

Assessing the Relationship between Job Enrichment and Employees' Attitudes toward Organizational Changes in the Airline of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to assess the relationship between the dimensions of job enrichment and employees' attitudes towards organizational changes and to determine the function of enrichment dimensions in predicting the attitude towards organizational changes. The study is descriptive regarding its objectives and nature, a survey considering data collection method used, and is of correlation studies type regarding the method of data analysis. The statistical population was the staff of the airline of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tehran and the data collection tools included the Hackman and Oldham's Job Enrichment Standard Questionnaire, and the Standard Questionnaire for attitudes towards change by Dunham et al through limiting its questions to organizational changes while maintaining the dimensions of the questionnaire. The data were analyzed using spss and lisrel software. Research findings indicated that there is a significant negative relationship between job enrichment and attitudes toward organizational changes.

Keywords: Job Enrichment, Attitude to Organizational Changes, the Airline of the Islamic Republic of Iran

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, change is considered as a constant element in life and business. Change refers to the transmission of the organization from the present situation to the desired situation, irrespective of which of the factors of human resources, structure, organizational goals, technology or culture is regarded as the basis and motive of organizational changes and their driving force [1]. Generally, change can have four levels of epistemological changes, attitude changes, changes in individual behavior, and changes in group or organizational behavior [2].

Attitude towards change: One of the most important factors that play a vital role in the implementation of change process is the attitude of employees towards change [3]. Attitudes toward change refer to employees' beliefs and tendency toward change [4]. According to Stephen P. Robbins' three variables of attitude, personality, and ability are the main variables affecting individual behavior, the ability to interact with the learning factor, personality by influencing the perceptual factor, attitude by influencing the two factors of motivation and perception constitute individual behavior. Beckhard and Harris (1987) proposed a formula for making changes in which change is equal to the product of multiplying three factors: the level of dissatisfaction with the current situation, the degree of desirability of future changes, and the initial practical steps that the result of this multiplication should be less than the amount of the resistance to change [5]. Dewoot (1996), by modifying Bekhard and

Harris's change formula, proposed the change equation, which is the product of multiplying 5 factors including pressure to change, clear and common view, change capacity, changeability, and initial executive steps minus the amount of the resistance to change [6].

Job Enrichment: Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1980) have proposed a model in which the five main characteristics of a job, including diversity of skills, task identity, significance and importance of duty, autonomy, and job feedback, lead in the formation and creation of three psychological states resulting from work in individuals which include: the experience of significance in work, experiencing the responsibility for work results, and obtaining knowledge from work results [7, 8]. These psychological states naturally

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enhance the level of internal motivation for work, job performance, and job satisfaction through a chain process. Based on the existing research reports, the job characteristics mentioned in the Hackman and Oldham model (1980) have a motivating aspect, additionally, it is possible to attain the level of job enrichment by calculating the potential motivational score through the stated job characteristics [9].

In this paper, we aimed to evaluate the relationship between job enrichment on employees' attitudes towards organizational changes, regarding the effect of attitude on motivation and also the motivational aspect of job enrichment characteristics.

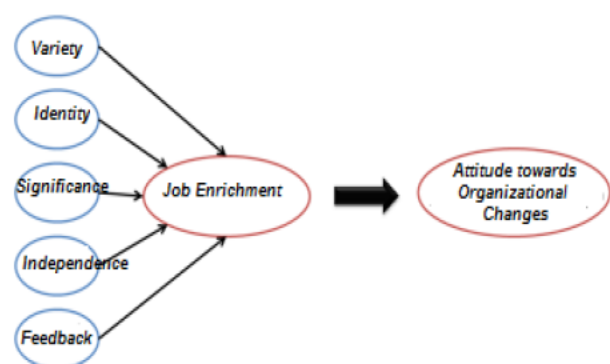


Figure 1: The conceptual model of research

Research hypotheses

Main Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between job enrichment and attitude towards organizational changes.

Sub-hypothesis 1: Variety of skills has a significant relationship with attitude towards organizational changes.

Sub-Hypothesis 2: Job identity has a significant relationship with attitudes toward organizational changes.

Sub-hypothesis 3: The significance of the job has a significant relationship with attitude towards organizational changes.

Sub-hypothesis 4: Independence at work has a significant relationship with attitude towards organizational changes.

Sub-hypothesis 5: Job feedback has a significant relationship with the attitude towards organizational changes.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was done by survey method. The data were collected as a field study, and the data collection instrument was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in two parts. In the first part, which is related to assessing the job enrichment of employees, the Hackman and Oldham standard questionnaire was used as a 5-choice Likert spectrum in the form of 18 questions. The questionnaire measures the five dimensions of job enrichment, including variety, identity, significance, independence, and job feedback, in five sections, each consisting of three questions. And for the second part, which is related to measuring the attitude of employees towards organizational changes, the standard questionnaire of Dunham et al. (1989) was used as a 5-choice

Likert spectrum in the form of 18 questions in three sections including 6 questions that measure emotional, cognitive and behavioral attitudes. As the Dunham questionnaire has a general approach to change, its questions were limited to organizational changes while maintaining the three dimensions.

