

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT WITH TEACHERS' CREATIVITY

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Abstract

Purpose: The present study aimed at investigating the relationship between knowledge management and psychological empowering with teachers' creativity in a descriptive correlational method in Isfahan in 2015.

Methodology: The statistical population included all teachers teaching at a 1st grade of boyish high schools of Isfahan city (774 teachers) out of which 256 persons were chosen through multi-steps accidental sampling using Corcoran method. Research instruments contained 3 questionnaires of knowledge management of Patrick and Sonia (2009) with 38 questions, questionnaire of psychological empowerment by Spritzer (1996) with 15 questions and creativity questionnaire of Tierney et al. (1999) having 9 questions based on Likert's 5-item scale. In order to examine the justifiability of questionnaires. Stability of this questionnaire was examined using Cronbach's Alpha, which was 0.90, 0.80 and 0.83 for management, psychological empowerment, and creativity respectively. In order to analyze data, we used a descriptive statistic (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and influential statistic (Pearson correlational coefficient, multi-step regression and variance analytic test).

Main Findings: Findings of this study showed that there exists a positive, meaningful relationship between two predicting a variable of knowledge management ($r = 0.382$) and all its dimensions and also psychological empowerment ($r = 0.136$) and its affectivity dimension with creativity ($p < 0.05$).

Implications: Results of this study can help education administrator to streamline teacher's activity in higher education institutions.

Originality: This study is first of its kind in researching relationship between knowledge management and psychological empowerment with teachers' creativity in Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.

Keywords: *knowledge management; psychological empowerment; teachers' creativity, Iran, Islamic azad university*

INTRODUCTION

Today knowledge is regarded as an essential element for organizations to be successful. Knowledge plays a pivotal role in cultural organizations in which intellectual capital and inconspicuous asset are of great significance. In today's society, if precise evaluation and attention is not paid to knowledge change and evaluation it will be concluded that today's post-industrial society is an informational one in which knowledge is enhancing technologies replace amplifier technologies. (Taghipour and Jahanian, 2009:122) in recent years, organizations began to join knowledge process and new concepts such as working knowledge, knowledge worker, knowledge management and knowledge-based organizations.

Drucker, a management expert, by using these terms informs us of creation of a new kind of organization in which mind power is governing instead of power of arms. An organization in which the most valuable asset is thought and physical assets such as machines are of lower importance. Collecting and applying new knowledge and information is essential for these organizations to success. (Hosnavi et al, 2011)

In an era which has been called knowledge era and knowledge organizations and knowledgeable persons are regarded as stable development foundations, knowledge management is of great importance. Nowadays economical, natural resources and manpower are not instrumental and useful themselves in order to be developed. These days ability to apply knowledge, abilities like getting intelligent, creating new solution to meet human requirements are placed on the top in universal system and knowledge and knowledge creation has become the main axis of development in the world. Knowledge is the competitive advantage of organizations and societies and conquer of a country to other is realized by knowledge. (Alvani, 2010:414) to put it mildly, knowledge is organizing in order to know. It is a coordination attempt to possess the essential knowledge for organization sharing knowledge in an organization and highlighting the collective organizational memory in order to improve decision making, efficiency enhancement and innovation. Knowledge management consists of knowledge, wisdom, experience with organization employees' value added, facilitating its retrieval and maintenance as an organization asset. Knowledge management is an attempt to convey employee's knowledge (Human Capital) to common organizational asset (structural intellectual capital).

