

Relationship Between Organizational Justice and Organizational Commitment in Primary Schools

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KEYWORDS Organizational Justice. Organizational Commitment. Education Administration

ABSTRACT The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the perception of teachers on organizational justice and organizational commitment behaviors. The study sample includes 350 teachers working in 25 primary schools in Ankara. Organizational Justice Scale was used in order to determine the level of organizational justice behaviors, whereas Organizational Commitment Questionnaire was used in order to determine the level of organizational commitment behaviors of teachers. Pearson moments correlation coefficient and regression analyze methods were used in analyzing data. The main findings of the study indicated that there is a positive and meaningful correlation found between organizational justice and organizational commitment behaviors of teachers.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important qualities of people living in modern societies is that they prefer to live an organized life. People have established many organizations to lead a social life. Of all these organizations, the most important one is the profession that people have to perform to lead their lives. Educational institutions are established for this purpose. As a consequence of working in organized establishments, some concepts have become important in professional life. Among these concepts, two of them stand out; organizational justice and organizational commitment.

Although organizational justice is not a new concept in administration literature, but it is being neglected. Concepts such as justice and correctness should not be underestimated (Hoy and Tarter 2004). Organizational justice studies, fairness perception at work in terms of participation in rewarding process, outcomes, decisions and decision making process (Byrne and Cropanzano 2001). Organizational commitment is a term that aims to explain human attitudes and behaviours at work (Mathews and Shepherd 2002). Organizational commitment implies a more psychological commitment of the employees to the organization on voluntary basis (Chovwen 2012). For the organizations to reach their set goals the contributions of the employees who remain committed to the organization and share its aims and values are certainly crucial (Buluc 2009).

When the related literature is analyzed, we can see that organizational justice and organizational commitment are important concepts. Or-

ganizational justice and organizational commitment are even more important concepts in education system and educational institutions, especially in countries such as Turkey that has young populations and so when the number of students, schools and teachers is taken into consideration the quantitative data in this study reveals that there were 10.979.301 students and 515.852 teachers at 32.108 primary schools in 2011-2012 academic year (MEB 2012). In this framework, the degree of the employees' organizational justice and commitment perception plays an important role in fulfilling the aims, organizational performance and quality. Therefore, in this study the relationship between organizational justice and commitment is analyzed based on perceptions of the primary school teachers.

When the studies conducted in foreign countries are analyzed, we see that the studies were mainly about the relationship between organizational justice perceptions and organizational citizenship behaviours (Moorman 1991), organizational justice at school (Hoy and Tarter 2004), the impact of organizational justice on teachers' trust in organizations and the role of organizational justice in teachers' performance evaluation (Annamalai et al. 2010) and the relationship between organizational justice, school climate and faculty trust (Guy and Dipaola 2008). Studies in Turkey examined the influence of organizational justice on interpersonal aggressive behaviours (Ozdevecioglu 2003a), the level of organizational justice in schools in Turkey and the relationship between organizational justice perceptions and aggressive behaviours (Titrek

2009), the relationship between organizational justice, job satisfaction and organizational trust (Iscan and Sayin 2010), the difference between the organizational justice perceptions of public officers and private sector employees (Yavuz 2010), the organizational justice perceptions of teachers working at private teaching centers (Yavuz 2012), the relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction (Yelboga 2012; Yesil and Dereli 2012), the relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction as perceived by Jordanian physical education teachers (Altahayneh et al. 2014) and the relationship between the favoritism attitudes and behaviours of the principals and teacher's perception of justice (Polat and Kazak 2014).

Studies on organizational commitment generally focused on organizational commitment and the socialization of the managers (Buchanan 1974), organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Porter et al. 1974), measure of organizational commitment (Cook and Wall 1980), multi-dimensional organizational commitment (Reichers, 1985), the dimensions of organizational commitment (Allen and Meyer 1990), teacher commitment (Shin and Reyes 1991; Firestone and Pennel 1993; Hulpia et al. 2010). In Turkey studies examined the organizational commitment of teachers and administrators (Balay 2000), affective and continuance commitment (Wasti 2002), the relationship between organizational support and organizational commitment (Ozdevecioglu 2003b), the relationship between organizational commitment and burnout (Cetin et al. 2011), the impact of the interaction between the leader and the member on organizational commitment (Goksel and Aydinlatan 2012), mobbing and its impact on organizational commitment (Karcioglu and Celik 2012), the relationship between instructional leadership and organizational commitment (Serin and Buluc 2012), the moderation effect of anxiety competencies of teachers on the relationship between primary empowerment and organizational commitment (Savas et al. 2013), the impact of organizational commitment and employee performance on employee satisfaction (Ahmad et al. 2014), the relationship between organizational commitment level and organizational silence (Kose 2014) and the mediating effect of psychological climate on the relationship between leadership styles and teachers' commitment (Savas and Toprak 2014).

