



RESEARCH ARTICLE

TEACHING HOSPITALS AND CORRELATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

Aims and objectives: The aim of this study was to assess the correlation between organizational climate and organizational commitment in the teaching hospitals in Iran.

Background: Existence of manpower committed to an organization in addition to reducing staff's absenteeism, delays and relocations causes a significant improvement in the performance of the organization and employees' spirit, and results in better manifestation of organizational goals and achievement of personal objectives.

Design: cross-sectional study. **Methods:** In this cross-sectional study, we included 317 managers and employees who worked at teaching hospitals affiliated to Tehran University of Medical Sciences. All the participants were asked a series of questions about demographic data, organizational climate, and organizational commitment. The data was analyzed using SPSS software version 17.00 for Windows.

Results: The average scores of organizational commitment and organizational climate were 79.2 and 108.8, respectively. Organizational climate had a significant positive effect on the managers' and employees' organizational commitment ($p < 0.001$, $R = 0.463^{**}$). Among demographic variables, sex, age, years of experience, job level, and job categories were significantly related to organizational commitment.

Conclusion: Improvement of the organizational climate boosts the organizational commitment of the staff and managers, and can constantly maintain organizations' capabilities and competing advantages.

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INTRODUCTION

Manpower can move forward in line of organizational objectives if directed properly or move opposite to the organizational goals if left undirected. Thus, understanding the manpower behaviours is very important in the management (Abaszadegan 1992). It is obvious that manpower cognition and retention don't mean only keeping employees in organization, but it refer to reciprocal association and solidarity between employees and organization (Mirsepasi 1996). Accordingly, managers are required to take care of the employees' needs in the workplace to enhance their morale and

job satisfaction and to create a suitable organizational climate for them (Desler 1988). The employees' commitment to the organization is an invaluable asset. In recent years, organizational commitment has been regarded as a substantial component of organizational studies and has received utmost attention due to its established relationship with the quality of organizational life (Turan 1998). In addition, research indicates that the employees' commitment is a strong, influential factor in organization success (Culverson 2002). Organizational commitment is an attitude towards the employees' loyalty to the organization and is considered a continuous process that results in the organization's welfare and success through involving employees in the organizational decisions and makes them feel appreciated (Moghimi 2000). The employees' performance in a particular organization is related to their personality and organizational roles, as well as the organization's conditions

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known as organizational climate (Moghimi 2000). Organizational climate is referred to as the 'employees' understanding of an organization and interpretation of the organizational environment characteristics which differentiates one organization from another (Streesse 2009). As personality refers to a person's individual traits, climate is likewise concerned with organization's sustaining features, and can affect the employees' and organizational behaviour, including their organizational commitment (Asgarian 1998). The main index for the superiority of an organization over other organizations is its efficient manpower. The existence of committed manpower in an organization boosts the organization's prestige in the community and paves the way for its growth and development. Professional, loyal and highly motivated employees and those who are consistent with the organizational objectives and values and are committed to keep their organizational membership are fundamental needs of an organization (Robbins 1994). Scientific studies conducted in the university affiliated workplaces have reported two broad attitudes about work; occupational engagement and organizational commitment. The two attitudes provide appropriate indices for the members' motivation (Moday *et al.* 1982).

Background

According to Hersi and Belanchar (1993), organizational success depends totally on the efficient employment of human resources based on behavioral sciences; it is a big challenge which supervisors, managers, and authorities involved in work and organization affairs face increasingly. In addition, work conditions can undoubtedly influence the efficacy and speed of the efforts. When one is busy doing a task, immediate surroundings affect the quality of performing the task as much as the person's actual capabilities do (Mirhashemi 2006). The impact of organizational commitment can be either negative, e.g. absenteeism (Mirhashemi 2006), leaving the job and delay (Moday *et al.* 1982), or positive, e.g. job performance and job promotion (Riaz Khan 2010), and emotional intelligence (Gahan 2012). Organizational commitment is correlated with a number of factors including motivation, partnership organizational equity (Mirhashemi 2006), and organizational change (Culverson 2002). On the other hand, organizational climate is related to some other factors, especially employees' performance and morale, efficiency and effectiveness (Zare 2006), leadership style and delegation (Fataj 1999), job satisfaction (Keuter *et al.* 2000) and organizational learning (Chen *et al.* 2012). Kudo *et al.* (2009) found that the rate of nursing mistakes was significantly correlated with a favorable organizational climate, nursing work conditions, and communication with physicians. According to Shwu-Ru & Ching-Yu (2010), dissatisfaction with the organizational climate among Taiwanese hospital nurses has caused them to quit their job. The above-mentioned issues further prove the importance of the organizational commitment and climate since managing a hospital subsumes the involvement of medical staff and nurses who make crucial decisions on operational policies in many situations and therefore, their high commitment to the organization may affect the decisions. Inappropriate organizational climate can waste a great deal of the organization's capital and the employees' efforts to achieve

