

THE IMPACT OF REWARD SYSTEM ON HUMAN RESOURCE PRODUCTIVITY IN CHAIN STORES

A CASE STUDY ON BAMA CHAIN STORES, MASHHAD, IRAN

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Abstract

Almost all managers in chain stores intend to use effectively and efficiently various resources such as labor, capital, materials, energy and information. Managers should pay attention to such requirements as an adequate organizational structure, efficient procedures, safe equipment's and tools, balanced working environment, and most importantly qualified and competent human resources in order to achieve optimal productivity. This research aims at investigating the impact of reward system on the productivity of human resources in chain stores considering the fact that BAMA Chain Stores, Mashhad, Iran have recently faced with the problem of hiring the experienced staff by their competitors. The present study contributes to prevent human resource turnover and improve their productivity by the implementation of a reward system and supervision of human resources. To this end, a number of 90 out of 300 employees of the stores were considered as the target population of the research as they have direct contact with customers. For the primary data collection a standard questionnaire with the reliability of 75%

was employed. The results obtained confirm that there is a positive and significant correlation between the reward system and all components of the research, i.e. improved environment, employee empowerment, improved management and communication, improved wages and motivational factors.

Keywords: Reward system, chain stores, human resources management, productivity, Iran

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, organizations are working in a very competitive and dynamic environment. To survive in this market they should be able to rapidly respond to changing customer demands. Reward management is one of the ways used by organizations to attract and retain suitable employees as well as to improve their performance (Njanja, 2013). Reward and punishment are two instruments which are considered essential to implementing education and its development, building healthy business environment and creating incentives to avoid frauds. So, it can be said that reward and punishment can create an incentive to improve human resources productivity (Hussaini, 2006).

Reward management is one of the strategies used by human resource managers to attract and retain competent employees and also to help them to improve their performance through motivating and complying with employment laws and regulations. As a result of these pressures, human resource managers seek to design reward structures facilitating the strategic objectives and goals of organizations and individual employees. Reward systems are vital for an organization (Maund, 2001). The only way employees will fulfill employers' dreams is to share in their dream (Kotelnikov, 2010).

In recent years, the rapid development of chain stores has been considered as one of the main priorities of the Ministry of Commerce in the field of distribution system reformation. Following the construction period and because of much difficulty in the distribution of goods most affected by two factors of economic vulnerability and improper structure of the traditional distribution system, the government decided to improve the status of distribution and prevent turmoil in the market by setting up innovative chain stores. Following the decision, REFAH and SHAHRVAND Chain Stores were established. However, despite the efforts performed these units didn't have much success in achieving the objectives due to the lack of an adequate vision of how to run the stores and what factors influence their success (Ranjbarian, Caboli, Sanayee and Hadadian, 2012).

The Necessity of the Research

Since receiving higher payment-based suggestions by its competitors, Human Resources department of BAMA Chain Stores have sought to examine the relationship between productivity and payables in order to keep the employees. To this end, the human resources department decided to design a reward system and thanks to the efficiency of the system, it hopes to increase productivity and decreases employee turnover. Effective implementation of a reward system may be an introduction to developing a reward system of BAMA Chain Store.

With regard to its advantages, it can be said that by reviewing the researches performed, the managers of chain stores will find that an efficient reward system increases productivity and is effective for their company.

Research Question

Is there a relationship between the reward system and the components of human resources productivity?

BAMA Chain Stores Company

HAMYARAN SEPEHR Company (Private Joint Stock), as the largest company of chain stores in Mashhad founded BAMA Chain Stores in December 2011 and is trying to deliver high quality services to citizens by implementing standards and successful experiences of supermarkets and employing experienced specialists.

Reward

Rewards include systems, programs and practices which influence the actions of people. The purpose of reward systems is to provide a systematic way to deliver positive consequences. The main goal is to provide positive consequences to assist desired performance. (Wilson, 2003).

