



## Providing Professional Commitment Model of Male Referees in Iranian Football Premier League

Javad Shahlaei Bagheri<sup>1</sup> | Hasssan Gharekhani<sup>2</sup> | Esmail Dolatyari<sup>3</sup>

1. Corresponding author, Associate Professor, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Tehran, Iran. Email: [javadshahlaee@gmail.com](mailto:javadshahlaee@gmail.com)

2. Assistant Professor in Sport Management, Sport Sciences Department, Faculty of Humanities, University of Zanjan, Zanjan, Iran. Email: [gharekhani@znu.ac.ir](mailto:gharekhani@znu.ac.ir)

3. Ph.D candidate of Sport Management, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Tehran, Iran. Email: [esmail.dolatyari@yahoo.com](mailto:esmail.dolatyari@yahoo.com)

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### ABSTRACT

This study deals with the effect of structural empowerment on professional commitment of male referees with the mediating role of job characteristics in Iranian football premier League. Data collected using a self-report survey. In addition to demographic items, the survey comprised 46 items measuring structural empowerment, professional commitment and, job characteristics. Experts in sports management and football refereeing confirmed the face and content validity of the questionnaire. 130 valid questionnaires completed by referees in the Persian Gulf Pro League in Iran. Structural equation modeling, confirmatory factor analysis and, path analysis were conducted for data analysis by using PLS Smart software. The effects of structural empowerment on professional commitment (T-Value= 2.27 and  $\beta$ = -0.18) and job characteristics on professional commitment (T-Value= 8.93 and  $\beta$ = 0.63) were both positive and significant. The effect of structural empowerment on job characteristics (T-Value= 4.94 and  $\beta$ = 0.43) was positive and significant. Referee's Job characteristics had a significant mediating role in the relationship between structural empowerment and their professional commitment (T-Value= 4.15,  $\beta$ = 0.27). The findings can provide critical insights for sport managers be more efficient in the field of football refereeing.

## Introduction

Human resource empowerment as a new approach to internal job motivation means releasing the internal forces of employees and providing a platform and opportunity; for developing their talents, abilities and, competencies (Villegas, 2015). Empowerment is an inevitable program for more work

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at a lower cost. Empowerment is the freedom of employees' actions about related activities. Therefore, the goal is to empower success at the individual and organizational levels (Azeem, Abrar, Bashir, & Zubair, 2015).

There are two different approaches to empowerment. A mechanical approach means delegating authority to lower-level employees within clear boundaries to make decisions and, delegate responsibilities to individuals. Another organic one, based on this approach, empowerment means risk-taking, growth and, change, as well as trusting employees, understanding their needs and tolerating mistakes at work, team-building and, encouraging them to do things collaboratively (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997).

Research has made much progress in showing how employee empowerment increases loyalty and, commitment to the organization. Loyal and committed workforce strives beyond job descriptions (Sanchez, 2012). The goal of empowerment is to use employees' thoughts to find better ways and, make the best possible decisions (Yang, Liu, Chen, & Pan, 2014). Human resources are empowered to help with decision-making and, management of affairs (Broniarczyk & Griffin, 2014). Nowadays, environmental changes have focused on the issue of empowering the organization's human resources. Because managers multiply their effectiveness in this way, As, a result, they make the organization more efficient. Employees' perceptions and beliefs about their abilities can influence organizational behaviors. Because employees who have more power in their work environment have more company with their managers. (Spreitzer, 1995). Studies show that empowerment is related to variables such as professional commitment, job characteristics and, productivity. The results of Liu et al. (2007), studies showed that professional commitment has a significant and positive relationship with psychological empowerment (Liu, Chiu, & Fellows, 2007). Professional commitment refers to believing and accepting the values chosen by the individual and the desire to maintain membership in the profession in which he or she is engaged (Vandenberg & Scarpello, 1994). In other words, professional commitment determines identity with the profession and attachment to the profession (Lachman & Aranya, 1986). Some researchers have described this category with the three characteristics of belief and, acceptance of professional goals and values, willingness to work hard based on the beliefs and, willingness of members to stay in the profession (Aranya, Pollock, & Amernic, 1981). One of the central and vital dimensions of empowerment is its structural dimension. This dimension includes the modification of workplace structures by managers and, facilitating access to the organization's facilities. Previous researchers have considered the four factors of delegation of authority, information sharing, participation in decision-making and, control as the main subset of structural empowerment (Kordnahich, Bakhshizadeh, & Fatholahi, 2015). Kanter (2008) also cited two factors: support and opportunity. In addition, the theory of structural empowerment proposed by him is related to the delegation of power and authority in the organization generally, it describes the employees' access to four environmental factors, i.e., opportunity, information, support and, resources in the organization (Kanter, 2008).