It is unlikely for organizations to continue actualizing specialties without understanding their internal process to create knowledge. Successful organization and schools of 21st century, small cooperative and commercial companies used information and knowledge more effectively through managing knowledge and apply that in order for creating value added for beneficiary individuals. ([Rahimi and Najafi, 2006:15](#)). In one hand quality of manpower ability is one of the important factors for organization survival and life. In other words, human resources are much more important than new technologies and financial resources. Human resources are considered as most important, expensive and valuable capital of an organization. New and effective technical empowerment in order to enhance organization efficiency is realized through exploiting employees' power. Employees possess a covert power by their knowledge experience & motivation and in fact empowerment is releasing this power. Using potential ability of human resources is regarded as a great advantage for every organization. Studies show that high-powered individuals are great capital for organization and management, as they are leader and reliable themselves and are capable of adapting to external & internal organizational changes. This is much more significant in educational organization especially education and management of education. Because education is a pervasive dynamic and effective institution which affects covert and overt holistic moral, political, economical, religious, social, legal and cultural behavior and norms of all members of society. The nature of activities and objectives is enhancement of creativity, manifestation of talents, enhancement of general and special awareness and specifying ways to reach excellence, development, Felicity and growth. But studies conducted in our country show that nowadays management of education ministry's human resources has got not a proper framework to empower its employee (act and charter of reforming education system, 2002:76) concept of employee empowerment historically shows that limiting individual of their innate ability to reach top unique levels of their professions obstruct the efficiency at personal and organizational level. ([Kuo et al 2010:26](#)) [Schutz](#) believes that empowerment is complete cooperation of employees and managers in decision making process. According to Desler, empowerment is giving more authorities to employees in order to make necessary decisions without being firstly controlled by superior managers. in Webster dictionary empowerment has been defined as giving official or legal power to others. ([Ahmadi et al, 2010, 27](#)) organizations need new thoughts and ideas for surviving and maintaining their positive and constructive role so that they can guarantee their dynamism through perceiving new approaches, otherwise they will be fell down. In fact, today maxim of "if you are not creative, you will die" is a serious threat to organizations. ([Alvani, 2002](#))

"Khalâghiat" (creativity) is an Arabic word rooted in Khalâgh which means to create. In Dehkhoda dictionary "Khalâghiat" has been defined as creating and making and Khalâgh is the person who has got new ideas. In Webster dictionary (2003) creativity is the ability to make new things and concepts or applying it has been defined in a new form by mental skills. ([Sam khaniian, 2004](#))

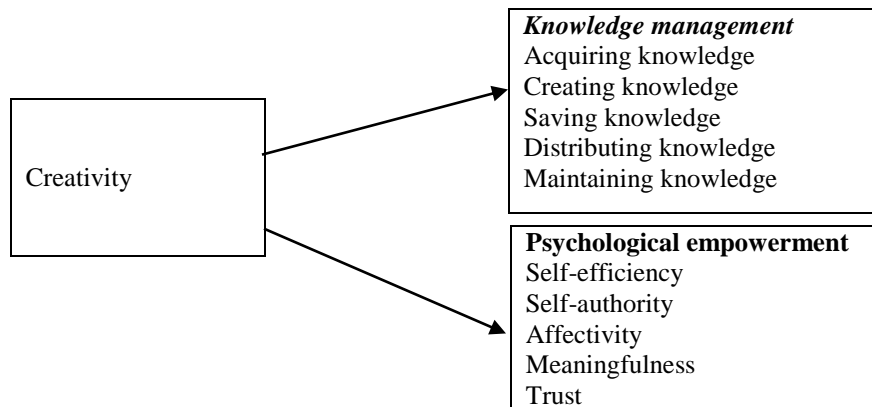
Creativity is ability to apply knowledge in order to solve a problem and innovation. Creativity consists not always of new ideas and it can be concerned conveying existing knowledge to new solutions and putting them into different framework or it can be concerned to relating methods that were not existed before. Creativity is one of the most important objectives of education and most important task of educational organizations. In developing and intensifying creativity in educational organizations, it is creative and innovative management which is the most effective factor because attitudes and ideas of principals toward creativity and innovation in themselves and organizations can change the educational environment to a center for change and innovation.

Therefore, if principals have got, along with management skills, also creativity and innovation knowledge and skill it paves the way for creating and growing creativity in schools and institutes. Herein one of the most challenges that today's managers are dealing with in organizations is not using enough intellectual resources, mind power and potential capacity of human resources. In most organizations, there use not optimally of employees' abilities and managers are not able to use their potentials ([Sayed Naghavi, 2010](#)) Stability and continuity of organization's activity is dependent to creation of competitive advantage. On the basis of this fundamental assumption, creativity is realized when organizations have got powerful manpower. ([Abtahi, 2006](#)). Today researcher believe that knowledge is the most important organizational resource which can create a competitive advantage for the organization through true management exploitation. Nevertheless, one reality in this respect is managers and principals' negligence or relative infirmity in applying principles of knowledge management in their management methods. This is while producing and reaching to advance and update knowledge in order to perform big industrial and economical plans is the urgent requirement of country in current situations and knowledge management can pave the way in order for various experience to convey to stable abilities.

