



## **Studying the relationship between organizational learning and organizational commitment of staffs of well-being organization in Yazd province**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Since disabled persons and their families are those who refer to wellbeing organization, staff of such organization requires special education to provide essential capabilities in them. On the other hand, such educations should increase job satisfaction of staff leading to the increasing commitment. The current research aims to find the relation between organizational learning and organizational commitment of staff in wellbeing organization of Yazd province.

**Methods:** This is an analytical-descriptive research and the statistical population is all staff of wellbeing organization of Yazd province (74 persons). Sampling was done by census in 2015. To gather information, Nifa organizational learning questionnaire and Allen & Mayer's organizational commitment questionnaire were used and each includes 24 items. Data were analyzed using SPSS<sub>18</sub> software, t-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlation and linear regression tests in significance level of P-value < 0.05.

**Results:** Participants were 34 men (46%) and 40 women (54%). 66% of respondents had bachelor and 35.1% had work experience between 11 and 15 years. There was no significant difference between organizational commitment, organizational learning and gender. There was no significant relation between age and other research variables except for normative commitment. There was a linear significant relation and positive and direct correlation between components of organizational commitment including affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment (P-value < 0.01).

**Conclusion:** there was a positive and direct relation between organizational learning and organizational commitment of staff. Organizational commitment and organizational learning were averagely low in the organization. Therefore, managers of wellbeing organization should identify educational requirements of staff and offer opportunities to meet such needs and to promote abilities, skills, loyalty and commitment of staff to the organization.

**Keywords:** Organizational Learning, Organizational Commitment, Wellbeing Organization

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## Introduction

Since beginning of 21st century, a new uproar has been risen in changes of life and organizational structure. In spite of dynamic changes in today world, these are such organizations that will be able to keep their entity and advancement. The importance of this point may cause the increasing ability to adapt with changes via learning either in individual or organizational levels (1). Organizational commitment is another significant point in condition of transformation and organizational learning. Few acceptable results are obtained by taking measures for deep changes regardless of strong commitment. Commitment is a risky effort to keep changes to the extent that such effort will become a part of the structure and common approach of the organization leading to survival of the organization (2).

Organizational learning is defined as measuring and determining what is effective and what is more effective (3). Organizational learning and learning organization are not synonymous. Organizational learning is learning of individual and groups in the organization but learning organization is learning of the organization as a whole system. In other words, learning organization results from organizational learning which is used to describe different types of activities involved in the organization. It is while that learning organization refers to a special type of organization, organizational learning is accounted as an internal process in the organization. In other words, the learning organization results from organizational learning (4). Organizational commitment is a motive force that requires the person staying in the organization and working in direction of organizational goals (5). According to the three-component model of organizational commitment outlined by Meyer and Allen, organizational commitment is made of three components such as continuous commitment, affective commitment and normative commitment.

Kaufman and Sangha (cited by Ulrich) (6) showed in their studies that learning in organizations is not possible without commitment

thus changing into a learning organization. The research of Cho and Kwon (7) on personnel of some Korean businesses showed that preparing for self-directed learning had positive relation with affective commitment. However, normative and continuous commitments have negative association with self-directed learning. In addition, Hatamizadeh et al. (8), investigated local staff of rehabilitation and stated that low skill and knowledge of rehabilitation staff and lack of strong motivation and organizational commitment made some problems.

Allen and Meyer (cited by Hybo) (9) have stated that staffs who feel their requests have been met and are qualified for their job roles, will be committed to their organization and learning culture will be created. This potential matter provides a stable environment to create satisfactory results for staff. On the other hand, the goals created for organizational learning increase organizational commitment of staff.

In the research on the relationship between organizational learning and organizational commitment, Asghar Hazrati Viri et al. (2), showed that there was a significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational commitment. Moreover, results of the researcher show that the education has a negative relationship with organizational commitment of staff. Results suggest that components of organizational learning, three components of partnership leadership, systemic thinking and development of staff qualification predict positively and directly organizational commitment. In this model, variables of joint perspective, organizational culture, labor and team learning and knowledge sharing were not significantly predictive (10).

Specialized, loyal staffs who attach organizational values and goals with strong motivation and commitment to stay in organization are the main requirements of any organization. Wellbeing organization is the most common institution for organizing vulnerable people. Wellbeing is responsible for heavy tasks from several aspects. In one hand, this organization is



responsible for supplying welfare of many disabled people in the society. On the other hand, the organization is responsible for many poor women and children. Concerning an important role of wellbeing organization in the society and increase of efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, the present research aims to study the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational learning of staff in wellbeing organization.

### Materials and Methods

This is an analytical-descriptive research. The statistical population includes staff of wellbeing organization of Yazd province in 2015 (74 persons). The sample size was chosen by census. The research tools are organizational learning and organizational commitment questionnaires with demographic specifications.

A) Allen and Meyer organizational commitment questionnaire (11): The questionnaire includes 24 closed questions with three components of affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment (eight questions for each dimension). Validity coefficients of the questionnaire for affective, normative and continuous commitments are 0.85, 0.79 and 0.83 respectively. The scoring was based on the five-point Likert scale ranging from completely agreed to completely disagreed. Concerning Likert scale, number 3 has been considered as the conceptual mean.