Extrinsic and Intrinsic Rewards

Rewards are usually divided into two groups: intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards are a host of external things that managers can provide to increase employee productivity. These include money, benefits, pay raise, promotion, flexible scheduling, etc.. According to Shunk, intrinsic rewards are considered intrinsic to people and are less sensible. In fact, they are subjective and referred to as how people feel about work and its values. (Shank, 2007).

Rewards and Motivation

The main reason for using reward is to create a motivation or a particular behavior among employees which will not only increase productivity but also prevent the behaviors that are destructive to the growth and development of an organization. That is what called expectancy theory by Vroom. Expectancy theory proposes that motivation is a function of outcome desirability (Martin, 2005).

Productivity

In Persian, the word "Bahrevary" has been suggested as the equivalent of the English word, Productivity. In some other texts, equivalents such as efficiency, effectiveness, yield, production power, capability and efficient reproduction have been mentioned (Akbari et al., 2009).

Productivity is one of the main factors that ensure the survival of organizations in the current competitive world. The prevailing culture of productivity leads to optimum use of all material and spiritual resources of an organization (Honary et al., 2006).

That is why human resources productivity is considered as the most important factor in the production of goods and services. So the relationship between human resources productivity and productivity is the most common means of measuring productivity and in most of studies on productivity it is generally used as productivity (Goudarzi and Ataei, 2009).

Productivity Components

According to the research performed (Thomas, 2008) the components of human resource productivity are the environmental conditions, employee empowerment, management and communication, collaboration and organizational climate and motivational factors. The hypotheses of this study are proposed based on the components of productivity (Thomas, 2008).

Chain Stores

A chain store consists of multiple retail stores under shared corporate ownership. The main tasks and functions of a chain store (purchasing, advertising, renting, etc.) are controlled by a headquarters or a central management (Samadi et al., 2009).

Human Resource Management

Human resource management is a strategic approach to attract, develop, manage, motivate and achieve commitment of key resources i.e. the people who work in or for it (Armstrong, 1993).

Operations and practices in human resource management system are divided into the four subdivisions: (1) system of absorbing, securing and adjusting human resources (2) System of education or renovation of human resources (3) retention system of human resources (4) system of employment and effective use of human resources (Farahi, R. 1998)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Foreign Researches

In a case study, Njanja et al. (2013) performed a study on the effect of reward on the performance of employees of Kenya Power and Lighting Company. The findings of this study showed that cash reward did not effect on employee performance. This was due to the fact that those who received and those who did not receive cash bonus all believed that cash rewards had the same effect on performance.

Schoeffler(2005) found that an effective reward system is of three immediate, short-term and long-term components. Short-term reward can be given monthly or quarterly and long-term rewards are given for loyalty throughout multiple years.

Bohlander at al. (2001) suggested that measuring performance is of high importance for an incentive program because it shows the importance of established organizational goals. "What is measured and rewarded is emphasized".

Hakala & Armstrong (2006) showed that in the field of human resource management, various authors suggest the following indicators to measure employee performance that include: quality, customer satisfaction, timeliness, absence or delay and achieving objectives.

Torrington, Hall & Stephen (2008) concluded that individual performance management in organizations has traditionally focused on performance evaluation and bonus allocation and effective performance is regarded as a result of the interaction between individual ability and motivation.

Duberg & Mollen(2010) performed a study on reward systems in the elderly health care division. The results showed that salary is a major aspect of the reward system. However, other incentives like bonus and stock make a workplace to be pleasant and the employees to be happy and more efficient rather than motivate them.

Axelsson & Bokedal (2009) performed a study on the rewards and motivating different generations in Volvo Car Corporation in Gothenburg. Key findings showed that although the growth opportunities for both generations were motivational, there were generational differences. However, both generations considered salary as important and non-monetary rewards as very important.

In his thesis entitled as "The impact of reward systems on corporate performance; case study of Ghana Commercial Bank", Patrick Apeyusi (2012) demonstrated that the concept of reward has not been fully understood in different branches of GCB. That is why most of employees and managers acknowledged that higher rewards did not motivate them to work harder.

