

THE EFFECTS OF CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANTS' SOCIALIZATION, ONBOARDING AND TURNOVER

Dorothy A. Henry, Walden University
Ernesto Escobedo, Walden University

ABSTRACT

This study investigates certified nurse assistants' perceived belongingness, attachment to their organizations, and intentions to leave their jobs. The theoretical foundation is Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory. Public policy guiding this study is the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Using a cross-sectional design, we found affective commitment to the organization partially mediated the relationship between organizational identification and turnover intentions. This finding is consistent with prior studies investing the antecedents of commitments to the organization. Data were collected from a random sample of 117 certified nurse assistants' who worked in nursing homes in a Midwest state and who completed a demographic questionnaire and six behavior and attitudinal questionnaires. Data were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression. We recommend employers develop a formal process to train and retrain certified nurse assistants, and establish formal workgroups to enhance relationships and decrease job turnover. The implications for social change include using this analysis to inform employers and policymakers about strategies to train and stabilize the certified nurse assistant workforce for the benefit of nursing home residents, employees and employers.

JEL: H5, I110

KEYWORDS: Policy, Policy Making, Caregiving, Health Care, Health Professional, Healthcare, Nurse

INTRODUCTION

Certified nurse assistants' (CNAs) are integral to the care provided to nursing home residents. The CNA is the principal caregiver of residents in the nursing home. States require CNAs to go through paraprofessional training prior to caring for nursing home residents. Nursing home administrators balance the challenges of retaining staff, CNAs in particular, to comply with the Patient Protection and Accountable Care Act (PPACA). The policies stipulated in PPACA require long-term care institutions to maintain the safety and wellness of patients (Robinson, 2010). In doing so, long-term care institutions must be transparent about their performance. In 2010, there were 65,700 nursing positions that needed to be filled in nursing homes across the United States (American Health Care Association, 2011). CNA job positions represented 43,700 of the total 65,700 jobs vacant in 2010. A vast body of research has explored the factors contributing to CNA turnover, however, little is known of how CNAs identify with the organization (Castle, 2008; Miller, 2009). Data were collected from a cross sectional group of CNAs in a Midwest state to investigate the processes through which CNAs are socialized into the workplace and influencers of turnover. Results show significant relationships among organizational identity, affective commitment, and intention to leave their jobs (Henry, 2014). The next section of this paper is a literature review. Following is the discussion of the data and methodology used in this study. Next is the results section. The last section is the concluding comments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is a synthesis of the studies that examined the Patient Protection and Accountable Care Act (PPACA) pertaining to long-term healthcare. Additionally, this section contains extant studies on organizational identity, organizational commitment, affective commitment to the organizations and employee turnover. The policies stipulated in PPACA require long-term care institutions to manage nursing home residents' health outcomes through care coordination to receive reimbursement incentives (Briesacher, Field, Baril, & Gurwitz, 2009; Haywood, 2010; Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute Policy Work, 2011). However, there are major concerns of policymakers that center on certified nurse assistants' (CNAs) staff turnover, which is upwards of 93% (American Health Care Association, 2010). Researchers have warned that CNAs are needed to care for an aging population, and the baby boomers born between the years 1946 and 1964 entering into traditional retirement (Buerhas, 2008; Kinghorn, 2012).

There have been numerous studies focusing on in-group behaviors, which provide the social cues that an individual can identify with and conform to the in-group norms (Boros, 2008; Edwards & Peccei, 2010; Marique & Stinglhamber, 2011). These group norms aid in conformity with the company, organization, individual and workgroups. In social identity theory, the individual associates with the company, (organizational socialization) through the process of organizational identification. Socialization strategies to integrate newcomers in the organization play a significant role in how employees identify with their work environment. Ashforth and Mael (1989) defined organizational identification as the perception of one with or belonging to an organization. Ashforth and Mael's reconceptualization states the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization in which he or she is a member (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

