

ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

COACHES' LOYALTY IMPORTANCE ON THE ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING WITH RECREATIONAL SPORT SERVICE

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Abstract

Human resource quality turns to be the crucial factor of organizational success in modern sport organizations. In other words the mission and aims of such organizations will be implemented only in case there work competitive and dedicated employees. In the following article there is discussed employees' loyalty as a significant activity part in sport organizations that determines the awareness, service quality and customer satisfaction of the organizations providing with recreational sport service. Due to the fact that one of the employee's disloyalty expressions towards the organization is his/her job turnover intention; there are also reviewed the reasons for changing a job and the links of such a wish to the demonstrated loyalty towards the organization. There is presented empiric research, the aim of which is to indicate the expression of coaches' loyalty to an organization and connection to the job turnover intention in martial arts clubs. Research sample – 79 coaches, employed in different martial arts clubs in the largest cities of Lithuania. The anonymous questionnaire was used to determinate the employees' continuance, affective and normative expression of loyalty, to disclose job turnover intention and determine their links towards socially demographic variables. The result has been calculated and analyzed by SPSS. The research disclosed that the investigated coaches are not tied by sport clubs which they work in as they do not have any moral commitment to the organization based on a strong sense of duty, and their link to the organization is not based on financial, career or professionalism ladder interests. During the analysis of the coaches' preparation to change an organization there was disclosed weak intention to change a job. Also there was noticed a trend that those employees distinguish by a lower wish to change a job, whose affective and normative loyalty is higher.

Key words: *loyalty, turnover intentions, sport organization, employee.*

Introduction

In recent years it is more and more broadly comprehended that physical activity turns to be one of the key conditions of an individual's physical, social and emotional wellbeing. Consequently, there increases a need for recreational service that impacts the development of the organizations, those provide with such service. However, thereby there arises quite a serious coaches' and instructors' issue that is most frequently related to the poor quality of the provided service (Jankauskienė, 2008). In the following context there arises an objective for sports organizations, which provide with recreational service and focus on the high quality standards - to find and maintain competitive specialists, able to meet customers' needs and provide with qualitative service maximally. Nevertheless, even though an organization possesses such human resources, it will not be efficient, if the employed do not become loyal to it.

There is predominant approach that the greatest asset of every modern organization is its loyal employees (Vveinhardt, Kotovskienė, 2008). There exists no possibility to achieve the aims of an organization without such persons effectively. High employees' loyalty or in other words – commitment to an organization means their willing to work for the benefit of an organization, through the identification of personal and organizational aims, commitment to them, loyalty, and work not only for a salary during the period critical for an organization. However, the continuity of the following willing depends on the responsive commitment of an organization to its members – employees commit their skills as they are provided with the conditions those meet their needs best. As a result human being performing some meaningful work experiences some satisfaction, and due to his/her competence and energy, an organization can compete successfully. In case this balance is violated, the employee's loyalty level decreases and most often that is related to his/her intention to change a job.

High turnover of employees in an organization reveals the management inadequacy of human resources. The following inadequacy is deepened by fast and dynamic change of external environment, due to which people are becoming more and more mobile, and have more possibilities in labor market. It is more and more difficult to keep competitive employees and tie them to an organization. Organizations are absolutely aware that having lost employees they are very likely to face a set of problems – not only will there be experienced financial expenses; however, there might be worsened atmosphere in a collective and it might be more difficult to provide with

services for some time as well as to secure their quality. As a result that could lead to the loss of customers' loyalty. It turns to be clear that good outcomes might be achieved only by organizations which set themselves an aim for their employees' development and security of the loyalty sense (Šajeva, 2007).

Even though in the scientific literature the employees' loyalty and commitment (Meyer et al, 2002), job turnover (Cunningham, 2006, Steel, 2002) and its connection to the loyalty and commitment to organization (Matzler & Renzl, 2006) have been analyzed quite for a long time and quite widely, there is not a lot of research of such a kind in the science of sports management (Kim & Chang, 2007, Komskienė et al., 2009, Lee et al., 2010). Although, it is known that employee attachment to the workplace index in Lithuania is one of the lowest in the Baltic States and in Europe (Savareikiene, Daugirdas, 2009), there is a gap in a deeper analysis of the commitment of the employed to an organization in different sectors. It would allow only disclosing the present situation and foreseeing measures those enabled effective implementation of loyalty sense for employees. Sports sector is not an exception as for it there are needed loyal employees, able to work efficiently and secure the quality of the provided service (Todd, Kent, 2009).

The expression of thought sets a question: what the employees' loyalty level is in sports organizations, providing recreational service and how the intentions to change a job are related to the employees' demonstrated loyalty?

The aim of study was to indicate the expression of coaches' loyalty to an organization and connection to the job turnover intention in martial arts clubs.

