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### A Study on the Relationship between Communication Skills and Mental Health and Job Empowerment

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#### A B S T R A C T

The aim of this study is to investigate the relation of communication skills with mental health and job empowerment of Melli Bank of Bandar Abbas in 2005. The study population includes 560 subjects. The sample size is selected using Cochran formula, which is equal to 142 subjects. The research sample is selected randomly. Research required data are collected using field method. Spreitzer Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire (1990), Mental Health Questionnaire (SCL 90 R) and Communication Skills Questionnaire are data collection tools of the study. Multivariate regression test is used to examine the research hypotheses. The results show that there is a significant relationship between empowerment dimensions ( $p = 0.04$ ) and communication skills. In addition, there is a significant relationship between empowerment dimensions ( $p = 0.001$ ) and mental health. Therefore, the dimensions of communication skills and mental health are good indicators of explaining the staffs' job empowerment.

**Keywords:** Communication Skills, Mental Health, Job Empowerment.

#### INTRODUCTION

One of the factors affecting the survival and life of the organizations is the quality of manpower empowerment. In other words, human resources are much more important than new technologies, financial and material resources. Empowering human resources is a new approach of occupation intrinsic motivation that means freeing up internal resources of the staff and paving the ground and creating opportunities for development of individuals' talents, abilities and competencies. In fact, it involves the person's perception of his/her role in job and organization<sup>1</sup>.

Empowerment is granting the authority and the right of decision-making to employees in order to increase their efficiency and encourage them play a useful role in the organization<sup>2</sup>. Empowering means the participation of employees in the information in order to form and design the structure of the organization<sup>3</sup>. Psychological empowerment is known as the process of increasing job intrinsic motivation, which includes four cognitive domains: feeling of influence, competence, meaningfulness and the right to select.

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## **A Study on the Relationship between Communication Skills and Mental ...**

Communication skills refer to those behaviours through which a person can communicate so that they lead to positive responses and avoid negative responses<sup>4</sup>. Communication is a very important skill in management and is the basis for efficient management. No manager can work well without good communications and communication skills<sup>5</sup>.

In general, communication skills are as follows: 1. Listening communication skills: the ability of manager to pay attention to suggestions or questions of others and understand them<sup>2</sup>. 2. Verbal communication skills: include the person's speech and verbal content. This particular type of communication can be known as the transference of thoughts, feelings, desires and what is going on the sender's mind to his/her audiences and mutually hearing their thoughts and feelings<sup>6</sup>. 3. Feedback communication skills: A process through which the message recipient announces the establishment of the communication and in response, expresses how he/she feels the main message<sup>8</sup>.

Improving the mental health of employees in the workplace, as one of the most important aspects of development and improvement of human resources in organizations, has attracted the attention of many researchers in Iran and abroad in recent decades. For the progress and development of the country in all fields, first healthy intellectual mindful manpower must be used in economic, services, education and industrial institutions which plays an important role in enhancing the productivity effect. Social and environmental disadvantages are the main factors of creating psychological pressure that endangers mental health. Human's mental health can be altered by stress and lead to long physical and psychological imbalances.

Carl Rogers believes that mental health is the individual's compromise with the world around him/her as far as possible, so that joy and useful and effective perception will be completed. The most comprehensive and most accepted definition of mental health is the definition presented by the World Health Organization (w.h.o). The Organization considers mental health as one of the criteria for public mental health. According to World Health Organization, mental health is "the state of physical, mental and social welfare, not just the absence of disease." On this basis, this paper examines the relation of the components of communication skills and mental health with job empowerment among the staff of Melli Bank (Iran).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present study, in terms of the implementation method, it is descriptive and correlational. The population of the study includes all employees of Melli Bank in Bandar Abbas province (40 females and 520 males) in 2015. The research sample consists of 142 subjects among 35 branches of Melli Bank in the city of Bandar Abbas who are selected using Cochran Formula and stratified random selection. In the present study, the required data are collected using field method. In fact, in this study, with direct reference to the target population (employees of the Melli Bank of Bandar Abbas) the information about communication skills, psychological empowerment, and mental health is collected. The questionnaires used to collect data are as follows:

