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The Relationship between Leader Empowering Behavior and Affective Organizational Commitment: A Research among Nurses¹

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigated the relation of leader empowering behaviors with affective organizational commitment through a survey among nurses working in private hospitals in Turkey. It was hypothesized that the higher the individuals feel their leaders/supervisors empowering behaviors the more they commit to their organizations affectively. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the relationship between perceived leader empowering behaviors and nurses' affective commitment perceptions. A research study was performed on a sample of 255 nurses who were working in private hospitals. The findings showed that there is a positive significant relationship between perceived leader empowering behaviors and affective commitment perceptions of nurses.

KEYWORDS: Leader Empowering Behavior, Affective Organizational Commitment, Nurses

INTRODUCTION

Changes in business environment have forced organizations to reconsider managerial systems in order to remain competitive in a volatile economy. In the past, organizations were typically bureaucratic, hierarchic and rigid while today's successful competitors are flexible, fast and dependent on their front-line employees acting independently for the best interest of the company (Baker, 2000). Success in the market depends on building organizations on synergy, flexibility, collaboration, partnership and employee accountability in return for employee freedom. While globalization accelerates together with changing world and harsh competition in business world, the importance of independent employees acting fast, innovative, right and best has been increased. Thereby, empowerment has become an important theme of management and leadership practices. Empowerment is one of managerial strategy in which leaders distribute information, power, knowledge and rewards throughout the organization to make employees involved in job highly, think strategically about their works and jobs, take personal responsibility for the quality of their work so to obtain high performance results.

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Organizations have implemented many managerial approaches based on employee empowerment such as self-managed work teams, high-involvement work practices and they embraced total quality management to increase first-level employees' power that is limited in traditional organizations (Lawler, 1986). Managers thought that implementing and embracing these approaches create both organizational and employee-based benefits such as increased productivity, innovation, business performance, capacity to adapt to their environment, speed in replying the requirements of changing environment, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and powerful employees. (Wellins, Byham and Wilson, 1991). Unfortunately, implementation of empowering managerial practices does not always lead to outcomes as expected by corporations or managers (Cotton, 1996; Wagner, 1994). The researchers designated some situational variables as reasons of failure such as top management support, compensation; training, organizational climate could moderate the effectiveness of empowering practices (Borghei, Jandaghi, Matin and Dastani, 2009). In addition, researchers have searched for organizational and psychological climate to evaluate managerial effectiveness and employees' organizational attitudes (Cooke and Szumal, 1993). Moran and Volkwein (1992) argued that the leaders implement some empowering practices to obtain better organizational outputs such as better and more effective performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and creativity. But these practices should be meant to subordinates so they feel empowered and show better organizational behaviors so better organizational outputs. In this perspective, the current study aims at verifying if there is a relationship between the leader empowering behavior and employees' perception of affective commitment.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

2.1. The Definition of Empowerment

Employee empowerment has been generally approached as one of the managerial functions, which organizations can use to enable the employees to perform well and to respond the demanding world of global competition (Hur, 2006). In both business world and academic literature, empowerment concept emerged in late 1980. Initially, researchers have considered it as related to organizational practices or managerial techniques, redesigning of organization and was meant giving employees more authority in tasks and job-related activities (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Slatten, 2010), sharing of information in all levels of organization, implying ability to make decisions, encouraging and rewarding employees to exercise initiative and imagination (Zemke and Schaaf, 1989), implying freedom someone from rigid control by instructions, policies, orders and giving that person freedom to take responsibility for his/her ideas, decisions and actions to release hidden capabilities and engage with motivation towards better organizational results, delegation of power, autonomy, leadership skills, team building experiences (Borghei et al, 2010, p.64). Empowerment was defined as a state of mind, in which employees feel control about how they perform the job, aware of the context in which the job is executed, feel responsibility for individual work output; experience shared responsibility for organizational performance and equity in the rewards based on performance (Melhem, 2004, p.72). According to Yoon (2001, p.195), empowerment was an intrinsic motivation or self-determination, effective motivation or competency, sense of control, need for power and self-efficacy. Empowerment is the delegation of authority and decision-making to employees. Empowerment is a process in which employees gain power, authority and influence over other

