Psychological Empowerment of the Devotees by Use of Structural Equations Modeling Case study: All Devotees of Ilam

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Abstract: Psychological empowerment refers to the process of increase of internal motivation proportional to the performance of delivered duties, including recognition aspects such as being affective, worthiness, meaningfulness and right of choice. This study is **Objective** to investigate the relationship between psychological empowerment of the devotees and the variables work life quality, organizational justice, social support and social health. **Methodology research:** This is a descriptive – correlation study in which the structural equation modeling is used. The populations include all devotees of Ilam who were selected by use of Cochrane's formula. From the **results,** it became clear that psychological empowerment of the devotees is directly affected by the factors such as social health, social support, work life quality and organizational justice. Moreover, the variable work life quality has more influence on the psychological empowerment of the devotees.

Keywords: empowerment; social health; social support; work life quality; organizational justice; structural equations

1. Introduction

Human force including the devotees, play a key role in the development of the society. In this regard, psychological empowerment is mainly affected by the factors social support and work life quality. Moreover, job stresses are decreased under the influence of social support (Chang et al., 2006). It is believed that there is a direct relationship between social health and psychological health but their definitions are different. By psychological health, we mean the personal performance of the persons. In other words, psychological health has no connection with the society. At the other hand, social health is referred to the control of human behavior and the measurement of health items relative to the personal group and social level.

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This is to say that psychological health refers to the positive personal performance and satisfaction toward the life (not only social life). For the first time, the authors defined the word "empowerment" in 1980. At the end of 1990, they studied the relation between the term "empowerment" and organizational and management factors. Cameron (1998) argues that the term "empowerment" means to make the employees powerful. In other words, it means helping the employees to improve their self-confidence and to prevail over their difficulties.

2. Review of Literature

Psychological empowerment refers to the process of increase of internal motivation toward the delivered duties including the feeling of being effective, worthiness, meaningfulness and the right of choice (Sale, sedghiani & Deghan, 2010). Tomas & Welts (1990) argue that psychological empowerment refers to the employees' perception of their role in the organization. It means to increase the employees' internal motivation toward the delivered duties. Spritzer (1995) argues that the psychological empowerment includes four aspects:

A) Meaningfulness aspect. Being meaningful means to be valuable. It means to have valuable job objectives and internal motivation. It refers to the correlation between job obligations, beliefs, values and behaviors. Witten & Cameron (1998) argued that the strong persons have the feeling of being meaningful, value the job objectives and follow the correct thoughts. The low degree of meaningfulness causes the employees to work reluctantly.

B) Worthiness. Worthiness refers to the employees' craft in performing their duties. The able persons have the feeling of worthiness. They believe that it is necessary to have the needed ability for performing duties successfully.

C) Self – government. Tomas & Welt house (1990) define self – government as the person's right of freedom of action and independence in determining needed activities proportional to the job duties. When the persons have the feeling of self – government participate in performing duties voluntarily. Such duties take root of their personal freedom. They know themselves as the pioneers of modern science and take great measures voluntarily. They make separate decisions and presents new ideas. Such persons call themselves the focus of control (Tomas & Welt house, 1990).

D) Being effective. Being effective is a concept that refers to the ability of a person to have influence on the application and operational consequences of the job. The skilled persons experience a feeling of personal control on the current consequences. They believe that it is possible to change the results by having influence on the work environment (Tomas & Welt house, 1990). Having the feeling of effectiveness is related to the feeling of self – control. When persons

experience the feeling of being capable, they should not only have the feeling of being effective.

In other words, persons need to control the consequences in order to experience the feeling of joy (Spritz, 1995). From the above mentioned, it becomes clear that how psychological empowerment can influence on the improvement of persons' capabilities. The current study aims to recognize the factors having influence on the empowerment and prepare the needed field for promoting what the devotees are capable of doing. In sum, this is to say that empowerment entails two main consequences:

- being advantageous for the organization
- being useful for the person

Most of the studies concentrate on the organizational advantage of empowerment because in the current competitive environment, the organizations should reach more effectiveness. Evidences show that the enabled organizations have experienced remarkable economical progresses. (Aplomb & Hebert, 1999)

2.1. Social Support

In reality, social support refers to the performance of the relations. It can be divided into four groups:

 A – emotional support;
 B – pecuniary support;
 C – informational support;
 D – evaluation support.

