

Research Article

**DETERMINATION OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN NURSES' ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMITMENT AND JOB-RELATED STRESS LEVELS: AN EXAMPLE OF A PUBLIC
HOSPITAL**

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Abstract: *This research was conducted in order to determine the correlation between the loyalty of nurses in Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdulhamit Han Education and Research Hospital and their job-related stress levels, which is one of the important elements of health service delivery. The sample of this research consisted of military nurses who were transferred from the Turkish Armed Forces to the Ministry of Health in 2016 and 170 nurses who agreed to participate in the research at Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdulhamit Han Education and Research Hospital after the transfer and the full count method was used when calculating the sample. In the research, which was planned to be definitive, the required data was collected using the Job-related Tension Scale and the Organizational Commitment Scale. In the research, the data was collected with the face-to-face interviewing method after the participants were informed of the purpose of the research, and after their consent was obtained and the participants were interviewed at their convenience. The data obtained were evaluated by establishing a database in SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 22.0 software. In the evaluation of the data, number, percentage, standard deviation, and mean were used as descriptive statistical methods. According to the groups, 82 (48.2%) of the employees were previously employed at the Gülhane Military Medical Academy (GATA) and 88 (51.8%) were employees of the Ministry of Health. According to regression analysis, the total change in job-related stress level is explained by 14.9% organizational commitment total. In correlation analyses, a negative correlation was found between job-related stress and emotional commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Employees who previously worked at GATA reported a significant decrease in the total value of organizational commitment relative to the total GATA value of organizational commitment. Job-related stress levels, on the other hand, showed a significant increase in employees who previously worked at GATA. According to the research findings, it is observed that organizational commitment tends to decrease in employees who previously worked at GATA, that there is a significant increase in job-related stress levels, and that the job-related stress of employees in GATA is high and significant.*

Keywords: *Job-related stress, organization, organizational commitment.*

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1. Introduction

Organization as a concept can be defined as a system in which the efforts of the employees are coordinated in order to achieve the determined common goals and where the dimensions of human, purpose, and technology are intertwined at the point of accomplishing this goal and as a structure that shows the correlation between authority and communication within the system [1,2]. The concept of loyalty, which is one of the feelings felt by the employees, refers to the loyalty and obligation displayed to the idea, the person, and the institution.

In the conducted research, the issue of organizational loyalty has become increasingly important as employees with high organizational loyalty demonstrate higher performance, have a lower intention to quit, and show more loyalty within the organization. Since the concept of organizational commitment is both a precursor and a result of the variables related to the organization, studies have also focused on the factors that affect loyalty [3]. Organizational commitment, as can affect many factors, can also be affected by numerous factors [4]. In the reviews of the literature, it is seen that many studies express that organizational commitment is also influenced by job-related stress [1,4-11]. In this study, it was tried to determine the correlation between organizational commitment and job-related stress levels of nurses working in public hospitals, which is one of the important elements of health care delivery. At the same time, it was tried to determine the correlation between mandatory organizational change and organizational commitment levels and change direction and before/after change organizational commitment and job-related stress levels. The results to be obtained are intended to contribute significantly to the health sector and management science in general.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

Constant changes in competition, market, and technology in businesses also increase the importance that organizations place on the value of their human resources [12]. However, in recent years, negative attitudes and behaviors towards the organizational system and work have become more common in organizations, and in such an environment, it is becoming increasingly difficult to increase employees' feelings of commitment to work and organization [13]. In some studies, one of the reasons why the qualified workforce, leave the organization and accept to work in other organizations for less pay, appears that the organization and its managers have been referred to as failing to connect their employees to the organization [14,15]. Organizational commitment, which is considered as one of the job-related attitudes of employees and which is one of the concepts that organizations have emphasized in their productivity studies in recent years, in general, refers to coming together of individuals working to achieve a number of goals, the desire of the employees to stay in the organization by identifying with their job, their compatibility with the work, interest and their psychological commitment to the organization by being identified with their job with loyalty to organizational values [13,14,17-20]. Allen and Meyer (1991) address organizational commitment in three fundamental dimensions as emotional commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment [13,21].