However, it is impossible to predict the relationship between structural empowerment and, the professional commitment of football referees by mediating their job characteristics. To shed light on this process, in the present research, we study, the mediating role of job characteristics in the relationship between structural empowerment on the professional commitment of referees in the Iranian Men's Football Premier League. Coaches and players usually interpret the refereeing, performance negatively. Winning players and coaches seldom point to the desired quality of refereeing; but losers of the competition attribute at least a portion of their losses to the referee's performance (Dolatyari, sadeghi, & Kalantari, 2023). Therefore, paying attention to the job characteristics of the referees, their level of commitment, and of course, their empowerment in the direction of the desired goals can guarantee healthy and better judgment. As a result, football leagues will be held with fewer margins and more order. We investigate these issues through all these factors (6 cases mentioned before) that have been considered. Referees are one of the main pillars of professional leagues and competitions. Referees, as valuable human resources of the federation, are responsible for one of the most critical and challenging tasks during competitions. Since the Football League is being pursued in different countries with Signiant progress and sensitivity, the presence of capable referees can be effective in better performance of matches.

Because good and fair judgment causes the order of the matches. Based on our analysis, we develop a model (at least an improved understanding), identifying the factors affecting empowerment referees. When the job and, the importance of the job duty for employees are well understood, the dimension of attachment and, staying in the job increases (Reeve, Jang, Hardre, & Omura, 2002; Said & Munap, 2010; Simons, Dewitte, & Lens, 2004).

In another study, Carrière and Bremner (2011) examined the main job characteristics of hospital staff and showed that job characteristics, job importance, and skill diversity increased professional efficiency and reduced pessimism and burnout (Carrière & Bremner, 2011). The theory of job characteristics model in the 1970s also showed that the main characteristics of the job could affect employee productivity, motivation and, satisfaction (Saavedra & Kwun, 2000). The job characteristics model was developed by Jacko and, the main dimensions of the job were promoted to seven characteristics: skill diversity, expertise, task importance, independence, information processing, problem-solving and feedback (Jacko, 2004). Kwon and Banks (2004) also stated that the type of organization is effective in predicting job characteristics and attitudes toward a career in predicting professional commitment (Kwon & Banks, 2004). According to the results of some research, the direct relationship between job characteristics, the psychological and, structural empowerment of employees is confirmed (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). In a review study, Elias found a significant relationship between the main characteristics of the job and professional commitment (Elias, 2006). Al-Abedi, and Chen Roy pointed out a positive and significant relationship between these two variables (Al-Abedi, 2018; Chen & Kao, 2012). Chatzoglou et al. (2011) presented a job characteristics model in which they pointed to professional commitment. According to this model, job enrichment can be predicted through job characteristics and attitudes, internal work motivation, and professional organizational commitment. Their results also showed that through the main characteristics of the job, professional commitment and organizational commitment are created and lead to job satisfaction. They proved that the variables of professional commitment and organizational commitment mediate between job characteristics and, attitudinal outcomes. They also expressed a significant relationship between job characteristics and professional commitment (Chatzoglou, Vraimaki, Komsiou, Polychrou, & Diamantidis, 2011).