Chepkirui Chepkwony (2014) in a study entitled "The relationship between reward systems and job satisfaction: a case study at Teachers Service Commission-Kenya" concluded that cash rewards didn't have significant effect on employee performance. People who received and those who did not received had the same impact on their performance, so there was no significant effect on performance.

ABOSEDE, Adebiji Julius (2012) in a study entitled "Reward system as a predictor of workers job performance: the case of health workers in Lagos State, Nigeria" showed that explanatory variables, reward, accounted for about 26% variations in the values of the dependent variable, job performance. In this model, it was found that reward as explanatory variable exhibits positive relationship with job performance and significant with t-value of 8.43t at %5 confidence level.

Domestic Research

Vanaki et al. (2011) in a study on nurses to examine employee satisfaction with the reward system concluded that the effectiveness of rewards was low. One reason of ineffectiveness of rewards from most nurses' viewpoint (more than 90% of nurses) was a sense of inner and outer inequality (Vanaki et al., 2011).

Habibi and Mohammadi Moghaddam (2011) performed a research and suggested a theoretical model for knowledge-based organizations explaining motivational programs (Habibi and Mohammadi Moghaddam, 2011).

Wright et al. (2008) performed a research to assess the impact of culture on motivational behavior to increase productivity in China. The results demonstrated that culture has a significant effect on the increase of employee motivation in the workplace leading to productivity improvement (Danialli et al., 2013).

Thompson (2000) suggested that in a comprehensive model of teamwork, depending on the team situation, there are multiple underlying conditions that are essential for successful performance and help to achieve the goal. Thompson called these factors as ability, motivation and cultural dimension of strategy (Hadizadeh Moghaddam and Hussein, 2010).

Farhadi.S et al. (2004), in their research, introduced the components related to employee performance and suggested an effective model based on performance and

measurement of organizational knowledge for evaluating employee performance (Farhadi et al. 2004).

Ansari Renani (1994) performed a research on analyzing and explaining the motivational status of human resources through the study of reward and punishment system in Iran steel plants industrial group and concluded that creating motivation depends on multiple factors, including the organization's goals, characteristics, behavior and expectations, competition etc. (Ansari Renani, 1994).

Soltani (2004) showed in a research that behavioral psychologists were among the first who concerned the preservation, development and maintenance of behavior and its consequences in the field of scientific psychology. Although the consequences of the behavior such as encouragement and punishment have long been used to change, reduce and promote the behavior, extensive scientific research in this field has been performed in recent years (Soltani, 2004).

Soltani (2007) showed that, in general, the fostered organizational human indices include strong perceptual skills, deep, stable and strong self-esteem, creativity, teamwork volunteering, a strong work ethic, accepting new changes in organization, desirable job skills and expertises, and self-assessment (Roghani et al., 2007).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In general, every research at first seeks to put forward a problem, a problem that raises many questions in the mind of the researcher leading to creation of hypotheses. The researcher seeks to answer the questions and approve or reject the hypotheses by collecting and analyzing the required information and statistics. So how to collect and analyze data is of high importance and is considered as a part of a scientific process that reflects theories in the form of scientific figures and statistics, the results can be shown quantitatively and the theoretical model can be measured and calculated.

The present research methodology is a cross-sectional descriptive survey. To test the hypotheses in this study, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire developed was based on two parts. The first part included demographic characteristics of respondents in which questions on gender, age, education and job tenure, were determined according to the researcher and the research objectives. In the second part, the questions were designed based on Likert scale. In this spectrum, each item (36 items) has five choices, which are described below.

- (1) "Strongly agree" with 5 points
 - (2) "Agree" with the 4 points
 - (3) "Not agree not disagree" with 3 points
 - (4) "disagree" with 2 points
 - (5) "strongly disagree" with 1 point.
- At all stages of data analysis these 5 levels were used.

Hypotheses

The Main Hypothesis

There is a significant and direct relationship between the reward system and the components of human resources productivity.

Sub-Hypotheses

H1: there is a significant and direct relationship between the reward system and improved environmental conditions.