Job-related stress/occupational stress, which significantly affects working life and is the precursor to many organizational behavior variables, has an important role in the performance of employees [22]. Work stress is the sum of correlations that exceed the individual's tolerability, which is threatening according to the mindset of the individual. Although work stress may seem to be an extension of general stress, its nature differs from general stress. Job-related stress occurs specifically as a consequence of

working life. Factors such as tasks, work environment, role conflict, the capacity of the employee may cause stress [23-25]. Although there are studies that express a positive correlation between organizational commitment and job-related stress, there are studies in which negative correlations are emphasized [5,8,26]. According to Leong, Furnham, and Cooper (1996), there are two different views on job-related stress and organizational commitment: According to the first view, employees with high organizational commitment experience the impact of stress more than employees with low organizational commitment. According to the second opinion, on the other hand, commitment protects individuals from experiencing the negative impacts of stress. There are several researches that reflect these two views. Meyer et al. (2002) stated in their meta-analysis study of research using a three-dimensional organizational commitment model that there is a positive correlation between continuance commitment and stress, Temizkan (2004), in his thesis on doctors in order to examine the correlations between organizational commitment and stress found a positive correlation between job-related stress and organizational commitment, Aydogan (2008) referred a positive correlation between stress and continuation commitment, Güçlü (2006), in his study, found a negative direction between work stress and emotional and normative commitment and Omoloara (2008), in his research, stated that there was a negative correlation between job-related stress and organizational commitment [1,5,6,9-11].

2. Research's Method

2.1. Purpose of Research

It was planned to determine the correlation between the loyalty of the nurses in Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdulhamit Han Education and Research Hospital to the organization and their job-related stress levels.

In this context, the hypotheses of the research are as follows;

H₀: There is no significant correlation between organizational commitment and job-related stress.

H₁: There is a significant correlation between organizational commitment and job-related stress.

Ethical Consideration

Before data collection, Ethics Committee approval was gained from the Ethics Committee of İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Medicine (7/5/2019-108624)

Form of Research

It was planned as descriptive in order to determine the correlation between the loyalty of the nurses in Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdulhamit Han Education and Research Hospital to their organization and the stress levels related to work.

2.2. The Location of Research and Its Characteristics

The research was conducted on nurses in Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdülhamit Han Education and Research Hospital in İstanbul province in order to investigate the scientific results of nurses who received education in schools under the Turkish Armed Forces and General Staff and who are assigned to these institutions between hospitals on the basis of organizational commitment in changing their organizations.

2.3. The Population and Sample of Research

The population and sample of the research consist of military nurses who were transferred from the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) to the Ministry of Health in 2016 and nurses who were employed at

Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdulhamit Han Education and Research Hospital after the transition and who agreed to participate in the research.

2.4. Application of Data Collection Forms

The ‘Organizational Commitment Scale’, which consists of 23 items in the first part, includes questions to assess the organizational commitment of employees. The scale is of Likert type and the items are (5) Strongly Disagree, (4) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree (2) Agree, (1) Strongly agree. In the second part, the “Job-related Tension Scale” developed by Revicki et al. in 1991 was used. The scale is of Likert type and the items are (4) Not suitable for me, (3) Partly suitable for me, (2) Mostly suitable for me (1) Completely suitable for me.

2.5. Data Collection

The required data were collected using the Job-Related Tension Scale and the Organizational Commitment Scale. The data were collected after informing the participants on the purpose of the research and obtaining their consent and the scale was applied by face-to-face interview method at the inconvenience of the participants.

In this study, the reliability of the organizational commitment scale was found to be high as Cronbach’s Alpha=0.934. The reliability of the job-related tension scale was found to be high as Cronbach’s Alpha=0.786.

3. Statistical Analysis of Data

The data obtained from the research were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 22.0. In the evaluation of the data, number, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistical methods.

The scores of scale sizes are evaluated between 1 and 5. In order to calculate the distribution range, distribution range=maximum value - minimum value/ number of degrees formula was used. This range has a width of 4 points. This width was divided into five equal widths and the limit values were determined as “very low” from 1.00 to 1.79, “low” from 1.80 to 2.59, “medium” from 2.60 to 3.39, high from 3.40 to 4.19, very high from 4.20 to 5.00 and the findings were interpreted [27].

