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**FACTORS AFFECTING JOB PERFORMANCE CASE STUDY: ZANJAN WATER AND
WASTEWATER COPORATION**

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ABSTRACT

This study has been engaged in how the impact of employees' perceived organizational support, psychological empowerment, and organizational citizenship behavior on their job performance and assessed the causal relationships between these variables in the Zanjan Water and Wastewater Corporation. Totally, 69 employees of Zanjan Water and Wastewater Co. participated in this research. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, linear regression, and hierarchical multiple regression. The results showed that both employees' perceived organizational support and their psychological empowerment positively affected job performance. Ultimately, organizational citizenship behavior mediated the relationship among employees' perceived organizational support and job performance, and the relationship among psychological empowerment and job performance.

**Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Psychological Empowerment,
Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Job Performance**

INTRODUCTION

The most vital issue in every organization is its job performance. It is one of the most crucial variables, which has taken more attention in developed countries. Psychologists consider job performance as a

product of human behavior. They believe that motivations and needs are affecting on individual performance, and finally on the economic growth and development. Also, It is believed that job performance is a hybrid

structure, based on which successful and unsuccessful employees are to be recognized through a series of certain criteria (Ghasemi, 2013).

Today, organizations have realized the importance of the human resources as the most important source for obtaining competitive advantage. Modern organizations compete to attract and maintain human resources by offering welfare programs and devoting attention to employees get. As a witness to this, Fortune Magazine which recently has published a new ranking, in which was introduced 100 top companies, where working would be more desirable for human resources (Riggle et al, 2009). In a response to a wave of competition over human resources, organizations invest in implementation and improvement of welfare programs and supporting employees and try to provide as much as possible facilities and amenities suitable for their employees. In the past few decades, it was maybe unusual to address such issues and discuss welfare and supportive programs for employees, but there are numerous companies in the world running such programs. These companies have practically realized that they can be benefited by investing on improving well fare and supportive programs of their employees. Because, employees feeling secure are

committed and satisfied, less absent, and do not leave the organization easily, all of which will enhance organization performance and help it to reach its goals (Taleghani et al., 2009). Desirable organizational performance cannot be achieved through the efforts of ordinary employees. One of the reasons for the success of large organizations is that they have employees who try beyond their own official duties (Senobari, 2009). This kind of behavior has been known as organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is an individual and volunteer behavior, which has not been directly designed by official reward systems in the organization; however, it promotes the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational performance (Organ, 1988).

In each organization, there are different variables, which can influence consequences and career results of the employees, thereby, organizational performance, which comprises of psychological empowerment and organizational support. Psychological empowerment is a method to create team spirit in employees through involvement process and responsibility giving to them. This method encourages employees to decide for their own works and to have more strength and more skills over work. Empowerment set a balance between manager power and

employees' freedom of action (Khatiri, 2006). Psychological empowerment directly affects on employees' attitude, results of which is reduction of contradiction and ambiguity in the role, anxiety reduction, job satisfaction, motivation, loyalty, creativity creation, effectiveness enhancement, tendency to decision making, more commitment, self-control, and team work (Afjeh & Miri, 2009). Organizational support, i.e., employees' perceived organizational support indicates their overall beliefs about the philosophy of values that an organization gives to role, participation, share, well fare, and health care. In other words, perceived organizational support shows employees' understanding of the extent to which organization are committed to them. In fact, the concept of the perceived organizational support is based upon a kind of interpretation of social exchange of organization commitment. In the case that employees extend their attempts and efforts in the organization in order to gain social, physical and financial rewards (Arizi & Gol Parvar, 2009).

Research has suggested that organizations need to empower employees, because their empowerment leads to an enhancement in decision-making, efficacy, job performance, and commitment (Short & Husband, 1994. qt. Arabian, 2014). Self-efficacy has derived

from social cognitive theory of Albert Bandura- well-known psychologist- that refers to individuals' beliefs and judges about their own abilities to do duties, tasks, and responsibilities (Abdollahi & Nave-Ebrahimi, 2007). Effective performance needs both having skills- an ability to do works, which are a result of employees' empowerment- and self-efficacy- believe in doing those skills (Abdollahi, 2005).

