

# PREDICTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL LOYALTY OF RAILWAY PERSONNEL BASED ON GLASSER'S THEORY

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with the objective of determining the possible applicability of Glasser's theory of choice (needs satisfaction) on prediction of personnel's organizational loyalty. This study was implemented based on descriptive-correlative method and on the survey that engaged 2899 male personnel of Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, residing in Tehran, using simple cluster random sampling and organiza-

tional loyalty questionnaire and needs intensity assessment test. Regression analysis and multivariate analysis of variance were used for data analysis. According to the results, a significant relationship exists between Glasser's theory of needs satisfaction and organizational loyalty of railway personnel ( $p < 0.001$ ). The author shows what needs are most significant for prediction of organizational loyalty and suggests recommendations regarding perspective work with the staff.

**Keywords:** railway, Iran, Glasser choice theory, basic needs, organizational loyalty, staff personnel, executive personnel, analysis of variance, survey.

## Background<sup>1</sup>

For long time the most public and state organizations have emphasized that efficient human resource is a sustainable development axis. For this purpose, majority of managers are seeking to promote loyalty in their relative organizations, but most times we observe an evident difference between what managers want for organization and what exists in the organization.

According to William Glasser, the phenomenon, when interests and reality mismatch, is referred to as a «failure gap». In his theory, cause of all behaviors is a continuous effort for choosing the best option for meeting needs, thus personnel of any organization chooses loyalty to organization when their choice is their best known way for meeting their needs. In return, cause of choosing disloyalty by personnel is that they think being faithful or acting faithfully doesn't meet their basic needs and they must choose another style and way for meeting their needs [1, pp. 22-44].

On the other side, necessity for sense of responsibility to organization is recognizing personnel's thought and preparing conditions, therein personnel can show their talent and capabilities [2, pp. 102-111].

Thus, within recent decades, personnel loyalty has been considered by behavioral sciences experts and scholars due to its important role in establishment of business space and progress of any organization. Nonetheless, there is no integrated and united definition about concept of personnel's loyalty and most of concepts explain different aspects of work ethics, whilst some specialists believe that for definition of loyalty, psychological and mental behavior of personnel as a personality structure must be focused in order to predict the causes of loyalty or disloyalty [3].

Certainly, satisfaction of personnel in business environment is the result of a perception that is incorporated in organization, management and work in organization, and this feeling of satisfaction may be converted to pleasant images in their desirable world and revealed in organizational loyalty.

Basing on Glasser's theory, desirable world of any person includes images, styles and solutions that meet their needs. Important part of continuous formation of these images in the desirable world of employees is subject to having a perception concerning basic needs satisfaction in working environment that causes loyalty of personnel to organization. This perception motivates the personnel to use their maximum power in the organization. Thus, it is clear that managers, in order to increase productivity and to reduce accidents at the workplace, extremely need organizational loyalty of their supervised personnel.

## Objective

The objective of this study is to determine the effect of five needs satisfaction based on Glasser's choice theory on prediction of organizational loyalty of railway personnel.

## Literature review

Experts believe that challenge of most large organizations is continuously related to behaviors such as daily delay of a few staff members to begin working, unexcused absence, hurry for leaving a workplace and tendency or practical action for permanent leaving of organization [4, pp. 82-94].

Allen & Meyer believe that organizational commitment is the result of experiencing personnel needs satisfaction or compatibility and coordination of their values to organization [5].

Some academic studies also demonstrate that organizational loyalty is the result of fairly distribution and performance in organization that respectively led to job satisfaction of personnel and suitable organizational communication in the organization [6].

Within last years, importance of the effect of human resources on goods production and services context motivated researchers and experts to take the commitment and loyalty of personnel into consideration as an attitude dependent on work for increasing qualitative level of organization. In the meantime, a few researches supposed that the organizational loyalty of personnel is the cause of deviant behavior reduction in working environment [7] and some other researches show that emotional and cognitive factors of personnel in relation to the work, colleagues and organization is significantly effective on prediction of different aspects of counter-productive behaviors [8]. Theft of properties and assets of an organization and unexcused absence from workplace are assumed as two evident samples of counter-productive and service behavior [9].

