

Gender, Work Performance and Workers Empowerment: A Statistical Interrogation

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ABSTRACT

Employee Empowerment refers to the allocation of powers assigned to the employees working in an organization for making some decisions. Gender determines employee empowerment. The study is to identify that empowerment level of workers among the male and female employees. For this purpose, the data was gathered from 119 banking professionals and 106 healthcare professionals in Puducherry. Organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees' perceptions over work, views towards organization, work performance and employee empowerment are the factors considered for the study. The results of the study found that female professionals are having better employee empowerment as compared to that of the male respondents. Suggestions such as better organizational support, supportive peers, better work life balance, work autonomy and job satisfaction are provided for improving the employee empowerment.

Keywords: Employee Empowerment, Work Performance, Gender, Banking professionals, Healthcare professionals.

INTRODUCTION:

Gender determines empowerment of the employees. There is a myth in a society, that male employees are empowered more than that of the number of women workers in an organization. But, practically speaking it is not so in the common practice. The employees are empowered only based upon their performance on the work. Generally, there employee empowerment is not decided based upon the gender (Finegan, Joan E, Spence Laschinger, 2001; Keziban Kaymakci, Sumeyra Babacan, 2014). But, the level of empowerment may across gender (Finegan, Joan E, Spence Laschinger, 2001). Henceforth, this study is undertaken in order to identify the level of employee empowerment across male and female working professionals.

Employee empowerment refers to the allocation of more powers to the working professionals. Such power is allotted to the employees based on the certain factors like citizenship behavior, workplace relationships and many more. The additional powers are allocated to the employees based upon position in the organization. Such employee empowerment among the banking and healthcare employees in Puducherry are discussed in this research work.

Defining Employee Empowerment:

Employee empowerment is the laying down of more powers to the workers which is more than their normal job description. Various definitions have been framed for the employee empowerment by many different researchers and authors. Sanjay T. Menon, (2001), stated the workers' psychological empowerment as the cognitive circumstance due to an act of perceived control, capacity and intentional internalization. The staff empowerment could also be described as keeping lower towards the business and self-driven in meeting the demands of the business through proper decision making for the purpose of attaining the ultimate objective of

the business (Herrenkohl RC et al., 1999). Employee empowerment is the authorization provided by the organization via connotation and arrangement through the enhancement by laying more powers to the workers (Amir Abou Elanga, Amen Imran, 2014).

REVIEW OF PAST STUDIES:

Rosman BM Yusoff, et al., (2015), find out that there is a strong and positive association with that of the social, environmental and economic performance among the 100 employees working in manufacturing industry in Malaysia through structural equation modeling technique. Jalal Hanaysha (2016) identified that workers empowerment and team work has a significant impact on the productivity of 242 personnel working in public varsities in North India. Spence Laschinger HK, et al., (2013), discovered that dependable management is inversely interrelated with the employee empowerment among 273 nurses. Chun-Fang Chaing, Tsung-Sheng Hsieh (2012), revealed that observed organizational support and personnel empowerment are optimistically associated with organizational citizenship behavior among 513 employees working in hotels at Taiwan. Clinton Linnaeus De Zilva, Wai Nam Wong (2012), found that highly empowered workers are delivering examination excellence in the organization among luxury hotel business employees in Singapore. Kai Hung Fong, Ed Snape (2015), has find that the leadership style has an interrelationship with that of the employee empowerment among 266 employees working in Hong Kong Telecommunications Corporation.

Ugwu FO, et al., (2014) found that managerial trust and workforce empowerment influences the work engagement among 715 employees working in commercial banks and pharmaceutical industry in Nigeria. Azman Ismail, et al., (2011), found that the employee empowerment and transformational management are significantly correlated with the organizational commitment. Emmanuel Erastus Yamoah (2013), described that employee empowerment would lead to better work performance. Krishna Murari (2013) revealed that the abusive leadership features such as haughtiness and thoughtlessness is negatively related to the employee empowerment.