employees and organization. Empowerment is combination of having decision- making power of their own, access to information and resources for taking proper decision, having options in making choices about how to do job, ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision-making. According to Scott, Jaffe and Tobe (1993), it refers to employees and managers sharing equal responsibility for outputs and increasing employees' contributions to an organization's success. Harley (1995) defined eight principles that managers should embrace to be successful in their efforts to empower employees. Those are protecting the dignity of all employees; managing perceptions, not just the facts; using organizational authority to release human potential rather than inhibiting; making decisions together with employees; clarifying vision, mission, objectives, goals and job descriptions; making employees feel that they are making the company a better place, making difference for others for the organization); coming from values; providing feedback requested by employees.

2.2. Managerial Empowerment Practices and Empowering leadership

Empowering managerial practices can be defined as a set of management practices aimed to increase employees' power and involvement in their work context. Since Lawler's studies (1986), it is commonly suggested that organizational empowering practices would be effective if they consist of four managerial practices: delegating decision-making to first-level employees, providing them training so they can assume an enriched work role, sharing relevant job and business information and providing contingent rewards to employee outcomes of achievement. Blanchard and his colleagues (1995) identified three key managerial practices associated with empowerment. Those are sharing information, creating autonomy through boundaries and building team accountability. Sharing information includes managers providing potentially sensitive organizational information on costs, productivity, quality, and financial performance to employees. Creating autonomy through boundaries refers to practices encouraging autonomous action, including the development of a clear vision and clarity regarding goals, work procedures, and areas of responsibility. In building team effectiveness, managers develop teams those receive decision-making authority and carry performance responsibilities in the organization (Randolph and Kemery, 2011, p.97).

Konczak, Stelly and Trusty (2000) developed a scale for empowerment focusing on the structural or relational perspective called "Leader Empowering Behavior Questionnaire" (LEBQ). The scale focuses on empowering behaviors of managers and consists of six dimensions these are delegation of authority(giving authority to make decisions that improve work processes and procedures, to make changes necessary to improve things, accountability (holding responsible for the work assigned, results, performance and customer satisfaction), self-directed decision making(encouraging employee to make his/her own decisions, create solution to problems), information sharing (sharing of everything that goes to high quality results), skill development (encouraging employee to use systematic problem solving methods, creating opportunities to develop new skills, giving importance to continuous learning) and coaching for innovative performance (taking risks and encouraging new ideas). The empowering behaviors of managers or leaders represented a type of leadership which focuses on empowering the subordinates and enables them to share decision-making, to use autonomy, and to have competency of their work.

As discussed previously, empowerment is conceptualized as a set of practices or managerial techniques in which empowering leadership behaviors play a central role (Conger and

Kanungo, 1988) (Raub and Robert, 2010, p.1744). Arnold and his colleagues (2000) defined behaviors of empowering leadership as leading by example, participative decision making, coaching, informing and showing concern/interacting with the team. While a manager enables his/her employees to participate on decision making, he/she encourages work group members to express ideas/suggestions, listens to work group's ideas and suggestions, uses work group's suggestions to make decisions that affect them, gives all work group members a chance to voice their opinions, considers work group's ideas when he/she disagrees with them. However, a manager makes coaching by helping work group see areas in which they need more training, suggesting ways to improve work group's performance, encouraging work group members to solve problems together and to exchange information with one another, providing help to work group members, teaching them how to solve problems on their own, paying attention to work group's efforts, telling work group when they perform well, supporting their efforts, helping them focusing on goals and developing good relations among work group members. A manager informs his/her work groups, explains company decisions, company goals, the purpose of the company's policies, rules and expectations and his/her decisions and actions. Also, a manager shows concern with their employees and interacts with them. He/ she cares about work group members' personal problems, shows concern for their well-being, treats them as equals, takes the time to discuss their concerns patiently, shows concern for their success, stays in touch with them, gets along with them, gives them honest and fair answers, knows what work is being done in work group and finds time to chat with them (Arnold et al, 2000). Additionally, Ahearne and his colleagues (2005) defined empowering leadership as enhancing the meaningfulness of work (make employees understand their objectives and goals relate to that of the company, the importance of their work to the overall effectiveness of the company, how their job fits into the bigger picture), fostering participation in decision making (making decisions together and consulting to employee on strategic decisions), expressing confidence in high performance (expressing confidence in employees' ability, ability to handle difficult tasks and performing in high level), providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (allowing employees to make their job on their own ways).

