O R I G I N A L   P A P E R

Organizational Commitment of the Nursing Personnel in a Greek National Health System Hospital

Effrosyni Krestainiti, MD, MSc
Nurse, Postgraduate student of the National School of Public Health, Athens, Greece

Panagiotis Prezerakos, MD, MSc, PhD
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Nursing, University of Peloponnese, Sparta, Greece

Corespondence: Krestainiti Effrosyni, 22 Megalou Alexandrou Avenue, 12244, Athens, Greece. E-mail: efkresteniti@yahoo.gr

Abstract
Background: The existence of organizational commitment in nurses' personality is a determining factor that secures the effectiveness and the efficiency in hospitals' function. Taking this for granted, we examined the level of this parameter in a nursing community.
Aims: The study investigates the dimension of organizational commitment of nursing personnel who work in a public hospital in the Athens district in Greece.
Methodology: The questionnaire of the study consisted of two sections and was distributed in three hundred nurses of the public hospital. Eventually, one hundred seventy two were filled in (response rate 57.33%). The statistical analysis was implemented by the statistical program SPSS for Windows (version 19.0).
Results: Nurses appear to have developed their commitment to the organization that they work for, in contrast to their dedication to the profession that seems to be low according to the findings.
Conclusions: The findings of the study are in agreement with relevant studies that have been conducted in the past both in Greece and abroad.

Key Words: organizational commitment, nursing personnel

Introduction

The health sector, in recent years, faces a patchwork of obstacles such as lack of resources and organizational problems. These problems hinder health systems worldwide and widow them less effective. This situation has led healthcare organizations to orient towards the exploitation of all available resources, both human and material, with the aim to improve the quality of health services while containing the cost. The role of nurses in this effort is vital to the sustainability of health systems. Organizational commitment of nurses is a main component that helps hospitals to achieve their goals, vision and mission as well (Knoop, 1995). As far as organizational commitment is concerned, it constitutes a modern concept which expresses someone's relationship with the organization that he works for. In recent years, this concept interests the management of human resources and has been recognized both its significance and necessity for the efficient function of an organization (Nehmeh, 2009; Zyga 2013).

For the description of organizational commitment several definitions have been formulated which all include the notion of employee's emotional and psychological attachment to the organization. The first to mention the issue of psychological

attachment to the principles of an organization was Kelman (1958), whereas twenty one years later the researches that were conducted by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) are the main source of present knowledge available to the scientific community.

According to their definition, organizational commitment consists of three assumptions: a) the acceptance and the faith to the values, the vision, the philosophy, the mission and the goals of the organization, b) the willingness to pay a lot of effort to achieve the organization's goals, and c) the desire to remain to the organization and work for it. It is obvious, that organizational commitment does not seem to be a mere passive belief in the organization's philosophy, but it contains an active relationship with employees who seem to have intention to offer to the organization (Guest, 1991).

The existence of organizational commitment in employees' personality is a prerequisite for the implementation of the strategy of an organization, which is a crucial dimension of the administrative process. Apart from proper planning, setting goals, proper organization and planning and monitoring procedures there must be existence of commitment behalf the employees. Its' absence may lead to a gap between the strategy set and the one that eventually implemented. Thus, the ability of employees to implement the strategy that was set out by the organization is related to the commitment the feel for it (Smith, 2009).

In health sector, the existence of organizational commitment in nurses' personality is an important factor for success. Nurses who are committed to their organization are less likely to resign and leave the organization. For the organization is vital to reduce the resignations because each employee who leaves takes away knowledge and experience gained, forcing the organization to waste both time and money to train another person to replace the resignation.

However, it is not enough for an organization to be able to keep its workforce. Prerequisite for the correct function is the individual himself be possessed by zeal and endeavor to offer.

Regarding the relationship between nurses and the organization has proved that nurses who feel emotionally committed put more effort since they wish to remain, in contrast to those who feel the need or obligation to remain. They provide quality health services to their patients, they act for the organization's benefit, they are rarely absent and they truly care about organization's future (Guest, 1991).

Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that the commitment to the organization has positive effects not only for the organization but also for the employees, while according to previous researches organizational commitment has a positive correlation with job satisfaction (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Williams & Hazer, 1986; Marsh & Mannari, 1997).

Methodology

Sample

The sample of a study is a decisive parameter, and the larger the sample, the more accurate the results and the smaller the random error of the study. The purpose of this study was to achieve an acceptable size for the sample, which would be feasible and would not be distinguished by a high degree of fault sample. The fully and correctly completion of at least one hundred fifty questionnaires was set as a goal. The participants of the public hospital were finally one hundred seventy two nurses and nurses' assistants in total. The sample could be described sufficiently proportional to the total nursing personnel. Totally, three hundred questionnaires were distributed one hundred seventy two of which were returned completed, seventy ones' not completed, while the remaining fifty-eight ones' were never returned to the researchers (response rate: 57.33%).

