The Relationship Between Organizational Trust and Organizational Commitment in Turkish Primary Schools

Kürşad Yılmaz
Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Education, Dumlupınar University, Kütahya, Turkey

Abstract: The aim of this study is to define the relationship between the organizational trust level and organizational commitment of primary school teachers. A research is a general survey model. Study group of the research consists of 120 teachers who work in Kütahya city centre. The data of the study is gathered through organizational trust scale and organizational commitment scale. In this study, Pearson Correlation Analysis is used. According to the results, there are medium-level, positive and significant relationships between organizational trust and its sub-dimensions and organizational commitment and its sub-dimensions.

Key words: Organizational trust, organizational commitment, primary schools, teachers, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

The trust is one of the most important themes in human relations and human behaviors. Trust is important in organizational life as well as the human relations. Employees feel of trust for their administrators, colleagues and shareholders in the organizational life affects the organizational behavior and the relation between the employee and the organization. Thus, there are numerous theoretical (Hoy and Kupersmith, 1985; Tschanen-Moran and Hoy, 2000; Tschanen-Moran, 2001; Brunn, 2002; Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2003; Hoy and Tschanen-Moran, 2003) and applied (Tschanen-Moran and Hoy, 1998; Hoy and Tschanen-Moran, 1999, Hoy and Tarter, 2004, 2006) studies about the organizational trust. In these studies, the relation between organizational trust and many other variables are examined. We can see organizational justice (Hoy and Tarter, 2004), organizational citizenship (Deluga, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 1996), leadership (Arnold et al., 2001; Tschanen-Moran, 2003), organizational climate (Tarter et al., 1995; Hoy et al., 2002), organization health (Hoy et al., 1996; Smith et al., 2001), organizational culture (Deney and Cannon, 1997) and organizational commitment (Podsakoff et al., 1996; Ugboro, 2003; Perry, 2004) among those variables.

According to Rosen (1998) trust in organizations consists of two parts. One of them is to trust and the other one is trustworthy. Trusting is related with believing in the other people and being trustworthy is related with deserving the trust that the other people feel for you.

According to Clarke (2002) trust is one of the important elements of effective relations. Trusting other people and their trusting you have a vital importance. In addition, being trustworthy among the important qualifications that a leader. Trust has a role of mortar which holds the leader and his followers together. This mortar is the main resource of the leaders’ positions (Tschanen-Moran and Hoy, 1998).

Organizational trust, even in the risky situations, is an individual’s being confident about any applications and policies that will affect the organization and having positive expectations about them (Lewicki et al., 1998). In this sense, organizational trust is an individual’s comprehension of the organizational support, belief of the administrators’ being trustworthy (Mishra and Morrissey, 1990) and will of organization’s being open, concerned and reliable in the relation between the employee and organization (Mishra, 1996). Organizational trust is not a one-sided concept. In the previous studies, organizational trust is examined in various dimensions. In this study, organizational trust is examined with the sub-dimensions which are trust in school administrator, trust in colleagues and trust in shareholders (students and parents).

Trust provides a lot of benefits in organizational life. A trustworthy atmosphere has an important role in openness for development, in an effective communication and in organizational effectiveness (Tschanen-Moran, 2001). In organizations where trust is dominant, one can see an open and participating atmosphere, responsible employees, productivity and organizational commitment, compromise culture, team work, high job satisfaction and
participation in decisions (Buyukdere and Solmus, 2006). These qualifications require a decrease in disagreements, the percentage of intent to leave and discontinuity as well as an increase in productiveness, motivation and creativeness (Asmunakulu, 2007).

In organizations with lack of trust, employees accuse each other for any mistake, develop defense mechanisms, avoid taking responsibility, feel suspicious and jealous, make gossips, try to stay away from work and disaffirm organizational goals. Also there comes out a decrease in organizational commitment, professional satisfaction, performance in addition to unhappy employees and unhappy organization atmosphere. Complaints become a reason for punishments and discharge. As a result, employees feel themselves stuck in their work (Buyukdere and Solmus, 2006; Asmunakulu, 2007).

Organizational commitment is defined as a relative power of joining an organization and one's identifying himself with that organization (Potter et al., 1974). O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) defined organizational commitment as the individual's level of identifying himself with the organization. Yüksel (2000) defined organizational commitment as a process which includes loyalty in the employer, endeavoring for the sake of organization’s benefaction and success. Celep (2000), on the other hand, defined organizational commitment beyond the formal and normative expectations of an organization and emphasized on the behaviors of an individual’s towards the organizational goals and values.

Even though the definitions vary, in general organizational commitment consists of at least three elements (Mowday et al., 1979, 1982; Luthans, 1995; Nystedt et al., 1999; Kaemar et al., 1999): (1) Strong belief and acceptance for the objectives and values of the organization, (2) Will to make considerable efforts for the organization, (3) Strong will to remain a member of the organization.

