

## ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATING IN INTRAMURAL SPORTS: A STUDY ON UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate organizational commitment of individuals participating in intramural sports in terms of demographical features. 246 individuals were included into the study, which were selected with convenience sampling method from facilities providing intramural sports in a public university. Data were collected with face-to-face interview technique and by means of questionnaire. The first section of the questionnaire consisted of organizational commitment scale developed for Turkish language and culture, and the second section consisted of demographical questions. Descriptive statistics, t-test and ANOVA analyses were utilized in interpretation of data. In accordance with the results acquired, it was detected that the employees participating in intramural sports had had higher averages with respect to employment situation (administrative personnel), age (44 and over) and income (2400 and 3400 TL) variables.

**Key Words:** Leisure, Recreation, Recreational sports, Intramural sports, Organizational commitment

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### KURUM İÇİ REKREASYONEL SPORA KATILAN BİREYLERDE ÖRGÜTSEL BAĞLILIK: ÜNİVERSİTE ÇALIŞANLARI ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

#### ÖZ

Bu araştırmada kurum içi rekreasyonel spora katılan bireylerin örgütsel bağlılıklarının demografik özelliklere göre değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmaya bir devlet üniversitesinde kurum içi rekreasyonel spor hizmetlerinin sunulduğu tesislerden uygun örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilen 246 kişi dâhil edilmiştir. Veriler yüz yüze görüşme tekniği ve anket aracılığı ile toplanmıştır. Anketin birinci bölümü Türk dili ve kültürü için geliştirilen örgütsel bağlılık ölçeğinden, ikinci bölümü ise demografik sorulardan oluşmaktadır. Verilerin yorumlanmasında tanımlayıcı istatistik, t-test ve ANOVA analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgulara göre kurum içi rekreasyonel spora katılan çalışanların örgütsel bağlılıklarının istihdam durumu (idari personel), yaş (44 yaş ve üzeri) ve gelir değişkenine (2400 ve 3400 TL) göre farklılaştığı tespit edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Boş zaman, Rekreasyon, Rekreasyonel Sporlar, Kurum içi sporlar, Örgütsel bağlılık

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## INTRODUCTION

“Intramural” consists of combination of Latin words intra (within) and mural (wall). With addition of sports concept, intramural sport is defined as sports activities arranged specifically for individuals within authority field of an institution. Sports programs and services arranged for employees of municipalities, universities, troops, associations, foundations and unions are within scope of intramural sports<sup>33</sup>. These programs are popular supplies from particularly campus recreation departments in universities. Incorporating different kinds of recreational sports and activities into arranged programs, it is aimed to draw attention of individuals. Traditional and non-traditional activities such as individual, team and racket sports are within the scope of these programs. Different skills and degrees of difficulty are provided to enable comfort of participants and to increase the number of participants<sup>36</sup>.

In modern universities, intramural sport is one of the essential components for both students and employees<sup>4</sup>. The intramural sports and services provided in university campuses enable experience of physical and mental benefits by participants<sup>45</sup>. It is stated that participation in intramural sports develops fitness level and health status of an individual<sup>17,33</sup>. There are studies revealing that participation in intramural sports contributes individual not only physically, but also emotionally, psychologically and socially<sup>1,27,18,19</sup>. For example, it was revealed in conducted studies that participation in this program increases self-esteem<sup>8</sup>, develops skill of coping with stress, decreases level of stress<sup>22</sup>, facilitates social integration of an individual<sup>2</sup>, affects feeling with organizational society<sup>13</sup>, strengthens skills of leadership and communication, enables internal motivation<sup>9</sup>, increases academic success, team work and group

commitment, socializes individuals, contributes to moral development, clarifies values and develops time management<sup>33</sup>.

