



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Role of Organizational Climate in Organizational Commitment: The Case of Teaching Hospitals

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**Abstract**

**Objective:** The commitment of employees is affected by several factors, including factors related to the organizational climate. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment of nurses and the organizational climate in hospital settings.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted in 2014 at two teaching hospitals in Yazd, Iran. A total of 90 nurses in these hospitals participated. We used stratified random sampling of the nursing population. The required data were gathered using two valid questionnaires: Allen and Meyer's organizational commitment standard questionnaire and Halpin and Croft's Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire. Data analysis was done through SPSS 20 statistical software (IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA). We used descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient for the data analysis.

**Results:** The findings indicated a positive and significant correlation between organizational commitment and organizational climate ( $r = 0.269$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). There is also a significant positive relationship between avoidance of organizational climate and affective commitment ( $r = 0.208$ ,  $p = 0.049$ ) and between focus on production and normative and continuance commitment ( $r = 0.308$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ).

**Conclusion:** Improving the organizational climate could be a valuable strategy for improving organizational commitment.

## 1. Introduction

Organizational commitment has become a major concept in organizational research and in understanding staff behavior at work since the 1970s [1,2]. It reflects

the extent to which staff members identify with the organization and engage with its goals [3].

There are many definitions for organizational commitment. Sheldon [4] defines it as an individual's attitude or orientation to an organization which connects

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the individual's identity to the organization. Canter [5] believes organizational commitment is the tendency of social actors to allocate their authority and loyalty to social systems. The general approach to organizational commitment is an important factor to understand organizational behavior, and a good predictor of an employee's staying on the job [6]. Moreover, organizational commitment is one of the major motivational aspects which form the identity of individuals in the organization and cause them to participate in the organization, integrate with it, or enjoy being its member [5]. Organizational commitment in the workplace has been considered in scientific and professional circles for more than 5 decades [7]. Committed staff can improve growth and excellence in the organization, and a lack of committed staff can reduce the quality of services and products and hinder the organization's performance [7,8].

Organizational commitment focuses on staff commitment to the organization. Organizational commitment is the most fully developed of all the work commitment constructs. Meyer and Allen [1,2] suggested a framework with three different types of organizational commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment refers to staff members' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Staff members with strong affective commitment stay with the organization because they *want to*. Continuance commitment refers to staff members' assessment of whether the costs of leaving the organization are greater than the costs of staying. Staff members who perceive that the costs of leaving are greater remain because they *need to*. Normative commitment refers to staff members' feelings of obligation to the organization.

One of the organizational factors that have a significant impact on the commitment of staff is organizational climate. Research about organizational climate starts with an analysis of the current level of the individuals and focus on what are involved in the conditions of the psychological climate [9]. For this reason, organizational climate is one of the main concepts in organizational behavior [10]. A suitable organizational climate leads to innovation and inspiration in the organization and has a positive role in reaching organizational objectives. Accordingly, managers should always monitor the organizational climate [7].

The organizational climate makes a critical link between the organization's leaders and the organization itself [11]. Organizational climate serves as a measure of individual perceptions or feelings about the organization [12,13]. The organizational climate is reflected in the organization's objective to develop its staff or employees by providing them good working environments and conditions and assisting and supporting them so they can achieve job satisfaction; all of these enhance

commitment among the staff toward the organization [14]. Many studies have shown that organizational climate has positive effects on organizational commitment [11,15]. Specifically, organizational climate variables (e.g., motivation, decision making, communication, leadership, and goal setting) are significant predictors of organizational commitment [16,17]. An association between the organizational climate and organizational commitment helps to clarify the concept of organizational commitment, which has been shown to be a reliable predictor of employee behaviors, such as turnover and absenteeism [18]. As a result, employee commitment to the organization is a crucial issue in today's health system. Many researchers have sought to evaluate the factors that contribute to forms of commitment [19,20,21]. As such, the aim of this study was to assess the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational climate in a hospital environment.

## 2. Materials and methods

This correlation descriptive study was done through a cross-sectional method in two educational hospitals in Yazd, Iran (Shahid Sadoughi Hospital and Afshar Hospital), in 2014. A total of 90 nurses from different units of these hospitals contributed to the study. The sampling technique for personnel selection was stratified random sampling in proportion to the number of personnel.

### 2.1. Measurement tools

In order to evaluate organizational commitment, Allen and Meyer's organizational commitment standard questionnaire, which comprises 24 questions, was used [2]. In this scale, three dimensions of organizational commitment (emotional commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment) are analyzed, where their sum determines the overall score for organizational commitment. Questions 1 to 8 assess affective commitment, Questions 9 to 16 measure continuance commitment, and Questions 17 to 24 evaluate normative commitment. The questions are designed based on a 5-point Likert system ranging from "I completely disagree," scored 1 point, to "I completely agree," scored 5 points.

Considering the standard questionnaire, the face and content validity of this questionnaire were confirmed by soliciting the opinion of three experts, and the reliability of the organizational commitment questionnaire was obtained to be 0.80 (Cronbach  $\alpha$  coefficient = 0.80).

In order to analyze organizational climate, we used the original Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire developed by Halpin and Croft [7]. This questionnaire has 32 questions related to eight dimensions of organizational climate: community spirit (Questions 1 to 4), disturbance (Questions 5 to 8),

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