

Assessment of Relationship between Managers' Power Resources and Employees commitment of Governmental Organizations in Rafsanjan Southeastern Iran

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Abstract

All activities at different levels of the organization will not lead to high productivity unless commitment and inner sense of staff do not exist. Therefore, our community requires committing the employees to do things right through tools and resources of power that are handled by leaders and managers, and affect the behavior of employees. This study evaluates the relationship between five power resources of managers (expertise, coercive, legitimate, reward and referent) and employee commitment. According to nature of subject, the research is descriptive correlation. Statistical population contained employees of governmental organizations of Rafsanjan including 6875 people among which 350 individuals were selected through first formula of sampling. The questionnaires were distributed among employees and collected data were analyzed by SPSS. Frequency tables, column charts, Pearson and Spearman correlation tests and multiple linear regressions have been used for data analysis. Among five resources of power, expertise and referent power had positive relation with employee commitment and other resources had negative relation.

Keywords: Power Resources, Commitment, Employees, Managers, Organization

Introduction

Our world is the world of organizations and the main director of this circle is human being. They give life to organizations and enable reaching the goals. Without human, organization is meaningless and management is an ambiguous affair (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995).

Behavior of employees in all organizational levels are affected by managers' behavior, and behavior of managers is derived from their power resources that use them for authority and affect on others' behavior (L. Daft, 2000).

For being effectiveness in such an era, it is necessary for managers to operate beyond the boundaries of nations and adopt themselves with different cultures, systems and techniques. Adaptation is the key and password of executives' success. On the other hand, leaders must obtain power based on their personalities, efforts and succeeds where they will work to achieve. The manager, who uses power tools and resources according to the circumstances, will be more successful.

Managers can modify the behavior of subordinates according to their wishes through influence in the heart, although the power resources are affected by the change of present world and breaking the boundaries has caused managers to face with new challenges, but too many managers still operate in old and traditional ways of exercising power and implementing policies. Such fact leads to lack of efficiency and negligible effectiveness in organizations (L. Daft, 2000).

Efficiency and development of any organization largely depends on the proper use of human resources. Managers in organizations are policy makers and authorities, and organizational performance is related to their ability. Managers can provide the context of growth and excellence or corruption of organization by using power resources and this issue depends on the nature of power and the way of using it (Haghighi, 2001).

Conception of Power

In Persian dictionary, power means ability, authority and coercion and force and executive effective ability (Moein Dictionary, 1996).

Power could be defined as a potential ability that any individual owns to use it for being effective on other people and their decision making ability, so that the others are made to do something (Don Ham et al, 2002).

Power in organizational level

The ability of a person to affect on an individual or a group; in other words, the ability of a leader to use material and immaterial facilities in order to achieve organizational goals in organizational level, could be called as power (AmirKabiri, 2001).

Mayer defines power as the ability of influencing on organizational achievements (Mayer, 2001). Weber believes that power is the probability that an individual is in such situation in his social relations that imposes his will despite all oppositions (Weber, 1947).

Hyland and Justi believe that real power is reached when people help their manager or organization gladly to reach certain goals (Hyland & Justi, 1999).

Resources and Kinds of Manager Power

Managers use power to achieve authority in work environment. It is originated from organizational and individual resources. These resources can be divided into job power and personality power (Herskouich, 2002).

According to job situation, three power bases, reward power, coercive power and legitimate power, are taken by manager and personality power includes expertise power and referent power (Iran Nejad Parizi, 2002).

Rezaeian, categorizes power resources into two parts:

1. Position power: It includes reward and punishment power which is given with organizational post and applying it depends on good relation of manager with top manager.
2. Personal power: It contains expertise power and referent power (Rezaeian, 2001).

French & Raven categorizes power resources in social psychology:

- 1) Coercive power
- 2) Reward power
- 3) Legitimate power
- 4) Referent power
- 5) Expertise power.

French & Raven have identified five power resources in organizational environments that are applied in this research as theoretical framework:

- 1) Coercive power
- 2) Reward power
- 3) Legitimate power
- 4) Referent power
- 5) Expertise power.