Emotional support includes the feeling of sympathy, trust and attention. There is a meaningful relation between emotional support and persons health. Pecuniary support refers to the services prepared for the needy persons. Informational support consists of all suggestions and information used by person in solving problems. Evaluation support means to present useful information needed for self – evaluating (Telkom & Hinting, 2001). Social support is a multi – aspect concept defined variously by the authors. Shultz & Schwartz (2004) believe that social support can be regarded as a set of interrelated measures for prevailing over stress and difficulties. Some commentators (Sarasin et al., 1998) have defined social support as a set of feelings received by one from behalf of the others.

2.2. Life Quality

Work life quality improvement refers to the process implemented by the organization with the purpose of increase of organizational effectiveness through

the employees' growth and promotion. With the help of such process, the organization's staffs learn how to work with each other and what measures should be done to fulfill the organizational goals and improve the employees' work life quality (Ahmadi et al., 2010). The work life quality includes each activity aimed to the increase of the employees' effectiveness. Through improving work life quality, the managers and the employees learn how to work better. They learn which activities and developments are beneficial. In other words, they learn that there is no relation between the organization's goals and the employees' welfare. (Lee & Juiced, 1982)

2.3. Social Health: Larson (1996) remarks that social health is referred to the persons'perception of the quality of the relations between themselves and other social groups. He believes that it is possible to evaluate the person's health by use of social health criterion. Such criterion includes all internal responses of each person by which it is possible to know the real feeling (Larson, 1996).

The social health aspect may be the most complicated aspect. The world Health Organization (1948) has introduced social health as one of the key health elements. On the other hand, because of the lack of reliable instruments, this concept is usually discussed in social political studies. The studies relative to the social health put emphasize on the personal health, but the persons are a part of social structure (Kitz & Shapiro, 2004). The social health aspect, therefore, is the main aspect by which the ability of the devotees can be devalued.

2.4. Perceived Organizational Justice

Organizational justice makes clear how to deal with the employees so that they experience the feeling of joy. Moreover, organizational justice includes three aspects: distributive justice; procedural justice; interactive justice. (Aria, 2004)

3. Research Background

The Amine's (2010) classic study "*The relation between social capital and social health*", revealed that there is a meaningful relationship between social capital and the variables such as poverty, population's natural growth, harshness, education, unemployment degree and insurance.

The Hemati's & Sepah Mansour's (2008) early work "the relation between stress and social support among the students of Tehran", showed that the decrease of the students' stress is affected by the social support and there is a meaningful relationship between the variables social support, marriage and gender. SiahSiari et

al (2010) concluded that there is a meaningful relationship between the student's identity and the parents' social support. Moreover, the female students are more supported by the parents in comparison to the males.

Moniz Binder (2007) studied the relation between social support and job satisfaction of head nurses of California and concluded that there is a meaningful relationship between social support and job satisfaction of the head nurses. Moreover, there is no difference between the two variables. Tee Say (2008) found that the variable job satisfaction of the employees is increased by the support of their coworkers, friends and family members. In the work environment, the employees' job satisfaction is mainly affected by the social support of the supervisors. It is believed that high job satisfaction improves job performance and factors such as the relations between the employees, salary and services have influence on the job performance. Chen (2000) investigated the relationship between work life quality and job satisfaction. He concluded that the employees' job satisfaction is affected by various factors including the organization type, services, employment kind, management methods, personal characteristics, education, age, gender, marriage condition and salary. Riesman & Katz (2003) studied the relation between the characteristics of a self-directed team and their work life quality and performance. Results showed that there is a meaningful relationship between the mentioned variables.