But, W. Glasser, being one of pioneers of internal control psychology in consideration of different factors of physical and psychological needs, studied on why and how behavior is created and believed that all work, which a person makes, is a kind of behavior and all important behaviors are selected and expressed for a specific purpose and intent that is similar to satisfaction of one or more needs among five basic needs. These needs include survival, love and sense of belonging (attachment), power and progress (self-valuing), freedom and fun [10, pp. 32-80]<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> English text is mainly reproduced in author's original version, with some editorial changes and abridgements.

<sup>2</sup> Choice theory of W. Glasser, particularly regarding its application to social phenomena, isn't shared by considerable number of adherents of classical and social psychology. — Note of ed.board.



The basis for William Glasser's choice theory was propounded in 1998<sup>3</sup> as support theory of reality therapy approach and contrary to some psychological schools and traditional psychoanalysts is strongly formed on the belief that past of anyone is not a determining agent of his current behavior but past experience includes agent or information that man receives from the outside world; these information and experience may have effect on choice of a person, but what is identified as behavior determinant is a choice that people do for meeting their demands and needs and not factors affecting the choice. It is because of a fact that man makes his desirable choice among various options [1, pp. 22-44].

W. Glasser upon applying choice theory in human resource management believes that whenever there is a difference between what people want and what they have, failure gap is made and internal balance is disordered. Then, people take actions to redress the balance. Effort for returning balance shows man's responsibility. This responsibility or sense of being responsible is defined as a capability of a man to meet his needs so that not to deprive the others from meeting their needs. In return, escape from responsibility is an ineffective and unrealistic effort or behavior for meeting the needs [11, pp. 81-91]. Responsible behaviors or irresponsible behaviors are formed with the purpose of meeting five basic needs [10, pp. 32-80]. Accordingly, in any organization, loyalty (responsibility) or disloyalty (escape from responsibility) are kinds of behavior, selected by personnel of that organization to meet their needs.

In addition, assessments in IR Iran's railway within 10 consecutive years from 1382 to the end of 1391 (2003-2013) show that direct effect of human resources on occurrence of railway accidents and events was of 50-60% [12], whilst as most experts believe, technical and natural factors resulting in accidents and events were also affected by human resources and need further consideration.

On the other side, some experts assume organizational loyalty as an attitude or mental positioning related to work and organization that specifies relationship between employees and their managers, other personnel and organization as a whole. Result of this relationship explains satisfaction with work in organization or intellectual and practical choice or staying in or leaving the organization or staying together with expressing counterproductive behaviors in organization.

According to Glasser, experiencing a pleasant feeling is dependent on meeting basic needs and a key for complying with needs of any man is having intimate and emotional relationship with other humans. He believes that satisfaction of anyone with school, home, family, working environment and employer is dependent on his needs satisfaction; a behavior that due to meeting the needs is converted to pleasant and desirable images in the qualitative world of man [10, pp. 32-80].

Certainly, people differ from each other in relation to opportunity of their needs satisfaction. Accordingly, as Glasser mentions, each one of us learns quality and procedure of complying with our needs in connection with the others and if we don't learn a true way for meeting our needs, we will be unsatisfied and sickly. In these cases, each of us to reduce this pain resorts to unreal and ineffective behaviors [13] and until not finding more suitable behavior for meeting our needs, we will not give up the previous behavior, because the manner we behave though ineffective and unreal is converted to pleasant images in our desirable world. Therefore Glasser

focused on training effect in three contexts including reality therapy, strategic management and education and stated that people after retraining by choice theory approach can more appropriately identify their needs and meet them. It causes achieving the experience of feeling of satisfaction and formation of this belief that they can control their life matters as much as they want [11, pp. 81-91].

### Methodology

This study is an applied research in terms of objective and a descriptive-correlative study therein organizational loyalty is based on Glasser's theory of needs satisfaction of male personnel of IR Iran's railway, residing in Tehran. Accordingly, hypothesis that «Glasser's theory of needs satisfaction in working environment significantly effects the prediction of organizational loyalty» was tested.

Participants of this study consisted of 2899 male personnel of IR Iran's railway, residing in Tehran, with employment status as official, fixed corporate, daily-wage, specified employment contract and employed from 1392 (2013). According to Kramer method, sample size in this study was equal to 200 peoples that were selected based on two-stage random sampling. To test the respective hypothesis in consideration of nature of measurement scale that is an interval scale, moreover by reason of five independent variables (subscales of needs intensity assessment as predictor variables) and a dependent variable (organizational loyalty scores as criterion variable), multiple regression was used.