H2: There is a significant and direct relationship between the reward system and employee empowerment.

H3: There is a significant and direct relationship between the reward system and improved management and communication.

H4: There is a significant and direct relationship between the reward system and improved wages.

H5: There is a significant and direct relationship between the reward system and improved collaboration and motivational factors.

Statistical Population

The statistical population of the present study is Bama Chain Stores with 15 stores 300 employees in the city of Mashhad, Iran.

Sampling

Given to the form of activities performed in these stores, the cluster sampling method was used in this study and the number of samples was estimated 75 using Cochran Formulas. After selecting clusters (15) the cluster of number of samples (75) will be allocated randomly among the clusters (5 samples per cluster).

$$n = \frac{N(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 * pq}{(N-1)(\epsilon)^2 + (Z_{\alpha/2})^2 * pq}$$

$$n_1 = \frac{300 * 1.96^2 * .5 * .5}{299 * (0.09)^2 + 1.96^2 * .5 * .5} = 75$$

Z= Confidence coefficient to coefficients of samples (at 95% confidence level, equal to 1.96).

$$Z_{\frac{0.05}{2}} = Z_{1-\frac{0.05}{2}} = 1.96$$

Research Variables

This study has two types of variables, dependent and independent. Dependent variable is organizational productivity and independent variable is reward system which includes five components. The questions of the questionnaire related to each component are shown in the table below:

Table 1: the combination of questionnaire questions

Number of questions	Components
10	Improved Environmental Conditions
5	Employee Empowerment
4	Improved Management and Communication
8	Improved Wages
10	Improved Collaboration and Motivational Factors

Reliability and Validity

The questionnaire used in this study had been used in 2008 in North Carolina, and we, in consultation with professors and experts, fitted the questionnaire with the respective research environment and distributed among the participants. The overall reliability of this questionnaire in Carolina survey was reported 90.4%. In this study, reliability was also measured using Cronbach's alpha. Given the reliability scale (over 75%) the reliabilities reported were considered good.

Table 2: Reliabilities of productivity components using Cronbach's alpha

Reliability	Components
%79	Improved Environmental Conditions
%77	Employee Empowerment
%77	Improved Management and Communication
%87	Improved wages
%86	Improved Collaboration and Motivational Factors

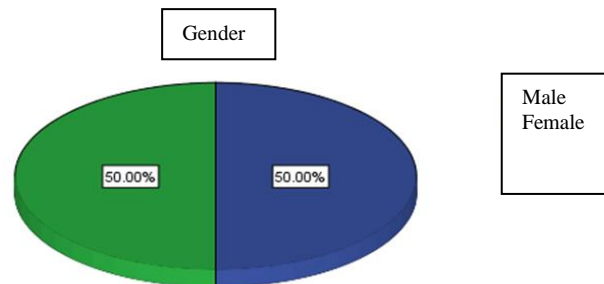
Data Analysis Approach

To analyze data obtained and test the hypotheses and given that some of the parameters are measured by more than 7 questions, first the dimensions were reduced by principal component analysis and then after specifying the parameters and being unknown the independent variable (reward system), the components were introduced into the structural equations to the correlation of each component of productivity with the reward system be determined. Principal component analysis was performed using SPSS and structural equations using LISREL.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