### **Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire**

In this study, in order to measure the psychological empowerment, the questionnaire developed by Spreitzer (1990) has been applied. This questionnaire is translated by Naami (2008) and have four subscales including significance, competence, autonomy and effectiveness. This questionnaire contains 12 articles. For each subscale 3 articles are intended and each article has a five-point response from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In this study the reliability of the questionnaire is calculated through Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is equal to 0.82.

### **Mental Health Questionnaire (SCL 90 R)**

The questionnaire includes 90 nine- dimension questions, which include: anxiety, aggression, depression, interpersonal communication sensitivity, somatization, obsessive - compulsive, phobia, psychosis and paranoid. In addition, there are seven additional questions in the questionnaire, which are not categorized under any of the nine above mentioned dimensions. They are clinically important and help the general indices of the test. The questionnaire has been used repeatedly. The reliability of the questionnaire abroad was between 0.72 and 0.90 and its validity was between 0.36 and 0.73, and in the studies conducted in Iran it was between 0.27 and 0.66.

#### Communication Skills Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed by the researcher. Its content validity is evaluated by academics professors and specialists. The reliability of the questionnaire is calculated through test - retest method and Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is equal to 0.83.

To analyse the data, descriptive and inferential statistical methods (descriptive statistics: mean, standard deviation), (inferential statistics: Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression) are used.

## RESULTS

In this section, the mean and standard deviation of the indicators and dimensions of the indicators have been investigated separately.

**Table 1.** Mean and Standard Deviation of Research Variables

Row	No.	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	
<b>Mental Health</b>	Somatization	142	00	20	5.60	<b>4.52</b>
	Obsessive - Compulsive	142	00	10	3.20	<b>22.48</b>
	Interpersonal Communication Sensitivity	142	00	11	2.78	<b>22.47</b>
	Depression	142	00	8	1.47	<b>1.81</b>
	Anxiety	142	00	13	3.40	<b>2.89</b>
	Phobia	142	00	16	2.37	<b>2.29</b>
	Paranoid Thoughts	142	00	4	1	<b>1.07</b>
	Psychosis	142	24	22	1.97	<b>2.50</b>
	Aggression	142	00	4	0.83	<b>0.95</b>
<b>Communication Skills</b>	Listening Skills	142	8	23	15.11	<b>2.71</b>
	Non-verbal Skills	142	6	22	13.12	<b>3.13</b>
	Verbal Skills	142	7	44	12.88	<b>4.11</b>
<b>Psychological Empowerment</b>	Competence	142	00	10	8.46	<b>1.63</b>
	Autonomy	142	1	10	8.60	<b>1.30</b>
	Effectiveness	142	00	15	7.45	<b>1.87</b>
	Significance	142	1	10	6.93	<b>1.86</b>
	Trust	142	2	10	7	<b>1.88</b>

The study on mental health in the research sample about mental health dimensions indicates that the mean of somatization complaints is equal to 5.6, the mean of obsessive - compulsive is equal to 3.2, the mean of interpersonal communication sensitivity is equal to 2.78, the mean of depression is equal to 1.47, the mean of anxiety is equal to 3.4, the mean of phobia is equal to 2.37, the mean of paranoid thoughts is equal to 1, the mean of psychosis is equal to 1.97, and the mean of aggression s is equal to 0.83. The study on skills and communication empowerment in the research sample about in communication empowerment dimensions shows that the mean of communication and listening skills is equal to 15.11, the mean of communication and non-verbal skills is equal to 13.12, the mean of communication and verbal skills is equal to 12.88. The study

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on communication empowerment in the research sample about the dimensions of psychological empowerment shows that the mean of competence is equal to 8.46, the mean of autonomy is equal to 8.60, the mean of effectiveness is equal to 7.45, the mean of significance is equal to 6.93, and the mean of trust is equal to 7.

