

Is an employee's commitment to an organisation related to staff productivity?

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Abstract

Background/Aims The effects of organisational commitment on the overall performance of employees is significant and unique. This study aimed to determine the relationship between organisational commitment and staff productivity.

Method The study population comprised of the staff in a health centre in the city of Khorramabad. A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed among the health centre staff and 102 completed questionnaires were collected. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to analyse the collected data using descriptive statistics.

Results The results showed that 66.7% of the participants had an intermediate level of commitment to the organisation, while 33.3% of the participants had a good level of commitment. Furthermore, 2.9% of the participants had low levels of productivity, 91.2% of the participants had an intermediate level of productivity, and 5.9% of participants reported good productivity levels. The Pearson test showed a significant positive relationship between commitment to the organisation and productivity ($r=0.365$; $p=0.01$).

Conclusion In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between commitment to the organisation and productivity. There is a potential to increase commitment further.

Key words: ■ Health centre ■ Organisational commitment ■ Productivity ■ Staff

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INTRODUCTION

The healthcare workforce is the most important factor behind efficiency and effectiveness in healthcare institutions (Bahrami et al, 2016). In particular, employees in healthcare institutions play a pivotal role in ensuring the quality of health services. To achieve their targets, organisations require an efficient and committed workforce. A workforce that is committed to the organisation reduces absences, delays and displacements and increases mental wellbeing.

The importance of organisational commitment, studied in public, private and nonprofit organisations, is known all over the world. Employee commitment affects the performance of an organisation and, hence, a committed workforce relates to improved performance (Tiwari and Singh, 2014).

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Commitment to an organisation is one factor that affects employees' behaviour (Bienstock et al, 2003). The attitude, or an individual desire, to stay in the same job in an organisation is often significant. The sense of identity that people find in the organisation, a sense of belonging to the organisation, and an employee's willingness to a company are also important (Hasani et al, 2013).

However, being committed to an organisation is not the same as motivation and attitude, yet it influences behaviour through them. Commitment as a concept can take many forms (Hendel and Kagan, 2014). Wiener (1982) defined it as a normative motivational process, which is clearly distinctive from the instrumental approaches to the explanation of behaviour work. There are many scientific theories about organisational commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990: 3) suggest:

‘Commitment could take three different forms.’

Emotional commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment, identity, and involvement in an organisation. In emotional commitment, the organisation is important for the individual, who knows themselves as a component of the organisation. Continual commitment reflects recognition of the costs associated with leaving the organisation. In this type of commitment, the employee does not find it easy to leave the organisation, given the anticipated costs and the associated problems. Normative commitment refers to the feeling of obligation to stay on with the organisation among the staff; it is related to their work in the organisation (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

Several studies revealed that commitment usually leads to positive outcomes (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Balay, 2007; Aydin and Akdag, 2016). For decades, it was thought that the lack of commitment has a linear relationship with staff turnover and had a negative impact on organisational performance (Allen and Meyer, 1990). An understanding of factors and personal characteristics is valuable because of the effects commitment has on an organisation (Einolander, 2015). Labour productivity is one of the most important resources of any organisation and reflects the success of organisations. Identifying the factors that affect the productivity of the workforce can contribute to solving organisational problems and may lead to increased organisational productivity (Gashmard et al, 2013). However, measuring the productivity of healthcare services is not easy because of the nature of the service and lack of tangible goals (Preker et al, 2000).

Today, reducing labour productivity is evident in some of the health organisations (Seyed and Farahi, 2012). By identifying the factors that affect organisations, staff productivity can be improved. Along this line, Hersey and Goldsmith represented the ACHIEVE model that examines seven factors—ability, clarity, help, incentive, evaluation, validity, environment—and can identify the factors affecting the productivity that will help managers in solving problems related to productivity (Hersey and Goldsmith, 1980). The public sector provides primary health services. The emphasis of the government on primary healthcare over the last two decades has made the public sector the main provider of primary healthcare services (Nasseri et al, 1991).

Health centres in Iran are the main providers of necessary and primary healthcare services, free of charge, for the entire Iranian population who live in rural and urban regions (World Health Organization, 2006). A district health centre is a managerial planning and supervising entity that supports the preventive and ambulatory healthcare systems in the district (Pakshir, 2003). Khoram Abad The health centre in Khorramabad supports both urban and rural health areas.

