

The Effect of Internal Marketing on the Dimensions of Organizational Commitment: A Research on Nurses in Turkey

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Original Research

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Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of internal marketing applications on the organizational commitment of health care personnel, specifically nurses. Health care is crucial for people's lives and nurses are an important part of it. Internal marketing is a significant tool for increasing job efficiency and service quality.

Method: In order to test the hypotheses developed for this objective, data was collected in 2010 from 270 nurses registered to the Turkish Association of Surgical Nurses and the Association of Diabetes Nurses via e-mails. In this study, Foreman and Money's internal marketing scale and Allen and Meyer's organizational commitment scale were used in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were sent and received online. 250 questionnaires were received, the rate of response is 92%. The compiled data was evaluated via factor analysis and regression analysis.

Results: The findings of this analysis revealed that internal marketing activities are influential on organizational commitment elements, particularly affective commitment and normative commitment. According to survey results, in relation with the nurses' institutions, reward and communication - internal marketing applications - have an effect on normative, affective and continuance commitment - organizational commitment elements. It is concluded that vision and development - internal marketing applications - are effective on nurses' affective and normative commitment, yet are not effective on continuance commitment. On the other hand, it is found out that training - one of the internal marketing applications - has an impact on nurses' affective and normative commitment.

Conclusion: It is clear that internal marketing applications are influential on organizational commitment. It is possible to increase organizational commitment of nurses as long as there is required care and attention paid to internal marketing applications. Therefore, hospital

managers should raise their employees` satisfaction and commitment to the hospital by some internal marketing applications such as strengthening the employees` communication with each other, rewarding, creating vision and trainings. Therefore, hospital administrators should be aware of internal marketing applications, as they are vital to the staying decision of nurses.

Key Words: internal marketing, nurses, organizational commitment, Turkey

İçsel Pazarlama Faaliyetlerinin Örgütsel Bağlılık Unsurları Açısından Değerlendirilmesi: Türkiye’de Hemşireler Üzerine Bir Araştırma

Özet

Amaç: Bu çalışmanın amacı içsel pazarlama uygulamalarının sağlık sektörü çalışanı olan hemşirelerin örgütsel bağlılığı üzerinde etkisini incelemektir.

Yöntem: Bu amaçla geliştirilen araştırma hipotezlerini test üzere Türk Cerrahi ve Ameliyathane Hemşireleri Derneği ve Diyabet Hemşireleri Derneğine kayıtlı bulunan ve e-mail adresine sahip olan 270 hemşireye anket gönderilmiştir. Bu çalışmada anket sorularının oluşturulmasında Foreman ve Money’e ait içsel pazarlama ölçeği ve Allen ve Meyer’e ait örgütsel bağlılık ölçeğinden yararlanılmıştır. Anket online olarak gönderilmiş ve aynı şekilde geri toplanmıştır. 250 anket geri dönmüştür, geri dönüş oranı %92’dir. Veriler faktör analizi ve regresyonanalizi ile değerlendirilmiştir.

Bulgular: Analiz sonuçları; içsel pazarlama faaliyetlerinin örgütsel bağlılık unsurlarından duygusal bağlılık ve normatif bağlılık üzerinde etkili olduğunu göstermektedir.

Sonuç: İçsel pazarlama uygulamalarının örgütsel bağlılığı arttırdığı açıktır. Bu nedenle hastane yöneticileri; çalışanların birbirleriyle iletişimlerini güçlendirerek, ödüllendirme, iletişim, vizyon

oluşturma, eğitim çalışmaları gibi birtakım içsel pazarlama uygulamalarıyla çalışanların memnuniyetlerini ve hastaneye olan bağlılığını arttırmalıdır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: İçsel pazarlama, hemşireler, örgütsel bağlılık, Türkiye

Introduction

The human factor, is the most important focus for all service-oriented organizations. For any type of service companies, company employees are the focuspoint of the companies. Because, employees have an important role in providing the customers with qualified service and enabling customer satisfaction . Similar to allkinds of businesses, in hospitals and other healthcare organizations, human beings should be the most critical element to focus on. It is vital that, the employee serving in a hospital satisfies the needs of patients. This is because qualifications of the employees are parallel to the organization and they directly affect customer satisfaction. Employees are also the major marketers of the company’s concept of excellent service, creating customer satisfaction and further improving the organizational performance.¹ Therefore, satisfaction of the patient (external customer), is primarily dependent on the satisfaction of hospital employees, or, in other terms, internal customers.

