

An Investigation of Principals and Teachers Attitudes towards a Desirable Conceptual Framework of Organizational Health

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to explain the factors affecting organizational health (OH) via proposing a desirable conceptual framework for Sama institutions of Islamic Azad University (IAU). All principals and teachers who work in Sama institutions, districts 2 and 13 constituted the statistical population of the study from among which 386 individuals (80 principals and 306 teachers) were selected as the statistical sample. The random classification sampling method, using Morgan Table, is used to select the sample population. The present study is of field research type that uses descriptive analysis as well as interpretive analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, Krotit Bartlett test, Factor-Analysis test, Varimax Turning Technique, Independent T-Test, ANOVA and generally speaking SPSS were employed for analyzing the collected data. The researcher-made questionnaire of 0.98 reliability and confirmed validity was used as the research instrument. The nine factors, identified in this study, as the effective factors on OH according to their importance are; 1) Service leadership, 2) Optimum distribution of power and communication, 3) Correlation, 4) Innovation, 5) Problem-solving capability, 6) Application of sources, 7) Autonomy, 8) Morale and 9) Social satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Organizational Health, Factor Analysis, Teachers Attitudes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational Health has been among the issues that attracted the attention of management theorists. The overwhelming discussions about OH indicate its significance in the flurried world of science and technology. Defining OH, measuring it and estimating the health of an organization/institution is not an easy task. However, as a concept, OH justifies and explains the sustainability and maintenance of an organization. In other words, OH is among the most effective organizational indices (Jahed, 2006). Moreover, what makes OH scientifically significant is the dynamic nature of organization as well as the studies conducted to make better use of OH.

The production and implementation of rules and norms in any organization are considered as the priorities and Islamic Azad University (IAU) is not exceptional in this respect. Thus, the processes through which these rules and norms are established as well as explaining the system of OH in IAU are necessary. Directing these processes and procedures to promote the proper behavior of the organization and higher education centers seems a must. The reformulation of the current conditions is necessary to remove the blockage to the social, economical, political and especially the cultural development of Iran.

2. Theoretical framework

As stated in the management literature, OH is mainly dependent on employees' health. However, there has been a gradual movement from focus on employees' health towards the health of the management processes, the culture and structure of the society, psychological factors, coping with the working environment, the employees' satisfaction, leadership, trust, interactive support, social responsibility, the effectiveness and so on.

According to Denis and Marvin (2011) OH is an organization's potentiality for effective performance to pull it off effectively, to have accurate modifications and to promote the inner growth of the organization.

2.1. Features of Healthy Work Place

Michael Polanyi (2004) proposes 10 features of healthy work place as: clear and achievable work roles, reasonable work demands, job strain model, work place social support, fair treatment and just reward, adequate wages, satisfactory work hours, job security, a safe organizational climate, healthy employment arrangement.

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A healthy organization faces the outside obstacles successfully and takes advantage of them to achieve the main goals of the organization. Bearing in mind that the short-run operations on any given day may be effective/ineffective, health implies a summation of effective short-run coping. Having a healthy expertise and techniques leads to increasing employees' liability, the quality of the products and provided services. Therefore, the attempt for improving labor health and welfare, in the first place, begins and proceeds via having a healthy organization. As Dejoy and Willson (2007) state the improvement, growth and development of OH is achievable by promoting and recovering healthy work place.

2.2. Organizational Health Theories

1. Miles Theory

The term OH was initially used by Mathew Miles in 1969. As he proposes a scheme to measure the health of an organization, he also reminds that it is not possible to have a healthy organization. He believes that OH refers not only to the survival of organization in its environment but also "to cope adequately over the long haul and continuously develop and extend its surviving and coping abilities" (p: 379).

To define and explain OH, Miles postulated 10 properties of a healthy organization by referring to three basic needs of it including: 1. Task needs, 2. Maintenance needs and 3. Growth needs.

The first three properties are pertinent to what Miles calls 'task needs' of the organization and includes: 1. Goal focus, 2. Communication adequacy, 3. Optimal power equalization. The next three factors that are categorized under 'maintenance needs' are: 4. Resource utilization, 5. Cohesiveness, 6. Morale, and the next four factors referred to as the 'growth needs' of organization are: 7. Innovativeness, 8. Autonomy, 9. Adaptation, 10. Problem-solving.