The statistical population consisted of the employees of the Airline of Islamic Republic of Iran in the city of Tehran in the fall of 2018, which were about 8600 people in total. In order to fit the sample size with the statistical population volume [10], 384 questionnaires were randomly distributed, and finally 370 completed and usable questionnaires were gathered. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS and Lisrel statistical software. To analyze the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, structural equation analysis, path analysis model and second-order confirmatory factor analysis were applied.

Research validity and reliability

Questionnaire validity: The concept of validity or being valid answers the question of how well the measurement tool measures the desired feature. Without knowing the validity of the measuring instrument, one cannot be sure of the accuracy of the data obtained from it. Measuring tools may be valid for measuring a particular trait in a statistical population, while not being valid to measure the same trait in another statistical population [11].

In order to be sure about the validity of the research questionnaire, the viewpoints of the supervising and counseling professors and experts in this field were used, and the necessary modifications were taken into account.

Questionnaire reliability: Reliability means the extent to which the measurement tool achieves the same results under the same conditions. The range of reliability coefficients can be changed from zero (non-relevance of the results obtained in repeated measurements on the population) to one (complete relevance of the obtained results in the repeated measurements on the study population).

The Cronbach's alpha method is the most widely used method for calculating and measuring the reliability of a questionnaire, and since Cronbach's alpha method is used in this study, just this method has been explained, and the explanation of other methods is avoided.

To calculate the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, first calculate the standard deviation of the scores of each subset of the questions of the questionnaire and the standard deviation of the total questions (sub-sets) should be calculated, then the alpha coefficient of each subcategory of the questions is obtained using the following formula:

$$r_{\alpha} = \frac{J}{J-1} \sum \frac{S_i}{S_t}$$

r_{α} = Cronbach's alpha coefficient

S_j = the standard deviation of j th subset
 S_t = total standard deviation
 J = the number of subsets in the questionnaire questions

In this study, based on the conceptual model presented, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is obtained for the questionnaire in Table 1.

Table 1: Questions related to variables and reliability coefficient of questionnaires

| Factors | Related questions | Number of questions | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Emotional attitude | 1-6 | 6 | 0.747 |
| Cognitive attitude | 7-12 | 6 | 0.700 |
| Behavioral attitude | 13-18 | 6 | 0.729 |
| The overall questionnaire of attitude to change | 1-18 | 18 | 0.838 |
| Skill variety | 1-6-11 | 3 | 0.821 |
| Job identity | 2-7-12 | 3 | 0.744 |
| Job significance | 3-8-13 | 3 | 0.723 |
| Independence | 4-9-14 | 3 | 0.846 |
| Job feedback | 5-10-15 | 3 | 0.791 |
| Overall Questionnaire of Job Enrichment | 15 | 15 | 0.788 |

Considering that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained for the questionnaire are higher than 70%, it can be said that the reliability of the questionnaires is at an acceptable level.

Second-level confirmatory factor analysis for the variable of job enrichment:

To confirm that the factor of job enrichment is related to five factors (variety of skills, job identity, job significance, independence, and feedback), Second-level confirmatory factor analysis is used. And according to Figures 2 and 3, it can be said that all the obtained coefficients are significant because all the coefficients have a significant value greater than 1.96.

Table 2: Job Enrichment

| Question | Explained variance | Standard coefficient | Significance coefficient (t value) |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Skill variety | 0.28 | 0.53 | 8.26 |
| Job identity | 1.00 | 1.00 | 14.96 |
| Job significance | 0.30 | 0.55 | 4.56 |
| independence | 1.00 | 1.00 | 12.25 |
| feedback | 0.67 | 0.82 | 6.14 |

As can be seen from Table 2, job identity and independence are the most important factors in measuring the variable of job enrichment in this study.

Second-level confirmatory factor analysis for the variable of attitude toward organizational changes:

To confirm that the attitude towards organizational change is related to three factors (emotional, cognitive and behavioral attitudes), the second-level confirmatory factor analysis is used. And according to Figures 4 and 5, it can be said that all the obtained coefficients are significant because all the coefficients have a significant value greater than 1.96.

Table 3: Attitudes toward organizational change

| Question | Standard coefficient | Explained variance | Significance coefficient (t value) |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Emotional attitude | 0.81 | 0.65 | 12.71 |
| Cognitive attitude | 0.94 | 0.88 | 9.88 |
| Behavioral attitudes | 0.89 | 0.79 | 11.07 |

As can be seen from Table 3, the factor of cognitive attitude is the most important factor for assessing the variable of attitude towards organizational changes.

Checking the normality of data distribution:

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check the normality of the data, and the results of this test indicated that the data were normal.

Examining and calculating the relationship between research variables and hypothesis testing

Structural equation modeling is used to investigate the main research hypothesis which is related to the relationship between the variables of job enrichment and attitude change.

Main Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the variables of job enrichment and attitude toward organizational changes.

According to the calculations done, and as shown in Figures 6 and 7, the main hypothesis of the research, which is examining a significant relationship between job enrichment and attitude towards organizational changes, is accepted with a negative and significant standard coefficient.