The professional commitment of football referees plays a pivotal role in maintaining the integrity and fairness of the sport. By dedicating themselves to upholding the rules, regulations, and ethical standards of football, referees contribute significantly to the overall quality and enjoyment of the the competitions. Understanding and investigating the commitment among football referees helps ensure that they remain impartial and enforce the rules consistently, leading to fair play and sportsmanship on the field. It can also help to identify areas for improvement in their training, development, and support. This, in turn, helps maintain the high standards expected of them in their crucial roles. By studying the factors that contribute to a referee's commitment, organizations can create better work environments and foster greater job satisfaction, leading to improved performance and long-term retention. Research on professional commitment among football referees can guide policy-making and decision-making processes for governing bodies, leading to better support systems and improved overall officiating.

Therefore, considering the importance of studying different dimensions of professional commitment among football referees, the purpose of this research is to study the effect of structural empowerment on professional commitment of male referees with the mediating role of job characteristics in Iranian football premier league.

## **Methodology**

This was an applied and descriptive-correlational study conducted in the field. The statistical population consisted of 130 male referees of the Iranian Football Premier League in 2022. The statistical sample was selected as a whole (sample equal to the population). The data collection tool consisted of three separate questionnaires. Combined Structural Empowerment Questionnaire Kordnahich et al. (2015) and, Kanter (2008) with 18 questions, Professional Commitment Questionnaire (Aranya & Yampuler, 1999); with 12 questions and, Job Characteristics Questionnaire (Jacko, 2004) with 16 questions in Likert's 5-value range were used (Table1). The face and content validity

of the questionnaires were reviewed and approved by 25 sports management experts and refereeing experts. Their construct validity was also confirmed through convergent validity (factor loading and AVE value above 0.5) and, divergent or diagnostic validity based on (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), index. The combined reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated and, confirmed by PLS software (0.92, 0.89 and, 0.84, respectively). Due to the distortion of 11 numbers, 119 questionnaires (It was distributed in person and electronically) were finally analyzed. The total reliability of the questionnaire was obtained through Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 85%. Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, single sample T-test, linear regression and finally, structural equation modeling using PLS software were used. The Model processing was done in three stages. In the first step, the evaluation of the external model or measurement model (validity and reliability) was performed. In the second step, the evaluation of the internal or structural model (path coefficients, coefficient of determination, predictive criterion and, effect size) was calculated. In the third step, the overall research model was adapted using Chi-Square, NFI and, SRMR indices. Finally, the hypotheses were tested at the significance level (P, 0.05).

**Table 1.** Questionnaire Items

row	Variable name	Dimensions of research	Relevant items
1	Structural Empowerment (18 items)	Delegation authority	1-7-18
2		Information Sharing	5-11-15
3		Joint decision making	3-8-14
4		Control	4-12-16
5		Support	3-6-9
6		Opportunity	2-10-17
7	Professional Commitment (12 items)	Identification	1-6-8-10-11
8		Stay in job	3-4-9-12
9		Involvement	2-5-7
10	Job Characteristics (16 items)	Information processing	9-13-14
11		Skill variety	6-8-16
12		Specialization	1-3-12
13		Task significance	4-7-10-15
14		Feedback	2-5-11

## Results

### A. Descriptive

In the inferential analysis of the data, the evaluation of the external and internal models and the test of the hypotheses are displayed in the form of several tables. To avoid prolonging the content in the findings section, the demographic information of the research samples is summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The Statistical Description of Research Samples

Variable	Type	Frequency	Percentage
Marital Status	Single	29	24.4
	Married	90	75.6
Expertise in Arbitration	Referee	49	41.2
	Assistant Referee	70	58.8
Degree of Judgment	Grade 1	1	0.8
	National	104	87.4
	International	14	11.8
Educational Degree	Diploma	1	0.8
	post-diploma	4	3.4
	Bachelor	48	40.3
	Master's degree	66	55.5

Field of Study	Physical Training	64	53.8
	Non-physical training	55	46.2
Main Job	Teacher	20	16.8
	Employee	46	38.7
	Military	1	0.8
	Self-Employed	22	18.5
	Other	30	25.2

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for raw data distribution showed the distribution of Structural Empowerment data (Sig= 0.20, Z= 0.51), Professional Commitment (Z= 1.25, Sig= 0/09) and, Job Characteristics (Z= 0.063, Sig= 0/10), is typical (Table 3). As a result, parametric tests were used for inferential data analysis.