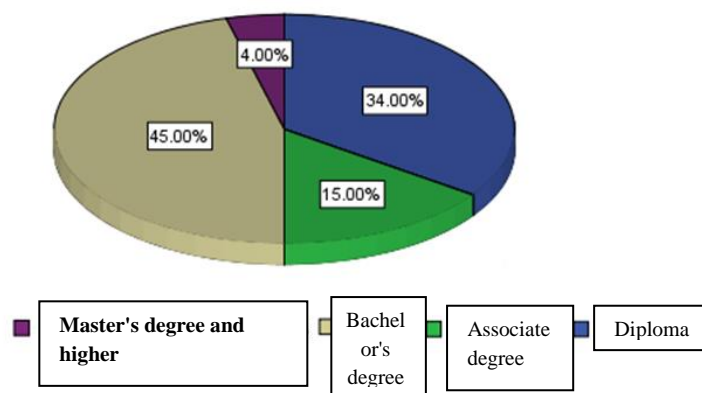
Demographic Profile

Diagram 1: gender of respondents



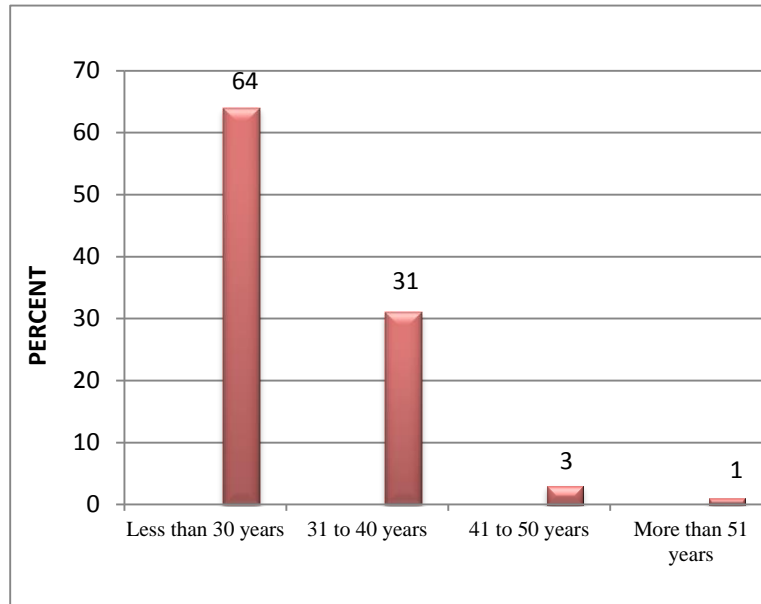
According to the diagram 1, the number of male and female respondents is the same.

Diagram 2: educational level of respondents



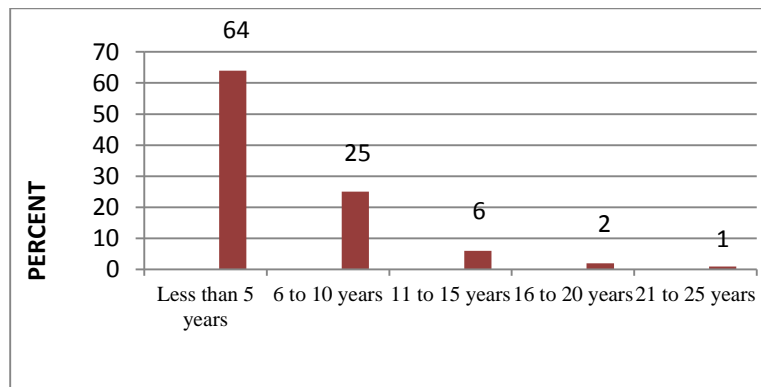
The diagram indicates that 45% of respondents have bachelor's degree and 4% have master's degree and higher.

Diagram 3: age of respondents



According to the diagram, the highest frequency is related to the respondents under the age of 30 years old and the least frequency is related to people being more than 50 years old.

Diagram 4: job tenure of respondents



According to the diagram, 64% of respondents have less than 5 years and 1% has over 21 years job tenure.

Inferential Statistic

Dimensionality Reduction of Improved Environmental Conditions

Since nine questions measure this dimension, the questions were reduced by using factor analysis.

Based on the results of factor analysis, KMO value is 0.755 and its Bartlett value is 210.954, which is significant at 0.95 level suggesting appropriate variables for analysis.

Table 3: KMO value, Bartlett and the significance level of the environmental conditions

Significance level(sig)	Bartlett	KMO
.000	210.954	.755

In Table 4, the values of the principal components and their eigenvalues as well as percentage of variance proportion are provided. Our criteria for extracting the principal components are those their eigenvalues are more than 1. To determine how many variables explain each principal component, the correlation between the components and variables was used.