B) Nifa organizational learning questionnaire (12): the questionnaire includes 24 items with personal skills (6 items), subjective models (6 items), joint perspective (4 items), team learning (4 items) and systemic thinking (4 items). To find questionnaire reliability, Cronbach' alpha amount was calculated as 0.95. The questionnaire was scored based on the seven point Likert scale ranging from completely agreed to completely disagreed. To determine the questionnaire validity, content validity was used. The questionnaires were judged by professors and experts in this field including professors of rehabilitation management and treatment-health

service management. The content validity of questionnaires was confirmed as well.

To analyze data, descriptive and analytical statistics were used in the research. First, demographic specifications of respondents were obtained by descriptive statistic. Then, to test hypotheses and to study causal relations between variables, SPSS<sub>18</sub> software, single sample *t*-test (to study organizational learning and organizational commitment of staff of wellbeing organization in Yazd province), Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (to determine normalization or lack of normalization of the society), Pearson correlation test (to determine presence or absence of correlation between organizational learning and organizational commitment), independent *t* test (to study the relationship between gender, dimensions of organizational commitment and research variables), one way variance analysis test (to test the relationship between age and research variables) as well as linear regression (to determine the contribution of independent variable (organizational learning) from dependent variable (organizational commitment) were used.

Further, in the current study all ethical issues were observed based on the Helsinki Declaration.

### Results

74 staffs of wellbeing organizations of Yazd province participated in the study. Results indicate that 45.9% were men and 54.1% were women. The highest level of education was bachelor (66.2%). Furthermore, 43.2% of staffs were between 31 and 40 years old (32 staffs). Most respondents had work experience between 11 and 15 years old (35.1%). 6 respondents (8.1%) had work experience less than 5 years.

According to table 1 and concerning 3 as the average number, mean organizational learning ( $X = 2.38$ ) and mean organizational commitment ( $x = 2.60$ ) were moderate among staffs.

Summary of results of organizational learning (independent variable) and organizational commitment (dependent variable) and its dimensions have been shown in table 2. Results suggest significant relationship between



organizational learning and organizational commitment and its dimensions.

As seen in table 2, there is a significant relation between organizational learning and organizational commitment and its dimensions including affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment. Such relationship was direct and positive. In addition, the highest correlation was found between organizational learning (independent variable) and affective commitment.

As seen in table 3, no significant difference was found between organizational commitment, organizational learning and gender.

According to table 4, all research variables had no significant relationship except for normative commitment. Means of different ages had no significant effect on variables except for normative commitment or no significant difference was found between them.

Concerning normal distribution of the sample (P-value = 0.374), regression test was done and results are shown in table 5.

To study the power of organizational learning in prediction of organizational commitment, bivariate regression was used. Results showed that organizational commitment explored 27.3% of variance of organizational learning (table 5).

**Table 1.** Studying organizational learning and organizational commitment among staffs

Variable	Conceptual mean or middle point of questionnaire range (3)				
	Estimated Mean	T	df	P	Mean Difference
Organizational commitment	2.60	-7.80	73	0.01*	-0.40
Affective commitment	2.23	-11.25	73	0.01*	-0.76
Continuous commitment	2.77	-3.21	73	0.02*	-0.22
Normative commitment	2.78	-4.84	73	0.01*	-0.22
Organizational learning	2.38	-11.46	73	0.01*	-0.62

\*Significant at the 0.05 level

**Table 2.** Studying correlation between organizational learning and organizational commitment and its dimensions

Row	Description	Correlation Coefficient*	P	Type of relationship
1	Organizational learning -----organizational commitment	0.532	0.01**	Direct & positive
2	Organizational learning -----affective commitment	0.629	0.01**	Direct & positive
3	Organizational learning ----- continuous commitment	0.351	0.002**	Direct & positive
4	Organizational learning -----normative commitment	0.334	0.004**	Direct & positive

\*Pearson Correlation Coefficient

\*\*Significant at the 0.05 level

**Table 3.** The relationship between gender and each dimension of organizational commitment and organizational learning

Relationship	Mean Difference	T	P*
Gender -----organizational commitment	-0.036	-0.349	0.728
Gender -----affective commitment	-0.097	-0.714	0.477
Gender -----continuous commitment	0.065	0.457	0.649
Gender -----normative commitment	-0.076	-0.842	0.403
Gender -----organizational learning	-0.007	-0.070	0.944

\*Significant at the 0.05 level

**Table 4.** The relationship between age and dimensions of organizational commitment and organizational learning

Relationship		Sum of squares	F	P
Age--- organizational commitment	Inter-group (treatment)	0.578	1.47	0.236
	Intra-group (error)	13.92		
	Total	14.50		
Age--- affective commitment	Inter-group (treatment)	1.75	2.67	0.076*
	Intra-group (error)	23.31		
	Total	25.07		
Age---continuous commitment	Inter-group (treatment)	0.253	0.337	0.715
	Intra-group (error)	26.61		
	Total	26.86		
Age---normative commitment	Inter-group (treatment)	0.91	3.17	0.048*
	Intra-group (error)	10.17		
	Total	11.08		
Age---organizational learning	Inter-group (treatment)	0.25	0.580	0.563
	Intra-group (error)	15.33		
	Total	15.58		