Thus, although structural empowerment defines behaviors or practices that leaders should implement to obtain better organizational results, leaders realized that there must be something on process beginning from empowering leadership towards better organizational results (Mills and Ungson, 2003). For example, in some situations, information, knowledge and power can be given to employees but they still feel disempowered. Otherwise, none of these requirements are met, but employees felt empowering actions (Spreitzer and Doneson, 2005). Thus, alternative conceptions of empowerment have emerged to explain for this deficiency. Although this approach established the base of empowerment, psychological state of the empowerment has been required. Other approach focuses on psychological empowerment as a cognitive motivational state considering individuals' psychological reactions to empowering practices and leadership behaviors (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). Consequently, it is suggested that both structural and psychological approaches are need for a better empowering leadership style.

2.4. Organizational Commitment

In 1984, Meyer and Allen recommended a two dimensional conceptualization of organizational commitment namely, affective and continuance commitment. In 1990, they added a third component called normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Originally introduced by Weiner and Vardi (1980), normative commitment is defined as feelings of obligation to stay in an organization because of the belief that it is best and right thing to do as a job compared to other probable job. Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that commitment is a psychological state indicating an employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to continue or discontinue to organization as a member. Meyer and Allen (1991) further posited that affective, continuance and normative commitments are not types of commitment rather they are component. Hence an employee's relationship with the organization might reflect varying levels of all three. Thus, Meyer and Allen (1987) described organizational commitment with three dimensions those are affective, continuance and normative commitment.

Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment to an organization. Employee with strong sense of affective commitment continues to stay at his/her employing organization as members of it because he/she wants to and be happy of being in that organization. These people identifies with their organizations, feel involved in and enjoys of being member in that organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) suggest that affective commitment is obtained from work experiences that satisfy employees' need to feel comfortable in the organization and contribute to their feelings of competence in the work role (Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1982). Affective organizational commitment is associated to mainly positive work experiences, such as job satisfaction and organizational fairness, higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviors and lower levels of withdrawal behaviors like absenteeism.

Continuance commitment refers to an attachment to an organization based on an employee's awareness of the costs related to discontinuing being member of employing organization. Employees of an organization with a strong sense of this commitment to the organization stay in that organization because they feel they need to remain as a result of calculating the benefits and costs of being membership or not and decide on stay as a result of weighing benefits against the costs of membership in the organization. Remaining with an organization results from the fact that cost of quitting is much more from benefits of staying such as investments in the organization in terms of time, money and effort (Mowday et al., 1982). It has two primary antecedents and those are lack of job alternatives. It represents a need to stay with the organization and is not related to positive organizational or individual outcomes.

Normative commitment is defined as an attachment to an organization in which employee thinks ethical dimensions of staying and quitting. Employees of an organization with a strong sense of normative commitment to the employing organization stay as a member of that organization because of they feel obligated to be an employee of it. It is seen as the accumulation of internalized normative pressures to act in a way which meets organizational goals and objectives (Wiener, 1982). Normative commitment is argued to develop from organizational commitment norms that are developed through familial, cultural or organizational socialization. It appears to be predictive of positive outcomes but not as strongly as affective commitment (Wasti, 2002).