2. Talkot Parsons Theory

As quoted in Abbaszadeh (2008) Parsons investigates OH in the educational centers from seven aspects under three dimensions:

A: Board-level dimension including: 1. Institutional integrity

B: Administration-level dimension including: 2. Initiating structure, 3. Consideration, 4. Principal influence, 5. Resource support

C: Technical dimension including: 6. Morale, 7. Academic emphasis.

The 'integrity of institution' refers to the capability of the organization to cope with environment. 'Principal's influence' pertains to his/her ability to influence subordinates. 'Consideration' refers to the principal's open and friendly behavior. 'Initiating structure' refers to principal's ability in establishing interaction among personnel, fulfilling their job expectations, performance standards and methods to carry out the job. 'Resources support' pertains to principal's measures in supplying necessary resources for optimal performance. 'Morale' indicates openness and reciprocal trust and sociability. And 'academic emphasis' shows organization's attempt in achieving goals.

2.3. Systematic Approach towards Organizational Health

Caplan (1993) and Karavata (1997) (cited in Seyed Javadian 2010) propose a model called Organizational Health Indices (systemic model of OHI). According to this model OHI are categorized as:

A- Input Indices: On the basis of Input Indices an organization is healthy if and only if its input is healthy. It refers to the organization's ability to attract healthy labor. Moreover, input indices manifest the imagination the organization creates in the environment. The input indices include:

- Ability to absorb ingenious and effective labor
- Ability to absorb financial sources
- The satisfaction of suppliers
- Effective information network

B- Process Indices include: long-term approach, integrity, allocation, learning capability, innovation, technology and organizational culture.

C- Output Indices include: profit or added value, satisfaction, loyalty, succession, substitution, quality of product (service), stock value and social satisfaction.

Apparently, having healthy organization is the prerequisite for the social development. If we look at a society as a system, organizations are subsystems that each fulfills a specific duty in it. They have to be able to cooperate with each other to achieve goals. This cooperation requires a healthy organization where there is no room for political defrauds and confusions, i.e., the policy of the organization should be crystal clear. Such an organization enjoys high moral and efficiency, thus there is less chance to substitute an inefficient labor force (Beigzadeh and Beyrami, 2009, p: 63).

In this vein, the research questions proposed in the present study are:

- 1- What factors contribute to the promotion of OH in Sama institutions of IAU located in districts 2 and 13?

- 2- Do people with different demographic backgrounds approach OH differently, taking into account the proposed cognitive theoretical framework?

3. METHODOLOGY

The current study is a field study of descriptive type. The library method was used to collect and review the related background literature. In this regard, a variety of sources, books, journals and national/international websites were explored to conceptualize OH. However, the major portion of the study was carried out as a field work where the principals' and teachers' perception of and attitudes about OH were gathered and analyzed.

3.1. Participants

101 principals and 1482 teachers, in total 1583, who work in Sama institutions of IAU located in districts 2 and 13 constitute the participants for this study.

3.2. Sample Selection

Random selection classification method was used for sampling. Morgan Table was run to determine the number of selected sample, which was 386 individuals including 80 principals and 306 teachers.

4. INSTRUMENTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

In the first step, the documented theoretical bases available in and out of Iran were explored via library research and surfing the net and on the basis of these findings a set of concepts; definitions and theoretical frameworks were suggested. In the next step, a researcher-made questionnaire was prepared, the validity of which was confirmed by OH experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated using Cronbach's Alfa (0.98). Then the questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Using SPSS, the collected data went under such analyses as; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test, Croite Bartlet Test, Factor- Analysis Test, Independent T-Test, Varimax Turning Technique, ANOVA, Shefe Test, and so on.

5. RESULT

Q1: What factors contribute to optimize OH in Sama institutions of IAU located in districts 2 and 13?

Having administrated Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and Varimax Turning Technique, the following factors were identified and confirmed. They will be discussed in depth here in the hierarchy of importance.

Note: The factors with less than 0.4 indices were eliminated from the analysis.

The Factor-Analysis test was used to classify the factors that affect OH. As illustrated in Table 1 and according to KMO criteria, it is estimated as 0.966 which is considered sufficient enough for factor analysis. In addition, the results of Kriot Bartlett's test showed 41756, P. value= 0.000 which indicates the appropriateness of the factor classification on the basis of factor- load coefficient.