**Table 3.** Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test to Determine the Normality of the Data

Index	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z	Sig
Structural Empowerment	2.40	0.67	0.051	0.20
Professional Commitment	2.97	0.49	1.25	0.09
Job Characteristics	3.33	0.41	0.063	0.10

## B. Inferential

### *Proposed model processing*

#### *Step 1: Evaluate the external model (measurement)*

At this stage, convergent validity, diagnostic validity and, combined reliability were measured. Convergent validity was assessed based on the results of the extractive variance of each dimension. Considering that the values of this index were more than 0.5 in all dimensions, the convergent validity was confirmed (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Extracted Variance and Convergent Validity

Variables	Extracted Variance
Structural Empowerment	0.690
Professional Commitment	0.640
Job Characteristics	0.646

Divergent validity was confirmed with Fornell and Larcker index. According to the table below, all the central diameter values are more significant than the corresponding rows and columns (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Divergent |Validity

Variables	Structural Empowerment	Professional Commitment	Job Characteristics
Structural Empowerment	<u>0.810</u>		
Professional Commitment	0.080	<u>0.779</u>	
Job Characteristics	0.396	0.478	<u>0.815</u>

Reliability was also measured using Total reliability Cronbach's alpha (Delvin Goldstein). According to the values of both indices (higher than 0.7), reliability was also confirmed (Table 6).



**Table 6.** Cronbach's and Combined Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Reliability	Total Reliability
Structural Empowerment	0.91	0.93
Professional Commitment	0.72	0.90
Job Characteristics	0.86	0.84

**Step 2: Evaluate the internal (structural) model**

In evaluating the internal model, the coefficient of determination index was measured. In examining the coefficient of determination of R2 values, equal to 0.19, 0.33 and, 0.67 are considered weak, medium and, firm, respectively. According to the obtained results, the coefficient of determination is average (Table 7).

**Table 7.** Coefficient Value

Variable	The Coefficient of Determination	Criterion	Status	Result
Professional Commitment	0.242	0.19	Weak	Medium Structural Model Processing
		0.33	Medium	
Job Characteristics	0.157	0.67	Strong	

Step 3: General model processing: Five indicators, such as Chi-Square, NFI and, SRMR, were used. According to result, the model processing is moderate.

**Table 8.** General Model Processing

Model Processing Indicators	SRMR	d_ ULS	d_ G	Chi-Square	NFI
Values Obtained	0.084	1.324	0.330	288.395	0.784
Criterion	0.109	Below 95%	Below 95%	---	Above 90%

The structural equation modeling method was used to investigate the effect of each Variable of the research model. The results of the research path model are presented in two modes: standard coefficients (Figure 1) and, significance coefficients (Figure 2).

A summary of hypothesis test results is also provided in Table 9. The values obtained for the impact coefficients in the structural model are evaluated in terms of sign, quantity and significance. The coefficient of determination is also known. The numbers 0.25, 0.50 and, 0.75 were considered weak, medium and strong values of the coefficient of determination, respectively. However, its optimal value depends on the subject of research on the one hand and, the number of hidden exogenous variables related to that endogenous Variable whose coefficient of determination has been calculated.

