

THE EFFECT OF EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE PERCEPTIONS ON THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: A UNIVERSITY SAMPLE

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Abstract

Social concepts such as equity, fairness and organizational justice play an important role in employees' evaluation of their own workplace environment. The employees who have positive feelings about these concepts are committed more to their organization, which leads to job satisfaction and an increase in the level of organizational success.

This study aims to indicate the effect of employees' organizational justice (OJ) perceptions on their organizational commitment (OC). A sample university with its administrative and academic staff is determined as the study field. In the study, it is indicated that, on the basis of OJ's lower dimensions, it affects OC positively and significantly.

Key Words : *Organizational justice, organizational loyalty, organizational behaviour*

JEL Code : D23 - Organizational Behavior; Transaction Costs; Property Rights

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, all the sources of educational organizations should work in harmony for the proper functionality of educational activities (Doğan,2008:1). It is of utmost importance that all the present sources should operate in parallel with the aims of the organization. Also in universities the most important source for the persistence of educational process is the source of human; that is the employees. In accordance with this thought, the quality of education and tuition will be improved by the performance of the employees in this university.

The studies on the personal performance of the employees have shown that OC and OJ are involved in the area of organizational behavior. In these studies, it is indicated that, in the organizations whose employees have a high perception of justice, OC will be high, too (Cihangiroğlu,2011:9-16; İşcan,2004:198) and correspondingly, employees with a high OC will contribute more to their organization.

This study aims to analyze the relation between OJ perceptions and OC of the administrative and academic staff working in the sample university.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Organizational Justice (OJ) Perception:

There are various factors which affect the employees' commitment to the organizations they work for. One of these factors is the OJ perception. OJ involves the encouragement of fair and ethical applications and operations within the organization. In other words, in a fair organization, the employees evaluate the administrators' behaviors as fair, ethical and rational (İşcan,2004:187).

In literature, OJ is commonly known to have three factors: distributive, procedural (process) and interactional (Cohen-Charash,2001). In this sense, distributive justice (DJ) is the justice of an employee which he perceives as a result of comparing the commitments he makes to his work and the outcomes of these such as rewards, duties and responsibilities, with the commitments the other employees make and the outcomes of them (Colquitt,2001). Procedural (process) justice (PJ) implies that, while justifying the fairness of the organizational decisions, the employees are not interested in what these decisions are; however, they are concerned about the processes which determine these decisions. (Çakmak,2005:31). Interactional justice (IJ) concentrates on the interpersonal relationships; behaviors among employees and the fairness of the communication within the organizations. (Yazıcıoğlu,2009:5).

2.2 Organizational Commitment (OC):

According to Hersey and Johnson (2001), the term OC amounts to the overall normative pressures that are put on the employees to fulfill their organizational tasks, the psychological interest towards the organization and the psychological state that forces the individual to remain in the organization (İşcan and Naktiyok, 2004:185).

About the OC, the most common classification is made by Allen and Meyer (1990). In this classification OC has three components: Affective Commitment (Emotional Loyalty) (AC), Continuance Commitment (CC) and Normative Commitment (NC).

AC could be defined as the desire of the employees to remain in the organization (Meyer,1997:11). Employees with a high AC are eager to stay as a member of the organization (Balay,200:21). CC can be defined as the employees' need to remain within the organization unless it is too costly to leave the organization or they have no other choice (Meyer,2002:22). In NC, the employees believe they have obligations and responsibilities in the organization and therefore they feel they have to remain in the institution (Wasti,2002:398). In NC, the employee feels he has to work in the institution, so it differs from AC and the employee isn't affected by the calculation of the loss in case he resigns, so it differs from CC (Solmuş,2004:245).