French believes that power may practically change in different forms, such as positive or negative. Some positive applications are effective leadership, encourage and stimulation; in contrast, destruction, hurt and coercion are some examples of negative power (French & Bell, 2000: 309).

Coercive power is the ability to control punishments. The power to grant the ability to punish or withhold positive outcomes as a means for the other things you want to do.

According to "Nasr Esfahani", coercive power is a treatment for problem solving, behavior modification or reducing undesirable behavior (Nasr Esfahani, 2004).

Reward power means that leadership encourages the employees to fulfill job responsibilities through controlling the rewards that are considered valuable by them.

In general, if the manager is able to control the employees' payment, comment on their promotions and have a significant authority in assignment of jobs, he owns a good reward power (Ghasemi, 2003).

French & Bell suggest that legitimate power is based on the fact that power owner has legal right for authority and the one who obeys, has a kind of legal commitment for its acceptance (French & Bell, 2000).

Expertise power is a tool whose owner can control expert information; because expertise ensures the manager and employees to guarantee the authority of manager in organization (Hersey & Belanchar, 2001).

Finally, referent is a power derived from charisma or personal attraction which is created and maintained among people who encourage respect to each other via desirable relation (Lionsen, 1991).

Organizational Commitment

Several studies have been conducted on organizational commitment. Commitment, as a mental position, has at least three separable dimensions and is a kind of tendency, demand and requirement for maintaining the job in any organization. Generally, dimensions of commitment are considered as three following positions:

1) Emotional Commitment: It contains emotional affiliation of employees to determine the identity of organization and involvement in organizational activities.

2) Continuous Commitment: It includes the commitment based on attending to the organization and employee is participated in organization life.

3) Withholding Commitment: It contains individuals' feelings regarding the necessity of remaining in organization (Moghimi, 1998).

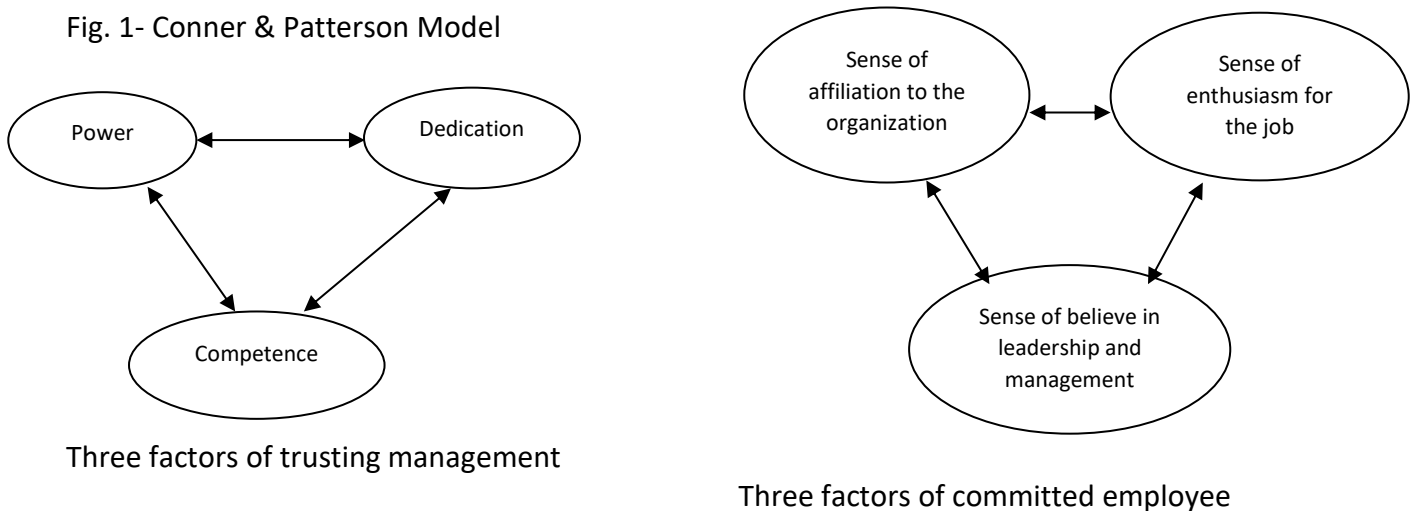
As it can be observed, the most common point in theories related to commitment is that commitment is a mental state that first, identifies employee's relationship with organization; second, it implicitly hints on continuation or termination of membership in the organization and in addition, it is clear that the nature of these mental states are different. Therefore, in emotional commitment, the individual continues to work in organization, because he accepts it and tends to remain in the same organization. In continuous commitment, the individual continues to work in organization, because he is not able to take any other way and is forced by the others. Emotional commitment reflects employees' emotional attachment and his identification with the values and goals of the organization and his involvement with the organization.