\*Significant at the 0.05 level

**Table 5.** Regression analysis of the relation between organizational learning and organizational commitment

Model	Correlation Coefficient*	Determination Coefficient	Adjusted Determination Coefficient	Standard Error of Estimation
1	0.532	0.283	0.273	0.380

\*Regression Correlation Coefficient

## Discussion

The present research aims to study the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational learning of staff in well-being organization. Results indicate that organizational commitment and organizational learning are averagely low in such organization. A significant relationship was found between organizational learning, organizational commitment and its dimensions such as affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment and such relationship was direct and positive. In addition, the highest correlation was seen between organizational learning and affective commitment. No significant difference was found between organizational commitment, organizational learning and gender. Furthermore, there was no significant relationship between

age and all variables except for normative commitment.

Krishna (13) obtained a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning and affective commitment. The results consistent with aforementioned results (14) showed that culture of organizational learning had positive effect on organizational commitment. Kaufman and Sangha (cited by Ulrich) (6) indicated in their study that organizational learning is not obtained without organizational commitment thus a learning organization won't be created. Moreover, Makarem et al. (15), studied the relation between organizational-citizenship behavior and organizational commitment of staff of wellbeing organization in 2013 and they showed that there was a positive and significant relation between organizational-citizenship behavior and





organizational commitment. In addition, there was a positive and significant relation between dimensions of organizational commitment, affective commitment, normative commitment and organizational-citizenship behavior but no significant relationship was found between continuous commitment and organizational-citizenship behavior. Based on obtained results, the organization increases motivation and loyalty of staff by providing opportunities for gaining new skills and experiences. The staffs know that their efforts are recognized and rewarded followed by job promotion and higher salary thus they will tend to increase their performance and commitment to the organization.

Moreover, consistent results (14) showed that the relationship between affective commitment (organizational commitment) and organizational learning. Cho and Kowen noticed (7) positive relationship between preparing for self-directed learning and affective commitment. In addition, results of Hopkins (16) indicated that strong learning culture perceived by staff associated with high level of affective commitment and organizational support. People with high affective commitment have more affective attachment with organizational goals and values. When the organization gives formal structures to staffs for sharing information, staffs who affectively attach organizational goals and values, will look at such structures as opportunity not only for organizational growth but also for personal growth.

According to research of Joe and Lim (17), staffs with practical tendency and subjective capability in recognition, design, application and evaluation of continuous learning have more fixation and loyalty to their organizations. Yaghoubi et al. (18), reported in their research that there was a significant relationship between components of learning organization and continuous commitment. Therefore, people with highly continuous commitment will pay more attention to organizational learning. Thus, it can be said that there is an interaction between these two factors.

Results of a research (19) showed that there was a direct relationship between components of

organizational commitment such as normative commitment and organizational learning. According to Markuvart (20), interpretation of individual from structures given by the organization for learning associates with normative commitment of individual. One of factors that create normative commitment is that the organization invests on individuals in a way that people feel a high attachment to the organization thus they will commit and stay in the organization.

Kowari et al. (21), studied capability of organizational learning, its obstacles and facilitators from views of staffs in wellbeing centers of Tehran in 2012. They showed that there was a significant relationship between gender and organizational learning. In other words, age had no significant relationship with all variables except for normative commitment or means of different ages had no significant effect on variables other than on normative commitment. Concerning non-significant relationship between gender, age and organizational commitment and organizational learning, it seems that factors other than gender and age are effective on commitment and learning of staffs. In addition, concerning the relation between staffs' age and normative commitment, it can be said that people with lower ages will have more justified explanation for leaving the current job thus the pressure of norms and moralities will be reduced in the organizations.

### Conclusion

There is a positive and direct relationship between organizational learning and organizational commitment. Therefore, managers of well-being organization should identify educational requirements of staffs and provide opportunities to meet such requirements and to promote abilities, skills, loyalty and commitment of staffs to the organization. As a result, it can be said that organizational learning suggests developed intellectual capabilities resulted from organizational commitment and opportunities of organizational growth. On the other hand, as organizational commitment is one of requirements of organizational learning and the learning



organization, organizational commitment originates from organizational learning. Managers and leaders who want to realize the learning organization should take steps to approach organizational goals to staffs' goals and values. By supplying structures and channels for learning and developing knowledge in the organization, organizational learning can be increased, some opportunities can be provided for personal growth of staffs leading to protection of knowledge resulted from organizational learning.

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### Conflict of interests

The authors of the study state that there is no conflict of interests.

### Authors' contributions

Kamali M, Asadollahi SH and Mobaraki H designed research; Asadollahi SH and Kamali M conducted research; Kamali M, Sherbaf N and Mobaraki H analyzed data; and Afshari M and Asadollahi SH wrote the paper. Asadollahi SH had primary responsibility for final content. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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