The t-test was used to compare quantitative continuous data between two independent groups, and a one-way ANOVA test was used to compare quantitative continuous data between more than two independent groups. To determine differences after ANOVA test, the Scheffe test was used as a complementary post-hoc analysis. Pearson correlation and regression analysis were applied among the continuous variables of the study. In the study, organizational commitment scores were checked and the difference of job-related stress scores compared to groups was analyzed by ANCOVA test.

4. Limitations

Since the study covers a multidimensional and comprehensive subject, the subject is limited in this respect by addressing organizational commitment and the impact of job-related stress on nurses. The findings obtained in the research were examined in the sample of Haydarpaşa Sultan Abdulhamit Han Education and Research Hospital and were limited within the time frame in which the data was collected. In this context, the evaluation of the findings from the current study together with findings

from different sample groups that are both quantitative and qualitatively differentiated is important to achieve more generalizable results.

5. Findings and Discussion

In this section, the findings, which were obtained from the analysis of data collected by scales from the employees involved in the research to solve the research problem, are included. Explanations and interpretations were made based on the findings.

5.1. Descriptive Analyses

By age, 57 (33.5%) of employees were aged 30 and under, 58 (34.1%) were aged between 31-40, and 55 (32.4%) were aged between 41 and over. By gender, 149 (87.6%) of employees were female and 21 (12.4%) were male. By education level, 75 (44.1) of employees were undergraduate and above, 49 (28.8%) were associate degree and 46 (27.1%) were high-school graduates. By the duration of their work in the institution, 87 (51.2%) of employees have 5 years or less and 83 (48.8%) have 5 years or more. By their weekly working hours, 119 (70.0%) of employees work 40 hours or less, and 51 (30.0%) work 40 hours and more. By working units, 64 (37.4%) of employees work in internal units, 49 (28.8%) in surgical units, 24 (14.1%) in out-patient units, 17 (10%) in intensive care units, 13 (7.6%) in administration units and 3 (1.7%) in the training unit. By the number of patients given daily care, 49 (28.8%) of employees have 10 and less, 60 (35.3%) have 11-20, 61 (35.9%) have 20 and more. By their work schedule, 86 (50.6%) of employees work at day-shifts, 12 (7.1%) at night-shifts, and 72 (42.4%) in shifts. According to the satisfaction level of the employees, 65 (38.2%) are satisfied, 49 (28.8%) are dissatisfied, and 56 (32.9%) are undecided. According to the satisfaction of the employees of their units, 111 (65.3%) are satisfied, 31 (18.2%) are dissatisfied, and 28 (16.5%) are undecided. According to monthly income satisfaction, 23 (13.5%) of employees are distributed as yes, and 147 (86.5%) as no. According to the employee groups, 82 (48.2%) were previously employed at GATA and 88 (51.8%) were employees of the Ministry of Health.

Table 1. Organizational Commitment and Job-Related Tension Means

	N	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Emotional Commitment	170	2.804	1.114	1.000	5.000
Continuance Commitment	170	2.884	0.740	1.000	5.000
Normative Commitment	170	2.636	0.813	1.000	5.000
Organizational Commitment Total	170	2.770	0.742	1.040	5.000
Job-Related Tension	170	39.688	7.441	2.000	68.000

The mean of "emotional commitment" of the employees is calculated as $2,804 \pm 1,114$ (Min = 1; Max = 5), the mean of "continuance commitment" as $2,884 \pm 0,740$ (Min = 1; Max = 5), the mean of "normative commitment" as $2,636 \pm 0,813$ (Min = 1; Max = 5), "organizational commitment total" mean as 2.770 ± 0.742 (Min = 1.04; Max = 5) and "job-related tension" mean as 39.688 ± 7.444 (Min = 21; Max = 68).

The emotional commitment score of the employees involved in our research towards the organization is very close to the continuity commitment score but ranks second. Normative commitment,

on the other hand, ranks third. According to this, nurses' organizational commitment and emotional, continuance, and normative commitments, which are the lower dimensions of organizational commitment, are at the "moderate" level. This situation, as stated by Meyer et al. (2002), can be assessed as the level of employees feeling responsible for their job for the benefits they receive from the organization, or their level of loyalty to the organization is moderate [6].