Changer & Kananga (1998) studied the organizational empowerment. Lee et al (2001) divided empowerment into two types: relational empowerment and motivational empowerment. Most of the available contexts are classified on the basis of such variables.
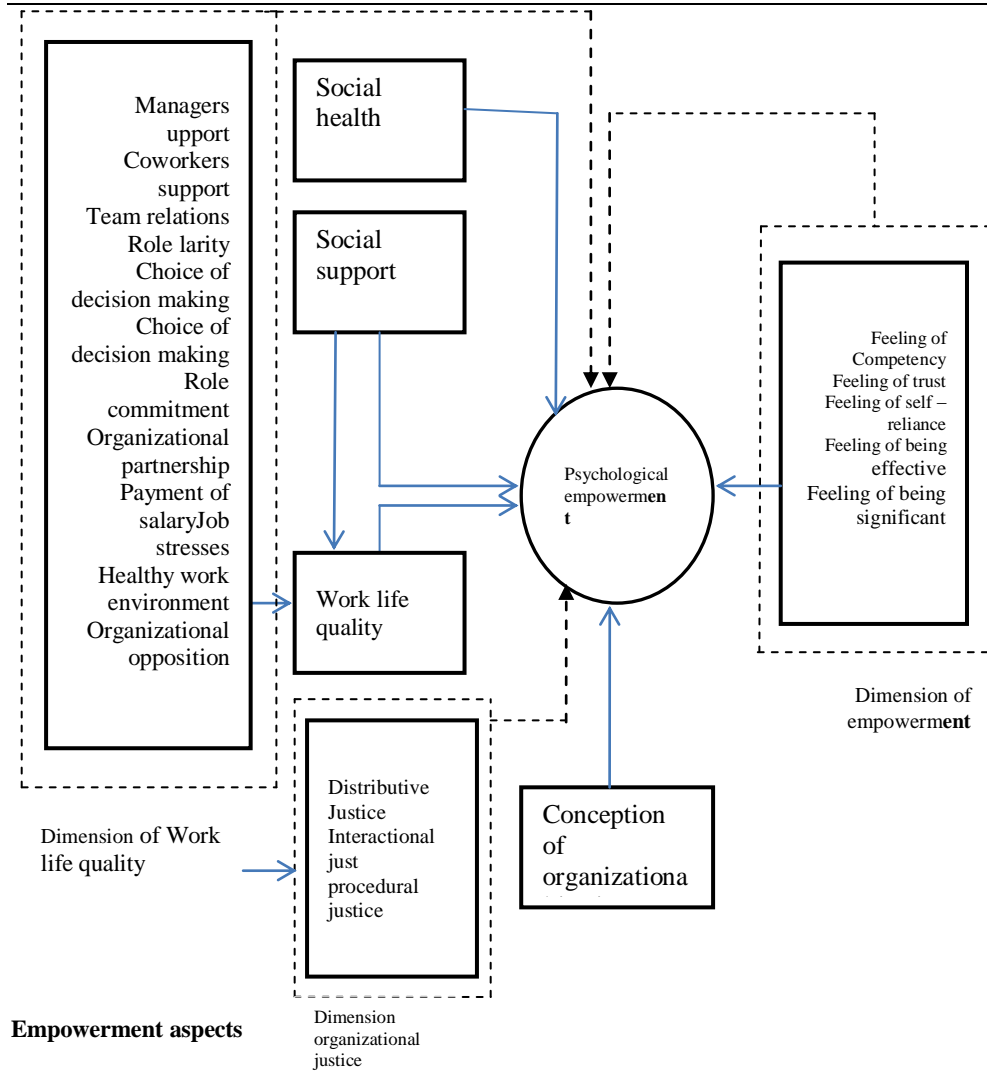
Conceptual model of the research:

Managers upport
Coworkers support
Team relations
Role larity
Choice of decision making
Choice of decision making
Role commitment
Organizational partnership
Payment of salaryJob stresses
Healthy work environment
Organizational opposition

Social health

Social support

Work life quality

Psychological empowerment

Feeling of Competency
Feeling of trust
Feeling of self – reliance
Feeling of being effective
Feeling of being significant

Dimension of empowerment

Dimension of Work life quality

Distributive Justice
Interactional just
procedural justice

Conception of organizationa

Empowerment aspects

Dimension organizational justice

Figure 1. Aspects of organizational justice

In result, this survey is aimed to answer the following question:

Do the variables social health, social support, work life quality and organizational justice have influence on the psychological empowerment of Liam's devotees?