Table 1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.966
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	41756.963
	df	2080
	Sig.	0.000

Varimax Turning Technique was used for the classification and nomination of the factors. The findings show that there is a high correlation coefficient between the results of factor analysis and the primary factor classification. As shown in Table 2, in discussing OH, 85% of total variance can be explained on the basis of nine factors identified in the study.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	38.011	58.478	58.478	14.325	22.038	22.038
2	5.315	8.177	66.655	8.309	12.782	34.821
3	2.412	3.711	70.367	7.822	12.033	46.854
4	2.341	3.602	73.969	5.579	8.583	55.437
5	1.791	2.756	76.725	5.244	8.067	63.504
6	1.640	2.523	79.248	3.801	5.848	69.352
7	1.326	2.041	81.288	3.796	5.841	75.193
8	1.281	1.971	83.260	3.387	5.211	80.403
9	1.023	1.574	84.833	2.880	4.430	84.833

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Factor 1: This factor includes 15 such variables as (variance 22.038):

- Principals' ability in gaining institution's needed equipments and facilities
- Principals' ability to take care of subordinates' welfare
- Principals' willingness to do some changes
- Principals' recommendations are followed by the subordinates
- Principals' capability to cooperate with subordinates
- Employees' eagerness to stay in the institution despite better job opportunities from other institutions
- Employees' carefulness in performing tasks
- Taking care of the institution's properties
- Institution's investment for individual progress and vocational growth
- Employees' loyalty to principal
- Directing all the attempts and decisions to achieve the institution's goals
- Constant verification and improvement of the institution's goals
- Adaptation of the institution's goals with the environmental demands
- The acceptability of the Institution goals for employees
- The clearness of the institution's goals to employees

The above discussed factor is called 'Service Leadership' factor due to its components. The results of studies by Berenz (1994), V.K. Shriber (1995), Janet (1995), Liget (1997), Sadeg Aghbaya (1999), Lyden and Klingel (2000) and Mehmet (2007) emphasize on the significance of leadership in OH.

Factor 2: The following 10 components constitute the second factor (variance 12.782)

- Information is easily accessible to employees
- Subordinates can talk with super-ordinates and convince them accept their reasonable suggestions
- Intra-group competition among employees for promotion is desirable and pleasant.
- Circulars and regulations are available to all employees in time.
- Influence on others originates from one's knowledge and merits not his/her status and power
- Establishing fearless and stressless relationship among subordinates and super-ordinates
- Paying attention to corporation in decision making
- Providing methods of relationship among organization's different strata
- Using various methods to facilitate constant and reciprocal relationship among employees
- Establishing constant reciprocal relationship among employees

Owing to the above mentioned variables, factor 2 is called 'optimum distribution of power and communication' factor. The results of the studies by Ransom (1990), Lydel and Klingel (2000) and Capot Drive (2004) support the effect of 'optimum distribution of power and communication' factor on OH.

Factor 3: The three variables clustered under this factor (variance 12.033) are:

- Employees show prejudice in favor of their own organization against other organizations
- Successful performance against outside destructive forces
- To supply employees' demands to defeat outside demands
- Organization's capability to cope with the environment
- Coordination and coalition among organization's different portions
- Organization's capability to meet the environmental needs
- Love and respect among employees

Factor 3 is called 'cooperative' factor, due to the above mentioned variables. The findings of Sadeg Aghbaya (1999), Benis and Shayan (2002) and Bill Willkerson (2006) back up the significant role of 'cooperation' factor in OH.

Factor 4: The eight variables constitute this factor (Variance 8.583) include:

- The modification in organization's construction and processes in the passage of time
- The recognition of environmental needs and programming to meet them
- Producing new products (e.g. new and different courses/fields of study)
- Supporting creativity and innovation (teachers' and students' innovation must be supported)
- Competing among organizations for progress
- Perception of environmental potential capacities
- Innovation in solving problems
- Innovation in providing services to the costumers

This factor is called 'innovation' factor because of its emphasis on the role of 'innovation' in OH which is validated in Keshtkaran et al (2009) study.