Evaluating our research in terms of score evaluations, it can be said that the employees have a medium level of emotional commitment, and by increasing the job satisfaction levels of the employees, they will feel more connected to their jobs and will be more efficient by feeling more responsibility for the organization. For this reason, organizational culture, an effective leadership process, an effective communication environment, and mutual trust, giving nurses the message that they are important and valuable employees of the organization, sharing organizational goals, recognizing career opportunities, and supporting participation in decisions can be helpful as basic tools for employee commitment [16-18].

5.2. Correlation Analysis

Table 2. Correlation Analysis Between Organizational Commitment and Job-Related Tension Scores

	Emotional Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative Commitment	Organizational Commitment Total	Job-Related Tension
Emotional Commitment	1.000 0.000				
Continuance Commitment	0.383** 0.000	1.000 0.000			
Normative Commitment	0.630** 0.000	0.505** 0.000	1.000 0.000		
Organizational Commitment Total	0.879** 0.000	0.696** 0.000	0.864** 0.000	1.000 0.000	
Job-Related Tension	-0.492** 0.000	-0.053 0.490	-0.314** 0.000	-0.393** 0.000	1.000 0.000

p* < 0,05; p** < 0,01

When correlation analyses are examined between emotional commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, organizational commitment total, and job-related tension, the following correlations are found.

- r = 0.383 positive correlation (p=0,000<0.05) between continuance and emotional commitment,
- r = 0.63 positive correlation (p = 0,000 <0.05) between normative commitment and emotional commitment,
- r = 0.505 positive correlation (p =0.000<0.05) between normative commitment and continuance commitment,
- r = 0.879 positive correlation (p = 0.000 <0.05) between organizational commitment total and emotional commitment,
- r = 0.696 positive correlation (p = 0.000 <0.05) between organizational commitment total and continuance commitment,

- $r = 0.864$ positive correlation ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) between organizational commitment and normative commitment,
- $r = -0.492$ negative correlation ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) between job-related stress and emotional commitment,
- $r = -0.314$ negative correlation ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) between job-related stress and normative commitment,
- $r = -0.393$ negative correlation ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) between job-related stress and organizational commitment total

Correlations between other variables are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

In addition, another result of our research is that there is a negative correlation between job-related stress and emotional, normative, and overall organizational commitment. Looking at studies in foreign literature, many studies show that job-related stress has a significant and negative correlation with an organizational commitment [28-35]. The results of the research examining the characteristics between organizational commitment and job-related stress of nurses who play an active role in achieving the goals and objectives of hospitals and providing a quality and efficient service also support the results of our study [15,25,29,32,36-44]. Both literature surveys and the results of our research indicate that nurses, the most important component of the health care field, identify themselves with the organization and that, superior performance can be achieved from employees to the extent that nurses reflect their participation in the organization.

Highly motivated health manpower may tend to decrease job-related stress. Thus, his/her superior performance can be considered a success in the field of health by affecting the provision of quality health care and the service directed towards the community as a final outcome. For this purpose, an effective leadership process, an effective communication environment, and mutual trust in organizational culture can help nurses to communicate that they are important and valuable employees of the organization, sharing organizational goals, recognizing career opportunities, and supporting participation in decisions can be essential tools for commitment [4,15,16].

Table 3. Impact of Organizational Commitment on Job-Related Tension

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	T	p	F	Model (p)	R ²
Job-Related Tension	Invariant	45.946	21.628	0.000	20.225	0.000	0.254
	Emotional Commitment	-3.392	-5.906	0.000			
	Continuance Commitment	1,866	2.401	0.017			
	Normative Commitment	-0.807	-0.958	0.339			
Job-Related Tension	Invariant	50.611	24.803	0.000	30.695	0.000	0.149
	Organizational Commitment Total	-3.943	-5.540	0.000			

Regression analysis performed to determine the cause and effect relationship between emotional commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, and job-related tension was found to be significant ($F=20.225$; $p=0.000 < 0.05$). The total change in job-related tension level is 25.4% explained by emotional commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment ($R^2=0.254$). Emotional commitment reduces the level of job-related tension ($\beta=-3.392$). Continuance

commitment increases job-related tension level ($\beta=1.866$). Normative commitment, on the other hand, does not affect the job-related tension level ($p=0.339>0.05$).

Meyer et al. (2002), in their meta-analysis study of research using a three-dimensional model of organizational commitment, found a negative directional correlation between emotional commitment and stress, and a positive directional correlation between continuance commitment and stress. However, since the number of studies examining the correlation between normative commitment and stress is very small, they were unable to make a decisive analysis.