Regarding the importance of attention to employees' job performance in the organization and the effective role that citizenship behavior can play in this regard, the goal of this research is to determine the impacts of employees' perceived organizational support and their psychological empowerment on job performance and organizational citizenship behavior as a mediator variable in Zanjan's Water and Wastewater Corporation. The officials of this corporation have always tried their best so that their employees perform their official duties well. However, what they have neglected is the citizenship behavior that compels employee to do affairs more than his/her official and assigned duties. It is expected that result of present research will show the importance of perceived organizational support to the officials.

Inside and outside of Iran, researches have

been done on each variables of this research, to which are mentioned as following:

Soltani et al. (2013), in the research entitled "mediator role of organizational citizenship behavior on the effect of perceived organizational support; and psychological empowerment on job performance" found that perceived organizational support and empowerment do not solely affect job performance. Thus, citizenship behavior is as a mediator variable between perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment with job performance.

Ghasem Zadeh (2012), in the research entitled "to study the role of psychological empowerment on job performance and individual responsiveness of employees of Urumieh University in 2012-2013 academic year" which was performed among 215 employees of this University. Results showed that psychological empowerment directly affects on job performance; and individual responsiveness of employees had positive and significant effect. The results of the regression tests also confirmed a linear relationship to predict individual performance and individual responsiveness according to psychological empowerment factors.

Zare'ee et al. (2012), in the research entitled "to study a relationship between empowerment, self-efficacy, and job

performance in employees of education department of Marvdasht and Durudzan" found that there is a positive and significant relationship between empowerment, self-efficacy, and job performance. Also, there is a positive and significant relationship between some of the factors of these three variables. Among demographic variables, none of them has a significant relationship with job performance. Generally, it can be said that empowerment and self-efficacy can be predictors of job performance.

Norouzi Seyed Hosseyni (2011), in the research entitled "impact of perceived organizational support on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior of the employees of physical education departments" found that perceived organizational support affects on organizational commitment; and expanding or increasing organizational support is led to reinforce employees' organizational commitment. Also, he showed that perceived organizational support significantly affects on organizational citizenship behavior.

Gholami (2011), in the research entitled "to study the impact of psychological empowerment on organizational citizenship behavior of employees of National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company" showed that aspects of feeling of meaningfulness,

feeling of deserving, and the feeling of effectiveness affect on citizenship behavior. No evidence was found that shows the impact of feeling self-organizing on organizational citizenship behavior during this research. It was determined that education status variable has an adjusting impact on the relationship between psychological empowerment variables and organizational citizenship behavior variables, but work experience has not such an effect.

Mirjafari et al. (2010), in the research entitled "to study a relationship between empowerment and communicational skills with job performance of employees of Shiraz Petrochemical Industries Designing and Engineering Company" showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between empowerment and job performance variables. In addition, empowerment variables can be predictors of job performance. They observed no significant relationship between communicational skills and job performance, and these were not predictors for job performance. They also observed significant relationship between empowerment and communicational skills variables.

Khalesi et al. (2009), in the research entitled "the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and employees empowerment in Health Centers of Medical

University of Tehran" found out that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and employees empowerment.

Taleghani et al. (2007), in the research entitled "the impact of perceived organizational support on the employees' commitment and organizational performance in Mellat Bank, Tehran Branches" concluded that perceived organizational support has a positive and significant relationship with emotional commitment. However, there is not significant relationship between perceived organizational support, continuous commitment, and organizational behavior.

Arizi et al. (2007), in the research entitled "relations path model of perceived organizational support with job, professional, and organizational variables" found that there is a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and job, professional, and organizational variables.

