



Evaluating the Relationship between Creativity and Employment Status of Hospital Staffs

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Abstract

Considering the growing concern about modernism in the present era, the necessity of exploiting creative minds and even unskilled labour is undeniable. Therefore, one of the important challenges of present managers of organizations is lack of efficient use of intellectual resources, mental power, and potential capacities of human resources. The aim of this study is to evaluate the relationship between creativity and employment status of hospital staffs. This study was conducted using a descriptive-analytical method. The studied population includes all staffs of Shahid Rajayi Hospital of Karaj in Iran. The tool used in this study was a 76-question questionnaire based on Five-point Likert scale. Finally, collected data were analysed using statistical tests of Pearson correlation coefficient and t-test by means of SPSS-19 software. Results showed that the mean creativity of hospital staffs has been 276.96 for women and 279.74 for men. There was a positive correlation between work experience and creativity of staffs, but this relationship was not significant ($r=0.008$ and $p=0.94$). Mean creativity between men and women was not statistically significant ($p=0.6$). The highest correlation coefficient was between encouragement dimension of the top manager and creativity of hospital staffs ($r=0.87$ and $p<0.01$), and the lowest correlation coefficient was between the dimension of challenging work and creativity of hospital staffs ($r=0.36$ and $p<0.01$). There was no statistically significant difference between mean creativity of staffs at different educational levels ($p=0.4$). There was a positive and significant relationship between organizational position of staffs and their creativity ($r=0.23$ and $p=0.042$). In the present era, creative thinking and creativity of the work force are the main strengths of any organization – even health care organizations. It seems that influencing staffs' attitude, giving freedom, and encouraging them can have an important role in improving the hospital performance.

Keywords: Creativity, staffs, hospital.

Introduction

In order for the organizations to continue their effective and constructive role, they need new thoughts, ideas, and views so that they can ensure their dynamism using those new standpoints; otherwise, they are doomed to be decayed. As we know, organizations' resistance to various environmental changes and developments has led to their elimination or diminishing; they will be no longer able to maintain the status quo. Nowadays, modernistic enthusiasm, creativity, and innovation in organizations are considered as ideal strategies for adjusting organizations¹.

One of the important challenges of present managers of organizations is lack of efficient use of intellectual resources, mental power, and potential capacities of human resources. In most organizations, capacities of human resources are not used optimally, and managers cannot exploit their potential capabilities². Those organizations which emphasize on progressive planning, identify potentialities at the first step, give

adequate information to their staffs, and encourage them to problem-solving activities can obtain more creative results. Many others use their time and resources for organizational affairs: providing competence and opportunities, establishing an internal reward system, creating attitudes' continuity and clear objectives, identifying innovation opportunities, and providing a healthy environment so that new ideas can be presented as organizational factors of creativity³.

In general, creativity can be defined as "exploiting intellectual abilities in order to create a new notion or concept". It is implied by this definition that emergence of creativity in any activity is expected and it is not limited to any certain kind of activity⁴. Considering the growing concern about modernism in the present era, the necessity of exploiting creative minds and even unskilled labour is undeniable. Many of the scholars of human resource management believe that creativity requires an art, and that art is "thinking". In other words, creativity is the art of associating un associated matters. In fact, creative thinking, innovation, human performance, and high efficiency of

fundamental elements are required for guaranteeing the future development of society. Actually, new thoughts and ideas may change the organizational structure radically⁵.

Creativity in health system is also the essence of quality improvement, in a way that in order to improve clinical and health services, we need new ideas and thoughts so that health care organizations can compete with others⁶. We must also pay attention to designing new mobile hospitals⁷ and electronic reception system, and developing clinical training. All these originate from creative thinking of health workforce. On the other hand, the more professional and specialized the workforce, the more they can exploit their mental power and have creative thinking⁸.

Researchers have shown that there is a positive relationship between the level of education and creativity; the higher the levels of education, the more creativity individuals have⁹. Regarding work experience, it has been shown that increasing work experience of staffs will increase creativity^{9,10}.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the relationship between creativity of Shahid Rajayi Hospital's staffs and employment status. By employment status, we mean the type of employment, work experience, level of education, and organizational position.