### Instrument

In this study, two questionnaires including organizational loyalty and needs intensity assessment were used based on objective and subject.

### Organizational loyalty questionnaire

Data collection instrument for assessment of organizational loyalty was 7-item questionnaire that was introduced by Ali Valkazemi and translated by Golparvar and Nadi in Iran (2011), and used for assessment of responder's perceived loyalty to organization and its reliability and validity was accepted. Responding scale of this 5-point questionnaire was formulated from «completely disagree» to «completely agree», and examinees upon choosing options were assigned values specifying their loyalty [7]. In the present study, internal uniformity of this test was calculated based on Cronbach's alpha equal to 0.78.

### Needs intensity assessment test

This test was made for the first time by Sahebi (2011) based on structures of William Glasser's choice theory and assesses responder's satisfaction with five basic needs including need for survival, need for love and sense of belonging, need for power and self-value, need for freedom and fun and two questions were designed for each question in two parts.

Before implementing test on the final sample, at first this test was applied to 30 people that had been selected randomly and general Cronbach's alpha was estimated for 5 variables (5 basic needs) and equaled 0.71 that is an acceptable reliability.

In addition, Cronbach's alpha in five scales of test was separately obtained as follows:

Need for survival: 0.60

Need for love and sense of belonging: 0.76

Need for power and self-value: 0.65

Need for freedom: 0.64

Need for fun: 0.60

Content validity of this test was confirmed by specialists.

### Results and conclusions

Summary of results shows that Glasser's theory of needs satisfaction in working environment has a significant effect on prediction of loyalty of railway personnel residing in Tehran.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. Glasser, William. Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom. Harper, 352 p. — Note of ed.board.

**Table 1**

**Summary of regression analysis for prediction of organizational loyalty based on 5 basic needs satisfaction**

Predictor variables	Non-standardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	t	Significance level	Semi-partial correlation
	B	Beta			
Constant value	22.906	-	70.699	0.000	-
Survival	0.148	0.112	1.892	0.06	0.087
Love	0.466	0.337	5.222	0.000	0.241
Power	0.593	0.427	6.689	0.000	0.309
Freedom	0.081	0.06	1.023	0.308	0.047
Fun	-0.067	-0.062	-1.153	0.25	-0.053

**Table 2**

**Summary of dependent variable prediction model**

Significance level	F	Standard error	Adjusted R square	R square	R
0.000	55.609	3.545	0.581	0.592	0.769

According to summary of results in tables (1) and (2), there is a significant relationship between Glasser's theory of needs satisfaction and organizational loyalty of railway personnel ( $p<0.001$ ) and statistics  $t$  and significance levels indicate that out of five predictor variables, 3 variables including need for power and value, need for love and belonging and need for survival have a significant connection with loyalty variable and obtained beta coefficients indicate that needs for survival, love and power have a positive and significant correlation with organizational loyalty. Finally, in consideration of the foregoing and obtained coefficients, regression equation was formulated based on non-standardized regression coefficients as below:

$$(Loyalty) Y= 22.906+0.148 (survival)+0.466 (love) +0.593 (power)$$

Upon comparing beta standardized coefficients, it was concluded that need for power (0.427) had a maximum effect on prediction of organizational loyalty of railway personnel and thereafter need for love (0.337) and need for survival (0.112) were prioritized.

Significance of correlation between needs satisfaction and organizational loyalty of railway personnel is consistent with Glasser's choice theory that refers peoples' satisfaction to rate of meeting their needs [10, pp. 32-80].

In addition, these results are consistent with the expectancy theory, because according to expectancy theory, personnel are extremely under effect of expectancy and demand of any person for working conditions, organization and management [14, pp. 50-52]. In addition to the foregoing, results of this study are consistent with the theory of reference group that supposes satisfaction of personnel with working environment is independent on meeting interests, demands and conditions of personal and private reference group [15, pp. 17-23].

According to the results provided in tables (1) and (2), despite of acceptable level of organizational loyalty of personnel, basic needs of personnel are not met proportionally and railway personnel prefer to meet their needs respectively based on priority of need for power and progress, need for love and belonging, need for survival, need for freedom and need for fun. These findings are corresponding to Glasser's theory that believes that employees to meet their needs, prefer another need, because of their choice and importance of their needs. This importance is affected by genetic factors and explains varied images in desirable world of any person [10, pp. 32-80].