The standard coefficient between the two variables is (-0.44), and the significance coefficient is (-3.34). Since the significance coefficient obtained is smaller than the value (1.96-), it can be said that the standard coefficient obtained is also significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the hypotheses that there is a significant relationship between

the variables of job enrichment and attitude change is accepted.

To analyze the sub-hypotheses of the research model, which is related to the relationship between the dimensions of the variable of job enrichment and the attitude towards organizational changes, the path analysis model was used. And as presented in Figures 8 and 9, the following results were obtained for the sub-hypotheses:

Sub-hypothesis 1: Variety of skills has a significant relationship with attitude towards organizational change.

The standardized coefficient between the two variables is -0.28. A significance coefficient between these two variables is 2.50 (less than 1.96), showing that this relationship is negative and significant.

Sub-hypothesis 2: Job identity has a significant relationship with attitude towards organizational change.

The standardized coefficient between the two variables is 0.05. The significance coefficient between these two variables is 0.35 (less than 1.96) indicating that this relationship is not significant.

Sub-hypothesis 3: The significance of the job has a significant relationship with the attitude towards organizational change.

The standardized coefficient between the two variables is 0.16. The significant coefficient between these two variables is 1.65 (less than 1.96) indicating that this relationship is not significant.

Sub-hypothesis 4: Independence has a significant relationship with the attitude towards organizational change.

The standardized coefficient between the two variables is -0.12. The significance coefficient between these two variables is 0.98 (less than 1.96) representing that this relationship is not significant.

Sub-hypothesis 5: Job feedback has a significant relationship with attitude toward organizational change.

The standardized coefficient between the two variables is -0.36. The significant coefficient between these two variables is -1.9 (less than -1.96) indicating that this relationship is negative and significant.

Therefore, sub-hypotheses 1 and 5 were confirmed and hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 were not confirmed.

The goodness results of the fit of structural equation models

The goodness of fit shows whether the theoretical model has a statistically significant theoretical and practical meaning or not. Table 3 compares the obtained indicators and values for the structural equation model.

Table 4: Model fit criteria

| Fit index | Acceptance criteria | Statistics of the research model |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| (Chi square) χ^2 | $\chi^2/df \leq 3$ | 2.80 |
| RMSEA1 | RMSEA<0.08 | 0.078 |
| NFI2 | NFI>0.90 | 0.93 |
| CFI3 | CFI>0.95 | 0.96 |
| GFI4 | GFI>0.90 | 0.92 |
| AGFI5 | AGFI>0.85 | 0.87 |

As can be seen from Table 4, according to the mentioned indicators, the structural equation model of the research is in a very good position in terms of fitness.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the research findings, the main hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between job enrichment and attitude towards organizational change was confirmed.

Among the sub-hypotheses of the research, the sub-hypothesis 1 based on the significant relationship between skill variety and attitudes towards organizational change, was confirmed.

Among sub-hypotheses of the research hypothesis 5 based on the significant relationship between job feedback and attitudes towards organizational change, was confirmed.

Suggestions:

As mentioned in the introduction of the research, one of the influential factors in the change equation of De woot (1996) is the factor of clear and common view towards change, since this equation is the result of multiplication by five factors minus the resistance, it can be concluded that the absence of any of these factors will reduce the product of the equation to zero and only the resistance to change will remain. Considering the confirmation of the main hypothesis of this study based on a significant relationship between job enrichment and attitude towards organizational change, it seems that in organizational change management, to achieve a common vision to create change, there is a need to unify enrichment level in all employees, especially in dimensions

1Root Mean Squarererror of Approximation

2Normed Fit Index

3Comparative Fit Index

4Goodness of Fit Index

5Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index

of variety and work feedback. It should be noted that according to the results of research on job enrichment, which states that increasing job enrichment reduces absenteeism, service leave and increases employees' satisfaction [12]. Therefore, it is necessary to pay sufficient attention to the issue of unification in order to maintain a balanced level of job enrichment.

Considering that the significant hypotheses of the relationship between job variety and job feedback have been confirmed, it is suggested that:

To create variety and reduce monotony and fatigue from work, employees should be allowed to use their mental capacity and should be given the opportunity to use their skills, experience, enthusiasm, talent and creativity. Job rotation can be an important instrument in this regard.

In order to increase job feedback, jobs must be designed in such a way that employees have a full understanding of how they are doing their job and be able to be informed of the results of their performance while doing the work.