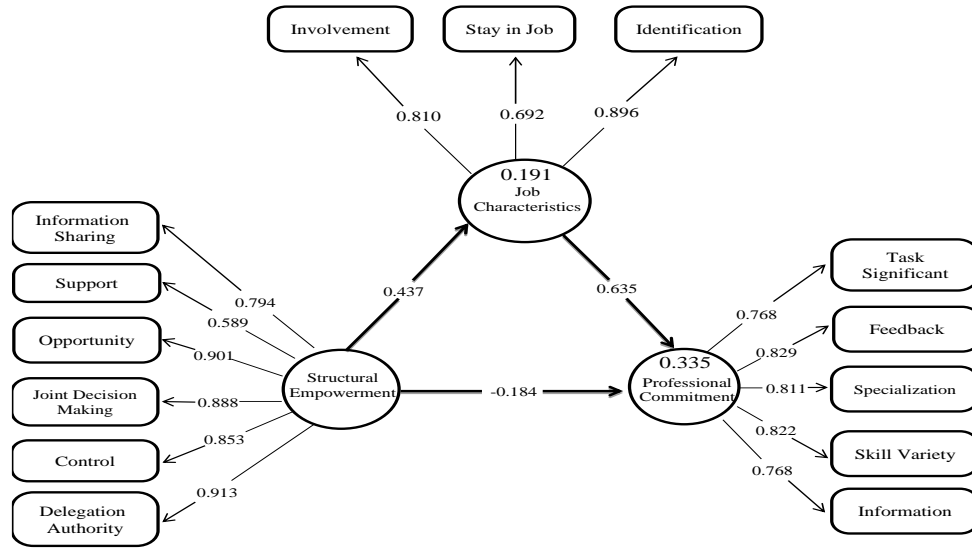


Figure 1. Research Model in the Form of Standard Coefficients

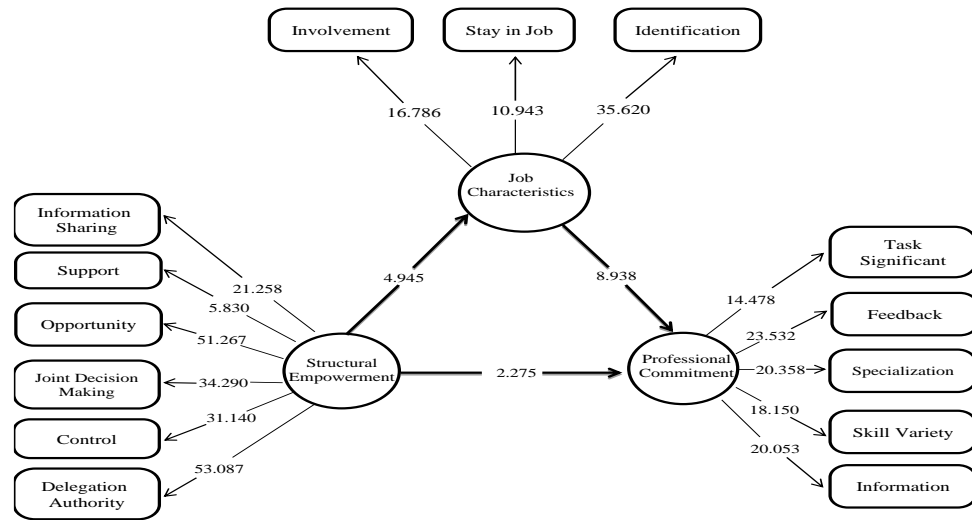


Figure 2. Research Model in the Form of Significance Coefficients

The value of the path coefficient of the variable was structural empowerment with professional commitment (-0.184). Therefore, the effect of structural empowerment on the commitment was negative and significant and, the first hypothesis was confirmed.

The coefficient of structural empowerment path coefficient on job characteristics was (0.437). Therefore, the effect of structural empowerment on job characteristics was positive and significant and, the second hypothesis was confirmed.

The value of the path coefficient of job characteristics on professional commitment was (0.63-5). Therefore, the effect of job characteristics on professional commitment was positive and significant and, the third hypothesis was confirmed (Table 9).

**Table 9.** Results of Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses	T-Value	$\beta$	The result of the hypothesis
The Effect of structural empowerment of male football referees on their professional commitment	2.275	0.184-	Supported
The Effect of structural empowerment of male football referees on their job characteristics	4.945	0.437	Supported
The Effect of job characteristics of male football referees on their professional Commitment	8.938	0.635	Supported

❖ The criterion of significance is  $\pm 1.96$ .

