Social Capital And Organizational Commitment Influence On Job Performance Amongst Academic Staff: A Case Study At Universiti Sains Malaysia.

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Abstract

There is an ‘increasing societal requirement that colleges and universities must become more responsive to national economic needs and new government demands for increased performance’ (Alexander 2000, p.411). Recognizing the links between performance in higher education and economic and social development is now a critical issue. The success of human resources and effective population systems is now critical in the legitimacy of higher education in the contemporary knowledge economy(Alexander 2000, p.412). However while KPI (Key Performance Index) have become a key policy platform to measure and drive performance towards greater productivity in higher education a significant issue has arisen in terms of the intangibles and social capital that is also critical to performance, innovation and sustainable development. Intangible values have been the subject of significant academic debate in diverse institutional contexts from business through to higher education. Is performance reliant on forms of more or less intangible social capital and commitment? Alternatively is there no necessary connection between social capital, commitment and KPI? In short the relationship between key performance criteria how this affects and relies on forms of largely tacit social values and interactions is the object of this paper.

We examined the extent of non tangible forms of social capital and commitment contributions to successful attainment of KPI’s and broader performance. It is based on a study 376 academic staff in Universiti Sains Malaysia. Methods used include factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. Factor analysis was used to reduce large numbers of explanatory variables for commitment and social capital. We obtained 3 factors that explained organizational commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. This study found that affective and normative commitments are positively influenced by social capital explained by 3 factors: relational trust, cohesive bonds and social network. These 3 factors tend to contribute to greater affective and normative commitments. The significance of affective and normative commitment to organizational performance over the long term is an important aspect of organizational theory and research. There is a strong literature linking organizational commitment with overall and long term job performance. Negative views about the workplace, negative views about the social interactions at work and a failure of work places to generate affective and normative commitments can lead to higher rates of turnover, lack of real engagement with the goals of an organization and a failure of buy in by staff to the goals of the organization.

What our study has also found that both high commitment and social capital among the academic staff do not necessarily manifest in high job performance measured in terms of KPI. Instead, staff background such as age, rank and years of working with the university seem to have more influence on their job performance. In conclusion success in the current KPI structure which
measures a very limited and narrow concept of performance does not necessarily rely on social capital or social capabilities, nor does success in generating such KPI’s necessarily produce of organizational commitments which when combined with longer term generation of social competencies and capabilities underpin deep and ongoing performance culture.