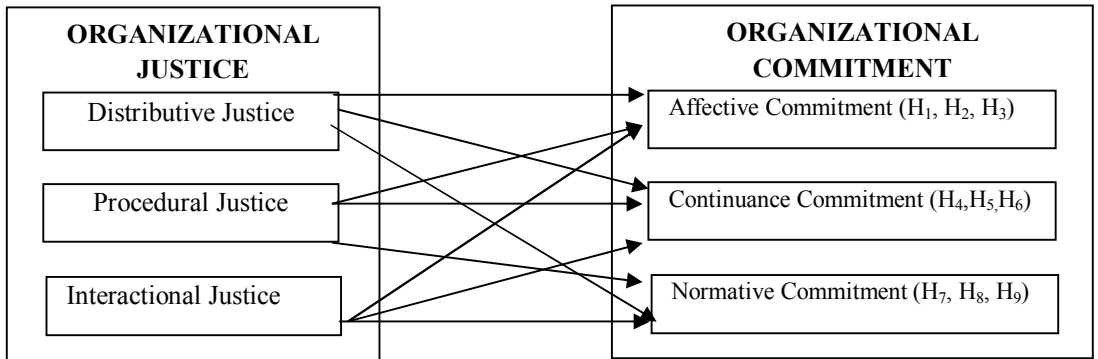
2.3 The Relationship between Organizational Justice Perceptions and Organizational Commitment:

There are various factors which affect the commitment of the institutional workers to their institutions in our day. One of these factors is, without doubt, the OJ perceptions of the workers. The individuals with a higher OJ perception have more job satisfaction, higher performance, which leads to less resignation and as a consequence, they have a higher commitment to their institutions (Bakshi,2009:145).

In this respect, while Cohen and Charash (2001) have claimed that there is a relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment, Chang (2002) has also found positive and significant connections between organizational commitment and distributive and procedural justice. As stated in present researches, the employees' perceptions on the fairness of the organizations they work for lead to an increase in their job commitment (Erkuş,2011:249).

Here is a research model shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Research Model



Here are the hypotheses to be tested in the study:

H1: Distributive justice (DJ) affects affective commitment (AC) positively and significantly.

H2: Procedural justice (PJ) affects affective commitment (AC) positively and significantly.

H3: Interactional justice (IJ) affects affective commitment (AC) positively and significantly.

H4: Distributive justice (DJ) affects continuance commitment (CC) positively and significantly.

H5: Procedural justice (PJ) affects continuance commitment (CC) positively and significantly.

H6: Interactional justice (IJ) affects continuance commitment (CC) positively and significantly.

H7: Distributive justice (DJ) affects normative commitment (NC) positively and significantly.

H8: Procedural justice (PJ) affects normative commitment (NC) positively and significantly.

H9: Interactional justice (IJ) affects normative commitment (NC) positively and significantly.

3. METHOD

3.1. Sampling

The sample consists of 451 academic and administrative staff of a university in Ankara. To collect the data, an online questionnaire was prepared and sent to 451 participants via e-mail; 121 participants filled in the questionnaire. Then the forms were checked and 12 of them were taken out as some of the answers were missing. 109 of them were included in the study. The demographic information of the participants is as follows: 44% (N=48) are women and 56 % (N=61) are men. 37,6% (N=41) of the participants are around 40 years old or younger, 22% (N=24) have an associate, 16,5% (N=18) have an undergraduate, 25,6% (N=28) have a postgraduate and 35,9% (N=39) have a doctor's degree. The positions of the participants are as follows: 71,6% are academic staff (N=78 –a professor, 6 associate professors, 14 assistant professors, 57 academics) and 28,4% (N=31) are administrative staff.

3.2 Research Scales

Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS): Allen and Meyer's (1990) OCS is used to measure OC. As stated in Wasti's original commitment scale, OC scale has three dimensions: 'Affective Commitment' with 9 statements, 'Continuance Commitment' with 9 statements and 'Normative Commitment' with 14 statements; with a total of 32 statements (Wasti, 1999:45).

Organizational Justice Scale (OJS): To determine the participants' OJ perceptions, a scale was used which was created by Özdevecioğlu (2003) and was later improved by Alper (2007). The scale which is mentioned involves three components with a total of 22 statements: 'Distributive Justice (4 statements)', 'Procedural Justice (10 statements)' and 'Interactional Justice (8 statements)'.

The participants were asked to read the statements in each item and mark their answers on a five-level Likert Scale, in which 1 refers to 'I strongly disagree' and 5 refers to 'I strongly agree'.

To assess the construct validity of OC and OJ scales, an exploratory factor analysis was done and to check its reliability, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used. After the application of factor analysis, 1 question about OC and 2 questions about OJ were eliminated as their factor loads were low, they couldn't be classified under any factors and therefore, weren't understood well enough by the participants. In factor analysis, OC is grouped under three factors, which are defined as affective, continuance and normative commitment. And similar to that,

OJ is grouped under three factors which are defined as distributive, procedural and interactional justice. The factors, factor loads and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient can be seen in Table 1. In the light of this information, the scale could be identified as valid and reliable.

