

## Description of bureaucracy structure of the university and job – alienation of its staff

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### Abstract

Among the objective and tangible creatures of the world, it is human – being who can revolutionize his real identity, sell his human spirit and become alien. In this research, the relationship between the university's bureaucracy and job – alienation of its staff was studied. The research method is descriptive – correlation. Statistical population of research includes the staff of state universities of Tehran city. The sample included 375 persons. The research tools are two questionnaires of bureaucracy and job – alienation. The research results include: The bureaucracy structure has an effect on job – alienation of the staff by the value of 4.9% .

**Keywords:** organization, structure, bureaucracy, job – alienation

### Introduction

Our world is the world of organizations. The main runners of these wheels are humans. It is them who revive the bodies of organizations and make the verification (realization) of goals possible. The more extensive and complex human societies become, the role of organizations in them increases. The more evolutionary movement the societies find, the effect of organizations on different aspects of social life of humans deepens, and its performance domain extends more (Qadimi, 2001). One of these large and important organizations is the universities. The structure of higher education system including state (public) and private, which is true realization of bureaucracy, can be handled by humans like a lever and transformed into the most powerful construction or destruction factor of humans. Today, job – alienation among the staff of official systems is more discussed than worker alienation in the factory, and this is formed and influenced by the structure of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is a complex (sophisticated) and multi – dimensional term which is sometimes praised more than all other scientific words and it is sometimes rejected. Some praised it and some found the main reason of all social and official difficulties and misfortunes in it. Weber's view in respect of inevitable bureaucratization and Marx's alienation concept have evident similarities. Both of them believe that novel (new) approaches of organization have increased the productive efficiency of the organization in an unexpected way. In view of Weber, psychological stress of bureaucracy on people is as much as the intensity and importance of the pressure of bureaucratic class on proletarian class (Cauzer, 2009). In his view, in a modern and industrial society, a worker is alienated from his production and job result, an official, a teacher , a scientist and a researcher are alienated from their organizational job, teaching, knowledge topic and research, respectively (Rosenberg, 2006).

In this way, it can be said that job – alienation phenomenon is a relatively conventional (~~popular~~) phenomenon in industrial and developing societies which exists among the staff of large organizations.

### The significance of the study

In the world of third millennium, the importance and effect of organizations on human are acknowledged by everyone. The development of various organizations and complexity of technical tools and the influence of mechanism in different domains of economic, social and cultural life, especially in developing countries, creates the distance and paradox between human, job and organizational environment and the human is gradually alienated against job and its product and job – alienation phenomenon is formed (Golabi, 1995). By developing organizations, the number of sub – sectors increases and they become more specialized, the interaction decreases, the norms are dissolved, there is no control on the behaviors anymore, and the organizations are bureaucratized. This same process is observed in the universities and they cause similar result as well (Byron Baum, 2010, P 98). The structure of state universities is adapted from a concentrated system (Arasteh et al., 2004). The researchers believe that one of the negative effects of the concentrated structure on the individuals is job – alienation. Members of organization perceive non – personal – being of the organization's rules as a phenomenon which makes a distance between them and their jobs and it creates a sense of non – identity in the person (Asghari, 2006). Marx defined the concept of alienation in this way: human separation from the nature, from his own activity, from his existence in the sense of member of human species and from other human being (Masaroush, 2001).

The identification of alienation factors in human is very important such that Shariati (1979) proposed the issue of alienation as a disaster for human species in the present century. The identification of the factors and outcomes of job – alienation is important since the side effects results from it are not only followed by physical and mental disorders for human, but also they have a negative effect on his behavior and occupational performance which can be followed by absenteeism, decrease in the clients, satisfaction and organizations fall.

Regarding the above – mentioned issues, this paper seeks to the relationship between bureaucratic structure of the universities which seems as concentrated and bureaucratic, and the value of job – alienation of their staff.

### Theoretical bases of the study

#### *The concept of bureaucracy*

Dow Grime believes that Vincent M. degournay is the inventor of the word bureaucracy in a letter which he wrote on January 1, 1764. Gournay means the bureaucracy is a form of government in which the government's employees are not appointed to meet the public interest, but it seems that public interest is arranged in such a way that the offices are able to survive.