When the literature is examined in the context of the effect of organizational commitment on work-related tension, the results of the study that work-related stress affects organizational commitment by tending to be more organizationally dependent of less stressed workers support the results of our study [5,8,11,28,36-38].

5.3. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis conducted to determine the cause and effect relationship between organizational commitment total and job-related tension was found to be significant ($F=30.695$; $p=0.000<0.05$). The total change in job-related tension level is explained by organizational commitment total of 14.9% ($R^2=0.149$). Organizational commitment total reduces job-related tension level ($\beta=-3.943$). When the literature is reviewed, it was found that Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found a negative correlation between organizational commitment and stress in their meta-analysis study, and Moore, Henderson, and Chawla (2004) found that less stressed workers tend to be more organizationally dependent in their research on health professionals and debt enforcers in Texas [8,26].

Post-merger means of organizational commitment total do not differ significantly according to group variable ($t=1.827$; $p=0.070>0.05$).

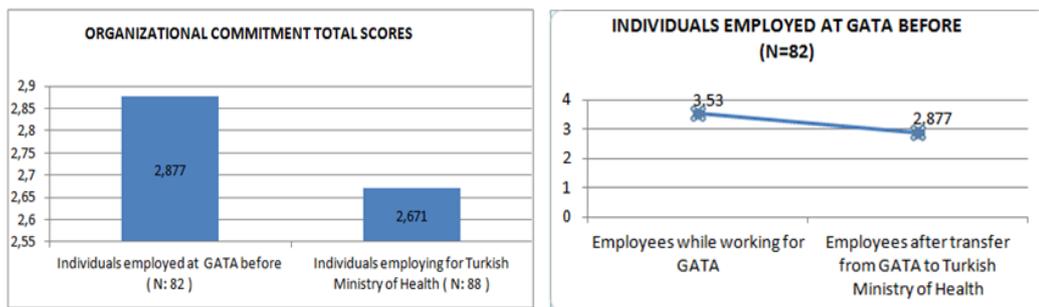


Figure 1. Organizational Commitment Total Scores by Groups

When we look at the differentiation of organizational commitment scores by groups, it is seen that the mean of organizational commitment of the Ministry of Health employees (2.671) is lower than the mean of overall organizational commitment (2.770). The organizational commitment means of GATA employees, which was 3,530 before the institution change, was found to be 2.877 after the merger.

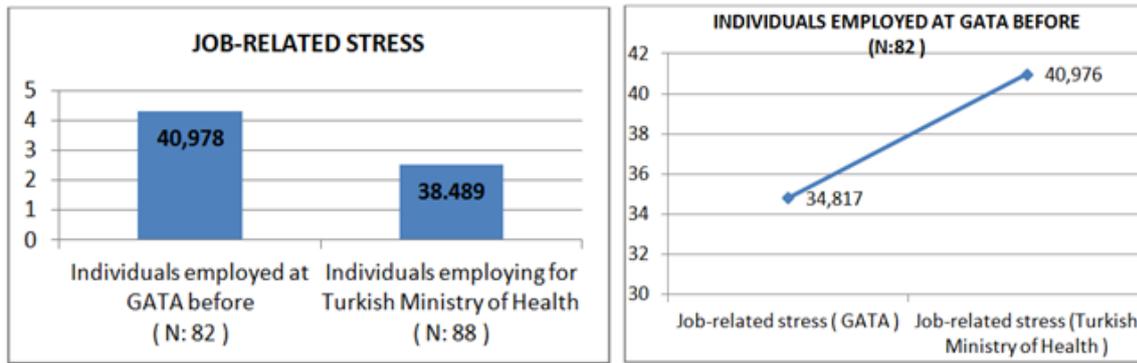


Figure 2. Total Scores of Job-Related Stress by Groups

After the merger, job-related stress scores of previously employed at GATA ($\bar{x} = 40.976$), were found to be higher than the job-related stress scores of the Ministry of Health employees ($\bar{x} = 38.489$). Job-related stress on previously employed nurses at GATA ($\bar{x} = 34.817$), according to GATA value, the increase in job-related stress value ($\bar{x} = 40.976$) was found significant ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$).