Material and Methods

This study was conducted using a descriptive-analytical method. Statistical population of this study includes office workers and nurses of Shahid Rajayi Hospital of Karaj. Sample size has been estimated 150 individuals, with 0.05 percent error and 5% estimation accuracy and also with standard deviation of a 60-individual pilot sample (SD=.73). The sample has been chosen in a simple random method.

The tool used in this research was a questionnaire including demographic variables and main variables. In order to evaluate creativity level of staffs, 9 elements related to creativity were considered. In sum, the questionnaire included 76 questions which were based on Five-point Likert scale. In order to determine the validity of the questionnaire, it was given to a number of expert professors in the field of human resource management. On the other hand, the number of questions has been used many times in previous studies. Moreover, in order to determine reliability of the questionnaire of staffs' creativity, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 96% using SPSS-19 software. Finally, the obtained data were analysed using statistical tests of Pearson correlation coefficient and t-test.

Results and Discussion

Regarding the age of the participants, 17.7% were under 25, 64.6% were between 25 to 40, 15.2% were between 40 to 50,

and 2.5% were older than 50 years. 69.6% of respondents were women. Respondents' level of education has been shown in the following table. As can be seen, most respondents were staffs with Bachelor's degree.

Table-1
Level of education

| Level of education | Percent |
|--------------------|---------|
| Master's degree | 6.3 |
| Bachelor's degree | 73.9 |
| Associate degree | 20.3 |

Respondents' work experience has also been shown in table-2. As the table shows, individuals with less than 10 years of work experience devote the most part to themselves, which is indicative of fresh workforces in the hospital.

Table-2
Work experience

| Years of service (work experience) | Percent |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Less than 10 years | 72.2 |
| 10 – 20 years | 26.5 |
| More than 20 years | 1.3 |

Employment status of the studied subjects showed that 33.3% were salaried employees, 42.0% were contract employees, and 24.7% were freelance employees. Mean creativity of hospital staffs was 276.96 and 279.74 for women and men respectively.

Results obtained from considering the relationship between each dimension of creativity and staffs' creativity in order to determine the level of correlation of creativity dimensions surveyed in the questionnaire showed that the highest correlation is between encouragement dimension of the top manager and creativity of hospital staffs ($r=0.87$ and $p<0.01$). This means that if the top manager encourages staffs, their creativity will increase. Moreover, encouragement dimension had correlation with creativity of hospital staffs ($r=0.82$ and $p<0.01$). The lowest correlation was between the dimension of challenging work and creativity of hospital staffs ($r=0.36$ and $p<0.01$) (table-3).

There was a positive relationship between the level of education and creativity of hospital staffs. This means that upon the increase of educational level of staffs, we can expect that their creativity is also improved; however, this relationship was not significant ($r=0.028$ and $p=0.8$).

Regarding work experience, it should be said that there was a

positive relationship between work experience and staffs' creativity. This means that upon the increase of work experience of hospital staffs, we can expect that their creativity is also improved; however, this relationship was not significant ($r=0.008$ and $p=0.94$).

Table-3
The relationship between creativity dimensions and staffs' creativity in Shahid Rajayi Hospital of Karaj

| Statistical indices | Mean | Standard deviation | Correlation coefficient |
|----------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Creativity dimensions | | | |
| Freedom | 8.75 | 2.29 | 0.57* |
| Challenging work | 17.05 | 3.67 | 0.36* |
| Top manager's encouragement | 62.43 | 12.072 | 0.87* |
| Organizational encouragement | 40.49 | 11.69 | 0.82* |
| Lack of organizational obstacles | 32.92 | 8.432 | 0.64* |
| Adequate resources | 18.27 | 5.176 | 0.75* |
| Objective workload | 13.97 | 4.255 | 0.51* |
| Creativity | 16.30 | 4.691 | 0.69* |
| Efficiency | 19.72 | 4.435 | 0.70* |

* $P < 0.01$

There was a positive relationship between employment status of hospital staffs and their creativity, but this relationship was not significant ($r=0.15$ and $p=0.21$). However, there was a positive and significant relationship between organizational position of hospital staffs and their creativity ($r=0.23$ and $p=0.042$). Moreover, there was a positive relationship between staffs' gender and creativity, but this relationship was not statistically significant ($r=0.024$ and $p=0.84$).

