

## An Investigation On Perceived External Prestige And Related Work Variables In A Turkish Context

*Türk Örnekleminde Algılanan Dışsal Pretij Ve İş  
Değişkenleri İlişkisinin İncelenmesine Yönelik Bir Çalışma*

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### *Türk Örnekleminde Algılanan Dışsal Prestij Ve İş Değişkenleri İlişkisinin İncelenmesine Yönelik Bir Çalışma*

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#### Özet:

Örgütsel davranış yazınında algılanan örgütsel prestij, çalışanların örgütlerine ilişkin olumlu tutumlar ve davranışlar geliştirilmesinde sağladığı faydalar nedeniyle oldukça ilgi çeken bir konu olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu kapsamda çalışmada Türk çalışanların örgütlerine ilişkin algıladıkları dışsal prestij ile çalıştıkları örgüte ilişkin tutumları arasındaki çoklu ilişki tartışılmaktadır. Araştırma bulguları, batılı araştırmalara benzer biçimde, algılanan dışsal (örgütsel) prestij duygusal bağlılık üzerinde iş tatmini ve örgütsel özdeşleşmenin kısmi aracı rolü ile etkili olduğunu göstermektedir. Bulgular ayrıca, iş atatmini ve örgütsel özdeşleşmesi olan çalışanların, çalıştıkları kurumu daha prestijli görme eğiliminde olduklarına işaret etmektedir. Çalışmada araştırma bulgularının yorumuna ve bu kapsamda yürütülecek gelecek çalışmalara ilişkin önerilere de yer verilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** algılanan dışsal prestij , duygusal bağlılık, örgütsel özdeşleşme, iş tatmini, itibar, hiyerarşik regresyon analizi

#### Abstract:

Perceived external prestige (PEP) is an interesting topic in the organizational behavior literature, due to its role on constitutes positive attitudes and behaviors. The purpose of this paper is to study the mutual interaction between employees' perception of the external prestige of their working organization and their attitudes toward organization in Turkish context. The results showed that impact of PEP on affective commitment is partially mediated job satisfaction and organizational identification which was overlap with western research finding. We also discover a relationship that employees who have job satisfaction and identification tend to see their organization more prestigious and more favorable. Implications of the findings and suggestions for future studies are also discussed.

**Keywords:** perceived external prestige, affective commitment, organizational identification, job satisfaction, Reputation, hierarchical regression analysis

## Introduction

Organizational image has become important for companies. An organization's market performance is directly dependent on the combined perceptions of its stakeholders or the attractiveness of the organization to its key stakeholders. Stakeholder perception is defined as corporate reputation (Fombrun 1996). Reputation refer to an intangible asset and legitimacy gain, a competitive advantage against rivals for reaching resources and increasing organizational effectiveness (Kaplan and Norton 1992; Elsbach 1994; Weigelt and Camerer 1988; Deephouse and Carter 2005). Reputation encourages customer trust, company and product loyalty and sympathy, which cause desired sells return, market share (Steral and Emery 1997; Nguyen and Leblanc 2001; Herbig and Milewicz 1997). Thus, organizational reputation is defined as a predictor of a firm's financial performance and stock market value (Brown and Perry 1994; Vergin and Qoronfleh 1998). Besides the external impacts of reputation, considerable research has shown that organizational reputation impacts employee attitudes. Research indicates that an organization that has a positive image or reputation has an advantage in recruiting and retaining qualified employees (Lemmink et al 2003; Ferris et al 2002) and that reputation affects their attitudes toward the organization (Ashforth and Mael 1989, 1992, Dutton et al 1992).

Changes in the working environment and market structure due to new organizational practices make human capital as a core instrument of competition. On the macro level, the working environment is becoming more and more complex. On the micro level, organizational boundaries are becoming more transparent, with employees coming from increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds. Employees with diverse expectations and values increasingly populate all levels of a workplace. Thus, organizations need more common values, goals and identities for managing such diversities (Albert etc., 2000:13-14). Environmental adaptation strategies

and new organizational structures facilitate productivity and efficiency for top managers, but they connote job ambiguity or job uncertainty for employees. In particular, the flattening of hierarchies and the outsourcing of technology- based production processes cause mass dismissals, which damage the trust between employees and employers (Albert etc., 2000:14). Thus, the main problem faced by the modern organization is how to provide an environment that facilitates the development of emotional bonds among workers and between employers and employees. Such a bond or emotional attachment between an employee and an organization is necessary to keep individual talents in an organization, which is defined in organizational literature as "organizational commitment" or "organizational identification." Some research based on social identity theory shows that favorable reputation perceptions among employees foster positive attitudes toward the organization such as bond individuals to organizations (Mael and Ashforth 1992; Dutton and Dukerich 1991; Dutton et al., 1994; Smitdt et al. 2001).