Looking at the differentiation of job-related stress total scores by groups; the job-related stress mean (38.489) of the Ministry of Health employees was seen to be lower than the overall job-related stress mean (39.688). The job-related stress means of employees working at GATA before the merger, which was 34.817, was found 40.976 after the merger.

Strong organizational culture strengthens the organizational commitment by meeting the expectations of the employees about the organization and increases their motivation. The effects and contributions of organizational culture in efficiency and productivity are seen on motivation and organizational commitment. Tools used to motivate employees also affect the culture of the organization. At the same time, the organizational culture affects the strength of organizational commitment by determining the duties, responsibilities, and obligations within the organization [44,45]. In the study of Karadağ et al. (2011), it was observed that GATA academic administrators have a high sense of commitment to their institutions. The high level of organizational commitment of nurses employed at GATA before can be thought to stem from the fact that nurses, who started their working life by studying at schools affiliated to the Turkish Armed Forces, worked with a high discipline for long years, understanding the organizational environment of this institution. Employees who are transferred from a more autocratic institution with limited participation in decisions and high hierarchy to an institution where employees are expected to be more participatory are expected to increase their organizational commitment and work-related stress, on the contrary, in our study, it was observed that organizational commitment of GATA employees decreased in their new institution and their work-related stress increased. This situation can be interpreted as taking into account the importance of organizational culture and organizational values, the importance of organizational commitment in terms of management science, and a subject that should be evaluated in terms of guiding politicians. The main subject in organizations is to be able to place the organizational culture and to adapt it correctly to the employees. Although the leader has a very important role in achieving this, the organizational commitment and work-related stress levels of the employees should be taken into consideration in the establishment of the values system adopted by the employees and the implementation of these values [3-45].

5.4. Covariance Analysis

In the research, organizational commitment scores were checked and the difference of job-related tension scores according to groups was analyzed by ANCOVA (covariance analysis) test.

Table 4. ANCOVA Test Results on The Difference Between Groups in The Impact of Organizational Commitment on Job-Related Tension

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean of Squares	F	p	η^2p
Emotional Commitment	1249.055	1	1249.055	31.566	0.000	0.161
Continuance Commitment	212.874	1	212.874	5.380	0.022	0.032
Normative Commitment	94.859	1	94.859	2.397	0.123	0.014
Group	323.051	1	323.051	8.164	0.005	0.047
Error	6528.926	165	39.569			
Total	277133.000	170				

$R^2 = 0.302$ (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.285$)

According to ANCOVA analysis results, the difference between adjusted job-related tension scores was found to be significant.

6. Conclusion

In this research, which reveals the correlation between stress and organizational commitment, different basic characteristics of nurses such as age, working hours, education level, marital status, and gender were taken into account. After determining descriptive data on employees, the correlation between stress and employees' organizational loyalty to the organization was examined. According to the findings obtained, there was a negative correlation between employees' job-related stress levels and organizational commitment. In other words, employees' job-related stress has been observed to negatively affect their level of commitment to the organization.

According to the results of our study, the job-related stress level of employees in GATA is higher than the job-related stress of the Ministry of Health employees. Despite the possibility that a military institution with more autocratic and limited participation in decisions and a higher hierarchy, and the stressors it can cause to the employee, would be expected to decline after the change of organization, the level of stress was observed to increase. It can be thought that this is due to the change that has been passed and the suddenness and necessity of this change. At the same time, it was concluded that the organizational commitment of GATA employees was on a downward trend compared to before the change of institution.

In conclusion, nurses experience very intense stress due to the nature of their job. In particular, it is observed that nurses experience stress from time to time due to their duties, their roles, relationships with patients/nurses or team members, physical conditions, and policies of the institution. Thus, sources of stress can weaken or sometimes completely eliminate people's commitment to the organization. On the other hand, individuals with low-stress levels tend to have a firm attitude towards the institution. Organizational commitment to the institution reveals the loyalty and commitment to thought, person,

and institution. Therefore, nurses should not experience problems such as incongruity or having difficulties.

The compliance to Research and Publication Ethics: This work was carried out by obeying research and ethics rules.

Ethical Consideration:

Before data collection, Ethics Committee approval was gained from the Ethics Committee of İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Medicine (7/5/2019-108624)

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