In examining the fourth hypothesis, the mediating role of job characteristics in the causal relationship between structural empowerment with professional commitment (T-Value = 4.157 &  $\beta$  = 0.278) was significant (Table 10).

**Table 10.** Investigating the Mediating Role of Job Characteristics

Effective Variable	Mediator Variable	Dependent Variable	Indirect Effect Rate	T-Value	P-Value	Result
Structural Empowerment	Job Characteristics	Professional Commitment	0.278	4.157	0.001	Supported

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed that structural empowerment could predict and, explain professional commitment, so the prediction of structural empowerment on professional commitment is negative and, meaningful. This finding is consistent with the results of research by Bae et al. (2020), Fragkos et al. (2020), Aggarwal et al. (2018), showed that employee commitment arises from a variety of emotional, normative, continuous, cognitive and, behavioral ones and, empowerment significantly affects organizational commitment. Fragkos et al. (2020), noted that structural empowerment was a strong predictor of nurses' organizational commitment and was strongly associated with organizational commitment. Aggarwal et al. (2018), also reported that Indian nurses experienced a high level of structural empowerment, which leads to high commitment (Aggarwal, Dhaliwal, & Nobi, 2018; Bae, Nam, & Lee, 2020; Fragkos, Makrykosta, & Frangos, 2020).

The negative experiences of referees in the past and the management of the Refereeing Department are probably influential in justifying this finding. Because there is no correct idea of empowerment in both theoretical, conceptual discussions, content and, practical one in both groups (referees and officials). Therefore, they do not consider empowerment in increasing productivity by creating a sense of mutual commitment between themselves (referees and officials). They also do not believe in attempting to develop and advance the organization to secure personal interests.

One of the possible reasons is the referees' lack of belief in the effect of empowerment in improving the quality-of-service delivery and the managers' lack of belief in the effect of this variable in improving the organization's effectiveness and improving the referees' motivation and commitment. Because empowerment increases the loyalty and commitment of the organization's employees. Loyal and committed human resources will go beyond their job descriptions (Sanchez, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to change the attitude of each group (referees and officials) about the effects of empowerment and to create a better and more constructive understanding and interaction between them. Then, it is necessary to implement effective programs to empower referees with the aim to strengthening their professional commitment. Structural empowerment also provides federations, especially the refereeing committee, with the potential capacity to use human resources. Empowerment, in addition to organizational benefits, has many benefits for referees. Referees who see themselves as more empowered, report less conflict and ambiguity. In addition, they have more control over the environment. Therefore, by improving the level of structural empowerment, it is possible to increase the level of acceptance and commitment to the goals, values



and continuity of presence in the organization. The results indicate that one of the ways to enhance the professional commitment of referees is structural empowerment. As a result, if the process of structural empowerment of referees is designed and implemented, their professional commitment will increase.

Findings showed that structural empowerment can predict and, explain job characteristics. Therefore, its effect on referees is positive and significant. This finding is consistent with the findings of O'Brien (2010) and, Velthouse (1990), who found a direct link between job characteristics and, the structural and psychological empowerment of employees. Structural empowerment may increase self-confidence in referees. When employees engage in empowerment programs in specific situations, with more confidence, they show better behavior and, performance. Finally, results such as hard work, initiative, innovative behavior, quick response and flexibility are obtained, which are necessary for the success of organizations (Spreitzer, 1995). Consistent with this finding (Arnold & House, 1980) and (Faturochman, 1997) also showed that there is a significant relationship between mental states (self-confidence and motivation) with empowerment.

In addition, the internal correlation of the variables of the main dimensions of the job can be very decisive, because if the characteristics of the job are significantly and directly related to each other, they better meet the mental states (Faturochman, 1997). Therefore, it can be said that the situation will improve if structural empowerment courses are held.