The bureaucratic structures are created to communicate the organizational programs effectively to achieve the goals, facilitate the organizational processes. The tasks of each sector are determined by the regulations and bylaws. The employees are expected to react towards each other according to their roles (Byron Baum, 2010).

#### *Positive characteristics of bureaucracy*

Weber knows bureaucracy as an effective tool to attain the goals of organization. In his view, using the bureaucracy, the organization can maximize the function of the organizations staff and prevent money and time wasting. The fundamental advantage of bureaucracy is its capability to evaluate the results. In bureaucratic organization qualifications, not based on the appointed criteria (Couzer, 2009). The greatest benefits of bureaucracy are those which are expressed by Weber. The structure of bureaucracy is the best known ethical tool for necessary supervision on human – beings. This structure is superior than other structures in terms of precision, stability, situation and certainty. The specialty increases the level of transferring the individuals to higher positions and decreases the probability of relying on external factors such as social position, gender and religion to make

personal decisions (Denhart, 2003; Byron Baum, 2010). Some of other positive characteristics of bureaucracy include the deletion of wrong or inappropriate criteria to select the staff, as well as lifelong – being of the staff's employment is another advantage of it (Asghari, 2006; p. 146).

The most important issue surrounding this topic was presented by Robert Merton. He believed that similarity and uniformity are harmful. The rules and regulations are emphasized such that take a symbolic meaning. Gradually, the observation of prosaic official regulations causes the goal replacement (Asghari, 2006), such that the individuals ignore the goals of the organization and replace their personal goals such as protection of their base in the organization or avoid the responsibility. They call this as goal replacement (Chon, 2006).

#### ***Disillusionment of the client***

The persons, who were out of the organization and had to communicate the organizational bureaucracy, will face the problem of disillusionment. Members of the organization receive wage and salary for performing the job in the organization whereas the client is detained for answering a request for a few days or weeks. This causes the disillusionment of the client. Such an official may receive salary increase for this detainment. Therefore, the clients of bureaucracy should suffer this non – personal being phenomenon for a long time.

#### ***Alienation of the staff***

The fundamental cost which is followed by the bureaucracy is the alienation of the staff. Members of the organization perceive non – personal being of the organization as a phenomenon which creates a distance between them and their jobs and creates the feeling of non – identity being in the person. As Marx cites, the specialization process causes the workers changes into a paralyzed person and a monster who obtains just high specialty in some fields under the pressure and at the cost of missing a world of creative power and mental power. In this process, the components of job allocate not only to different persons, but also the person himself is divided into smaller components and he is transformed into an automatic mechanical force for slight actions (Papenham, 2008).

#### ***Job – alienation***

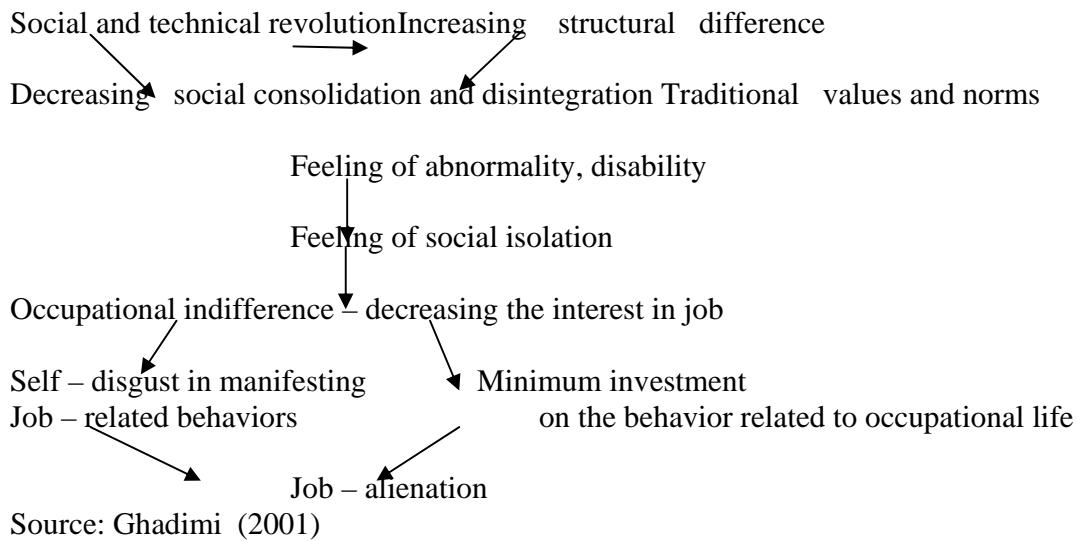
The most obvious theories in respect of job – alienation can be found in the writings of Marx. Marx who is known as the most prominent and keen – sighted social philosopher in nineteenth century, declared in final chapters of third volume of the book "capital": man labor will continually be dominated by some forces which are imposed on his willing from outside and disturb his dream to verify (realize) self – construction; they will neutralize his liberal attempt by mediation and make a dam against him (Papenham, 2008). In Marx's belief, the history of human – being has a double aspect; it means on one hand, the history is the witness of the creator of human – being in the nature and on other hand, the history represents increasingly alienation of human (Couzer, 1999). Marx believes that the nature of work in capitalism countries is alienated because of disintegration of the work into pre – determined components.