The termof internal marketing appears to be used by Berry for the first time. When Berry² first devised the term internal marketing, he focused primarily on organizational views of the role of the employee in creating perceptions of service quality. He claimed that, organizations should view employees as customers, and be treated as such, or more precisely as internal customers.² Similarly, according to Greene³, “internal marketing is viewing employees as internal customers, viewing jobs as internal products, and endeavou-

ring to design these products to meet the needs of these customers better”.

According to the extended internal marketing approach, internal marketing is an effort to ensure customer satisfaction through the process of creating motivated and customer-oriented personnel. Shiu and Yu¹ have come to the result in their study that internal marketing effects the job satisfaction of employees. Iliopoulos and Priporas⁴ have come to the result that internal marketing has an important effect on employees after a study they have conducted in a public hospital. From this perspective, internal marketing approach is an organizational approach, that analyzes the roles of all personnel for the purpose of meeting the needs of the external customer. In other words, internal marketing is the task of successfully hiring, training and motivating able employees to serve the customer well⁵, which enables the work force to gain customer awareness and service orientation as well as motivation.⁶

The primary objective of internal marketing, is to obtain personnel who are motivated and aware of customers at every level, and to ensure external customer satisfaction, as the focus point of organizational activities is the external customer. Internal marketing activities, if carried out effectively, can thus change the attitudes and behaviors of the employees. Positive employee attitudes including job satisfaction, involvement and commitment to organizations can influence external marketing activities and hence and customer satisfaction.⁷ Once this satisfaction is created, the possibility of customer loyalty and stability will be obtained, which in turn, will lead to a growth in organizational profit and market share.

Internal marketing covers the activities of personnel informing, training and motivation, to ensure that the organization serves the customers better.⁸ The principals of internal marketing activities

are: reward ceremonies, inter-unit communication meetings, training sessions for the employees, orientation programs, training programs, exhibition organizations, video-slide demonstrations, celebrations for special occasions, boxes for complaints and suggestions, social activities, training and raising the employees, creating a vision for employees, personal development, rewards, education, management support, internal communication and employee involvement in external communication.⁹⁻¹⁴ Broadly, in internal marketing literature, the focal activities can be listed as: *personal development, training, vision formation, rewarding and communication.*

Internal marketing activities are important, as the staff members who catch an opportunity for self-development through all the offered services have elevated self-esteem and productivity; thereby his/her commitment to the organization rises. In addition, effective and continuous training programs are exceptionally significant since they do not merely inform the personnel on certain issues and develop their capabilities, but these programs also serve as a communication and interaction tool. In the studies of Moshahabet al¹⁵ it was reached to the result that hospital employees are highly motivated by taking service training. Hence, through internal marketing activities it becomes possible to satisfy the needs of employees and motivate them; increase job satisfaction, thereby preventing resignations, and ensuring the satisfaction and loyalty of the external customer.¹⁶

Supporting and training the employees, the employees` trust against each other and their active communication with each other and active communication in the organization, awarding the employees regularly, equal and just treatment to all personnel are some of the critical internal marketing activities that enhance the commitment levels of employees. The types of rewards that can

be used to provide sustainability, increasing productivity and motivating the employees are financial and nonfinancial rewards and competitions.. Rewarding personnel who have superior performance levels, should be practiced as an organizational policy.

If data sharing and healthy communication exist in an organization, the employees will feel more valuable and they will strive to perform at a high level for the well being of their organization.