Factor 5: The eight variables categorized under this factor (variance 8.067) are:

- There is no unsolved problem in organization
- Principal's political and official capabilities in solving organization's minor/major problems
- Principal's high will and insightfulness in solving organization's minor/major problems
- Absorption of graduates in job marketing
- No environmental damage from organization
- Organization's capability in solving its own problems
- Respect to the costumers and eliminating their dissatisfaction
- Holding meetings to solve the problems

Bearing in mind these variables, factor 5 is called 'capability to solve problems' factor and its effect on OH is confirmed by Benis and Shine (2002).

Factor 6: The five variables that discussed under this factor (variance 5.848) are:

- Optimal use of elites
- Effective use of personals' capabilities
- Optimal use of financial sources (including buildings, equipments, classes, labs, etc) in emergencies
- Avoiding taking advantage of personnel's

This factor is called 'source application' factor and its role in OH was validated by Skandarian (1999), Keshtkaran et al (2009), Sadeg Aghbaya (1999) and Lyden and Klingel (2000).

Factor 7: Seven variables constitute this factor (variance 5.841) including:

- Organization's tendency towards interaction with the environment and maintaining its autonomy at the same time
- Organization's response to the environmental changes arises from its internal determinacy and organization is not a passive entity
- Sama institution moves towards official autonomy
- Sama institution's independence in providing financial sources and the expenditures
- Institution is not governed by outside organization or the personnel

This factor is referred to as 'independence/autonomy' factor and its effect on OH was discussed in Matthew Milez's theory (1969).

Factor 8: This factor consists of eight variables (variance 5.211) as:

- Personal's intimacy and closeness with the institution
- Staff including principals, teachers, clerks,... do their job enthusiastically in Sama institution
- Reciprocal respect among the personnel
- Reciprocal trust and confidence among the personnel

For the above mentioned reasons, this factor is called 'morale' factor and its significance in OH was shown in Skandary (1998), Zahraii (2011), Tofigi (2011), Hoy and Wolfok (2000), Liget (1997) and Lydel and Klingel (2000).

Factor 9: The two variables (variance 4.430) discussed for this factor are:

- The tasks that institutions perform should not only be acceptable in the society but also fulfill people's expectations, e.g. cultural tasks
- Institution efficiency in creating balance between its budget and expenses

This factor is called 'social satisfaction' factor and its effect on OH was backed up by the findings of Kaplan and Karavata (cited in Seyed Javadian 2010).

The above mentioned factors constitute the cognitive framework sketched to obtain a desirable OH in Sama institutions of IAU.

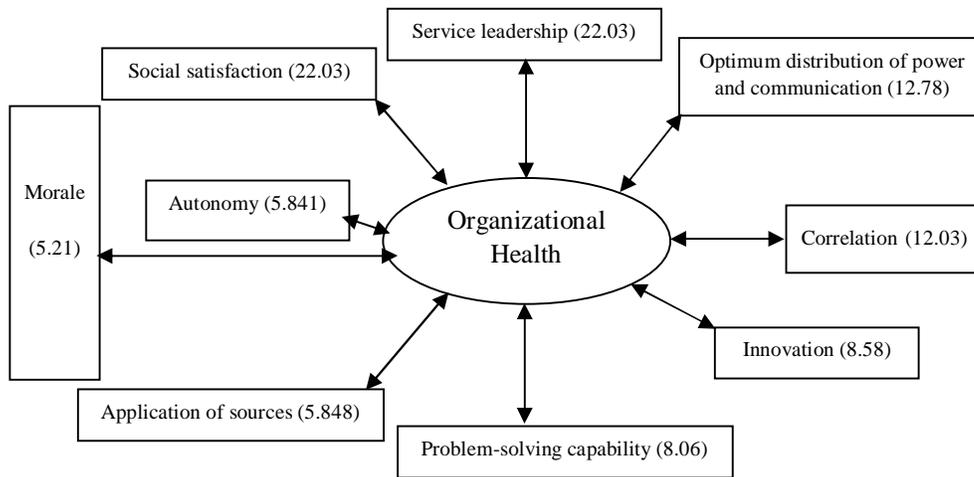


Figure 1: Desirable Conceptual Framework of Organizational Health

Q2: Do people with different demographic background differ in their attitudes towards the desirable perception framework of OH?

Q 2.1 Is there any difference between the principal’s and teacher’s view towards OH variables?