The job – alienation history shows that the alienation has moved in a direction where can be planned on a u – shaped map. In the machinism period of industries, the freedom decreased and the alienation curve increased rapidly. In twentieth century, the alienation curve continued to rise; finally, it reached the last point at present (Mir – Mohammadi, 2010).

#### ***Theories of job – alienation***

Among the theories which were presented in respect of job – alienation, we content ourselves with the theory of Faunce and Kanungo. Faunce defines the alienation in this way: disability, uselessness, abnormality are some conditions which direct the person towards the alienation.

He believes that the alienation is composed of the feeling of social isolation and the feeling of self – disgust. On the other hand, he suggests that this process should be considered in this way:



Kanungo expresses his sociological attitude in respect of job – alienation within a motivational frame work. According to this criterion, job – alienation is initially stemmed from the imagination which the job is not able to meet the essential needs of the individual. Among motivational expressions, Kanungo expresses five factors of seaman. Each of them is the representative of a situation in which satisfying one of the essential needs failed. Regarding these conditions, the worker loses the imagination of objectivity and becomes futile and useless (*ibid*)

### **Empirical background**

In a research, Ali Hosseinzadeh et al. (2009) studied the effective social and economic factors on job – alienation. According to his hypotheses, the findings of his research showed that men have more jobs – alienation than women. Mean job – alienation among the men and women are estimated 57 percent and 54 percent, respectively. The hypothesis including the relationship between job security and alienation was confirmed. The results showed that the less job security is, the level of job – alienation will be higher. The relationship between these two variables is described by Merlo's theory of need hierarchy.

Since at first stage, job satisfaction is related to the person's satisfaction with the wage and salary which is received. Therefore, if the person is able to meet his physiological needs well; the pleasure and satisfaction, absenteeism and separation from job. In a research, Hajizadeh (2009) examined the relationship between self – alienation and scientific position among faculty members of Yazd University. Statistical population of the research was 298 people. Among them, 135 persons were selected. His findings showed the variables including meaninglessness and professional characteristics have not meaningful relationship with scientific position. But there is a positive correlation between the variables including powerlessness, abnormality and the evaluation of scientific position.

In a research titled as "the organizational alienation", Aiken & Haghe (1970) examined the job – alienation and described its factors and reasons near the staff of American rehabilitation organization. Using seaman's powerlessness components and assuming it equal to the concept of job – alienation, they initially measured it and then, they examined its relationship with strictly official centralization. It means that the stricter is the emphasis on official regulations, the feeling of job – alienation near the individual's increases at the same level. They (Aiken and Haghe) also found that job – alienation results in the colleagues– alienation too.

In a study, Lomond (2009) examined the predictive factors of job – alienation the educational staff. The studied population included six different organizations in the sector of information Technology (IT) in India.

He studied different factors such as creativity, diversity and understanding of justice, structural elements and occupational independence. The performed sampling was objective. The number of participants in this research was 1142 persons of the educational staff. Among them, 227 persons were known as job – alienation. It means out of every 5 persons, 1 person was job – alienation. In the variable of structure, Lomond referred to two scales including the hierarchy and participation in the decision – making. The result of his prediction showed that the more is the level of participation in decision – making, the level of alienation is less as the same. Lomond's prediction was based on the nature of positive job's relationships.