Allen and Meyer¹⁷ define organizational commitment as the “psychological condition that explains the relationship of employees with the organization and their decision to stay in it”. They further suggest that, organizational commitment is the strength of an individual’s identification with the goals and values of a particular organization, the strong belief in, and acceptance of, organizational objectives and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization.¹⁸ Similarly, Abbott¹⁹ defines organizational commitment as the psychological bond between employee and the organization s/he is employed in.

Briefly, it is based on employees’ self-identification with the affiliation for which they work. Employees with high organizational commitment are able to work in harmony, and they add value to the organization. Hence, their commitment and motivation is also secured.

Researchers analyze organizational commitment as a multidimensional phenomenon. One of these studies focusing on the multidimensionality of organizational commitment is from Meyer and Allen. According to their research, these dimensions are: *affective commitment* (identification with the organization), *normative commitment* (expressing a perceived obligation to stay in an organization), and *continuance commitment* (recogni-

tion of the costs associated with leaving an organization).¹⁷ That is to say, an individual with *affective commitment* thinks s/he wants to stay; an individual with *normative commitment* feels obliged to stay and an individual with *continuance commitment* feels s/he must stay in the organization.²⁰ Nurses who have affective commitment to the institution they work for devote themselves to this organization and their level of commitment will naturally be high. On the basis of their continuing with the same organization, there is commitment. Normative commitment is that nurses feel grateful to their organization. The nurses with high level of normative commitment consider behaving in the way that is desired by organization as the right thing to do. They feel responsible for behaving positively. On the other hand, continuance commitment is about the nurses’ material and moral values that they will sacrifice in the event of leaving the organization. In continuance commitment, a nurse thinks about whether she will have the same acquisition or not when she transfers to another organization. Otherwise, this type of commitment can be explained as feeling obliged to stay in the organization for familial or similar reasons or having not much time for retirement. The nurses with a compulsory commitment to the organization have low performance at work and behave negatively.

As relevant literature is scanned, it surfaces that there are studies that analyze the relationship between internal marketing activities and organizational commitment. In Caruana and Calleya’s¹⁰ study, they suggested that internal marketing might be a useful tool in creating organizational commitment and internal marketing activities (vision, rewarding, training and in-company communication) have a positive effect on affective commitment, which is a dimension of organizational commitment. Similarly, Chang and Chang’s¹³ study on hospital personnel suggested

that, there is a positive relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment. Demir et al.'s²¹ study on Turkish academicians proposed that, there is a strong relationship between reward for merit, which is a sub dimension of internal marketing, and affective-normative commitment; corporate communication and affective- continuance commitment: training-vision and continuance-normative commitment. Further, Candan and Çekmecelioğlu's²² study demonstrated that internal marketing activities positively influence affective and normative commitment.

Aim

The purpose of our study was to analyze the effects of internal marketing applications on organizational commitment. In that context, the focus is on whether internal marketing activities have an effect on the organizational commitment of nurses.

The research model is a cause and effect relationship based model that analyzes the effects of internal marketing activities on organizational commitment. The research model (proposed model) in this study has been formed by the writers/researchers based on aims of this study. It is shown in Table 1 with the hypotheses, which are as follows:

H1, H2, H3: Internal marketing activities (rewarding and communication, vision and develop-

ment, training) have an effect on affective commitment (H1), continuance commitment (H2) and normative commitment. (H3)

Method

Design

This study design is descriptive. Research was carried out in Turkish Association of Surgical Nurses and the Association of Diabetes Nurses in 2010.