Material and methods

The study was carried out in Lithuanian martial arts clubs. In the study there participated 79 trainers, in average of 39.12 ± 12.52 years old. The categories of surveyed were divided into gender (83.5%, $n=66$ of participants were men and 16.5%, $n=13$ were women), education levels (high school graduate – 81.0%, $n=64$ and secondary education 19.0%, $n=15$), total duration of work in organization (less then 1 year: 10.1%, $n=8$, 1 years till 5 years – 45.6%, $n=36$, from 5 years till 10 years 21.5%, $n=17$, from 10 years and more 22.8%, $n=18$ of the surveyed), received salary (1000–1500 Lt. a month 55.7%, $n=44$, 1501–2000 Lt a month 26.6%, $n=21$, 2001 up to 3000 Lt a month 17.7%, $n=4$).

Instrument. There was used an anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of three parts. The first part of questionnaire was designed to measure organizational loyalty. It was adapted from J. P. Meyer and N. J. Allen's 3-component model of organizational commitment (Savareikiene, Daugirdas, 2009). Loyalty to the organization was rated on an 18 question scale, i.e. 6 questions for each form of loyalty: affective, continuous and normative. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of items on a Likert scale, ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree.

The second part of the questionnaire was designed to measure one's intent to change job. It was designed in accordance with the work of Pilkauskaitė-Valickienė et al. (2007). The scale considered of 5 items, each item was rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree. The third part included socio – demographic questions.

Analysis. The data were processed using SPSS 16 for Windows. For the research data estimation of the employees' loyalty expression there was applied arithmetic average (V) and standard deviation (SN). Work experience, salary and age group average differences were indicated under the Student t test. There was applied Pearsons correlative analysis to indicate the relationship between the strength of employees' loyalty and their willing to change a job. The research outcomes of employees' intention to change a job were reviewed after having carried out a percentage analysis and differences were indicated applying the criteria of χ^2 . The difference was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

Results

Expression research of martial arts club coaches' loyalty disclosed that the loyalty forms to the organization spread as following - continuous loyalty, the average of which is 3.2 ± 0.4 points, normative loyalty (average 3.0 ± 1.1 points) and affective loyalty (average 2.9 ± 0.7 points).

Having analyzed separate loyalty forms it was disclosed that affective loyalty is mostly influenced by the fact that a club there coaches work means a lot for them (average, 3.8 points), besides, the researched in the following organization would be eager to seek for career (average 3.7 points) too. However, coaches do not feel being tied to the club very often emotionally (average 2.2 points) or being a 'part of the family' in an organization (average 2.3 points).

The analyzed normative coaches' loyalty to the club revealed that the researched agree that the following organization is worth their loyalty (average 3.5 points) and think that they felt guilty if they had to resign

(average 3.2 points). However, they feel in debt to the organization least (average 2.6 points) or committed to coworkers (average 2.7 points).

Continuous loyalty analysis revealed that the researched think that they would lose too much if left the club now (average 3.5 points), thus at the moment they would like to stay (average 3.6 points), and they also have too few options those enabled thinking of resigning from the club (average 3.0 points).

Having analyzed the expression of loyalty forms under the aspects of age, work experience and salary (Fig. 1) it was defined that affective, continuous and normative loyalty essentially do not differ dependently on coaches' age, work experience or salary ($p < 0,05$).