Employees, who have a strong emotional commitment, maintain their membership in the organization and continue to work on it, because they are willing to work there. Continuous commitment reflects the costs associated with leaving the organization. The employees, whose primary relationship with the organization is based on continuous commitment, will remain in the organization because it is necessary and required for them to remain there. Finally, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation and debt to remain in the organization and the employees who have such commitment, think that they must remain in the organization (Coleman & Cowyer).

Also, Conner & Patterson have suggested work commitment model to managers in order to establish commitment in employees. It has three principals: 1) Sense of enthusiasm for the job 2) Sense of affiliation to the organization and 3) sense of believe in leadership and management.

These three senses provide a triangle of work commitment and strengthen commitment. This model is depicted in the following (Conner and Patterson, 1992). (Figure 1)

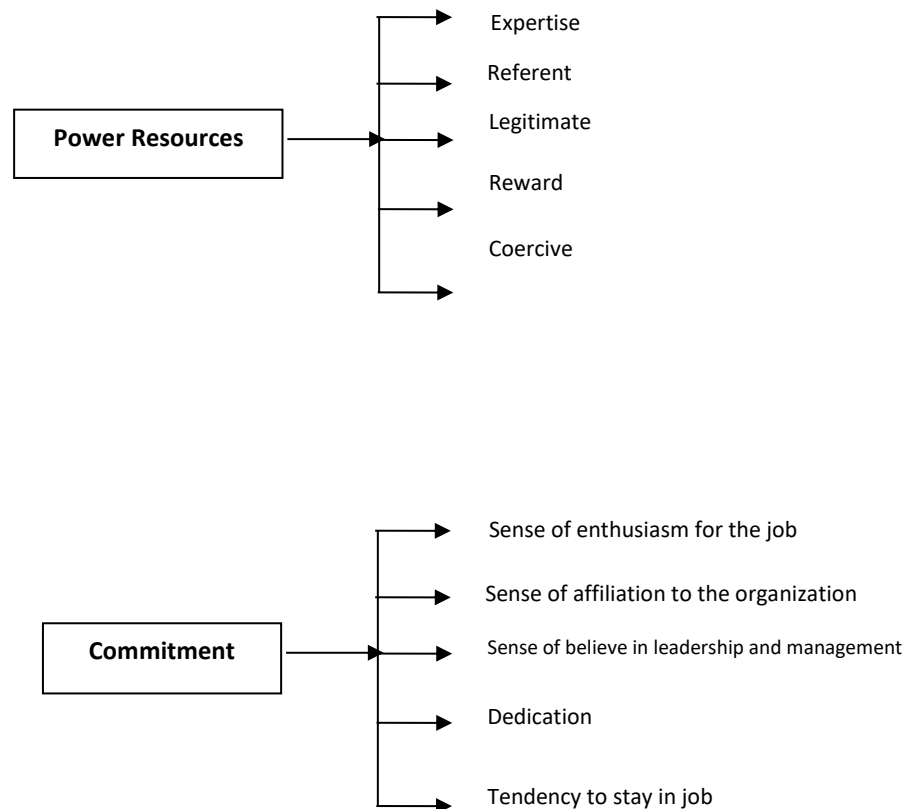
Fig. 1- Conner & Patterson Model



Power is the main characteristic of manager' role and provides the context of his effectiveness in organization. It is an unavoidable phenomenon in organization that some managers think negatively about it (Oreg, 2003). The fact is that being positive or negative for power depends on the judgment and its application, so that if the subject is organizational goals, it is considered as a positive and functional phenomenon and if the goal is obtaining personal aims, power is obviously negative. (Mann, 1995) Also, since the phenomenon of

power is a fundamental factor in organization that shapes organizational behavior such as organizational commitment, we can say that a result of the commitment is that individuals accept and trust their leader. In general, the relationship between five resources of power with organizational commitment can be observed in Figure 2.