Intramural sports programs help employees to be involved into organizational society directly or indirectly and to interact with other employees<sup>20</sup>. The studies reveal that participation into intramural sports and activities increases feeling of collaboration with other employees and being a member of a society, and strengthens attitude of developing mutual collaboration<sup>24,13,14</sup>. It is stated that collaboration between workers and status of being a member of organizational society are essential in provision of job satisfaction<sup>25</sup>. Organizational commitment of individuals having job satisfaction are high, because organizational commitment and job satisfaction are directly proportional<sup>39</sup>. In addition to job satisfaction, other benefits acquired as a result of participation into recreational sports may affect organizational commitment. For example, in their study, George and Sabapathy (2011) detected that there was a significant relationship between motivation and organizational commitment. Collaboration developing between employees as a result of participation into intramural sports is one of components constituting organizational trust. Organizational trust is evaluated as one of the most important factors in constitution of organizational commitment<sup>38</sup>. Intramural sports programs are services for employees within structure of the organization. According to Özdevecioğlu (2003), structural feature of the organization is shown as one of the factors affecting organizational commitment. In brief, benefits acquired as a result of participation into recreational sports may affect organizational commitment directly or indirectly.

Organizational commitment is presented by Meyer and Allen (1991) as a three

dimensional structure: affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment is a strong feeling for values and purposes of the organization by its employees. Generally, employees with strong emotional bond continue to remain in organization<sup>31</sup>. Continuance commitment is related to cost to be encountered by an employee in case of leaving the organization. Increase of perceived cost is interpreted as sign that the employee remain in the organization. The cost to be encountered in case of leave of employment is a reason for continuing to remain. Normative commitment is based on obligation. An organization may give prizes to its employee and cover expenses of education, etc. for personnel and career development of the employee. This investment of the organization may create pressure on the employee in continuing to work there. This pressure may continue until the employee feels that his/her debt has been paid<sup>31</sup>.

In the Turkish society in which individual and social benefits of recreation have

## METHOD

Participants of the study consists of employees utilizing intramural sports services within Anadolu University. The university staff consists of academic, administrative and corporate personnel. 246 people determined using convenience sampling method were included into the study. The data were collected from the personnel using Anadolu University Covered Swimming Pool, Tennis Courts, Yunus Emre Campus Gym, İki Eylül Campus Sport Complex, Çarşı A Sport Complexes and Anadolu Sport Centers by means of a questionnaire using face-to-face interview technique.

The questionnaire consisted of two part or section as organizational commitment scale and demographic questions.

recently been understood, lack of scientific knowledge relating to the recreational sports may be implied. As a result of the literature review, it is highlighted that there is no awareness relating to the role of recreational sports in bonding of the employees with the institution. No research was encountered relating to the examination of organizational commitment of the employees participating into intramural recreational sports.

There are a number of factors affecting organizational development of individuals. These factors are collected in three groups as personal, mission-related and structural<sup>16</sup>. Personal factors such as gender, age, education level and employment situation, and structural factors such as salary level are within components affecting organization commitment<sup>16,40</sup>. In this study, it is aimed to evaluate organizational commitment of individuals participating in intramural sports in terms of some personal and structural features.

Organizational commitment model of Meyer and Allen (1991) was taken into account in measurement of organizational commitment, and measurement tool developed for Turkish language and culture by Wasti (2000) was used. The scale consisted of three dimensions as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, and 22 items. For internal consistency reliability of the scale, each dimension and total Cronbach Alpha coefficients were calculated. The internal consistency values for affective commitment was found as 0.94, continuance commitment as 0.90 normative commitment as 0.92 and total internal consistency reliability as 0,95.

Conformity of the data to parametric tests was determined in accordance with

skewness and kurtosis values prior to analysis. For data analysis, independent sample t-test was used for comparison of two groups, and One-Way ANOVA

## RESULTS

Prior to initiation of the data analysis, it was checked if data set exhibited normal distribution. On examination of distribution of the data, it was observed that skewness value varied between .98 and -12, and kurtosis value between -1.07 and -58. According to Kline (2011), skewness value should not be more than 10 and kurtosis value should not be more

analysis for comparison of more than two groups. Bonferroni and Tamhane's T2 tests from Post-Hoc tests were used to determine which groups had difference.

than 3. Skewness and kurtosis values in this study are within acceptable ranges. Thusly, it is seen that the data exhibited normal distribution. Descriptive statistical analysis was utilized in determination of demographical features of the participants in the study. Table 1 presents demographical features of individuals participating in intramural sports in Anadolu University.

