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Achieving the Agility of Human Resources Through Job Empowerment Practices and Job Satisfaction: Empirical Evidence from the Banking Sectors

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Abstract

Financial sectors, like other sectors with strict hierarchies, need help to be adaptive or agile enough to satisfy the needs of competitive situations. In this regard, this study aims to evaluate the influence of job satisfaction on the link between job empowerment practices and the agility of human resources and fills the gaps in the current literature. To fulfill these aims, the study employs data collected through a survey of 460 employees randomly selected across various levels of commercial banking. AMOS 25 was used to conduct a statistical data analysis by applying structural equation modelling to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed positive and direct associations between job empowerment practices, job satisfaction, and the agility of human resources. In addition, employee satisfaction served as a powerful intermediary between empowerment practices and the agility of human resources. This study is one of the first to analyze the association between these factors in this field. These results imply that banks should develop effective job empowerment strategies to increase employee job satisfaction, which can lead to a more agile workforce. As mentioned in this paper, it also has important and helpful implications for academics and banks.

Keywords: Human Resources Agility, Job Empowerment Practices, Decision-Making, Delegation Authority, Job Satisfaction

JEL Classification Code: G01, M12, M19

1. Introduction

The competitive business climate has unquestionably accelerated the rate at which firms must innovate to maintain and improve their competitive position. One of the characteristics of a creative firm is its capacity to promote, develop, and utilize the abilities of its employees (Martín et al., 2022). The primary concern of organizations is how to incentivize their workers to generate creative ideas and provide an environment in which organizational members

may implement their innovative concepts (Lai et al., 2021). The current challenge has compelled businesses to increase resilience, expand their adaptability, and easily perform their operations. Indeed, agility began as a novel response to managing a dynamic and changing environment and subsequently became a vital success element for enterprises (Kustiyadi & Windijarto, 2021).

Adopting innovative techniques, like the agility of human resources, also enables financial sectors to respond to environmental changes. Human resources are now a key strategic source of knowledge and advancement and a foundation for brilliance. They enable sectors to carry out their duties professionally and efficiently and achieve the competitive edge that ensures their survival, growth, and success (Menon & Suresh, 2022). In addition, the extended plurality of sources, such as Alavi (2016), Muduli (2016), and Sherehiy and Karwowski (2014), confirmed that the agility of human resources focuses on three measures: “proactivity, adaptability, and resilience.” In this sense, human resource agility can be attained through advanced methodologies. New research demonstrates that firms cannot be nimble

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without a talented staff. Human resource agility depends on knowledge, learning bias, and other organizational support activities that should be prioritized in an agile-seeking firm (Alavi, 2016).

In this context, empowerment is viewed as the emancipation of the human from restrictions, the encouragement of the individual, and the motivation and reward for exercising entrepreneurship and innovation. On the other hand, empowerment liberates the person from severe control, rigid laws, and precise policies, allowing him to assume responsibility for his actions. Under tight bureaucracy and authoritarian governments, an individual's potential and abilities will unavoidably remain dormant and exploited (Ibrahim, 2015). Moreover, job satisfaction is one of the organizationally beneficial behaviors in developed nations, which drives employees to boost their output. Organizational loyalty reduces absenteeism and enhances employees' interest in the company, enhancing its ability to adapt to changing surroundings and achieve its objectives (Kim & Kim, 2021).

Our study provides many important contributions. First, this study demonstrates the significance of empowering practices and job satisfaction in attaining the agility of human resources, therefore expanding our empirical knowledge of the factors of human resource agility in financial sectors. Second, the study investigates the interdependencies between empowering practices, job satisfaction, and human resource agility. Despite the intuitive attractiveness of the theoretical argument for the contribution, including both empowering practices and the agility of human resources in financial sectors, there is no research on this topic. In addition to addressing these challenges, our research investigates whether or not job satisfaction mediates this relationship, which has useful implications for practitioners and policymakers in all nations seeking to develop agility-driven competitiveness.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1. Job Empowerment Practices

Empowerment enables individuals to contribute their talents and responsibilities, motivates them to make the right decisions, and gives them authority and confidence to perform their work without management intrusion (Siswanti & Muafi, 2020; Rajalingam et al., 2011). Yin et al. (2020) defined employee empowerment as consolidating administration and employee connections, incentives, involvement in decision-making, and eliminating internal managerial barriers between administration and employees. For a long time, giving employees more power has been a focus of many practices and studies. It has been done in many ways, including getting employees involved and

participating in decision-making, which led to the trendy empowerment perspective (Thani et al., 2022). Similarly, human resources are viewed as an essential organizational asset, and employee empowerment is a key notion for human resource development that boosts productivity. Improving the organization's quality and profitability depends on how employees perceive their competence (Yin et al., 2019).

