

Research Paper

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# Mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management (case study of Kerman Melli Bank branches)

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management with the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in Kerman Melli Bank branches. This research is descriptive-correlative in nature and method, and applicable from the point of view of the goal. The statistical population includes all the employees of Kerman Melli Bank branches, whose number was 240 in 1400, and due to the limitation of the statistical population, all its members were selected as a sample and studied in the form of a census. The research data was collected through a questionnaire (Wetan and Cameron Employee Empowerment, 1998; Oregon Organizational Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire, 1998; and Customer Relationship Management Questionnaire, Sin et al., 2005). Data analysis has been done using structural equations and Lisrel software. Research findings indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management with the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior. This result indicates that when an organization has capable employees, the amount of citizenship behavior and customer relationship management increases.

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## Extended Abstract

### Introduction

In the last few years, the term "customer relationship management" has attracted a lot of attention in the field of marketing and business and etc, especially private and public organizations and companies, as well as business consultants, heavily involved in this field and have developed the concept of customer relationship management, which means the organization's efforts to create and provide higher value to the customer (Panahi et al, 2020). Organizations have widely recognized that customers are their most important asset and they look at customer relationships and its quality of as mutually beneficial exchanges and as opportunities that need to be managed. Taghizadeh, (2015) in a research titled evaluating the effectiveness of customer relationship management based on the fuzzy inference system, reached the conclusion that customer relationship management is below average and needs improvement. So the factors affecting it should be investigated. One of the factors affective on customer relationship management is extra-role behavior or organizational citizenship behavior (Qureshi et al, 2015).

One of the proposed models in the field of organizational citizenship behavior is Organ's model (1980), the dimensions of which are: altruism, work conscience (duty commitment), chivalry, politeness, social etiquette. Many factors can affect organizational citizenship behavior; one of which is employee empowerment (Ismaili et al, 2011).

Research shows that the best strategy for solving the challenges facing organizations and achieving their goals is employee empowerment. In the management literature, the idea of empowered employees is repeatedly described as the main element of promoting innovation, organizational adaptability, improving customer relations, and increasing employee satisfaction. Empowerment and human resource development is a management approach in which employees are empowered to make decisions and participate in the decisions of the organization (Panahi et al., 2020). Employees have potential talents that can be actualized by means of empowerment. Managers can use the level of empowerment of employees to improve and develop the undesirable capabilities of employees and better use this organizational resource to achieve the organization's goals (Jasri, 2011).

According to the above mentioned, the main problem of the research is: what is the relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management with the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in Kerman Melli Bank branches?

### Theoretical framework

Empowering human resources means creating the set of necessary capacities in employees to enable them to create added value in the organization and fulfill the role and responsibility they have in the organization, combined with efficiency and effectiveness. Empowering employees has dimensions as follows: (1) Competence (2) Independence (3) Meaningfulness (4) Effectiveness (5) Trust (Conger & Konungo, 1998).

Applebaum (2004) states that organizational citizenship behaviors are precautionary behaviors that are not part of the formal work needs of employees, but they are things that promote the effective structure of the organization.

Customer relationship management requires a customer-oriented philosophy and culture to support effective marketing, and sales and after-sales service processes in the organization. A customer-centric culture is based on a simple concept of one-to-one communication between customers and vendors. This approach looks at each customer as an individual with their own demands, purchases and needs. By using customer relationship management, the company's relationship with customers and their needs are examined and studied. Customer relationship management is actually a process to collect and integrate information in order to use it

effectively and purposefully. This information can be related to customers, sales, effective marketing, market sensitivity and needs (Irannejad and Yadollahi, 2014).

Panahi et al, (2020) conducted a research under the title of the current research to investigate the effect of knowledge management in the implementation of customer relationship management with the mediating role of employee empowerment. The results indicated that knowledge management directly has a positive effect on employee empowerment, which in its own part directly effects on the implementation of management of customer communication and can lead to mutual synergy. Also, knowledge management can have a positive and meaningful impact on the implementation management of customer communication by empowering employees. Therefore, employee empowerment can strengthen the effect of knowledge management on customer relationship.

(Le & Ho,2020) conducted a research entitled investigating the relationship between benevolent leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) with the mediating role of member-leader exchange. The results of the analysis confirm the mediating effect of leader-member exchange in the relationship between benevolent leadership to OCBO and OCBI. University leaders can benevolently motivate university employees to perform extra-role behaviors that motivate not only the organization but also other colleagues and students by fostering a good quality leader exchange.

### Research methodology

The research method is descriptive-correlative in nature and applicable in terms of purpose. The statistical population of this research consists of all the employees of Melli Bank of Kerman, whose number has reached 240 in 1400. Due to the limitation of the statistical population, all its members have been selected as a sample and studied in the form of a census. Three questionnaires were used to collect data related to variables (employee empowerment questionnaire, Vaten & Camron standard questionnaire, (1998), organizational citizenship behavior questionnaire, questionnaire Organ (1998), customer relationship management questionnaire, Seen et al. (2005) questionnaire; based on a 5-point Likert scale (completely agree to completely disagree).

### Research findings

In order to investigate the research hypothesis and data analysis, structural equations and Lisrel were used, and the results showed that there is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management with the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in Melli Bank branches of Kerman. Empowering employees through citizenship behavior can improve customer relationship management. That is, by increasing the numerical value in empowering employees, organizational citizenship behavior will increase and as a result, customer relationship management will increase. These findings indicate that when an organization has capable employees, the amount of citizenship behavior and customer relationship management increases. The first sub-hypothesis test showed that there is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management in Kerman Melle Bank branches. That is, if employees feel competent, their motivation will be high, and as a result, customer relationship management will improve. The results of the second sub-hypothesis test showed that there is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior in Kerman Melli Bank branches. That is, having the feeling of the right to choose and the freedom of action of employees leads to the improvement of their level of job satisfaction and as a result, extra-role behaviors increase. The results of the third sub-hypothesis test showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and

customer relationship management in Kerman Melli Bank branches. It means that if the organization has loyal employees, compatible with the organizational goals and values, they will work beyond the prescribed duties, and as a result, customer relationship management will increase.

### **Conclusion**

The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the relationship between employee empowerment and customer relationship management with the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the branches of Melli Bank of Kerman. The results of this research are consistent with the results of research findings of Iran Nejad & Yadlahi, (2014); Qureshi et al, (2015) and Ismaili et al, (2011); which indicate that when an organization has capable employees, the amount of citizenship behavior and customer relationship management increases.

According to the present research, it is suggested that managers provide conditions so that employees are empowered and feel confident about their future careers. Also, try to make it possible for employees to increase their job skills. Try to make the employees feel that they are doing their duties successfully. Give employees more freedom of action.