Mariuz Bratnicki, Monika Kulikowska-Mrozek, Izabela Marzee, Przemyslaw Zbierowski (2007) identified that that employee empowerment and organizational performance are positively related with one another. Adolreza Miri, Hassan Rangriz, Esmail Sabzikaran (2011) found that there is a stronger affiliation amid managerial structure and employees' empowerment among the employees working in National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company. Sharon Pande, Udayan Dhar (2014) identified self-evaluation, pro-activeness, self-efficacy, internal locus of control and risk taking abilities are the factors responsible for the employee empowerment among 243 employees. Abbasi Moghadam, Bakhtiari, Raadabadi, Bahadori (2013) identified that there is a strong association amid the managerial knowledge and the personnel empowerment among 310 nurses.

Robert C. Liden et al., (2000) found that workers' psychological empowerment does not mediated the association amid the leader and team-member exchange and the occupational outcomes. Mushipe Zuvarashe Judith (2012) has found that organizational commitment and the different proportions of empowerment of personnel namely decision-making, power-sharing and information-sharing are positively associated with one another. Said Shaban Hamed (2010) has identified that employee empowerment are optimistically related to role clarity, organizational trust, job involvement and job satisfaction among 862 working professionals.

Research Gap:

As there are numerous studies on the employee empowerment such as those conducted by the authors and researchers like Perminder Jit Singh, KS Sangwan (2011); Gilad Chen, et al., (2007); Lynn Holsworth, Susan Cartwright (2002); Bradley L. Krikman, Benson Rosen (1999); Chun-Fang Chiang, SooCheong(Shwan) Jang (2007); Ruta Kazalaukaite, Ilona Buciuniene, Linas Turauskas (2012); Steffen Raub, Christopher Robert (2012); Robert Davison, Maris G. Martinsons (2012); Geetha Jose, Sebastian Rupert Mampilly (2014); and many more. But such authors failed to study about the employee empowerment from the perspective of gender amid banking and healthcare professionals in Puducherry with the constructs namely organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees' perspectives over job, employees' views towards the organization, work performance and employee empowerment. Henceforth, in order to fulfill this research gap, the study has been undertaken.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Major aim is to identify the level of empowerment of workers among the male and female banking and hospitality professionals working in Puducherry. The secondary aim is to make out the associations of the

influencers of the employee empowerment namely organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees’ perceptions over the work, employees’ views towards the organization and work performance amid the male and female respondents.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

Based upon the above objectives considered for the study, the following objectives are framed for the study.
 H_0^1 : There is no significant difference amid the guy and feminine interviewees with respect of factors considered for the study.
 H_0^2 : Work performance has no significant association with that of the gender and level of work performance.
 H_0^3 : The Level of influencers of employee empowerment and the employee empowerment (resulting factor) of both the male and female employees are equal.

Restrictions of the exploration:

225 employees are the sample size and it is restricted to the banking and the hospitality employees within Puducherry. The study is also limited with five influencers like organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees’ perceptions over the work, employees’ views towards the organization and work performance and with resulting factor employee empowerment. Therefore, if the sample size has been extended along with if the different settings are changed and added with different sample region along with more factors, then there are many probabilities of obtaining different results.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Data for the study has been obtained from 225 respondents consisting of 119 banking and 106 healthcare professionals working in Puducherry. Data has been collected through the non-convenience sampling technique. The data has been obtained from the workers employed in various banks and hospitals in Puducherry region of Pondicherry U.T. through structured questionnaires. The collected data has been analyzed using t-test, chi-square test and U test.

FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR THE STUDY:

Conceptual framework of the study:

The expected relationship between the factors considered for the study has been provided below in the form of diagrammatic illustration. It consists of certain demographic factors and the organizational factors influencing the employee empowerment among the respondents. The projected relationship is presented below as follows.