Table 4: The factors extracted by eigenvalues and percentage of variance

E cumulative percentage of varie	E percentage of variance	Eigenvalue	Factor
36.888	36.888	3.320	1
52.602	15.714	1.414	2
62.914	10.312	.928	3
72.335	9.421	.848	4
81.082	8.747	.787	5
87.689	6.607	.595	6
92.668	4.979	.448	7
96.577	3.909	.352	8
100.000	3.423	.308	9

In this table two components are more than 1 which were selected as the principal components. Using varimax rotation the proportion of each component was determined.

Table 5: determining environmental conditions components using varimax rotation

Factor Load	Questions of the Questionnaire	Dimensions
.829	Are you satisfied with your job?	1
.754	Are you satisfied with your job description?	
.761	Are you happy with your workload?	
.527	Would you like to do your job with better quality?	2
.482	Was the training provided to perform the required tasks sufficient?	
.510	Is your job stimulating and varied?	
.761	Do you feel physically safe in the workplace?	
.795	Do you feel psychologically safe in the workplace?	
.695	Is the working environment an opportunity to learn new things?	

Improved Wages

Based on the results of the factor analysis, KMO value is 0.866 and Bartlett value is 457.122, which is significant at 0.95 level suggesting the appropriate variables introduced for the analysis.

Table 6: KMO value, Bartlett and the significance level of improved wages

Significance level (sig)	Bartlett	KMO
.000	457.122	.866

Eigenvalues are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: the factors extracted by eigenvalues and percentage of variance

E cumulative percentage of varie	E percentage of variance	Eigenvalue	Factor
55.810	55.810	4.465	1
74.671	18.861	1.509	2
83.566	8.895	.712	3
87.874	4.308	.345	4
91.908	4.035	.323	5
95.328	3.420	.274	6
98.258	2.930	.234	7

As shown in the table, two components are more than 1 which were selected as the main components and using varimax rotation the proportion of each component were determined.

Table 8: determining wages components using varimax rotation

Factor Load	Questions of the Questionnaire	Dimensions
.886	Are your satisfied with the current benefits?	1
.913	Are your satisfied with your salary?	
.821	Do you rank your salary well?	
.861	Is your salary fair?	
.843	Do you satisfied with the current legal system?	
.628	Are you well aware of the reward system and how to get them?	2
.859	Do you rank team rewards well?	
.872	Do you rank team rewards fair?	

Improved Collaboration and motivational factors dimensions

Based on the results of factor analysis, KMO value is 0.863 and Bartlett value is 390.275, which is significant at 0.95 level suggesting the appropriate variables introduced for the analysis.

Table 9: KMO value, Bartlett and the significance level of motivational factors

Significance level (sig)	Bartlett	KMO
.000	390.275	.863

Eigenvalues are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: the factors extracted by eigenvalues and percentage of variance

E cumulative percentage of varie	E percentage of variance	Eigenvalue	Factor
46.935	46.935	4.693	1
59.767	12.832	1.283	2
69.889	10.123	1.012	3
77.560	7.671	.767	4
83.312	5.752	.575	5
87.680	4.368	.437	6
91.374	3.695	.369	7
94.710	3.336	.334	8
97.594	2.884	.288	9
100.000	2.406	.241	10

