

The Relationship between Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees in Turkey*

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Abstract: The main purpose of this study which concentrates on the common context of empowerment levels and determines the content is to find out the relationship between levels of perceived empowerment. Besides, the subgoal of this article is to define the differences for the empowerment levels according to some demographic distinctive of the participants. The research has been obtained from 203 people working in foreign trade organizations placed in Istanbul. A scale was used to define the personnel empowerment levels with a question form for demographic characteristics. The data were analyzed by Mann Whitney-U and Kruskal Wallis tests. As a result of the research; there are positive relationships between some levels, but in others there are not. In addition to this, as a subgoal of the study, it has reached the result that the perceived levels of empowerment did not differ according to gender and education variables however they indicate differences according to age, experience, number of organizations worked, department and position.

Keywords: Employee Empowerment, Empowerment Levels, Foreign Trade Companies

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is enabling employees or teams to make their own decisions about their jobs. It is the transfer of decision-making power to employees within certain limits. In order to achieve this, organizations start from the top as a structural mechanical change, define the mission, vision and values of the organization, determine the duties, roles and rewards of the employees, transfer responsibilities and ensure the participation of the employees in the business results (Ceylan, 1998).

Empowerment, according to Thomas and Velthouse, is defined by 'changes in the parameters that motivate employees (such as appreciation of the work done...')'. They aimed to correct the model of Conger and Kanungo in three ways (Koç, 2008, p.21-24).

First, if the empowerment is defined as a type of motivation, it will become much more obvious (Gümüştekin & Emet, 2007). This type of motivation is natural business motivation (internal motivation of the person) that addresses the elements within the person. The second is about how to make jobs arrangements that will provide this motivation. The third is that while waiting for the employees to fulfill the requirements of the job, they should also catch their opinions. This model suggested that the way the work is done will also be affected by individual differences in the interpretation process.

In the light of the information given above, empowerment is, in a sense, energizing others. The traditional classical / bureaucratic approach is based on a combination of tight control, strict punishment and conditional rewarding. In this understanding, the work is only a tool for the employees and the first duty of the employees is obedience. On the contrary, this new understanding emphasizes more flexible control and a sense of unity about work. In management, it is aimed to attract the employees and make their work more meaningful instead of removing them to decision making process. The concept of empowerment is mainly used to explain the motivational content of this new management approach (Doğan, 2006, p.182).

The real empowerment is that employees can ignore some rules and prohibitions when necessary, while dealing with their customers. Today's new management system requires an organic commitment to the business, an effective use and a development of human resources, and participation of everyone to the decision-making processes (Doğan, 2005, p.168).

As the importance of its employees increases for the companies, the level of investments for them increases as well. Especially in recent years, the struggle to understand what employees feel and what they expect, has a great importance for the companies to understand their employees better (Güven et al., 2005: 129). Thus, it is possible for the employees to increase their performance, act more

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efficiently and contribute companies to make profits accordingly. But to empower employees physically and mentally is the key.

Thus, the concept of 'employee empowerment' added to the literature expresses the efforts of the companies in recent years. In general, personnel empowerment refers to all of the activities for the business management that include giving employees more responsibility and voice to their jobs, providing them a certain level of freedom and socially encouraging them to make them feel better in the work environment (Barutçugil, 2004, p. 34).

Employee empowerment aims to increase employees' capacity, referring to the level of determination of them. The main purpose here is not to encourage employees to act to push themselves beyond their limits. This encouragement is in a way to increase the morale and motivation levels of the employees. Thus, employees will have an effective working process with a high level of motivation and capacities, even if they are at a very normal pace, without having to force them (Aras, 2013, p. 3).

Generally, it is expected that there will be serious pressure on motivating employees or an orientation that will create high performance expectations from them. Although the general view is that to make employees to think to perform their work more efficiently. And at a certain level, even if such motivation methods create an incentive for the employees to push their capacities, their motivations will be effective for a limited period of time. Motivation processes that do not have continuity and rational expectations will not allow employees to have higher performance or more successful in any way (Keser, 2006, p. 43-44).

The important point here is to increase the level of responsibility of employees and to increase their self-confidence with the qualified responsibilities and duties they have gained, beyond the efforts to motivate the employees in general (Aytürk, 2010, p. 111). This increased sense of trust will enable employees to act more resolutely and stronger. The basic expectation of the employees is to increase their responsibility levels physically and functionally as well as the initiatives that will make them feel good in terms of spirituality through social activities.

In this way, it is possible to say that empowerment is actually a declaration of freedom in business life for working individuals. The working life, which is left to the control of the center with an authoritarian perspective, is moving away from the center day by

day. The concept of empowerment also refers to the transition of management perception to a system that revolves around the employees by moving away from the center. In other words, it shows that the authority and influence of the center are increasingly distributed to the environment and the structure in which the employees are located, and shared (Çavuş, 2008, p. 1290).

When looking at the factors that are effective in bringing the issue of employee empowerment to the forefront, the following points are noted (Daft, 2001, p. 502):

- With the globalization of competition and its presence in different areas, change becomes mandatory for businesses and especially the interests of their employees,
- Beyond the importance of the employees' competencies, to make them more efficient and effective on decision-making processes,
- Increasing the strategic importance of developing products and services through employees,
- It is imperative to create a corporate structure with a high-level of performance and a 'learner' quality.

In a process where incentivizing and mental empowerment of employees is a great importance in order to ensure a high level and permanent productivity. Empowerment is one of the most demanding practices and qualifications for the employees to participate and contribute to business results. Because, while empowering the personnel in this process, not only the level of responsibility and duty increase, but also their income and social relationship levels within the company (OECD, 2005: 167). Participation in management will be in direct proportion with the employees' desire and skills to participate in decision-making process and the level of encouragement and acceptance of the organization (Bedük & Tambay, 2014).

1. Behavioral and Cognitive Personnel Empowerment

Business management should ensure that employee empowerment becomes an organizational practice and established behavior by supporting its employees, especially in talent management, and primarily, individuals with self-confidence should be assigned while choosing the staff to be empowered so that behavioral empowerment can create positive effects (İnci Bolat et al., 2009: 217; Demir, 2013: 8).

The important elements of behavioral personnel empowerment can be summarized as follows (Dönmez, 2012, p.9):

- To ensure that the employees understand and embrace the vision, mission and objectives of the institution correctly and to carry out empowerment efforts in this direction,
- To ensure that employee empowerment is sustainable,
- To enable employees to determine their own empowerment strategies, not in accordance with the decisions of the administration,
- To regulate the processes of alienation and
- Transferring certain powers to eligible employees for the transfer of the authority.