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Psychological empowerment of the devotees of Ilam is meaningfully affected by social health.

Hypothesis 2: psychological empowerment of the devotees of Ilam is meaningfully affected by social support.

Hypothesis 3: conception of organizational justice influences meaningfully on the psychological empowerment of Ilam's devotees.

Hypothesis 4: work life quality influences on the psychological empowerment of the devotees of Ilam.

Method, Population and Sample

From goal perspective, this is a theoretical – development psychological research and from data gathering perspective, this is a descriptive – correlational research. The populations include all of the devotees of Ilam who were selected by use of randomized sampling.

The sample included 111 persons who were selected using Cochran's formula as the following:

$$N = \frac{Nz^2 Pq}{(N-1)\, d^2 + Z^2 pq}$$

Reliability of the questionnaire

In order to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach'sα model and structural equation modeling (x^2/df) was used. The Cronbachs' α was % 8232.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using structural equation technique and Lisrel software consisted of two steps. At the first step, the variables were accepted / rejected by use of confirmed factor analysis and during the second step, the research hypotheses were tested by use of structural model.

Confirmed factor analysis of the variables

In this research, independent variables include social health, social support, work life quality and organizational justice. Moreover, the empowerment factor was regarded as the dependent variable of the research.

Confirmed factor analysis of independent variables

Because the variables social health and social support are directly evaluated by questionnaire, the authors regard them as the one dimensional variables and analyze them by use of confirmed factor analysis. On the other hand, because the variables work life quality and organizational justice are dimensional, the authors regard them as the two – step variables and such variables need confirmed factor analysis. The first factor analysis is based on the correlation between the questions and the dimensions. Moreover, with the help of the second step factor analysis we can reach the available variables.

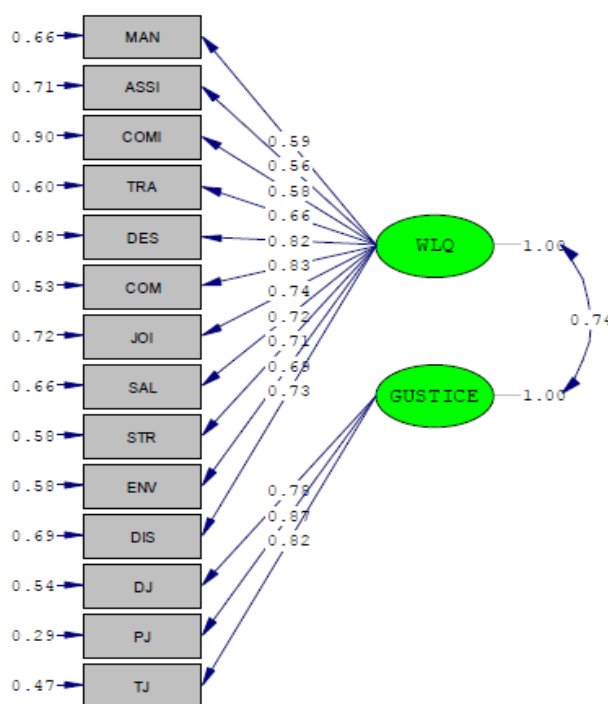**Confirmed factor analysis of the variables social health and social support**
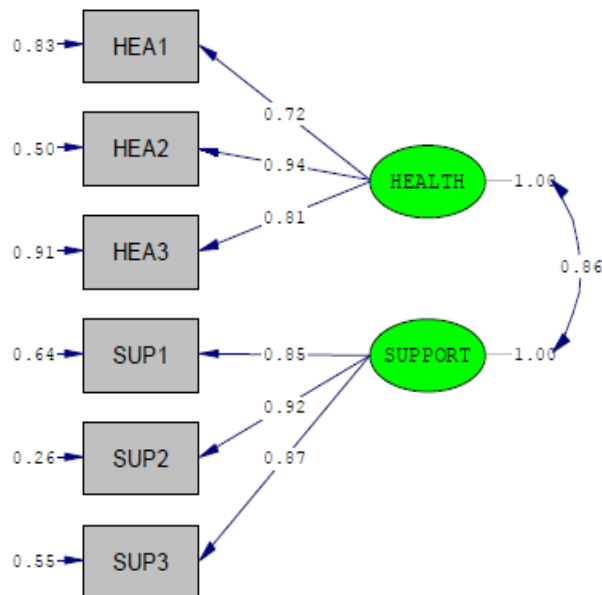
Chi-Square=11.98, df=8, P-value=0.00092, RMSEA=0.067