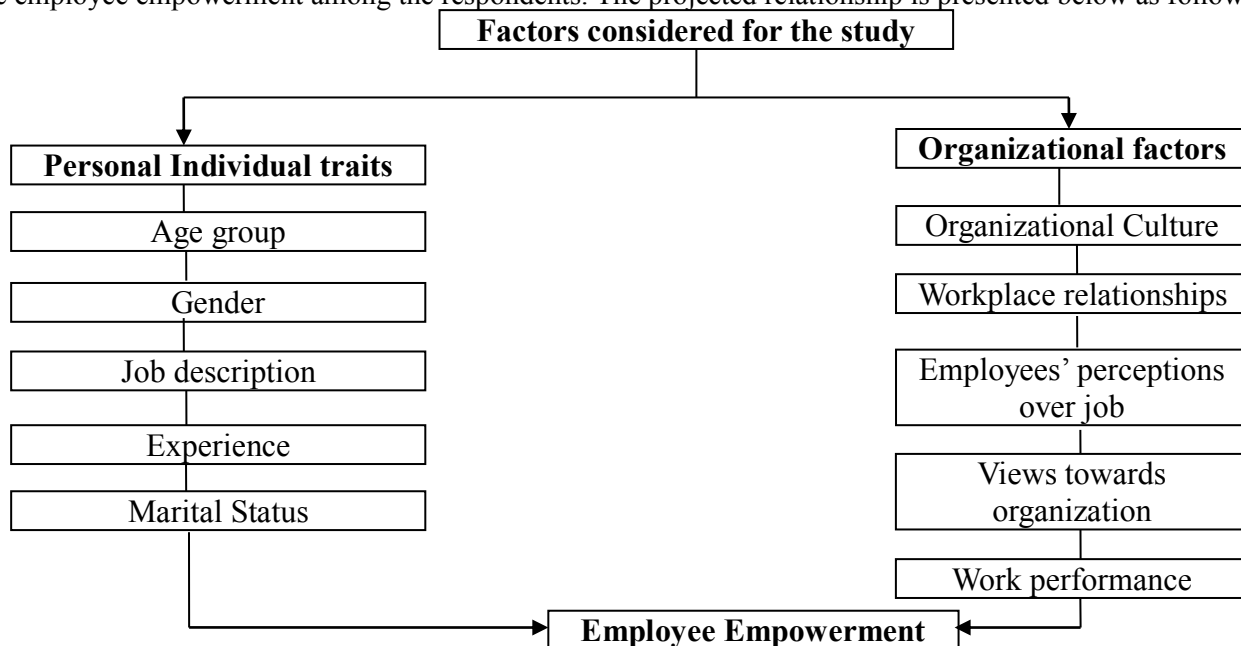


Figure 1: Factors considered for the study

This above figure clearly projects the variables taken for the study. For the purpose of analysis, the variables are classified into personal individual traits of the respondents and the organizational factors. This personal individual trait of the interviewees includes the sub-constructs like gender, age group, job description, experience and marital status. While the organizational factor consists of the variables namely organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees' perceptions over job, views towards the organization and work performance.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Personal individual traits of the respondents:

Personal traits of the interviewees refer to the individual demographic characteristics of the entire population taken for the study. Constructs such as age group, gender, work description, experience and marital status are considered for the study. Age group could be further sub divided into upto 30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years and above 50 years, gender could be classified as male and female and work description is better classified into banking and healthcare professionals. The experience of the interviewees in terms of below 10 years, 10-15 years and above 15 years, while the marital status of the respondents could be classified into married and unmarried.

Organizational Factors:

These are the major constructs that are considered to be influencing the employee empowerment. Such factors are organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees perceptions over job, views towards the organization, work performance are the major influencers of the employee empowerment among the respondents as per the study. They are explained below in detail.

1. Organizational Culture (OC):

Organizational culture refers to the working conditions, favorable organizational policies and organizational support provided to their employees. Favorable working conditions and organizational policies such as flexi time, better work life balance, employee grievance redressal programme, paid vacations, reimbursement of entire medical and educational expenses of the employees and their dependents and other financial and non-financial benefits and improved organizational support improves the probabilities of the empowerment of the employees.