Empowerment of employees can only be possible by having loose working conditions and encouraging the right people in the right way (Eren Gümüştekin & Emet, 2007: 4; Şen, 2010: 12). Employees cognitively respond to the process by a series of positive or negative responses, by questioning and trying to understand the meaning of the tasks and behaviors they display. At this point, it is important to ensure that the employees must work with the highest positive attitude toward work, which is a factor directly reflected on the work outcomes and it is very important (Özaksu, 2006: 7; Hüseyinoğlu, 2011: 42).

In cognitive perspective, four main factors gain importance in employee empowerment approaches (Dönmez, 2012, pp. 10-11):

Meaningfulness: Empowering by employees must have a really valuable meaning. Otherwise, the employee's effort will become a burden and performance will decrease (Şen, 2010: 13; Aras, 2013: 10).

Effectiveness: According to the employees, it is also very important that empowerment has a meaningful effect. For this reason, it is important to determine the applications accurately and meaningfully in order to increase the effect level (Kesen, 2015: 6533; Seçgin, 2007: 15).

Self-Efficacy: The most important factor for the employees in staff empowerment is self-efficacy levels. For the employees who have problems with self-confidence and self-efficacy, empowerment will become a laborious and difficult workload and inefficient. In this context, it should be decided which job and for which process is appropriate in terms of empowering the personal characteristics of employees (Şen, 2010: 14).

Job Freedom: Empowering employees is related to the liberation of them. Liberation will enable success-oriented work with more meaningful activities. Otherwise, there can be no personnel empowerment (Çöl, 2008: 37). It is important to

consider how the employees perceive the empowerment activities and how they react, paying attention to prevent not having adaptation problems in the context of the business activities and the individual level in order to assign the right person to the right job and position.

In general, there are certain differences between organizations that accept personnel empowerment systems and organizations that do not implement this system. The main reason is that businesses that empower their staff have more chances to use their employees' potential (Bolat, 2008, p.90). In addition, even a single employee in the personnel empowerment system can be seen as extremely important for the organization.

When looking distinctive features of the companies that employ personnel empowerment system, the following points are remarkable (Doğan & Demiral, 2007, p. 286):

- The organization's stakeholders and customers are at the center of the overall structure of the organization,
- Within the organization, empowered employees who are part of a working group, strive to share the skills and powers they have equally,
- The main characteristics of such organizations are that they have the ability to communicate strongly and make joint decisions,
- Each of the employees who are part of the organization is expected to have the capacity to manage themselves,
- All employees have responsibility for the elimination of the needs of the customers,
- Organizations help their employees to participate in their training programs in order to be empowered from various angles, and expect a high performance from them in line with this participation.

Each of these points is highly likely to meet the expectations of organizations on empowerment during careful implementation. In general, when organizations implement a personnel empowerment system, they can reach the points they desire in three areas such as their own systems, relations with customers and the development of their employees.

Moreover, empowerment enables companies to have the similar management approaches. Because the personnel empowerment-oriented organizations that move away from the decentralization make it an attitude over time and their general views are moving on the same axis

(Ataman 2001, pp. 3445-346). Empowerment that gives more positive effects in terms of institutional structures and more efficient results due to the fact that there is a departmentalization in such institutions.

The organizational culture that organizations have has been able to find a place in the perception of general management and operation of the organizations over many years, and in this way all of the cultural values can be accepted for many years. Although the culture of the organization constitutes a perception of senior management, there is a cultural infrastructure of concepts such as personnel empowerment in the lower levels. In order to establish the qualifications in which the concept of personnel empowerment meets the need, corporate communication, promoting the participation of employees in the management process, etc. should be addressed. In this way, it is easier to create a culture of empowerment (Dogan, 2006, p. 97).

In institutions where empowerment is settled as a culture, the following characteristics stand out (Dogan, 2006):

- Employees can act jointly in accordance with the business interests,
- The issues that cause problems can be discussed clearly and accordingly and everyone's opinion can be taken,
- In order to solve customer problems, it can be primarily considered in the name of customers' expectations and interests,
- Decisions can be taken in a series that is accepted by everyone,
- Objectives and the roadmap set for them are clearly articulated,
- Cross-communication is provided,
- The feedback mechanism works extremely regularly and fastly,
- Poor performances are investigated in conjunction with the causes and solutions.

It is very natural to create an empowerment culture for the organizations which already have a suitable one for it (Bolat 2008, p. 68). Because, in this way, the organizations comprehend the management perceptions that already exist within their bodies more clearly and have an idea about how to act in terms of empowerment. Considering that the influence of organizational culture has been widely accepted in the past years, in recent years, empowerment is valued and stands out as much as

organizational culture. Now every organization is trying to create a diverse and stereotyped set of values, primarily empowerment, to draw its own path and create its own organization.

2. Method

This research is designed as a 'survey model'. "Survey models are research approaches that aim to describe a situation that exists in the past or present as it exists. The event, an individual or an object that is the subject of the research is tried to be defined in its own conditions and as it is. No effort is made to change or influence them in any way" (Karasar, 2009, p.77). The population of this research is the employees and middle and upper level managers who work in foreign trade companies whose headquarters are located in Istanbul. The sample of the study is 203 people working in foreign trade companies in Istanbul. Convenience sampling method was used in the research, the data were collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire survey consists of two parts; demographic questions for participants in the first section, and the scale for determining the basic characteristics of the personnel empowerment concept and process is in the second. The scale for determining the level of staff empowerment was developed by Şimşek (2004). The scale created by Şimşek by scanning relevant literature consists of 18 items. The expressions in this section are designed according to the Likert type. There are control items considering that the participants and / or managers may avoid giving correct answers to some questions in the survey. The main objective of the research is to determine whether the empowerment levels of the employees are correlated or not. Its subgoals can be expressed as determining whether these levels differ significantly according to some demographic variables. Accordingly, the hypotheses of the research are listed below:

H1: There is a correlation between employee empowerment levels.

H2: The perceived empowerment level of employees varies significantly by age.

H3: The perceived empowerment level of employees varies significantly by experience.

H4: The perceived empowerment level of employees varies significantly by number of organizations worked.

H5: The perceived empowerment level of employees varies significantly by department.

H6: The perceived empowerment level of employees varies significantly by position.

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the data collected from the employees were included. Explanations and comments were made based on the findings obtained. The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1.

