

QUALITY OF LIFE AT WORK AS PREDICTOR OF JOB COMMITMENT IN 1122 RESCUE WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

The present research aimed to investigate whether quality of life at work can predict job commitment among rescue 1122 workers. It was hypothesized that quality of life at work is a predictor of job commitment. Within group research design was employed to conduct this research. Purposive sampling technique was used. A sample of 60 workers was recruited from Punjab Emergency Services (Rescue 1122). Professional Quality of Life (Stamm, 2005) and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer & Allen, 1993) was used to assess quality of life at work and job commitment respectively. Data was analyzed by using SPSS version 17. Results show that Quality of life at work (compassion satisfaction) predicts job commitment in rescue workers. Enhanced quality of life at work can ultimately improve job performance where by leading to organizational growth among rescue 1122 workers.

Key words: Rescue 1122, job commitment

INTRODUCTION

Quality of life at work is the attitude that workers have towards their jobs, colleagues and organizations that ignite a string leading to the organizations growth and efficiency. A good quality feeling towards their job means the workers feel contented doing work which will lead to a creative job atmosphere.

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The fulfilling work environment provides a better quality of life at work (Rethinam & Ismail, 2008). Our understanding of professional quality of life or work quality of life will comprise of compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue and burnout (Figley, 2002).

Compassion satisfaction is the apparent joy resulting from relieving the distress of others and working with severely ill or traumatized people and subsequent serving to mitigate efforts to lessen their misery and agony. It is the simplest conception is the capacity to obtain gratification from care giving (Figley, 2002). Compassion satisfaction may moderate the detrimental effects of burnout and compassion fatigue. Persons who prefer care giving professions frequently employ a protective mechanism that comes from the satisfaction of helping others and protects against the development of compassion fatigue (Stamm, 2002).

Compassion fatigue is chiefly state of maladaptive stress that trauma personnel frequently experience while working with people who have undergone through a single or multiple traumatic events. It is a response to listening and witnessing the effects of the traumatic event of the client (Bergel, 2007; Figley, 2002) or that from serving or wanting to help a person who has been traumatized (Donohve, & Tolle, 2009).

Burnout is fairly comparable to compassion fatigue as both can result in feeling of helplessness, anxiety, and depression. Compassion fatigue might be a causal factor to burnout. Burnout is defined as exhaustion of physical or emotional vigor or incentive usually as a consequence of long-drawn-out stress or frustration. Burnout results from work related sources (Ardino, 2011). Burnout is a mental fatigue, feelings of persistently pressured by one's self or others to enhance performance (Bergel, 2007; Snooks, 2009).

However there is some difference among burnout and compassion fatigue. Burnout is contemplation due to unwarranted and extended exposure to stress, while compassion fatigue can be experienced succeeding to as less as a single incident occurring rapidly and is connected with grief from working with an individual with a traumatic history (Bergel, 2007; Cherniss, 1980; Donohve & Tolle, 2009). Compassion fatigue is discrete to burnout as there are feelings of fear and sadness and the symptoms may be disconnected from actual causes (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995) as well as a faster recovery rate from compassion

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fatigue than from burnout (Figley, 1995). Satisfaction of helping others buffers against the development of compassion fatigue (Stamm, 2002).

Organizational commitment refers to strength of an employee's involvement in the organization and identification with it. Highly committed people will most likely see themselves as devoted members of the organization, referring to the organization in the personal terms (Stamm, 2002). Organizational commitment continues to be predisposed by job experience, with many of the same factors that result in job satisfaction, same factors also contribute towards organizational commitment or lack of commitment (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2007).

Literature endorses that quality of life at work like compassion satisfaction is a predictor of job commitment (Hooper, Craig, Janvrin, Wetsel, & Reimels, 2010; Huang, Tung-Chun, Lawler, John, Lei, & Ching-Yi, 2007; Ijaz, 2010; Tremblay and Messervey, 2011) whereas compassion fatigue (Robins, Meltzer, & Zelikovsky, 2009) and burnout (Gomez & Ruledge, 2009; Sethi & King, 1997) were found to be negatively associated with job commitment.

The aim of this present study is to explore whether quality of work life is a predictor of job commitment in rescue 1122 workers. It is thus hypothesized that: 1) Quality of life at work (compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction and burnout) will predict job commitment (Affective commitment, continuous commitment, normative commitment); 2) There is likely to be a positive relationship between compassion fatigue and burnout; 3) There is likely to be a negative relationship between compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction; 4) There is likely to be a negative relationship between burnout and compassion satisfaction.

METHOD

Participants

A sample of 60 rescues workers working in the Punjab Emergency Service 1122 Rescue Department, falling within the age range 20 to 40 years were recruited. Only rescue workers who have been working in the rescue department for at least 2 years were included in the sample. Moreover workers who had acquired 10 or more years of formal education were included in this study. Rescue workers who had presently being diagnosed with any psychiatric illness or formerly have been on any psychiatric medication and those unable to provide a written consent were excluded from the study.