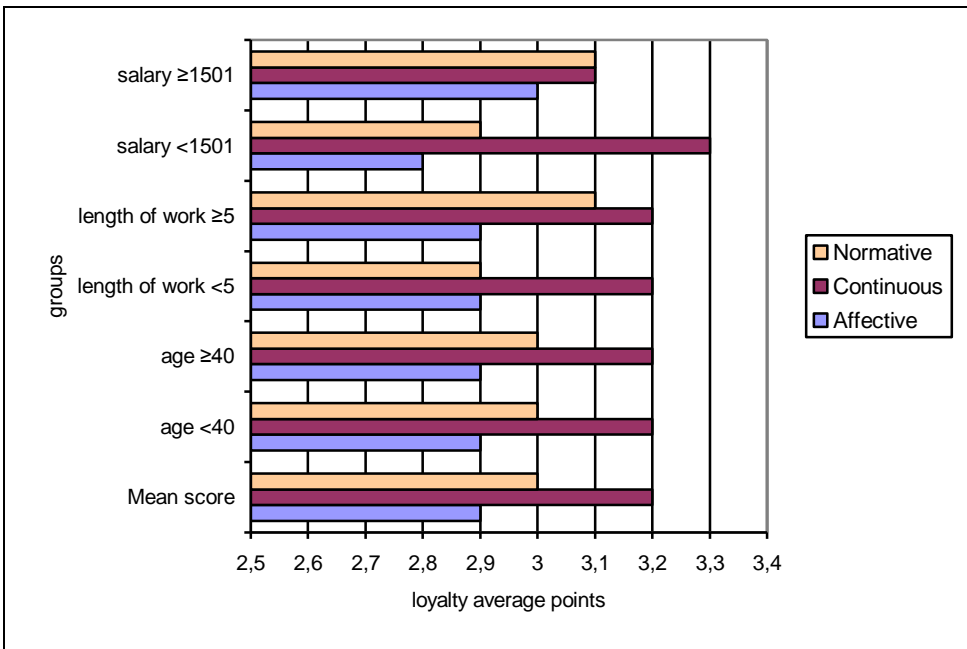


Figure 1. Expression of loyalty forms in the aspects of age, length of work and salary

However, it was indicated that the researched, whose work experience exceeds 5 years, demonstrate higher normative loyalty (average 3.1 points) in comparison to those, whose work experience is less than 5 years (average 2.9 points). Those, whose salary is higher than 1500 Lt., demonstrate a bit stronger affective (3 points) and normative (3.1 points) loyalty. However, ones, who receive a salary that in less distinguish for continuous loyalty (3.3 points).

Having analyzed coaches' preparation in martial arts clubs to change a job, it was indicated that the researched do not distinguish for very strong or strong willing to change a job. There is predominant very weak (40.5%) and weak (43.0%) employees' willing to change a job and only for 16.5% of employees there is appropriate average strength willing to change a job (Fig. 2).

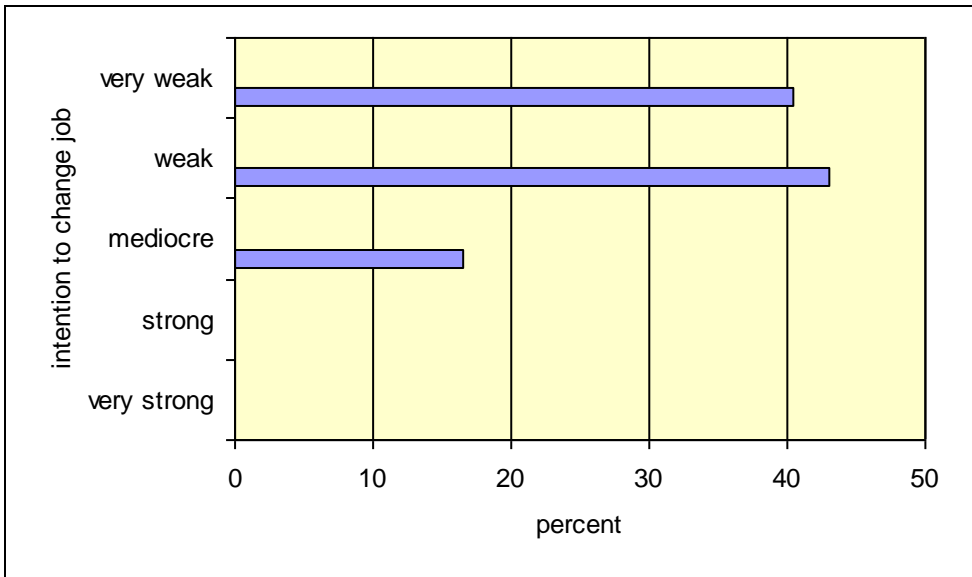


Figure 2. Coachers' willing strength so change a job

In order to define the relationship between employees' loyalty form expression and intention to change a job there was carried out correlative analysis, during which there was estimated Pearson's correlation coefficient. During the analysis of the statements reflecting the strength of affective loyalty and willing to change a job there was disclosed weak relationship between the strength of a willing to change a job and statements: 'I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization, 'I do not feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to my organization' and 'I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own' (Tab. 1).

Table 1

Relationship between coaches' loyalty and willing to change a job

Loyalty	Strength of willing to change a job r
Affective loyalty	-0.249*
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	-0.077
I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization	0.182
I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization	0.318**
I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization	0.323**
I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own	-0.306**
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	0.236*
Continuous loyalty	0.024
One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives	-0.167
If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.	-0.002
I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization	-0.325**
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave organization now	0.084
It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to	0.056
Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire	-0.386**
Normative loyalty	-0.292**
I owe a great deal to my organization	0.074
I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.	-0.283*
This organization deserves my loyalty	-0.020
I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.	-0.246*
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	-0.368**
I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.	0.068

Clarification: *level of statistical meaningfulness in correlative connection $p < 0.05$

**level of statistical meaningfulness in correlative connection $p < 0.01$

During the research of continuous loyalty in the relationship of employees' loyalty and a willing to change a job there were indicated statistically reliable weak reverse relationship only between: a statement '*I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization*' and the strength of a willing to change a job, and a statement '*Right now, staying*

with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire' and the strength of a willing to change a job.