3. Findings and Comments

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	Groups	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	16	7,9
	Male	187	92,1
	Total	203	100,0
Education Level	Primary and Secondary School	29	14,3
	High School	89	43,8
	Associate	20	9,9
	Undergraduate	54	26,6
	Graduate	11	5,4
	Total	203	100,0
Age	18-25 Years	21	10,3
	26-30 Years	36	17,7
	31-35 Years	32	15,8
	36-40 Years	45	22,2
	41-45 Years	30	14,8
	46-50 Years	25	12,3
	Over 50 years old	14	6,9
	Total	203	100,0
Experience	5 Years and Six	81	39,9
	6-10 Years	49	24,1
	11-15 Years	29	14,3
	16-20 Years	24	11,8
	Over 20 Years	20	9,9
	Total	203	100,0
Number of Organizations Worked	1	10	4,9
	2-3	140	69,0
	4 and above	53	26,1
	Total	203	100,0
Department	Foreign Trade	19	9,4
	Customs	72	35,5
	Export	44	21,7
	Import	38	18,7
	Operation	9	4,4
	Other	21	10,3
	Total	203	100,0
Position	Operations Executive	25	12,3
	Customs Executive	39	19,2
	Customs Broker	11	5,4
	Administrative Personnel	45	22,2
	Field Personnel	23	11,3

	Export Executive	36	17,7
	Import Executive	7	3,4
	Other	17	8,4
	Total	203	100,0

According the data, 16 (7.9%) of employees are female and 187 (92.1%) are male. 29 (14.3%) of employees finished primary and secondary school, 89 (43.8%) finished high school, 20 (9.9%) finished associate degree, 54 (26.6%) finished undergraduate degree and 11 (5.4%) finished graduate degree. 21 (10.3%) of employees are 18-25 years old, 36 (17.7%) are 26-30 years old, 32 (15.8%) are 31-35 years old, 45 are (22%) 36-40 years old, 30 are (14.8%) 41-45 years old, 25 are (12.3%) 46-50 years old, 14 are (6.9%) distributed over the age of 50.

In terms of experience, 81 (39.9%) of the employees have 5 years and below, 49 (24.1%) have 6-10 years, 29 (14.3%) have 11-15 years, 24 (11, 8%) have 16-20 years, 20 (9.9%) have over 20 years.

10 (4.9%) of the employees are distributed as their first workplace, 140 (69.0%) are between 2-3 and 53 (26.1%) are as 4 and above. 19 (9.4%) of the employees are working in foreign trade department, 72 (35.5%) are in customs, 44 (21.7%) are in exports, 38 (18.7%) are in imports, 9 (4.4%) are in operation, 21 (10.3%) are stated as other. 25 (12.3%) of the employees are working as an operations executives, 39 (19.2%) are customs executives, 11 (5.4%) are customs brokers, 45 (22.2%) are administrative personnel, 23 (11.3%) are field personnel, 36 (17.7%) are export executives, 7 (3.4%) are import executives, 17 (8.4%) are working as other.

Table 2. The Relationship between Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees

		Bureaucracy	Job Autonomy	Trust	Communication	Participation	Rewarding	Competency	Resourcing	Training	Meaning	Teamwork	Risk Taking	Belonging
Bureaucracy	r	1,000												
	p	0,000												
Job Autonomy	r	0,299**	1,000											
	p	0,000	0,000											
Trust	r	-0,179*	-0,014	1,000										
	p	0,010	0,848	0,000										
Communication	r	0,166*	0,257**	0,146*	1,000									
	p	0,018	0,000	0,037	0,000									
Participation	r	0,186**	0,398**	0,039	0,309**	1,000								
	p	0,008	0,000	0,580	0,000	0,000								
Rewarding	r	0,252**	0,283**	0,115	0,132	0,159*	1,000							
	p	0,000	0,000	0,101	0,061	0,024	0,000							
Competency	r	0,227**	0,378**	0,041	0,234**	0,242**	0,543**	1,000						
	p	0,001	0,000	0,560	0,001	0,001	0,000	0,000						
Resourcing	r	0,231**	0,360**	-0,044	0,182**	0,302**	0,146*	0,308**	1,000					
	p	0,001	0,000	0,537	0,009	0,000	0,037	0,000	0,000					
Training	r	0,311**	0,257**	-0,009	0,265**	0,262**	0,302**	0,342**	0,220**	1,000				
	p	0,000	0,000	0,895	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,002	0,000				
Meaning	r	0,246**	0,310**	-0,074	0,229**	0,395**	0,239**	0,330**	0,405**	0,289*	1,000			
	p	0,000	0,000	0,292	0,001	0,000	0,001	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000			
Teamwork	r	0,255**	0,399**	0,095	0,381**	0,454**	0,279**	0,428**	0,284**	0,352*	0,439**	1,000		
	p	0,000	0,000	0,179	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000		
Risk Taking	r	0,103	0,332**	0,058	0,162*	0,393**	0,244**	0,332**	0,223**	0,269*	0,415**	0,388**	1,000	
	p	0,146	0,000	0,414	0,021	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,001	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	
Belonging	r	0,165*	0,443**	0,152*	0,426**	0,357**	0,470**	0,489**	0,257**	0,376*	0,424**	0,522**	0,406*	1,000
	p	0,019	0,000	0,030	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000

Within the framework of the main objective of the research, the relationship between dimensions of empowerment levels were examined.

Accordingly, there is a weak, positive relationship between job autonomy and bureaucracy ($r=0.299$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and negative relationship between trust and bureaucracy ($r=-0.179$; $p=0.010<0.05$). There is also very weak and positive relationship between communication and bureaucracy ($r=0.166$; $p=0.018<0.05$).

There is a weak and positive relationship between communication and job autonomy ($r=0.257$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between communication and trust ($r=0.146$; $p=0.037<0.05$). There is also very weak and positive relationship between participation and bureaucracy ($r=0.186$; $p=0.008<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between participation and job autonomy ($r=0.398$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is a weak and positive relationship between participation and communication ($r=0.309$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is also weak and positive relationship between rewarding and bureaucracy ($r=0.252$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is also weak and positive relationship between rewarding and job autonomy ($r=0.283$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between reward and participation ($r=0.159$; $p=0.024<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between competency and bureaucracy ($r=0.227$; $p=0.001<0.05$).