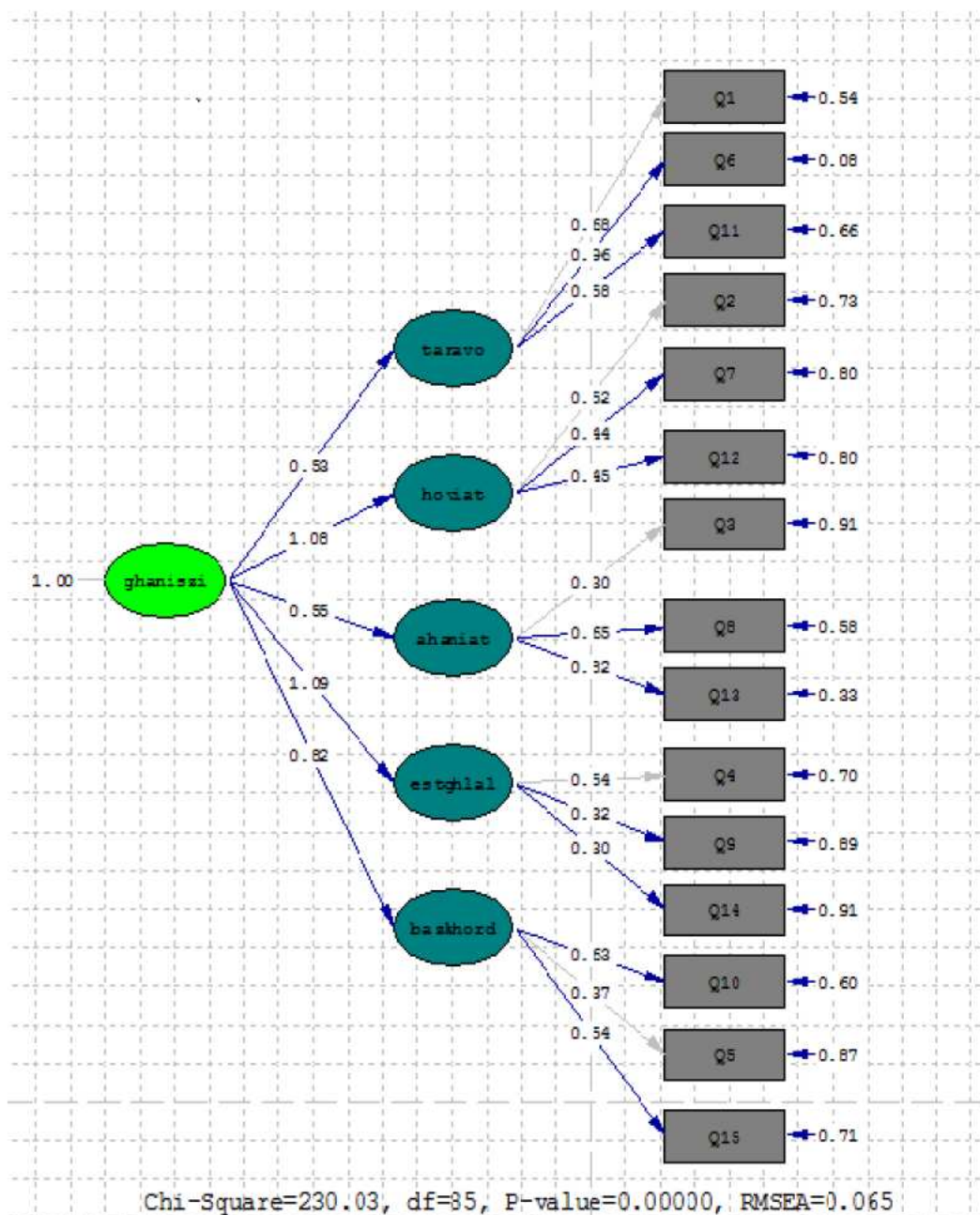


Figure 2: Second order confirmatory factor analysis model for the variable of job enrichment (standard coefficients)

