



FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

Investigating the factors affecting the employees' job alienation in District 2 of Islamic Azad University

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted with the aim at investigating the factors affecting the job alienation among the employees in District 2 of Islamic Azad University. The research method is correlative and applied in terms of objective. The statistical population consists of all 1604 official employees in District 2 of Islamic Azad University situated in cities of Urmia, Ardebil and Zanjan provinces in 2013. The sampling method has relative simple random method and the sample size is obtained equal to 310 through Kerjcie and Morgan Tables; data is collected through Melvin Seeman's job alienation questionnaire. It has the content validity and the reliability of questionnaire is equal to 0.91 by Cronbach's alpha method for job alienation. The statistical methods, namely, the t-test, ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression tests are applied after processing the collected data. The obtained results indicate that there is a significant relationship between the job alienation and job satisfaction, involvement and justice, but there is no relationship between the "work experience", "type of job" and "type of employment" and job alienation n.

Keywords: employees, Job, alienation, job satisfaction

Received 12.06.2014 Accepted 10.07.2014

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INTRODUCTION

The alienation or in other words the self alienation is a concept which has affected numerous organization and management science thinkers' studies. In this regard, three experts, namely, in this field, the concept was discussed more seriously, one of Karl Marx, Max Weber and Mannheim, have seriously investigated this concept and each of them have had the leading ideas about the employees' job alienation and have discussed about the individual, organizational and social effects in details. Both Marx and Weber have declared that the job alienation refers to the emotional state based on which the individual job is considered as an external factor and thus he has no sense of internal independence. However, because it was difficult to provide an exact definition of self alienation, the numerous different interpretations of this concept have been presented since then [9].

Nowadays, the sense of powerlessness, emptiness and alienation are considered as three core dimensions of job alienation according to the experts' viewpoints. Some of the organizational behavior science theorists believe that most of the people are satisfied with their jobs which give them the opportunities to provide service for others; if these people feel that their activities have no benefit for colleagues, other people and society, they will feel frustrated and worthless [13]Therefore, the millennium managers strongly need to rethink about their value orientation and adapting them with new organizational behavior models which encourage the combined individual and organizational success, personal development, learning and training [9].

A person, who suffers from burnout, is constantly tired, aggressive, negative, pessimistic and angry, irritable and impatient, and flies off the handle due to a little discomfort; he is impatient and finds himself in a dead end. The staff may be suffering from burnout at all levels [1]In this regard, it is essential to identify the factors which are involved in the development of burnout because the reduced effectiveness and increased absenteeism are seen in people who suffer from burnout.

According to studies, the more the job intensity and demand are greater, the more the employees' job burnout is enhanced [7],According to one of the distinguishing characteristic of burnout, the people

believe that there are a few resources available to cope with stressful situations, and thus they should refer to personal capacities and rely on them to reduce the burnout (Miller and Ellis, 1982, [5]).

Leiter and Maslach believe that the less there is a proportion between the person and his occupation, the more the probability of burnout is enhanced in person [5], The burnout is associated with negative organizational outcomes such as the lower levels of organizational commitment.

However, perhaps the most important concept in the field of job alienation is Melvin Seeman's theory [10], about the powerlessness which on the one hand refers to the lack of economic ability and relative and social deprivation and on the other hand means the lack of individual creativity and freedom of action in relevant areas. The feeling of powerlessness or lack of effectiveness has been gradually popular followed by the sense of distrust which is a cognitive habit under which the people interpret their social relations with a lack of integrity, lack of support, and selfishness [8].

Theoretical background

- Javadi has sociologically investigated the factors affecting the job alienation among the nurses in Arak City and concluded that the lack of human interaction and lack of equal job opportunities for promotion and gaining the job points by nurses are correlated with job alienation. [11].

- Ghadimi (2000) conducted a research entitled as "Evaluation of job alienation in administrative structure of Iran". The researcher has utilized Marx and Weber's ideas about the alienation. He has concluded that the job alienation is the most important personal and social alienation and it leads to the separation of society from the environment. [4].

According to his viewpoint, a large portion of the lack of mobility and abnormality of the Iranian administrative system is associated with the employees' behavior and incentives with low motivation and tendencies towards job and belonging to organization. [2].

- Kargar-Mozayen (2005) conducted a study entitled as "The job alienation and its impact on the labor efficiency along with a case study on the staff in Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs in Gilan province. The total statistical population is equal to 29 samples in this study in and they were working in three sectors of labor inspection, employment and relations. The questionnaire is utilized as the research tool. In his research, the researcher indicates that there is a significant inverse relationship between some aspects of job alienation such as the sense of job anomie, meaningless and labor efficiency. In other words, the more the sense of job anomie and meaningless is enhanced, the more the labor efficiency is decreased. [2].