Their re-conceptualization based on the premises of relational factors indicates identification with the organization presents the foundation for attitudes and behaviors (De Moura, Abrams, Retter, Gunnarsdottir, & Ando, 2009). Sluss, Ployhart, Cobb and Ashforth (2012) explored the condition in which 1,101 new employees identified with the organization. This same study explored generalization of relational and organizational identification using the supervisor as a prototypical mediator to a new employee identifying with the organization. The findings from their study supported the hypothesis that each variable partially mediated the relationship between the newcomers' relational identification and organizational identification (Sluss et al., 2012). Additionally, findings from this same study suggested the newcomers' relational identification generalized to organizational identification when the supervisor was a prototype (Sluss et al., 2012). Marique and Stinglhamber (2011) expanded organizational identification research in a cross-sectional study investigating employee identification to proximal targets of affective commitment. Affective commitment is defined as an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Results of their study showed affective organizational commitment mediated the effect of organizational identification on job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The present study theoretically extends the work of Tajfel and Turner, Ashforth and Mael, and Myer and Allen, by examining the components of organizational commitment. Second, it expanded the research on the mediating role of organizational identification, (socialization) organizational commitment (affective) and turnover intentions of CNAs. We found when CNAs intent to leave the organization increases, their attachment to the organization decreases.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The present study used a quantitative design to collect data and analyze respondents' self-reports on the outcome turnover intentions. This population included certified nurse assistants' (CNAs) with part-time or full-time work experience in for-profit and nonprofit facilities. In 2013, each CNA received an informed consent form, paper survey and postage-paid return envelope through the U.S. Postal System. A reminder card to complete the survey was mailed 7 days after the initial mailing. The researcher mailed follow-up reminder cards at the third and fourth week to the nonrespondents. The surveys were available for CNAs

to complete for 6 weeks from the date of IRB approval. One hundred seventeen surveys were completed and returned through the U.S. Postal System yielding a response return rate of 11%. The researcher performed all data analysis using Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) 18. To investigate the correlations of CNA turnover, this study examined the mediator relationship of, affective commitment to an organization, on predictor variables organizational tenure, occupational tenure, workgroup tenure and organizational identity, and dependent variable turnover intention. A test of mediation examines the relationship between the predictor and the mediator variable, and the relation between the mediator and the criterion variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In essences, the mediator explains the relationship between two variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Model

To test the hypothesis: Affective commitment to an organization will not mediate the relationship between organizational identity and turnover intention we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e \quad (1)$$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Most of the respondents were female, 95.7%, with 3.4% male respondents, which is consistent in the nursing home industry, yielding a representative sample (Kostiwa, Meeks, & Meeks, 2009). Sixty-nine respondents were currently working in a nursing home facility, 39 responded as not currently working in a nursing home, with 9 not providing a response. All 117 respondents had nursing home experience with 67.5% working full-time, 20.5% part-time and 4.3% agency employees. CNAs working in for-profit nursing home facilities represented 49.6% of respondents, with 27.4% working in nonprofit nursing home facilities. The majority of the respondents worked for a nursing home licensed for Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance, 54.7%. Respondents also worked for nursing homes licensed for private insurance, 7.7%; Medicare, 6%; Medicare and private insurance 6%; Medicaid and Medicare, 5.1%; private insurance and Medicaid, 2.6%; and Medicaid, .9%, respectively. Almost all of the respondents, 82.9%, worked as a CNA, 11.1% as Something Else, 1.7% as Executive Directors/Administrators (with .9% as a licensed nurse assistant). The summary statistics of the demographics measured on a continuous scale were tenure to the organization, tenure to the occupation, and tenure to the workgroup. As indicated in Table 1, the respondents' tenure to the organization was $M = 8.27$ years. Tenure to the occupation of the respondents was $M = 14.23$, and tenure to the workgroup was $M = 8.72$.

While the CNAs responding to this study have worked in the occupation for over 14 years, the results indicated turnover has occurred during the span of their professional careers. Affective commitment, organizational identification, job satisfaction and turnover intention were measured on a continuous scale. Table 1 presents the respondent's affective commitment (ACORG) results as $M = 19.69$ and organizational identity (IDORG), $M = 15.87$ on a scale ranging from 6 to 30, respectively. Affective commitment to the workgroup (ACWG_1 SMEAN) had a reported $M = 15.67$, and affective commitment to an occupation $M = 17.44$ on a scale ranging from 4 to 20, respectively. Job satisfaction (JS) had an $M = 9.40$ on a scale of 5 to 20. Turnover intention (TI_1SMEAN) had an $M = 7.81$ on a scale of 3 to 15.

The results of the hierarchical regression to test affective commitment to an organization (ACORG) mediation relationship between organizational identity (IDORG) and turnover intention (TI_1SMEAN) are presented in this section. Four steps were performed to test mediation in the variables of interest. The first model examined the relationship between the independent variable IDORG and dependent variable TI_1SMEAN. The first model showed a correlation between the independent variable organizational identity and predictor variable turnover intentions ($r = 0.280$, $p = 0.056$). In model two, we tested the relationship between the independent variable IDORG and the mediator ACORG. Results indicated a

significant effect of ($r = 0.277, p = 0.061$). Model three explored the relationship between the mediator ACORG and dependent variable TI_1SMEAN. ACORG and TI_1SMEAN were also found to have a significant effect ($r = 0.535, p = 0.000$). The fourth model and final test investigated the mediator relationship to the dependent variable after controlling for the independent variables.