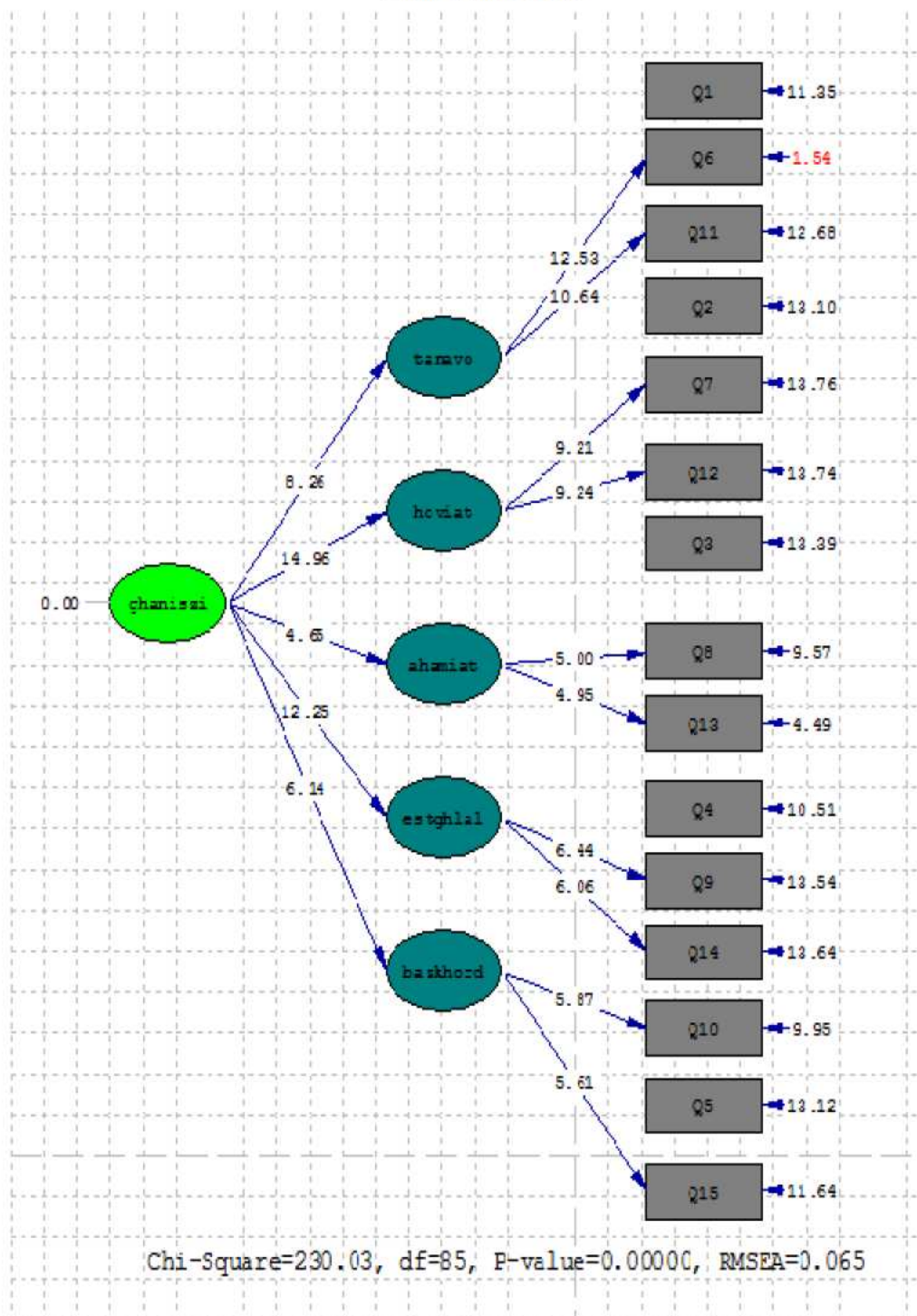


Figure 3: The second-order confirmatory factor analysis model for the variable of job enrichment (significant coefficients)