The difference in defining organizational commitment is also seen in studies examining the classification of organizational commitment. There are different classifications about organizational commitment (Katz and Kahn, 1977; Mowday et al., 1982; Wiener, 1982; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986; Allen and Meyer, 1990). The mostly used one among these classifications belongs to Allen and Meyer (1990). Because this classification is widely used in recent years (Cheng and Stockdale, 2003; Powell and Meyer, 2004; Erdheim et al., 2006; Chang et al., 2007) and there are new conceptualizations and evaluation studies (Jaros, 1997; Karim and Noor, 2006; Solinger et al., 2008) going on them. According to Allen and Meyer’s classification (1990), an organizational commitment consists of affective, continuance and normative commitment elements. In this study, affective and continuance commitment dimensions are used. Affective commitment is employees’ feel of commitment in accordance with the rate of their adopting the organization’s values, goals and aims. Continuance commitment is the commitment that develops as a result of employees’ investments in their organizations (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Balay, 2000; Çetin, 2004).

Persons begin to get information about the second parties’ characteristics by interacting with the organization and the administrators of the organization and begin to feel trust together with this information and previous experiences. According to Kollok (1994) commitment arises from the feel of trust. If a personal believes in the trustworthy of an organization or administrators of that organization, this belief increases his commitment (Liou, 1995; Burke and Stets, 1999).

Trusting in an organization increases the commitment and even there comes out some problems employees tend to preserve their existing relations. This situation is defined by the studies (Podsakof et al., 1996, Ugboro, 2003; Perry, 2004) examining the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational trust. But these studies were done by the organizations apart from the educational organizations. There are not any studies carried by educational organizations. Even though there are various studies (Kamer, 2001; Mortas, 2005; Özbek, 2006) done in Turkey about the relation between organizational commitment and organizational trust, a few of them were took part in educational organizations (Demircan, 2003). Even this study, which is prepared in educational organizations, takes place in the field of business enterprise. In this sense, the aim of this study is to define the relationship between the level of primary school teachers’ organizational trust and the perceptions of organizational commitment.

It was hypothesized that:

H1: There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers’ organizational trust and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

H2: There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers’ trust in administrators and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

H3: There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers’ trust in colleagues and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.
H4: There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers' trust in shareholders and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The survey model is used in this study as it defines the relationships between the primary school teachers' perceptions about organizational commitment and organizational trust.

Study group: In the study group, there are 120 teachers working in public primary schools in Kütahya city center. Teachers are chosen randomly.

Instruments: Organizational trust scale (Yilmaz, 2006) and organizational commitment scale (Altunkese, 2002) are used as data gathering tools in this study. Organizational trust scale consists of 22 items and three sub-dimensions which are trust in administrators, trust in colleagues and trust in shareholders. In this scale, the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of trust in administrators sub-dimensional is 0.89, trust in colleagues sub-dimensional is 0.87, trust in shareholders sub-dimensional is 0.82 and the reliability coefficient of whole scale is 0.92. Organizational trust scale is answered as: 1-never, 2-rarely, 3-sometimes, 4-often and 5-always. The ones who answer this scale learn their level of trust at school as a result of their total points. The ones who get high points trust their organization more than the ones who get lower points.

Organizational commitment scale consists of two sub-dimensions which are affective commitment and continuance commitment. There are 25 likert type items in this scale. The teachers point defined by the scale indicates their organizational commitment level. The ones who get high points have much more commitment to their organization more than the ones who get lower points. In this scale, the reliability coefficient of Organizational commitment scale is 0.65, affective commitment sub-dimension is 0.66 and continuance commitment sub-dimension is 0.40. The scale is answered as 1-completely disagree, 2-disagree, 3-moderately agree, 4-Agree and 5-completely agree.

Data analysis: In the analysis of the data, Pearson correlation analysis is used. The reason for using this type of analysis is its being competent in defining the level of relations between two or more variables.

RESULTS

The results of the analysis done with the aim of defining the relationship between organizational trust and its sub-dimensions and organizational commitment and its sub-dimensions are stated as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers' organizational trust and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

The first hypothesis of the study is supported. Because there was a moderate, positive and significant relationship \( r = 0.57; p<0.01 \) between the level of primary school teachers' organizational trust and the perceptions of organizational commitment. When coefficient of determination \( r^2 = 0.32 \) is taken into account, it can be said that 32% of total variance of organizational commitment arise from organizational trust. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship \( r = 0.49; p<0.01 \) between the level of primary school teachers' organizational trust and the perceptions of affective commitment. Coefficient of determination \( r^2 = 0.24 \) indicates that 24% of total variance of affective commitment arise from organizational trust. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship \( r = 0.53; p<0.01 \) between the level of primary school teachers' organizational trust level and the perceptions of continuance commitment. Coefficient of determination \( r^2 = 0.28 \) can be interpreted as that 28% of total variance of continuance commitment arise from organizational trust.