This article focuses on the most significant aspects of employee empowerment, including decision-making and delegation of authority. The delegation of power refers to transferring authority to other management levels so that employees can impact decisions concerning their performance (Liu, 2017; Bani-Melhem et al., 2020). According to Juhana et al. (2020), the delegation of power is essential in major businesses, where the overall managers cannot potentially assume entire responsibility. Managers must be able to delegate authority to their helpers, who are provided with a specific subset of the manager's rules to follow legal or natural guidelines. The second aspect of employee empowerment is decision-making, empowering employees to voice their suggestions, recommendations, and opinions concerning their unit and job (Le et al., 2020).

Likewise, this paper seeks to confine the impact of these factors on the agility of human resources. In this context, agility is a new notion in human resource management, yet it has been a commonly taught topic for several years. It is researched to determine how firms may be and remain successful in a dynamic environment and to ensure they acquire a competitive edge (Ulrich & Yeung, 2019). Besides that, many scholars have independently examined the link between empowering techniques and the agility of human resources. According to Anwar and Abdullah (2021), the delegation of authority significantly impacts the overall effectiveness of human resources. In addition, all staffers should consider human resource agility for businesses to be agile. Al-Jammal et al. (2015), Aldalayeem and Aldofairy (2016), Farahani and Salimi (2015), and Nouri and Mousavi (2020) reported that the agility of employees may be accomplished if individuals interact, share their perspectives, and have decision-making authority and that there is a significant and positive association between the delegation authority (DA) and agility of human resources.

From another angle, multiple studies have independently investigated the relationship between decision-making practices and the agility of human resources. This has resulted in favorable arguments in academic literature. For instance, Muduli (2016, 2017) examined the effect of employee participation in "decision-making" on the agility of the workforce. Findings indicated that collaboration in decision-making is judged vital for agile workforces. Harraf et al. (2015), Muduli and Pandya (2018), Munteanu et al. (2020), and Natapoera and Mangundjaya (2020) reported that employees with decision-making authority and collaboration

tend to be more adaptive and flexible to the surrounding environment. These results led us to propose the following research hypotheses:

H1: *The empowerment practices of employees have an influence on the agility of human resources.*

H2: *The delegation of authority for employees affects the agility of human resources.*

H3: *The decision-making strategy affects the agility of human resources.*

2.2. Job Satisfaction

The topic of job satisfaction (JS) is how the staff feels regarding their profession and the many aspects of their work. There are many causes why businesses must be focused on the satisfaction of employees, like the fact that staff expects to be treated with care and that satisfaction in the work can drive worker manners in ways that impact organizational objectives (Milana, 2018). According to Garg et al. (2018), job satisfaction is critical to the business's success since if a person is unhappy with his job, he will not be committed to the business. Employees' dissatisfaction with their work leads them to seek employment elsewhere, affecting the business (Bayarçelik & Findikli, 2016).

In this research, job satisfaction evaluates as an independent variable (IV) on the agility of human resources and a mediator (M) between the agility of human resources and empowerment practices, which establishes a bond between the organization and its employees to achieve organizational goals. It assists individuals inside the business to overcome dynamic environments (Al-Abbadi & Mensah, 2022; Marta et al., 2021). Moreover, various things impact job satisfaction, including intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. Intrinsic satisfaction relates to employment tasks, including autonomy, variety, and skill application. Extrinsic satisfaction, on the other hand, derives from working techniques, remuneration, supervisor, promotion opportunities, and coworkers (Park & Johnson, 2019). In this context, Azmy (2021) and Nabatchian et al. (2014) discovered that when employees are satisfied with their occupations, they are more adaptable, responsive, and inclined to initiate corporate change. Maintaining a high level of efficiency takes a great deal of satisfaction. Besides that, it was shown that employee satisfaction directly and positively influences human resources' agility. Similarly, the satisfaction of the employees contributes to a productive and motivated workforce, which assists employees in acquiring the data necessary, knowledge, and skills to expand the business (Al-Abdullat & Dababneh, 2018).

Generally, businesses must be able to adjust to their environments to maintain and enhance their effectiveness in the face of a variety of continual environmental changes.

As a result, Aidan et al. (2018), Hameed et al. (2022), Momeni and Pourasadi (2015), and Rahardi et al. (2022) confirmed that there is a considerable positive correlation between satisfaction and the agility of human resources.