Figure 2. The variables social health and social support

As mentioned before, the relation between dimensions and questions is called factor loading. Such factor loadings should be more than %5 to be accepted. From the above figure, it is clear that all factor loadings are bigger than %5. Therefore, this is to say that such dimensions are perfectly evaluated by the questions. Moreover, all factors consist of meaningful factor loadings. From the results, it becomes clear that the above figure confirms both factor analysis and meaningful model of the research. In this graph, the rectangles are observable variables and the ovals are latent variables.

Confirmed factor analysis of the variables work life quality and organizational justice

As mentioned above, because the variables work life quality and organizational justice are dimensional, two factor analyses are needed.

Figure 3. Factor analysis of the variables work life quality and organizational justice

Results show that such model is perfect and all parameters of the model are meaningful. Moreover, there is a positive and meaningful relationship between the variables work life quality and organizational justice.

Confirmed factor analysis of dependent variable

In this study, the empowerment variable is regarded as the dependent variable. This variable needs two factor analyses because it is dimensional.

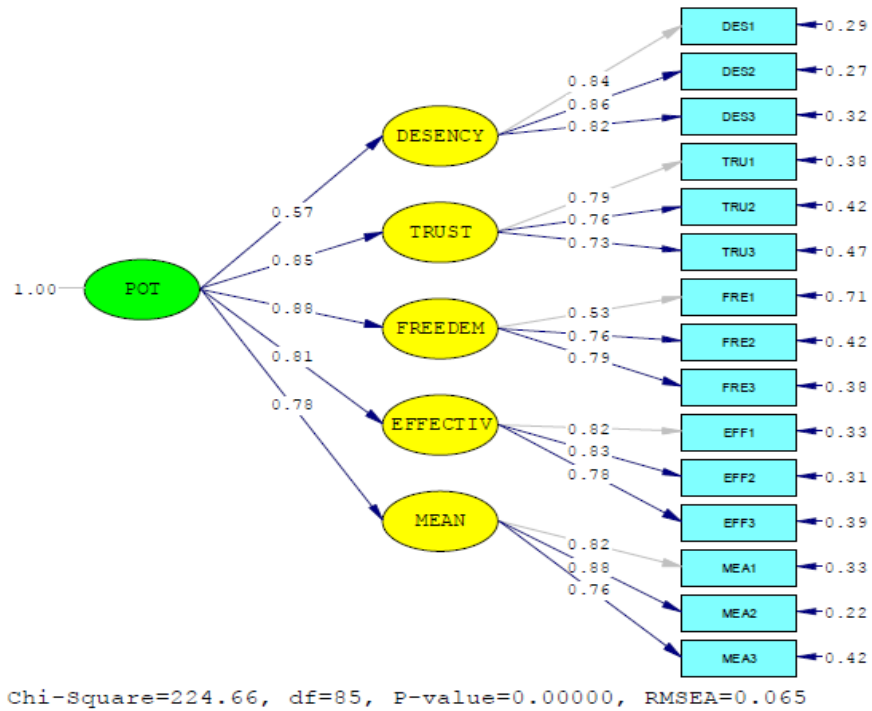Chi-Square=224.66, df=85, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.065

