

The Role of Empowerment Strategy on Achieving the Organizational Competencies through Organizational Learning of Directors in Jordanian Public Organizations

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the role of Empowerment Strategy in achieving the Organizational Competencies of Managers of Public Corporations in Jordan .A random simple sample consisted of (350) hundred out of (1400) managers were participated in this study. Also a developed questionnaire has been formed with three sections and Likert Scale of Five points was built. To confirm the stability of the instrument, the researcher used Cronbach Alpha Coefficient Test. The results of this study indicate that, applying the empowerment strategy was medium, the level of organizational Competencies in Jordan public organizations was high, the adaptive learning is medium, and the generative learning is low. There was a statistically significant impact of the dimensions of empowerment strategy on achieving the organizational Competencies through the process of organizational learning in Jordan public organizations.

Key Words: Empowerment Strategy, Organizational Competencies, Organizational Learning, Jordanian Public Organizations

1. Introduction

The interest of individuals' needs is considered one of the management priorities that due to its great role in the success of any organization. The organizations began to concentrate on these needs including the problems and causes of employees, where the administrative empowerment is the most important topic in this concern. With the beginning of the second millennium, the organizations need to change in the job administrative approaches. The impact of the acceleration development the global organizations and local companies was great, as well as the new technologies, globalization and economic openness. These factors required transformation from the traditional hierarchy premise to the new democratic and participative administrative premise. The empowerment strategy is linked to the organizational competencies, since the empowerment contributes to the raising of individual participation level and developing the performance level of the employees.

The improvement of employee's performance is an essential factor for applying the concept of empowerment in administration. Such improvement is considered a driving power and a holistic effort for empowerment programs. The organizational competencies have a great and effective impact on the performance of the employee, and considered basic inputs used by employees for producing their activities in the job environment. The organizations need to increase the organizational learning to become able for matching the large changes in the contemporary business environment. To achieve this requirement, the organizations require more openness to the modern concepts and ideas. Due to the importance of studying of organizational learning and its role in achieving the goals of organizations, the concept of organizational learning has become one of the basic concepts that management, researchers and practitioners focus on to enhance the job satisfaction by employees.

2. Problem of the Study

Many organizations, including the Jordanian public organizations, haven't comprehended the change towards establishing strategies for empowerment that lead to achieve the organizational competencies. These organizations become in a badly need for these strategies in order to achieve progress, success and sustained of change.

Therefore, the problem of this study is represented by the following question: What is the role of empowerment strategy in achieving the organizational competencies of managers of the public corporate in Jordan?

3. Importance of the Study

The importance of this study comes from both theoretical and applied aspects. From the theoretical aspect, the study focuses on the strategy of empowerment and its role in qualifying employees and enhancing their job capabilities and developing their tasks capabilities. On the applied aspect, the study analyses the role of empowerment strategy in achieving the organizational competencies of managers in the public organizations through the processes of organizational learning that contributes to improve the performance of these organizations in general.

4. Objectives of the Study

The study aims at recognizing the role of empowerment strategy in achieving the organizational competencies through organizational learning of the managers in the public organizations. It also aims to reach some results and recommendations that can be useful for the leaders in these organizations to enhance organizational competencies of the employees.

5. Hypotheses of the Study

The study seeks to test the validity of the following hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no statistically significant impact ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the dimensions of empowerment strategy (Delegation, participation, self development, self motivation, and self creativity) on the achievement of organizational competencies (competency of administrative job, competency of administrative roles, competency of communication skills, competency of self development), in the Jordanian Public Organizations.

Ho2: There is no statistically significant impact ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the dimensions of empowerment strategy (Delegation, participation, self development, self motivation, and self creativity) on the organizational learning in the Jordanian Public Organizations.

Ho3: There is no statistically significant impact ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the dimensions of empowerment strategy (Delegation, participation, self development, self motivation, and self creativity) on achieving the organizational competencies through organizational learning in the Jordanian Public Organizations.