- *Michael Aiken and Jerald Hage*, two American sociologists (1970) investigated the job alienation and its factors among the employees in Welfare Association of America in their research entitled as the "Organizational alienation". According to Seeman's powerlessness component and equating it with job alienation concept, they initially measured it and then explored its relationships by the extreme administrative centralization. In other words, the more the emphasis on the administrative rules and regulations is enhanced, the more the sense of job alienation is increased in people. Furthermore, the job alienation will lead to the colleagues' job alienation. [11].

- Paw (1986) studied the alienation, powerlessness and social isolation among the prison staff in Montana State. From a total of 193 subjects, for whom the questionnaires were sent, 126 questionnaires returned. The questions of questionnaire were designed based on the religion scale which measured different levels of alienation, powerlessness and social isolation. The researcher 12 provided 12 hypotheses 2 of which were confirmed in all staff and 4 were seen just in a group of employees, and the other hypotheses were rejected. The results of this study indicate that the level of alienation is higher in younger workers with less experience than the experienced staff in such a way that there is a lot of hopelessness and despair of prison space and their jobs. [4].

- Another study, conducted by Tarnowiesky on 2821 managers in 1973, indicates that despite the fact that the managers have taken the jobs which require less integrity, expertise, and hierarchical governance than the assembly line workers' jobs, there is still the job alienation among them [3].

Main purpose of research

This study is conducted with the aim at investigating the factors affecting the job alienation among the employees in District 2 of Islamic Azad University. The statistical methods, namely, the t-test and analysis of variance and Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression tests are utilized after processing the collected data.

In this regard, the subsidiary objectives are as follows.

1. Investigating the impact of factors such as the education and gender on job alienation;
2. Investigating the impact of job security on job alienation;
3. Investigating the relationship between job satisfaction and alienation;
4. Investigating the sense of fairness among employees on their job alienation;
5. Investigating the relationship between employee involvement and their job alienation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research has the correlative method with applied objective.

Statistical population and sample

The statistical population consists of all 1604 official employees in District 2 of Islamic Azad University of Urmia, Ardabil and Zanjan provinces in 2013. The research has relative simple random sampling method and the sample size is obtained equal to 310 by Kerjcie and Morgan Table.

Research data and its collection tools

Data collection is done through Melvin Seeman's job alienation questionnaire; it has the content validity and the reliability of questionnaire is obtained equal to 0.91 through Cronbach's alpha method.

The job alienation is the independent variable and the gender, type of employment, work experience, type of job, job satisfaction, organizational justice, job involvement and job security are the dependent variables.

Research hypotheses

1. There is a relationship between gender and job alienation.
2. There is a relationship between socioeconomic status and job alienation.
3. There is a relationship between the type of employment and job alienation.
4. There is a relationship between the work experience and job alienation.
5. There is a relationship between the type of job and job alienation.
6. There is a relationship between the job satisfaction and job alienation.
7. There is a relationship between the organizational justice and job alienation.
8. There is a relationship between the organizational involvement and job alienation.
9. There is a relationship between the job security and job alienation.

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics of this study indicate that 14.51% of the whole respondents were female and 85.49% male. In terms of the type of employment, 56.9% of respondents were official and 19.7% had the contractual employment and accounted for the highest percentage. 86.45% of respondents had bachelor's degrees or higher and 69.67% percent of respondents had the work experience of 11 years and above.

First hypothesis

Testing the relationship between the gender and job alienation variables

Table 1: T-test results associated with the gender and job alienation variables

Gender	Frequency	Mean job alienation	T statistics	Standard deviation	Significance level	Degrees of freedom
Female	45	54.13		10.5		
			-2.202		0.028	304
Male	265			8.73		

The results of table above indicate that the obtained absolute value of t statistic is equal to 2.202 and there is a statistically significant mean difference at the level of 0.05; in other words, there is different mean job alienation between men and women. Furthermore, the mean job alienation is higher in men than women, thus this hypothesis is confirmed.

Second hypothesis

Testing the relationship between the type of employment and job alienation

Table 2: F-test results associated with the type of employment and job alienation variables

Type of employment	Frequency	Mean	Inter-group variance	Intra-group variance	Degree of freedom	Significance level
Official	176	56.92				
Contract	22	55.65	295.265	24952.84	3	313%
Contractual	61	57.09				
Other	51	54.28				

According to the second hypothesis, there is a relationship between the type of employment and job alienation. As shown in Table, the significance level of this test is 312% and since it is higher than 5%, the relationship between these two variables is not confirmed.

Third hypothesis

Testing the relationship between work experience and job alienation

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between the work experience and job alienation variables

Name of variable	Pearson Correlation	Significance level
Work experience	0.101	0.78

According to the results of table, the obtained correlation coefficient is equal to 0.101 and the significance level is 0.78, thus their relationship is not significant and this hypothesis is not confirmed since its is higher than 0.05.