Borghei and his colleagues (2010) have found a significant relationship between all dimensions of psychological empowerment and organizational commitment. According to Beer and

Spector (1985), commitment required of creation high trust relations between all members of the workforce, which in turn meant employees being able to exercise influence and in some way be empowered that is captured by Spreitzer's psychological empowerment scale. In this study psychological empowerment is approached as antecedent of organizational commitment. Meyer, Becker, and Vandenberghe (2004) indicated a strong relationship between intrinsic motivations and affective commitment. The meaning dimension of psychological empowerment invites affective organizational commitment because it measures the harmony between work role demands and employee's needs (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson, 2005; Spreitzer, 1995). Feelings of autonomy, competence and impact are likely to increase the individual's commitment to the organization, as they will further enhance the ability of the employee to express his /her values through his/her work. Finally, psychological empowerment is also associated with increased continuance commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991), because the loss of an empowering work arrangement may be seemed as the sacrifice of something valuable that is difficult to replace with another organization.

2.5. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

2.5.1. The relationship between leader empowering behaviors and affective commitment

Raub and Robert (2010) examined the impact of empowering leadership behaviors (ELBs) and psychological empowerment on a broad range of employee behaviors. Drawing on self-determination theory (Gagné and Deci, 2005), they hypothesized that ELBs directly influence in-role and affiliate extra-role behaviors, but that the influence of ELBs on challenging extra-role behaviors would be mediated by psychological empowerment. Results supported their hypotheses of direct and mediated effects of ELBs on employee behaviors. Drawing on self-determination theory (SDT; Gagné and Deci, 2005; Sheldon et al., 2003) researchers developed basic principles for distinguishing work behaviors that might be directly affected by empowering leader behaviors (ELBs) from those for which psychological empowerment is likely to be an important mediator of the ELB/employee behavior relationship. According to SDT, motivation differs not only in intensity, but also in quality. SDT depicts that some types of behavior are driven mostly by controlled motivation, which is activated by contingencies external to the individual, while others are stimulated by autonomous motivation, which implies a sense of choice (Gagné and Deci, 2005). They proposed that while in-role and affiliative extra-role behaviors are likely to result from controlled motivation, challenging extra-role behavior clearly requires more autonomous forms of motivation. They suggested that psychological empowerment as a mediating variable representing the autonomous motivation necessary for the execution of challenging extra-role behaviors while show that in-role and affiliative extra-role behaviors are not typically driven by autonomous motivation, psychological empowerment is not in need to be mediator between ELBs and those behaviors. In 1995, Van Dyne et al defined in-role behaviors as related the duties and responsibilities that are formally assigned as part of a work role, whereas extra-role behaviors are organizationally beneficial discretionary behaviors that are independent from the scope of an employee's formal job duties (Raub and Robert, 2010, p.5). As a result, psychologically empowered employees are likely to proactively take their job responsibilities (Spreitzer, 1995, p.1448), involving foreseeing problems and taking the initiative to come with a new constructive change (Morrison and Phelps, 1999). When employees feel psychologically empowered they have internalized the values related to engagement in autonomous, self-determined activities. As a result, they are

likely to engage in challenging extra-role behaviors not because they feel obliged to do, but rather because they perceive that such behavior as self-determined' (Gagné and Deci, 2005, p.335). Gagne', Boies, Koestner, and Martens (2004) thus predicted that affective commitment would be facilitated by employees' autonomous motivation. Hence, based on previous studies, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant positive relationship between perceived leader empowering behaviors and employees' affective commitment.

2.5.2. Variables and research model

The variables of the research and the theoretical model of the present study can be presented as follows:

