

The Relationship between Ethical Climate and Intention to Stay in Female Bodybuilding Clubs in Golestan Province

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between ethical climate and intention to stay (ITS) in the female athletes at bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province. The research adopted a descriptive-correlational method and was carried out as a field study. The research population consisted of all female athletes at bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province in 2014 (N=3000). A number of 384 athletes were selected as the research sample using Morgan table. Of the administered questionnaires, a number of 341 questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher. The data were collected using a demographic datasheet, Victor and Cullen's Ethical Climate Questionnaire (1988) and Hanshow's Anticipated Turnover Scale (1985). The results showed that ethical climate was above average in female bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province. Still, athletes' ITS was below average at female bodybuilding clubs. The findings revealed a significant relationship between ethical climate and athletes' ITS at female bodybuilding clubs. Considering the present findings, it is recommended that coaches and managers of female bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province create a favorable ethical climate and meet customer needs in order to induce a positive attitude in the athletes and increase their ITS.

Keywords: Ethical climate, Intention to stay, Club and customer, Golestan Province

Introduction

Organizational behavior is not simply subject to formal expectations, personal needs and organizational goals. Rather, it is the result of dynamic relations among these elements. The organizational participants bring in a set of unique characteristics, emotions, values, needs and motivations to the workplace. These personal characteristics intervene in the rational and planned aspect of the organizational life and tend to create a collective sense of identity, which transform the simple congregation of individuals into a discrete character at the workplace. This workplace-induced natural sentiment is variably referred to as organization character, social milieu and climate. Every concept refers to normal, spontaneous and human orientation of the organization. They suggest there are common meanings and unwritten rules that guide the organizational behavior (Hoy & Miksel, 2013). The type of relationship among the people in an organization creates the organizational characteristics and climate. Organizational climate refers to what the employees generally perceive of their workplace (Mirkamali, 1999).

Schnider (1999) contends that ethical behaviors often emerge when an athlete tends to display a form of goodness in sports. However, ethical problems arise when athletes are only instructed to have good athletic performance without being asked to be good people.

Many a researcher believes that amateur sports cherish many advantages over professional sports when it comes to ethical codes. Hsu (1999) asserts that the real sense of amateur morale lies in a love for game without expecting external rewards, which has developed into a mental tendency and affection for doing sports and participating in contests. Being amateur is different from being professional, and the value of amateurship needs to be restored. Although amateurship spirit is forgotten in professional sports, it exists in almost all sports activities with agendas other than mere competitive aspect. Being amateur means to be in love with sports that is a positive side of personal tendencies. Without such love, it is only the matter of advertising to have good athletic performance and be an ethical athlete.

One of the most important topics of organizational research is discovering the relationship between organizational ethical climate and employee attitudes and behavior (Hojjati and Azema, 2014). Ethical behaviors in the organization are an important issue for managers. The management needs to play a key role in promoting ethical behavior across the organization. When the employees experience an ethical climate in the organization, they consider their relations to be fair in the organization. This would increase employee satisfaction and commitment. When the employees perceive the manager's behavior as ethical, they will enjoy higher job satisfaction so that turnover decreases in the organization. This is particularly valuable for the organization (Nadi and Hazeghi, 2011). Thus, organizational leaders play an important role in creating an ethical climate, communicating and executing ethical practices. When the employees consult with the leaders to alleviate the problems, they are creating an environment in which they feel job satisfaction and enhance their commitment (Ahearne et al, 2005). Job satisfaction is a by-product of ethical climate. Research has shown a positive correlation between job satisfaction and ethics (Nadi and Hazeghi, 2011). Several theoretical models have been developed to explain employee turnover. Although these models mostly focus on individual characteristics such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Hayes et al, 2006), some researchers suggest that institutional characteristics and interpersonal interactions may also play a role in this regard. For example, workplace factors such as role conflict, diversity of jobs, relations with colleagues and independence may be critical to job satisfaction. Nowadays, people spend almost half of their waking hours in their workplace. Thus, satisfaction with one's job and workplace is a necessity (Coomber and Barriball, 2007).

Besides, ethical climate is associated with many factors such as performance, productivity and efficiency, leadership style, decreased turnover, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and unfavorable organizational climate may spoil a considerable portion of organizational assets. Thus, it is particularly important to understand the organizational climate and make attempts to improve it in an environment with special conditions (Delgoshae et al., 2008). Since Iranian officials attach a crucial significance to the development of moral values in people, the researcher aimed to examine the athletes' commitment to ethical codes. The study is meant to address the question 'is there a significant relationship between ethical climate in bodybuilding clubs and female athletes' ITS?'