There is a weak and positive relationship between competency and job autonomy ($r=0.378$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There are very weak and positive relationship between competency and communication ($r=0.234$; $p=0.001<0.05$). There is also very weak and positive relationship between competency and participation ($r=0.242$; $p=0.001<0.05$). There is a moderate and positive relationship between competency and reward ($r=0.543$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is very weak and positive relationship between resourcing and bureaucracy ($r=0.231$; $p=0.001<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between resourcing and job autonomy ($r=0.36$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between resourcing and communication ($r=0.182$; $p=0.009<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between resourcing and participation ($r=0.302$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is very weak and positive relationship between resourcing and rewarding ($r=0.146$; $p=0.037<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between resourcing and competency ($r=0.308$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is a weak and positive relationship between education and bureaucracy ($r=0.311$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between education and job autonomy ($r=0.257$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between education and communication ($r=0.265$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between education and participation ($r=0.262$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between education and rewarding ($r=0.302$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between education and competency ($r=0.342$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a very weak and positive relationship between training and resourcing ($r=0.22$; $p=0.002<0.05$).

There is very weak and positive relationship between meaning and bureaucracy ($r=0.246$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between meaning and job autonomy ($r=0.31$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between meaning and communication ($r=0.229$; $p=0.001<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between meaning and participation ($r=0.395$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between meaning and reward ($r=0.239$; $p=0.001<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between meaning and competency ($r=0.33$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between meaning and resource provision ($r=0.405$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between meaning and education ($r=0.289$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and bureaucracy ($r=0.255$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and job autonomy ($r=0.399$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and communication ($r=0.381$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and participation ($r=0.454$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and rewarding ($r=0.279$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and competency ($r=0.428$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and resourcing ($r=0.284$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a

weak and positive relationship between teamwork and training ($r=0.352$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between teamwork and meaning ($r=0.439$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between risk taking and job autonomy ($r=0.332$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is a very weak and positive relationship between risk taking and communication ($r=0.162$; $p=0.021<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between risk taking and participation ($r=0.393$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is very weak and positive relationship between risk taking and rewarding ($r=0.244$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between risk taking and competency ($r=0.332$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a very weak and positive relationship between risk taking and resourcing ($r=0.223$; $p=0.001<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between risk taking and training ($r=0.269$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between risk taking and meaning ($r=0.415$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between risk taking and teamwork ($r=0.388$; $p=0.000<0.05$).

There is very weak and positive relationship between belonging and bureaucracy ($r=0.165$;

$p=0.019<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and job autonomy ($r=0.443$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a very weak and positive relationship between belonging and trust ($r=0.152$; $p=0.030<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and communication ($r=0.426$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and participation ($r=0.357$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and rewarding ($r=0.47$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and competency ($r=0.489$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and resourcing ($r=0.257$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and education ($r=0.376$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and meaning ($r=0.424$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a moderate and positive relationship between belonging and teamwork ($r=0.522$; $p=0.000<0.05$). There is a weak and positive relationship between belonging and risk taking ($r=0.406$; $p=0.000<0.05$). The relationships between other variables are not statistically significant ($p>0.0$). Therefore, the H1 hypothesis has been partially accepted.

Table 3. Means of Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees by Age

	Groups	N	Mean	Sd	KW	p	Difference
Job Autonomy	18-25 Years	21	3,714	1,056	17,498	0,008	5 > 1
	26-30 Years	36	3,917	0,732			5 > 2
	31-35 Years	32	4,219	0,793			3 > 7
	36-40 Years	45	3,956	0,825			5 > 4
	41-45 Years	30	4,467	0,73			5 > 6
	46-50 Years	25	4,08	0,759			5 > 7
	Over 50 years old	14	3,571	1,016			
Participation	18-25 Years	21	4,143	1,195	16,948	0,009	3 > 4
	26-30 Years	36	4,111	0,919			3 > 7
	31-35 Years	32	4,469	0,621			5 > 4
	36-40 Years	45	3,911	0,874			6 > 4
	41-45 Years	30	4,4	0,814			5 > 7
	46-50 Years	25	4,32	0,852			6 > 7
	Over 50 years old	14	3,786	0,699			
Rewarding	18-25 Years	21	3,619	0,921	12,672	0,049	1 > 4
	26-30 Years	36	3,444	1,252			3 > 4
	31-35 Years	32	3,719	1,023			3 > 6
	36-40 Years	45	2,978	1,138			5 > 4
	41-45 Years	30	3,6	1,329			
	46-50 Years	25	3	1,19			
	Over 50 years old	14	3,5	0,855			

Competency	18-25 Years	21	3,714	1,102	13,647	0,034	5 > 2
	26-30 Years	36	3,5	1,108			3 > 4
	31-35 Years	32	3,938	0,878			3 > 7
	36-40 Years	45	3,378	1,051			5 > 4
	41-45 Years	30	4,067	1,015			5 > 6
	46-50 Years	25	3,48	1,085			5 > 7
	Over 50 years old	14	3,286	0,914			
Training	18-25 Years	21	3,19	1,167	15,19	0,019	5 > 1
	26-30 Years	36	3,611	1,128			6 > 1
	31-35 Years	32	3,438	1,19			5 > 4
	36-40 Years	45	3,4	1,031			6 > 4
	41-45 Years	30	3,967	1,066			5 > 7
	46-50 Years	25	3,88	1,236			6 > 7
	Over 50 years old	14	2,929	1,141			
Teamwork	18-25 Years	21	4,19	0,873	16,266	0,012	1 > 7
	26-30 Years	36	4	1,069			2 > 7
	31-35 Years	32	4,25	0,803			3 > 4
	36-40 Years	45	3,822	0,936			3 > 7
	41-45 Years	30	4,4	0,675			5 > 4
	46-50 Years	25	4,04	1,099			5 > 7
	Over 50 years old	14	3,429	0,852			6 > 7

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the job autonomy scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the age variable ($KW=17,498$; $p=0.008<0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; job autonomy scores ($4,467 \pm 0.730$) for those aged 41-45 were higher than job autonomy scores ($3,714 \pm 1,056$) for those aged 18-25. Job autonomy scores for those aged 41-45 ($4,467 \pm 0.730$) were found to be higher than job autonomy scores ($3,917 \pm 0.732$) for those aged 26-30. Job autonomy scores ($4,219 \pm 0.793$) for those aged 31-35 were higher than job autonomy scores ($3,571 \pm 1,016$) for those over the age of 50. Job autonomy scores ($4,467 \pm 0.730$) for those aged 41-45 were found to be higher than job autonomy scores ($3,956 \pm 0.825$) for those aged 36-40. Job autonomy scores ($4,467 \pm 0.730$) for those aged 41-45 were higher than job autonomy scores ($4,080 \pm 0.759$) for those aged 46-50. Job autonomy scores for those aged 41-45 ($4,467 \pm 0.730$) were found to be higher than job autonomy scores ($3,571 \pm 1,016$) for those over the age of 50.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the participation scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the age variable ($KW=16,948$; $p=0.009<0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to