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Measures

Demographic Information sheet

Demographic information sheet was constructed which included participants information i.e. name, age, education, designation, marital status, monthly income, year of experience, family system.

Organizational Commitment Scale (OCQ)

Meyer and Allen (1993) developed the Organizational Commitment Scale that measures commitment within an organization. Organizational Commitment questionnaire has 15 items with seven point Likert scale (strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, not agree, slightly agree, moderately agree, strongly agree). The total Organizational Commitment Scale is the sum of the answers on 15 items. The content of the scale represents three border areas: a) Affective commitment, b) Continuance commitment, c) Normative commitment. The reliability of these scales is .87 for affective, .75 for continuance, and .79 for normative scale. The overall reliability of the scale is satisfactory, judged by internal consistency mean (Cronbach alpha is .80).

Professional Quality of life scale (PQL)

Stamm (1997) constructed the Professional Quality of Life Scale. It consists of 30 statements with five Likert scale (*Never, Rarely, A Few Times, Somewhat Often, Often, Very Often*). The scale consists of 3 subscales named Compassion Satisfaction Scale, Burnout Scale and Trauma/Compassion Fatigue Scale. The scoring of the scale follow such rules: few items are scored in a reverse direction. Next to every response reverse of that score is written (i.e. 0=0, 1=5, 2=4, 3=3). 15 items: 1, 4, 15, 17 and 29 are scored in reverse order. The value 0 is not reversed, and is calculated as null. Item no 3, 6, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27 and 30 comprise Compassion Satisfaction Scale. Item no 1, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 26, and 29 make up the burnout scale. Item no 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 23, 25 and 28 form the trauma compassion fatigue scale. Mean score on compassion satisfaction is 37 (alpha scale reliability .87). Average score on the burnout is reported to be 22 (alpha scale reliability .72). Moreover that on compassion fatigue is 13 (alpha scale reliability .80).

Procedure

To initiate the study an authority letter that explained the nature of the study was issued from the Department of Applied Psychology. The study was under taken in Punjab Emergency Services (rescue 1122) prior to the data collection written permission was taken from the Head of the institute. Psychological tools (professional quality of life) used to assess quality of life at work (compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction & burnout) and organizational commitment questionnaire used to assess job commitment (normative commitment, continuous commitment, affective commitment) were administered on rescue 1122 workers. Demographic information sheet was self constructed to gather information regarding important study variables. Before the administration of the demographic information sheet and other measures, the sample was explained about the nature and purpose of the research. Rapport was established by assuring them the confidentiality about their personal responses and facts that they were free to leave the study without penalty or prejudice. A consent form was filled by each participant and after that participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Recruited sample Rescue workers (N=60)

Descriptive characteristic		<i>F</i>	%
Age	20-25	35	58.4
	26-30	21	34.9
	31-35	3	5.0
	36-40	1	1.7
Monthly income	11,000-15,000	5	8.3
	16,000-20,000	51	8.5
	21,000-25,000	4	6.5
Year of experience in current job	2	1	1.7
	3	43	71.7
	4	13	21.7
	5	3	5.0
			Contd.....

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Descriptive characteristic		<i>F</i>	%
Marital status	Married	38	63.3
	Unmarried	20	33.3
	Divorced	2	3.3
Family system	Nuclear	58	96.7
	Joint	2	3.3
Designation	CTWO	10	16.7
	ACCA	2	3.3
	DR	4	6.7
	LTV	5	8.3
	EMT	14	23.3
	FR	21	35.0
	SC	2	3.3
	SI	2	3.3
Qualification	Matric	4	6.7
	Inter	35	
	Bachelor	17	28.3
	Master	4	6.7

Note. *f* (frequency), CTWO (computer telephone wireless operator), ACCA (accountant), DR (dert rescues), LTV (driver), EMT (emergency medical technician), FR (fire rescuer), SC (station coordinator), SI (shift in charge).

Table 2
Reliability Statistics

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α
Quality of life at work			.89
Compassion satisfaction	43.58	3.32	
Burnout	69.45	5.83	
Compassion fatigue	28.56	4.63	
Job commitment			.61
Affective commitment	32.23	3.14	
Continuous commitment	25.70	5.67	
Normative commitment	21.51	1.98	

Note. α (Cronbach alpha), *SD* (standard deviation), *M* (mean)

Table 3
Correlation among Study Variables (n=60)

Variable	QWL	CS	burnout	Compassion fatigue	Job commitment
QWL	-	.70**	-.905**	-.85**	.29*
CS	-	-	-.591**	-.39**	.34**
Burnout	-	-	-	.76**	-.25*
CF	-	-	-	-	-.26*
JC	-	-	-	-	-

Note. QWL (quality of work life), CS (compassion satisfaction), CF (compassion fatigue), JC (job commitment), * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4
Linear Regression analysis with Quality of Life as predictor of Job Commitment (n=60)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	CI 95%	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	54.31	13.82		26.63	81.98
CS	.89	.31	.34	0.26	1.53

Note. CS (compassion satisfaction), $R^2 = .12$, $\Delta R^2 = .10$, *** $p < .001$

A linear regression analysis was carried out to find out the significant predictors of quality of life at work after controlling age, education, monthly income, year of experience, type of family system and designation. Quality of life at work (compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue and burnout) was taken as a predictor variable and job commitment (normative commitment, affective commitment, and continuous commitment) as outcome variable. Result revealed that compassion satisfaction (sub scale of quality of life at work) significantly predicted job commitment.