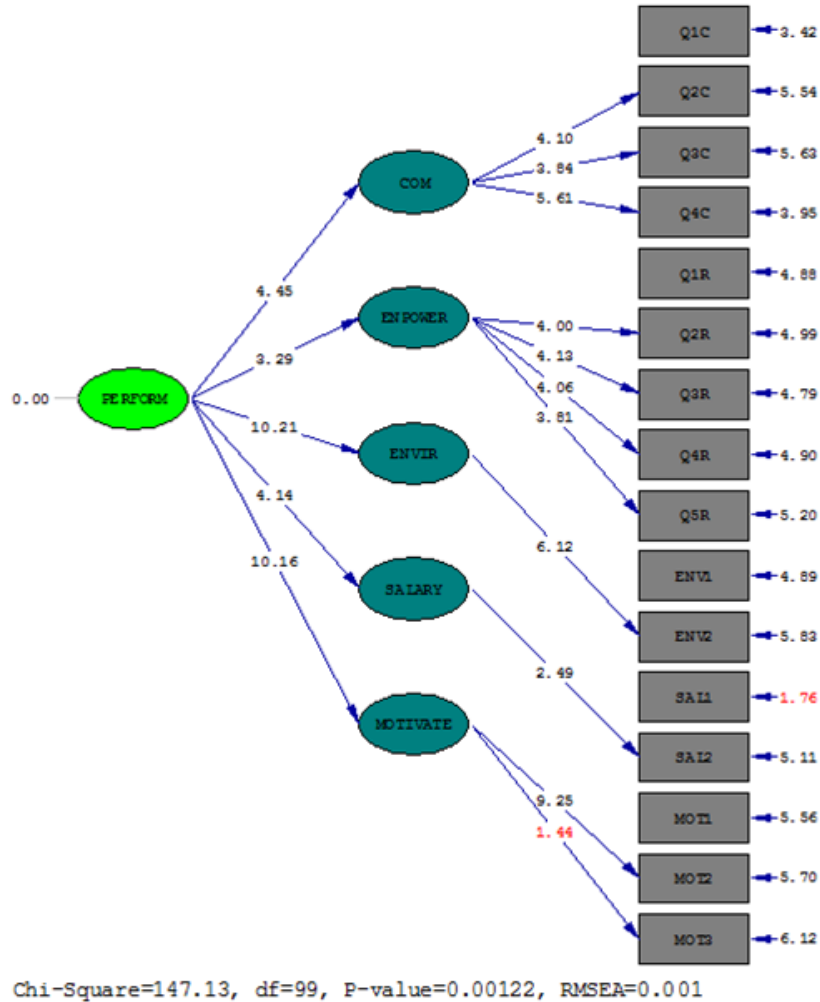
As shown in the table, three components are more than 1 which were selected as the principal components and using varimax rotation the proportion of each component were determined.

Table 11: determining motivational factors components using varimax rotation

Factor load	Questionnaire questions	Dimensions
.848	Are you motivated well by the current career position?	1
.821	Are you motivated by the opportunities in the job description?	
.498	Are you motivated by rewards and evaluations?	
.717	Are you motivated with team reward?	2
.836	Are you motivated by performance-related pay?	
.847	Are you motivated by development of suggested opportunities?	
.804	Are you motivated by career path opportunities?	3
.523	Are you motivated by customer satisfaction?	
.897	Are you motivated by your colleagues?	
.541	Are you motivated by pay raise?	

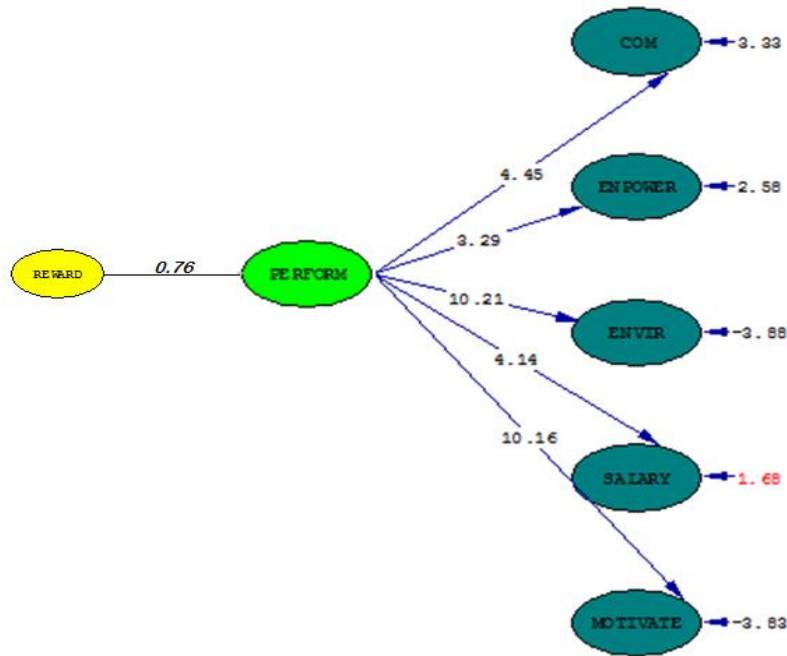
Having determined the proportion of each dimension, the relationship between productivity and its components is specified and plotted in the following figure.

