

## Excellence of Human Resources in Non-governmental Organizations with a Voluntary Approach in the Volunteers' Organization of the Red Crescent Society

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### Original Article

#### Abstract

**INTRODUCTION:** The excellence of human resources has been one of the basic goals of organizations in recent years, and efforts have been made to create appropriate competitive advantages for the organization. In this research, the excellence of human resources in non-governmental organizations was investigated in the Volunteers Organization of the Red Crescent Society.

**METHODS:** This cross-sectional descriptive research was carried out using a quantitative approach. The statistical population in this research consisted of the employees and volunteers of the Volunteers Organization, among whom 429 individuals were selected using a simple random sampling method. The required data were collected through a researcher-made questionnaire. In order to investigate the research hypotheses, Spearman's correlation and regression tests were used in SPSS-21 software.

**FINDINGS:** According to the opinions of the employees and volunteers of the Volunteers Organization, there was a significant relationship between the excellence of human resources and volunteers activities in service organizations with a volunteer approach. This means that in this organization, improving the conditions of excellence of human resources would increase the willingness to volunteer behaviors in the organization.

**CONCLUSION:** The results showed that various organizations could have effective activities with targeted planning in human resource excellence in the field of social responsibility and doing voluntary activities in the community in such a way that when these activities are planned and continuous, the responsibility of other NGOs or such organizations is reduced.

**Keywords:** Excellence of human resources; Non-governmental organizations; Volunteering, Voluntary performance

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#### Introduction

In today's competitive world, one of the important elements for creating transformation, organization survival and achieving the desired goals and missions is the human. With the beginning of the third millennium, the role of human resources has become more prominent day by day and now it is referred to as the only factor in achieving success and sustainable competitive advantage in the organization. Human resources are one of the most important concepts and criteria for

measuring the excellence of organizations (1). The continuous development of human resources skills is the most crucial engine of business success and the only way to maintain the stability of productivity and profitability of all beneficiaries of the organization, from senior management to the youngest operator in the rapidly changing business environment (2).

Fundamental changes in the activities, procedures, and business of human resources management during the past years have made the

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issue of human resources capabilities more and more important to leading organizations. By improving the job performance of employees, the strategic capabilities of human resources can help organizations perform better than their competitors and take a larger part of the market (3).

According to Davis (2000), capability involves personality traits, knowledge, skills, patterns, and mental concepts or a combination of these factors that lead to a person's successful performance in the desired job. Based on this, capability is a combination of explicit and implicit knowledge, behaviors, and skills that create the potential and capacity to perform tasks effectively for others (4).

An organization identifies its strengths and opportunities and plans to improve them and reach a developed and learning organization. Identifying organizational capabilities and the results of using structured approaches are known as novel management activities, and organizations widely use them to determine strengths, areas of improvement, and the path to excellence. Non-governmental organizations can be more active in this field by adopting a voluntary approach and considering social responsibility important because the voluntary behaviors carried out by various organizations cause today's employees to have freedom of action and decision-making power to perform their duties. This is while organizations are looking to increase productivity through their employees.

The term excellence means rising and becoming better, and organizational excellence means an organizational commitment to the sustainable and permanent growth and development of the company to obtain customer satisfaction and continuously increase the profitability of the company in an inclusive and supportive national environment. Organizational excellence depends on specific conditions, culture, internal and external environment, characteristics of the organization's human resources, strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that an organization is involved with (5).

Among the applications of the human resource excellence approach are conscious recognition and focus on the strengths and improvable areas of human resources; planning for short-term, medium-term, and long-term improvement of human resources; improving or redesigning the

structure, processes, activities, and systems of human resource; the application of different criteria to increase the share of human resources in the realization of business goals and strategies; and the utilization of different performance indicators to show the share of human resources in organizational performance (4).

Based on the above, modern management trends along with organizational excellence are in line with the growing interest in human resource management practices that represent a comprehensive human resource strategy of an organization. Therefore, there is a need for a human resource management strategy to plan, train, and develop employees and acquire the necessary skills based on the acceptance of organizational excellence, including leadership excellence, subordinates excellence, organizational structure, and cultural excellence. Human resource management practices have a reciprocal relationship with organizational excellence in which one affects the other or is dependent on the other, and therefore, the importance of the relationship between human resource management practices and organizational excellence cannot be ignored (6).