organizational efficiency (Saatchi 2000). Taking the above issues into account, the present study was conducted to investigate the correlation between organizational climate and organizational commitment of employees and managers in the teaching hospitals affiliated to Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This descriptive cross-sectional study was performed from February to June 2013. The research participants consisted of all managers and staff working at four selected teaching hospitals affiliated to Tehran University of Medical Sciences. Three questionnaires including the questionnaire of Halpin and Craft's description of organizational climate, Meyer and Allen's questionnaire of organizational commitment, and a demographic questionnaire (gender, marital status, age, education, job categories, and years of experience, type of employment, shift work, income, and job level) were filled for participants. All the questionnaires were validated by experts, and their reliability was calculated in a randomly selected sample of 20 participants using Cronbach's alpha. The study protocol was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Iran University of Medical Sciences with code number of 93/D/105/3113. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and informed consent was obtained before enrollment. Considering the organizational commitment questionnaire, the reliability coefficients for affective, normative, and continuous commitment were 0.694, 0.832, and 0.754, respectively. Regarding the organizational climate indices, the reliability coefficients for spirit, hindrance, engagement, intimacy, consideration, aloofness, and production emphasis were 0.795, 0.876, 0.851, 0.827, 0.764, 0.837, and 0.877, respectively. The total reliability coefficient was 0.828, as well. Five-point Likert scales were used in the questionnaire of organizational commitment and climate. This study examined eight dimensions of organizational climate including sprit, hindrance, intimacy, engagement, consideration, aloofness, trust, and production emphasis and three dimensions of organizational commitment including affective, continuous and normative. A sample size of 317 participants was calculated based on a sampling formula for finite population. To calculate the standard deviation, 20 questionnaires were filled in by employees at a selected hospital.

Statistical Analysis

The data analysis was performed by SPSS software version 17.00 for Windows using Pearson correlation coefficient, t-test, chi-square, univariate and multivariate regressions, and ANOVA tests.

RESULTS

Totally, 282 questionnaires were returned by managers and employees (response rate 89%). The mean age of the participants was 38.2 years (SD=5.7). Moreover, 43.97% of the participants were male and 82.9% were married. The mean years of experience was 15.6 years (SD=5.79) and 71.6% had bachelor's degrees while 11.3%, 8.1%, 4.97%, and 1.4% of the participants had diploma, associate's, master's, and doctorate

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and organizational climate components and organizational commitment dimensions ranking

Organizational climate components	Rank	Maximum	Minimum	Range	Average	Standard deviation
Group intimacy	1	20	4	16	16.26	6.45
Hindrance	3	20	7	13	15.29	8.82
Engagement	2	20	6	14	15.46	8.72
Intimacy	4	20	1	19	14.11	9.12
Consideration	5	20	4	16	12.47	11.44
Aloofness	6	19	6	13	12.03	7.06
Thrust	8	19	4	15	11.32	12.36
Production emphasis	7	20	2	18	11.91	13.08
Organizational climate		136	81	55	108.85	11.29
Commitment dimensions	Rank	Maximum	Minimum	Range	Average	Standard deviation
Affective	1	38	8	30	27.48	40.11
Continuous	2	35	14	21	26.23	13.03
Normative	3	35	13	22	25.51	21.48
Organizational commitment		101	45	56	79.2	11.79

Table 2. Correlation rate between organizational commitment dimensions and organizational climate as well as between organizational climate dimensions and organizational commitment

Organizational commitment	Evidences
Affective commitment	0.000=P, **, 0.408=R
Continuous commitment	0.030=P, *, 0.205=R
Normative commitment	0.000=P, **, 0.439=R
Organizational commitment	0.000=P, **, 0.455=R
Organizational climate dimensions	Evidences
Group intimacy	0.000=P, *, 0.425=R
Hindrance	0.016=P, **, 0.227=-R
Engagement	0.000=P, **, 0.463=R
Intimacy	0.000=P, **, 0.407=R
Consideration	0.002=P, **, 0.287=R
Aloofness	0.519=P, , 0.062=R
Thrust	0.002=P, **, 0.291=R
Production emphasis	0.000=P, **, 0.366=-R

Table 3. Correlation between organizational commitment and job-related and individual variables