In this approach, the justifications for this research were underlined by Otuya (2019) and Sidhu et al. (2021), who highlighted that if the clear link between three factors is significant, one can mediate the connection between the others. Similarly, limited (if any) research has utilized job satisfaction as a mediator variable between the agility of human resources and empowering practices. It might be a novel finding that job satisfaction mediates the link between agile human resources and empowering practices. Finally, these results led us to propose the following research hypotheses:

H4: *job satisfaction influences the agility of human resources.*

H5: *Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between human resources agility and employees' empowerment practices.*

H6: *Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between the agility of human resources and the delegation of authority for employees.*

H7: *Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between the agility of human resources and the decision-making strategy.*

3. Research Method

3.1. Instrument Design and Respondents

Our research is based on a questionnaire. There are four sections inside the questionnaire. The first section contains demographic information about respondents and their organizations, which is commonly employed in business research (this section has five factors). The second section gathers information about the agility of human resources, with adaptation, proactivity, and resiliency as its components. 21 items were used to measure this section. The third section measures employee empowerment practices, including decision-making strategy and delegation of authority. 9 items were used to measure this section. The final section covers job satisfaction, with its components being intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. 12 items were used to measure this section. Each item was evaluated on a Likert-type scale with different options, ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree).

All active commercial banks in Jordan constituted the target population of "21247 workers". Referring to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), this study needed 379 responses, while Guetterman et al. (2015) suggested getting 20 percent to the number of respondents. As a suitable sample, 460 individuals

from various sectors were chosen for this study. The data was analyzed utilizing “SPSS and AMOS”; following a screening of the data, it was specified that 448 were valid for analysis. The results of the participants’ characteristics are shown in Table 1 below.

In addition, Table 2 provides information on the analysis of the variables, including Cronbach’s alpha, factor loading, AVE, and CR.

As depicted in Table 2, all factors’ measures of Cronbach’s α “internal consistency” are far above the 0.7 thresholds. The factor loadings vary from 0.50 to 0.94, beyond typical cutoff levels. Regarding the convergent validity of all measures, the CR “composite reliability” is significantly above the

indicated cutoff of 0.700. Besides that, the AVE “average variance extracted” exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.500. Considering these factors, we may infer that our measurements are reliable (Hair et al., 2010; Shiau et al., 2019). The fit of the model was also measured for all variables. Chi-square = 2353.359, DF = 997, relative Chi-Square = 2.360 < 5, CFI = 0.923, and RMSEA = 0.055 < 0.080. The data and the hypothesized model fit well (Hair et al., 2010; Ong & Puteh, 2017). Based on how strongly these variables are linked in our model (view Table 3).

4. Results

4.1. The Direct Effect of Independent Variables on The Agility of Human Resources

We started by analyzing the direct relationship between empowerment practices “EP” and the agility of human resources “AHR.” The standardized path coefficients indicate that the empowerment practices “EP” has a positive and significant impact on the agility of human resources ($\beta = 0.570, p < 0.001$). This evidence supports the first hypothesis (H1).

Second, by analyzing the direct relationship between decision-making “DM” and the agility of human resources. The standardized path coefficients indicate that decision-making has a positive and significant impact on “AHR” the agility of human resources ($\beta = 0.100, p < 0.05$). This evidence supports the second hypothesis (H2).

Third, by analyzing the direct relationship between the delegation authority “DA” and the agility of human resources. The standardized path coefficients indicate that delegation authority has a positive and significant impact on “AHR” the agility of human resources ($\beta = 0.215, p < 0.05$). This evidence supports the third hypothesis (H3). Fourth, by analyzing the direct relationship between job satisfaction “JS” and the agility of human resources “AHR.” The standardized path coefficients indicate that job satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on “AHR” the agility of human resources ($\beta = 0.0270, p < 0.001$). This evidence supports the fourth hypothesis (H4).

These findings illustrate the direct effect of independent variables (IVs) on the agility of human resources “AHR,” whereas Table 4 details the standard regression weights for the direct effects of independent variables (IVs) on the agility of human resources.

