

IMPORTANCE AND EFFECT OF EMPOWERMENT IN HOTEL ENTERPRISES

A STUDY ABOUT CONSUMERS' BUYING BEHAVIOR PATTERNS AND
THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment is the most popular concept among modern management and organization applications, which improves the decisional authorities of employees and supports their personal development. Personnel empowerment is the most suitable management understanding considering the familiarizing of an organization with employees, showing that they were esteemed by the managerial level and enhancing their participation to their work. In the labor intensive tourism sector, empowerment applications play an important role increasing the employees' productivity and ensuring the organizational efficiency. The permanence and success of hotel enterprises which give priority to customer satisfaction and personnel satisfaction depend on the quality of the personnel and on a continuous increase in this quality. This study determines the dimensions of the subject, explains how this subject is perceived by managers and employees, and what are the conditions of success.

Keywords: Employee Empowerment, hotel enterprises

1. INTRODUCTION

The empowerment in question can relate to the employees, the front-line managers and supervisors, or to the organisation as an entity, "the empowered organisation". These variations revolve around unitary rhetoric for integrating the interests and efforts of both employers and employees with the assumption that low-level employees can contribute to management decisions and in so doing enhance the performance of the organisation.(Cunningham, Hyman,1999) In the past decade, business practitioners and organizational researchers (Conger & Kanungo, 1988); have embraced notions of empowerment in the workplace. Yet, until recently, the literature has lacked consensus on a definition or operationalization of empowerment in the workplace.

Major approaches to conceptualizing employee empowerment can be classified into three major categories: "Empowerment has been considered as an act: the act of granting power to the person(s) being empowered. It has been considered as a process: the process that leads to the experience of power. It has also been considered as a psychological state that manifests itself as cognitions that can be measured"(Dimitriades,2005)

In essence, empowerment is the management style where managers share with the rest of the organizational members their influence in the decision-making process that is to say, the collaboration in the decision making process is not limited to the position with formal power with certain characteristics such as information systems, training, rewarding, power sharing, leadership style and organisational culture are concerned.(Pardo,2003). Empowerment is an aspect, a technic and an application which emphasizes more contribution of labours(Koçel, 2003).

Empowerment applications in hotel enterprises are an important method to increase personnel productivity, which make them feel esteemed by the management by including the employees in decisional activities by asking them to participate in the planning stage, and by recompensing and supporting them with continuous sufficient training.

2. DEFINITION OF EMPOWERMENT

The empowering of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies is a noble, necessary and natural part of human development. More recently, there has been growing interest in the concept of empowerment, by both management researchers and practitioners. Many see the rise in the popularity of empowerment as a response to the impact of global competition and the information/technology revolution(Cacioppe,1998). "Empowerment" is a term which describes a wide range of different arrangements and meanings(Lashley 1995). Empowerment attributes decision-making power and authority in all respects. This authority and power includes employees' mental and physical features and also includes environmental, constructural and management

factors(Yildirim,2004) A significant number of organizations appear to believe that the theory of empowerment (Oxford English Dictionary definition includes such words as authorize, license, permit, delegate etc.) requires managers to make it clear to their staff what is required, the bounds of authority and the resources available to complete the task. In other words: managers should be taught the process of delegation and thereafter things, somewhat miraculously, will change for the better(Long 1995). Employee participation is a complex management tool that over 50 years of research has proven that, when applied properly, can be effective in improving performance, productivity and job satisfaction(Nykodym, Simonetti, Nielsen,Welling,1994). Employee empowerment or participative decision making isn't a simple management concept. Empowerment increases a person's decision-making authority and ability by means of bee, sharing, and teamwork(Barutçugil, 2004).

There are a number of problems with the existing prescriptive literature on empowerment. First, the term is used very loosely and it is not always clear if we are comparing like with like. Second, it is rarely located in a historical context: empowerment is seen as an entirely new phenomenon. Third, there is little detailed discussion of the issues likely to arise when implementing empowerment or the conditions which are necessary for such an approach to be successful. It is assumed that employers will simply welcome the new approach, seeing it as beneficial to them and to the organisation. The literature also takes a universal approach, regarding empowerment as appropriate to all organisations in all circumstances. Fourth, the literature trivialises the conflict that exists with in organisations and ignores the context within which empowerment takes place(Wilkinson,1998).