Hypothesis 2: There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers' trust in administrators and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

The second hypothesis of the study is also supported. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship \( r = 0.40; p<0.01 \) between the level of primary school teachers trust in administrator and the perceptions of organizational commitment. When coefficient of determination \( r^2 = 0.16 \) is taken into account, it can be said that 16% of total variance of organizational commitment arise from the trust in administrators. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship \( r = 0.31; p<0.01 \) between the level of primary school teachers' trust in administrator and the perceptions of affective commitment. Coefficient of determination
(r^2 = 0.09) indicates that 9% of total variance of affective commitment arise from the trust in administrators. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.45; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in administrator and the perceptions of continuance commitment. Coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.20) can be interpreted as that 20% of total variance of continuance commitment arise from the trust in administrators.

**Hypothesis 3:** There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers' trust in colleagues and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

The third hypothesis of the study is also supported. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.52; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in colleagues and the perceptions of organizational commitment. When coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.27) is taken into account, it can be said that 27% of total variance of organizational commitment arise from the trust in colleagues. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.48; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in colleagues and the perceptions of affective commitment. Coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.23) indicates that 23% of total variance of affective commitment arise from the trust in colleagues. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.44; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in colleagues and the perceptions of continuance commitment. Coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.19) can be interpreted as that 19% of total variance of continuance commitment arise from the trust in colleagues.

**Hypothesis 4:** There was a significant relationship between the level of primary school teachers' trust in shareholders and the perceptions of organizational commitment as well as affective commitment and continuance commitment.

The fourth and the last hypothesis of the study were also supported. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.49; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in shareholders and the perceptions of organizational commitment. When coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.24) is taken into account; it can be said that 24% of total variance of organizational commitment arise from the trust in shareholders. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.46; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in shareholders and the perceptions of affective commitment. Coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.21) indicates that 21% of total variance of affective commitment arise from the trust in shareholders. There was a moderate, positive and significant relationship [r = 0.41; p<0.01] between the level of primary school teachers' trust in shareholders and the perceptions of continuance commitment. Coefficient of determination (r^2 = 0.16) can be interpreted as that 16% of total variance of continuance commitment arise from the trust in shareholders.

**DISCUSSION**

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between the organizational trust level of primary school teachers and the perceptions of them on organizational commitment. Although it is stated that there is an important relationship between organizational trust and organizational commitment, any research trying to determine this relationship has not been made. It's important to determine the relationship between organizational trust and organizational commitment in schools. Because trust is key element in organizational behavior (Hoy and Kupersmith, 1984) the development of productive group relationships and interpersonal relationships in schools (Hoy et al., 1992). In addition, there is relationship (Bryk and Schneider, 2002) between the trust in school and academic effectiveness of school. Academically success is higher in schools where trust feel is dominated. One of the important subjects affected by organizational trust is organizational commitment. That employees have high organizational commitment is very important in the point of realization organizational goals. Employees having high organizational commitment show commitment to the organization by means of strong attitudes and inclinations. This situation affects employees' occupational success, job satisfaction levels, organizational behavior type and relationships with colleagues positively. But it decreases the states like high organizational commitment, leaving the organization, nonattendance to work, unhappiness, disappointment, unsatisfied the job, organizational conflict. Since these kinds of employees have positive attitude on their organizations and colleagues, they stay for longer time in the organization and generally don't think about leaving. Employees having high organizational commitment show much more effort in realizing their duties and organizational aims. In this context organizational commitment has a critical importance in the realization of organizational aims.
According to the results got from the research, as long as the positive views of primary school teachers on organizational trust and its sub-dimensions increase, it becomes an increase also in organizational commitment levels. Even if there is no any direct relation between these variances, one of important variances affecting organizational commitment is organizational trust. This finding was also determined by the studies (Podsakoff et al., 1996; Ugboro, 2003; Perry, 2004; Ozbek, 2006) made in the organizations except educational organizations. As seen, as far as the trust level of teachers attending the research on the administrators’ increases, their organizational commitment levels also increase. But the level of the relationship between the trust in administrators and affective commitment is lower than the other ones. So it can be said that trust feel felt on the administrators has less effect on organizational commitment. As far as the trust of teachers on their colleagues and shareholders increases, the levels of organizational commitment and its sub-dimensions increase.

So school administrators must do arrangements, which will increase trust level in school, to increase teachers’ organizational commitment levels. School administrators have teachers feel their own values and their trustworthy. First the person must own trust and be trustworthy in order to form trust in people (Burwash, 1998). Töremen (2002) states necessary things to form a trust and to continue it in line: To tell about events concerning trust, to make an opportunity for organization members to provide their knowing each other by encouraging cooperation and providing social environments, to behave consistently in words and acts, to melt individual interests in organizational interest. Consequently being clear in forming trust, cooperation, consistence and not being selfish are very important. It can be said that people are trustable and think other people but that the opposite people are generally selfish and distrustful.

REFERENCES


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