Deep and strong human resources management determines how much these resources affect different resources. Activities related to successful strategic human resources planning determine the needs of the organization and at the same time link the human resources strategy to the general strategy of the organization. The human resources strategy will direct the human resources of the organization in various dimensions (7). It can be acknowledged that the organization's excellence is achieved mainly through human resources management. The role of human resources in the organization should be directly related to strategies. The organization progresses towards its excellence. Strategic management of human resources should be a part of other strategies of the organization and act in parallel with them (8). Excellent organizations achieve the desired competencies by attracting employees, developing their knowledge, and positively and actively supporting them. Employees' individual development is strengthened when authority is delegated and their potential capabilities are liberated and realized (9).

Human resources evaluation involves assessing the human resources activities of an organization. Briefly, human resources evaluation

deals with controlling the quality of human resources activities and their support from the organization's strategy. A boost in the productivity of organizations and their ever-increasing development requires the growth and productivity of employees as well as strengthening their motivation. Excellence has three dimensions: the first dimension means becoming high and superior, the second dimension is the organizational commitment that leads to the sustainable and permanent growth and development of the company to obtain customer satisfaction and the continuous increase in the company's profitability in an inclusive and supportive national environment; and the third dimension indicates the path of organizational superiority and excellence, which leads to the identification, diagnosis, development, and expansion of success in an effortful organization (10). Therefore, it can be acknowledged that excellence occurs along the path of quality and completes it.

Service and voluntary sector organizations must acknowledge the importance of their services and maintain a consistent understanding of the values, efficiency, and effectiveness of public service. For these organizations that operate in an uncertain environment that is subject to frequent functional and structural changes, values are like a compass to guide activities. If servicing the public is not based on an appropriate set of values, the trust and respect of those who rely on it may be lost, or different values may be emphasized based on administrative and political priorities at a given time; however, adherence to a common set of acceptable and coherent values is necessary for stability and coherence (11).

Participating in voluntary activities with the employer provides various benefits for both the organization and the individuals involved. These activities contribute to the growth of social capital within the company, as well as the growth of communication between companies and local community groups, and create long-term commitment and partnership for mutual cooperation. These activities increase the involvement and participation of employees, create grounds for strengthening and developing their skills, lead to the discovery of new solutions for the problems and challenges of society with the cooperation of local communities, and create a competitive advantage. Employee participation is the main core of voluntary activities with the

employer's participation, and to increase employee participation in these activities, it seems necessary to identify the factors that motivate them to participate in these activities (10).

Bagheri et al. (2022), in their research, entitled "Elaboration of the organizational excellence structural model (EFQM) based on five neo personality factors", designed and implemented the structural model of organizational excellence based on five neo personality factors (a case study of employees of the Ministry of Sports and Youth). The results of this study demonstrated that

the effect of neuroticism, empiricism, agreement ability, and accountability variables was significant on organizational excellence. The findings of this research showed that the effect of the personality dimension of neuroticism on organizational excellence was negative and significant, that is, the more a person's tendency to anxiety, tension, hostility, and depression in the job, the weaker the job performance. On the other hand, the findings of the mentioned research showed that empiricism had a significant effect on the organizational excellence of the employees of the Ministry of Sports and Youth, and since organizational excellence itself is under the influence of basic factors, such as personality traits, close attention should be paid to these variables in the processes of recruitment and before- and during-service training (11).

Seyed Naghavi et al. (2018), in research entitled "A model of human resources excellence for Iranian governmental organizations", concluded that the desire to survive is inherent in organizations, and in the private sector, profitability is the guarantee of survival, while in the public sector, people's satisfaction ensures the survival. For this reason, quality seeking is essential in both public and private sectors. The private sector has surpassed the public sector in applying management models. This research included causal conditions (inefficiencies, expectations, and requirements), central phenomenon (excellence of human resources in the public sector), background conditions (modern public service theory, culture of excellence, and rules), intervening conditions (micro models, features of public administration, and the differences between public and private sectors), strategies (government, political authorities, human resources organization, human resources functions, administrative ethics, people, partners,

and family), results (human and organizational resources), consequences (organization, society, and ideal), and interpretations (people and colleagues) (12).

Volunteering is the provision of time or skills to a volunteer group or organization (e.g., charities or non-profit organizations) during a planned activity. This definition involves three key concepts: a) the process of providing time or skills is active and not passive like financial aid; b) it is a planned activity and not helpful like spontaneous (passive) behaviors; and c) this activity is performed through a charity or volunteers organization. In recent decades, there has been growing attention to the study of voluntary activities (13).