Measures

This study constitutes a cross-sectional study, which was conducted from 26/04/2012 to 07/06/2012 and involved the nurses and nurses' assistants of a hospital of the public sector. The method which was chosen to conduct the study is the use of a structured self-complemented questionnaire. The questionnaire and the study received approval by the Scientific Council-Ethics Committee of the Hospital after the submission of the application, the research protocol and the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the participants after they were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of data collected, voluntary nature of the study and guaranteed anonymity. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section had to do with the measurement of organizational commitment and for this purpose the short version was chosen as a research tool of the questionnaire Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday et al., 1979). The questionnaire consists of fourteen statements and is the most widely used measurement tool for this dimension. Participants responded by indicating their answers using a five-point scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree.* The second section related to the demographics of the respondents such as gender, age, years of employment, if permanent or part-time staff. In addition, it included data about the employees' Department. The feasibility of this section is extremely important because as it has been proved almost all questions included, affect the organizational commitment of employees. At this point, it should be noted that the researchers received permission by e-mail from the creator of the questionnaire in order to be used for the purpose of the study. To assess the reliability and validity of the tool of the study, a pilot study was conducted. Moreover, the ability of the researchers to detect inconsistencies, non understandable terms, and difficulty to reply was provided. During pilot study of the questionnaire, thirty questionnaires were completed from nurses and nurses' assistants. The indicator Cronbach's alpha was calculated and found greater than 0.65 in all scales of various measurement tools, fact that indicates acceptable internal consistency.

Results

Commenting on the profile of the sample, the 77.3% (n=133) were female whereas the 22.7% (n=39) were male. The median age of the participants was 35.2 years. A 51.2% (n=88) of the participants were single, a 37.8% (n=35) were married and a 11.1% (n=19) were divorced. The 81.4% (n=140) of the respondents were nurses and the 18.6% (n=32) were nurses' assistants, while the average of their years of service was 10.4 years. Moreover, the 83.7% (n=144) were permanent employees whereas the 11.6% (n=20) were not and the 95.3% (n=64) had a full time job in contrast with the 4.7 (n=8) that had a part time job.

Analyzing the answers of the respondents about nurses' and nurses' assistants commitment to the organization that they work for, a 40.7% (n=70) neither agree neither disagree in the question if they feel ''proud'' telling others that they work for the organization and only the 24.4% (n=42) believe that their values coincide with those of the organization. In the question if the organization inspire them to try and do their best the 33.7% (n=58) neither agree neither disagree. Only, the 18.1% (n=31) would do everything, in every sector, in order to keep on working for the organization. A 50.6% (n=87) neither agree neither disagree in the question if they feel ''happy'' to have chosen this organization to work for. On the other hand, a 50% (n=76) intend to make every effort to make this organization a successful one. Table I presents more questions and answers about organizational commitment.

As far as the dedication of the respondents to the profession is concerned, a 58.2% (n=100) feel ''happy'' with the profession that they have chosen and a 74.3% (n=147) claim that their values are in accordance with those of

the organization. In addition, a 77.9% (n=134) feel ''proud'' of being a nurse.

Table II presents more questions and answers about dedication to the profession. The Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated separately for each subscale with respondents' demographic profile and the values of the total cohort were found to pass the normality distribution test.

Discussion

In our study, the median rating of nursing's personnel organizational commitment was calculated 26.2. The specific rating received rates from 9 to 45 and since increase of the total rating of organizational commitment declares low commitment to the organization this rating declares that the nursing personnel who work for this specific

Table I. Nursing's personnel answers about organizational commitment

	Strongly agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Neither agree/Neither disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly disagree N (%)
I am proud telling others that I work for the organization	24 (14.0)	51 (29.7)	70 (40.7)	24 (14.0)	3 (1.7)
This organization inspires me to try and do my best	13 (7.6)	44 (25.6)	58 (33.7)	45 (26.2)	12 (7.0)
I believe that my values coincide with those of the organization	6 (3.5)	36 (20.9)	63 (36.6)	51 (29.7)	16 (9.3)
I tell my friends that this organization is a very good one to work for	7 (4.1)	33 (19.2)	75 (43.6)	44 (25.6)	13 (7.6)
I would do everything, in every sector, in order to keep on working for the organization	7 (4.1)	24 (14.0)	76 (44.2)	55 (32.0)	10 (5.8)
I am really interested in the organization's future	22 (12.8)	71 (41.3)	59 (34.3)	16 (9.3)	4 (2.3)
I feel really happy to have chosen this organization to work for	18 (10.5)	31 (18.0)	87 (50.6)	28 (16.3)	8 (4.7)
In my opinion, this organization is better than the ones I used to work for	14 (8.1)	24 (14.0)	66 (38.4)	52 (30.5)	16 (9.3)
I intend to make every effort to make this organization a successful one	21 (12.2)	65 (37.8)	62 (36.0)	21 (12.2)	3 (1.7)