When it really comes down to practicing empowerment, executives and employees are engaged in shadowboxing. Management says itwants employees who participate more; employees say they want to be involved. The meaning of getting involved, from both the parties, appears different from a real understanding of empowerment. Here, employees push for greater autonomy and management tries to keep control through systems, process, and tools.(Bhanatagar-Sharma,2004) Organizations have addressed this by developing new types of role for their managers. In organizations surveyed which involve their managers in the process of empowerment, the involvement takes the following forms (Lowe,1994):

- Coaching, in which skills and knowledge are transferred on the job.
- Acting as a sponsor for subordinate projects.
- Facilitating suggestion programmes or quality circles.
- Mentoring, in which managers offer guidance to more junior employees in a way which is more involved than a straightforward coaching role.
- Facilitating self-directed work teams, where the manager offers the benefit of his/her experience and expertise without directing the team's activities.

- Facilitating training events, more formal as a method of skills transfer than on-the-job coaching, but still aiding the process of passing knowledge down the line.
- Setting up job rotation schemes to broaden the experience of junior employees.
- Giving accreditation to front-line staff on the acquisition of specific competences.
- Facilitating business-planning teams.
- Taking ownership of their staff's development.

Spreitzer (1995) described four dimensions (listed below) regarding the psychological state of the subordinate:

- Meaningfulness: the meaning of a value or a task goal or purpose judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards.
- Competence: competence is an individual's belief in his/her capability to perform task activities skilfully.
- Self-determination (or choice): autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes.
- Impact: the perception of the degree to which an individual can influence certain outcomes at work.

The higher an individual "scores" in each of these elements, the greater the sense of empowerment, and also the absence of any dimensions cause a decreasing in the feeling of empowerment level. It is only recently that researchers have begun to study psychological empowerment, its antecedents, and its consequences in a systematic manner, also relate psychological empowerment to work satisfaction, stress and effectiveness (Ozdilli, 2003). A decrease in job-related stress and an increase in job satisfaction are two of the key anticipated outcomes behind the introduction of empowerment in the workplace. Low levels of empowerment in daily working life are strongly related to mental distress and excess chronic disease and many studies highlight the positive effect on sickness, absence, and turnover. (Holdsworth, Cartwright, 2003).

3. EMPOWERMENT IN HOTEL ESTABLISHMENTS

The basic source of providing competitive advantage and the customer satisfaction in the hotel enterprises is the employee. Empowerment applications play a significant role in increasing employee's productivity and providing organizational efficiency. Interest in employee empowerment within the hospitality industry has been associated with some of the key themes identified in the development of HRM generally, namely, gaining competitive advantage through improved service quality. Particularly, it has been held that service deliverers (front-line people) play a crucial role in determining the extent and quality of customer experience and satisfaction (Lashley, McGoldrick, 1994).

Because of consumer conscious and competitiveness, an employee in the hotel establishments must make decision simultaneously with the time of event, and must practice this decision. If s/he makes a mistake, a solution can be found and a feedback can be done. This approach requires empowerment of employees and departments of the hotels(Dalay, Coşkun, 2002).

Investigation of the use of empowerment in service sector organisations reveals a number of different forms of empowerment being applied in practice. These different approaches evidence a range of managerial meanings being applied which are based on different perceptions of business problems, motives for introducing empowerment, and perceived benefits to be gained from empowerment. The fact that empowerment can be used as a term to describe different initiatives provides a convenient rhetoric which suggests that empowerment is "in principle a good thing" and produces a "win-win" situation for employees and managers.(Conrad, 1999)

The combination of customer and employee satisfaction, it is argued, leads to improved organizational performance through, on the one hand, repeat business and word-of-mouth recommendation, and, on the other, improved employee morale, increased effort and lower turnover and absenteeism, as well as creativity and innovation (Hales, 1998)

In effect, proponents of empowerment typically advocate the replacement of concurrent control via direct supervision and work regulations by self or mutual control by employees, underpinned by other forms of control. Thus it is argued that empowerment must be accompanied by, inter alia(Hales, 1998):

- careful employee recruitment and training (ex-ante control) to select "empowerable" employees and to inculcate the skills and attitudes conducive to exercising "acceptable", "responsible" choice
- performance-related pay and symbolic rewards/recognition (ex-post control) to encourage the exercise of responsibility and initiative
- promoting a service-oriented organizational culture (meta control) and shaping employee attitudes

Advocates of empowerment claim some impressive benefits for hospitality operators who introduce empowerment to their organizations. Furthermore, they argue that traditional hospitality organizations create problems for themselves by engendering feelings of disempowerment. Table I summarizes some of the claimed benefits of empowerment and the problems of disempowerment in hospitality operations(Lashley, 1995).