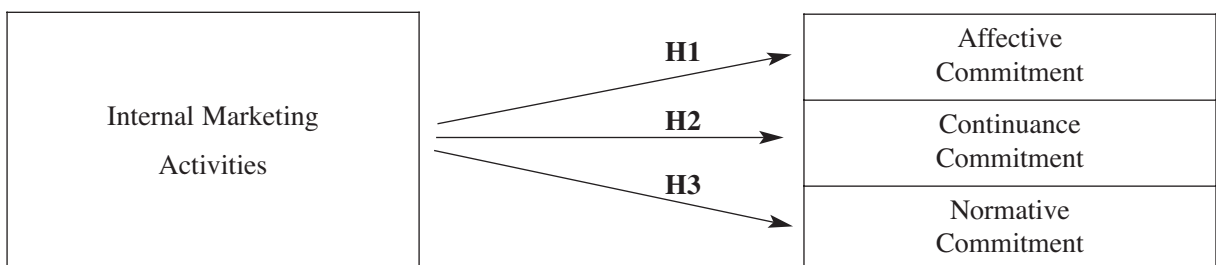
Sample

Our present research covers registered nurses with e-mails who belong to the Turkish Association of Surgical Nurses and the Association of Diabetes Nurses. There are 270 nurses with e-mails registered to those two associations. The questionnaires were sent and were received. 250 questionnaires were received. The rate of response is 92%. The participants of this survey were asked to fill in and response in a period of fifteen days.

Data Collection

The data gathering tool of this study, which is the questionnaire, consists of two parts. Demographic questions, and statements (items) in table 2 form the questionnaire. As items of the questionnaire are places in this study (in table 2), they are not added in appendix. In the first part, there were five questions asked to determine demographical features. In the second part, there were ques-

Figure 1: Research (Proposed) Model



tions related to internal marketing activities that were based on Foreman and Money's⁹ internal marketing scale, which has been used as a reference for many studies in Turkey^{21,22} and other countries.^{10,23} The questions that are relevant to organizational commitment are based on Allen and Meyer's²⁰ organizational commitment scale that has been used by a great number of researchers in Turkey.^{21,22, 24-26} Since validity and reliability of this scale was tested earlier, it was used as a reference and applied to the present research.^{9,20}

Regarding internal marketing 15, organizational commitment 18, variables were employed and these variables were evaluated via a 5-point Likert type response scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). Additionally, questionnaires were sent to two administrative professors experienced in questionnaire items and five nurses to control its content. A pilot run of the questionnaire was then administered to 40 nurses. After detecting that there was no difficulty in understanding the questions, the questionnaire was put into practice.

Data Analysis

Of the descriptive statistics, a percentage basis was used for demographical data, and a mean and standard deviation were used for internal marketing activities and expressions related to organizational commitment elements. To detect the number of dimensions and to analyze organizational commitment scale and internal marketing scale and the relationship of scale items with relevant factors (to detect the applicability of factor analysis for sampling adequacy test by conducting KMO: .749 and Bartlett's test: .000), factor analysis was applied. To analyze the effects of internal marketing on organizational commitment and test hypotheses, multiple regression analysis were employed. Research carried out 95% confi-

dence interval. SPSS 16 version was used to analyses the data.

Ethical Considerations

To conduct the study on the nurses selected amongst the association members, a petition stating the research topic, objective and method was written to the administration. Our study was initiated on receiving 5 no and 5.08.2010 dated and 2658 no and 10.06.2010 dated written approvals of associations. Letter of approval was sent to the Association Administration to conduct this survey on the nurses of the association concerned. When it was favorably replied, the survey was conducted. The numbers in the paragraph show the date and registry number of the letter.

Study Limitations

This study covers a limited number of nurses. In future studies it would be beneficial to increase the number of samplings and conduct this analysis on both the private sector nurses and the state nurses, and then compare the findings. Only these employees at health sector were contacted, therefore this study was conducted upon these participants. It will certainly be more useful to include other employees at health sector.

Results

55.6% of the nurses constituting the sampling are 30 years of age or below, 64% are married, 38% are graduates of a nursing college, 83% are employed in public hospitals and 39% have 12 or more years of work experience. All of the respondents were women, there were no men.