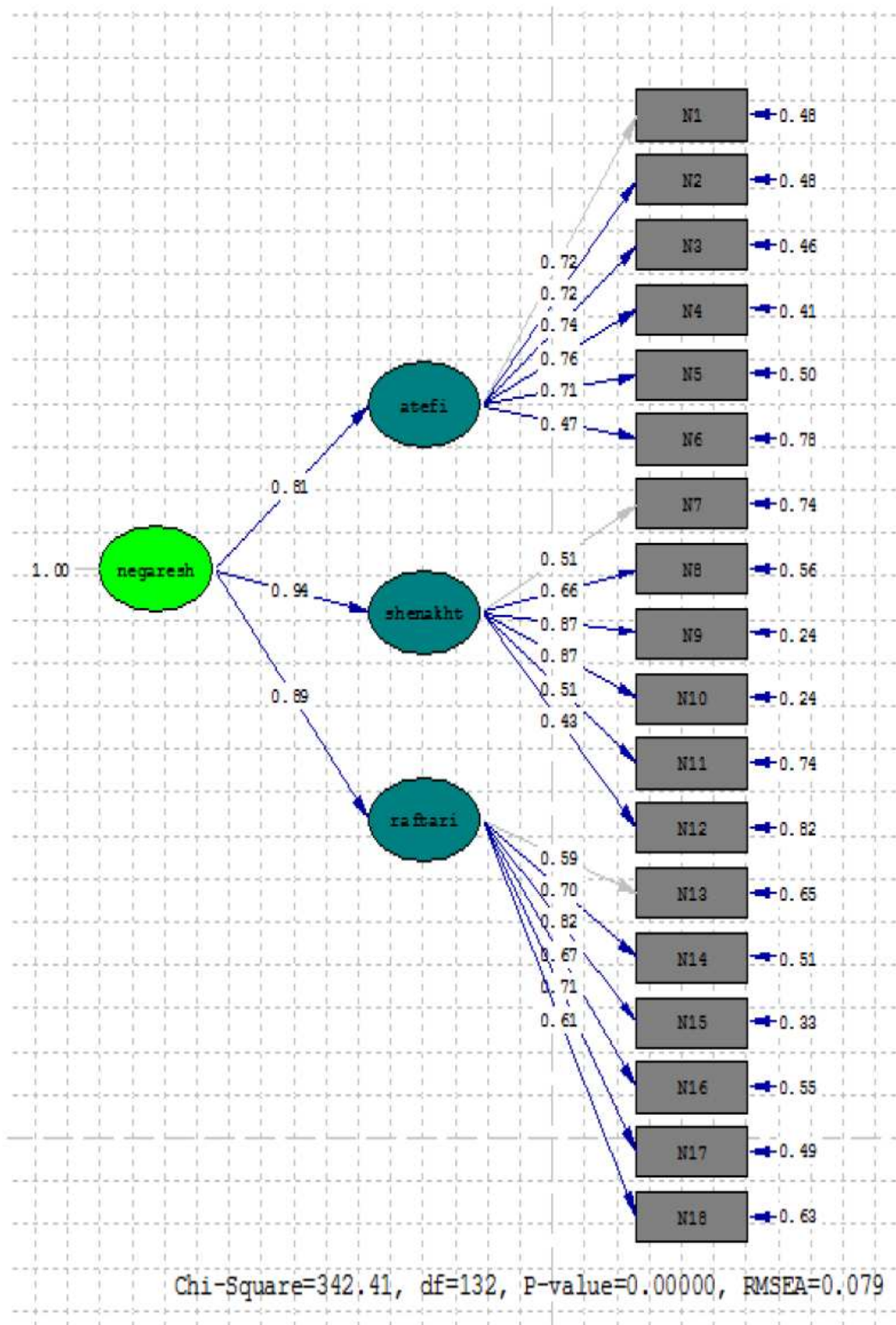


Figure 4: The second order confirmatory factor analysis model for the variable of attitude towards organizational change (standard coefficients)

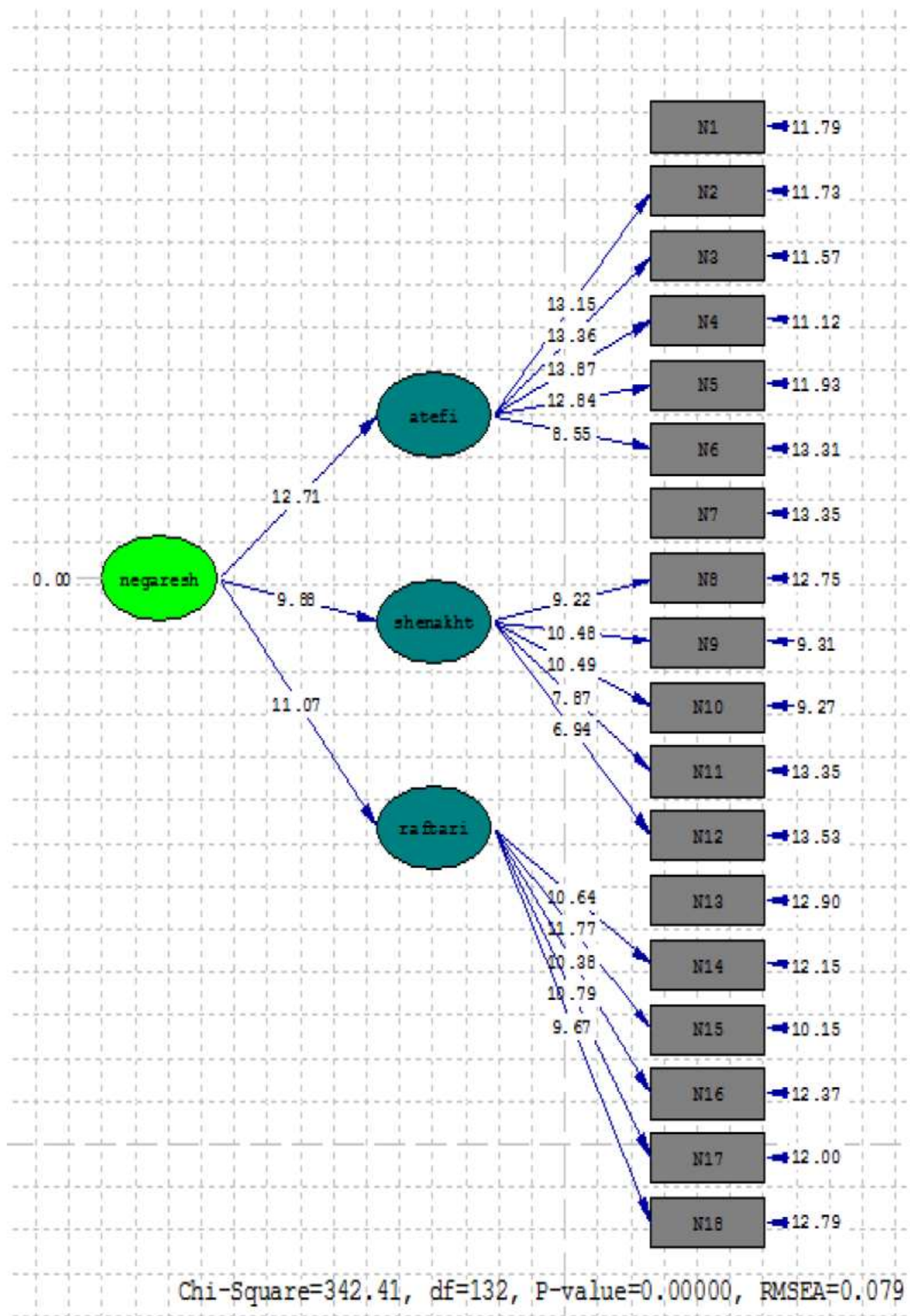


Figure 5: The second-order confirmatory factor analysis model for the variable of attitude towards organizational change (significant coefficients)