Table I. Empowerment and disempowerment in hospitality operations

<u>Benefits of empowerment</u>	<u>Problems of disempowerment</u>
More responsive service	Limited authority to meet service needs
Complaints dealt with quickly	Complaints dealt with slowly through senior manager
Greater customer satisfaction	High level of costs in generating new customers
More repeat business	Low morale and poor motivation
Well-motivated staff	High labour turnover
Improved labour stability	Low productivity
Increased productivity	Low wages but high labour costs
Lower labour costs	Low quality
High quality	Low profits
High profits	

Source: LASHLEY, C. (1995) "Towards An Understanding Of Employee Empowerment In Hospitality Services" International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 27-32 .

4. A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT IN THREE, FOUR AND FIVE STAR HOTEL ENTERPRISES

4.1. Purpose of Research

The main purpose of this research is to obtain beneficial results by testing the efficiency of the employee empowerment variables determined by theoretical information, by means of survey (sampling of similar subjects) method to be applied to medium and large scale enterprises (three, four and five star hotels) operating in Turkey. In order to achieve this purpose, questionnaires were prepared one for the managers and one for employees.

4.2. The Importance of the Research

The success of all functions fulfilled in the tourism sector included in the service sector depends on the human factor. The continuity of hotel enterprises furnishing services in the tourism sector depends on the quality level of the chosen personnel and on the continuous increase of this quality. The competition between hotel enterprises operating worldwide and in our country, in the context of customer satisfaction, increases the importance of the employee. Consequently, the notion of employee empowerment could be considered as a means for the enterprises to reach their objectives. It is important in the tourism sector to identify the subject's dimensions, to explain

the perception of this subject by managers and employees, and to clarify the conditions of success.

4.3. Universe of the Research

The data analysed in this research derived from the evaluation of 401 survey questionnaires applied to the managers and the employees of medium and large scale enterprises (three, four and five star hotels). The reason why four and five star hotel enterprises were chosen for the research was that their quality, their kind of service, and their organizational environment are different compared to the small hotels. However, three star hotel enterprises were included to the survey contents in order to increase the data number and to identify the differences between them.

4.4. Method of the Research

Survey and questionnaire techniques are used as the data gathering methods of the research. It is taken advantage of the studies in this field to develop the scale of the survey. The scale had been improved with some additions regard to the Murat Gümüş's study in the same area. The questionnaire are two types. These are manager-centered and employee-centered questionnaires. Besides, the poll consists of three sections in general. These sections are, the demographic characteristics of the enterprise, the demographic characteristics of the manager/employee and the poll questions concerning the managers/employees. The open-ended questions were not included in the questionnaire.

Some variables have taken place in the study of the survey that is applied both to the managers and to employees. In the survey applied to the managers ; authority, source, presentation of the knowledge, cooperation, affinity to job, decision making related to job, conferment, creating variety and difference, being creative and reformist and education, and in the survey applied to the employees; there are being considered important, support, encourage, to love job, source and provide opportunity, education, relations with customers and managers, reaching to goals and conferment, are formed the variables of the research.

Mediterranean region and the hotels active in this region have been chosen as an environment of research. The reason why Mediterranean region has been chosen is its being prior in terms of tourism of Turkey. The research has taken place in the hotels that are active in the city centers, and the survey has been applied to the 96 managers and 305 employees who are chosen randomly from 24 hotel organization.

The data analysed in this research derived from the evaluation of 401 survey questionnaires applied to the managers and the employees of medium and

large scale enterprises (three, four and five star hotels) in Mediterranean. 800 questionnaires were sent to the 60 hotel establishment, but only 401 useable responses were received from 24 hotels. 305 of them belong to employees and 96 of them belong to managers.

The Statistical Program for Social Science for Windows 13 has been used in the research for the data evaluation. The data were entered into the program according to the codification principle and the necessary analyses were carried out.

4.5. Reliability and Validity Analysis of Research

In this study it is directed to the evaluation by the experts, academicians, professionals from the tourism industry and the statisticians for the questions of the survey and the content.

The analysis of the reliability Cronbach alfa is found as 0.763. And this number introduce that the surver is reliable.

4.6. Findings of the Research

The findings of the research are presented into three groups. First group consists of the demographic characteristics of managers, employees and hotel enterprises; second group is formed by the attitude of the managers towards the employees' empowerment and the third group focuses on the attitude of the employees towards their empowerment.