**Table 1.** Demographical features of participants

DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION	Frequency n	Percent %
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	125	50.8
Female	121	49.2
<b>Age</b>		
23-29	39	15.9
30-36	93	37.8
37-43	56	22.8
44 and over	58	23.6
<b>Profession</b>		
Academic Staff	74	30.1
Administrative personnel	69	28.0
Corporate personnel	103	41.9
<b>Educational Status</b>		
Primary and Secondary School	53	21.5
Associate degree		
/Undergraduate	105	42.7
Postgraduate	88	35.8
<b>Income Level</b>		
2400 TL and below	73	29.7
2401-3400 TL	51	20.7
3401-4400 TL	47	19.1
4401 TL and over	75	30.5

According to Table 1, rate of male participants was higher than female. The highest participation was in age interval of 30-36 with a ratio of 37.8%. The highest participation into intramural sports was from individuals with "Administrative personnel" status with a ratio of 28%. For education level, the ratio of those with "Associate

degree /Undergraduate" education level was 42.7%. 30.5% of the participants were detected to have an income level of "4401 TL and over".

No statistically significant difference was seen in any dimensions constituting organizational commitment in terms of gender.

**Table 2.** Status of differentiation of organizational commitment in accordance with gender variable

Factors	Gender	n	M	Sd.	t	p<
Affective commitment Level	Male	125	4.2345	0.62255	.605	.546
	Female	121	4.1825	0.72228		
Continuance commitment Level	Male	125	3.9700	0.74582	-.689	.491
	Female	121	4.0316	0.65100		
Normative commitment Level	Male	125	4.0136	0.71092	-1.665	.097
	Female	121	4.1597	0.66280		

\*\*p&lt;.01, \*p&lt;.05

On comparison of organizational commitments of individuals participating in intramural sports in terms of age groups, it was detected that participation in intramural sports exhibited difference in dimensions of affective commitment ( $F_{(3,242)}=11.231$ );  $P<.001$ ;  $\eta^2=.122$ ), continuance commitment ( $F_{(3,242)}=3.446$ );

$P<.05$ ;  $\eta^2=.041$ ) and normative commitment ( $F_{(3,242)}=4.333$ );  $P<.01$ ;  $\eta^2=.051$ ) constituting organizational commitment. Table 3 shows status of differentiation of organizational commitment in accordance with age variable.

**Table 3.** Status of differentiation of organizational commitment in accordance with age variable

Factors	Age	n	M	Sd.	F	p	$\eta^2$
Affective commitment Level	23-29	39	3.8494	0.81120	11.231	0.001**	.122
	30-36	93	4.0695	0.65729			
	37-43	56	4.3931	0.62724			
	44 and over	58	<b>4.4964</b>	0.43713			
Continuance commitment Level	23-29	39	3.7502	0.71577	3.446	0.017*	.041
	30-36	93	3.9404	0.80138			
	37-43	56	4.1069	0.57341			
	44 and over	58	<b>4.1616</b>	0.56985			
Normative commitment Level	23-29	39	3.7836	0.78366	4.333	0.005**	.051
	30-36	93	4.0464	0.75231			
	37-43	56	<b>4.2602</b>	0.55302			
	44 and over	58	4.1823	0.57004			

\*\*p&lt;.01, \*p&lt;.05

Organizational commitments of individuals participating in intramural sports did not exhibit any significant difference in terms of education level. In terms of status, a statistically significant difference was seen in levels of affective commitment ( $F_{(2,243)}=6.059$ );  $P<.01$ ;  $\eta^2=.048$ ),

continuance commitment ( $F_{(2,243)}=3.757$ );  $P<.05$ ;  $\eta^2=.030$ ) and normative commitment ( $F_{(2,243)}=3.340$ );  $P<.05$ ;  $\eta^2=.027$ ) constituting organizational commitment. Table 4 shows status of differentiation of organization commitment in accordance with status variable.