4.2. Mediation Analysis

This study revealed that the effect of empowerment practices (EP) on the agility of human resources (AHR) was 0.57 (p -value = 0.000). In contrast, the direct influence of EP on AHR with the mediating effect of JS was likewise

Table 1: Characteristics of the Participants

Demographic Factors	Frequency (n)	% Of responses
Gender		
Female	178	39.7
Male	270	60.3
Marital Status		
Married	246	54.9
Single	147	32.8
Widowed	19	4.2
Divorced	36	8.0
Age		
Less than 25 years old	27	6.0
25 – 35 years old	198	44.2
36 – 45 years old	181	40.4
More than 45 years old	42	9.4
Educational		
Secondary school	4	0.9
Diploma	19	4.2
Bachelor’s degree	317	70.8
Master’s degree	69	15.4
Postgraduate diploma	22	4.9
PhD	17	3.8
Working Experience		
Less than one year	31	6.9
1–less than 5 years	97	21.7
5–less than 10 years	142	31.7
10–less than 15 years	93	20.8
15–less than 20 years	52	11.6
20 years and more	33	7.4

Table 2: AVE, Cronbach's Alpha, Factor Loading, and CR

Variable/Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's α	AVE	CR
Decision-Making Strategy		0.728	0.619	0.861
DMS1	0.90			
DMS2	0.92			
DMS3	0.74			
DMS4	0.50			
Delegation of Authority		0.908	0.627	0.893
DA1	0.71			
DA2	0.89			
DA3	0.82			
DA4	0.90			
DA5	0.77			
Job Satisfaction		0.947	0.872	0.894
IS1	0.70			
IS2	0.73			
IS3	0.94			
IS4	0.65			
IS5	0.66			
IS6	0.59			
ES7	0.72			
ES8	0.76			
ES9	0.79			
ES10	0.80			
ES11	0.91			
ES12	0.75			
The Agility of Human Resources		0.950	0.792	0.898
Pr1				
Pr2	0.59			
Pr3	0.73			
Pr4	0.84			
Pr5	0.86			
Pr6	0.80			
Pr7	0.85			
Pr8	0.67			
Ad9	0.68			
Ad10	0.84			
Ad11	0.83			
Ad12	0.92			
Ad13	0.74			
Ad14	0.68			
Re15	0.56			
Re16	0.79			
Re17	0.89			
Re18	0.88			
Re19	0.89			
Re20	0.61			
Re21	0.58			
Re22	0.63			

Pr: proactivity; Ad: adaptability; Re: resiliency; ES: extrinsic satisfaction; IS: intrinsic satisfaction.

Table 3: Mean values (M), Standard Deviations (SD), and variables Correlation

Variables	M	SD	DM	DA	JS	AHR
Decision making	3.43	0.74	0.771			
Delegation authority	3.50	0.93	0.611	0.825		
Job satisfaction	3.55	0.86	0.760	0.530	0.880	
The agility of human resources	3.83	0.72	0.86	0.614	0.74	0.71

Table 4: Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	S. E	Beta	CR.	P-value	Result of Hypothesis
H1	EP → AHR	0.746	0.062	0.570***	12.060	0.000	Significant
H2	DM → AHR	0.155	0.098	0.100*	2.059	0.043	Significant
H3	DA → AHR	0.029	0.047	0.215**	3.521	0.002	Significant
H4	JS → AHR	0.684	0.090	0.270***	3.630	0.000	Significant

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 5: Mediation's Results

*DV = Agility of Human Resources (AHR) *M = Job Satisfaction (JS)	Independent Variables (IVs)		
	Job Empowerment Practices	Decision Making	Delegation Authority
Total effect of IV without M on DV	0.570*** (0.000)	0.100*** (0.001)	0.220*** (0.001)
Direct effect of IV with M on DV	0.450***(0.000)	0.010 (0.845)	-0.090 (0.177)
Effect of IV on M	0.750***(0.000)	0.100 (0.101)	0.170** (0.014)
Effect of M on DV	0.440*** (0.000)	0.980*** (0.000)	0.980*** (0.000)
Indirect effect of IV with M on DV	0.333*** (0.000)	0.097*** (0.001)	0.167*** (0.001)
Mediation	Full mediation	Full mediation	Full mediation
Result	Supported (H5)	Supported (H6)	Supported (H7)

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

significant at 0.45 (p -value = 0.000). The statistical significance of the effects of EP on JS was 0.75 (p -value = 0.000). Lastly, the effect of JS on AHR was similarly statistically significant (p -value = 0.000) at 0.44. JS strongly mediated the effects of EP on AHR at 0.333 (p -value = 0.000). These results supported hypothesis 5.

Besides that, this study also revealed that the effect of decision-making (DM) on the agility of human resources (AHR) was 0.100 (p -value = 0.001). In contrast, DM's direct influence on AHR with JS's mediating effect was likewise significant at 0.010 (p -value = 0.845). The statistical significance of the effects of DM on JS was 0.100 (p -value = 0.101). The effect of JS on AHR was similarly statistically significant (p -value = 0.000) at 0.98. JS strongly mediated

the effects of DM on AHR at 0.097 (p -value = 0.001). These results supported hypothesis 6.