4.7. Findings Concerning the Demographic Characteristics of the Managers

The gender, age group, marital status, educational level, the position in the enterprise, the department, the working period in the sector, the working year in the existing enterprise and the number of hotel enterprises for which the manager worked previously are the demographic characteristics to be filled in the poll questionnaire by the managers of the three, four and five star hotel enterprises operating in our country. The answers of the managers are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. The Distribution of the Managers Regarding their Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Woman	33	34.4	Marital Status	Married	52	54.2
	Man	61	63.5		Single	40	41.7
	No answer	2	2.1		Widow	4	4.2
	Total	96	100		Total	96	100
Age Group	18-28 yrs old	32	33.3	Educational Level	Primary school	3	3.1
	29-38 yrs old	39	40.6		Highschool	34	35.4
	39-48 yrs old	22	22.9		Associate degree	25	26.0
	49 and over	3	3.1		Bachelors degree	29	30.2
	Total	96	100		Master degree	5	5.2
Position at the Enterprise	High	24	25.0	Department	Total	96	100
	Medium	57	59.4		Front Office	42	43.8
	Low	14	14.6		Floor Services	13	13.5
	No answer	1	1.0		Food-Beverage	24	25.0
	Total	96	100		Accounting	12	12.5
Working Period in the Sector	Less than 1 year	4	4.2	Working Years in the Hotel Enterprise	No answer	5	5.2
	Between 1-3 years	17	17.7		Total	96	100
	4 - 7 years	29	30.2		Less than 1 year	16	16.7
	8 or more years	44	45.8		Between 1 - 3 years	49	51.0
	No answer	2	2.1		4 - 7 years	18	18.8
	Total	96	100		8 or more years	12	12.5
Number of Hotel Enterprises for which Manager worked previously	1	17	17.9	No answer	1	1.0	
	2	21	21.9	Total	96	100	
	3	22	22.9				
	4	30	31.3				
	No answer	6	6.3				
	Total	96	100				

As observed in Table 2, 63.5% of the 96 managers are men and 34.4% of them are women. It is understood that a significant majority of the managers working for the hotel enterprises included in the research are men.

As observed on the Table 1, a majority of the employees who answered the questionnaire are at an age between 29 and 38, married, granted high school and licence diplomas, employed mostly at front office department and in a medium position. On the other hand, the majority of the managers worked in the sector for 8 years and more; are employed at the present enterprise for 1-3 years. The majority of the mentioned managers have previously worked in 4 and more hotel enterprise. These informations indicate that the hotel managers worked in the sector for a long time but their working period in the present enterprises were short and they have often switched enterprise.

4.8. Findings Concerning the Demographic Characteristics of the Employees

Following the demographic characteristics of the managers, the demographic characteristics concerning the 305 employees working for the hotel enterprises included in the research are explained below. These characteristics include gender, age group, marital status, educational level, the permanency at the enterprise, department, the working period in the hotel sector, and the working year in the existing enterprise. The findings concerning these characteristics are illustrated in Table 3.

It is indicated on the Table 3 that 65% of the employees are men, are aged between 18 and 38, most of them are married, graduated from high school, are on the permanent staff of the enterprise and work at the food and beverage department. On the other hand, the working period of the employees at the sector is between 4 and 7 years, the working period in the existing enterprise is between 1 and 3 years.

Table 3. Distribution of Employees Regarding Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Woman	92	30.2	Educational Level	Primary school	50	16.4
	Man	198	64.9		Highschool	120	39.3
	No answer	15	4.9		Associate degree	69	22.6
	Total	305	100		Bachelors degree	55	18.0
Age Group	18-28 yrs old	116	38.0		Master degree	9	3.0
	29-38 yrs old	110	36.1		No answer	2	0.7
	39-48 yrs old	66	21.6		Total	305	100
	49 and over	3	1.0		Department	Front Office	78
Total	305	100	Floor Services	83		27.2	
Marital Status	Married	164	53.8	Food-Bewerage		94	30.8
	Single	125	41.0	Accounting		42	13.8
	Widow	11	3.6	No answer		8	2.6
	No answer	5	1.6	Total	305	100	
	Total	305	100	Working Year At the Hotel Enterprise	Less than 1 year	18.7	57
Permanency of Employee	Permanent staff	238	78.0		Between 1 - 3 years	43.3	132
	Trainee	20	6.6		4 - 7 years	25.2	77
	Extra	22	7.2		8 or more years	10.8	33
	Part-time	17	5.6		No answer	2.0	6
	No answer	8	2.6		Total	100	305
	Total	100	305				
Working Period in the Hotel Sector	Less than 1 year	18	5.9				
	Between 1 - 3 years	69	22.6				
	4 - 7 years	123	40.3				
	8 or more years	92	30.2				
	No answer	3	1.0				
	Total	305	100				