The realization of vision goals in voluntary organizations depends on having satisfied, loyal, efficient, and cooperative human capital. Nevertheless, it can be claimed that the key position and strategic role of human resources management in creating organizational commitment and attachment and excellence in the performance of employees and volunteers, and as a result, increasing productivity and organizational efficiency for many executives of organizations, including non-profit and voluntary organizations, public sector organizations, and economic enterprises, have not been specified (14).

Human resources are the most prominent factor of advantage and excellence in a public organization, and managers' skills are detrimental to the correct leadership of human resources. Therefore, the effective components in the environment of voluntary organizations, which are somehow influential on the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of human resources, should be taken into consideration (15).

This research, with a systematic review of previous studies, seeks to investigate what effect the excellence of human resources can have on the activities of non-governmental organizations with a voluntary approach. In this study, due to the fact that the survey was conducted on employees and volunteers of an organization of volunteers, as well as since the excellence of human resources is one of the areas that are influenced by the management of the organization, attention has been paid to the approach of volunteering behaviors in the organization.

## Methods

This cross-sectional descriptive research was carried out using a quantitative approach, and it can be considered an applied research. The statistical population of this research involved volunteers and employees working in the Volunteers Organization in Tehran Red Crescent Society, among whom 429 individuals were selected using a simple random sampling method. A researcher-made questionnaire tool was used to collect information regarding effective factors in human resources excellence and its effect on voluntary behaviors. This instrument measures strategic management of human resources (3 items), employee job satisfaction (4 items), training and empowering employees (2 items), controlling and providing feedback to employees (3 items), organizational learning (2 items), information technology, planning, and human resources development (3 items), the quality of employees' working life (2 items), employee maturity (5 items), employee performance management (4 items), reward and service compensation (2 items), employee safety and health (2 items), knowledge management (2 items).

Another tool that was utilized was the 16-item Voluntary Behaviors in NGOs Questionnaire. The validity and reliability of these questionnaires were evaluated. The validity was confirmed using face validity and the elite group, and the reliability was also evaluated using Cronbach's alpha test method. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the organizational excellence and voluntary behaviors components were obtained at 0.956 and 0.876, respectively, which indicated acceptable reliability. Analyzes were performed using SPSS software (version 21), and according to the assumptions, Spearman rank correlation coefficient and regression test were used.

## Findings

Spearman's correlation coefficient test, which is calculated at the error level of 0.01, was used to examine the responses of the samples and research hypotheses.

The results of the tests in Tables 1 and 2 show that at the error level of 0.01, for the human resources excellence component, the amount obtained for Sig (a significant level that must be less than 0.05 for the existence of a significant

**Table 1:** Spearman's correlation test results of human resources excellence components

Variable	Significance level	Correlation degree	Error level
Strategic management	0.000	0.754	0.01
Job satisfaction	0.001	0.654	0.01
Training and empowerment	0.000	0.644	0.01
Control and feedback	0.001	0.876	0.01
Organizational learning	0.000	0.657	0.01
Technology and information technology	0.001	0.776	0.01
Career planning and development	0.000	0.698	0.01
Quality of life	0.000	0.788	0.01
Maturity of employees	0.000	0.578	0.01
Performance management	0.000	0.887	0.01
Rewards and compensation for services	0.000	0.447	0.01
Safety and health	0.002	0.778	0.01
Knowledge management	0.000	0.987	0.01

**Table 2:** Spearman's correlation test results of human resources excellence components

Variable	Significance level	Correlation degree	Error level
Voluntary behavior	0.002	0.887	0.01

**Table 3:** Results of the regression test between the components of human resources excellence and voluntary behaviors

Variable	B	SE	T	P
Strategic management	0.306	0.665	4.321	0.556
Job satisfaction	0.245	0.443	3.456	0.665
Training and empowerment	0.334	0.442	4.998	0.775
Control and feedback	0.234	0.445	5.778	0.445
Organizational learning	0.332	0.543	3.440	0.662
Technology and information technology	0.334	0.446	3.556	0.552
Career planning and development	0.256	0.345	3.654	0.661
Quality of life	0.245	0.221	4.689	0.778
Maturity of employees	0.241	0.334	2.549	0.552
Performance management	0.212	0.445	4.997	0.665
Rewards and compensation for services	0.223	0.342	3.446	0.553
Safety and health	0.334	0.442	2.443	0.766
Knowledge management	0.442	0.332	4.998	0.435
Voluntary behavior	0.221	0.476	5.321	0.776

