

A study of effective factors on commitment and continuance on volunteers in non-governmental charity Organizations in Tehran City

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to study those factors that influence commitment and continuance of volunteering staff in non-governmental charity organization of the city of Tehran. This study uses descriptive-correlative method where subjects are volunteers in non-governmental charity organizations in Tehran. A number of 220 volunteers were selected on randomly systematic basis taking into account the geographical distributions of the subjects from whom 134 (65%) were female while 77 (35%) were male, 100 (45%) were single and 120 (55%) were married. Data were collected through questionnaires and Chi/Square test was used to assess relationship between components while entropy test was carried out for weighting and prioritization of variables in Excel and SPSS software's. The results of Chi/Square test showed that all occupational, environmental and personal factors have a significant relationship with individual commitment and normative continuance. Also, entropy measure showed that the weight effects of occupational factors (0.333), environmental factors (0.342) and personal factors (0.325) in staff commitment. The results showed that the environmental factors are slightly more effective than occupational and personal factors in staff commitment, which calls for more focus on such factors in the commitment and continuance of volunteers in non-governmental charity organizations.

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1. Introduction:

In recent decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been known as the main medium of development. One of the resources to NGOs is volunteering employees who work with no expectation of being compensated, without whom such organizations would not be able to survive (Buklin and Associates, 2000). Since the volunteering of these people is based on their personal intentions, the focus should be not only on their recruitment but also on their normative commitment and continuance with the organization.

Recently, ample attention has been given to the factors that influence the commitment and continuance of human resources to an organization and various works have been done in order to explore various aspects of this relationship since factors such as lack of effective communication of managers with employees, non-safe and unhealthy surroundings, disrespect, job degradation, or lack of opportunities to promote may lead to an imbalanced working environment for the staff. In other words, until the employee of an organization is not satisfied, properly

motivated and committed to the organization, their activities do not produce any effective outcomes coming to their final detachment from the organization.

2.1 Problem Statement

The problem of the present research is as follows: what are the effective factors in commitment and continuance of volunteering staff of non-governmental charity organizations? In fact, this research addresses the following topics:

1. Recruitment and commitment of volunteers
2. Review of influential factors on the recruitment and commitment of volunteers
3. Prioritization of influential factors
4. Introducing new techniques to NGOs to enhance the recruitment and commitment of volunteers

“Job satisfaction” is a set of feelings and beliefs that an individual develops about her current occupation (George and Gareth, 1999). Steers, and

Porter have mentioned four factors that affect job satisfaction: (a). general factors i.e. those variables that are true about almost all the employees including participation and promotion opportunities, (b). occupational environment including those variables that form a job group such as heading style, quality of relationship with colleagues, working conditions and workplace, (c). content or practical factors i.e. personal attributes that identifies an individual from other individuals such as age, experience and personality (Steers and Porter , 1991). Moorhed & Griffin (1988), divided factors that impact job satisfaction into three categories including: organizational factors such as salary, growth opportunities, policies and work conditions, group factors including managers and colleagues, and personal factors including needs, motivations and benefits (Moorhed and Griffin , 1988) .

“Commitment” is an important organizational behavior that illustrates the loyalty and devotion of the employees to that organization and their willing to continue to work which may be a result of individual interest or need (Allen and Meyer , 1993). Commitment has been in focus in recent years and its positive influence on the organizational performance has been approved of in many researches. Less committed personnel show more absenteeism and lack of interest (Allen and Meyer , 1996).

Mowdey et al in their theory , emphasized on four categories of preconditions of organizational commitment as follows: (a) personal attributes including age, sex, education, race, work experience, (b) attributes related to individual role such as job description of job challenges, role contrasts or role ambiguities, (c) organizational structure including size, centralized or decentralized structure, and control and supervision domain, (d) work experience which is the result of an employee living within the organization (Mowdey et al,1982).