Regarding the above mentioned issues, one can state that the most important capital of every school are teachers and the significance is because they are teachers who help the schools to reach its objectives through carrying out the assigned tasks of theirs. Teachers should be capable to use maximum of their potentiality to make the school achieve its goals. For instance, their occupational objectives should be important to them so that they feel they are doing a significant task and profession, they should know that they have the ability to solve the problems whenever in their work through creativity and creating new solutions, also they are to believe that can their tasks by essential and sufficient knowledge, the more their ability and motivation to work in school will be. Then they will have a true cognition and understanding of their work. In this era of

acceleration, change, evolution and innovation. Education as a mother and feeding organization needs knowledge management and investing on teachers and conveying them to knowledge workers so that they can be creative and innovation in encountering new and future changing problems and schools which need new solutions for future problem use them. Hence the present study is to answer this question that is there any meaningful relation between knowledge management and psychological empowerment with teachers' creativity?

HYPOTHESES



In order to state the relationship between these variables following hypotheses has been posted:

Hypo#1: there is a meaningful relationship between knowledge management and its dimensions with teachers' creativity.

Hypo #2: there is a meaningful relationship between psychological empowerment and its dimensions with teachers' creativity.

Hypo #3: knowledge management dimension can predict teachers' creativity.

Hypo #4: psychological empowerment dimensions can predict teachers' creativity.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is an applicable descriptive correlational research. Data collection was a field one through giving questionnaires to research's samples. Research statistical population were 774 teachers of all teachers teaching 1st grade and of the boyish high school of Isfahan in 2014-2015. These 3 regions were selected accidentally (by sortation), and by the help of a table of accidental numbers, 256 persons have been selected from among 451 ones. Research instruments were 3 questionnaires:

Questionnaires of knowledge management of Patrick and Sonia (2009), a questionnaire of psychological empowerment by Spritzer (1996) and creativity questionnaire of Tierney et al. (1999) whose justifiability were evaluated by some teachers and some of the items were reformed by them. And content justifiability of them, regarding standard and high usage of questionnaires, was confirmed by some experts in this field. Stability of this questionnaire were examined using Cronbach's Alpha, which was 0.90, 0.80 and 0.83 for management, psychological empowerment, and creativity respectively.

Hypo#1: there is a meaningful relation between knowledge management and its dimensions with teachers' creativity:

Variable of creativity criteria			
Statistical indicator Predicting variable	Correlational coefficient	Correlational coefficient square	Meaningfulness level
Knowledge management	**0.382	0.146	0.001
Acquiring knowledge	**0.171	0.029	0.008
Creating knowledge	**0.253	0.064	0.001
Saving knowledge	**0.251	0.063	0.001
Distributing knowledge	**0.348	0.121	0.001
Maintaining knowledge	**0.202	0.041	0.002

Results of the table above show that the correlational coefficient between knowledge and dimensions of it that are knowledge acquisition, creation, save, distribution and maintaining knowledge and teachers' creativity is meaningful. ($p < 0.05$) According

to (r²) specifying coefficient, 14.6% of knowledge management variance is the same as creativity. So the first hypothesis concerning the relationship between knowledge management and its dimensions with teachers' creativity is accepted.

Hypo #2: there is a meaningful relation between psychological empowerment and its dimensions with teachers' creativity.

Table 2: Correlational coefficient between psychological empowerment and its dimensions with teachers' creativity

Statistical indicator Predicting variable	Variable of creativity criteria		
	Correlational coefficient	Correlational coefficient square	Meaningfulness level
Psychological empowerment	**0.382	0.146	0.001
Self-efficiency	**0.171	0.029	0.008
Self-authority	**0.253	0.064	0.001
Affectivity	**0.251	0.063	0.001
Meaningfulness	**0.348	0.121	0.001
Trust	**0.202	0.041	0.002

Results of the second table demonstrate that correlational coefficient between psychological empowerment and affectivity with creativity is meaningful, that is there exist a meaningful relation between psychological empowerment and affectivity is meaningful. Based on r² specifying coefficient 2.1% psychological empowerment and creativity's variance are the same. So the 2nd hypothesis is also accepted.

Hypo #3: knowledge management dimension can predict teachers' creativity.

Table 3: Multiple correlational coefficient of knowledge management with teachers' creativity

Statistical indicator Criterion variable		Predicting variable	Multiple correlational coefficient	Square of Multiple correlational coefficients	Square of adjusted Multiple correlational coefficient	F coefficient	Meaningfulness level
Teachers creativity	1 st step	Dimension of knowledge distribution	0.339	0.115	0.110	24.591	0.001
	2 nd step	Dimension of knowledge production	0.380	0.145	0.136	15.998	0.001

Results of the 3rd table show that from among under study variables in the regression, the best predictor of teachers activity in 1st and 2nd steps are knowledge distribution and knowledge creation, respectively. According to step to step regression analysis results, there is a meaningful relation between knowledge distribution and knowledge production. That is the more knowledge distribution and creation increase, then the more teachers' creativity will be intensified. But the relation between knowledge maintenance, knowledge saving and acquisition with teachers creativity was not meaningful.