2. Workplace relationships (WPR):

Workplace relationships are considered as one of the influencer of the employee empowerment. If the all types of relationships among the employees such as with the co-workers, peers, employer, superior and subordinates are favorable towards the working professionals, then there would be more chances of getting empowered in the organization. If the workplace relationships are not so favorable towards the workers, then there are no chances of being empowered.

3. Employees perceptions over job (EPOJ):

Employees' thoughts towards their work determines the EE. Employees' perceptions over the work could either be positive or negative. Positive thoughts about the work make the employees to work hard and as a result, they could be easily empowered. But, on the other hand, the negative views about the job make the workers to have no chances for the empowerment.

4. View towards the organization (VTO):

Workers views towards the organization play a critical role in the enlargement of the EE. The views may be positive or else even negative. Such positive thoughts about the organization paves way for the better employee empowerment while, the negative thoughts about the organization ends up in the absence of being empowered at work by the management towards the employees.

5. Work performance (WP):

Work performance is the last predictor of the employee empowerment among the workers. Work performance is influenced due to the plenty of reasons such as the organizational commitment, work contentment, work life balance and other plenty of reasons. If the performance of the employees on their job is higher, it would result in the improved employee empowerment, whereas the reduced work performance results in the reduction on the chances and opportunities of being empowered at work.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Reliability Analysis:

The cronbach’s reliability analysis has been tested with regard to have a better accuracy and the validity of the questionnaire. For this purpose, 50 cases has been adopted in a questionnaire containing 30 items. The alpha value for the questionnaire is .7024 and as the alpha value is between 0.8 to 0.7 which denotes better accuracy of the values. It has been identified that the questionnaire is accurate, stronger and reliable.

Personal individual traits of the respondents:

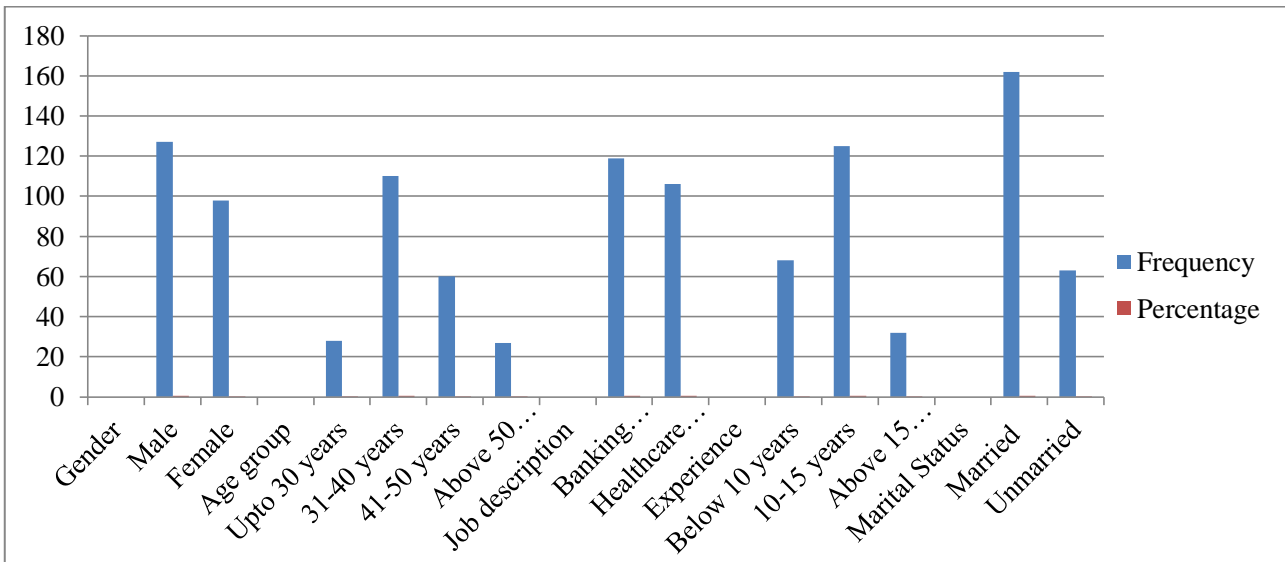
Personal individual traits of the interviewees are classified on to the following features namely gender, age group, work description, experience and marital status among the workers. They are presented below.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of personal individual traits among 225 banking and healthcare professionals