The results showed that the staff who make their jobs meaningful, emphasized on the importance of job relationships.

Regarding the research topic, the method of the present research is descriptive, of correlation kind. The studied statistical population in this research includes all the official staff of state universities of Tehran city. They are 15650 persons. Sampling method of this research is proportional. To select the volume of sample using Cochran formula with confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5% regarding the volume of statistical populations (15650 persons), 375 persons were selected as the sample's volume.

### ***Instruments of the study***

In this research, two kinds of questionnaire were used. The questionnaire of first kind was bureaucracy made by Adli. The questionnaire of second kind was job – alienation made by Dean.

### **Findings of the study**

*H1: There is a relationship between the structure of universities (bureaucracy) and job – alienation.*

Regarding data obtained from the questionnaire, this relationship was confirmed. There is a meaningful correlation between those two (the value of 0.222). Therefore, 4.9% of job – alienation of the employees can be predicted by the structure of bureaucracy. Emphasizing on the method, discipline and compatibility, the pressures and limitations of bureaucracy prevent the natural training of human's character. Implementation and maintenance of human force in the structure of bureaucracy cause mental and psychological needs and requests of the staff will not be addressed enough. This carelessness causes the depression and job-alienation. Aiken and Haghe's research showed that like bureaucracy, very centralized and hierarchical organizations result in alienation since they give low opportunity to the individuals for decision – making and the individuals have low authority to assign the jobs.

*H2: There is a meaningful relationship between bureaucracy formality and job-alienation level.*

In this research, regarding the obtained data, this relationship was not confirmed. In the researcher's view, the employee's fear from top managers and lack of job security, as well as negative evaluation of job-alienation phenomenon by the employees are some reasons for this result. Aiken and Haghe believe that the most fundamental and common studied aspect of the organizational structure includes the rules and organizations which determine non – personal role of the performance of all members inside the organizations. One of its consequences is that the staff should follow the rules just for the rules themselves, since such rules invariably constitute the basis and foundation of their evaluation. Therefore, it can be concluded, despite the predication of researcher, the execution of rules and regulations is not bad by itself, especially if the person can

find that the execution of such rules causes some improvements during the organizational attempts and it increases the efficiency.

*H3: There is a meaningful relationship between the hierarchy and job-alienation.*

In this research, the correlation coefficient for the variable of hierarchy is 0.142%. It can be said that there is a meaningful relationship between these two variables and this relationship was accepted. In the structure of universities,  $P<0.05$  was obtained. The significance level of testing the individuals is  $P<0.05$  because of the context of organizations and kind of relationship which exists (mostly up to down and very complex hierarchy). Because of intra – organizational relationships and incorrect and (self – centralized) self- governing practices of the managers which resulted from illegal – being of their powers, the individuals are hindered from the development, creativity and innovation and change into inactive, isolated, indifferent, irresponsible and alien elements. In these organizations, they are not allowed to control the work place minimally. They are encouraged to be subordinate and follower and gradually, they are job-alienation. If we can propagate more bottom – top relationship in the organizations, the managers shall be exploited by point of views of the staff more, it causes boasting of our country. Upward relationship is a way in which the individuals convey their beliefs, facts, thoughts, feelings and values to others. This provides the possibility to express the feelings and satisfy social needs until the individuals shall feel less social isolation.

*H4: There is a meaningful relationship between job division and specialty and job-alienation.*

In this research, the correlation coefficient for job division and specialty was obtained equal to 0.01. The significance level of test is  $P>0.05$ . Therefore, this relationship was not confirmed. The specialty procedure causes the worker shall be changed into a paralyzed creature as Marx cites. Under the pressure and with the excuse of missing a world of creative power and mental potential, he achieves a high specialty just in some fields. In this process; ultimately, the individual is divided into smaller components. He is transformed into an automatic mechanical force for partial practices and feels tiredness and boring. Shariati (1975) knows the specialty as one of the enemies of human and one of the factors of job-alienation. Hidgar also says that the specialty is the enemy of human in one sense , since human – being possesses various dimensions, talents and needs who can perform different actions. While the specialty is a compulsory system which is imposed on him and prisons this multi- dimensional human into a uni-dimensional system and a fixed, routine, repetitive work. This causes job-alienation of the individual.