Materials and Methods

The research adopted a descriptive-correlational method and was conducted as a field study. The research population consisted of all female athletes at bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province in 2014 (n=3000). A number of 384 athletes were selected as the research sample using Morgan table. The participants returned a number of 341 of the administered questionnaires. The data were collected using a demographic datasheet, Victor and Cullen's Ethical Climate Questionnaire (1988) and Hanshow's Anticipated Turnover Scale (1985). The data were categorized and described using descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, measures of central tendency and variability, tables and figures. The reliability of the questionnaires was examined through internal consistency method using Cronbach's alpha formula. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, paired t test and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to analyze the data.

Results

As illustrated in Table 1, the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test shows that the level of significance in the data obtained from ethical climate and ITS is larger than 0.05, which suggests the normal distribution of the data in the research variables.

Table 1: Results of testing the normality of data

Variable	N	Z	Sig.
Ethical Climate	342	1.320	0.061
ITS	2.342	1.239	0.093

As shown in Table 2, the mean score of ethical climate is 3.56 with a standard deviation of 0.47. Thus, ethical climate obtained a high mean score ($t=21.77$, $P<0.001$). The mean score of ITS is 2.89 with a standard deviation of 0.69. Thus, ITS obtained a low mean score ($t=-2.91$, $P<0.004$).

Table 2: Description of ethical climate and ITS variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	df	t	Sig.
Ethical Climate	3.56	0.47	0.56	340	21.778	0.001
Athletes' ITS	2.89	0.69	-0.11	340	-2.916	0.004

Table 3 illustrates the results of testing the relationship between ethical climate in female bodybuilding clubs and athletes' ITS in Golestan Province. As shown in the table, the level of significance of Pearson correlation coefficient is smaller than $\alpha=0.05$ ($P\leq 0.001$). Therefore, the research hypothesis is rejected. That is, there is a significant relationship between ethical climate in female bodybuilding clubs and athletes' ITS in Golestan Province.

Table 3: Relationship between ethical climate and athletes' ITS

Variable	Athletes' ITS
Ethical Climate	$r = 0.15$
	$P = 0.005$

Discussion and Conclusion

The increasing competitiveness in the modern world has encouraged organizations to adopt a customer-oriented approach in their marketing strategy. Organizations have learned that it is easy to attract customers but cumbersome to render them into loyal customers. Research has shown that customer satisfaction is no longer enough per se. Rather, what is important is to retain the customers and increase their loyalty. This has gone far beyond service organizations to include other sectors such as sports. Nowadays, it is one of the most serious concerns for club coaches and sports marketers to attract and maintain athletes.

The present findings revealed that ethical climate was above average in female bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province. Ethical climate constitutes both right and wrong perceptions at the workplace inducing a positive attitude in the employees, keeping them longer in the organization and convincing them not to leave the organization. The present findings are consistent with the findings of Elci and Alpkan (2009), who studied ethical climate in the Turkish telecommunication companies, and with those of Hojjati and Azema (2014), who studied the relationship between ethical climate and ITS in the nurses with Social Security Hospital in Golestan Province and reported a favorable ethical climate in the hospital. The present findings are also consistent with the findings of Thomas et al. (2006) who carried out a study entitled 'promoting behavior and organizational citizenship behavior' in the USA. They reported that the organization plays a key role in employees' behavior. They further observed that ethical values may affect the key organizational variables, and higher levels of ethical behavior are positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior.

Customer retention is one of the most important issues in sports services. It is still a challenging issue to measure customer satisfaction and service quality in the sports service sector (Williams, 1998). The research findings showed that the athletes' ITS in the female bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province was below average. Contemporary marketing is not based on production facilities but on providing the customers with satisfaction. When customers are satisfied with a supplier, they tend to remain more loyal to him. Current customers seek superior quality and more services consistent with their needs and guaranteed efficiency (Rahmani, 2008).

Research has shown that employees with higher job satisfaction are in a better physical health and mental ability. In organizational terms, high levels of job satisfaction reflect a favorable organizational climate, which leads to employee retention. This is because job satisfaction emanates from workplace, organizational system, the rules governing the work and social-cultural factors (Tahrir et al., 2010).

The findings showed a significant correlation between ethical climate and athletes' ITS in female bodybuilding clubs in Golestan Province. This is consistent with the findings of Nadi and Hazeghi (2011), Hojjati and Azema (2014) and Okpara and John (2008). Nadi and Hazeghi (2011) carried out a study entitled 'structural equation modeling of the relationships among ethical climate, job satisfaction and organizational

commitment with intention to leave in the employees at private hospitals in Shiraz City'. They reported a negative correlation between ethical climate and employee intention to leave. Hojjati and Azema (2014) studied the relationship between ethical climate and ITS in the nurses with Social Security Hospital in Golestan Province. They found a significant positive correlation between ethical climate and the nurses' ITS. Okpara and John (2008) did a research entitled 'the impact of ethical climate on job satisfaction and commitment in Nigeria'. They showed that ethical climate encouraged job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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