Figure 4. Factor analysis of the variable empowerment

Results show that the model is perfect because all parameters are meaningful. Furthermore, there is a meaningful and positive relationship between all dimensions of the variable.
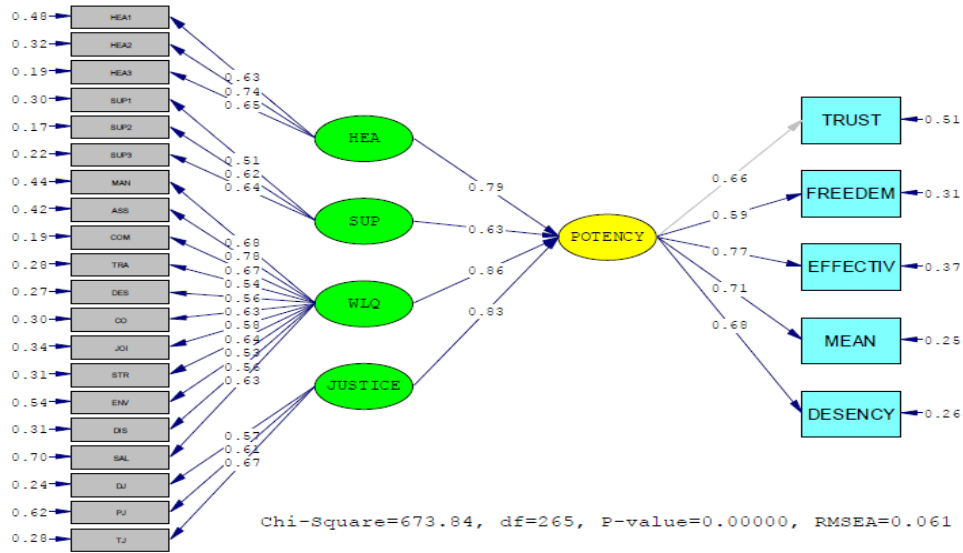
Path analysis

Figure 5. Standard estimation of the model

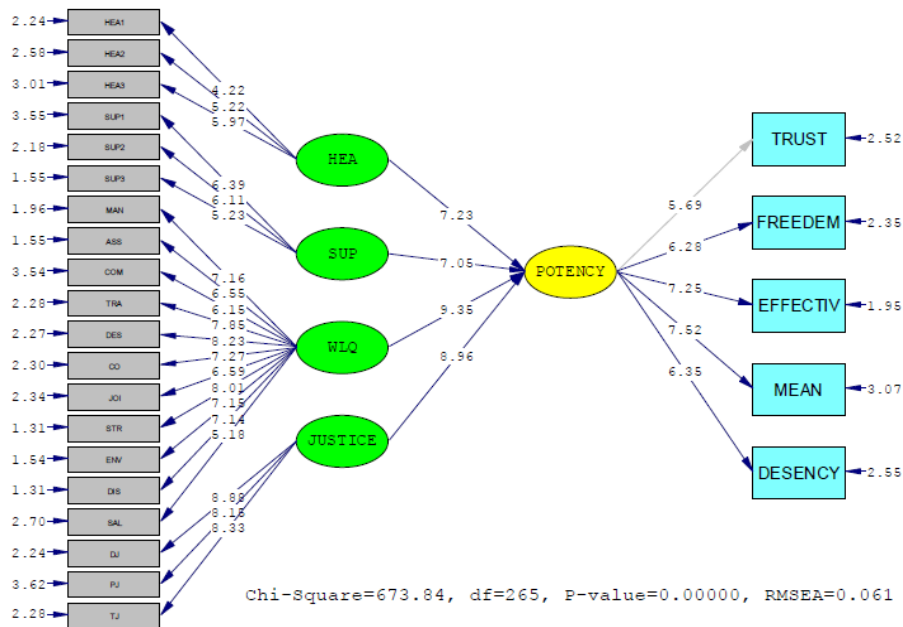## Meaningful coefficients of the model

Figure 6. Meaningful model of the research hypothesis

Suitability criteria of the main hypothesis

The suitability criteria of the model include x^2, df, p – value and RMSEA among which x^2/df is of importance. The lower such criterion, the more suitability will be. The criterion RMSEA is the average of the errors of the model. Such criterion is achieved on the basis on the basis of the research errors and when it is below %8, the model is suitable.