6. Model of the Study

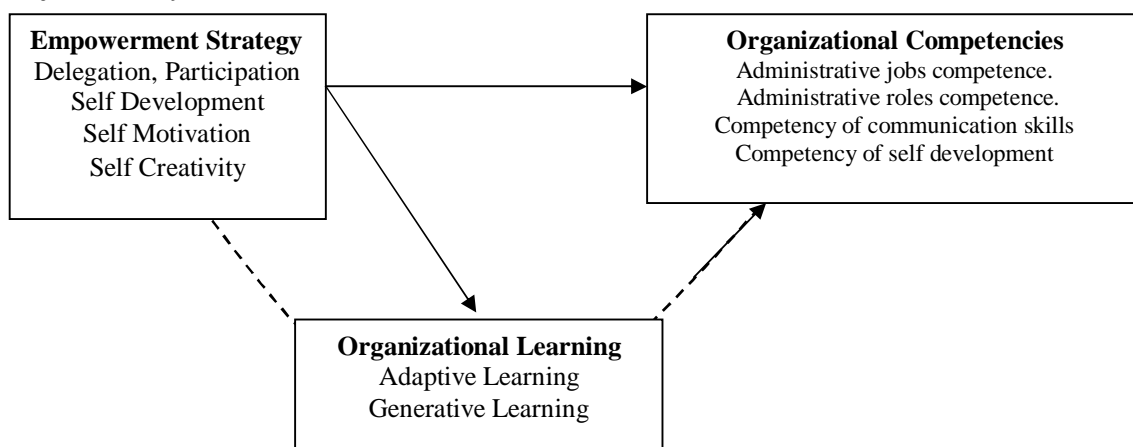


Figure 1: shows the model with its independent, intermediate and dependent variables.

7. Literature Review

7.1 Littrell (2003) defined the administrative empowerment as the "skill of giving employees the power to their own job goals, make decisions, and solve the related problems within their authorities and responsibilities. Harrim and Alkshali (2008) study found that the managements of the Jordanian constructions companies use good levels of empowerment for the employees, besides that work groups feel a good level of efficiency. The results indicate a clear impact of employee's empowerment on the effectiveness of groups.

Rose (2007) study indicated a relationship between empowerment of managers and the organization climate and job performance. It showed that the empowerment of business unit is related positively to the performance of employees in these units. The importance of administrative empowerment stems from that is to increase the understanding of employee's role in achieving the goals of their organization, and developing their self competencies, as well as increasing their job satisfaction and the compatibility between organization needs and the personal needs of employees. It founds that such empowerment leads to gain the satisfaction of customers, increase the productivity of organization, and the responsiveness of organizations to the external stimulate, as well as achieving the creativity and distinction in doing business. Hard and Q'Sullivan (1998) study found that empowerment is not a weak option. The managers who paved the way for empowerment were sure that organizational goals can't be achieved without the empowerment of employees. Reza (2010) study indicated a statistically significant relationship between the administrative empowerment and institutional commitment. The administrative empowerment consists of several dimensions:

1. Participations: The participation is an important process that contributes to reach the right decision. It affects the process of decision taking (McShane Van Glinow, 2005).

2. Work Teams: The administrative empowerment contributes the creation of perceptions and build the self and humanitarians assessments against the status besides recognizing his/her satisfaction by different aspects of organization which can be reflected positively in forming the organizational values and culture (Ghada and Mike, 2005). The most crucial characteristics of teams are sharing of information, focusing the team efforts on the task under execution, providing teams with materials and equipments and building the external support for the team and helping team members to develop and use their skills (Harrington-Mackin, 1994). The importance of work teams in the administrative organizations is stemmed from many organizational objectives and tasks that are implemented through work teams to collaborate and enhance the creative initiatives of employees, as well as the simplification of procedures and utilize the mind talents and capabilities to solve the administrative problems to find different approaches (Gordon, 1992). Kurtzberg (2000) indicates a relationship between the individual creativity approaches and the operations and performance of the team on one side and the outputs of such team. McCoy (2000) indicated a positive relationship between favoring the collaborative conflict solution and increasing the skill levels of team members.

3. Importance of the work: The importance of work requires the link of individuals' identity to greater identity. The organizational identity represents several features through which we can recognize the matters and basic nature of things clearly, whether things are physical entity or mental premise (Hutchens, 2009).