Fourth hypothesis

Testing the relationship between the type of job and job alienation

Table 4: T-test results associated with the type of job and job alienation

Type of job	Frequency	Mean job alienation	T statistic	Significance level
Official- Non-specialized	116	55.86		
			-0.873	0.560
Official- specialized	194	56.80		

As shown in the table, the obtained absolute value of t is equal to 0.874 and the significance level 0.46. Since it is higher than 0.05, the hypothesis above is not confirmed, thus there is no relationship between the type of job and job alienation.

Multivariate -regression test between independent and dependent variables:

Table 5: Results of multivariate regression test between independent and dependent variables

	B	Beta	Standard error	t statistics	Significance level
Constant value	103.62		3.859	26.85	0.01
Job Satisfaction	0.552	-0.416	0.066	-8.384	0.01
Organizational Justice	-0.126	-0.136	0.057	-2.231	0.02
Job Security	-0.162	-0.126	0.079	-3.05	0.04
Organizational involvement	-0.275	-0.204	0.079	-3.49	0.001
Socioeconomic status	0.868	0.148	0.265	3.27	0.001

To build the job alienation- prediction regression equation, the variables which were at the distance level were involved as the independent variable and the job alienation as the dependent variable. The investigation of obtained results in the table indicates that the job alienation- prediction equation can predict 50% of variance in the dependent variable and this indicates that the value of R or is between the values predicted by the equation and the real values. In other words, 70% of predicted values are equal to the real values . Given the obtained significance level, the values are significant at the level of 99% and since the research model has been able to predict 50% of dependent variable variance through the job satisfaction, organizational justice, job security, organizational involvement and socioeconomic status, it can be concluded that it has appropriate predictive power.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The nature of job alienation as an interconnected set requires the investigation of social and psychological factors which correlated with each other. This fact should be noted that the human builds both society and its history and is affected by his own products. The job alienation has vast dimensions, but this study emphasizes on the type of job alienation which is a very impressive individual and social phenomenon because the human with job alienation has in fact the sense of alienation from himself, society and environment wherein living. [12].

Based on the research findings, the job satisfaction, involvement, security, and justice and five fundamental variables, namely, the gender, socioeconomic status, work experience, type of job, and type of employment are investigated as the independent variables correlated with the job alienation phenomenon. The results of implementing various statistical tests on collected data indicate that from five variables above the organizational involvement, socioeconomic status, job satisfaction, organizational justice, gender, and job security have the maximum significant positive impact on the job alienation, but the work experience, type of job, and type of employment have no significant relationship with it.

The mean job alienation is higher in men than the women because the men have higher opportunities in academic jobs than women to gain the superior posts and positions and the men are more involved in job competition. Since it is not equal to access to all positions and promotions, it leads to the dissatisfaction and a sense of injustice and discrimination among the employees and consequently the job alienation and dismissal.

Other results indicate that there is a significant inverse relationship between job satisfaction and alienation; in other words, the more the job satisfaction is decreased, the more the job alienation is enhanced. The job satisfaction is primarily associated with the individual satisfaction with the amount of received salary and can provide the basic needs such as the food, clothing and so on. Therefore, if someone

is able to satisfy his own physiological needs, the satisfaction is achieved otherwise it leads to the dissatisfaction, absenteeism and dismissal from work.

This study also confirms the relationship between the organizational justice and job alienation; in other words, the more the organizational justice is reduced, the more the job alienation is enhanced; and thus the relationship of this variable can be explained by Adaner's theory of equality. According to this theory, the person compares the ratio of self- outcome to data with the ratio of others' outcome to data. If the individuals have no feeling of equality between the outcome and data, they will show various reactions such as the underactivity, loss of motivation, decreased quality of work and dismissal from work.

There is a significant inverse relationship between the organizational involvement and job alienation, so that the more the employees' participation is reduced, the more their job alienation is enhanced. This correlation can be explained by Kurt Lewin's theory. According to Kurt Lewin's view, the staff and workers' participation in decision-making about the workshop and whatever is related to their job future indicate that the more the employees' informal relationships are enhanced in affairs, the more their satisfaction and sense of security is increased and vice versa.

The results of this study indicate the relationship between two variables, the job security and job alienation; in other words, the more the employees' job security is reduced, the more their job alienation is enhanced. The relationship between these two variables can be explained by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. According to this view, of the physiological needs are properly satisfied, the person will seek to satisfy the higher level needs or the need for security. The employees' security needs can be fulfilled through continuation of job (not layoff), establishing the complaint system (protection against supervisor's arbitrary actions), establishing a proper system for pension insurance (protection against financial losses due to disease and assuring the employees for the existence of salary and retirement income) [6].

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