Personal individual traits	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	127	56.4%
Female	98	43.6%
Total	225	100%
Age group		
Upto 30 years	28	12.4%
31-40 years	110	48.9%
41-50 years	60	26.7%
Above 50 years	27	12%
Total	225	100%
Job description		
Banking professional	119	52.9%
Healthcare professional	106	47.1%
Total	225	100%
Experience		
Below 10 years	68	30.2%
10-15 years	125	55.6%
Above 15 years	32	14.2%
Total	225	100%
Marital Status		
Married	162	72%
Unmarried	63	28%
Total	225	100%

Source: Primary data

Considering the personal individual traits of the respondents, taking the first variable namely gender, the male employees are maximum in the number i.e., by 127 respondents, while the women respondents amounted to 98 in number. Taking into account the age group of the respondents, the highest respondents i.e., 110 interviewees are aged within the group 31-40 years, followed by it, 60 employees are within the age group 41-50 years, then 28 respondents reported that they are aged within 30 years and the least number of workers are aged above 50 years i.e., by 27 respondents. Concerning the work description of the interviewees, the maximum employees are bankers with 119 professionals and 106 employees are healthcare professionals. As far as the experience of the workers are concerned, 125 workers are having experience from 10-15 years, then 68 workers are experienced below 10 years and the lowest experience range is above 15 years because it has only 32 personnel within this range. Considering the marital status of the workers, 162 employees are married and they are maximum in number, whereas 63 interviewees are unmarried and they are minimum in number.



Bar Graph 1: Graphical representation of the demographic profile of the respondents

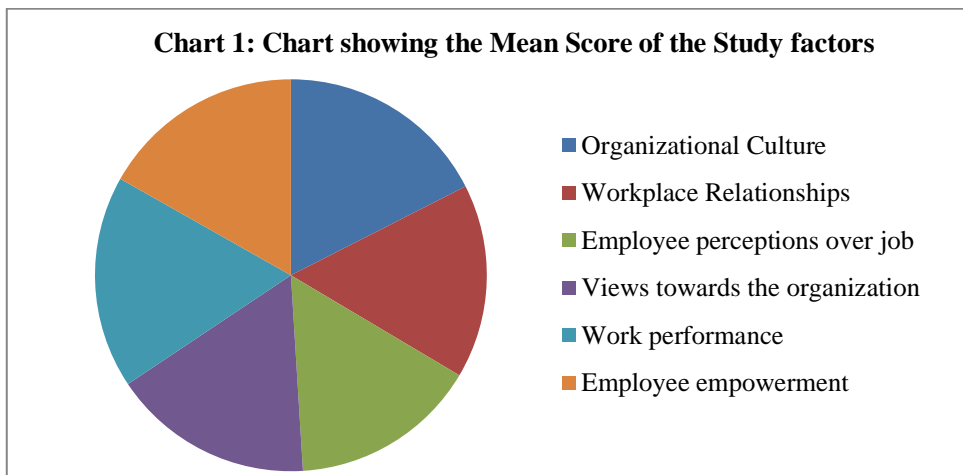
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE STUDY FACTORS:

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of The Factors Influencing Employee Empowerment and Employee Empowerment

Factors considered for the study	Mean	Standard Deviation
Organizational Culture	19.39	5.63
Workplace Relationships	17.74	5.33
Employee perceptions over job	17.16	5.99
Views towards the organization	18.40	5.43
Work performance	19.44	3.49
Employee empowerment	18.62	5.88

Source: Primary Data

The above table 2 and chart 1 clearly displays the mean and standard deviation of the factors considered for the study. Considering the constructs taken for the study, the work performance is the highest influencer of the employee empowerment at 19.44 mean, followed by it, the constructs namely organizational culture influences the employee empowerment at 19.39 mean, then by the views towards the organization at 18.40 mean, then by the workplace relationships at 17.74 mean and then by the employees perceptions over work at 17.16 mean. Lastly, the employee empowerment has a mean score of 18.62 mean.