Factor Analysis Results of the Variables Forming Organizational Commitment Scale and their Reliability Values

Table 2 illustrates the number of dimensions organizational commitment scale can be analy-

zed. It also demonstrates the results of the factor analysis which was conducted to expose the correlation between scale items and relevant factors. Relevant factor loads are also given. By employing varimax rotation for the organizational commitment scale, 3 dimensions of which eigenvalues are above 1 were exposed. After removing organizational commitment scale variables (OC2, OC4, OC6, OC7, OC9) that decrease Cronbach's alpha coefficient a structure composed of 3 factors was created (Table 2). Factors were named after scanning relevant scale literature and considering item contents. Factor 1 is named as Affective Commitment, Factor 2 as Continuance Commitment and Factor 3 as Normative Factor. Factor 1(AC) explains 26%, Factor 2 (CC) explains and 21% and Factor 13% of the total variance.

Factor Analysis Results of the Variables Forming Internal Marketing Scale and their Reliability Values

The results of the factor analysis employed to detect the number of dimensions of the internal marketing scale and the relationships of scale items with relevant factors were illustrated in Table 2. By employing varimax rotation for the internal marketing scale, a 3-factor structure of which eigenvalues were above 1 was exposed. Factor 1 is named as Affective Commitment, Factor 2 as Continuance Commitment and Factor 3 as Normative Factor. Factor 1(AC) explains 26%, Factor 2 (CC) explains and 21% and Factor 13% of the total variance.

Regression Analysis

To analyze the effects of internal marketing on organizational commitment and test the hypotheses, a multiple regression analysis was conducted (table 3). A multiple regression analysis detects the strongest variable which has the highest rate of variance explanation amongst a group of inde-

pendent variables that are hypothesized to explain a dependent variable.

According to the findings obtained from this study:

- Of the sub-dimensions of internal marketing, rewarding and communication ($\beta = .239$, $p < 0.05$), vision and development ($\beta = .244$, $p < 0.05$), and training ($\beta = .242$, $p < 0.05$) are influential on affective commitment. It can be claimed that rises in all three independent variables lead to an increase in **affective commitment**, hence H1 hypothesis was confirmed.

- Of the sub-dimensions of internal marketing, rewarding and communication ($\beta = .245$, $p < 0.05$) have an effect on continuance commitment. However, vision, development and training have no effect on **continuance commitment**. Thus, the H2 hypothesis was confirmed for rewarding and communication for sub-dimensions, but unconfirmed for the other sub-dimensions.

- Of the sub-dimensions of internal marketing, rewarding and communication ($\beta = .174$, $p < 0.05$), vision and development ($\beta = -.272$, $p < 0.05$), and training ($\beta = .489$, $p < 0.05$) are influential on normative commitment. It can be claimed that increases in all three independent variables lead to an increase in **normative commitment**. Hence, the H3 hypothesis was confirmed.

Discussion

The results of our study reveal that the organizational commitment of nurses is significantly low. This is not a surprising result for nurses in Turkey, as the survey results are in parallel with the previous studies conducted in Turkey. Due to such a similar result, it is mentioned here. As the means in Table 2 are examined, it appears that, with a general mean of 2.66 the level of organizational commitment is significantly low. Accord-

Table 1: Results of factor analysis about organizational commitment and internal marketing