Mardani (2005), in the research entitled "to study a relationship between perceived organizational support with organizational commitment and job performance among employees of Khuzestan Pipe industry" found that organizational support could be a predictor to organization commitment and desirable job performance.

Chiang Hsieh (2012), in the research entitled

" the impact of perceived organizational support and employee's psychological empowerment on job performance and mediatory role of citizenship behavior" found that perceived organizational support can increase job performance just through citizenship behavior, that is, perceived support cannot affect on job performance on its own. In addition, employee's psychological empowerment can increase job performance whether on its own or through citizenship behavior.

Tao Miao (2011), in the research entitled " the impact of the relationship between perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, citizenship behavior, and job performance" found that there is positive relationship between perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and job performance. In addition, there is positive relationship between perceived support, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior.

Tokmak Turgut (2011), in the research entitled "the impact of organizational control position on citizenship behavior mediated by perceived organizational support" found that there is a positive relationship between organizational control position and citizenship behavior mediated by perceived

organizational support.

Rocha (2008), in the research entitled " the impact of perceived organizational support on organizational performance regarding the mediating role of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior" found that perceived organizational support affects on important behaviors and attitudes among attitudinal variables such as organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and tendency to leave the job.

Armeli et al. (1998), in the research entitled "the impact of perceived organizational support on job performance" concluded that perceived organizational support has positive impact on job performance and improves employees' performance.

The focus of this research is on the factors affecting job performance. Job performance is dependent variable and perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment are independent variables of the research. Meanwhile, employees' citizenship behavior has considered as a mediator variable.

The variables in question are shown in figure 1 in the form of a model derived from the Chiang-Hsiseh.

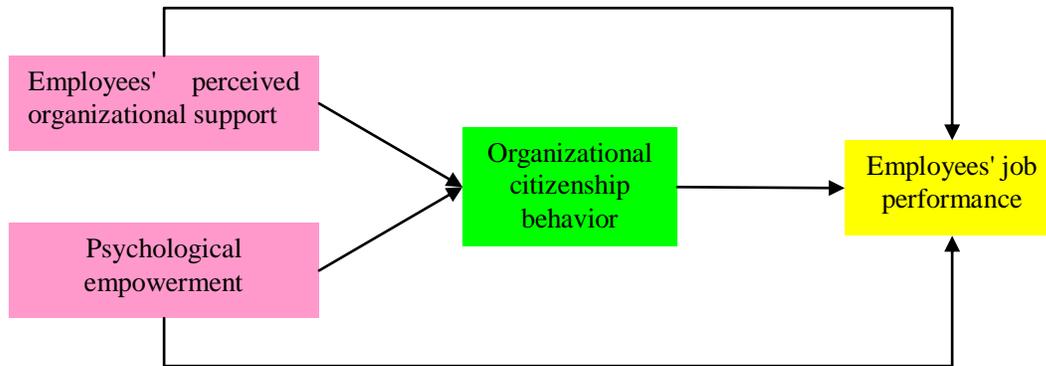


Figure 1: Research model; Ref: Hsieh, Chiang (2012)

The hypothesis made about the results of the pervious studies influenced the development of the model include:

- H 1. Employees' perceived organizational support affects organizational citizenship behavior.**
- H 2. Employees' perceived organizational support affects employees' job performance.**
- H 3. Employee's psychological empowerment affects organizational citizenship behavior.**
- H 4. Employees' psychological empowerment affects their job performance.**
- H 5. Employee's organizational citizenship behavior affects their job performance.**
- H 6. Organizational citizenship behavior strengthens the impact of employees' perceived organizational support on their job performance.**
- H 7. Organizational citizenship behavior strengthens the impact of employees' psychological empowerment on their job performance.**

METHODOLOGY

Regarding the goal of the research, which is engaged in factors affecting employees' job performance in Zanjan's Water and Wastewater Corporation, statistical population of the research is all employees of this organization. The number of the sample during the research (spring 1394) was 69 employees. Thus, considering the number of statistical population being limited, there was no need of sampling and the questionnaire was given to all of the employees. Return rate of questionnaires was 100%.