Dependent variable: Affective organizational commitment

Independent variable: Leader empowering behavior

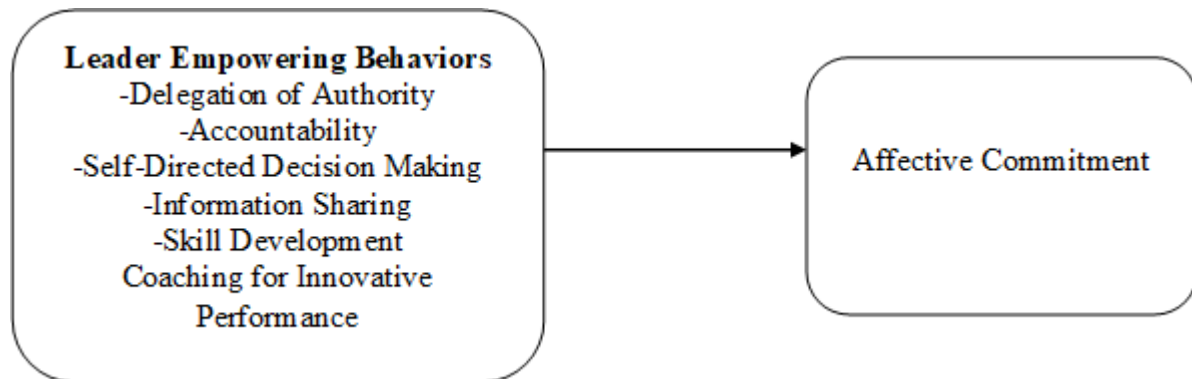


Figure 1. Theoretical model of present study

3. METHODOLOGY

This part of study gives a brief information about methodology applied during research process, the variables of the study, the scales measuring the variables, sampling approach and characteristics of the participants, selection of study organizations and employees and questionnaire distribution process will be explained in detail.

3.1 Research Design and the Sample

This study is conducted for the purpose of describing characteristics of the relationship between empowering leadership behavior and affective organizational commitment. The survey method is applied to evaluate the relationship between this study's main variables. The unit of analysis refers to the level of aggregation of the data analysis stage and in this research, the unit of analysis is individual employees in organizations. This is a cross-sectional study as the data were gathered through convenience sampling method. The convenience sampling approach was utilized in which organizations and participants were selected because of their convenient accessibility to the researcher. The participants were the 255 employees (nurses) from different hospitals in health care sector. The participants were asked to evaluate behaviors of their superiors through leader empowering behavior questionnaire. Participants contributed to the study by computer based questionnaires. The surveys were distributed via an online internet survey site. The questions regarding the demographic characteristics of the participants

included age, education level, gender, total tenure in the work life, tenure in current organization. Some of these demographic questions were asked as open-ended questions. The table 1 below shows the demographical properties of sample that used in the current study. Accordingly, approximately male and female percentages are distributed equally. Most of participants, %80, are undergraduates.%63 of sample are aged between 22 and 30. And most of sample worked in their current work between 1 and 5 years.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Samples

VARIABLE		N	%
Gender	Female	138	54
	Male	117	46
Education	Undergraduate	189	80
	Graduate	44	19
	Doctorate	3	1
Age	22-30	147	62,6
	31-40	76	32,3
	41-54	7	5,1
Working Time	1-5 years	182	77
	6-12 years	33	14
	13-33 years	20	9

3.2. Measurement Tools

The scale used in this study was composed of three parts. The first part of scale contained items about empowering leadership behavior. The second part of scale included items attempting to evaluate the affective organizational commitment. In the third part, respondents were asked to give information about their demographics (age, gender, educational level, work time experiences... etc). All items were measured on 5 items likert type scale accordingly from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree".

"Leader empowering behaviors" were measured with Konczak et al. (1999) 17 items Leader Empowering Behavior Questionnaire which includes subscales reflecting delegation of authority, accountability, self-directed decision making, information sharing, skill development and coaching for innovative performance.

"Affective commitment" was measured with 9 item organizational commitment scale, which includes subscales affective, normative and continuance commitment. Following Eisenberger et al. (1990), affective commitment to the organization was measured using seven items from Meyer and Allen's (1984) affective commitment scale and two items from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979; Porter et al., 1974). These items were selected because they seem most proper for explaining the feelings of liking for, pride in and organizational membership valuation assumed to underlie the affective style of organizational commitment. (Lamastro, 2009).

3.3. Procedure

This analysis is based on the information collected randomly from various private hospitals in Turkey. 360 questionnaires were distributed to employees and 255 returned with a 71 %

response rate. The survey was administered using the total design method, consisting of the first round telephone calling, mail or visit, the second round telephone calling to remind and the second round mail. Also, if it was necessary the third round telephone calls were done or e-mails were sent.