Figure 1: Productivity and its components



As is clear from the figure, the relationship between the components considered for productivity is confirmed. The values reported are t-values that are given in t-student test and compared with standard values. In this graph, all t-values are greater than the standard. So their impact on the reward system is confirmed and the structural equation based on the relationship between productivity and reward system is drawn. The Chi-square value is at the significance level (sig <0.05) and the error value is also at the standard level (Critical value of standard error is 0.08).

Figure 2: Plotting the structural equation using gamma full matrix fixed



According to the values obtained from MLP equations (maximum likelihood) the research hypotheses are examined.

Table 12: the summary of MLP results

Researcher Hypothesis	coefficient of determination obtained from structural equations	Dimensions	Hypothesis
Confirmed	0.56	Reward System and Improved Environmental Conditions	H1
Confirmed	0.24	Reward System and Employee Empowerment	H2
Confirmed	0.34	Reward System and Improved Management and Communication	H3
Confirmed	0.35	Reward System and Improved Wages	H4
Confirmed	0.23	Reward System and Motivational Factors	H5

H1: According to Table 12, the relationship between reward system and improved environmental conditions is confirmed. Given to the coefficient of determination obtained from structural equations, the improved environmental condition is correlated with the reward system by 56%. So the research hypothesis is confirmed.

H2: According to Table 12, the relationship between reward system and employee empowerment is confirmed. Given to the coefficient of determination obtained from structural equations, the employee empowerment is correlated with the reward system by 24%. So the research hypothesis is confirmed.

H3: According to Table 12, the relationship between the reward system and improved management and communication is confirmed. Given to the coefficient of determination obtained from structural equations, the improved management and communication is correlated with the reward system by 34%. So the research hypothesis is confirmed.

H4: According to Table 12, the relationship between the reward system and improved wages is confirmed. Given to the coefficient of determination obtained from structural equations, the improved wages is correlated with the reward system by 35%. So the research hypothesis is confirmed.

H5: According to Table 12, the relationship between the reward system and motivational factors is confirmed. Given to the coefficient of determination obtained from structural equations, the motivational factors is correlated with the reward system by 35%. So the research hypothesis is confirmed.

Main hypothesis: Based on estimating the equations of maximum likelihood table, the components of human resources productivity is correlated with the reward system by 76%. So the main hypothesis is confirmed.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The study revealed that the relationship between the reward system and all components of the research, improved environmental conditions, employee empowerment, improved management and communication, improved wages and motivational factors were confirmed. In general, the correlation between the reward system and productivity was determined 76%. So the management of Bama Chain Stores can increase the productivity of their employees thank to create a motivational factor and prevent employee turnover by implementing a reward system. Since a chain store is a trading unit in which two factors of income and expenditure play important roles in its success and on the other hand due to its structure and size the variables are so complex and there are many factors affecting the operation of the store so, it is necessary to use modern scientific techniques and methods for managing the store and the problems would be studied from scientific viewpoint. Therefore, the following suggestions are offered for optimal implementation of the results of the study:

1. First in one of the best-seller stores, the results are implemented and after removing the potential problems they will be implemented in all the branches.

2. All executive instructions for the reward system will be designed on the basis of the research and implemented after training and be updated annually.
3. The best staff will be employed for training and deployment of the system in the future branches.
4. A suggestion system will be designed and implemented for collecting and applying innovative ideas of employees.

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