Lastly, this study also revealed that the effect of delegation authority (DA) on the agility of human resources (AHR) was 0.22 (p -value = 0.001). In contrast, the direct influence of DA on AHR with the mediating effect of JS was likewise significant at -0.090 (p -value = 0.177). The statistical significance of the effects of DA on JS was 0.170 (p -value = 0.014). Lastly, JS strongly mediated the effects of DA on AHR at 0.167 (p -value = 0.001). These results supported hypothesis 7. Therefore, job satisfaction was a full mediator in the model (hypotheses 5, 6, and 7). Table 5 outlines the mediation effects in the structural model between the independent variables and the agility of human resources.

5. Discussion

This paper tested and proposed a conceptual model of the effect of job empowerment practices (JEP) on the agility of human resources (AHR), as mediated by the intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction elements of the job satisfaction scale (JS).

The positive influence of job empowerment practices on the agility of human resources was consistent with findings from earlier research indicating that empowerment practices affect the agility of human resources (Al-Ganemi & Chalab, 2021; GhalichKhani & Hakkak, 2016; Muduli, 2017; Muduli & Pandya, 2018; Nouri & Mousavi, 2020; Greasley et al., 2005).

Besides that, the positive influence of job satisfaction “JS” on the agility of human resources was consistent with findings from earlier research indicating that the satisfaction of employees affects the agility of human resources (Aidan et al., 2018; Azmy, 2021; Goodarzi et al., 2018; Momeni & Pourasadi, 2015; Nabatchian et al., 2014).

These outcomes provide good feedback to the management of the financial sectors, encouraging them to prioritize employee empowerment and urge them to voice their opinions. These discoveries also enable the financial industry to design techniques to achieve competitive advantages, improve staff abilities, and respond to external and internal changes in the workplace. Empowered staff will be more content with their positions, will be able to respond to changes more quickly, will be able to expand their abilities, will improve the quality of financial services, and will acquire a competitive edge.

Specifically, the findings demonstrated that a positive influence of decision-making “DM” on the agility of human resources was consistent with findings from earlier research indicating that decision-making affects the agility of human resources (Munteanu et al., 2020; Natapoera & Mangundjaya, 2020; Sherehiy & Karwowski, 2014; Thani et al., 2022). Furthermore, the JS mediates the influence of decision-making and the agility of human resources to the extent that the influence of decision-making and human resources becomes significant and even positive.

In addition, the findings revealed that a positive effect of delegation authority “DA” on the agility of human resources was consistent with past study findings demonstrating that delegation authority influences the agility of human resources (Al-Jammal et al., 2015; Aldalayeen & Aldofairy, 2016; Farahani & Salimi, 2015; Ibrahim & Mona, 2018; Lassoued et al., 2020; Nouri & Mousavi, 2020). Moreover, the JS mediates the impact of delegation authority and the agility of human resources to the point that the influence of delegation authority and human resources becomes significant and even positive.

Lastly, the decision-making and delegation authority leads policymakers to execute and develop actions that might help establish a design of more suitable principles for generating and executing successful decisions relating to agility. Banks with the most promising future will have the most adaptable people resources. They are also essential to expanding banks, their financial performance, and attaining a comparative edge.

In conclusion, the preceding debates highlight the significance of job satisfaction, decision-making, a delegation of authority, and agility of human resources, which are strongly interrelated. In addition, job satisfaction is essential as a mediator between agility of human resources, decision-making, and delegation power inside banks, and it provides a significant theoretical contribution by offering a new study path on job satisfaction.

6. Conclusion

This study evaluates the influence of job satisfaction on the link between job empowerment practices and the agility of human resources. The findings demonstrated a positive influence of job satisfaction and job empowerment practices on the agility of human resources, which are strongly interrelated. On the other hand, job satisfaction is essential as a mediator between agility of human resources, decision-making, and delegation of authority inside banks. This paper is not devoid of limitations. First, concentrating on two elements of decision-making and delegation authority, namely job empowerment practices, necessitates the inclusion of well-known important components such as effective communication and work teams to understand the role of job empowerment practices in a more general context. Secondly, administrators might have more favorable opinions than bank employees or vice versa. Specifically, this study has prioritized and combined the vital research drivers that aid banks in enforcing and embracing practices that promote adaptation to a dynamic and fast environment. Consequently, this paper helps fill the gaps in the existing literature, gives important answers to academics, and enhances management literature.

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