To predict the empowerment of the employees through communication skills, multiple regression test is used.

**Table 2.** Results of Determination Model of the Role of Communication Skills in Predicting Job Empowerment

Predictor Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Determination Coefficient	Adjusted Coefficient
Communication Skills	0.52	0.27	<b>0.28</b>

Results of regression analysis regard to the prediction of the job empowerment of employees through communication skills show that the desired model has a determination coefficient of 0.27. This state suggests that the communication skills explain 27 percent of the job empowerment.

**Table 3.** Analysis of Variance of the Role of Communication Skills in Predicting Job Empowerment

Model	Sum of Squares	Freedom Degree	Mean of Squares	f	P
Regression	1093.63	5	218.72	18.018	<b>0.001</b>
Error	29214.30	136	214.81		
Total	30307.94	141	-		

Results of variance analysis shows that according to  $f = 18.018$  and  $p = 0.001$ , communication skills significantly explain the employees' job empowerment.

**Table 4.** Prediction of Job Empowerment through Communication Skills

Communication Skills	beta	t	P
Verbal Skills	-0.181	-2.711	0.04
Listening Skills	0.171	3.671	0.03
Nonverbal Skills	-0.233	-2.258	0.04

The results finally show that verbal skills, according to  $\beta = -0.181$  and  $p = 0.04$ , listening skills, according to  $\beta = 0.171$  and  $p = 0.03$ , and nonverbal skills according to  $\beta = -0.233$  and  $p = 0.04$  are significantly able to explain job empowerment.

To predict the job empowerment of the employees through mental health dimensions, multiple regression test is used.

**Table 5.** Results of Determination Model of the Role of Mental Health Dimensions in Predicting Job Empowerment

Predictor Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Determination Coefficient	Adjusted Coefficient
Mental Health	0.33	0.108	<b>-0.111</b>

Results of regression analysis regard to the prediction of the job empowerment of employees through communication skills show that the desired model has a determination coefficient of 0.108. This state suggests that the mental health explains 10.8 percent of the job empowerment.

**Table 6.** ANOVA of the Role of Mental Health in Predicting Job Empowerment

Model	Sum of Squares	Freedom Degree	Mean of Squares	f	P
Regression	32.528	3	10.843	12.049	<b>0.001</b>
Error	30275.41	138	219.38		
Total	30307.94	141	-		

Analysis of variance show that according to  $F = 12.049$  and  $P = 0.001$ , mental health significantly explains the job empowerment.

**Table 7.** Prediction of Mental Health through Skills and Psychological Empowerment

Skills and Psychological Empowerment	Beta	t	P
Somatization	-0.33	-4.340	0.001
Obsessive - Compulsive	-0.153	-3.025	0.02

<b>Interpersonal Communication Sensitivity</b>	0.216	2.057	0.04
<b>Depression</b>	-0.181	-2.711	0.04
<b>Anxiety</b>	0.171	3.671	0.03
<b>Phobia</b>	-0.233	-2.258	0.04
<b>Paranoid Thoughts</b>	-0.131	-4.272	0.02
<b>Psychosis</b>	-0.319	-2.139	0.04
<b>Aggression</b>	-0.181	-2.711	0.04

The results finally show that mental health dimensions are significantly able to predict the employees' job empowerment.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between communication skills and mental health and the employees' job empowerment. The research findings show that communication skills lead to the employees' empowerment. On the other hand, the results suggest that mental health dimensions are able to predict 10.8 percent of employees' empowerment. Accordingly, mental health dimensions are able to predict employees' empowerment. Due to the nature of mental health dimensions, they create a good impression on the person and thereby lead to employees' job empowerment. Therefore, healthy individual pays attention to different aspects of his/her job and tries to improve his/her abilities.

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