Table 1: Summary Descriptive Statistics of Participant (N = 117)

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Tenorg_1smean	8.27	5.61	117
Tenocc	14.23	3.93	117
Tenwg_1smean	8.72	5.81	117
Acorg	19.69	5.94	117
Idorg	15.87	3.38	117
Acocc	15.67	3.40	117
Acwg_1smean	17.44	3.13	117
Js	9.40	4.51	117
Ti_1smean	7.81	3.51	117

Note: TENORG_SIMEAN = organizational tenure; TENOCC = occupational tenure; TENWG_SIMEAN = workgroup tenure; ACORG = affective organizational commitment; IDORG = organizational identity; ACWG_SIMEAN = affective workgroup commitment; ACOCC = affective occupational commitment; JS = job satisfaction; TI_SIMEAN = turnover intention. The mean respondents' tenure to their organization was 8.27 years. The mean respondents' tenure to the occupation was 14.23 years, and the reported mean tenure to the workgroup was 8.72 years.

The fourth model, which included organizational identity (IDORG) and affective commitment organization (ACORG), indicates significant changes in R^2 (0.253). This regression was significant with an $F(5, 111) = 11.005, p = 0.000$. The predictor variable has a positive and significant influence on turnover intention (TI_1SMEAN) with R^2 equaled 0.331 and the adjusted R^2 0.301. Further visual inspection reveals that this model accounted for 58% of the explained variance in the organizational identity score.

The coefficients affective commitment to an organization (ACORG) and organizational identity (IDORG) contained in the final model were evaluated to analyze the individual contribution of the predictor variable. One factor had significant beta weights. Affective commitment to an organization ($B = -0.524, p = 0.000$) had a significant negative relationship to turnover intention. It is important to note that an inspection of the ANOVA statistics revealed organizational identity was statistically significant; however, it was not significant in predicting turnover intention. It is concluded the hypothesis concerning affective commitment to an organization, organizational identity, and turnover intention was partially supported. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Results infer as turnover intention increases affective commitment to the organization decreases. All other relationships are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression Results for Affective Commitment Mediate Relationship between Predictor Organizational Identity and Turnover Intention

Model 4	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	R ² Change	PF Change	P ANOVA
1	0.280	0.078	0.045	0.078	2.374	0.056*
4	0.576	0.331	0.301	0.253	42.046	0.000***
Coefficients for Final Model						
	B	β	t	p	Bivariate r	Partial r
Step 1						
IDORG	0.150	0.144	1.584	0.116	0.130	0.148
Step 2						
(Constant)	13.583		6.805	0.000***		
IDORG	0.123	0.119	1.524	0.130	0.130	0.143
ACORG	-0.309	-0.524	-6.484	0.000***	-0.535	-0.524

Note. IDORG = Organization Identification Scores; ACORG = Organization Affective Commitment Scores * $p < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $p < .000$
 *This table shows the regression equation. Organizational identity (IDORG) and affective commitment organization (ACORG) had significant changes in R^2 (.253). This regression was significant with an $F(5, 111) = 11.005, p = .000$. The predictor variable has a positive and significant influence on turnover intention (TI_1SMEAN) with R^2 equaled .331 and the adjusted R^2 .301.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The purpose of this study was to identify the correlations of CNA turnover in nursing homes operating in a Midwest state. Researchers have cautioned the likelihood of the nursing facilities retaining a CNA from start to year-end is dismal (American Health Care Association, 2008; Miller, 2009). Correlations were identified by testing Tajfel and Turner's grand theory of social identity. To investigate the correlations of CNA turnover, this study examined the mediator relationship of organizational identity, affective commitment to an organization, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. Turnover intention examines how employees feel about their organizations. Employees who become dissatisfied with their job may experience turnover intentions (Henry, 2014). It is possible that the dissatisfaction with the job can result from the inability to achieve a person's identity standard (Hogg, 2006). When examining the intent to leave employment, researchers find interest in how often an employee thinks about quitting the organization (Jaros, 1997). Researchers have indicated commitment and organizational identity can influence employee turnover intention and job satisfaction (Marique & Stinglhamber, 2011).