Table II. Nursing's personnel answers about dedication to the profession

	Strongly agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Neither agree/Neither disagree N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly disagree N (%)
I intend to do my best in order to improve both the image and prestige of my profession	66 (38.4)	77 (44.8)	19 (11.0)	9 (5.2)	1 (0.6)
I am really happy to have chosen this profession	34 (19.8)	66 (38.4)	50 (29.1)	15 (8.7)	7 (4.1)
My profession matches my values	46 (26.7)	101 (58.7)	17 (9.9)	4 (2.3)	4 (2.3)
I am proud telling others that I am a nurse	50 (29.1)	84 (48.8)	26 (15.1)	8 (4.7)	4 (2.3)
My profession makes me to do my best and to be a better person	53 (30.8)	74 (43.0)	36 (20.9)	7 (4.1)	2 (1.2)

public hospital do not demonstrate high organizational commitment.

Regarding the relations arising from organizational commitment and demographic characteristics of the nursing personnel, it seems that only the total years of service associated with the rating of the commitment to the organization.

More specifically, growth in total years of services associated with an increase of the rating of the commitment to the organization. Thus, increase in total years of service associate with reduced commitment to the organization. This result is consistent with earlier studies (Camilleri, 2002; (Chiok Foong Loke, 2001; Steers, 1977; Inverson & Buttigieg 1999) where they abut in same conclusions.

The median rating of the dedication to the profession was calculated 10.2. This rating received rates from 5-25 and since increase of the total rating of the dedication to the profession declares low dedication to the profession the rating declares that the nursing personnel is dedicated to their profession. This data supported by the study conducted by Jenaro (2011) and Colleagues who pointed out that the majority of nurses who participated in the study showed high engagement to the nursing profession.

Finally, concerning the relations arising between the dedication to the profession and demographic characteristics, it seems that there are no statistically significant relations between them.

References

Bateman T.S. & Strasser S. (1984). A longitudinal analysis of the antecedents of Organizational Commitment. Academy of Management Journal, 27(1): 95-112.

Camilleri E. (2002). Some Antecedents of Organizational Commitment: Results from an Information Systems Public Sector Organization. Bank of Valetta Review, 25: 35-38.

Chiok Foong Loke J. (2001). Leadership behaviors: effects on job satisfaction, productivity and organizational commitment. Journal of Nursing Management, 9: 191-204.

Guest E.A. (1991) Human Resource Management. Mcgraw-Hill, London.

Jenaro C. Flores N. Orgaz M.B. & Cruz M. (2011). Vigour and dedication in nursing professionals: towards a better understanding of work engagement. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 67(4): 865-875.

Inverson A. & Buttigieg K. (1999). Affective, Normative and Continuance Commitment: can the ''right kind'' of commitment be managed?. Journal of Management Studies, 36(3): 308-333.

Kelman H.C. (1958). Compliance, identification and internalization: Three processes of attitude change. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2: 51-60.

Knoop R. (1995). Relationships among Job Involvement, Job satisfaction and Organizational Commitment for Nurses. The Journal of Psychology, 29(1): 643-649.

Marsh R.M. & Mannari, H. (1977). Organizational commitment and turnover: A predictive study. Administrative Science Quarterly, 22: 57-75.

Mowday R. Steers R. & Porter, L. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 14: 224-247.

Nehmeh R. (2009). What is Organizational commitment, why should managers want it in their workforce and is there any cost effective way to secure it?. Swiss Management Center, 5: 45-46.

Smith B.D. (2009). Maybe I will, maybe I won't: what the connected perspectives of motivation theory and organizational commitment may contribute to our understanding of strategy implementation. Journal of Strategic Marketing, 17 (6): 473-485.

Steers R.M. (1977). Antecedents and Outcomes of Organizational Commitment. Administrative Science Quarterly, 22(1): 46-56.

Williams L.J. & Hazer J.T. (1986). Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction and Commitment Variables in Turnover Models: A Reanalysis Using Latent Variable Structural Equation Methods. Journal of Applied Psychology, 71: 219-231.

Zyga S. (2013). Organizational commitment and satisfaction from work. Hellenic Journal of Nursing Science, 2(5).