determine the difference. According to this; participation scores ($4,469 \pm 0.621$) for those aged 31-35 were higher than participation points ($3,911 \pm 0.874$) for those aged 36-40. Participation scores ($4,469 \pm 0.621$) for those aged 31-35 were higher than participation points ($3,786 \pm 0.699$) for those over the age of 50. Participation scores for those aged 41-45 ($4,400 \pm 0.814$) were higher than participation points ($3,911 \pm 0.874$) for those aged 36-40. Participation scores for those aged 46-50 ($4,320 \pm 0.852$) were higher than participation points ($3,911 \pm 0.874$) for those aged 36-40. Participation scores for those aged 41-45 ($4,400 \pm 0.814$) were higher than participation points ($3,786 \pm 0.699$) for those over the age of 50. Participation scores ($4,320 \pm 0.852$) for those aged 46-50 were higher than participation points ($3,786 \pm 0.699$) for those over the age of 50.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the rewarding scores of the study participants constituted statistically different identical sequential ($KW=12,672$; $p=0.049<0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; rewarding scores ($3,619 \pm 0.921$) for those aged 18-25 were higher than the rewarding points ($2,978 \pm 1,138$) for those aged 36-40. Rewarding scores ($3,719 \pm 1,023$) for those aged 31-35 were higher than the rewarding scores ($2,978 \pm 1,138$) for those aged 36-40.

Rewarding scores (3,719 ± 1,023) for those aged 31-35 were higher than the rewarding scores (3,000 ± 1,190) for those aged 46-50. Rewarding scores (3,600 ± 1,329) for those aged 41-45 were higher than the rewarding scores (2,978 ± 1,138) for those aged 36-40.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test to examine whether the competency scores of the employees differ statistically depending on the age variable (KW=13,647; p=0.034<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; competency scores for those aged 41-45 years (4,067 ± 1,015) were higher than the competency scores (3,500 ± 1,108) for those aged 26-30. Competency scores (3,938 ± 0.878) for those aged 31-35 were higher than competency scores (3,378 ± 1,051) for those aged 36-40. Competency scores (3,938 ± 0.878) for those aged 31-35 were higher than their competency scores (3,286 ± 0.914) for those over the age of 50. Competency scores for those aged 41-45 (4,067 ± 1,015) were higher than competency scores (3,378 ± 1,051) for those aged 36-40. Competency scores for those aged 41-45 years (4,067 ± 1,015) were higher than the competency scores (3,480 ± 1,085) for those aged 46-50. Competency scores for those aged 41-45 (4,067 ± 1,015) were higher than competency scores (3,286 ± 0.914) for those over the age of 50. There was a significant difference in the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the training scores of the participants differ statistically depending on the age variable (KW=15,190; p=0.019<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; training scores (3,967 ± 1,066) for those aged 41-45 were higher than their training scores (3,190 ± 1,167) for those aged 18-25. Training scores (3,880 ± 1,236) for those aged 46-50 were higher than their training scores (3,190 ± 1,167) for those aged 18-25. Training scores for those aged 41-45 (3,967 ± 1,066) were found to be higher than the training scores (3,400 ± 1,031) for those aged 36-40.

Training scores (3,880 ± 1,236) for those aged 46-50 were higher than their training scores (3,400 ± 1,031) for those aged 36-40. Training scores (3,967 ± 1,066) for those aged 41-45 were higher than their training scores (2,929 ± 1,141) for those over the age of 50. Training scores (3,880 ± 1,236) for those aged 46-50 were higher than their training scores (2,929 ± 1,141) for those over the age of 50.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the teamwork scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the age variable (KW=16,266; p=0.012<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; teamwork scores (4,190 ± 0.873) for those aged 18-25 were higher than teamwork scores (3,429 ± 0.852) for those aged 50. Teamwork scores (4,000 ± 1,069) for those aged 26-30 were found to be higher than teamwork scores (3,429 ± 0.852) for those over the age of 50. Teamwork scores (4,250 ± 0.803) for those aged 31-35 were higher than teamwork scores (3,822 ± 0.936) for those aged 36-40. Teamwork scores (4,250 ± 0.803) for those aged 31-35 were found higher than teamwork scores (3,429 ± 0.852) for those over the age of 50. Teamwork scores (4,400 ± 0.675) for those aged 41-45 were higher than teamwork scores (3,822 ± 0.936) for those aged 36-40. Teamwork scores (4,400 ± 0.675) for those aged 41-45 were higher than teamwork scores (3,429 ± 0.852) for those over the age of 50. Teamwork scores (4,040 ± 1,099) for those aged 46-50 were found to be higher than teamwork scores (3,429 ± 0.852) for those over the age of 50.

There were no significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test which is conducted to examine whether the employees involved in the study differ statistically according to the age variable of bureaucracy, trust, communication, resourcing, meaning, risk-taking, belonging scores. Therefore, the H2 hypothesis has been partially accepted.

Table 4. Means of Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees by Experience

	Groups	N	Mean	Sd	KW	p	Difference
Bureaucracy	5 Years and below	81	3,481	0,882	11,247	0,024	4 > 1
	6-10 Years	49	3,714	1			5 > 1
	11-15 Years	29	3,897	1,113			
	16-20 Years	24	3,917	0,929			
	Over 20 Years	20	4,15	0,933			
Job Autonomy	5 Years and below	81	3,84	0,873	12,503	0,014	4 > 1
	6-10 Years	49	4	0,842			5 > 1

	11-15 Years	29	4,069	0,842			5 > 2
	16-20 Years	24	4,333	0,761			
	Over 20 Years	20	4,45	0,686			
Rewarding	5 Years and below	81	3,123	1,088	12,716	0,013	4 > 1
	6-10 Years	49	3,408	1,171			5 > 1
	11-15 Years	29	3,31	1,073			5 > 3
	16-20 Years	24	3,75	1,327			
	Over 20 Years	20	3,95	1,146			
Training	5 Years and below	81	3,272	1,151	17,848	0,001	4 > 1
	6-10 Years	49	3,449	1,062			5 > 1
	11-15 Years	29	3,517	1,271			4 > 2
	16-20 Years	24	4,208	0,932			5 > 2
	Over 20 Years	20	4	1,026			4 > 3
Belonging	5 Years and below	81	3,506	1,131	21,368	0,000	3 > 1
	6-10 Years	49	3,714	1,099			4 > 1
	11-15 Years	29	4,138	0,915			5 > 1
	16-20 Years	24	4,042	0,999			5 > 2
	Over 20 Years	20	4,55	0,759			

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the bureaucracy scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the experience variable (KW=11,247; p =0.024<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; bureaucracy scores for those with 16-20 years of experience (3,917 ± 0.929) were found higher than 5 years and below experience (3,481 ± 0.882). Bureaucracy scores for those whose experience is over 20 years (4,150 ± 0.933) were found higher than 5 years and below experience (3,481 ± 0.882).