Hypo #4: psychological empowerment dimensions can predict teachers' creativity.

Table (4) multiple correlational coefficient of psychological empowerment with teachers' creativity

Statistical indicator Criterion variable		Predicting variable	Multiple correlational coefficient	Square of Multiple correlational coefficient	Square of adjusted Multiple correlational coefficient	F coefficient	Meaningfulness level
Teachers creativity	1 st step	Dimension of affectivity	0.184	0.034	0.030	8.371	0.004

p<0.01

As seen in the 4th table, from among understudy variables in the regression, best predictor for teachers' activity in 1st step was affectivity dimension of psychological empowerment. According to step to step regression analysis the relation between affectivity dimension of psychological empowerment and teachers' creativity was meaningful. On this basis, in the first step, the dimension of affectivity specifies 3.4% variance of teachers' creativity. F coefficient on the level of p<0.01 is meaningful.

Table (5). Beta coefficient in predicting teachers' creativity

Statistical indicator Criterion variable	Predicting variable	the nonstandard Beta coefficient	Standard Beta coefficient	F coefficient	Meaningfulness level
Teachers creativity	1 st step Dimension of affectivity	0.184	0.440	2.893	0.004

Findings of this table indicate that beta coefficient increases creativity of teachers to .0184 with 1 unit increase in affectivity dimension. The prediction equation for 6th hypothesis of research is like this:

Teachers' creativity = 0.128 affectivity + 2.966

Table (6) out-equation variables in regression for predicting teachers' creativity with dimensions of psychological empowerment.

1 st step	Scale	Beta	Amount of t	Meaningfulness level
	Self-efficiency	0.028	0.391	0.696
	Self-authority	0.127-	1.687-	0.093
	Meaningfulness	0.048-	0.681	0.796
	Trust	0.083	1.0250	0.213

Results of Table 6 showed that the relation between self-efficiency, self-authority, meaningfulness and trust with teachers' creativity was not meaningful.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Results of this study demonstrated that correlational coefficient between knowledge management and dimensions of knowledge acquisition, creation, save, distribution and maintaining knowledge is meaningful. Obtained results of [Rahimi \(2006\)](#), [Niyazazari et al. \(2008\)](#), [Nir and Jokar \(2008\)](#), [Nikbakht et al. \(2013\)](#), [Ahmadi Baladehi&Mirzayee \(2013\)](#) is in agreement with this study's concerning positive and meaningful relation between knowledge management and rate of creativity. Also, these results are in agreement with [Gabberty&Tomas \(2007\)](#), [Sigala&Chalkiti\(2015\)](#) regarding the relationship between knowledge management, creativity, and innovation. Regarding the obtained results, we can indicate that paying attention to dimensions of knowledge management including knowledge acquisition, creation, save, distribution and maintaining knowledge, is to some extent investing manpower.

Therefore, enhancement of knowledge asset of an organization through an approach which develops organization goals lead to teachers creativity and continuous (nonstop) education of teachers and perceiving organizations operation and understanding roles of themselves, organization and they way of teachers evaluating of their colleagues and support interactions of organizations' members and positive and supportive interactions of colleagues in organization and teachers understanding of their profession's perspective and accepting that and evaluating opportunities and organizations' reward will lead the teachers' creativity. If managers act on the basis of knowledge management, the way will be paved so that teachers seek to discover ways of innovation's and creative and understand schools problems and issues and encourage their colleagues to acquire knowledge and information and pave the way for teachers ability and creation improvement.

According to results, there exists a meaningful relation between psychological improvement and its efficiency dimension with creativity. So the second hypothesis of this study concerning the relation between psychological empowerment and its dimensions with teachers' creativity, is accepted. But the relation between dimensions of self-efficiency, self-authority, meaningfulness, and trust with creativity is not meaningful. This hypothesis is in agreement with results of studies by [Salehi Sedighani and Dehghan \(2009\)](#), [Sayed naghavi & Abass pour \(2011\)](#), [Shahbazi \(2013\)](#), [Xiaomeng & Kathyryn \(2010\)](#), [Gunduz & Ozbag \(2014\)](#), [ozaralli \(2015\)](#), concerning the direct and strong relation between dimensions of psychological empowerment. Studies show that high-powered individuals are counted for as great capital for the organization, as they are leader and reliable themselves and are able to adapt themselves with external and internal changes of the organization.