Of the most important results of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, individual interest in surviving, the intention to remain with the organization, presence, high job performance, increased efficacy, improved work spirit, physical and mental health and life satisfaction can be mentioned as good examples. The present study such as other similar studies have used Mazlo’s hierarchy of needs, Herzberg’s two-factor (or the Dual

Structure Theory), Moore’s theory of needs, and theoretical model by Mowdey et al. as a basis for further investigation.

The factors to be studied were categorized into three groups including occupational, environmental and personal groups affecting one’s recruitment and commitment to an NGO based on results of previous researches. Attempts were also made to best identify the most effective factors in this regard the results of which are as follows:

1. Occupational factors: promotion and growth opportunities, participation, independence, success, respect and appreciation.
2. Environmental factors : supervision, work conditions, relationships with co-workers, organization size, safety and health, organizational role in society
3. Personal factors: work experience, age, need satisfaction, meeting individual expectations before recruitment by organization, education and sex.

3. Materials and Method

This study used cross-sectional descriptive-correlative method. The subjects were those who volunteer to actively work in non-governmental charity organizations licensed by Tehran Social Welfare Organization. Samples were taken by random systematic sampling method of 220 individuals using sample volume of infinite society formula.

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires which were composed of two major parts. The first part was intended to obtain demographic information from the subjects including sex, age, education, marital status and employment. The second part was designed to ask questions regarding occupational, environmental and personal characteristics using Likert Scale (from 1=too small to 5= too big). Then Fishcer’s exact test was carried out to on the error probability level of =5% whereby the questionnaire reliability was confirmed. After collections of questionnaires and the required were processed by Excel Spreadsheet and SPSS software and then tested by Chi/Square and entropy tests.

4. Discussion and Results

A comparison between occupational, environmental and personal factors by entropy test shows that environmental factors play the most significant role in recruitment and commitment of volunteers and occupational and personal factors are on the next levels (Table1).

Table1. Entropy criterion for the weight to different factors

Index	Weight	Priority
Occupational factor	0.333	2
environmental factor	0.342	1
personal factor	0.325	3

The relation of all the effective factors with continuance and commitment of volunteers were verified using Chi/Square test while factors such as respect, success and independence were the most effective ones and growth opportunities, appreciation and job involvement were on the next levels. The results of pervious researches have showed that occupational factors affect strongly job satisfactions and commitment of an individual to the organization.

Safety and health and relationships with other colleagues are the most effective environmental factors while the next levels belong to supervision, work condition, organization role in society, organizational policies, services and organization size. Pervious researches on NGOs have showed that volunteers may leave their organizations simply if they are not able to establish affective links or commitment with the organization, hence environmental factors may play an important role in continuance and commitment of volunteering employees.

The results also emphasized on the fact the compatibility of an individual expectations before joining an organization with the actual organization and need satisfaction are leading effective factors, also demographic factors are effective in continuance and commitment of volunteers.

4.1 Practical proposals

1. Providing suitable work conditions including proper lighting, fresh air, reduced

noise in workplace, reduced workload to decrease tensions resulting from unsuitable work conditions.

2. Sufficiently authorization of volunteers , delineating job performance, creating a healthy environment with an emphasis on interpersonal relationship, enhancing personal relationships, independence and occupational feedback in order to reduce tensions and the probability of their leaving.
3. Managers of NGOs should explain the objectives of their organizations to the volunteering staff making them understand the importance of those objectives..
4. Most of the volunteers have personal intentions that drive them to work in NGOs. The results of the research illustrate the fact that since environmental factors are more effective than other factors (in fact, they help an individual to remain with the organization), it is suggested that the managers be trained on the determination of occupational factors (motivational factors) and environmental factors (health factors).
5. Using different tests in order to identify individuals with capabilities to employ them in positions compatible to their attributes to avoid costs resulting from their leaving.
6. Emphasizing on education and expertise in promoting and assigning positions in order to use optimally the volunteers and making them feel useful.
7. Appreciation of volunteers.
8. Interviewing those individuals who have left the organization in order to identify the root causes of the leaving and making effective decisions to address such root causes.
9. Developing a close relationship with volunteering employees and their participation in decision-making process.

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