Table 1. Suitability criteria of the main hypothesis

RMSEA	Df	X^2
%61	265	673/84

From the above table, it becomes clear that the model is suitable because RMSEAR <%8 and x^2/df<3.

Examination of research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: there is a meaningful relationship between social health and psychological empowerment of the devotees.

There are two statistical hypotheses:

Ho: social health has no influence on the devotees' psychological empowerment

HO: pxy=0

HI= pxy≠0

Table 2. Results of structural equations modeling analysis: H1

Standard coefficient	T – value	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Results
%79	7/23	Social health	Psychological empowerment	Rejection of HO

Due to the hypothesis 1, social health influences on the devotees' psychological empowerment. As seen in the above table, hypothesis 1 is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected because standard coefficient is %79 and t- value is bigger than 1/96. This is, therefore, to say that psychological empowerment of the devotees is increased under the influence of social health and hypothesis one is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There is a meaningful relationship between social support and psychological empowerment of the devotees.

Statistical hypothesis:

HO: Social support has no influence on the psychological empowerment of the devotees.

Hi: social support has influence on the devotees' psychological empowerment.

Ho: $P_{xy}=0$

H1=$P_{xy}\neq0$

Table 3. The results of structural equations modeling analysis: hypothesis 2

Standard coefficient	T – value	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Results
%63	7/05	Social health	Psychological empowerment	Rejection of HO

Due to H1, social support affects the devotees' psychological empowerment. From the above table, standard coefficient is %63 and t – value is bigger than 1/96. Therefore, H0 and H1 are respectively rejected and accepted. It is hypothesized that psychological empowerment of the devotees is increased under the influence of social support. In results, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: There is a meaningful relationship between work life quality and psychological empowerment of the devotees.

Statistical hypothesis:

H0: work life quality does not influence on the devotees' psychological empowerment.

H1: work life quality influences on the devotees' psychological empowerment.

Ho: $P_{xy}=0$

H1=$P_{xy}\neq0$

Table 4. The results of structural equations modeling analysis: hypothesis 3

Standard coefficient	T – value	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Results
%86	9/35	Work life quality	Psychological empowerment	Rejection of HO

Due to H1, work life quality influences on the devotees' psychological empowerment. From the above table, standard coefficient is %86 and t – value is bigger than 1/96. Therefore, the two hypotheses H1 and H0 are respectively rejected and accepted. In result, this is to say that the psychological empowerment of the devotees is improved under the influence of work life quality. The hypothesis 3, therefore, is accepted.

Hypothesis 4: there is a meaningful relationship between the two variables organizational justice and psychological empowerment of het devotees.

Statistical hypothesis:

H0= organizational justice has no influence on the devotees' psychological empowerment

H1: organizational justice has influence on the devotees' psychological empowerment.
Ho: $P_{xy}=0$
H1=$P_{xy}\neq0$

Table 5. The results of structural equations modeling analysis relative to the hypothesis 4

Standard coefficient	T – value	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Results
%83	8/96	Organizational justice	Psychological empowerment	Rejection of HO

Due to H1, psychological empowerment of the devotees is affected by organizational justice. As seen in the above table, standard deviation relative to the two variables is %83 and t-value is bigger than 1/96. Moreover, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. This is to say that organizational justice affects on the psychological empowerment of the devotees. Hypothesis 4 is, therefore, confirmed.

Conclusion

This study was aimed to investigate the relationship between psychological empowerment of the devotees and the variables work life quality, organizational justice, social support and social health. From the results, it became clear that psychological empowerment of the devotees is directly affected by the factors such as social health, social support, work life quality and organizational justice. Moreover, the variable work life quality has more influence on the psychological empowerment of the devotees.

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