In this study, staff are those working in environmental, occupational, school, family, nutrition and health education units of the district health centre and supervise health workers in rural and urban health centres. This study was conducted to

investigate the relationship between an employee's commitment to an organisation and productivity of the health centre staff.

METHODS

A search across different databases (such as PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Embase) revealed that, so far, the relationship between organisational commitment and staff productivity has not been investigated in other countries—a gap in the literature that this study has attempted to fill.

This study is an analytic-descriptive study conducted in a cross-sectional manner. In other words, this is a descriptive study as it investigates the distribution of the variables, frequency of the outcomes and it is analytical as it assesses the effective factors on the main study questions (Saeedi and Akbari, 2018).

The study population comprised of the staff who worked at Khorramabad health centre in 2016. The questionnaire was distributed to all of the staff in the district health centre. The sampling was carried out in a census manner.

The data collection tool was a paper-based questionnaire with three parts. The first section pertained to demographic information (eg age, sex, education, work experience and employment status). The second part was Allen and Meyer's organisational commitment questionnaire, which contained 3 variables and 24 questions (each one had 8 questions). The third section of the questionnaire related to productivity, based on the model by Hersey and Goldsmith (1980), and deals with 7 variables and 26 questions. To validate the questionnaires the advice of the health services management professors was sought. To test the reliability of the questionnaire, a sample of 20 staff from the total population (110) were chosen to complete a pilot questionnaire.

Questionnaires were completed by the study participants and returned to members of the research team. Questionnaires were anonymised.

The assessment questions were based on the Likert scale (1 meant very low, 2 meant a low score, 3 was equal to an average score, 4 meant a high score and 5 was a very high score) and for analysis, the scores were converted to percentages. A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed among the health centre staff and 102 completed questionnaires were collected. This meant a response rate of 92.7%.

For data analysis and descriptive statistics, such as mean, absolute and relative frequency or analysis, statistics including the Pearson correlation coefficient and chi-square; the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software was also used. After collecting the completed questionnaires, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the organisational commitment questionnaire was 0.9 and, for the productivity questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.87.

RESULTS

The average age of a member of staff was 38.1 years of age and the median age was 38 years of age. The minimum age of participants in this study was 24 years of age and the maximum age was 58 years of age. In total, 20.6% of the participants were single and 79.4% were married. In this study, 36.3% of participants were men and 63.7% were women. Regarding to work experience, 8.8% of participants had less than 5 years, 29.4% had between 5–10 years, 29.4% had between 10 and 15 years, 21.6% had between 16 and 20 years, and 10.8% had over 21 years of experience. Regarding education, 33.4% had an associate in sciences, 56.6% of the participants had a Bachelor's degree and 9.8%

Table 1. Distribution of participants' demographic characteristics

Demographic variables		n	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	21–30	11	10.8
	31–40	58	56.8
	41–50	28	27.5
	51–60	5	4.9
Sex	Male	37	36.3
	Female	65	63.7
Education	Associate in sciences	34	33.3
	Bachelor of sciences	58	56.9
	Master of sciences	10	9.8
Work experience (year)	<10	39	38.2
	11–20	52	51.0
	21–30	11	10.8
Employment status	Official	64	62.7
	Semi official	9	8.8
	Contractual	29	28.4

had a Master's degree. In terms of employment status, 62.7% were permanent staff, 8.8% were semi-official (those whose contracts are renewed for 5 years), and 24.8% were contractual staff (those whose contracts are renewed for 1 year) (*Table 1*).

There was no significant correlation between work experience and productivity. The findings showed that the level of education has a significant and negative relationship on commitment to an organisation ($P=0.05$; $r=-0.238$) and productivity ($P=0.05$; $r=-0.223$). The employment status has a significant relationship with commitment ($P=0.01$; $r=0.298$) and productivity ($P=0.01$; $r=0.319$) (*Table 2*).

Among the participants in the study, 66.7% had an average level of commitment to the organisation and 33.3% had a good level of commitment to the organisation. The mean level of organisational commitment was 64.7%. The lowest level of commitment to the organisation was 51.6%, and the highest level of commitment was 80%. Furthermore, 2.9% of staff had low productivity levels, and 91.2% had average productivity levels, while 5.9% had high levels of productivity. The mean level of productivity was 53.6% (*Table 3*).