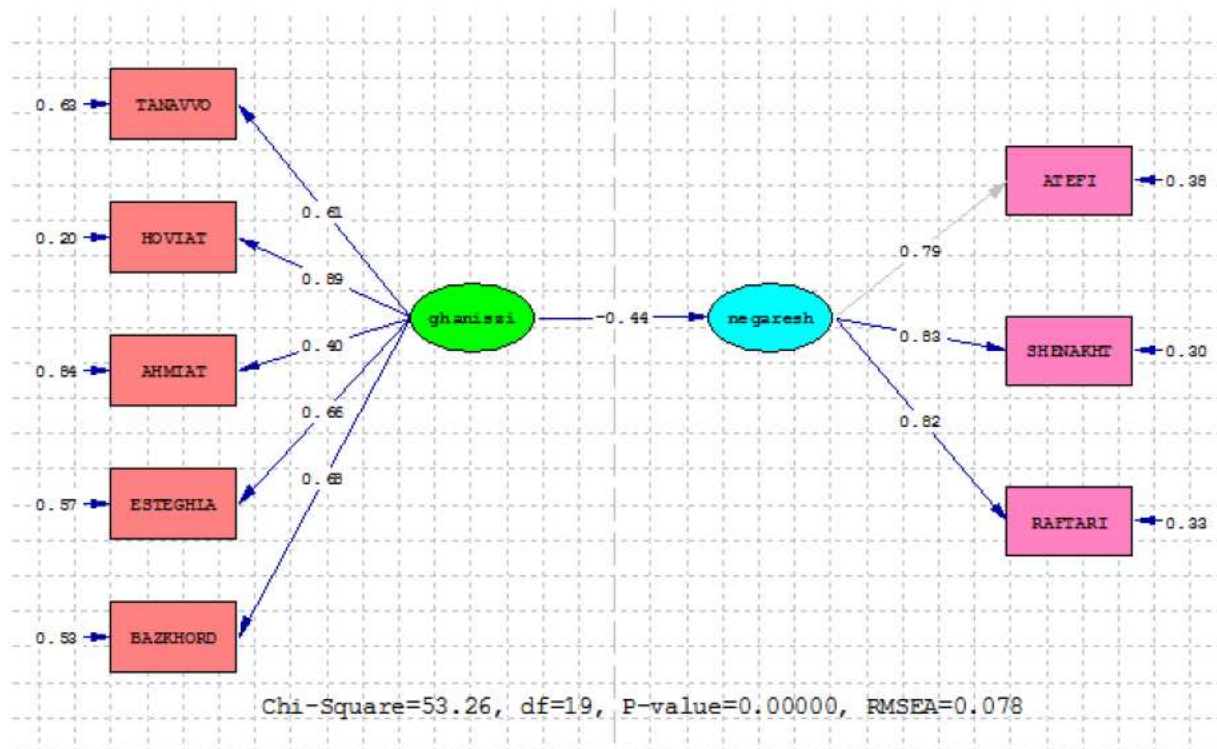


Figure 6: Structural Equation Model (Standard coefficients)