Data required for testing the hypothesis was gathered with a five Likert Scale

questionnaire. The questionnaire used in the process is a Standard one. It has been designed in two separate sections. The first section includes 4 general questions on demography and the second section includes 40 professional questions related to the hypothesis, which itself is divided into 4 parts. First part relates to the first independent variable (employees' perceived organizational support) that has been derived from Rodes questionnaire (2001). Second part relates to the second independent variable (psychological empowerment). This questionnaire was designed by Spreitzer (1995). Third part relates to the mediator

variable (organizational citizenship behavior) which was taken from Podsakoff (1997). Fourth part relates to the dependent variable (employees' job performance), which is derived from Ang (2003) and Kim (2009). The validity of the questionnaire was certified by related experts and scholars. It was used Cronbach's Alpha test to determine reliability of the questionnaire, of which final results were obtained using SPSS as seen in table 1. Regarding the fact that obtained correlation coefficient is more than 0.7 for all the variables; foresaid questionnaire is of high reliability.

In this study, it was used descriptive statistics such as frequency, percent frequency, and descriptive table to describe demographic variables. It was used descriptive statistics "simple regression" for hypothesis testing. It was used hierarchical regression for mediator variable (organizational citizenship behavior).

Analysis of data and testing hypothesis

In order to choose an appropriate test for testing hypothesis, first distribution of population should be specified. Thus, it was

used Kolmogorov–Smirnov test in this research to determine normality of the sample. Following hypothesis are arranged to normality testing of statistical hypothesis:

H0: data distribution for each variable is normal.

H1: data distribution for each variable is not normal.

As shown in Table.2, it can consider data as normal because the significance level of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for data is more than 0.05. Therefore, H0, which assume that data are normal, is confirmed. Thus, it can use parametric tests for hypothesis testing.

In this research, it was used liner regression to test first to fifth hypothesis. It was used hierarchical regression to test sixth and seventh hypothesis (Baron & Kenny method). It was used SPSS software to analysis data.

A summary of the results of testing hypothesis 1-5 are shown in table 3. Results indicate that these hypothesis are confirmed.

Table 1: The amount of Cronbach's alpha

The name of the variable	Perceived organizational support	Psychological empowerment	Organizational citizenship behavior	The employees' job performance
The amount of Cronbach's alpha	0.82	0.729	0.726	0.702

Table 2: Results of K-S test

		JP	OCB	POS	PE
N		69	69	69	69
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	4.2931	4.1619	3.1862	4.3069
	Std. Deviation	.73821	.45643	.82796	.47729
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.242	.086	.209	.119
	Positive	.172	.069	.105	.119
	Negative	-.242	-.086	-.209	-.115
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.304	.463	1.123	.642
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.067	.983	.160	.804

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Table 3: Summary of hypothesis test results

Hypothesis	Hypothesis description	Test type	Beta	F	sig	Test result
First	Employees' perceived organizational support affects organizational citizenship behavior	Linear regression	0.592	36.189	0	Hypothesis 1 is confirmed
Second	Employees' perceived organizational support affects their job performance	Linear regression	0.284	5.877	0.018	Hypothesis 2 is confirmed
Third	Employees' psychological empowerment affects their organizational citizenship behavior	Linear regression	0.683	58.480	0	Hypothesis 3 is confirmed
Fourth	Employees' psychological empowerment affects their job performance	Linear regression	0.569	32.133	0	Hypothesis 4 is confirmed
Fifth	Employees' organizational citizenship behavior affects their job performance	Linear regression	0.674	55.866	0	Hypothesis 5 is confirmed

It was used hierarchical regression to test sixth and seventh hypothesis considering the existence of mediator variable in these hypothesis. There are various methods to analyze mediator variable, one of which is Baron and Kenny method (1986) as following:

1. Show that X is a predictor of Y, using regression.
2. Show that x is a predictor of M, using regression.
3. Show that M is a predictor of Y when X is under control by performing multiple linear regression using X and M as predictor variables and Y as a criterion variable.