Null Hypothesis: I

H₀¹: There is no significant difference amid the guy and feminine workers with respect to factors considered for the study

Table 3: t-test for significant difference between the male and female respondents with regard to the factors considered for the study

Factors considered for the study	Gender				t value		P value	
	Male		Female					
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	M	F	M	F
Organizational Culture	18.59	6.044	20.42	4.882	-2.441	-2.509	.015*	.013*
Workplace Relationships	17.09	5.539	18.58	4.943	-2.103	-2.134	.037*	.034*
Employee Perceptions over Job	16.28	6.433	18.31	5.174	-2.542	-2.613	.012*	.010**
Views towards Organization	17.59	5.730	19.44	4.846	-2.563	-2.619	.011*	.009**
Work Performance	18.78	3.779	20.31	2.859	-3.330	-3.449	.001**	.001**
Employee Empowerment	17.50	6.312	20.06	4.936	-3.305	-3.410	.001**	.001**

Source: Primary Data

** denotes significant at 1% level

* denotes significant at 5% level

SD denotes Standard deviation,

M denotes Male,

F denotes Female.

Since P value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level with regard to the study factors namely organizational culture and workplace. Henceforth, it could be stated that there is a significant difference between the male and female workers with regard to the organizational culture and workplace relationships in influencing the employee empowerment. Depending upon the mean score, the female employees have better organizational culture and workplace relationships as compared to their male counterparts as they have more commitment towards their profession. Since, the majority of male workers, themselves accepted due to their personal commitments and social life, they could not concentrate on their work and its demands with fullest concentration as compared to that of the female respondents.

As the P value is lower than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with respect of the employees' perceptions over work and employees' views towards the organization among the male employees. While, the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level with regard to the workers' perceptions over job and personnel's ideas towards the organization for the female workers. Therefore, it is identified that there is a significant difference between the male and the female employees with regard to the factors employees' perceptions over work and employees' views towards the organization on inducing the workers' empowerment. Based on the mean score, the women workers are have more positive perceptions towards their work and more optimistic views towards their organization than that of the male workers as the having highest level of passion towards their work as to that of the male. This is due to fact, which men have to look after all his family commitments as he holds the position of family head, because of which he could not concentrate on his work.

P values of the factors namely work performance and employee empowerments are lesser than that of the 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level. It is better concluded that there is a significant difference between the men and women workers in their level of work performance and the employee empowerment. Based upon the mean value, the women employees are having better employee empowerment and work performance as compared to their male counterparts. It is due to the major reason that women employees are having better organizational culture, proper workplace relationships, positive perceptions towards the work and the organization and as a result, their work performance arises. This in turn ends up in the better employee empowerment and which is lower for the male workers.

Null Hypothesis II:

H₀²: Work performance has no significant association with that of the gender and level of work performance.

Table 4: Chi-square test for association between gender and level of work performance as a base for the determination of the employee empowerment

Gender	Level of Work Performance			Total	Chi-square value	P value
	Low	Moderate	High			
Male	47 (37.0%) [68.1%]	58 (45.7%) [56.9%]	22 (17.3%) [40.7%]	127 (100%) [56.4%]	9.247	.010**
Female	22 (22.4%) (31.9%)	44 (44.9%) (43.1%)	32 (32.7%) (59.3%)	98 (100%) (43.6%)		
Total	69 (30.7%) [100%]	102 (45.3%) [100%]	54 (24.0%) [100%]	225 (100%) [100%]		

Source: Primary Data

- Note: 1. The value within () refers to percentage within gender (Row percentage)
 2. The value within [] refers to percentage within level of work performance (Column Percentage)
 3. *Denotes significant at 1% level.