4. Delegation: Delegation is an important skill that managers should be characterized in any organization. This importance is clear in the administrative process in general and for the authorized person in specific. Who can't authorize effectively cannot manage effectively (Titus and Samuel, 2006). Francisco et al (2005) indicated that the most important pillars of empowerment is the skill of power Delegation and distribution it on their employees. Cavers (1993) indicated that the most critical constraints of administrative Delegation are related to the traditional administrative pattern, selfish of managers, conflicts, and crisis that encounter organization besides the ambiguity of roles and goals. Cook and Hunsaker (2001) assured that the most crucial constraints of administrative Delegation are related to the personality of manager and his/her fear to lose their position.

7.2 Organizational Learning: Thomas and Allen (2006) define the organizational learning as the "process that leads to learning of organization continuously. Sun and Scott (2003) indicated that the organizational learning expresses "the learning process used in organization and handling the question about how individuals in the organization learn? Hodgkinson (2000) suggested that organizational learning is achieved as a result of interaction of individuals with each others in a continuous way through learning process. This interaction enables them to acquire experiences. Farago (1995) defines organizational learning as "all systems, mechanism, and tools used to improve the capabilities of individuals continuously to reach specific goals related to individuals and organization. The above mentioned definitions show that the organizational learning represents a process with specific and recognized components and mechanisms. Such process is interactive and continuous to improve the capabilities of individuals in organization. Kumar and Idris (2006), Raiden and Dainty (2006) and Finger and Brand (1999) indicated a significant and positive impact, with medium levels, for the dimensions of the organizational learning on the cognitive performance of organizations. But the most affecting dimensions are: learning group, thinking of the level of system and strategic leadership. The organizational learning consists of two types:

1. **The Adaptive Learning** is related to the learning of subordinates, in the industrial companies. The skills are necessary for implementing the tasks, and the work procedures lead to gradual development of these companies to secure their survival in the market.

2. **Generative Learning** is related to the learning type under the interest of subordinates through an attempt to perceive their business in future and design. This type requires a high degree of autonomy by the subordinates to experiment new approaches. Sun and Scott (2003) indicate that the adaptive learning does not require high cost and long time, while the generative learning includes the building of new capabilities and giving up the previous work approaches intentionally. Such process is essential for the operative side of the organization which works in a highly changing environment, which in turn will lead to high costs (Malhotra, 1996). Wijnhover (2011) also indicated that the adaptive learning is related to the simple change which is involved in the first stage of learning process. The generative learning is linked to the advanced stage that complements the adaptive stage. The generative stage focuses on improving the potentials of organization in exploring the capabilities in order to modify the behavior, and create new knowledge and experience. Marquardt (2000) study which stressed the importance of leadership for organizational learning. The study indicated the need of organizational learning process for power that enables it to implement the tasks in good way. Here the focus is made on the leader rather than his/her tasks.

7.3 Organizational Competencies:

It indicates a specific level of performance which aims of achieving the projected results of the job (Dobois, 2003). Rodolfa et al (2005) indicated that organizational competencies are the embedded features of individuals that lead distinctiveness and effectiveness. The competency also is defined as "all knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to execute a specific task in a facilitated way (Epstein and Hundert, (2002).The dimensions of competency are represented by the following:

1. **Competency of Administrative Competency:** McKnight et al (2009) focus on the concept of competency system and work stability for job through a legal system that gives the employee the guarantees and benefits; those are not enjoyed by any other individuals outside the company, through defining their tasks, benefits and penalties. Such competency is related to the recruitment of competent employee for the suitable task and his/her capability to do the job efficiently and effectively (Katsihea. Et al, 2010). Banai and Reisel (2007) study limited the administrative jobs of expectations of individuals, where we can depend on it to achieve favored results for the individuals due to the effectiveness of the administrative system, principals, information systems and the organizational relationship among individuals without exaggerating the presentation of facts which in turn will improve the morale, quality and productivity.

2. **Competency of Administrative Roles:** It represents the core of administrative process and contributes to make the management more efficient and dynamic and being a driving tool to achieve the goals (Klemp, 2003). It has become the criterion through which the success of any administrative organization is determined. This competency has become the focus of researches due to the need for change, in order to implant the spirit of responsibility and power of employees (White, 2009).

3. **Competency of Self Development:** The self development stresses the importance of thinking in determining the problems and searching for solutions. The approaches used for self development are varied according to the variation of benefits available for individuals. The more the use of advanced technology is the more flexible the development will be (Ayse, 2006). The type of self development differs according to the applied techniques (Olian and Durham, 2004). The self development of individuals' knowledge and skills can be ripened through applying the modern information technology (Darry and Miller, 2005).

8. Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive-analytical methodology through data collection by questionnaire to test hypotheses and answer the main question.

9. Population

The population consists of (1400) managers in the public organizations in Jordan.

10. Sample

A random simple sample of 25% of the population (350) managers was drawn, where the researcher distributed the questionnaire to them. The research retrieved (285) forms (81.43%) of the sample while he excluded 39 forms due to its invalidity for statistical analysis. The net valid forms were (246) forms (70.3%) of the sample.

11. Instrument

The researcher developed a questionnaire of three sections, empowerment strategy, organizational competencies, and organizational learning. The researcher adopted Likert Scale of Five Points to measure the responses. The study considered the arithmetic mean between (1-2.49) as a low level of perception, (2.5-3.49) as a medium level of perception and 3.5-5 as a high level of perception.

12. Reliability of Instrument

The researcher established the stability of the study instrument by using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for internal consistency. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for each variable and its dimensions

Variable	Dimension	Cronbach Alpha
Strategy of Empowerment	Delegation	0.84
	Participation	0.85
	Self Development	0.89
	Self Motivation	0.81
	Self Creativity	0.90
Organizational Competency	Competency of Admin. Jobs	0.88
	Competency of Admin. Roles	0.91
	Competency of Communication Skills	0.89
	Competency of Self Development	0.82
Organizational. Learning	Adaptive Learning	0.73
	Generative Learning	0.80

The results of Table 1 show that stability coefficients for empowerment strategy were (0.81-0.90), while organizational competencies were (0.82-0.91) and organizational learning were (0.73-0.80). The internal consistency accepted is >0.60 .

13. Results of Analysis and Hypotheses Test

Table 2 shows that general mean for the dimensions of empowerment strategy were (3.47) which mean the applying of such strategy in Jordanian Public corporate by medium level. The general mean for the dimensions of organizational competences was 3.55, which mean that such competencies are high in these organizations. The general mean of organizational learning was (2.40) which mean that applying such learning is medium.

Table 2: Means and Standard Dev. For Respondents' Perceptions on Applying Empowerment

Dimension	Mean	Std. Dev.
Delegation	3.37	0.64
Participation	3.42	0.62
Self Development	3.56	0.59
Self Motivation	3.54	0.60
Self Creativity	3.44	0.61
Total Average	3.47	0.56
Competency of Administrative Jobs	3.61	0.55
Competency of Administrative Roles	3.56	0.58
Competency of Communication Skills	3.68	0.54
Competency of Self Development	3.30	0.61
Total Average	3.55	0.55
Generative Learning	2.83	0.71
Adaptive Learning	1.97	0.66
Total Average	2.40	0.68

14. Test of Hypotheses

Before applying the regression analysis to test the hypotheses, the researcher conducted the tests of variance inflation coefficient (VIF), the Tolerance Variance and Skewness to secure the data suitability for the assumptions of regression analysis, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Tests of VIF, AV, and Skewness.

Dimensions of Independent Var.	VIF	Tolerance	Skewness
Delegation	2.39	0.419	0.370
Participation	2.90	0.345	0.210
Self Development	3.36	0.298	0.266
Self Motivation	3.46	0.289	0.337
Self Creativity	2.28	0.341	0.261

The values of VIF coefficient test for each dimension <10 where the values range between (2.28-3.46). the values of Tolerance of variance lost are $0.289-0.419 > 0.05$, which indicates no high correlation among the independent variables (multi collinearly). To verify the assumptive of normal distribution of data, the researcher depended on the Skewness value of variables. As shown in Table 3, the Skewness value for all variable was >1 which means that data is distributed normally.

Table 4: Results of Regression Analysis to Verify the Model Validity for Hypotheses Test.

Dependent Variables	Deg. of Freedom	R2 Det. Coef.	Calc. F Value	Sig. Level F
Competency of Adm. Jobs	(5.240)	0.659	92.95*	0.000
Competency of Adm. Roles	(5.240)	0.610	74.97*	0.000
Competency of Comm. Skills.	(5.240)	0.640	85.42*	0.000
Competency of Self Dev.	(5.240)	0.662	93.96*	0.000

* Statistically significant at $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

Table 4 shows the validity of hypotheses testing model. Due to the higher value of calculated F than its tabular value at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ with freedom degrees of (5.240), where the dimensions of empowerment strategy interpret 66.2% of variance in the dimension of "organizational competencies." It also interpreted 65.9% of the variance in the dimension of "competency of administrative jobs", 61% of variance in "competency of administrative roles; 64% of variance in "competency of communication skills", and interpreted 62.2% of variance in "competency of self development". All these values confirm the role and impact of empowerment strategy dimensions in interpreting the dimensions of organizational competencies.