In Turkey, the analysis of the research on organizational justice and organizational commitment suggests that lots of studies rarely focus on educational settings. In addition, there are not many studies that examined the relationship between these two concepts. Justice and commitment are thought to be important concepts for educational institutions. Thus, the current study analyzes the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment.

Organizational Justice

Justice is one of the most important criteria in the social life. It is also the basis of all the correct behaviours. When the justice is achieved-ensured, everything is done properly but when it is not achieved people try to acquire their rights illegally (Chegini 2009). Organizational justice as a concept relates to the decision making process on how to determine whether the employees are treated fairly in the workplace and how it influences other variables about work (Moorman 1991). Organizational justice, with the focus on the relationship between the dimensions of organizational justice and the importance of justice criteria, is still an important field (Colquitt et al. 2001).

Organizational justice has been the subject of many studies. The results of these studies suggest that the justice variable can be related to many organizational outcomes (Niehoff and Moorman 1993). Organizational justice researchers have nearly reached a universal agreement on the dimensions of organizational justice (Byrne and Cropanzano 2001). The analysis of the literature demonstrates that there are three dimensions of organizational justice, which are distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice (Niehoff and Moorman 1993; Greenberg 1996; Colquitt et al.; 2001.; Byrne and Cropanzano 2001; Simpson and Kaminski 2007). These dimensions are summarized respectively.

Distributive Justice

Distributive justice is expected to give an equal share of the outcomes (rewards and costs) to actions and performance. Costs and rewards are distributed based on the performance of the employees. The employees who contribute to the objectives of the organization are rewarded or punished when they fail (Colquitt and Chert-

koff 2002). Obtaining the correct information to make fair decisions in the organization is essential. If the employers or leaders make an effort to obtain correct information concerning the performance of the employees and the employees are aware of their effort, the employees' perception of the fair distribution of rewards will increase. Otherwise, if they think that their leaders do not have information about what they do and their performance, their faith in fairness in distribution will be shaken (Niehoff and Moorman 1993).

Procedural Justice

Procedural justice relates to how the outcomes are distributed, not the outcome itself. It forms the principles of determining the roles of the participants in the decision making process (Cropanzano et al. 2007). The presence or absence of the procedures is a basic fact that influences the perception of fairness. Designing the procedures in a way that increases the voice of the employees in the decision making process or decreasing bias and errors in decisions can be an example of this procedure (Niehoff and Moorman 1993). According to Daft (1991) procedural justice requires fairly applied rules. Employees should be informed about the rules and rules should apply to everybody and be consistent.

Interactional Justice

Interactional justice is concerned with fairness perception of the relationship between the administrators and the workers. This relates to the interaction between those influenced by the distribution of the outcomes and the source (Ozdevecioglu 2003a). Interactional justice focuses on the perceptions of the informal treatment experienced when procedures are implemented (Qiu et al. 2009). According to Bies and Moag and Cropanzano and Greenberg (cited in Burton et al. 2008), interactional justice is about the perception of fairness when some social changes take place. If the workers are treated with dignity and respect, and provided with explanations for decisions that influence them, the perceived level of interactional justice can be higher.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment refers to an employee's affective or emotional reactions to the

organization. The organization's goals and values are more important than the employee's own role and values in terms of the interests of the organization. As a consequence of a positive outcome of the quality of job, organizational commitment can be considered as at workplace (Cook and Wall 1980). Organizational justice comes into being when the employees identify with the organization and exert effort on behalf of the goals and values of the organization. Therefore, it is an affective commitment to the organization and that employees would maintain commitment as long as they identify with the goals and values of the organization (Mowday et al. 1979).

Mowday et al. (1982) distinguished between attitudinal commitment and behavioral commitment. Attitudinal commitment refers to an employee's identification with organizational goals and willingness to focus efforts on achieving these goals. Behavioral commitment is defined as outcomes of individuals' behaviors (cited in Reichers 1985). Meyer and Allen (1991) have devised a new model by adding affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment to the previously devised model by Porter and others (1974). Affective commitment is emotional attachment to the organization, identification and involvement of an employee with the organization. Employees with strong affective commitment feel a strong commitment to the organization and do their best to achieve the goals. Continuance commitment relates to the costs associated with leaving the organization. Normative commitment is concerned with employee's feelings of obligation to remain in the organization, especially when they feel highly committed to the organization.