4. FINDINGS

The collected data was recorded to SPSS (Version 18). The reverse coded items were recoded. The data was analysed by checking the normal distribution and linearity of each item of the scales. In questionnaire, there were only two questions having reverse effect in affective organizational commitment. After they are recoded, during the factor and reliability analysis, they were excluded from the analysis. The research findings are presented in three sections. The first section comprises the results of the internal reliability analysis and factor analysis of each questionnaire; the second section comprises the correlation matrix which includes all the research variables; the third section is dedicated to hypothesis tests and other findings which facilitate the evaluation of results.

4.1. The Factor and Reliability Analysis Results

The results of the reliability analysis are given in the following Tables.

As Table 2 shows, factor analysis was done to specify the sub dimensions leader empowering behavior questionnaire as it is the same like in the literature consisting of six sub- dimensions, delegation of authority, accountability, self-directed decision making, information sharing, skill development and coaching for innovative performance or different. To measure the validity of the whole questionnaire for factor analysis Keiser Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy test and Barlett's Test of Sphericity test were conducted and because of KMO value is above the 0.50 and barlett test value is significant 0.000, the data set was found proper for the factor analysis. (KMO=0,872, $\chi^2_{\text{Barlett test}}(55) = 1730,406$, $p = 0,000$).

The factor analysis using Varimax and components rotation was done for 17 items, which related to six sub dimensions each consisting of three questions except information sharing sub-dimension consisting of two questions. Factor analysis grouped measurement into three sub-dimension rather than six. Questions with measure of sampling adequacy value under 0,50, with similar factor weights and factor weights under value of 0,50 were excluded from the analysis. Accordingly, questions 19, 27, 28 were excluded. Next, reliability analysis was done for each three sub-dimension to measure factors' internal consistency calculated by Cronbach α values. Some questions excluded from the factors because if these items were deleted from the analysis, cronbach α values would be increased. These items decreased the value of internal consistency.

Table 2. Empowering Leader Behavior Factor Analysis Results

Factor Name	Items	Factor weight	Variance explained	Reliability
Supporting	My manager shares information that I need to ensure high quality results.	0,837	30,932	0,891
	My manager provides me with the information I need to meet patients' needs.	0,818		
	My manager ensures that continuous learning and skill development are priorities in organization.	0,775		
	My manager provides me with frequent opportunities to develop new skills.	0,758		
	My manager encourages me to use systematic problem-solving methods.	0,631		
Delegation	My manager gives me the authority I need to make decisions that improve work processes.	0,860	28,699	0,893
	My manager gives me the authority to make changes necessary to improve things.	0,810		
	My manager relies on me to make my own decisions about issues that affect how work gets done.	0,792		
	My manager encourages me to develop my own solutions to problems I encounter in the organization.	0,753		
Accountability	My manager holds me accountable for the work I am assigned.	0,650	15,287	0,738
	I am held accountable for performance and results.	0,598		
Total			74,918	
Keiser Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			0,872	
Barlett's Test of Sphericity			1730,406	
df			55	
Sig.			0,000	

Cronbach α values which are 0,891; 0,893 and 0,738 those are above the value of 0,70 as a criteria. This questionnaire explained % 74,918 of variance. Thus this measurement used in this analysis is valid and have internal consistency.

Table 3. Affective Organizational Commitment Factor Analysis Results

Factor Name	Items	Factor weight	Variance explained	Reliability
Affective organizational commitment	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization.	,930	74,422	0,941
	Working at this organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	,899		
	I feel emotionally attached to this organization.	,875		
	I really feel that any problems faced by this organization are also my problems.	,854		
	I would be happy to work at this organization until I retire.	,844		
	I am proud to tell others that I work at this organization.	,820		
	This organization deserves my loyalty.	,811		
Total			74,422	
Keiser Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			0,921	
Barlett's Test of Sphericity			1551,230	
df			21	
Sig.			0,000	

As seen in Table 3, because only one sub-dimension of organizational commitment questionnaire which is affective commitment is included into current analysis, reliability analysis was done for all nine items to measure factor's internal consistency calculated by Cronbach α values which is 0,921. During reliability analysis two questions have been excluded from the analysis because their decreasing affects on internal consistency and factor analysis is done with seven remained questions. The questionnaire explained % 74,422 of variance as shown $KMO=0,921$, $\chi^2_{\text{Barlett test}}(21)=1551,230$, $p=0,000$ in Table 5.