DISCUSSION

The present study was designed mainly to infer whether quality of life at work is a predictor of job commitment in Rescue 1122 workers. Our study findings established that quality of life at work (compassion satisfaction) was the only significant predictor of job commitment in our study sample. In the past many investigators from the Western and European countries have investigated

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similar issue and endorsed that quality of life (burnout, compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction) are significant predictors of job commitment among a diverse sample of workers (Cicognani, Pietrantonio, Palestini, & Prati, 2009; Sreenivas, Wiechmann, Anderson, Chakravarthy, & Menchine, 2010; Hooper, Craig, Janvrin, Wetsel, & Reimels, 2010; Huang, Tung-Chun, Lawler, John, Lei, & Ching-Yi, 2007; Ijaz, 2010).

Compassion satisfaction is a significant predictor of job commitment as the role of compassion satisfaction, conceptualized as a personal resource that has found to buffer the relationship between job demands and job strain. Tremblay and Messervey (2011) tested a sample of 122 military soldiers to find out moderating role of compassion satisfaction in job commitment. Results showed that compassion satisfaction moderated the relationship between job demands and job commitment. More specifically, when compassion satisfaction was high, the effect of role overload on job strain was significantly reduced and that of job commitment was enhanced.

Mathieu and John (1991) in a sample of cadets established that organizational commitment and compassion satisfaction were reciprocally and positively related; however the influence of satisfaction on commitment was stronger. Compassion satisfaction turned out to be a strong predictor of job commitment. Moreover in another study carried by Kalliath, Driscoll and Gillespie (1998) authors highlighted associations amid dimensions of burnout and employee job commitment to the organization in two samples: nurses and laboratory technicians of hospitals, by means of structural equations analysis. In this study burnout was found to be negatively associated with job commitment and a significant predictor of low job commitment. However among the sample of technicians a direct negative relationship between organizational commitment and depersonalization was not found to be significant. This study endorses dissimilar findings in relation to our study results; this can be attributed to diversity in the selection of the sample, demographic characteristics of the sample and type of research design employed by the investigator.

De Panfilis (2006) investigated the risk of compassion fatigue and burnout and the potential for compassion satisfaction among a sample of child protection staff working in Colorado. Moreover the investigators inferred whether compassion satisfaction is a predictor of job commitment in the said sample. Based on the results from this study, the researchers believe that

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compassion satisfaction may help lessen the aftermaths of burnout and compassion fatigue, and acts as a predictor of job satisfaction.

Moreover the results of our study uncovered significant positive correlation among burnout, and compassion fatigue and a significant negative correlation of both constructs with compassion satisfaction. Prati, Gabriele, Pietrantonio, Luca, Cicognani and Elvira (2011) investigated these constructs among 463 Italian rescue workers. Compassion satisfaction was established to be positively linked amid efficacy beliefs, sense of community and the usage of active coping strategies. Burnout and Compassion fatigue were chiefly linked with the use of dysfunctional coping strategies. Moreover a strong negative correlation between burnout and compassion satisfaction was inferred.

Child protective service workers were surveyed by Allen (2011) to determine whether perceived organizational support was associated with levels of compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction. Results revealed a positive association between compassion fatigue and lack of organizational support. However, when burnout was controlled, the relationship was no longer statistically significant. Moreover a negative relationship between compassion satisfaction and burnout was inferred. Demographic factors of gender, experience, and education did not significantly modify the observed association between perceived organizational support and compassion fatigue or compassion satisfaction. Moreover among worker's of Colorado county child protection department, a strong positive association between compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue was found however the association between burnout and compassion satisfaction was not statistically significant (Conrada & Kellar-Guentherb, 2006). These findings are contrary to our study results, endorsing that nature of job in a human service department determines the direction and magnitude of constructs like compassion satisfaction and fatigue (Snooks, 2009), hence warranting a more extensive investigation in future.

Limitations

Generalization of the study results is limited because sample was only taken from Rescue 1122 workers. Moreover the measures used for investigation, were primarily developed for western society so some items might be culturally biased.

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Recommendations

Larger sample could be taken from service departments including police staff, nurses, fire fighter, psychologist and social workers to provide a more confirmative evidence for the hypotheses under investigation. Moreover qualitative research ought to be done in this area so as to reveal in depth factors that can be contributing towards job commitment.

The present research shows that there is an association between quality of life at work and job commitment among Rescue 1122 workers. This study has imperative implications for provision of psychological interventions for the rescue workers as it highlights that improved quality of life at work can enhance job commitment. This study is a valuable addition in psychology and opens avenues for conducting more extensive qualitative and quantitative studies to reveal other psychological factors associated with job commitment.

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