This is much more significant in the educational organization especially education and management of education. Because education is a pervasive dynamic and effective institution which affects covert and overt holistic moral, political, economic, religious, social, legal and cultural behavior and norms of all members of society. The nature of activities and objectives is an enhancement of creativity, a manifestation of talents, enhancement of general and special awareness and specifying ways to reach excellence, development, felicity, and growth. From among psychological empowerment variables affectivity has got the most meaningful relation with teachers creativity and therefore special attention should be paid to it to grow creativity in teachers.

Results of this study demonstrated that from among under study variables in the regression, the best predictor for teachers' creativity in 1st and 2nd steps are knowledge distribution and knowledge creation (dimensions of knowledge management), respectively. According to results of step to step regression analysis, there is a meaningful relation between dimensions of knowledge distribution, knowledge creation, and acquisition with teachers' creativity. But the relation between knowledge maintenance, saving knowledge and acquiring knowledge with teachers' creativity is not meaningful. This hypothesis is in agreement with findings of [Rahimi\(2006\)](#), [Niaz Azari et al. \(2009\)](#), [Nir and Jokar \(2009\)](#), [nikbakht et al. \(2014\)](#), [Ahmadi Bala dehi and Mirzaee \(2014\)](#), [Gabberty and Thomas \(2007\)](#), [Sigala and Chalkiti \(2015\)](#). Regarding the predicting power for teachers' activity (among dimensions of knowledge management) we should say that school's principles can allow teachers to exploit knowledgeable teachers through correct management, creativity, and innovation of them whenever they need new solutions. Also if organizations be able to remove the existing obstacles in growing potential talents and in order to encourage teachers, prepare facilities for them and seek for exploiting their creativity and potential talents, in this situation teachers feel they are paid attention and have more positive feeling to themselves, their job and organization. Therefore, in this situation, one can say that creativity is in a high level in this school.

According to the result of multiple correlational coefficients, psychological empowerment and teachers' creativity was meaningful. As shown, from among understudy variables the best predictor for teachers' creativity in 1st was affectivity dimension from psychological empowerment. According to results, there was a meaningful relation between affectivity dimension of psychological empowerment and teachers' creativity.

But the relation between self-efficiency, self-authority, meaningfulness and trust of knowledge with teachers' creativity was not meaningful. This is in agreement with findings of [Salehi sdighani & Dehghani\(2009\)](#), [Sayed naghavi & Abass pour \(2011\)](#), [Shahbazi \(2013\)](#), Gundaz and Ozbeg (2014) and Ozarlli (2015). And finally, these findings demonstrated that from among psychological empowerment variables, the feeling of affectivity has the most meaningful relation with teachers' activity. That is the more feeling of affectivity is increased in teachers, the more creativity one can expect of them. The feeling of affectivity is an individual's belief concerning his abilities to make a change in a desirable direction and in a specific time. Individuals who have strong affectivity are high powered and do not believe in limitation of their abilities by external obstacles in their works and professions. Rather they believe they can control those obstacles and then motivation and creativity will be in a high level in them. When school situation is like that teacher have self-control on their work's consequences and teachers believe that they can make change by influencing the environment or the results to obtain, they feel they are able, and it increases motivations to work in a school which itself increases creativity in teachers. So we can say when teachers are allowed to control consequences of their work and feel they are doing an important and valuable task, in these circumstances teachers motivation will be increased and rate of transferring and absence will be decreased whose result will undoubtedly be increase creativity of teachers. And as mentioned, empowerment plans will be most in order to overcome employees' dissatisfaction, decreasing expenses of occupational absence, and increasing the quality of work.

According to obtained results, we recommend schools principals to increase creativity in teachers by adopting creative and innovative approaches, and make the teachers creative by removing obstacles and providing desirable circumstances in order to apply an expanded amount of their skills and pave the way for scientific and intellectual cooperation of theirs so that they can increase motivation in teachers.

If managers want to have a creative organization, they are required to try to be creative themselves and pave the way for teacher's creativity. Managers can provide circumstance for creativity to occur and growth in teachers through observance of some principles. These principles are as follow: (i) they are to care about creativity. (ii) Avoid imposing a specific pattern. (iii) Develop imposing new beliefs (iv) make necessities for creative thinking. (v) Make opportunities for exercising with educational periods of creativity.

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