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test which was applied to examine whether the job autonomy scores of the employees differ statistically depending on the experience variable (KW=12,503; p=0.014<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; job autonomy scores for those with 16-20 years of experience (4,333 ± 0.761) found higher than 5 years and below job autonomy scores (3,840 ± 0.873). Job autonomy scores for those over 20 years experience (4,450 ± 0.686) were found higher than the job autonomy scores (3,840 ± 0.873) for those with 5 years and below experience. Job autonomy scores for those over 20 years experience (4,450 ± 0.686) were higher than (4,000 ± 0.842) 6-10 years experience.

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to

examine whether the rewarding scores of the employees differ statistically depending on the experience variable (KW= 12,716; p=0.013<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; rewarding scores for those 16-20 years of experience (3,750 ± 1,327) were higher than 5 years and below experience points (3,123 ± 1,088). Rewarding scores (3,950 ± 1,146) for those more than 20 years of experience were higher than the rewarding points (3,123 ± 1,088) for those with 5 years and below. Rewarding scores (3,950 ± 1,146) for those more than 20 years experience were found higher than the rewarding points (3,310 ± 1,073) for those 11-15 years experience.

Significant differences also were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the training scores of the study differ statistically depending on the experience (KW=17,848; p= 0.001<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; training scores for those with 16-20 years (4,208 ± 0.932) were higher than the scores of 5 years and below (3,272 ± 1,151). Training scores (4,000 ± 1,026) for those with more than 20 years were found higher than the training scores (3,272 ± 1,151) for those with 5 years and below. Training scores for 16-20 years (4,208 ± 0.932) were higher than 6-10 years (3,449 ± 1,062). Training scores (4,000 ± 1,026) for those with more than 20 years were found to be higher than the training scores (3,449 ± 1,062) of 6-10 years. Training scores for

those with 16-20 years higher than (4,208 ± 0.932) training scores of 11-15 years (3,517 ± 1,271).

Significant differences again were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the belonging scores of the employees differ statistically depending on the experience variable (KW=21,368; p= 0,000<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the belonging scores of those with 11-15 years (4,138 ± 0.915) were found higher than the belonging scores of those with 5 years and below 3,506 ± 1,131). 16-20 years (4,042 ± 0.999) was higher than the belonging scores of those with 5 years and below (3,506 ± 1,131). The number of belonging scores (4,550 ± 0.759) for those with more than 20 years

experience was higher than the belonging scores (3,506 ± 1,131) for those with 5 years and below. The belonging scores (4,550 ± 0.759) for those with more than 20 years experience were higher than the belonging scores (3,714 ± 1,099) of those 6-10 years.

To examine whether the employees constitute statistical differences according to the number of organizations worked, trust, communication, participation, competency, resourcing, meaning, teamwork, risk-taking scores, there are no significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test (p>0.05). Therefore, the H3 hypothesis has been partially accepted.

Table 5. Means of Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees by Number of Organizations Worked

	Groups	N	Mean	Sd	KW	p	Difference
Bureaucracy	First	10	3,4	0,966	6,839	0,033	2 > 3
	Second- Third	140	3,821	1,013			
	Fourth and above	53	3,491	0,823			
Job Autonomy	First	10	3,7	0,823	6,987	0,03	2 > 3
	Second- Third	140	4,136	0,815			
	Fourth and above	53	3,811	0,9			
Rewarding	First	10	2,9	1,101	10,693	0,005	2 > 3
	Second- Third	140	3,55	1,134			
	Fourth and above	53	3	1,16			
Competency	First	10	3,3	0,675	6,601	0,037	2 > 3
	Second- Third	140	3,736	1,077			
	Fourth and above	53	3,415	1,008			
Training	First	10	2,9	1,101	6,888	0,032	2 > 1
	Second- Third	140	3,664	1,09			
	Fourth and above	53	3,302	1,249			
Meaning	First	10	3,3	0,675	18,829	0	2 > 1
	Second- Third	140	4,236	0,911			2 > 3
	Fourth and above	53	3,755	1,073			
Teamwork	First	10	3,9	0,738	6,829	0,033	2 > 3
	Second- Third	140	4,164	0,878			
	Fourth and above	53	3,755	1,073			
Risk Taking	First	10	3,1	1,101	9,128	0,01	2 > 1
	Second- Third	140	4,036	0,932			
	Fourth and above	53	3,774	0,993			
Belonging	First	10	3,8	1,033	7,824	0,02	2 > 3
	Second- Third	140	3,957	1,024			
	Fourth and above	53	3,434	1,201			

Significant difference was found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the bureaucracy scores of the employees differ statistically depending on number of organizations worked (KW= 6,839; p=0.033<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; number of organizations worked scores of those 2-3 (3,821 ± 1,013) were found higher (3,491 ± 0.823) than 4th and above.

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was conducted to examine whether the job autonomy scores of the employees differ statistically (KW =6,987; p=0.030<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; job autonomy scores (4,136 ± 0.815) of 2nd and 3rd (3,811 ± 0.900) higher than 4th and above.

Significant differences also were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the rewarding scores of the employees (KW=10,693; p=0.005<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; rewarding points (3,550 ± 1,134) of 2nd and 3rd were found higher than the 4th (3,000 ± 1,160).

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the competency scores of the employees differ statistically (KW= 6,601; p=0.037<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; competency scores (3,736 ± 1,077) of 2nd and 3rd were found higher than the competency points (3,415 ± 1,008) of 4th and above.

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the training scores of the employees differ statistically (KW= 6,888; p=0.032<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; training scores (3,664 ± 1,090) of 2nd and 3rd were found higher than the training points (2,900 ± 1,101) of first.

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the number of employees differed statistically (KW= 18,829; p=0.000<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the meaning scores (4,236 ± 0.911) of 2nd and 3rd were found higher than the meaning points (3,300 ± 0.675) of the first. The meaning scores of 2nd and 3rd (4,236 ± 0.911) were found higher than (3,755 ± 1,073) 4th and above.

