

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Relationship between Organizational Commitment Factors and Individual Characteristics of Iraqi Football Team Coaches with the Mediation Role of Job Satisfaction

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EXTENDED A B S T R A C T**Introduction**

The primary objective of sports coaching is to nurture athlete development, improve all aspects of their performance, and maximize their athletic achievements. Coaching is defined as a dynamic, social, and interpersonal process where coaches aim to positively influence athletes' physical, technical, tactical, and psychological growth. Sports coaches play a crucial educational role, contributing to the psychological well-being of youth by promoting enjoyment, self-esteem, and perceived health. Coaches who promote fair play and respect are associated with higher levels of enjoyment, self-esteem, and lower dropout intentions. This aligns with Meyer and Allen's affective commitment, defined by identification with organizational goals, willingness to exert effort for them, and an emotional desire to remain. Additionally, although a four-component commitment model has been proposed to address shortcomings of the three-component model, few studies have used it. Job satisfaction plays an extremely important role, becoming a central research topic in organizational management. It is among the most critical job-related factors, referring to the set of positive tendencies or feelings individuals hold about their work. Moreover, coaches are considered the most important human resource in a sports team, producing the product of sporting competition and playing the largest role in organizational performance. Job satisfaction is an attitude that extends beyond the organization into private life. For coaches, professional-level satisfaction can be considered a positive state experienced through a complex evaluation of structures, processes, and individual and team results. It is influenced by team social dynamics, relating to social interactions within the team, such as cohesion, club environment, culture, and relationships with athletes, management, and teammates. The job satisfaction of sports coaches is influenced by various factors, including work passion, flow experience, and organizational commitment. Coaches who show harmonious passion for their profession tend to perceive more positive experiences at work and feel greater satisfaction. Furthermore, job satisfaction is linked to motivation and is an indicator of sports organizational performance. Research showed that tennis coaches and full-time coaches reported higher job satisfaction compared to part-time coaches. Additionally, studies found that coaches' job satisfaction levels did not differ significantly based on gender, team gender, or tenure. These findings highlight the importance of factors like passion, commitment, and organizational support in promoting coaches' job satisfaction. Research concluded that increased job satisfaction leads individuals to exert more effort and consequently perform better. Accordingly, high job satisfaction can increase productivity, commit the individual to the organization, improve physical and mental health, boost morale, and provide grounds for life satisfaction. Similar research found that managerial behavior and organizational commitment can predict employee productivity. Other studies found that job satisfaction has a direct and strong effect

on affective commitment; a one-unit change in employee job satisfaction creates a 0.61 unit change in their affective commitment. The relationship between corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment is not limited to the affective dimension; the normative dimension also plays an important role, and employees' perception of social responsibilities affects their job satisfaction. Since in football teams, as in any organization, human resources (coaches) are influential factors, and the more motivated coaches are, the better their efficiency will be. Therefore, having organizational commitment is a factor that can increase their commitment to the organization and team, thereby enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness. Ultimately, this research seeks to answer whether a relationship exists between the factors of organizational commitment and the individual characteristics of coaches of football teams in Iraq, with job satisfaction playing a mediating role.

Methodology

Regarding methodology, this research was descriptive-correlational, applied in purpose, and used a field method for data collection. The statistical population included Iraqi football experts, including coaches, referees, athletes, club presidents and managers, veterans, and sports management professors. Teams from the Iraqi League were considered. The sample size was estimated using Cochran's formula at 150 people, selected through stratified random sampling. A combined questionnaire was used, incorporating job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and individual characteristics questionnaires. After confirmation by the supervisor, it was distributed. Cronbach's alpha was used for reliability, which was suitable for all indices (above 0.7). For validity, structural equation modeling and partial least squares were used for analysis.

Findings

The results showed a direct, positive, and significant relationship between organizational commitment and the individual characteristics of coaches. There was also a direct, positive, and significant relationship between job satisfaction and the individual characteristics of coaches. Furthermore, job satisfaction played a mediating role in the relationship between organizational commitment and individual characteristics. It was also found that group cohesion has a direct, positive, and significant relationship with coaches' individual characteristics. Similarly, group cohesion has a direct, positive, and significant relationship with social attraction to the group, task attraction to the group, and task integration of the coaches.