We hypothesized affective commitment to an organization would not mediate the relationship between organizational identity and turnover intention. Affective commitment is defined as the employees' emotional attachment to identify with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Marique and Stinglhamber (2011) posited the behavior aspect of affective commitment is an exchange where individuals become committed to an organization to receive favorable treatment. To investigate the correlations of CNA turnover, hierarchical analyses were performed to test the mediator relationship of organizational identity, affective commitment to an organization, and turnover intention. This hypothesis was partially supported. As the model predicted, the null hypothesis was rejected. Based on the results of this study, as turnover intention increases, affective commitment to the organization should decrease.

This finding indicates an employee will not be as emotionally attached to the organization when there is a decision to leave the organization. The findings of this study are supported in extant research that the form of commitment influences turnover intentions and behaviors (Jaros, 1997). Researchers have confirmed that employees with affective commitment choose to remain with the organization (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). The manner in which the employee identifies with the organization's identity precipitates how the employee relates to the company (Zagenczky, Gibney, Few & Scott, 2011). When employees have a strong identity to the organization, they will remain with the employer even when the conditions of the organization are unfavorable (Henry, 2014). Researchers have indicated employees who identify with the organization have cognitions, affections, and desire that manifest in dimensions of pride, categorization and cohesion (Romeo, Yepes, Berger, Guardia, & Castro, 2011). These dimensions are exhibited as self-esteem, group identity, and desire to remain with the organization (Romeo et al., 2011).

Employers concerned with improving organizational commitment should focus on the people aspect of the company. Employers who develop a formal process to onboard and socialize CNAs can enhance the perception of belonging to the company. Implementing consistent assignments is a positive social change for the nursing home resident as it improves clinical outcomes. The scope of this study included turnover intentions of CNAs working in nursing homes that operate in a Midwest state. As typical in research, this study had limitations. The first limitation centers on the survey design used to collect data. The self-reported affective commitment, organizational identity, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, measures may have caused inflation in relationship between the variables. A second limit of this study was combining attitudinal and behavior theoretical concepts using a cross-sectional design with data collected at one point in time. As with all research, bias was another limitation of note in this study. The present researchers minimized these limitations by comparing the present results to the test-retest reliability, reliability and validity of prior studies for consistency in the replication of the research studies.

This study used a multifocal design to fill a gap in the literature by combining attitudinal and behaviors scales to investigate CNAs. The variable in this study related to CNAs' turnover intention. It is recommended future research examine the moderator effects of affective commitment, organizational identity, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. This study looked at the proximal targets of turnover to gain an understanding if the respondents identified most with their workgroup or occupation. Using a qualitative study, the identification with proximal targets can expand on the findings of this study. A mixed-method design is an excellent method to investigate quantitative and qualitative responses on the proximal targets of job satisfaction and turnover.

REFERENCES

- American Health Care Association. (2010). *The state long term health care sector characteristics, utilization, and government funding update*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.ahcancal.org/research_data/trends_statistics/Documents/ST_rpt_STStats2011_20110906_FIN AL_web.pdf
- American Health Care Association. (2011). *Report of findings nursing facility staffing survey*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.ahcancal.org/research_data/staffing/Documents/REPORT%20OF%20FINDINGS%20NURSI NG%20FACILITY%20STAFFING%20SURVEY%202010.pdf
- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(1), 20–39. doi:10.5465/AMR.1989.4278999
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173-1182. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173
- Boros, S. (2008). Organizational identification: Theoretical and empirical analysis of competing conceptualizations. *Cognition, Brain, & Behavior*, 12, 1–27. Available from <http://www.ascred.ro/>
- Briesacher, B. A., Field, T. S., Baril, J. & Gurwitz, J. H. (2009). Pay-for-performance in nursing homes. *Health Care Financing Review*, 30(3), 1–13. Available from <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/HealthCareFinancingReview/>
- Buerhaus, P. I. (2008). Current and future state of the US nursing workforce. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 300(20), 2422–2424. doi:10.1001/jama.2008.729
- Castle, N. G. (2008). State differences and facility differences in nursing home staff turnover. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 27(5), 609–630. Doi: 10.1177/0733464808319711
- De Moura, G. R., Abrams, D., Retter, C., Gunnarsdottir, S., & Ando, K. (2009). Identification as an organizational anchor: How identification and job satisfaction combine to predict turnover intention. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 540–557. doi:10.1002/ejsp.553
- Edwards, M. R. & Peccei R. (2010). Perceived organizational support, organizational identification, and employee outcomes. Testing a simultaneous multifoci model. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 9(1), 17–26. doi:10.1027/1866-5888/a000007
- Haywood, T. (2010). The cost of confusion healthcare reform and value-based purchasing. *Healthcare Financial Management*, 44–48.