A significant difference was found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the teamwork scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically (KW=6,829; p=0.033<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the difference. According to this; teamwork scores (4,164 ± 0.878) of 2nd were found higher than teamwork scores (3,755 ± 1,073) of 4th.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the risk-taking scores of the employees differ statistically (KW= 9,128; p=0.010<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the risk-taking scores (4,036 ± 0.932) of 2nd and 3rd were found higher than (3,100 ± 1,101) the first.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was applied to examine whether the employee's belonging scores in the study differ statistically (KW= 7,824; p=0.020<0.05). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; belonging scores (3,957 ± 1,024) of 2nd and 3rd were found higher than the belonging points (3,434 ± 1,201) of 4th and above.

According to the Kruskal Wallis H test, which is conducted to examine whether the trust, communication, participation, and resourcing scores of the employees participating in the study differ statistically depending on number of organizations worked, there are no significant differences were found (p>0.05). Therefore, the H4 hypothesis has been partially accepted.

Table 6. Means of Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees by Department

	Groups	N	Mean	Sd	KW	p	Difference
Trust	Foreign Trade	19	3,316	1,157	17,24	0,004	1 > 2
	Customs	72	2,389	1,157			1 > 3
	Export	44	2,386	1,104			1 > 5
	Import	38	2,816	1,205			6 > 2
	Operation	9	2,444	0,882			6 > 3

	Other	21	3,19	1,123			
Rewarding	Foreign Trade	19	3,211	1,032	14,284	0,014	3 > 1
	Customs	72	3,042	1,238			3 > 2
	Export	44	3,818	1,147			6 > 2
	Import	38	3,474	1,059			
	Operation	9	3	1,225			
	Other	21	3,714	0,845			
Competency	Foreign Trade	19	3,421	1,17	17,076	0,004	3 > 1
	Customs	72	3,375	1,013			3 > 2
	Export	44	4,091	0,984			4 > 2
	Import	38	3,737	1,005			3 > 6
	Operation	9	3,667	1,118			
	Other	21	3,524	1,031			
Belonging	Foreign Trade	19	3,842	1,068	12,655	0,027	3 > 2
	Customs	72	3,542	1,113			4 > 2
	Export	44	4,114	1,104			3 > 6
	Import	38	4,026	1			
	Operation	9	4,111	0,782			
	Other	21	3,571	1,121			

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the trust scores of the employees differ statistically depending on the department variable (KW=17,240; $p=0.004 < 0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was performed between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the trust scores of foreign trade ($3,316 \pm 1,157$) were found higher than ($2,389 \pm 1,157$) the customs. The trust scores of foreign trade ($3,316 \pm 1,157$) were higher than the ($2,386 \pm 1,104$) export. The trust scores of those in foreign trade ($3,316 \pm 1,157$) were higher the ($2,444 \pm 0.882$) operation. The trust scores of the others ($3,190 \pm 1,123$) were found higher than the customs ($2,389 \pm 1,157$). The trust scores of the others ($3,190 \pm 1,123$) were higher than ($2,386 \pm 1,104$) the export.

Significant differences were also found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the rewarding scores of the employees differ statistically depending on the department variable (KW=14,284; $p=0.014 < 0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the rewarding scores of export department ($3,818 \pm 1,147$), were higher than the ($3,211 \pm 1,032$) foreign trade. The rewarding scores of export department ($3,818 \pm 1,147$) were higher than the ($3,042 \pm 1,238$) customs. The rewarding scores of the others ($3,714 \pm 0.845$) were higher ($3,042 \pm 1,238$) than customs.

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the

competency scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the department (KW=17,076; $p=0.004 < 0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the competency scores of export ($4,091 \pm 0.984$) were found higher than the competency points ($3,421 \pm 1,170$) of foreign trade. The competency scores of export ($4,091 \pm 0.984$) were found higher than the competency points ($3,375 \pm 1,013$) of the customs department. The competency scores of export were found higher than the competency points ($3,737 \pm 1,005$) of customs ($3,375 \pm 1,013$). The competency scores of export were found higher than the competency points ($4,091 \pm 0.984$) of the others ($3,524 \pm 1,031$).

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the belonging scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the department variable (KW=12,655; $p=0.027 < 0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was performed between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the belonging scores of export department ($4,114 \pm 1,104$) were found higher than the belonging points ($3,542 \pm 1,113$) of customs. Belonging points of the import ($4,026 \pm 1,000$) was higher than the customs ($3,542 \pm 1,113$). The belonging scores of export ($4,114 \pm 1,104$) was higher than the belonging points of the others ($3,571 \pm 1,121$).

To examine whether the employees participating in the study differ statistically according to the department variable studied, bureaucracy, job autonomy, communication, participation, resourcing, education, meaning, teamwork, risk-taking scores, there are no significant differences

were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, the H5 hypothesis has been partially accepted.

Table 7. Means of Perceived Empowerment Levels of Employees by Position

	Groups	N	Mean	Sd	KW	p	Difference
Resourcing	Operations Executive	25	4,2	0,646	15,777	0,027	4 > 2
	Customs Executive	39	3,897	0,94			6 > 2
	Customs Broker	11	4	0,894			4 > 5
	Administrative Personnel	45	4,444	0,659			4 > 8
	Field Personnel	23	3,739	1,096			6 > 5
	Export Executive	36	4,306	0,71			
	Import Executive	7	4,143	0,378			
	Other	17	4	0,791			
Risk Taking	Operations Executive	25	4,04	0,889	18,182	0,011	1 > 5
	Customs Executive	39	3,744	1,044			4 > 2
	Customs Broker	11	3,545	1,128			4 > 3
	Administrative Personnel	45	4,267	0,889			4 > 5
	Field Personnel	23	3,391	1,033			4 > 8
	Export Executive	36	4,056	0,984			6 > 5
	Import Executive	7	4,286	0,488			7 > 5
	Other	17	3,765	0,752			

Significant differences were found according to the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the resourcing scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the position variable ($KW=15,777$; $p=0.027 < 0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was performed between groups to determine the differences. According to this; the resourcing points of the administrative personnel ($4,444 \pm 0.659$) were higher than the resourcing points ($3,897 \pm 0.940$) of customs executive. The resourcing points of export executive ($4,306 \pm 0.710$) were found higher than the resourcing points ($3,897 \pm 0.940$) of customs officer. Resourcing points of administrative personnel ($4,444 \pm 0.659$) were higher than the resourcing points ($3,739 \pm 1,096$) of field personnel. The funding points ($4,444 \pm 0.659$) of administrative personnel were higher than the funding points of others ($4,000 \pm 0.791$). The resourcing points of export executives ($4,306 \pm 0.710$) were higher than the resourcing points ($3,739 \pm 1,096$) of field personnel.