	Organizational commitment
Gender	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.018, *, R=0.223 t-test $\alpha=0.018$, t=-2.39
Marital status	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.92, R=0.009 t-test $\alpha=0.92$, t=-0.099
Age	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.003, **, R=0.279
Education	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.272, R=0.105 Regressions $\alpha=0.079$, F=2.155
Job class	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient 0.002 P=0.002**, R=0.293 Regressions $\alpha=0.017$, F=3.557
Years of experience	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.018*, R=0.223
Type of recruitment	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.168, R=0.131 Regressions $\alpha=0.378$, F=0.982
Night shift	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.290, R=0.101 t test $\alpha=0.290$, t=-1.063
Salary	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient P=0.064, R=0.175 Regressions $\alpha=0.117$, F=1.895
Job position	tests of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient 0.042 P=0.042*, R=0.193 Regressions $\alpha=0.044$, F=3.206

Table 4. Reciprocal effects and correlations between components of organizational climate

	Production emphasis	Thrust	Aloofness	Consideration	Intimacy	Engagemen	Hindrance
Group intimacy	R=-0.134 P=0.1	R=0.138 P=0.146	R=-0.063 P=0.511	R=0.145 P=0.126	R=0.208* P=0.028	R=0.382** P<0.001	R=0.154 P=0.105
Hindrance	R=-0.055 P=0.565	R=-0.010 P=0.917	R=-0.096 P=0.314	R=-0.089 P=0.350	R=-0.029 P=0.765	R=-0.216* P=0.022	
Engagement	R=-0.251** P=0.007	R=0.224** P=0.017	R=-0.070 P=0.464	R=0.399** P<0.001	R=0.371 P<0.001		
Intimacy	R=-0.276** P=0.003	R=0.256** P=0.006	R=-0.071 P=0.456	R=0.401 P<0.001			
Consideration	R=-0.378** P<0.001	R=0.678** P<0.001	R=-0.158 P=0.097				
Aloofness	R=0.284** P=0.002	R=-0.191* P=0.044					
Thrust	R=-0.461** P<0.001						

Significant relationship Insignificant relationship

degrees, respectively. More than 70 % worked in the health sector, and 10.3%, 14.2% and 14.5% were involved in management, financing and administration services, respectively. More than 67% had permanent employment, 17% worked on a contract basis and 13% were temporarily employed. About 44.3% of the participants had shift work. Around 57% earned 500-800 thousand Tomans monthly, and the income of 38% ranged between 800 and 1000 thousand Tomans (around 230-300 dollars). Senior managers, middle managers, and employees comprised 6.7%, 29.4%, and 63.8% of the samples, respectively. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics and ranking of organizational climate and organizational commitment indices. The mean scores of organizational commitment and organizational climate were 79.2 and 108.8, respectively. Table 2 shows that organizational climate had a significant positive effect on managers and employees' organizational commitment. All the components of organizational climate (esprit, hindrance, engagement, intimacy, consideration, and production emphasis), except for aloofness, had significant relationships with organizational commitment. All the relationships were direct except for hindrance and production emphasis. All three aspects of organizational commitment (affective, continuous and normative) were correlated with organizational climate, as well. As shown in Table 3, there was a significant relationship between organizational commitment and individual traits. Organizational commitment was more in men than in women (82.07 vs. 76.96), and increased with age and years of experience. Considering job categories, managers enjoy the highest organizational commitment (86.2); commitment of the financial, administrative, and medical staff was 82.7, 81.4, and 76.72, respectively. Taking job level into account, organizational commitment among managers was 89.05 for senior managers and 79.93 for middle managers, while employees, holding the lowest job level, had the least commitment (77.86). Table 4 shows correlations between components of organizational climate at the evaluated hospitals.

DISCUSSION

In this study, both organizational commitment and climate were in moderate conditions and required improvement¹. Table 1 shows organizational climate reported by employees and managers of the hospitals, according to which the first four components related to the employees' personality traits showed an open organizational climate, while the second four components relevant to the managers' relationships with employees indicated a closed organizational climate. The results showed a relatively favorable status of the components related to employees' personality traits, but regarding components related to managers' behavior there seem required to implement some reforms. Övgü & Çakmak-Otluoğlu (2012) concluded that supports provided by organizations' managers resulted in affective commitment to the organization which, in turn, improved performance in the organization. In addition, results of Akroyd, Legg and Jackowski study (2009) indicated that organizational support and supervisors' conduct had a significant positive relationship with affective and continuous commitment. Some possible reasons can be identified and taken into consideration for achieving such results. The managers' low trust and performance may be caused by their lack of motivation to put themselves into trouble, to help employees, to work hard, and to make themselves role models for employees. Managers can motivate employees only when they are aware of the effects of the employees' attitudes, e.g. job satisfaction, organizational commitment, etc., on the organization performance, and are themselves fully motivated. Another reason can be the education of hospital managers. Proper management provided by a well-trained and experienced manager can enhance efficiency and productivity of the hospital. Since most hospital managers graduate in academic disciplines rather than management, managers with related education are preferred. Training courses can help to overcome the problem, as well. Managers should be interested in changing the organizational climate and in increasing