According to the information illustrated in Tables (3), (4) the obtained mean score of OH variables for principals was; Mean= 410.32, SD= 89.04, whereas for teachers it was; Mean=421.61 and SD= 86.36.

As the Mean difference test shows ($t= -1.034, P=0.302$), the difference is not statistically significant ($P=0.302>.05$).

Table 3: Group statistics

job	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std. Error Mean
OH principal	80	410.3250	89.04341	9.95536
Teacher	306	421.6111	86.36557	4.93719

Table 4: Independent samples test (T test)

	Levene s Test for Equality of variances		T-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
OH Equal variances assumed	0.572	0.450	-1.034	384	0.302
Equal variances not assumed			-1.016	120.747	0.312

Q 2.2 is there a relationship between people’s demographic background and their attitudes towards OH variables? In other words, is people’s demographic background a contributing factor to their perception of OH variables?

To answer question2.2, one way ANOVA was performed. As it is illustrated in Table (5) the mean of evaluated OH variables according to the attitudes is estimated as:

- V= 424.38, SD= 79.99 for participants with five years work experience
- V= 416.10, SD= 90.07 for participants with five-ten years work experience
- V=421.10, SD= 86.89 for participants with over ten years work experience

Table 5: Descriptive for three participants

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
-5	86	424.3837	79.99958	8.62658	407.2318	441.5357	213	585
5-10	198	416.1061	90.07202	6.40114	403.4825	428.7296	204	650
10-	102	421.1078	86.89483	8.60387	404.0401	438.1756	216	587
Total	386	419.2720	86.93103	4.42467	410.5725	427.9716	204	650

The criteria, $F= 0.302, P=0.740>.05$ indicates an insignificant difference among the participants’ attitudes.

Table 6: Result ANOVA Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4575.514	2	2287.757	0.302	0.740
Within Groups	2904871	383	7584.519		
Total	2909446	385			

6. Conclusion

The results of the study refer to nine factors that contribute to OH betterment. The cognitive framework, proposed to estimate OH in the current study, is presented here. The contributing factors are arranged in accordance to their importance and priority including: 1) Service leadership, 2) Optimum distribution of power and communication, 3) Correlation, 4) Innovation, 5) Problem-solving capability, 6) Application of sources, 7) Autonomy, 8) Morale and 9) Social satisfaction. The significance of the first factor, i.e. 'service leadership' in OH has been proved in Berenz (1994), Dok Shreiber (1995), Janet (1995), Liget (1997), Sadeg Aghbaya (1999), Lynden and Klingel (2000) and Mehmet (2007). The importance of 'optimum distribution of power and communication' factor in OH has been supported in Randesom (1990), Lydel and Klingel (2000), and Kabot Drive (2004). The role of 'correlation' factor in OH has been emphasized in Sadeg Aghbaya (1999), Benis and Shine (2002) and Bill Wilkerson (2006). The role of 'innovation' in OH has been proven in a study conducted by Keshtkaran et al (2009). Furthermore, the significance of 'problem-solving capability' of the principals in OH in the study by Benis and shine (2002), 'source application' factor in Skandary (2000), Keshtkaran et al (2009), Sadeg Aghbaya (1999) and Lynden and Klingel (2000) have been confirmed. The 'autonomy' factor discussed in Matthew Milez's theory (1969) and the role of 'moral' factor in OH has been validated in Skandary (1998), Zahraii (2011), Tofigi (2011), Hoy and Wolfok (2000), Liget (1997), and Lynden and Klingel (2000). And finally, the importance of 'social satisfaction' factor in OH has been backed up in Kaplan and Karavata (cited in Seyed Javadian). The 'service leadership' factor was recognized as the primary and the most important factor in the perception framework proposed for OH in the present study. The reliability of 0.98 estimated for OH variable indices in this study is acceptable. There was no significant difference between principals' and teachers' attitudes towards the proposed perception framework for OH. Likewise, there was no considerable difference among participants' age and years of work and their attitudes towards the conceptual framework suggested for OH in the current study. As the findings show all the participants including the principals and teachers believe that the identified factors in this study are the main factors that contribute to OH promotion. In other words, none of such variables as the participants' characteristics, needs, job expectations, age and work experience affected the obtained results which indicates the significance of the proposed factors on OH in Sama institutions.

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