup>22</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:23). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

<sup>23</sup> Doğan, Selen (2003:29). *Personel Güçlendirme- Empowerment* (Birinci Basım). İstanbul: Sistem Yayıncılık



the organization depends on the management's understanding and agreement on the organizational structure and employee expectations.

If there is an atmosphere of uncertainty in an organization, employees will be affected by this and even if they see that their work is not going well they do not want to intervene because they do not want to risk being attacked themselves. For this, it is very important for managers to have trust in their employees and make them feel this. For example, by delegating important tasks and competencies to them, or by encouraging them to learn from their mistakes instead of punishing them for their mistakes.

### **1.2.5. Orientation Towards Common Goals**

In order for employees to perform work that will lead the organization to success, first of all, they must know very well their objectives in the organization. The organizational goals set by managers must be explained to the personnel in all details.

### **1.2.6. Performance Evaluation and Reward**

In evaluating the performance of empowered personnel, it is necessary to provide feedback on personnel performance and create a reward system that effectively provides the rewards that personnel deserve.<sup>24</sup> In this way, the positive feedback from staff in return for the work they do will motivate them more and make them embrace their work more willingly.

### **1.2.7. Resource Availability**

In many businesses, control of resources lies solely with top management. In staff empowerment practices, it is necessary to ensure that empowered staff have access to resources. These resources are; monetary funds, resources for support staff or experts that employees can consult. Top management often maintains control of resources to prevent employees from misusing them. As one moves from this stage to staff empowerment, employees must first be informed of the costs and effects of their use at lower levels. Then empowered employees must be assured that they take control of the resources they need.<sup>25</sup>

### **1.2.8 Group Work**

Teamwork is the most important element of empowering and adapting staff to change. Teams come together around a common goal and feel the need to work in harmony. Effective

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<sup>24</sup> Sahin, Nülüfer (2007:18). *Personel güçlendirmenin iş tatmini ve örgütsel bağlılık üzerine etkisi: Dört ve beş yıldızlı otel işletmelerinde bir uygulama*

<sup>25</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:27). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

teams spend a lot of effort and time to achieve goals in the direction they are given. In contrast, teams that fail rarely come together around a common goal. All team members should be aware of all business goals and the organizational structure in which these goals will be achieved. A characteristic of successful teamwork is that all members believe that everyone is doing their best. They want to believe that all members are moving in the same direction, trying to understand each other.<sup>26</sup>

### **1.2.9 Management Support**

Another condition that affects the success of the employee empowerment practice is the support of senior management. The success of the application for staff empowerment depends on the belief of senior management in the necessity of this application and the support of staff in this regard.<sup>27</sup> The support that management will provide to its employees not only keeps staff motivated, but also prevents them from being affected by the negative consequences that may arise from their demands and work results.

Each of the elements that we have described above has effects and features that will support and enhance staff empowerment. However, in practice, these elements should be considered not in isolation, but as a whole. Because the basic elements of staff empowerment are generally interconnected, the results of implementing one can affect the other.

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<sup>26</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:28). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

<sup>27</sup> Sahin, Nülüfer (2007:19). *Personel güçlendirmenin iş tatmini ve örgütsel bağlılık üzerine etkisi: Dört ve beş yıldızlı otel işletmelerinde bir uygulama*

### 1.3. Developments Leading Organizations Towards Personnel Empowerment

It can be said that the most important factors that cause the implementation of the empowerment method in organizations are the growing consumer awareness and the competitive environment. This awareness and environment require quick and flexible reactions. Employees must make decisions and take actions as soon as the work happens. When a mistake is made, at the same time, feedback must be received and lessons must be learned from the experience. Moreover, organizations are increasingly created as a holistic structure. This approach brings with it the need to strengthen individuals or units. Today's advanced technology makes this approach possible.<sup>28</sup>

Another phenomenon that makes empowerment inevitable is the increase in the educational level of employees. The assumption in traditional organizations is that the employee needs to be managed, to take orders, to be dependent and to avoid taking responsibility (McGregor's X-Y theory). The increase in the educational level and expectations of employees consider such administration unacceptable and demand more power, control and, in some sense, autonomy over the work. This is one reason for the emergence of empowerment.<sup>29</sup>