During the relationship research of employees' normative loyalty and a willing to change a job it was indicated that normative loyalty and a willing to change a job are related via statistically reliable weak reverse relationship.

Discussion

During the analysis of employees' loyalty there might be distinguished its different forms; however, most frequently analyzed ones are affective, continuous and normative loyalty (Meyer et al, 2002, Savareikiene, Daugirdas, 2009). Loyalty research of coaches, employed in Lithuanian martial arts clubs disclosed that among the researched continuous loyalty distinguishes most. Such loyalty is connected to the price of leaving the club. Employees, who demonstrate continuous loyalty most frequently, stay in the same organizations as it is financially beneficial for them. In the presence of such a form of loyalty the employee feels that he or she has invested some valuable things into the organization and they will be lost if he/she leaves it. In the following case the coaches are convinced that if staying in the present work place they will lose less than having decided to leave it. Such a form of loyalty is caused by a little number of other job suggestions which could enable the consideration of possibilities for resigning. This was also disclosed by the executed research which revealed that coaches currently would wish to stay in clubs (average 3.6 points), as they are convinced that they would lose too much if they left the club now (average 3.5 points). It is also thought that there are too few options which could enable the consideration concerning leaving the club - resigning (average 3.0 points).

Normative loyalty form is demonstrated weaker in the group of the researched (average 3.0 points). The following form disclosed the person's duty to stay in the organization. That is related to different established social norms most often, which oblige the employee to stay in the organization. It is frequently a result of cultural and organizational socialization. It is likely that coaches demonstrating normative loyalty will perform all working assignments thus they have to do them. These coaches also know that others depend on them and are looking forward to the certain result what is of great significance in sports sector (Todd, Kent, 2009). The following research disclosed that coaches partially feel in debt to the organization (average 2.6 points) or they are liable to the colleagues (average 2.78 points).

The least highlighted among the researched is affective loyalty. Even though such a form of loyalty is significant to the organization, affective loyalty is connected to the person's identification with an organization. Thus the researched coaches are not completely identified with a club, and they very often are not proud of belonging to it and only partially accept and recognize organizational aims and values. That is proved under the statements revealing that the researched do not feel emotionally tied to the club or being its family members.

Such a combination of loyalty forms when there is predominant continuous loyalty can not secure that at a critical moment the employee will take responsibility for actions or results of a decision made. The employees tend to opt; they care about their own interests, but not common ones. They will not do more than are paid for, and having received a financially more rewarding offer the employee will be willing to accept it (Savareikiene and Daugirdas, 2009). The following is confirmed under the research, those reveal that only affective and normative loyalties are very closely related to staying with the organization (Pakalkaite, 2006).

Employee loyalty can be treated as a specific pattern of behavior. Most frequently the employees, who are loyal, behavior differs from those, whose loyalty and commitment to an organization are lower. It was disclosed that the employees possessing stronger loyalty not only are more efficient, but leave the organization much more rarely (Vveinhardt, Kotovskienė, 2008). The following research revealed that the researched coaches' willing to change a sports club is quite weak – any researched did not reveal a very strong or strong willing to change the workplace. This could be explained under different reasons. The employees very often stay in the workplace as there are satisfied their different needs in it. The present work conditions and workload, career opportunities, organizational climate, good relationship with colleagues and managers, fair salary and stability satisfy them. However, unwillingness to change a job might be influenced by the very employee to be mobile or present little supply in labor market (van Dam, 2005, Petkevičiūtė, Kalinina, 2004)

There has been noticed a trend that those employees distinguish by less willing to change a job, whose affective loyalty is higher and who are emotionally more tied to the organization and feel strongly belonging to an organization. The less willing to change an organization is characteristic to those coaches, who think that they have fewer opportunities to compete in modern labor market. Those employees who are sure that they have currently to stay in the organization and have a wish for that, also distinguish by less willing to change a job. It is indicated that the employees

distinguishing for higher normative loyalty are likely not to change a job. Those employees who in case of a better offer would feel that it is not right to leave the organization would be also less likely to change a job.

Conclusions

Expression research in employees' loyalty revealed that the researched employees do not distinguish by the wish to tie to an organization, do not have strong duty feeling based on the moral commitment to an organization, and their relationship to an organization is not based on financial, career or professional refreshment interests. Affective, continuous and normative employees' loyalty under the aspect of work experience, age and salary did not differ reliably. It was indicated that there varied very weak and weak willing of the researched to change a job. There was noticed a trend that those employees distinguish by less willing to change a job, whose affective and normative loyalty is higher.

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