Choosing a need for power and progress satisfaction as a first priority of railway personnel is under impact of fac-

tors and characteristics such as specialty and uniqueness of professions and effect of power and progress on other needs satisfaction.

Choosing a need for power and progress satisfaction by railway personnel was converted to a desirable belief and their assumption that power and progress needs' satisfaction means achievement of their other demands. Their perception of reality and its comparison to their demands was followed by the fact that whatever they are more powerful, they will benefit from more advantages in organization proportionally. This mismatch in needs satisfaction is due to failure in meeting all needs moderately, thus personnel focus considerable part of their power on needs that are met easier with lower cost. Furthermore, need for love and attachment satisfaction is chosen by railway personnel, because they believe that most instructions and administrative regulations of organization are not updated and sometimes cumbersome, thus necessity of handling some affairs requires having close and non-organizational relations between personnel to use it for bypassing rules and finally handle affairs.

This finding is consistent to Glasser theory. He believes that satisfaction of four psychological needs including power, love, freedom, and fun affects the improvement of quality of work of public centers personnel more than physiological need satisfaction, because personnel of these centers are sure that with the minimum occupational activity they can also receive monthly salary and continue their life [1, pp. 22-44]. Thus, naturally, personnel take effort for self-preservation and keeping their survival, but meeting this need is their third choice and indicates that minimum requirements for meeting this need is provided for railway personnel and non-focusing on this need excluding a few cases (accidents and events) doesn't endanger the individual existence. Therefore, choosing this need satisfaction is not the first or even second priority. In addition, due to lack of adequate specialists in shift jobs and receiving insufficient salary and benefits for subsistence costs of railway personnel, meeting the need for freedom and fun is taken into next precedence.

**Recommendations**

Considering beta coefficients extracted from five needs based on Glasser's theory, choosing and meeting need for power had a maximum effect on organizational loyalty, thus it is recommended to provide career promotion and appointment software using reliable and pursuable qualitative and quantitative parameters data for personnel in order to perceive a tangible and reliable perspective for their promotion and progress in organization definitely.





It is suggested to incorporate committee on mental health for assessment, analysis and teaching choice theory and presentation of appropriate strategies for satisfaction of personnel's basic needs proportionally.

Whereas based on findings of this study, Glasser's needs satisfaction had a significant connection with organizational loyalty of railway personnel, it is proposed to focus on close communication between managers and personnel of organization and recognition of their needs in order to upraise motivation, goal and qualitative services production of personnel. Considering personnel's choice of needs satisfaction as a priority and assuming first, fourth and fifth priorities, it is suggested to revise it for updating instructions and regulations in organization and to formulate and implement training courses as introduction to professional rights for making personnel aware of interests that can be achieved through observing regulations, in order to get familiar with consequences of observance or breach of regulations and to have the required information for the best choice.

The obtained beta coefficients indicate also that choosing and meeting needs for power and love among other needs based on Glasser theory have a maximum effect on organizational loyalty of railway personnel. Thus it is recommended, for upraising and understanding personnel participation in responsible satisfaction of need for power and need for love and belonging in organization, to clarify organizational goals and establish a methodic system of collection, classification and analysis of personnel demands, to provide requirements for their growth and prosperity.

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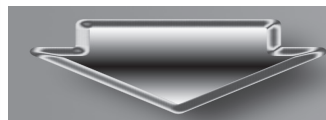
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<sup>1</sup> Here and hereafter the titles of works published in Iran are given in their English version, translated by the author – Note of the ed.board.

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## EDITORIAL RESUME

**W**hile fundamentals of W. Glasser choice theory are not recognized by many experts, a well detailed and tested effort by the author to develop on its basis research instruments and to apply them to a study of job motivators of railwaymen and to assessment of their corporate loyalty, merits in the editorial opinion any sort of attention. In any case the author doesn't conclude that the method, applied with regard to Glasser's theory

based approach, is a single-value method, but insists on high correlation of results obtained and on prevailing of some of the needs within the process of assessment of staff loyalty. Taking that into account and despite the fact that practical recommendations concern primarily the features of the railway of IR of Iran, the developed method is a ponderable occasion for further discussion and probably for its testing regarding features of other railways. ●