relationship between two variables) was less than 0.05% in the studied sample, which indicated the existence of a positive correlation between the effect of human resources excellence and voluntary performance in non-governmental organizations. After confirming the correlation between the two variables of human resources excellence and voluntary performance in non-governmental organizations, the degree of correlation was investigated. The obtained correlation was more than 0.05, which represented a high correlation between the two variables. In the next step, in order to investigate the effect of excellence of human resources and its components on voluntary behavior in non-governmental organizations, a linear regression test was used between the variables of excellence of resources and voluntary behaviors in non-

governmental organizations, the results of which are tabulated in Table 3.

The results of the regression analysis in the case of using the entry or simultaneous method indicated that based on the findings of the above results of the P column, which showed a significant level. Moreover, this finding, which was greater than 0.05, confirmed the existence of a significant relationship with a positive and direct correlation between the excellence of human resources and voluntary behaviors.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Activity in non-governmental organizations creates personal and social value at the community level because voluntary activities carried out by these organizations are often not explored properly. The investigation of what

factors affect these activities, according to the surveys, deepens the understanding that non-governmental organizations work together with government bodies and institutions to improve social conditions and implement various programs. However, it can be said that in voluntary organizations and non-governmental organizations, success in various fields has depended on having satisfied, loyal, efficient, and capable human capital; nevertheless, in this regard, it can be claimed that the key position and strategic role of human resources management and human resources excellence in creating organizational commitment and attachment, and the excellence of the performance of employees and volunteers, and as a result, increasing organizational productivity and efficiency for the executive staff of organizations have not yet been determined.

Since the workforce is the most prominent factor of advantage and superiority in a non-governmental organization, and due to the fact that the managers' skills in proper leadership of human resources are highly crucial, it is necessary to take into account the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations in increasing voluntary behaviors and the positive effects of these behaviors at the level of society. Therefore, the effective components in the environment of voluntary organizations, which are somehow effective in the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of human resources, should be given proper attention to improving the conditions. In order to implement this, it is recommended that the human resources program of NGOs be designed and put into practice in line with the organization's strategic plan. In addition, it is also important that if the voluntary organization has a suitable policy in the field of human resources excellence, in which key activities related to human resources are referred to, and human resources mechanisms are integrated and aligned, better results would be achieved in this regard.

Human resources strategies should be decided by the board of directors, and part of the attention and decisions of the board of directors and the attention of the executive directors of the organization should be allocated to human resources. In this research, the obtained data were analyzed using Spearman's correlation method

and regression analysis. The results demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between the excellence of human resources and the occurrence of voluntary behaviors in non-governmental organizations.

The correlation coefficient indicated a strong and positive relationship between the two studied components in this statistical population. Moreover, in order to examine the effect of the human resources excellence variable on voluntary behaviors, a regression test was used. According to the results of this test, with an increase and improvement in organizational excellence, the degree of willingness to volunteer behaviors and to perform these tasks improved in this sample as well. This result shows that when the excellence of human resources was organized in such a way that the volunteers and employees of the organization gained sufficient knowledge about their job field and were able to enjoy sufficient security and peace in the organization in accordance with the conditions created in voluntary behaviors, they inevitably participated in various tasks that were deemed necessary by the organization. Participation in voluntary activities is done in line with the social responsibility of organizations. An increase in the social responsibility of companies can take the burden off the shoulders of organizations such as the Red Crescent Society or NGOs. Improving knowledge in this area can create opportunities for organizations to work towards resolving social issues through focused and ongoing efforts.

In order to realize this, the human resources program of NGOs must be in line with the organization's strategic plan. In addition, voluntary organizations should adopt a human resources policy that refers to key activities related to human resources; besides that, human resources mechanisms should also be integrated and aligned. The organizational culture should have a clear emphasis on maintaining the respect of volunteers and employees, which should be a top priority for managers. The working environment should be favorable for them and their satisfaction should be the focus of senior management. The organization should provide a systematic way to receive and review their criticisms and suggestions. Communication between managers and employees, and especially the relationship between managers and employees and volunteers, needs to be made

possible and group meetings should be held from time to time. Finally, improving the level of competence as well as training volunteers and employees should be on the agenda and activities plan.

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### Conflict of Interests

Authors have no conflict of interests.

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