4. If M is a complete mediator of the relationship between X and Y, when M is under control, the effect of X should be zero.

5. If M is only a partial mediator, its effect will be reduced, but not eliminated.

A simple alternative method for complex models is Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, which comprises of various potential mediators and high consequences that should be analyzed apart from regression, thus it is very much time-consuming. A simple method has two levels (Beer, 2013):

1. Perform correlation analysis of all the variables. Correlation matrix shows first and second level of Baron and Kenny.

2. Perform hierarchical regression analysis in order to reach level 3 of Baron and Kenny:

Block1: potential mediators

Block2: potential factors

Tables.4, 5 show results of SPSS for sixth (organizational citizenship behavior strengthens the impact of employees'

perceived organizational support on their job performance) and seventh (organizational citizenship behavior strengthens the impact of employees' psychological empowerment on their job performance) hypothesis according to the above method.

Table 4: Results of SPSS mediation analysis (Baron & Kenny approach)

	Adj. R2	F Ratio	Beta	P
Regression of (POS) on (JP)	0.81	32.133	0.284	0.018 <= 0.05
Regression of (OCB) on (JP)	0.455	55.766	0.674	0 < 0.01
Regression of (OCB) on (JP) with POs control and POS Beta	0.369	53.734	0.686 0.192	0 < 0.01 0.001 < 0.01

$$0.284 - 0.192 = 0.092$$

Thus, regression coefficient (standard) can be obtained from this equation:

Since, the regression coefficient rises up, it

can be concluded that OCB raises POS.

Therefore, H0 is not supported and hypothesis

of the research is confirmed.

Table 5: Results of SPSS mediating analysis (derived from Baron & Kenny approach)

	Adj. R2	F Ratio	Beta	P
Regression of (PE) o (JP)	0.269	72.463	0.569	0 < 0.01
Regression of (OCB) on (JP)	0.455	55.766	0.674	0 < 0.01
Regression of (OCB) on (JP) with PE in control and PE Beta	0.433	75.067	0.497 0.238	0 < 0.01 0 < 0.01

$$0.522 - 0.238 = 0.284$$

Since, regression coefficient rises up, it can be concluded that OCB enhances PE. Therefore, H0 is failed and the hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this research showed that employees' perceived organizational support affects their organizational citizenship behavior. This result was not unexpected, because when employees in an organization

receive support and protection from their organization, they will have more motivation and empathy toward organization; thus, they will do more than their formal tasks.

The result of this hypothesis is consistent with the results of Norouzi Seyed Hosseyni (2011), Chiang Hsieh (2012) and Tao Miao (2011).

However, it can be said about the impact of employees' perceived organizational support on job performance that expansion and

enhancement of organizational support affects the strengthening of employees' job performance. Because, employees' motivation and encouragement toward organization and, naturally, to the related jobs leads to their higher attempts toward assigned works; thus it improve their job performance. The result of this hypothesis is consistent with research results of Arizi et al. (2009), Mardani (2007), Tao Miao (2011), Armeli et al. (1998); and it is contrary to Chiang, Hsieh (2012) and Taleghani et al. (2009). A cause of this contradiction may be likely the difference of studied population. Chiang Hsieh (2012) studied on hotel employees in Thailand, which can be quite different from the population of this research. Taleghani et al. (2009) worked on Tehran branches of Mellat Bank. The cause of this non-significance between these two variables is their own sentence "perceived organizational support has a very small share in the financial performance of a bank, there is no need to manipulate organizational support to improve financial. In addition, it should be considered that a number of variables affecting bank performance are various such that they weaken the role of perceived organizational support." It should be noted that job performance is often assessed due to the complexity of testing organizational

performance; these researchers had to assess job performance in a small branch of Mellat Bank. Therefore, it can be said that what they mean by organizational performance is job performance mostly.