Taken together, in order for educational institutions to achieve their goals, teachers' commitment to their institutions and perception of fairness, which has a significant influence to give rise to the presence of commitment is considered to play a major role. Therefore, it is very important to determine the effect of principals on teachers' commitment to the institution and their perception of organizational justice.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment in primary schools. More specifically, the study attempts to answer the following questions.

1. What is the perception level of the primary school teachers with regard to organizational justice?
2. What is the perception level of the primary school teachers with regard to organizational commitment?
3. What type of relationship is there between primary school teachers' perception of organizational justice and organizational commitment?
4. Is organizational justice a predictor of organizational commitment?

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Population

The research population comprises of 350 teachers from 25 primary schools in Ankara. The research samples were selected from the population, according to the random and cluster sampling methods. The sample group consists of 51,4 % male and 48,6 % female teachers. As for age, 37.7 % of the teachers were between 41 to 50 years and 7% of them were between 21 to 30 years. Of the respondents, 29.1 % had job experience between 11 to 15 years while 4 % between 1 to 5 years. In addition, 42.6 % of the respondents worked at the same school for 1 to 5 years and 8.8 % of them worked at the same school for more than 16 years.

Data Collection Tools

In the current study, data were collected through Organizational Justice Scale developed by Hoy and Tarter (2004) and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire by Mowday and Boulian (1974).

Organizational Justice Scale

Organizational Justice Scale is a 10-item Likert-type scale which was developed by Hoy and Tarter (2004). The scale was applied to a different group of 150 teachers for reliability and validity issues. Reliability analysis of the scale showed that Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .92. In terms of validity, KMO test was used to check if the data had been appropriate for the analysis. KMO value of the scale is found to be .945 and $p < 0.05$. The justice scale consisted of one dimension and it explains .70 of the total variance.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Organizational commitment was measured using Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Porter et al. (1974). This is a 15-item Likert-type scale. For the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, first it was applied to a different group of 150 teachers. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .87. The KMO value of the questionnaire is found to be .945 and $p > 0.05$. The questionnaire consisted of one dimension and it explains .43 of the total variance. For the analysis of data, mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (s), percentage (%), frequency (f), Pearson product moment (two-tailed) correlation and multiple regression analysis were used.

RESULTS

The analysis of the responses of the teachers to the Organization Justice Scale is displayed with mean and standard deviation in Table 1.

Table 1: Means and standard deviations of the teachers' responses to Organizational Justice Scale

	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
Organizational justice	350	3.92	.82

The analysis of the Organizational Justice Scale reveal that (Table 1) teachers' responses to the behaviours relating to the presence of organizational justice were "agree" ($M=3.92$, $sd=.82$). According to the results of the study, it is important to mention that the principals are consistent and committed to the ethical standards. At school everyone is treated equally, fairly and not discriminated. The study also suggests that teachers participate in the decision making process and their behaviors are not based on self interest.

In the next step of the study, the teachers' responses to Organizational Commitment Questionnaire were analyzed and shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations of the teachers' responses to Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
Organizational justice commitment	350	3.48	.66

The results of the analysis of Organizational Commitment Questionnaire suggest that (Table 2) teachers' responses to the statements relating to their commitment to their organization were "agree" (M=3.48, sd= .66). Accordingly, the organizational commitment of the teachers to their institutions is at a desirable level.

The relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment was analyzed using Pearson correlation and the results are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Pearson correlation and the results between organizational justice and organizational commitment

	1.	2.
1. Organizational justice	1.00	.640**
2. Organizational commitment	.640**	1.00

**p< .01

The results of the correlation analysis indicate that (Table 3) there is a positive, meaningful and a moderate relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment (r=.640, p<.01). Accordingly, there will be an increase in organizational commitment as the organizational justice perceptions increase.

In the current study, in order to find out whether organizational justice is a predictor of organizational commitment, multiple regression analysis was carried out and displayed in Table 4.

When the results of the multiple regression analysis (Table 4) on the organizational justice as the predictor of organizational commitment is examined, it is observed that there is a positive, meaningful and a moderate relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment. (R=.640, R² = .410, Adjusted R²= .408, p<.01). It is obvious that organizational justice explains approximately 41% of the total variance of the organizational commitment. This result can be interpreted as an indicator of employees' commitment to the organizations where there is fair treatment. Therefore, there is a possibility that in the institutions where the perception of organi-

zational justice is at its highest level, there will be an increase in the commitment to the organization.