**Table 4.** Status of differentiation of organization commitment in accordance with status variable

Factors	Profession	n	M	Sd.	F	p	$\eta^2$
Affective commitment level	Academic staff	74	4.1345	0.57595	6.059	.003**	.048
	Administrative personnel	69	<b>4.4424</b>	0.56882			
	Corporate personnel	103	4.1059	0.76277			
Continuance commitment Level	Academic staff	74	3.8708	0.79062	3.757	.025*	.030
	Administrative personnel	69	<b>4.1820</b>	0.63732			
	Corporate personnel	103	3.9717	0.65088			
Normative commitment Level	Academic staff	74	3.9386	0.72697	3.340	.037*	.027
	Administrative personnel	69	<b>4.2340</b>	0.60061			
	Corporate personnel	103	4.0915	0.70341			

\*\*p&lt;.01, \*p&lt;.05

On comparison of organizational commitments of individuals participating in intramural sports in terms of monthly income, a significant difference was only observed in affective commitment

dimension ( $F_{(3,242)}=4.080$ );  $P<.01$ ;  $\eta^2=.048$ ). Table 5 shows status of differentiation of organization commitment in accordance with monthly income variable.

**Table 5.** Status of differentiation of organization commitment in accordance with income variable

Factors	Monthly income	n	M	Sd.	F	p	$\eta^2$
Affective commitment Level	2400 TL and below	73	4.0227	0.82911	4.080	0.008**	.048
	2401 TL and 3400 TL	51	<b>4.4314</b>	0.46187			
	3401 TL and 4400 TL	47	4.1713	0.68729			
	4401 TL and over	75	4.2624	0.56476			
Continuance commitment Level	2400 TL and below	73	3.9526	0.74263	0.305	0.822*	
	2401 TL and 3400 TL	51	4.0411	0.50783			
	3401 TL and 4400 TL	47	3.9626	0.85587			
	4401 TL and over	75	4.0427	0.67096			
Normative commitment Level	2400 TL and below	73	4.0703	0.75889	1.029	0.381**	
	2401 TL and 3400 TL	51	4.1822	0.47281			
	3401 TL and 4400 TL	47	3.9483	0.85269			
	4401 TL and over	75	4.1203	0.62752			

\*\*p&lt;.01, \*p&lt;.05

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Organizations use human factor as an important component in subjects such as compete, produce qualified products, provide service and increase efficiency, etc. The fact that human factor is dependent on organization is an important issue in realization of purposes of said organization. Institutions such as universities may present recreational sports programs, thereby enabling protection of health, socialization and psychological benefits of their employees. Thusly, commitments of employees to organization may be increased, and work motivation and performance of individual with increasing organizational commitment may be affected. In this study aiming to evaluate organizational commitment levels of employees participating in intramural sports, organizational commitment was examined in terms of personal and some structural features.

One of personal features taken into account in valuation of organizational commitment is gender. According to the study results, it was detected that organizational commitments of employees participating in intramural sports did not exhibit any significant difference in terms of gender variable from demographical features. There are studies in the literature exhibiting that organizational commitments of females were much stronger than those of males<sup>29,41,11</sup>. Some studies reveal that organizational commitments of males were much stronger than those of females<sup>28</sup>. Apart from these results, it is also possible to see studies reporting no relationship between gender and organizational commitment<sup>12,10</sup>. The results obtained from these studies support studies revealing that there is no difference between gender and organizational commitment variable. The fact that there is no difference between gender and dimensions constituting organizational commitment may be

resulted from organization structure of the study, other features involving into the study or features of intramural sports service and programs. The provided service may not be regarded as sufficient in affecting organizational commitment in accordance with organization capacity and power in terms of organization employees participating in intramural sports. Thusly, the expected difference may not have appeared for organizational commitment dimensions in terms of gender demographical feature.