One of the other results of this research was that employee's psychological empowerment affects their organizational citizenship behavior. It has mostly emphasized to maintain and protect employees, i.e., to keep their physical and mental health as a main tasks in human resources management. In an organization where it has provided employees with required conditions for keeping their physical and mental health and they work with a happy and quiet moral, it is provided a grounds for their cooperation, empathy, participation, and working more activities that formal tasks and it strengthens employees' forgiveness and tolerance. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with research results of Gholami (2011), Khalesi et al. (2009), and Chiang, Hsieh (2012).

In addition, the impact of employees' psychological empowerment on their job performance was proved in this research. This result shows the fact that employees' psychological empowerment leads to their mental and psychological health; and it can improve their job performance. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with research

results of Ghasem Zadeh (2012), Zare'ee et al. (2012), Mirjafari et al. (2010), and Chiang, Hsieh (2012).

Results of this research indicate that employees' organizational citizenship behavior affects their job performance. Employees are engaging in doing affairs out of their formal tasks in addition of working on their formal tasks when they feel more belonging to the organization and consider organizational citizenship behavior as a sign of their interest and loyalty. Such a situation can affect how they perform their job and, consequently, enhance their job performance. The result of this hypothesis is parallel with research results of Arizi et al. (2009), Mardani (2007), Tao Miao (2011), Rocha (2008), and Chiang Hsieh (2012).

Also, the results of hierarchical regression showed that organizational citizenship behavior strengthens the impact of employees' perceived organizational support on their job performance. It was confirmed mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior that is beyond employees' formal tasks can be realized when employees feel that they are under protection and support of the organization; and they feel commitment and belonging to it. In such a condition, doing activities more than formal tasks in a

organization where shows self-devotion, cooperation, consultation, and employees' interest can increase and expand organizational protection and support over employees. The result of this hypothesis is parallel with the results of Chiang Hsieh (2012), and Rocha (2008).

According to this research, organizational citizenship behavior strengthens the effect of employees' psychological empowerment on their job performance. It was confirmed the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior. These results were not unexpected. Because employees, who see themselves as effective and participant not only in their own formal tasks but also in affairs beyond their formal tasks, become more aware of their own capabilities. This awareness affects on their psychological health to be improved. Then it leads to their psychological empowerment to be strengthened, which in turn leads to employees' job performance to be increased. This is parallel with the results of Chiang Hsieh (2012).

SUGGESTIONS BASED ON HYPOTHESIS

Following suggestions are made based on results:

1. Plan to empower employees and creating an attractive, lively, and constructive

workplace:

2. Provide employees with necessary feedbacks so that they clearly become aware of how they affect on organizational results.
3. Create a qualified workplace and make investment to improve and expand the principles such as communicating skills, self-management, self-control, learning, using feedback and scores that can help employees' empowerment.
4. Applying reward systems to encourage citizenship behavior can enormously affects on citizenship behavior. Empowering citizenship behavior just like other human behavior needs encouragement and support. Organization managers can prepare the grounds for growing organizational citizenship behavior by establishing proper policies and strategies.
5. Provide employees with organizational mutual support when they will be faced with hard living problems such as losing their dear ones, illness, ...
6. Encourage and reward employees in cases of success either inside or outside the organization.
7. Pay attention to employees' suggestions and critiques.
8. To work on organizational tasks, managers must provide a bed with strategies and activities such as providing information,

empowering authority, participatory management, team making, and giving employees independence so that employees work with inner motivation and interest.

9. Reduce controls and limitations as much as possible and use strategies to attract employees.
10. Managers should pay attention as much as possible to employees' condition in family, social, job areas upon conflicts, inter organization interactions, and even making decision so that employees' exchanged commitment and union will be strengthened.
11. Organizations can highly facilitate citizenship behavior by creating regular and logical systems to provide employees with reward.

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