Maximum score of organizational commitment is 120 and maximum score of organizational climate is 160.¹

employees' organizational commitment. They should feel the need to make changes, change their paradigms and views, and have motivation to do so. Employees stay in an organization not because they feel they have to stay in the organization to fulfill their duties but for the reason that they have a sense of belonging and engagement, and enjoy keeping their membership in the organization. Training can enhance the employees' commitment to the organization via improving their knowledge and providing them with further abilities for solving the workplace problems. In addition, if managers consider the employees' competence and eligibility in assigning tasks to them, and recognize and make use of their aptitude, it will raise their willingness to learn, progress, and participate in career training courses (Table 1). Achieving such results is also due to the managers' failure to seek and benefit from ideas and partnership of the involved employees which, in turn, will reduce the efficiency of decisions and measures taken as well as organizational commitment. Attempts to improve the organizational climate can therefore be regarded as a worthwhile strategy to ameliorate organizational commitment. By creating a positive atmosphere and an environment favorable for employees, managers can help to increase their sense of duty to stay in the organization, make efforts to achieve organizational goals (i.e. normative commitment), have sentimental engagement, and enjoy staying in the organization (i.e. affective commitment). Employing efficient managers with a single job can be useful. Multiple job holders have different obligations and have to share their time and power among their jobs. Attention to positive or negative performance of the managers and management stability is effective in this regard.

Organizational climate embraces various dimensions. Some of these dimensions have been investigated in other studies, but what is common among them is that all the researches have confirmed a significant correlation between organizational climate and organizational commitment. Turan (1998), Mirhashemi (2006), Chen and Yu-Wei (2012) and Decruz (1997) have performed similar studies at schools, universities, and factories. These studies results showed a direct relationship between workplace variables and the organizational climate as well as a significant correlation between the organizational climate and organizational commitment. In their study carried out at three big Australian auto factories, McMurray, Pace and Scott (2004), a significant correlation was found between the organizational commitment and organizational climate. Chiang (2002) reported that improvement of organizational climate would then progress the employees' organizational commitment. Tsai and Huang (2008) confirmed a relationship between the organizational ethical climate and three dimensions of organizational commitment in Taiwanese nurses. The studies by Chiu-Mei (2002), Stewart *et al.* (2006), Loscoco (1989) and Tai (2008) showed similar results. Our study showed that any decrease or increase in the average of one dimension can impact the average of one or several other dimensions. Therefore, managers should identify undesirable dimensions and their causes, and choose more effective actions and short-term solutions to amend and improve the organizational climate with attention to the reciprocal effects of organizational climate dimensions, organization status, and staff needs. Unlike most of the studies conducted in factories,

schools, and firms, this study was done in the field of health care, which is different from other environments because of its specific clients. Therefore, obtaining disparate results was not unexpected. Unlike Stewart (2006) who found that organizational commitment was more in women, the results of the present study showed more commitment in men. No significant difference was found between single and married people; however, Chen (2006) reported more commitment in elderly people because of having higher level positions and less job opportunities in other organizations; i.e. the more experienced employees are more committed to the organization. Stewart (2006) reported similar results, too. He found the highest organizational commitment in managers and the lowest in the medical staff. There is no significant difference in organizational commitment between those with different work shifts, those with different payment rate and those with different educational level. McCormick obtained similar results (McCormick & Catherine, 2000). Based on the results of the present study, improvement of the organizational climate augments organizational commitment of both managers and employees, and helps to maintain the organization's capabilities and competing advantages, as well. For generalizing the results of this study, some factors including time and place restrictions, transfer of some hospital wards to a newly-established hospital, and shortage of study resources should be taken into consideration

Conclusion

Improvement of the organizational climate enhances the organizational commitment of the staff and managers and results in maintaining the organizations' capabilities and competing advantages.

Relevance to clinical practice

According to the findings of this study, improving the organizational climate by different method increases the organizational commitment in the staff and managers and maintains organizations' capabilities and competing advantages.

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