4.2. Correlation Analysis for the Testing of Hypothesis

The hypothesis 1 proposed the relationship between leader empowering behavior and affective organizational commitment and in order to examine this relationship correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation Analysis (r)	
			1	2
1. Empowering Leadership	3,7655	,63851	1	0,498**
2. Affective Commitment	3,3556	1,0125	0,498**	1

As seen in Table 4, the results of testing a direct effect model show the finding that indicates leader empowering behavior is positively and significantly correlated with affective commitment ($r=0,498$, $p<0.01$). Accordingly, H1 was supported. This result demonstrates that

the ability of leaders to properly implement empowering processes in implementing job functions have directly increased affective organizational commitment and employee's feelings of commitment in the sample organizations.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Today's managerial efforts referring to increasing perception of empowerment, creating empowering culture in organizations to vitalize employees to work better and obtain better outcomes are useless as long as managements do not capture the empowerment process correctly. Empowerment is not simply giving employees much more discretion, resources, delegating control to serve better for the interests of employers. Empowerment is an inner to outer dynamic and it should be processed by inner consciousness of employees. If this process is seen as a way of taking something from employees by employers, rather than supporting employees' living life fully; if importance is given to control of employees for the efficiency of organization by management rather than to worker responsibility and belief about employees' able to work for the interests of organizations; if it is seen as only delegation rather than a process in which employees want to be part of it voluntarily and seen as participation rather than allowing employees to actually make decisions affecting their work activities and push authority to lower levels, all of these empowering actions becomes worthless. To be succeed in empowering actions, managers should consider some organizational (corporate actions, policies, unwritten rules), structural (information sharing, upward problem solving, accessing to information), cultural (approach to time, space, trust), individual (need for achievement, authority, affection, locus of control, self efficacy, self esteem) and job characteristics (task identity, task significance, skill variety, autonomy, feedback), environmental events, task and global assessments, interpretative styles, behaviors and interventions as moderating variables on the perception of empowerment. Managers should observe rightly all things that go around, recognize and visualize the outputs of empowerment efforts in different perspectives and consider the dilemmas. For example, if leaders dominate the work region with high visibility, employees might be silence because of often presence of leader. Otherwise, employees might complain about the lack of support by leaders in situation of low visibility. Employees might want to be independent in their work but they can also avoid from carrying all responsibility in decisions and work results. If an organization gives importance to working collaboratively and if managers in that organizations empower the employees, this might create perception of affective commitment towards the organization. Employees must always be involved in decisions which affect their work and empowerment is one of the strategies which can be used by management to motivate and retain employees in organizations. Empowerment creates sense of responsibility among employees, a high degree of commitment and reduces employee turnover.

Consequently, the current study was performed to understand if manager's empowering behaviors have relation with employees' affective commitment. The results of the study showed that employees who only perceive consciously empowering behaviors of their leaders show affective commitment to their organizations. The findings revealed that the leader empowering behaviors had significant positive relationship with employees' affective commitment perceptions. These findings suggest that employees' affective commitment to the organization is influenced by the empowering behaviors of their leaders in organizational environment.

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the study, other variables, such as personality, demographics, contextual variables, cultural variable can be examined as contingent factors that may have role on the relationship between leader empowering behaviors and affective commitment. For example, a research, should be done by considering organizational culture, other personality characteristics, job characteristics and socio cultural characteristics. In term of sampling there is another limitation since the sample size of the study is not too wide to generalize the findings. Therefore, it is suggested for the future studies that the research variables should be surveyed among larger sample groups including different organizations, sectors, positions, etc.

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