4.9. Attitude of Managers towards Employees' Empowerment

In consideration of the fact that the human factor is very important in hotel enterprises, research aims to identify the attitude of managers to the process of employees' empowerment and the importance level of these attitudes. 5-point Likert scale was applied in order to list, the opinions of managers on the subject. The Table 4 contains some strengthening statements which arithmetic means are considered.

Table 4. Attitude of Managers towards Employees' Empowerment

Statement	Arithmetic Mean	I definitely do not agree	I do not agree	I have not any idea	I agree	I definitely agree
Aims and targets are explained to employees; the necessary authority, resources and information are provided.	3.77	-	%8	%36.4	%26.1	%29.5
Employees work in a close cooperation with suppliers and customers.	3.25	%5.7	%12.6	%39.1	%35.6	%6.9
Employees can do more accurate analyses and assessments when they are more involved in the work.	3.38	%2.3	%10.5	%45.3	%30.2	%11.6
Employees make decisions about their work and apply them.	2.43	%18.4	%39.1	%26.0	%8.3	%4.2
Employees participate in decisions on the future of the enterprise.	2.55	%17.2	%31.0	%34.5	%13.8	%3.4
Employees put forward proposals and do not directly participate in decisions.	2.80	%11.5	%28.7	%32.2	%23.0	%4.6
Factor which motivates the employees is the reward brought by success.	3.38	%4.6	%10.3	%39.1	%34.5	%11.5
Employees develop ideas on most of the subjects, give information about and do not expect any direct award.	2.77	%12.6	%27.6	%33.3	23.0%	%3.4
Diversity and difference are assessed as richness and advantage.	3.43	%3.4	%14.9	%26.4	%46.0	%9.2

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Horizontal-vertical-transverse-multilateral communication is used in the company.	3.08	%5.7	%21.8	%40.2	%23.0	%9.2
Employees with a excellent performance are congratulated and rewarded.	3.05	%9.2	%25.3	%27.6	%27.6	%10.3
Rewards are mostly physical metarial.	2.94	%7.0	%31.4	%32.6	%18.6	%10.5
The company's success increases as the participation level of the employees in the decision-taking process increases.	3.32	%2.3	%10.3	%46.0	%35.6	%5.7
Employees become more successfull when they are granted authority and responsibility.	3.39	%3.4	%6.9	%46.0	%34.5	%9.2
A performance perfection is developing related to the resources provided to employees.	3.41	%4.6	%6.9	%37.9	%43.7	%6.9
When a creative and reformist environment is created both the employee and the enterprise benefit.	3.61	%3.4	%6.9	%29.9	%44.8	%14.9
Success increases as long as the employees are provided with the necessary educational and training environment.	3.79	%2.4	%3.5	%30.6	%40.0	%23.5
The existing system is unsuccessful and needs to be modified.	3.02	%5.7	%25.3	%37.9	%23.0	%8.0
Employee empowerment provides more work satisfaction.	3.56	%2.3	%9.2	%35.6	%35.6	%17.2
Personnel empowerment prevents the job loos and increases loyalty.	3.61	%2.3	%3.4	%36.8	%46.0	%11.5

According to the analyses, from the point of view of managers the most important aspects concerning empowerment are "providing necessary training to employees and rearrangement of the environment in conformity with the subject", declaration of aims and targets to the employees", "providing a reformist business atmosphere", providing employee loyalty and satisfaction by means of all these activities". On the other hand, according to the managers there is a below average participation regarding "employees taking decisions concerning their job and apply", paticipating in the decisions concerning the future of the enterprise", "putting forward proposals", "developing opinions, presenting information on many subjects and not expecting any direct award".

Consequently, it is concluded according to the findings that the managers gave importance to the employee empowerment and were targeting success on this subject at the enterprise environment, that they found the employees to be

incompetent for some subjects, however they wanted the continuity of the centralist management understanding.