ITEMS	Factors				
	AC†	CC	NC	Mean	S.D
Organizational Commitment (OC)*					
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	.833			2.85	1.32
3. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	.662			3.06	1.05
5. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	.769			2.73	1.17
10.This organization deserves my loyalty	.697			2.66	1.06
12.I owe to great deal to my organization	.675			2.52	1.28
18.If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I was consider working elsewhere	.470			2.66	1.15
14.It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.		.615		2.68	1.30
15.Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my organization now.		.650		2.45	1.27
16.I feel that I have very few options to consider leaving this organization		.817		2.38	1.09
17.One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.		.843		2.34	1.24
8. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave nursing			.799	2.88	1.16
11.I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.			.481	2.74	1.24
13.Even though I do not want to work in my present organization, I must go on working			.718	2.68	1.33
Croanbach's Alfa	0.81	0.79	0.56	Total Alfa: 0.84	
Total Variance Explained: %60.36 / KMO (Kaizer-Meyer-Olkin test): .749 / Bartlett's test of sphericity Sig: .000					
Internal Marketing	RC	VD	T	Mean	S.D
8. Our performance measurement and reward systems encourage employees to work together.	.816			2.43	0.99
9. We measure and reward employee performance that contributes most to our organization's vision.	.864			2.30	1.14
10.We use data we gather from employees to improve their jobs, and to develop the strategy of the organization.	.800			2.89	1.04
11.Our organization communicates to employees the importance of the services roles.	.708			2.88	1.29
12. In our organization, those employees who provide excellent service are rewarded for their efforts.	.746			2.36	0.93
14. This organization has the flexibility to accommodate the differing needs of employees.	.750			2.85	1.05

15. We place considerable emphasis in the organization on communicating with our employees.	.617			2.64	1.07
1. Our organization offers employees a vision that they can believe in.		.869		2.97	1.10
2. We communicate our organization's vision well to employees.		.649		2.86	1.17
3. We prepare our employees to perform well.		.721		2.65	1.01
5. Skill and knowledge development of employees happens as an ongoing process in our organization.		.428		3.39	1.08
13. In this organization, the employees are properly trained to perform their services roles.		.606		2.97	1.08
4. Our organization views the development of knowledge and skills in employees as an investment rather than a cost.			.792	2.65	1.09
6. We teach our employees "why they should do things" and not just "how they should do things".			.923	3.19	1.03
7. In our organization we go beyond training and educate employees as Well.			.777	3.40	1.10
Croanbach's Alfa	0.91	0.83	0.83	Total Alfa: 0.91	
Total Variance Explained: %68.3 / KMO (Kaizer-Meyer-Olkin test): .859 / Bartlett's test of sphericity Sig: .000					

Table 2continue:

* "OC2 I do not have any affective commitment to my hospital, OC4 I do not feel like a part of the family in this hospital, OC6 I do not have a strong sense of belonging to the hospital that I work in, OC7 I do not feel any moral obligation to keep working for my current employer, OC9 I would feel myself guilty if I quit this hospital right now" are removed

† AC: Affective Commitment, CC: Continuance Commitment, NC: Normative Commitment; RC: Rewarding and Communication, VD: Vision and Development, T: Training

ding to the general mean of the expressions on internal marketing activities (2.83), nurses find internal marketing applications of hospitals unsatisfactory.

These findings are consistent with literature, as earlier studies have also documented decreased levels of nurses' organizational commitment.^{27,28} In terms of a cause and effect relationship; inadequate communication, the lack of rewarding systems, training problems, excessive work loads, role ambiguity, conflicting responsibilities, and failure to reach business objectives, are major factors which drive nurses to emotional burnout.²⁹⁻³³ As a result of these various problems, nurses are forced to resign at an early age.

On the other hand, specific inadequacies in the working environment such as lack of internal marketing activities- activities that strengthen commitment- results in low level of organizational commitment. Correspondingly, we detected that nurses also deem internal marketing applications inadequate.

According to the results of our analysis, hypotheses are supported. A meaningful relation was not found out among "vision and development", "training" dimensions of internal marketing applications and continuance commitment. The findings of our study demonstrate that internal marketing applications have an effect on organizational commitment, and once all the fin-

Table 2: The effect of internal marketing activities on organizational commitment (results of regression analysis)