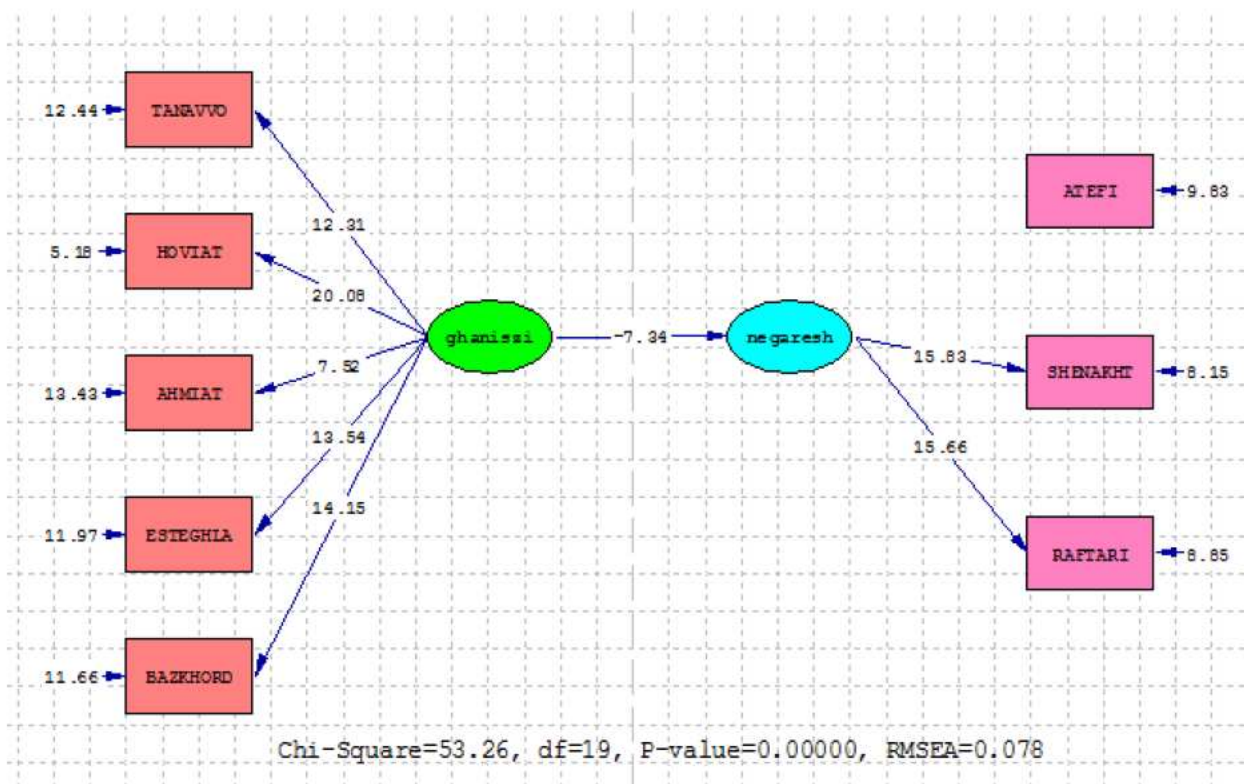


Figure 7: Structural Equation Model (Significant coefficients)

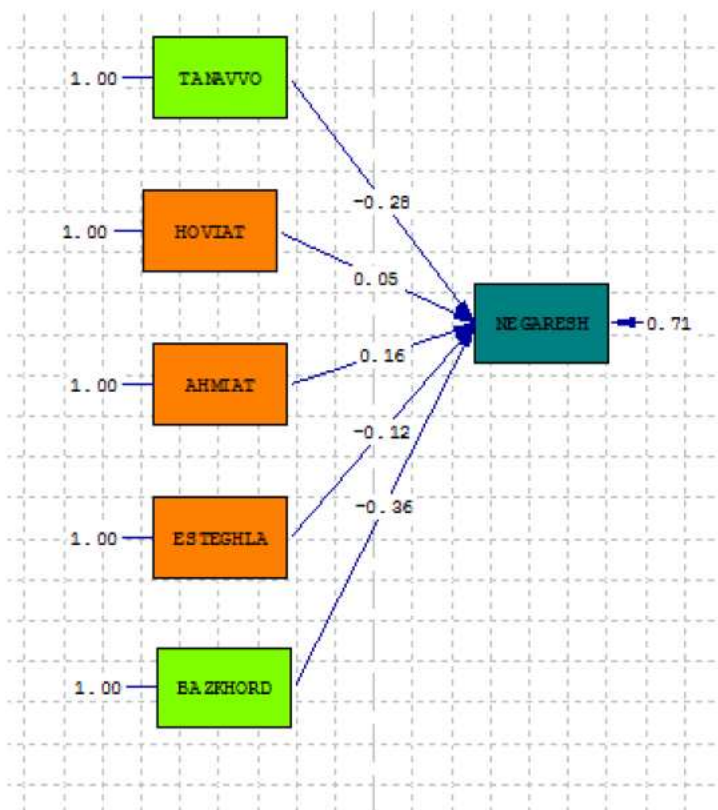


Figure 8: Path analysis model (standard coefficients)

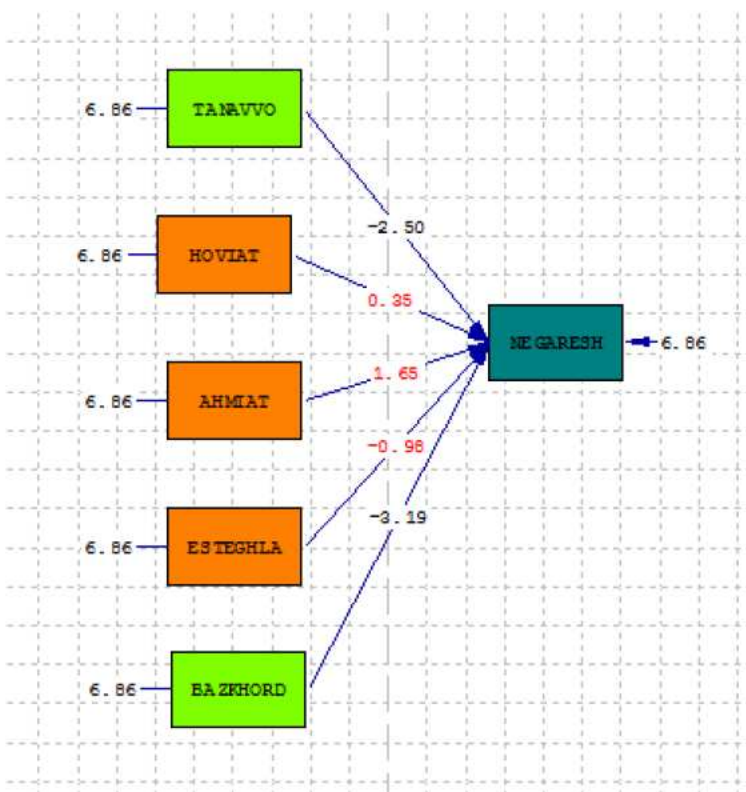


Figure 9: Path analysis model (significant coefficients).

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