Another demographical variable affecting organizational commitment is age of employees. At the end of the analysis, significant difference was seen in affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment dimensions constituting organizational commitment in terms of age of participants in intramural sports. It was seen that those "44 age and over" in employee age had higher averages in all three dimensions. It was stated that commitment to organization increased as age advanced<sup>16</sup>. Its reason may differ. According to career development model<sup>26</sup>, organizational commitment varies depending on age period of employees during their career. At the beginning of a career, organizational commitment level for an employee changes in accordance with presence of alternative job opportunities and their availabilities. A person at the beginning of his/her career tends towards a job he/she is interested in. If he/she realizes that the job is not proper for him/her, he/she does not hesitate to tend towards an alternative<sup>7</sup>. According to the results of this study, the fact that those in the 23-29 age group in organizational commitment averages are those with the lowest average is parallel with this career development model. As age advanced, an employee spends greater amount of time and energy and make investments for the organization. As a consequence, leaving the organization

gets more difficult<sup>32</sup>. As time passes, the employee acquires experience in the organization, and experience situations such as job satisfactions, promotion and advancement of job, which is shown as one of the reasons of the relationship between organizational commitment and age<sup>3</sup>. As age advances, individuals may experience various health problems. Participation into regular physical activity may keep individuals away from some health problems and may increase their life quality<sup>5</sup>. The fact that those in “44 and over” age group have higher organizational commitment average compared to others may be due to provision of intramural sports services with which individuals can maintain their physical and mental health.

Personnel in universities may be employed as academic, administrative and corporate personnel within scope of service provision. A significant difference was seen in organizational commitments of employees working as administrative personnel in dimension of organizational commitment in terms of employment situation. One of the main reasons why those employed as corporate personnel have lower organizational commitment may be shown as lack of job guarantee. Participation into intramural sports may not be a factor in constitution of organizational commitment of these individuals. Academician is regarded as a sort of information workmanship<sup>43</sup>. According to Reed (1996), information workmen cannot get attached to a certain organization. Flexibility and self-determination are stated to be prominent features of this group. Thusly, one of the reasons that there is no significant difference in organizational commitments of academic staff participating in intramural sports may be this situation. Lack of personnel cadre guarantee may be regarded as an important factor that organizational commitment of administrative personnel is different with respect to others. Lack of job

guarantee for corporate personnel and contractual work of academic staff other than associate professors and professor may be considered as obstacles for constitution of organizational commitment. Participation into intramural sports is one of important tools for eliminating burden and stress incurred by business life. The ratio of encountering negativities resulting from work for academic staff may be higher compared to other employees. Constitution of organizational commitment for academic staff trying to get away from negativities by participating in intramural sports is an expected situation. However, study results do not support this expectation.

Income level is one of the most important factors acting in decision of leaving the organization or not by employees. Understanding of justice of this distribution by employees affects organizational commitment<sup>21</sup>. According to the study results, a significant difference was observed in affective commitment level of employees participating in intramural sports with monthly income of “2401 and 3400 TL”. This situation may be due to perception of just distribution of income level. This perception may have a role affective commitment to the organization by the group with significant difference. Academic staff among personnel employed within university may have higher level of income compared to others. No significant difference was seen in the study results for employees with high income level. Cohen (1992) stated that income level is an important factor affecting organizational commitment for high level employees. Thus, it may be said that employees with high income level have low income perception. Utilization of intramural sports services may not be considered as an effective component for employees with high income level in constitution of organizational commitment.



Consequently, bonds of university employees participating in intramural sports were examined in levels of affective, continuance and normative commitment in this study. The results acquired showed that organizational commitments of employees participating in intramural sports did not change in accordance with gender and education variable. It was

detected that affective, continuance and normative commitment of academic staff in employment situation and advanced age in age category were higher compared to others. It was concluded according to income variable that participants close to lower category were affectively attached to the organization.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the results of this study evaluating organizational commitment of employees participating in intramural sports, some suggestions have been developed for administrators and future studies. The study may be a guide in evaluating the role of intramural sports services provided by university administrators for their employees in development of organizational commitment. Administrators may determine free time needs of employees with different demographical features, and enable provision of intramural sports having effect in constitution of organizational commitment. Existing programs may be updated, and more

effective activities may be incorporated into the program.

Existence of many factors affecting organizational commitment is mentioned. Participation into intramural sports may be one of these factors. With the studies to be conducted, the effect of participation into intramural sports on organizational commitment may be deeply investigated. Moreover, the effect of participation into intramural sports on organizational commitment may be revealed with a different point of view by comparison of organizational commitments of individuals participating and not participating in intramural sports with studies to be conducted in the future.

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