Also, according to the results, the job characteristics of referees predict their professional commitment and have a positive and meaningful effect. Based on this finding, we can say that the job characteristics of referees can predict their professional commitment. Alebadi (2018), reported a significant correlation between job characteristics and dimensions of professional commitment of football referees. Ramli et al. (2019) showed that job characteristics have a significant effect on organizational commitment. Kwon and Banks (2004), also noted that the type of organization effectively predicts job characteristics and, attitudes toward the profession in predicting professional commitment (Al-Abedi, 2018; Chatzoglou et al., 2011; Kwon & Banks, 2004; Ramli, Soelton, & Khotimah, 2020). Chatzoglou et al. found a significant relationship between job characteristics and professional commitment. They stated that by enriching the job through job characteristics, one could predict the intrinsic motivation of work, professional and, organizational commitment (Chatzoglou et al., 2011). In other words, the variables of professional commitment and organizational commitment mediate the role between job characteristics and, attitudinal outcomes.

The results showed that when the job and the importance of job duties are well understood by employees, they are more effectively involved in their work and, job leaving are reduced. As a result, the dimension of attachment and staying in the job increases (Brophy, 1987; Reeve et al., 2002; Said & Munap, 2010; Simons et al., 2004). Findings indicate that job characteristics and, professional commitment have positive significant effect on performance (Nugroho & Haryanto, 2019).

Elias (2006), also stated that there is a significant relationship between the main characteristics of the job and professional commitment (Elias, 2006). Among the possible reasons for the recent findings are the following: Job characteristics have created internal motivation, a sense of duty and, a desire to show competencies and abilities in referees, and this has led to an increase in professional commitment.

The results of Beyerlein (2006), research also positively and significantly predict four job characteristics (skill diversity, job identity, job importance, and job feedback) and strengthen job commitment (Beyerlein, 2006). In the job performance model based on the theory of goal setting and job characteristics (Chua, 2006) and the combined model of job characteristics and organizational citizenship behavior (Ünüvar, 2006), the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction is also mentioned. According to these models, job characteristics through job satisfaction can improve employee performance. Probably, this result also applies to the referees of the men's premier football league. So, job characteristics lead to job satisfaction of referees and, thus, creating motivation, attachment to work and, gaining identity (components of professional commitment that had the most role, respectively) lead to a positive and meaningful effect.

Probably, the characteristic of this job has created motivation and, by improving their social status, it has given them satisfaction. In line with this finding, Alabadi (2018), showed that there is a

significant positive relationship between professional commitment and job characteristics of Iraqi football referees through the impact of professional commitment (Al-Abedi, 2018). Therefore, it can be predicted that in addition to structural empowerment, the enrichment of job characteristics will also increase the professional commitment of judges.

Based on processing indicators, the model was reported to be moderate. One of the possible reasons for this finding is the lack of knowledge and serious determination of the officials of the federation and the referee's committee in implementing the empowerment dimensions. The following reason can be considered the lack of strategy, tactics, views, and practical approach to empowering referees by the referee's committee.

According to the results, the status of structural empowerment, professional commitment and, job characteristics, along with all dimensions of variables in the research sample, is better than the hypothetical situation. The results also show that among the main variables of the research, the structural empowerment variable obtained the highest average (3.40) and the professional commitment variable obtained the lowest average (2.97).

The study of the dimensions of professional commitment of football referees showed that the dimension of job attachment of referees has the highest average (3.43) and the dimension of staying in the job has the lowest average rank (2.39) among the referees. Attachment is of the utmost critical in predicting the level of professional commitment of football referees. Teng et al. (2006), stated that attachment is the most important dimension in the professional commitment of Taiwanese nurses (Teng, Shyu, & Chang, 2007). Of course, a common feature between football refereeing and nursing is the same effect of referees and nurses' performance on the life of individuals. There are also hardships and high job pressures in both of them. Gendron and Suddaby (2009), in examining the professional commitment of accountants of large Canadian corporations, declared attachment to be the most critical dimension (Gendron, Suddaby, & Qu, 2009).