Fig. 2- Relationship between power resources and organizational commitment



Since, effective use of power is a difficult challenge for leaders, employees and organizations, managers must make employees to feel commitment by applying tools and resources of power properly; because human resource is committed to assist organization in achieving its goals. But it must be evaluated that by which tools and resources, managers could be able to boost employees' commitment in organizations.

Research Methodology

This survey is applied descriptive correlation and has been conducted in 2007 in governmental organizations of Rafsanjan. The population of research includes 6875 employees of governmental organizations, companies, and institutes, among which, according to $d=0.516$ and $z=1.96$, and using formula1, a random sample including 360 employees were selected. The tool for data collection includes a questionnaire to assess the five components of power of managers and a questionnaire is to measure employee commitment. The first questionnaire consists of twenty questions with two alternatives and commitment questionnaire consisted of 18 questions in seven options from "absolutely disagree to strongly agree". They were distributed among sample after the validity and reliability of them were determined ($V=0.857$ and $V=0.9$, respectively). Twice test was used to calculate the reliability. After collecting the questionnaires and the exclusion of 320 questionnaires, they

were analyzed and data were entered into SPSS. In order to analyze the data descriptive statistics such as table, frequency chart and frequency percent have been used and then with inferential statistics including Spearman, Pearson and Mann-Whitney tests, the hypotheses were evaluated.

Findings of Research

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of the sample.(Table 1)

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of The Sample

Variables		Percent
Age	Less than 30	56.9
	30-39	43.7
	40-49	26.3
	More than 50	3
Gender	Female	44
	Male	56
Marital State	Single	21.3
	Married	78.7
Job Experience	5 years and less	22.4
	5-10	20.7
	11-15	15.8
	16-20	24.1
	More than 20	17
Educational Level	Diploma and lower	7.7
	Technician	15
	Bachelor	43.8
	Master and higher	4.2

Main Findings

The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the five sources of power and employee commitment in public organizations of Rafsanjan. According to R measures, especially R²_{adj} (adjusted (R²), since calculated –P in test is less than the significance level $\alpha = 0/05$, H₀ is rejected at this level, i.e., linear regression is significant and consequently there is a significant relationship between five sources of power and employee commitment (Table 2).

Table 2.

Regression Variance Analysis

Source Changes	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	R2	R2 adj	-P Value
Regression	15262.58	5	0.208	0.193	0.000
Error	58181.35	275			
Sum	73443.93	280			

Spearman correlation coefficient between the variables of the test is 0.365 and Pearson's correlation coefficient with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ is 0.369, which indicates a strong positive relationship between managers' expertise power and commitment of the employees. Also, the correlation coefficients $r=0.300$ and $r_s=0.296$ that have been calculated at significant level of $\alpha=0.05$, indicated that there is a positive relationship between referent power and commitment of employees based on the employee's perspective.(Table 3)

Table 3

Statistics of correlation test between five power sources and employees' commitment

	Pearson		Spearman	
	r	-P value	r	-P value
Legitimate Power and Employees' Commitment	0.171	0.002	0.148	0.008
Reward Power and Employees' Commitment	-0.267	0.000	0.263	0.000
Coercive Power and Employees' Commitment	-0.234	0.000	-0.234	0.000
Expertise Power and Employees' Commitment	0.369	0.000	0.365	0.000
Referent Power and Employees' Commitment	0.296	0.000	0.300	0.000

In the studied sample, the descending trend in transmittal plot and the results obtained from the table indicate that the relationship between legitimate power and employee Commitment is relatively weak. Correlation coefficient of 0.171, with a significant of $\alpha=0.05$ indicates that there is a weak negative relationship. The results also showed that there is also a weak negative relationship between coercive power and reward power (Table 3).