The participation rates to the statements in the questionnaire and the arithmetic means are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Attitudes Regarding Employee Empowerment

Statement	Arithmetic Mean	I definitely do not agree	I do not agree	I have not any idea	I agree	I definitely agree
My managers at the enterprise show that they consider me important	3.15	5.4	23.2	35.7	22.2	13.5
I have all the support from my managers concerning the job I do	3.16	4.0	21.3	39.7	24.3	10.7
I am not afraid to try something new on my job since my managers encourage me to do so.	3.14	7.3	20.0	35.0	26.3	11.3
My managers encourage us to propose new ideas and different opinions.	3.16	6.1	21.0	33.6	29.8	9.5
I like my job very much.	3.60	2.7	9.5	31.3	38.4	18.0
I am provided with all resources and opportunities necessary for my job.	3.36	2.7	16.4	34.5	34.8	11.6
I can get continuous training which will provide me with the knowledge and skills to better accomplish my job.	3.10	5.9	21.1	37.0	29.1	6.9
I can establish close relations with my customers and directly learn their needs.	3.52	4.7	13.5	28.0	32.8	20.9
I believe that I need not worry about future or my job as long as I am successful.	3.58	2.7	14.1	26.6	35.4	21.2
I realize the utility that my enterprise will get as long as I am successful at my job.	3.87	0.7	5.1	24.7	45.8	23.7
I am supporting the targets of my enterprise and do my best.	3.82	1.7	2.7	26.4	50.3	18.9
I can find solutions for the problems concerning my job, I can make decisions and apply them.	3.52	2.7	11.5	32.9	36.9	15.9
I believe that once I get the opportunity, I will be more successful.	3.95	1.0	4.4	22.9	42.4	29.3
My success at work is being appreciated and I am adequately rewarded.	3.06	10.2	20.1	30.7	30.7	8.2

Analysing the attitude of the employees towards the empowerment; it is understood from the findings that there is above average agreement with the statements “success will increase if the necessary environment is assured and the opportunity is given”, “this will be beneficial for the enterprise too”, “the targets of the enterprise are supported and the necessary duties are fulfilled”, “I like the work”, “success will provide positive consideration about the future”.

On the other hand, the employees’ agreement with the statements “appreciation of success at work and receiving reward”, “provision of continuity of training for getting information and skills”, “getting the necessary support from the managers concerning initiatives about the work”, “being considered important by the managers”, “introduction of new ideas and getting all kind of support from the managers” was below average.

Comparing the consensus of employees and managers to the statements concerning empowerment, we find out that both groups accentuated the success condition determined by arranging of the working environment in order to encourage empowerment. Similarly, the transfer and the adoption by employees of aims and targets form another subject concerning employee empowerment. According to the managers, it is possible to ensure the employee loyalty by means of employee empowerment. The empowered employees could have a positive view of the future thanks to its success.

The analyses show a similarity between the least approved statements by employees and managers. While the managers support a centralist decision machinery, the employees state that they can not get the necessary support. On the other hand, claims by the managers stating that employees are expecting reward for their work, are exposed by the employees saying that there is not a material or moral reward system. The statement of the employees about presenting information to managers received a low arithmetic mean while the employees expressed this situation as being that their new ideas do not get the necessary support and are not esteemed.

5. CONCLUSION

The employee empowerment notion, which means that the working person could participate in decisions concerning his job and could get the necessary training in order to reach this stage, and which has a crucial importance for enterprises operating in global competition aiming at providing the best service to customers, has been analysed in this study in three, four and five star hotel enterprises and the conclusions below have been reached.

Managers generally attach importance to the employee empowerment. Training of employees and modification of the environment, exposition of targets, and the idea of innovation are the conceptions stressing this importance.

However, considering the expansion of the responsibility area of employees by means of empowerment, the analysed outcomes show that the managers did not give the necessary support on this subject. The increase of the responsibility by the authority assignation increases employee motivation and empowerment achieves its real meaning mainly in service enterprises. This situation is clearly directly related to organizational structure and management understanding. The employees should participate too in the decision making process on some subjects, should be encouraged to offer proposals, and should receive material and moral rewards. In order to provide healthy formation of all these stages, and the employee selection and evaluation process should be analysed in detail, the employee suitable for the enterprise targeting the empowerment should be set up.

Considering the subject from the employees' side, it is understood that in case of provision of the necessary environment and opportunity the empowerment notion could be adopted. The analyses show that in order to give a meaning to this notion the management should clearly communicate its targets and aims and this should be in continuity. It is important that employees use their authority in a way to benefit the enterprise and themselves, that they identify with their work, and that they profit from their training in order to convert the notion into an enterprise strategy.

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