In addition, it cannot be assumed that the increasing democratization trends of societies will not be reflected in organizations. Organizations are part of the societies in which they are located, due to the concept of "integrity" that originates from the Japanese management system. For this reason, as democratic rights develop in society, the areas for individuals to use and claim them will expand and reach the organizations for which they work.<sup>30</sup>

In fact, empowerment can also be considered an extension of the increase in social well-being. As the level of well-being of societies increases, the degree to which people's "basic needs" are met also increases. Individuals who meet their basic needs or who have less concern about meeting them move up the hierarchy of needs. The place where the individual in a well-off society, who has no problem meeting his physiological, safety, and social needs, would like to reach are the other two steps of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, self-actualization (gaining

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<sup>28</sup> Coskun, Recai (2002:225). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coskun ve R. Altunısık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234

<sup>29</sup> Koçel, Tamer (2006:322). *İşletme Yöneticiliği*. İstanbul: Beta Yayınları

<sup>30</sup> Coskun, Recai (2002:226). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coskun ve R. Altunısık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234

recognition and prestige) and self-actualization/realization (possession) development of potential, creativity). Empowerment is the opportunity that the organization offers the individual to show and even fulfill himself.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, Çavus and Akgemci suggested that the most important reasons for the emergence of empowerment can be listed as follows;<sup>32</sup>

- With the rapid increase in globalization and competition, innovation has become more necessary in competition and those who innovate need more freedom,
- With the rapid increase in competitiveness, in order for productivity to be higher than in previous years, managers feel compelled to involve employees more in decisions,
- Increasing the strategic importance of developing goods and services,
- The need to create a high-performance learning organization.

#### **1.4. Barriers to Staff Empowerment**

Several factors that hinder the success of implementing staff empowerment can be seen as a process. The sources of these factors may vary depending on the situation. Some of the barriers to staff empowerment arise from the management level, some from the structure of the organization, and some from the staff.

##### **1.4.1. Problems and Obstacles Caused by Managers**

When applying empowerment, traits related to the manager's personality can sometimes get in the way. For example, a senior manager may be reluctant to delegate authority to a subordinate. He sees the delegation of authority here not as a relief in the operational structure of the organization, but as a limitation of his own powers. Many middle managers do not want empowerment because their control or need for it will be reduced. In reality, in the practice of empowering staff, the need arises for the organizational structure to be flat. However, this structure does not mean that middle managers will disappear. As the roles of middle managers will change, they will take on a role of leading and training empowered staff, rather

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<sup>31</sup> Coskun, Recai (2002:226). Gücün ve sorumluluğun organizasyona yayılması:Çalışanı güçlendirme (empowerment). (Editörler: I. Dalay, R. Coskun ve R. Altunışık). *Modern Yönetim Yaklaşımları*, İstanbul: Beta Basın Yayın Dağıtım, 219-234

<sup>32</sup> Çavus, Mustafa F. Ve Akgemci, Tahir (2008). İşletmelerde Personel Güçlendirmenin Örgütsel Yaratıcılık ve Yenilikçiliğe Etkisi: İmalat Sanayiinde Bir Araştırma, *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 20, [http://www.sosyalbil.selcuk.edu.tr/sos\\_mak/articles/2008/20/mcavus-takgeci.pdf](http://www.sosyalbil.selcuk.edu.tr/sos_mak/articles/2008/20/mcavus-takgeci.pdf). E.T:24.06.2009

than being busy with decisions that can be made more effectively by employees serving the customer.<sup>33</sup>

The leadership skills of managers are also important in terms of staff empowerment.<sup>34</sup> One of the most important characteristics that a good manager must have in order to make the entire organization feel its weight is leadership skills.

The most important problem that needs to be overcome is the training and change of managers themselves. Since the role of managers will change in empowerment practices, they need to make the necessary changes to adapt to this role and be trained in this direction. It is not easy to move away from the understanding of command and control and take on a role as a mentor, trainer and fulfill the appropriate requirements.<sup>35</sup>

One of the most important shortcomings of administrators is that they do not make an effort to train people and do not give enough importance to education. Both the inability to delegate authority due to distrust at lower levels, and the attitude of not being a guide for the training of those working in the field of profession and management is one of the reasons that leave enterprises lacking trained employees.<sup>36</sup> Managers who value the education of their employees and provide them with the necessary training opportunities make a positive contribution to the implementation of empowerment.