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT (dependent variable)					
INTERNAL MARKETING (independent variables)	Affective Commitment				
	β	t	sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Rewarding and Communication	.239	3.441	.001	.098	.362
Vision and Development	.244	3.206	.002	.097	.409
Training	.242	4.084	.000	.107	.305
F	43.771		.000		
R ²	.348				
Adj. R ²	.340				
INTERNAL MARKETING (independent variables)	Continuance Commitment				
	β	t	sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Rewarding and Communication	.245	2.978	.003	.091	.445
Vision and Development	-.032	-.354	.724	-.250	.173
Training	.136	1.937	.054	.000	.266
F	7.682		.000		
R ²	.086				
Adj. R ²	.075				
INTERNAL MARKETING (independent variables)	Normative Commitment				
	β	t	sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Rewarding and Communication	.174	2.254	.025	.021	.337
Vision and Development	-.272	-3.233	.001	-.490	-.120
Training	.489	7.462	.000	.331	.567
F	20.685		.000		
R ²			.201		
Adj. R ²			.192		

dings are examined as a whole, it can be stated that the findings are consistent with earlier studies.^{10,14,21,22,34} It appears that internal marketing activities are particularly influential on affective commitment and normative commitment, which are both elements of organizational commitment.

It can reasonably be concluded that a system of reward giving and communication are effective on three types of commitment. Abaan and Duygulu who conducted studies on the organizational commitment of nurses in Turkey found that promotion opportunities in an organization and positive relations at work have an accelerated effect on the organizational commitment of employees.²⁸ Accordingly, in performance evaluation, equality and a fair rewarding system, promotion opportunities, an effective, two-way communication system all give a positive working ethos for nurses.

In addition, easy access to any data in and out of the organization will increase affective, continuance and normative commitment of nurses to their hospitals. Proper and qualified data exchanges lessen the ambiguity of nurses while raising their feelings of satisfaction and organizational commitment. For that reason, as it is the case for other organizations, a proper system of communication should be established in hospitals.

It has been discovered in our study that, vision and development are influential on affective and normative commitment, but not on continuance commitment. People who are devoted to an organization with continuance commitment stay there because they have to remain in that organization. This finding can be associated with the fact that in today's world, it is hard for nurses to find a job in public hospitals and it is a tough decision for them to make to decide to quit from those hospitals.

We detected that training has an effect on affective and normative commitment. Effective and

continuous training programs are significant in both educating and raising the skills of nurses. Further, these programs can also develop customer-oriented awareness of nurses. The nurses who are provided with any type of training opportunities are expected to have an elevated commitment since their job satisfaction, organizational and personal objectives will be at similar levels. Similarly, the results obtained by Tsa-i and Tang³⁵ demonstrated that the more service training programs were implemented, and the clearer the service vision given by the hospital was, the better quality service patients received.

Conclusion

The findings of our study revealed that organizational commitment is significantly low. At this point, the need to carefully implement internal marketing activities, which are significant tools in developing organizational commitment, has surfaced. That is because the hypotheses, which were developed to detect the effect of *internal marketing activities on organizational commitment*, have proved to be satisfactory. As our findings indicate, internal marketing applications are influential on organizational commitment, which means it is possible to increase the organizational commitment of nurses. Therefore, required care should be paid to all of the internal marketing applications.

As our study emphasizes, the satisfaction of patients (external customers), can only be guaranteed through the satisfaction of employees (internal customers). At this point, organizational commitment plays an important role. That is because as organizational commitment level of nurses gets higher, so does the quality of care and patient satisfaction in return. Internal marketing, in that context, is a vital tool for increasing organizational commitment. Hence, hospital adminis-

trators should strengthen the communication amongst employees, pay special care to rewarding, communication, and training activities to increase both the employee and patient satisfaction. The presence of equality criteria in performance evaluation and the presence of fair reward system, chances of promotion, effective mutual communication system, an environment to express their own opinions, the chance to reach the information both within and outside the organization. Furthermore, effective and ongoing trainings are important in terms of both the informing the nurses and developing their skills. Trainings can expertise trainings, various courses, marketing communications trainings to improve patient-customer relations . These trainings help the nurses feel themselves deserving and may give them chances to improve themselves further in their career.

Contributions

Study Design: G E-I

Data Collection and Analysis: F E-A, G E-I

Manuscript Writing: G E-I, F E-A

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