Ho₁: There is no statistically significant impact at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ for the dimensions of empowerment strategy (Delegation, participation, self development, self motivation, self creativity) on achieving organizational competencies of (administrative jobs, administrative roles, communication skills, and self development) in the Jordanian Public Organizations.

Table 5: Results of multi regression analysis to test the impact of empowerment strategy on organizational competencies

Empowerment Strategy	β	Std. Error	β	T Value	Sign.
Delegation	0.435	0.094	0.222	4.627*	0.000
Participation	0.474	0.163	0.356	2.904*	0.004
Self Development	0.352	0.120	0.298	2.945*	0.004
Self Motivation	1.312	0.166	0.983	7.908*	0.000
Self Creativity	0.304	0.174	0.226	1.744	0.082

* Statistically significant at $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

Results of Table 5 show, with Beta coefficient and t test, that the dimensions of independent variables (Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation) have statistically significant impact on the dependent variable (organizational competencies by significance and increase of calculated t values in the table $\alpha \leq 0.05$, and affecting value of Beta which is statistically significant. The results indicated no statistically significant impact for the "self creativity" dimension on the "organizational competencies."

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant impact at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ of empowerment strategy (Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation, and self creativity) on the organizational learning in the Jordanian Public Organizations.

Table 6: Results of multi regression analysis to test the impact of empowerment strategy on the organizational learning

Empowerment Strategy	β	Std. Error	β	T Value	Sign.
Delegation	0.318	0.095	0.202	2.156*	0.000
Participation	0.367	0.165	0.274	2.193*	0.027
Self Development	0.358	0.121	0.300	2.960*	0.003
Self Motivation	1.293	0.168	0.963	7.719*	0.000
Self Creativity	0.380	0.176	0.280	2.226*	0.032

* Statistically significant at $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

Results of Table (6) show, with the coefficients of Beta and t test, that independent variable dimensions (Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation, self creativity) have statistically significant impact on the depended variable (competency of administrative jobs, by significance and high values of calculated t shown in the table at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ and the effecting power of Beta values.

H₀₃: There is no statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of empowerment strategy on the achievement of organizational competencies with the application of organizational learning in the Jordanian Public Organizations.

To test this hypothesis, the researcher applied path analysis of Amos (V.22) software, to verify the existence of direct and indirect impact of the empowerment strategy dimensions together on achieving the organizational competencies with the existence of organizational learning as an intermediate variable in Jordanian Public Corprates. Table 7 shows the results of path analysis which indicated an impact of empowerment strategy dimensions on the achievement of organizational competencies with organizational learning as an intermediate variable.

The value of calculated Chi² was (46.882) which were statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The value of goodness of Fit Index (GFI) was (0.997) which was near the one (full fit). The value of comparative Fit Index (CFI) was (0.992) which was near one. The value of Root Mean of Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was (0.011) which was near zero. The direct impact of the dimensions of empowerment strategy on organizational learning was (0.384) which indicates the impact. Therefore, the increasing interest in the dimensions of empowerment strategy will generate an impact on organizational learning. In the same context, the direct impact of organizational learning on achieving the organizational competences was (0.356) which confirms the impact. Therefore, the increasing interest in organizational learning will generate an impact on organizational competencies. The indirect impact of empowerment strategy dimensions on achieving the organizational competencies with the organizational learning as an intermediate variable was (0.326). This confirms the role played by organizational learning in enhancing the impact of empowerment strategy dimensions on achieving the organizational competencies. The value of calculated T for the coefficient of first path impact was (27.81) which were statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The value of calculated T for the second path impact coefficient was (22.54) which were significant ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This result indicates that there was an impact of empowerment strategy on achieving the organizational competencies with the existence of organizational learning as an intermediate variable.

