

An Investigation of the Impact of Social Capital on Performance of Payame Noor Employees of Tehran Province (Case Study: Varamin Payame Noor University)

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ABSTRACT: One of the most important aspects of social sustainability is to use the concept of capital in social dimension. Although, the word "capital" is applied in economical context, it is getting increasingly accepted in social context since two decades ago, such that it is introduced as an efficient and major resource in development. What lies in the meaning of social capital is investing in social relations and increasing, extending and sharing resources in social relations through social capital in order to facilitate collective action and build trust. Therefore, social relations is the main ground for social capital. This research is descriptive-correlational and is applied in terms of purpose. Statistical population of this work includes the staff of Varamin Payam-Noor University. Fifty-five members of the staff were selected via random sampling. The research model was adopted from the work of Erlinger et al in 2013. Correlation test and regression analysis were used for data analysis. Two primary and seven secondary hypotheses were validated. Based on them, social capital has a positive and significant effect on the commitment and performance of the staff of Tehran Payam-Noor University and on their commitment to the quality of the services and citizenship behavior.

Keywords: Social Capital, Commitment, Performance, Varamin Payam-Noor University

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are built to achieve certain goals. The degree of success in achieving organizational goals has a direct relationship with the performance of the human resources. A brief study of human resource management books reveals that most of the experts believe that since human resources play a determinant and pivotal role in fulfilling the goals of an organization and in its survival, growth and dynamism, the organizations should evaluate their staff and assess them based on appropriate criteria, their capability, skill, behavior, competence, performance, potential and actual talent before making any important decisions such as promotion, increasing the income, issuing rewards, educational planning, designing development and improvement plans, relocation, appointment and dismissal from service. There are many techniques and standards to evaluate individuals. The most important factor to consider in applying these methods is whether they provide the closest estimation to reality for their users. Nowadays, the success of an organization cannot be defined merely in accumulating material wealth and equipping the latest physical facilities and communication and information technologies.

The Importance of Social Capital

According to Pope (2003), Mat (2007) and Ireland and Meyer et.al (1999), social capital has five positive effects. First, social capital reduces exchange costs. Second, it facilitates creating and sharing knowledge. Third, the flow of interdependent activities is facilitated through development of a common understanding in the organization. Fourth, organizational cohesion increases, resulting in the decrease of the costs of leaving service, relocating, employing and retraining the staff. Fifth, companies increase their chance of profiting more than industry's average through maximizing the value of collaboration (Murphy, 2002).

At the individual level, social capital can help a lot to individual improvement. For example, job finding is one of the most recognized benefits of the networks. Strong evidence demonstrate that most of the people find their jobs, better payments and more satisfying jobs through individual connections rather than official medium.

Another research by Peterson et al. in 2000 revealed that social capital is exploited for job finding by white people more than black people (Peterson et al., 2000).

RESEARCH METHOD

The statistical population for this research consists of all the staff of Varamin Payam-Noor University. A sample of fifty-five individuals is generated using Cochran formula. The validity of the questionnaire is confirmed by experts and its reliability is validated using Cronbach's alpha.

Regression Test

Regression analysis is a statistical technique to investigate and model the relationship between the variables. Regression is required for estimation in almost every field such as engineering, physics, economics, management, biological sciences, biology and social sciences. Regression analysis is one of the most frequently used methods among statistical techniques.

Table1. The Results of Hypothesis Testing via Regression

Hypothesis Number	Variable		Standard Regression Weight	Beta Coefficient	Squared Coefficient of Determination	Significance	Result
	Independent	Dependent					
1 primary	Social Capital	Staff Commitment	1.072	0.80	0.65	0.000	confirmed
2 primary	Social Capital	Staff Performance	0.98	0.83	0.69	0.000	confirmed
1 secondary	Social Capital	Staff Quality Commitment	0.85	0.80	0.65	0.000	confirmed
2 secondary	Social Capital	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.92	0.82	0.67	0.000	confirmed
3 secondary	Organizational Commitment	Job Performance	0.61	0.69	0.47	0.000	confirmed
4 secondary	Organizational Commitment	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.67	0.80	0.64	0.000	confirmed
5 secondary	Service Quality Commitment	Job Performance	0.77	0.69	0.48	0.000	confirmed
6 secondary	Service Quality Commitment	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.91	0.85	0.73	0.000	confirmed
7 secondary	Job Performance	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.67	0.71	0.50	0.000	confirmed

Since the relationship between variables was validated using Pearson correlation test, regression test was used to calculate the strength of this relationship. The results of the regression test indicate that applying social capital variable in Varamin Payam-Noor University has a 0.80 effect on university staff commitment and the impact of this variable on the university staff performance is 0.83. Results of the secondary hypothesis testing reveal that the impact of the variable for service quality commitment on organizational citizenship behavior is very high and equal to 0.85.

CONCLUSION

Studying the Hypotheses and Suggestions

All of the Pearson correlation relationships between the variables are validated. It indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between all dependent and independent variables.

All of the results of this research are in accordance with various researchers' work in this field. The results of primary hypothesis analysis (the effect of social capital on commitment and performance of the staff of Varamin Payam-Noor University) were verified with high correlation and standard regression coefficient. The consideration of this result -the major role of social capital in improving organizational commitment and staff performance- will facilitate the development process and cultural and economic evolution for the organization. Therefore, university officials must apply social capital as a competitive and efficient means in their activities to achieve a higher staff commitment and performance. Not only university officials, but also managers and officials of other organizations can apply appropriate methods to build trust, develop commitment among the staff, train the staff, encourage and form expert groups in the organization in order to increase social capital of the staff and finally improve their organizational commitment and performance.

First and second primary hypotheses study the relationship between social capital and staff commitment and performance. Impact of social capital on commitment and performance is 0.80 and 0.83, respectively, which indicates a strong relationship between these variables., social capital has five positive effects. First, social capital reduces exchange costs. Second, it facilitates creating and sharing knowledge. Third, the flow of interdependent activities is facilitated through development of a common understanding in the organization. Fourth, organizational cohesion increases, resulting in the decrease of the costs of leaving service, relocating, employing and retraining the staff. Fifth, companies increase their chance in profiting more than industry's average through maximizing the value of collaboration. Commitment and performance is increased in this way, which is indicated by these works.

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