Table-4
The relationship between the studied variables and staffs' creativity

| Variables | Correlation coefficient (r) | P value |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Level of education | 0.028 | 0.8 |
| Work experience | 0.008 | 0.94 |
| Type of employment | 0.15 | 0.21 |
| Organizational position | 0.23 | 0.042* |

* $p < 0.05$

Discussion: In order for the organizations to confront environmental threats and to exploit probable opportunities, they have to recognize their internal capabilities and qualifications, obviate their weaknesses, and reinforce their strengths. Organizations' problems are so complicated and twisted that detecting the problem is not easy. Human nature of the organizations and complexity of staffs' behaviour has worsened this complicated situation¹⁰.

Considering the differences between creativity of male and female staffs in various studies, some different results and some conflicting results have been obtained. This is due to special internal conditions of different organizations and their uniqueness. However, the results of Ahmadi¹⁰, Andriopoulos⁹, Torrance and Goff¹¹ conform to the results of this study. In analysing creativity and educational level, it must be said that the results of this study conform to analyses of Torrance and Goff¹¹ and Ahmadi¹⁰ in terms of correlation and positive relationship between the two. However, in the present study, there was no significant relationship between creativity and educational level. Considering the relationship between work experience and staffs' creativity, the results conform to the results of the study of Nayak et al.¹².

There was a positive relationship between employment status of hospital staffs and their creativity, but this relationship is not significant. However, there was a positive and significant relationship between organizational position of hospital staffs and their creativity ($r=0.23$ and $p=0.042$).

Since the relationship between organizational position and staffs' creativity is positive and significant, it is suggested that human resource manager of the hospital pays more attention to this issue.

In order to improve creativity of hospital staffs, managers should apply appropriate mechanisms based on the hospital conditions, in order to enhance staffs' creativity. Therefore, it is necessary that they consider and inspect obstacles and problems of staffs' creativity. On the other hand, it should be said that according to the obtained results, top manager's encouragement (87%) and organizational encouragement (82%) have the highest correlation with staffs' creativity. Hence, encouragements in the hospital must be used to improve staffs' creativity.

Conclusion

Once upon a time in 1760, the common slogan of manufacturing organizations was "higher production", in a way that they saw more power in having higher production. In the next stage, they valued "information" and considered it as the main organizational power in global competition. However, it seems that today, creative thinking and creativity of the workforce is the main power of any organization – even health care organizations¹³.

Since most organizations seek to obtain more profits, the organization will win the challenge that can offer new ideas, new products, and new services to its customers (14). Obviously, nowadays hospitals have an important role in development of society's health as the organizations which offer clinical services. On the other hand, heavy costs incurred on hospitals should be handled with an accurate and a creative management.

It seems that applying plans such as Total Quality Management, Human Resource Development, and Clinical Governance can help staffs to acquire a new attitude and adopt themselves to the new environment.

One of the most important methods of improving staffs' creativity with no extra costs is transformational leadership. Leaders can enhance creativity by reinforcing the organizational and cultural settings which feed and supply creative attempts and facilitate learning. These leaders can create a system of creative performance by simple and even non-financial incentives. Modern organizations need a leader rather than a manager: a leader who can influence his/her followers' performance effectively¹⁴.

In order to enhance staffs' creativity, following solutions are suggested: Holding training courses of technical and human skills. Providing necessary information about the job and its terms and conditions. Developing staffs' sense of self-development and acquiring the experience of individual dominance on tasks. Fostering creative ideas of staffs. Using modern techniques and methods of creativity in the hospital. Forming the Creativity and Innovation Committee in the hospital

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