Henry, D.A. (2014). *The effects of certified nurse assistants' socialization, onboarding, and turnover* (Doctorial dissertation). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1547165868?accountid=14872>. (1547165868).

Hogg, M. A. (2006). Social identity theory. In Burke, P. J. (EDS.), *Contemporary social psychological theories* (pp. 111–136). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Jaros, S. J. (1997). An assessment of Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organizational commitment and turnover intentions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51*, 319–337. doi:10.5465/AMBPP.1995.17536599

Kinghorn, M. (2012). *Indiana population projections, 2010 to 2050*. Indiana Business Research Center, Kelley School of Business, Indiana University. Retrieved from <http://www.ibrc.indiana.edu/ibr/2012/spring/article1.html>

Kostiwa, I. M., Meeks, M., & Meeks, S. (2009). The relationship between psychological empowerment, service quality, and job satisfaction among certified nursing assistants. *Clinical Gerontologist, 32*, 276–292. doi:10.1080/07317110902895309

Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*, 103–123. doi:10.1002/job.4030130202

Marique, G., & Stinglhamber, F. (2011). Identification to proximal targets and affective organizational identification. *Journal of Personnel Psychology, 10*(3), 107–117. doi:10.1027/1866-5888/a000040

Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 1*(1), 61–89. doi:10.1016/1053-4822(91)90011-Z

Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., & Smith, C. A. (1993). Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*, 538–551.

Miller, E. W. (2009). *Study of turnover and training in Indiana's long-term care facilities*. University of Indianapolis Center for Aging & Community. 1–40. Retrieved from http://www.state.in.us/isdh/files/U_of_I_Staffing_Study_2009.pdf

Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute Policy Work. (2011). *Facts 3—who are direct care workers*. Bronx, NY: Author.

Romeo, M., Yepes, M., Berger, R., Guardia, J., & Castro, C. (2011). Identification-commitment inventory (ICI model): Confirmatory factor analysis and construct validity. *Quality and Quantity, 45*, 901–909. doi:10.1007/s11135-010-9402-0

Robinson, K.M. (2010). Care coordination: A priority for health reform. *Policy, Politics, & Nursing Practice, 11*(4), 266–274. doi:10.1177/1527154410396572

Sluss, D. M., Ployhart, R. E., Cobb, M. G., & Ashforth, B. E. (2012). Generalizing newcomers' relational and organizational identifications: process and prototypicality. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*(4), 949–975. doi:10.5465/amj.2010.0420

Zagenczyk, T., Gibney, R., Few, W., & Scott, K. (2011). Psychological contracts and organizational identification: The mediating effect of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Labor Research*, 32(3), 254–281. doi:10.1007/s12122-011-9111-z

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge and thank the certified nurse assistants for sharing their expertise and knowledge of the long-term care profession. Spending your day caring for those unable to care for themselves is both humbling and challenging. We thank each of you for caring for those in their time of need.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Dorothy Henry is a public administrator with 21 years of experience leading and managing complex initiatives resulting in improved operational efficiencies of public and non-profit organizations. She is a graduate of Walden University earning a Doctoral degree in Philosophy in the School of Social and Behavioral Science. Dr. Henry served as a subject matter expert on the *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Home* pilot to improve the quality of care and life of nursing home residents and stabilize staff in nursing homes designated as a critical access nursing home. Dorothy's research has focused on quasi-experimental quantitative research designs. Her research interests include public administration, organizational behavior and leadership, and health services. Dr. Henry can be reached at DrDAHenry@Gmail.Com.

Dr. Ernesto Escobedo is a contributing faculty member at Walden University in the School of Public Policy & Administration. Dr. Ernesto Escobedo holds a Ph.D. in Organization & Management, SPHR certification (Senior Professional in Human Resources), and CDM (Certified Distinguished Mediator). Further, Dr. Escobedo is a Texas Business Hall of Fame Scholarship recipient. Dr. Escobedo has taught for institutions of higher learning for the past 20 years. His research interests include public policy, finance, leadership, accounting, organizational behavior and change, budgeting, communications, and mediation. Dr. Escobedo has made numerous presentations at professional conferences. Contact Dr. Escobedo at Ernesto.Escobedo@Waldenu.Edu.