Discussion and Conclusion

The discussion and conclusion state that the aim was to investigate and analyze the factors of organizational commitment with the individual characteristics of coaches of football teams in Iraq, considering the mediating role of job satisfaction. The results align with research showing that both harmonious and obsessive passion are positively related to absorption and intrinsic motivation experience, but only harmonious passion significantly relates to enjoyment and job satisfaction. Other research showed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment significantly influence organizational citizenship behavior, with organizational commitment contributing more than job satisfaction. Furthermore, individual characteristics, compensation, and job satisfaction affect organizational commitment, and job satisfaction positively impacts organizational commitment. Job satisfaction also mediates the effect of organizational climate on employee performance. These findings indicate job satisfaction's important role in the relationship between individual characteristics, organizational commitment, and performance outcomes in sports coaching. Given the results showing a direct, positive, and significant relationship between organizational commitment and individual characteristics of coaches, the discussion continues in line with consistent and inconsistent research. Consistent research, such as a study on organizational commitment in business environments, found organizational commitment linked to positive individual characteristics like job involvement, creativity, and high performance, suggesting this is generalizable to sports. However, inconsistent research, like another study, found no direct relationship between organizational commitment and coaches' individual characteristics in sports, possibly due to different variables, environmental conditions, or populations studied. Organizational commitment refers to an individual's psychological attachment and loyalty to the organization. For football coaches, this means dedication, loyalty, and identification with their teams or organizations, manifesting as willingness to go the extra mile, exert more effort, and maintain a long-term perspective despite challenges.

Findings on the relationship between organizational commitment and coaches' individual characteristics have been mixed. These results are consistent with research reporting a

positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and desirable personal traits, while other research, found no direct relationship or even a negative correlation. Conversely, conflicting findings have shown that organizational commitment may not consistently predict or influence coaches' personal characteristics. This could be due to various factors, including the specific study context, measurement tools used, sample size, or cultural and environmental factors affecting coaching in different settings. It is important to note that research is ongoing, and new studies continue to contribute to our understanding of this relationship, particularly in Iraqi football coaching. More research is essential for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding. Overall, the current results are consistent with a segment of previous research indicating organizational commitment can enhance coaches' individual characteristics, which could have significant importance for the development of football coaches in Iraq.

The results showed a relationship between organizational commitment and the individual characteristics of coaches with the mediating role of job satisfaction. Evidence exists for a relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, where job satisfaction mediates the effect of organizational commitment on performance. Furthermore, performance appraisal has a positive relationship with employee commitment, explained through the mediation of job satisfaction. Self-efficacy also mediates between job satisfaction and employee commitment, with positive relationships between self-efficacy, employee commitment, and job satisfaction. This theory suggests that employees who perceive higher levels of support, fairness, and positive exchange with their organization are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction. Organizational commitment, referring to an individual's psychological attachment and identification with the organization, acts as a mediator in this relationship. Individual characteristics, such as personality traits, self-efficacy, and locus of control, are known to influence organizational commitment and job satisfaction. For example, individuals with high self-efficacy tend to have higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction because they believe in their ability to perform well and overcome challenges. Job characteristics and workplace quality also play a role in the relationship between organizational commitment, individual characteristics, and job satisfaction. Factors like autonomy, task variety, supportive leadership, and growth opportunities can increase organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Research has shown that organizational commitment positively influences job satisfaction. When employees feel committed to their organization, they are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction due to factors like increased motivation, engagement, and a sense of belonging. One effective study found that organizational commitment was positively and significantly associated with job satisfaction and played a mediating role. Another study showed that individual characteristics like self-efficacy, confidence, and willingness to improve efficiency play an important role in organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Another related study found that coaches who feel organizational commitment and have strong individual characteristics generally enjoy higher job satisfaction. Based on past research and the current results, it can be concluded that organizational commitment and individual characteristics of coaches significantly impact their job satisfaction. Therefore, in organizations and work environments, improving organizational commitment and strengthening coaches' individual characteristics can lead to improved job satisfaction. Organizational commitment in football coaches is influenced by various factors. Individual characteristics, rewards, and job satisfaction all play a role in determining organizational commitment. Furthermore, the level of managerial support provided to coaches has been identified as predictive of their organizational commitment. Person-organization fit, person-job fit, and person-environment fit all have strong positive correlations with organizational commitment among amateur sports coaches. Organizational commitment also has a significant positive correlation with the job satisfaction of football coaches. Therefore, it can be concluded that individual characteristics, compensation, job satisfaction, and managerial support all influence the organizational commitment of football coaches.

KEYWORDS

Organizational, Individual Characteristics, Sports Teams, Soccer, Job Satisfaction.