Table 7: Path Analysis Test for the direct and indirect impact of empowerment on the organizational competencies through organizational leaning

Statement	Calc. Chi2	GFI	CFI	RMS EA	Sig. Level	Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Path	Calc. T	Sig. Level
Empowerment Strategy Impact on Achieving the organizational competencies	46.882	0.99	0.99	0.011	0.011	0.384 Empowerment strategy impact on Org. learning	0.136*	ES ↓ OL	27.81	0.000
Through Organizational Learning as Intermediate Variable						0.356 Org. leaning impact on Org. com.	0.136*	ES ↓ OL	22.54	0.000

* Indirect Impact is the sum of direct impact coefficients multiplied by variables.

15. The Results

The study reached to the following results:

1. Applying the empowerment strategy was medium where the respondents focused on the joint cooperation among the employees to implement their tasks with a high proficiency and most of them tended to be satisfied by such cooperation. This result indicates the level of job empowerment of respondents, while most of them were unsatisfied with the adoption of imitation approach to change the negative behaviors.
2. The level of organizational Competencies in Jordan public organizations was high. Such result is attributed to the care of managers to submit initiatives that contribute to problem solving, utilization of human resources at all administrative levels, make efforts to establish a suitable work environment which contribute to implementation of tasks on time. Such result agrees with Das et al (2011) study which indicated a role for leading Competency in applying the total quality. It also agrees with the study of Ana et al (2005) which showed that the development of the new strategy which aimed at conducting an experimental analysis based on a theoretical situation on the basis of competency and affects the quality of competency and affects the quality of achieving the competitive advantage which can transformed from external sources to the organization.
3. The processes of organizational learning in Jordan public organizations are medium and the means ranged between (1.97-2.83). The dimension of adaptive learning obtained the first rank and the generative learning obtained the second.
4. The level of adaptive learning in Jordan public organizations is medium. The researcher suggests that this result indicates that interest in learning and its sources is medium in terms of data collection and conduct training and development as an important task which shows alarming on all events of external environment.
5. The level of generative learning in Jordan public organizations was low. The analyses show that the top management in these organizations are unresponsive and collaborative to the new ideas and propositions of employees. The management didn't encourage them to submit ideas to improve the work methods.

6. Dimensions of empowerment strategy interpreted 66.2% of variance in the dimension of organizational Competencies, interpreting 65.9% of variance in the dimension of "administrative job Competency", as well as 61% of variance in the dimension of "administrative role Competency", in addition to interpreting 64% of variance of "communication skills Competency" and interacted 62.2% of variance in the dimension of "self development Competency".
7. The dimensions of independent variable (Delegation, participation, self development, self motivation) are statistically significant impact on the dependent variable (organizational Competencies), where the dimension of "self motivation obtained the first rank followed by Delegation, self development and participation).
8. The dimensions of independent variable ((Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation, self creativity) are statistically significant impact on the dependent dimension of "administrative jobs Competency". The dimension of "self motivation" obtained the first rank followed by Delegation, self development, and participation.
9. The dimension of independent variable (Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation, and self creativity) is statistically significant impact on the dependent variable "administrative roles Competency." The dimension of self motivation obtained the first rank followed by Delegation, participation and self development.
10. The dimensions of independent variable (Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation, and self creativity) are statistically significant impact on the dependent variable "Competencies of communication skills." The dimension of self motivation obtained the first rank followed by Delegation and participation.
11. The dimensions of independent variable (Delegation, participations, self development, self motivation) are statistically significant impact on the dependent variable "Competencies of self development". The dimension of self motivation obtained the first rank followed by Delegation, self development and participation.
12. There is a statistically significant impact of the dimensions of empowerment strategy on achieving the organizational Competencies through the process of organizational learning in Jordan public organizations.

16. Recommendations

The study concluded the following Recommendations:

The Jordanian public organizations should focus on the empowerment of employees through the following approaches: Changing some orders and regulations that concentrate authority in the hands of top management to provide opportunity for lower levels to participate in administrative and executive decisions. Studying the training needs in a scientific method then arrange the suitable programs that enable the employees' empowerment. Activate the collective work through official and unofficial teams in the management. Concentrating on the system of selection and recruitment through adopting the objective criteria depend on the basis of proficiency on Competency. Encouraging employees to submit new ideas. Providing information necessary for employees to solve their work problems. Provide material and moral motivations for the employees of new idea.

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