There were significant differences in the Kruskal Wallis H test applied to examine whether the risk-taking scores of the employees involved in the study differ statistically depending on the position variable ($KW=18,182$; $p=0.011 < 0.05$). Mann Whitney U test was conducted between groups to determine the differences. According to this; risk-taking scores ($4,040 \pm 0.889$) of operations

executive were found higher than the risk-taking points ($3,391 \pm 1,033$) of the field personnel. The risk-taking scores of administrative personnel ($4,267 \pm 0.889$) were found higher than the risk-taking points ($3,744 \pm 1,044$) of the customs executives. The risk-taking scores of the administrative personnel ($4,267 \pm 0.889$) were higher than the risk-taking points ($3,545 \pm 1,128$) of customs broker. The risk-taking scores of the administrative personnel ($4,267 \pm 0.889$) were higher than the risk-taking points ($3,391 \pm 1,033$) of field personnel. The risk-taking scores of administrative personnel ($4,267 \pm 0.889$) were higher than the risk-taking points ($3,765 \pm 0.752$) of the other. The risk-taking scores of the export executive ($4,056 \pm 0.984$) were higher than the risk-taking scores ($3,391 \pm 1,033$) of field personnel. The risk-taking scores of import executive ($4,286 \pm 0.488$) were higher than the risk-taking points ($3,391 \pm 1,033$) of field personnel.

CONCLUSION

To examine whether the employees participating in the study differ statistically according to the bureaucracy, job autonomy, trust, communication, participation, reward, competency, education, meaning, teamwork, belonging scores according to position variable. There are no significant differences were found according to the Kruskal

Wallis H test ($p>0.05$). Therefore, the H6 hypothesis has been partially accepted.

This research was conducted to determine perceived empowerment levels of employees of the foreign trade companies operating in Istanbul. In this context, bureaucracy, job autonomy, trust, belonging, communication, participation, rewarding, competence, funding, training, meaning, teamwork, risk taking, competence and job autonomy levels were examined. It was found that the perceived empowerment levels of the participants are extremely high. In other words, the participants have a high level of perception about the factors that are triggering empowerment. This perception allows them to clearly perceive how the approaches of employee empowerment take place in their organizations. According to the results of the research, while many sub-factors such as business support, employee willingness and suitability of the conditions are considered, the values observed as low in trust factor indicate that the presence of the participants' doubts even if they are related to and compliance with them. Although a significant part of the factors listed above belong only to the participants, the trust factor is a phenomenon that occurs mutually between the organizations and the employees. However, when looking at the responses of the participants, it can be stated in general the participants' lack of trust is a concern.

Looking at the distributions of the employees' responses to the questions to measure their empowerment levels in the study, it is observed that they mostly give 'I agree' and 'I am indecisive' to the followed expressions; 'There are too many rules and directives to follow in this workplace', 'My job gives me all the responsibility in the work when and how to do it', 'Anyone in this workplace can be laid off in any moment', 'I have no emotional connection to this company', 'The communication within my colleagues is very clear and easy to dialogue with them', 'My performance at work is appreciated and rewarded by my seniors', 'To solve my problems, I am encouraged by my superiors', 'The tools and materials I use in the workplace enable me to do my job easier', 'The knowledge and the skills I need to do my job better is always supported by trainings', 'My job is a part of my life,' 'I think we are collaborating with my colleagues to achieve company goals', 'I can take a risk as a part of my job', 'I have the power to correct them when problems are arisen', 'I got enough trainings to meet different demands of the customers', 'Working as a team, we provide excellent customer service', 'I am totally free about how to do my job'. The majority of the participants are participating in

all of the phrases listed above. It is seen that a very large of the phrases include positive approaches to the positive incentives of the perceived empowerment levels of employees in the organizations in which they are affiliated.

On the one hand, the participants often prefer the answer 'I agree' in terms of employee empowerment. Consequently there is a compatibility in the organizations and the processes that follows a positive direction with the empowerment. This indicates that there is a successful planning and implementation in employee empowerment for the researched organizations. On the other hand, the response of the participants to the question of; 'Anyone in this workplace can be laid off in any moment' as 'I am indecisive' indicates that they are largely dissatisfied with the practices regarding the employee empowerment and the anxiety they have experienced in maintaining their presence in the workplace can directly affect their performance. Thus, no matter how effective employee empowerment is, not having a career opportunities at work will have a negative impact on empowerment.

Another important result of the research when the means of the personnel empowerment levels considered by age is that there are more meaningful results are obtained for the elderly employees on empowerment. Accordingly, the levels of the empowerment such as bureaucracy, job autonomy, trust, belonging, communication, participation, rewarding, competency, resourcing, training, meaning, teamwork, risk taking and job autonomy getting more attention for the employees who are between 41-45 years old. In other words, the participants, whose age range is 41-45, are more aware of the subject and thus make their evaluations accordingly. Participants belonging to this age group neither take a distant and ineffective stance on the subject nor become insensitive. For the employees of this age range, a certain experience has been achieved and according to this experience, they will perform applications and take responsibility for evaluating the empowerment efforts and informing their colleagues about the issue.

This research also highlights the experience factor on the levels of personnel empowerment when respondents' means are examined. Accordingly employees who have 16-20 years experience and more; bureaucracy, job autonomy, trust, belonging, communication, participation, rewarding, competency, resourcing, training, meaning,

teamwork, risk-taking and belonging are seen to evaluate to a higher means.

The study reveals the necessity of conducting a detailed research when addressing the means of employees based on the number of organizations worked. According to the results, participants who are in their first and third organizations are more likely to stand out on empowerment levels such as bureaucracy, job autonomy, trust, belonging, communication, participation, rewarding, competency, resourcing, training, meaning, teamwork and risk-taking.

It has been determined that the means of employees who worked four or more different organizations are lower than the others. Generally, it can be expected that employees who worked in more organizations perceptually will have a high level of knowledge and experience in empowerment as in many issues. However, according to the results of the research, it has been found that, surprisingly, those who worked in only one workplace had more reactions to the subject. Nevertheless, evaluating the subject in detail and evaluating these criteria can reveal different results.

In this study, when the means of employee empowerment levels are examined, it can be seen that there is a complex distribution on every levels of the empowerment. The means are similar between the export, foreign trade and operation departments. It is understood that the employees belonging to the export department are more prominent among these departments.

Finally, the study also found that there is a complex distribution when the means of perceived empowerment levels based on the position are examined. Accordingly, it is seen that the positions such as export executives, import executives, administrative personnel and operations executives are more cautious and focused for the empowerment than other positions evaluating the issue.

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