Fear of punishment is a problem for both managers and employees. The cost of making mistakes in the application of reinforcement will be high. For this reason, managers are hesitant to fully implement empowerment practices and try not to delegate their authority as long as the responsibility remains with them. Supporting the organizational structure for empowered employees to take responsibility will prevent this fear.

#### **1.4.2. Problems and Obstacles Caused by the Organization**

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<sup>33</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:45). İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması

<sup>34</sup> Doğan, Selen (2003:193). Personel Güçlendirme- Empowerment (Birinci Basım). İstanbul: Sistem Yayıncılık

<sup>35</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:45). İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması

<sup>36</sup> Akyuz, Omer F. (2001:46). Değişim Rüzgarında Stratejik İnsan Kaynakları Planlanması, İstanbul: Sistem Yayıncılık

It can be said that some characteristics of businesses limit their applications for innovation. These characteristics can be the business structure, product, employee or customer profile. These characteristics can be specified as:

- Adopting low cost, high volume production as a core strategy,
- Short-term customer relationships,
- Using simple and routine technology,
- Predictability and stagnation of the external business environment,
- Low level of development and social needs of employees,
- Low level of employees' interpersonal skills.

Some national cultures may not be compatible with the philosophy of staff empowerment. National cultures may be too hierarchical. This is to hinder empowerment. For example; in Bulgarian and Russian organizations, the perception of a single leader, lack of individuality and understanding of independence, underdevelopment, hierarchical organizational structures and lack of information and news sharing are reasons why empowerment cannot be successfully implemented. Some cultures may also affect the effectiveness of the incentive.<sup>37</sup>

#### **1.4.3. Problems and Obstacles Caused by Employees**

Employees may fear empowerment. Because staff who are in a decision-making and empowered position will take risks if the decision is bad.<sup>38</sup>

Given that the reliability factor is one of the most important needs during its implementation, forgiving human errors that may be made by employees and avoiding their penalization will affect the overall success.

The lack of desire of employees to change is also one of the obstacles to empowerment. However, thanks to empowerment, employees become more resilient to work stress, especially from technical and business environmental changes. Also, empowerment instead of forcing people to change has the property of attracting people to change. Because those who work on empowerment own the change. However, giving priority to empowerment in employee performance evaluations, taking measures to encourage participation, structuring the reward

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<sup>37</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:47). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

<sup>38</sup> Doğan, Selen (2003:84). *Personel Güçlendirme- Empowerment* (Birinci Basım). İstanbul: Sistem Yayıncılık

system in a way that supports empowerment and accurate feedback will help remove this obstacle.<sup>39</sup>

The employees of the organization, with the thought that their workload will increase, may face a conscious concept about personnel empowerment. To break the prejudice of the staff on this issue, the staff can be offered comprehensive training on this topic to eliminate the fears and doubts they have. Despite these trainings and instructions, there will also be people who avoid the pace of work, that is, who do not work hard. This is an important issue that managers should pay attention to people with this characteristic so that it does not affect the staff in general.

These factors, which we mentioned above, constitute a direct or indirect obstacle to the practice of personnel empowerment. Therefore, careful attention should be paid to these issues in order for personnel empowerment to be successful.

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<sup>39</sup> Özaksu, Özgür (2006:47). *İnsan Kaynakları Geliştirmede Personel Güçlendirme Yaklaşımı ve Bir Saha Araştırması*

## Conclusion

Recently, with the pressure of environmental conditions, globalization and the developed information age, organizations have come to judge their existing traditional management structures and have begun to feel the need to design a suitable roadmap for the new situation.

Within the framework of this new structuring, the most emphasized part and the one that is argued to need to be changed is the distribution of the decision-making mechanism in organizations to the employees of the lowest levels, where the jobs are prepared and structured. In parallel with the innovations and developments in the world, at the point reached today, it has become necessary to examine and analyze human resource management in a very comprehensive and broad way. When examining human resource management in detail, it has been highlighted that the issue of personnel empowerment should be emphasized separately.

We can define personnel empowerment as the process of sharing power, authority and responsibility with employees. Thus, it is intended that employees do their job effectively, trust themselves and become the god of the organization. To achieve success at the end of the empowerment process, an environment of interconnected harmony must be created between the top level of management, employees and the organization.

Studies on personnel empowerment are implemented in different ways according to the structure of organizations and their environment. For this, before starting the empowerment work, it is necessary to analyze the organization where it will be worked, to determine the appropriate methods and to act accordingly.



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