*H5: There is a meaningful relationship between job direction and job-alienation.*

Using the obtained data, the correlation coefficient of this variable and significance level is  $P<0.005$ . Regarding it, it can be said that this hypothesis was not confirmed. The employee is recruited in a governmental hierarchical system for a job direction. He starts from inferior, more partial level and with less wage and moves in the direction of higher positions. The ordinary employee likes there shall be a fixed system which improves the development conditions. He desires some conditions which provide his superiority basis. This problem provides the paradox between the superiority and success of the individual. But this study showed that this paradox doesn't cause job-alienation. Perhaps, one of its reasons is that the employees are satisfied with their current position and rank. Or they know that there are much favoritism and nepotism in our organizations which have a role in their job upgrade. Therefore, it can be said that the employees have not enough and sufficient motivation and hope in job upgrade (enhancement) to think of their high occupational (job) stages.

*H6: There is a meaningful relationship between non – personal orientation and job-alienation.*

In this study, the correlation coefficient of this variable was obtained 0.162. The significance level of the test is equal to  $P < 0.05$ . Therefore, this hypothesis was confirmed. Since the bureaucracy is based on wisdom and job conditions necessitate the dominance of formal spirit and impartial behavior without affection and revenge and sympathy and excitement, it is expected the employees prevent the interference of personal feeling and temptations encountering the client. This causes a relatively sterile and useless atmosphere shall be generated in which the individuals are changed into the organizational men without human character. In this way, the spirit is weakened and a weak spirit, on its part, causes to decrease the organizational efficiency and job-alienation.

*H7: There is a difference between job-alienation of male and female employees.*

One of the important issues which were addressed by the researcher in this research, was the comparison of job-alienation between men and women. In this study, the eigenvalue in the calculated Z is smaller than the value of Z. Freedom degree is 330 with the confidence level of 95% (1.96). Therefore, there is a meaningful difference of it is almost the same. Despite the prediction of researcher, this hypothesis was not confirmed. But among the components of job-alienation (powerlessness, feeling of social isolation, abnormality feeling), the component of abnormality feeling is significantly more among women than men. In previous researches (Adli, 1996; Hosseinzadeh, 2009), this hypothesis was confirmed. More job-alienation was observed among the men than women. Perhaps, the reason is that achieving higher positions and ranks for men was more than that for women, and the men are more involved in occupational competitions. But now, we observe that the number of transferring the positions and ranks to women became very much compared to the past. Women as much as men are involved in higher organizational jobs. Even top managers engage in work and attempt. This study showed that there is no difference between job-alienation among men and women in state universities of Tehran.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

In view of sociology, the alienation is a reaction towards the shortages and environmental factors which is manifested in the individual. The reason for this alienation is that the individuals lose the authority, freedom and dominance on their fates and attempt to express themselves for earning (receiving) a slight wage. Consequently, this lack of self – conception is followed by joining to the organizational system and makes him to be alienated towards the goals and results of that system. This study showed that there is job-alienation in the structure of bureaucracy OD state universities of Tehran city. In view of must social, political and economic aware persons, inactive (passive) and heterogeneous bureaucracy system in state universities is one of the biggest obstacles on any social and scientific development and revolution. Lack of appropriate and enough attention to the essential role of human force which the planning and performance of each revolution in the structure of universities are resulted from it, results in formation of indifference and job-alienation among the official employees of the universities. If we want to have the employees who have job satisfaction, operate in the organization without stress and have a unity feeling in respect of their job topic and involve in real and creative job, a job in which their talents and abilities are realized, we should generate the following changes in our organizational structure.

- Decreasing the hierarchy in the organization and entrusting (consigning) the authority
- Participation of the employees in decision – making and their effective public opinion
- Retaining the individuals regarding to their professional growth (development) and abilities
- The emphasis on the efficiency of the organization, not on retaining the organization
- The organizations movement towards organic structure

In this way, it can be concluded that to decrease job-alienation and increase job satisfaction and responsibility feeling in the members of state organizations, the above – mentioned factors should be addressed enough. If not, if the situation continues in the same way, we will observe increasing job-alienation among the employees in the future which this causes lack of development of scientific, economic and social efficiency of state (public) universities.

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