DISCUSSION

According to the results of the study, teachers have positive perceptions about organizational justice in primary schools, which may be interpreted as principals treat teachers fairly. Organizational justice is a crucial concept for both teachers and students. As mentioned by Titrek (2009) organizational justice is the most influential concept in creating a peaceful and harmonious workplace. Employees think that they are not treated fairly or in a biased manner when their expectations or needs are not met. These lead the employees to feel alienated at the workplace and problems such as having no confidence in their leaders.

Leaders should behave fairly and do their best to meet the needs of the employees. Baldwin (2006) emphasized that organizational justice relates to employees' perceptions of fairness in the procedures, interaction and outcomes, and this, in turn, influences employees' attitudes and behaviors in a negative or positive way. Consequently, it affects the performance of the employees and the success of the organizations. Greenberg (1990) explained how organizational justice influence perceptions of employees regarding the extent to which they are treated fairly in the organization, and how such perceptions influence organizational commitment, organizational trust and so on. Justice perceptions are also important for also the success, effectiveness and well-being of the organizations.

Studies conducted on organizational justice show that this concept influences a lot of variables. The results of the studies carried out by Moorman (1991), Olkkonen and Lipponen (2005), Annamalai et al. (2010), Guy and Dipaola (2008) Abasi et al. (2014) and Altahayneh et al. (2014) display that organizational justice impact on organizational citizenship, organizational trust,

Table 4: The results of the multiple regression analysis related to organizational justice as the predictor of organizational commitment

Variants	B	Standard error ^B	\hat{a}	t	p
Constant	1.486	.132		11.300	.000
Organizational justice	.510	.033	.640	15.537	.000

R= .640 R²= .410 Adjusted R²= .408 F_(1,348) = 241.396 p= .000

performance, school climate, identification with the organization and many other variables positively. Studies that examine the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment reveal that organizational commitment is influenced by organizational justice.

According to the results of the study, primary school teachers have high levels of organizational commitment, too. Organizational commitment is important in terms of organizational performance. When compared to other studies Ozdemir and Yayli (2014) found a positive and meaningful relationship between organizational commitment and performance dimension and Ahmad et al. (2014) found a positive relationship between organizational commitment and employee satisfaction and similarly. For Porter et al. (1974) organizational commitment is the power of a person in identification with and participation in the organization. Organizational commitment consists of some essential aspects which are strong belief and acceptance of the objectives and values of the organization, eagerness to work hard for the organization and remain as a member of the organization. These shows that commitment is an important concept for educational institutions as well. As mentioned by Terzi and Kurt (2005) teachers must do more than what they are supposed to do in terms of job definition so that schools can educate and transform them, which is possible only with teachers with high levels of commitment. Celep (2000) claims that teachers' organizational commitment is dependent on the adoption and acceptance of the goals and values of the school, efforts to achieve these goals and willingness to remain in the organization. Related studies stress out its importance and indicate that those who have high levels of commitment also have high levels of job satisfaction, organizational trust and organizational performance, and they are happy in their organizations (Straiter 2005; Steyrer et al. 2008; Hulpia et al. 2010).

In the current study, in order to determine the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment correlations were analyzed. The relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment was found to be positive, meaningful and at a moderate level ($r=0.640$, $p<.01$). This result reveals that when the organizational justice behaviors increase, organizational commitment level increases. Also, according to multiple regression analysis,

organizational justice is a predictor of organizational commitment. The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that teachers' organizational justice perception is a predictor of their organizational commitment.

CONCLUSION

When the performance and efficiency of educational institutions are taken into consideration, it is known that organizational justice and organizational commitment are very important concepts. The principal's fair treatment will affect not only the employee's commitment to their institutions but also the job satisfaction, motivation and the school climate positively. In the current study, organizational justice and organizational commitment are found to be highly correlated. Also, it is revealed that organizational justice is a predictor of organizational commitment. Therefore, principals are supposed to act fairly and avoid behaviors that may weaken the teachers' belief in justice to improve organizational commitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Studies conducted so far indicate that organizational justice and organizational commitment are important concepts for educational institutions. Teachers' justice perceptions regarding their schools and principals have a positive impact on their commitment to their institutions. In this respect, when the principals treat teachers fairly, teachers' commitment to their institutions and performance will improve.

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