As the p value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence, it is summed up that there is a significant association between the gender and the level of work performance on the determination of level of employee empowerment. Depending upon the row percentage, for the male workers, 37% of workers projects low levels of work performance, 45.7% of employees are having moderate level of work performance and 17.3% of personnel display high level of employees. The level of work performance for the female workers, 22.4% have low work performance, 44.9% are having moderate work performance and 32.7% are possessing high level of work performance. Henceforth, the female respondents have higher level of work performance (59.3%), whereas the male workers have low level of work performance (68.1%). The level of work performance is higher for the female workers as compared to that of the male respondents because the women have stronger aspirations towards their work.

Null Hypothesis III:

H₀³: The Level of influencers of employee empowerment and the employee empowerment (resulting factor) of both the male and female employees are equal.

Table 5: Mann-Whitney U Test for the bond amid the factors influencing the EE and employee empowerment among the male and female employees

Factors	Mean Ranks		Sum of Ranks		Mann-Whitney U test	P value
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Organizational Culture	103.24	125.65	13111.50	12313.50	4983.500	.010**
Workplace Relationships	105.06	123.30	13342.00	12083.00	5214.000	.036*
Employee perceptions over job	105.50	122.71	13399.00	12026.00	5271.000	.048*
Views towards organization	102.62	126.45	13032.50	12392.50	4904.500	.006**
Work performance	101.77	127.55	12925.00	12500.00	4797.000	.003**
Employee Empowerment	100.48	129.23	12760.50	12664.50	4632.500	.001**

Source: Primary Data

- * denotes significant at 1% level
 ** denotes significant at 5% level

As the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected for the factors in respect of the constructs namely workplace relationships and employees perceptions over work. Henceforth, it is conferred that the level of workplace relationships and employees perceptions over job in influencing the employee empowerment among the male and female professionals are not equal. Since, the p value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected with regard to the factors such as organizational culture, views towards the organization, work performance and employee empowerment. Therefore, it is inferred that level of organizational culture, views towards the organization and work performance in inducing the employee empowerment is differs from male and female workers. The p value of employee empowerment is lesser than 0.01, so the null hypothesis is rejected and it is

concluded that the level of employee empowerment varies with regard to the men and women workers. Depending upon the mean ranks, the female employees have more amount of employee empowerment (129.23) as compared to the male counterparts (100.48). This is because the influencers of employee empowerment are higher for the female employees as compared to their male co-workers, i.e., the organizational culture for male (m) =103.24, and for female (f) = 125.65; workplace relationships M=105.06, and F=123.30; employee perceptions over work M=105.50, and F=122.71; views towards the organization M=102.62, and F=126.45; and work performance M=101.77 and F=127.55.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The study rejected the entire null hypothesis and it paved way for the following findings. The study found that there is a significant difference amongst the guy and feminine banking and healthcare professionals with regard to all the factors considered for the study i.e., organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees' perceptions over work, views towards the organization, work performance and employee empowerment. It has also been identified that there is a significant association amid the gender and the level of work performance in determining the level of employee empowerment. The study further found that the influencers namely organizational culture, workplace relationships workers' perceptions over employment, views towards the organization and work performance in inducing the employee empowerment is significantly different amid the male and female respondents in Puducherry. Apart from these, the study revealed that the female workers are having high level of employee empowerment as compared to that of their male counterparts. This is because they have better influencing factors such as organizational culture, workplace relationships, employees' perceptions over job, views towards the organization and work performance.

Better organizational culture which could be increased through making the male employees in more participative decision making and better support from the organization; through proper workplace relationships which is achieved through the supportive peers and better job sharing. The employees' positive perceptions towards the work could be increased only if the organization paves way for the work life balance among the employees. Similarly, the workers views towards the organization could be increased by providing work autonomy and better work contentment. Through these constructs, the work performance increases and as a result, the employee empowerment arises. Empowerment of employees improves their productivity which in turn brings more profitability of the concern. As a result, the standard of living of the respondents improves and it paves way for the economic development.

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