The results of this study showed that there is a direct and significant relationship between commitment to an organisation and staff's productivity levels (*Table 4*).

DISCUSSION

The results of this study showed that there is often a direct and significant relationship between an employee's commitment to an organisation and staff productivity levels at a health centre. In line with this, the results of an earlier study showed that there is a significant relationship between commitment to an organisation and employee performance at a health network (Masoodi et al, 2012).

In this study, the mean level of commitment to an organisation was 64.75%, which shows that the commitment is almost at a moderate level. This supports the study of Mossadegh Raad (2005) and Nabizadeh Gharghozar et al (2013). The

Table 2. Correlation between organisational commitment, productivity and demographic variables

Demographic variables	Organisational commitment		Productivity	
	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sig	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sig
Sex	0.048	0.631	-0.047	0.638
Age	-0.157	0.116	-0.151	0.131
Level of Education	-0.238	0.016	-0.223	0.024
Work experience	-0.222	0.025	-0.091	0.361
Employment status	0.298	0.002	0.319	0.001

Table 3. The mean and standard deviation of the component of organisational commitment

Dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation
Emotional commitment	63.3	2.98
Continuance commitment	60.70	3.57
Normative commitment	70.17	3.29
Organisational commitment	64.75	5
Ability	2.59	58.34
Clarity	3.44	60.15
Help	2.80	34.32
Incentive	4.14	83.32
Evaluation	2.85	33.94
Validity	3.04	33.02
Environment	2.29	45.19
Total productivity	9.32	53.66

Table 4. The correlation of the organisational commitment and its components with productivity

P-value	Pearson correlation coefficient	Dimensions
P = 000	0.365	Organisational commitment
P = 0.547	0.06	Emotional commitment
P = 000	0.495	Continuance commitment
P = 0.459	0.074	Normative commitment

staff productivity in the present article was 53.66%, which is at a moderate level. The results of a study by Sharifi Asl et al (2012) showed that there is a direct and significant relationship between organisational commitment and productivity. Also, Javadi and Jafari (2014), in their study, produced similar results. Organisational commitment can be maintained over a long period of time, directly or indirectly, and will have a significant effect on the performance of the healthcare organisations (Goh and Marimuthu, 2016). This shows that organisational commitment can have a positive effect on productivity improvement and health indices. As such, educating and informing healthcare managers of this can help them plan better

for improved organisational commitment, which enables healthcare managers to prepare for health promotion.

In this study, normative commitment had the highest average among all components of organisational commitment, and this shows that more staff, out of necessity, prefer to remain with the same organisation. In a study by Masoodi et al (2012), average commitment was found to be 95%. This demonstrates that organisational commitment can be increased with appropriate planning. In this study, the average productivity was 53.66%, which means that productivity is at an intermediate level. Among the seven components of productivity, incentive had the highest percentage (83.32%) and validity had the lowest percentage (33.02%).

This study demonstrated that among the components of organisational commitment, there was a direct and meaningful relationship between continued commitment and productivity ($P=0.495$; $\alpha=0.01$).

The employment status had a significant relationship with commitment and productivity, which means that formal staff had the least productivity levels and contractual staff had the highest productivity levels. Perhaps, the anxiety surrounding contracts that are not automatically renewed makes employees more committed and more productive.

CONCLUSION

This study established a relationship between organisational commitment and staff productivity at a health centre. The organisational commitment was found to be at an intermediate level and as such, there is potential to increase this commitment to a higher level.

The organisation is advised to use the necessary tools such as financial, decision sharing and motivation to increase staff commitment, which should result in an increased level of productivity. As organisational commitment is an important factor affecting productivity, it should be taken into consideration. On the other hand, because staff productivity was at a mid-level, the organisation can increase productivity through the growth of ability, identifying tasks, extending support to staff, obtaining regular feedback and monitoring performance and reliability. Future studies should further explore the relationship between organisational commitment and productivity levels.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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KEY POINTS

- The level of education has a significant and negative relationship with organisational commitment and productivity
- The employment status has a significant relationship with organisational commitment and productivity
- There is a direct and significant relationship between organisational commitment and staff productivity
- There was no significant correlation between the work experience and productivity

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