Log-linear analysis of gender, commitment of employees and expertise power and also age, commitment and expertise power indicated that gender, commitment of staff and expertise power have no relation. At all ages, employees' commitment, expertise power and age are independent of each other.

Log-linear analysis of gender, commitment of employees and referent power indicated that gender is independent of commitment of staff and referent power. In other words, gender is independent of employees' commitment and also is independent of referent power.

Regarding the relation of age, employee commitment and referent power, the results of log-linear analysis indicated that age had a positive significant relationship with two variables of referent power and employee commitment.

Conclusion & Discussion

The main objective of this study was to determine the relationship between the five sources of power of managers and employee commitment via employees' views.

The results of the data analysis in this study showed that there is a relationship between sources of power management and employee commitment. Among the five sources of power, expertise and referent power had a positive relationship with employee commitment, and the reward, coercive and legitimate power are negatively associated with commitment. Burke and Wilcoxon (1997) in a study of a large company of domestic services in the field of power management and satisfaction of subordinates came to the conclusion that the power of referrals and expertise led to the greatest satisfaction, legitimate power and reward led to relative satisfaction and coercive power had the least satisfaction (Burke & Wilcox, 1997). Shams et al in their study concluded that expertise and legitimate power had the largest effect on employees' cooperation and coercive and reward power had the least effect (shams et al, 2011).

Most scholars in management and psychology believe that using coercive power (punishment) as a means to influence subordinates and staff has much more negative effects than positive, due to its adverse physical and mental effects (Nasr Esfahani, 2004).

In this study, also, the relationship between coercive power and employees' commitment was negative that corresponded with the results of Shams et al (2011).

Applying legitimate power lonely, affects commitment relatively, which means that using a power source, while ignoring the other sources, not also does not increase employees' commitment, but the continuous use of one source will reduce commitment.

It seems due to inflexibility of formal rules in organizations; the influence legitimate power on employee commitment is negative. The results of this study also confirm it.

The results obtained of the relationship between reward power and employee commitment indicate that there is a negative relationship between these two variables. It seems that the reason of negative and weak correlation between reward power and employee commitment in this study, is improper economic condition of families, which means that when the biological needs of individuals in the workplace are not fulfilled, poor financial rewards do not affect the motivation and also external rewards will not be significant. The reason may also be improper use of financial rewards.

The results showed that expertise power has positive significant relation with employees' commitment. Burke showed in a research that expertise power has the most effect on job satisfaction, and legitimate, coercive, referent and reward had the later importance respectively (Burke & Wilcox, 1997).

Usually managers with experience, knowledge, skill and more rational and accurate judgment of evaluating the issues, are naturally attracted by subordinates. Existence of such managers with these features in work environment, leads to greater confidence of their staff and the employees work correctly and efficiently, without delay, and waste of resources.

Referent power had a positive relationship with employee commitment that was consistent with research of Mahmoudi, in which referent power had the greatest impact on the participation of individuals. Usually, the managers who use referent power have an effective management, acceptable behavior and fair and trusted by subordinates than others.

Subordinates, also, choose them as their pattern and like determine their personality, because of their excellence and their special appeal and personal traits.

Referent power is more stable and resistant, due to the attraction of affecting, and stable power can also become internal, and whatever becomes internal, provides commitment.

Results showed that the relationship of expertise and referent power with employees' commitment is positive. Therefore, the managers should be used who have experience, knowledge and skill in carrying out and also have a personal appeal. Training courses must also be held to enhance the knowledge and expertise of staff.

Since the stiffness and rigidity of formal rules in an organization can be the reason of negative relationship between legitimate power and employees' commitment in governmental organizations of Rafsanjan, policymakers and investors can review the legislation and, if necessary, correct them.

Negative relationship of reward power and employee commitment can indicate the unfair use of the rewards that can be induced by reviewing the encourage system and the finding real needs of the employees.

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