Table 1: Factors and Factor Loads

Scale	Factors	Factor Loads	Cronbach's Alpha
Organizational Commitment	Affective Commitment	0,479-0,852	0,83
	Continuance Commitment	0.369-0.743	0.78
	Normative Commitment	0.431-0.888	0.82
Organizational Justice	Distributive Commitment	0,307-0,657	0,85
	Procedural Justice	0.465-0.654	0.89
	Interactional Justice	0.592-0.904	0.95

4. FINDINGS AND TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

The results of the regression analysis to determine the effects of OJ on OC are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Regression Analysis Summary

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	β	t	R	R ²	Rev. R ²	F	p	Hyp.	Results
DJ	AC	0,537	3,052*						H ₁	Accepted
PJ		0,067	0,271	0,687	0,471	0,456	31,223	0,000	H ₂	Rejected
IJ		0,986	5,858*						H ₃	Accepted
DJ	CC	0,469	2,275**						H ₄	Accepted
PJ		1,362	5,723**	0,716	0,512	0,498	36,720	0,000	H ₅	Accepted
IJ		1,438	8,890**						H ₆	Accepted
DJ	NC	-0,051	-0,251						H ₇	Rejected
PJ		0,102	0,368	0,583	0,340	0,321	17,990	0,000	H ₈	Rejected
IJ		0,530	2,818**						H ₉	Accepted

*p<0,05, ** p<0,01

In the first regression analysis, it was tested to see that if the components of OJ (DJ, PJ, IJ) have an effect on AC and it was proved that DJ and IJ affect AC positively and significantly. In the second regression analysis, CC is considered to be the dependent variable and it was tested to see if the components of OJ have an effect on CC, it is stated that all DJ, PJ and IJ affect CC positively and

significantly. The last analysis was made to see if the components of OJ have an effect on NC and as a consequence, only IJ is stated to have an effect on NC positively and significantly. Depending on the results that are presented in Table 2, all three regression models can be determined as significant.

5. CONCLUSION

In this study the connection between the employees' OJ perceptions and OC levels are evaluated. According to the results of the study which was carried out on the academic and administrative staff of the sample university, OJ affects OC on the basis of its lower dimensions.

According to the results of the study, AC is affected by DJ and IJ; CC is affected by DJ, PJ and IJ and NC is affected by only IJ positively. These results are similar to the ones in literature. Hassan (2002:63) stated that DJ and PJ affect the employees' level of OC positively in a study that he carried out on middle and low-level managers. In their study on accommodation establishments, (Yazıcıoğlu,2009:12) determined DJ, PJ and IJ affect OC in a positive and significant way and found out that among these three components, IJ has a higher influence on OC than the other components. (Bakhshi,2009:149) claimed in their study that DJ and PJ affect OC positively.

The employees' being deeply committed to their organizations leads to certain behaviors such as considering the objectives and merits of the organization as his own, undertaking risks for their organization and the desire to remain in the organization. And as a result of the decrease at the rate of the workers' resignations and the increase in their performances, the organizational effectiveness improves. In order to make this effectiveness last for a long time and for the management to function properly, the factors which increase and decrease the organizational commitment should be perceived very well (Lambert,2007:647). In various studies it is determined that OJ has a substantial influence on the employees' level of OC (Colquitt,2001, Wasti,2001, Yavuz,2010, Malik,2011).

To increase their employees' OC levels and their performances, the managers should be fair in their decisions, during the process of taking these decisions, in their behavior towards the employees, in their relationship with the employees and they should give importance to this attitude of fairness to be perceived by their workers, as well.

This study is thought to have contributed to literature. To be more specific, in previous studies, OC was assessed in only one dimension and its relationship between the dimensions of OJ was evaluated. However, in this study, OC has

been examined in three dimensions, in terms of AC, CC and NC according to Allen and Meyer (1990)'s classification and the relationship between each OJ dimension and OC dimension is pointed out.

This study was carried out on the academic and administrative staff of the sample university. For a generalization it would be more appropriate to do other researches in various sectors on various samples. For the future researchers of a similar topic, it could be suggested that they should try different sectors with more samples by including organizational citizenship behavior and levels of organizational trust in their studies.

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