Referees accept any legal orders and, recommendations in the area of work from the officials and they are always sensitive to the status and future of the refereeing profession and make every effort to develop it. It seems that internal reasons have attracted the referees. People who choose the job of refereeing for these reasons respect all the values and rules in that profession and consider themselves obliged to follow them. These individuals are susceptible to the fate and future of their refereeing career and work hard to reach higher levels. They have great enthusiasm for their jobs. The results showed that skill variety had the highest rating (3.53). This is in line with the results Niehoff et al. (2001), but with the results of Carrière and Bremner (2011), who reported the importance of the task as the most crucial dimension of the leading job characteristics and the diversity of skills in the second priority, are in conflict (Carrière & Bremner, 2011; Niehoff, Moorman, Blakely, & Fuller, 2001). It contradicts some of the researchers' results (Hwang & Jang, 2020; Johari, Yahya, Che Mit, & Omar, 2011).

The results show that referees need different physical, mental and, perceptual skills, which is why the referee committee of the federations of each country conducts physical fitness tests for referees every year. They consider and try to prepare the referees for judging the matches by teaching play-reading, management and, psychological techniques. It also seems that this feature can make referees loyal to the job of a football referees. So, in this regard, Niehoff et al. (2001), showed that among job characteristics, skill diversity has the most relationship with employee loyalty (Niehoff et al., 2001).

Following the results, the job feedback dimension obtained the lowest average (3.17). Although job feedback did not have a significant effect on judgment, its role should not be ignored. Everything judges receive through their job feedback is internal because they understand the correctness or incorrectness of their decision. However, they receive direct and immediate feedback on their performance through the reactions of players, coaches, spectators, referee observers, families, other referees, club managers, federation and referee committee officials, and even the media. Although these reactions may not be completely accurate, with a small quantity of modification, their role in job feedback can be considered adequate.

In this regard, the role of referee supervisors is very crucial. The most essential and influential referee job feedback, is provided by referee supervisors. Because the decision of the managers of

the refereeing department is based on the information of the supervisors and, the selection of referees for future games is done with the supervisors' evaluations.

The views of co-workers (other referees), coaches, players, and spectators and, the media influence referees' job feedback. Many referees find out the rightness or wrongness of their performance and decision according to people's feedback. However, the performance of referees before, during or after the refereeing can be influenced by some expert referees. Therefore, the feedback of this group for referees, is an effective job characteristic in improving their performance.

Findings also showed that among all the dimensions of the structural empowerment variable, the information-sharing dimension has the highest average (2.77) and has a better situation than other dimensions. These results are inconsistent with Stewart et al. (2010), Patrick and Laschinger (2006), which had the highest average (Patrick & Laschinger, 2006; Stewart, McNulty, Griffin, & Fitzpatrick, 2010). Information-sharing has the highest rank among the dimensions of structural empowerment. It refers to the provision of necessary and sufficient information and resources adequately to make judgments. There is also much information in the referees' committee to inform or update the referees. This process must continue to achieve successful results in the future. Among the variable dimensions of structural empowerment, the control dimension has the lowest average (2.17).

In conclusion, according to the obtained results, it can be said that for the effectiveness of the federation structure and the referee's committee, it is not enough for the referees to be suitable for their job in terms of skills and personality. Instead, based on the research findings, it must be acknowledged that not only the appropriate of the person with the job of referee, but also involvement in decision-making, provide the necessary opportunities for their development. Because they will have more motivation and be responsible for performing their duties. By sharing information, we should also try to transfer the necessary information from individuals at higher levels of the federation or committee structure to lower levels. Also sharing, information at horizontal levels can reduce the time required to solve Issues and ultimately improve the quality of the process.

Due to the more significant impact of structural empowerment on professional commitment through the mediation of job characteristics, especially among male referees, more focus and attention to this mediating variable in referees can improve the situation. Therefore, refereeing officials should pay special attention to the determining role of job characteristics. It is necessary to use knowledgeable individuals with sufficient expertise in the management fields of the federation and Referees Committee. In addition, by holding related workshops, courses and, classes for referees, we can help them be more efficient.

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