Despite the theoretical and empirical findings about perceived organizational reputation or prestige and its positive influence on employee's attitudes and behaviors, some important effects still need to be addressed, such as the impacts of an organization's origin or national or cultural features on the relationship. Cultural values potentially have an impact on a range of micro- and macro-organizational phenomena (Boyacigiller and Adler 1991:272). A popular study by Hofstede has provided a framework that links the culture variable to the organizational context. Through his analysis of data collected from subsidiaries of a large multinational corporation in 40 countries, Hofstede concluded that national culture has a major impact on employees' work-related attitudes (Hofstede 1984: 82). Since than many studies have examined the issue but did not consider cultural differences perspective. On the other hand some of the employees of well-regarded or international

companies, especially located in third-world countries, are more enthusiastic about displaying their partnership with an organization than others. Some employees are proud to volunteer the name of his/her organization when asked, while others are reluctant to answer. It is also unclear why some individuals exhibit more participative and defensive behaviors towards their employer than others against the negative externality or what kind of factors, variables or attitudes can induce positive perceptions about an organization and its reputation among employees. Hence the main aim of this study is to investigate the interaction between employee's perceptions of organizational reputation or prestige and their identification and commitment to the organization, studying four different firms.

## THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

### *Perceived External Prestige (PEP)*

Perceived external prestige (PEP) is an interesting issue for researchers and practitioners due to its role in forming positive employee attitudes and attachment to the organization. In March and Simon's motivation model, PEP is one of the antecedents of organizational identification and shows an organization's position among other institutions, constructed by individuals' own prestige standards and external prestige perceptions about the organization (March and Simon, 1958). Concept defined as perceived organizational prestige by Mael and Ashforth as the degree of organizational prestige when compared to other relates (Mael and Ashforth 1992). Bergami and Bagozzi associate the concept with the organizational statute of well-recognized, highly prestigious institutions, whereas Smiths et al. describe PEP as the individual-level interpretation and evaluation of organizational prestige based on an employee's own information (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000; Smithd's et al, 2001). Perceived organizational prestige was conceptualized by Dutton (1991, 1994) as a constructed external image, which is a specific form of organizational

image and is defined as assessments by members of an organization about what others think about their organization (Dutton and Duckerich 1991; Dutton et al, 1994). The authors defined corporate reputation as outsiders' beliefs about what distinguishes an organization from others (Mael and Ashforth 1992; Dutton et al, 1994; Smitdt et al, 2001; Carmeli and Freund 2002), which differentiates it from constructed external images or external prestige perceptions of insiders' and outsiders' interpretations of organizational information. However, sometimes insider perceptions of organizational prestige closely align with outsider perceptions (Dutton and Duckerich, 1991).

Despite the authors' conceptual differentiation, we postulate that employee perceptions of organizational prestige are a unique aspect of corporate reputation. Fombrun defined reputation as aggregate images of firms among key stakeholders (Fombrun and Shanley 1990). According to the stakeholder approach, an organization does not present one image but rather multiple images (Thompson 1967). Each of the various stakeholder groups relates differently to the organization and therefore has different perceptions of the organization (Freeman, 1984). Thus, each stakeholder has different transactions, interests and expectations and relates to the firm differently. Employees have exchange-based relations with organizations that use different criteria for evaluation. Therefore, they might have different perceptions of an organization's prestige than the customers, competitors, or suppliers (Riordan et al. 1997; Carmelli et al. 2006, Dowling 2001). On the other hand, from the employee perspective, insiders' reputation perceptions are more important than those of other stakeholders because employee loyalty has an effect on outsiders (Alsop 2004). In organizations especially white-collar employees have more detail and divergent organizational information than outsider where sometimes alike, which was the main assumption of Dutton's study that differentiated constructed external prestige from organizational reputation (Dutton et al

1994). Today's employees have ownership in firms, and information is openly and broadly shared, which increases the power of employees throughout the organization. Not only top managers and middle managers, but also lower level managers and employees may have access to organizational information. These kinds of strategies are implemented for establishing alliances between executives and employees, and they provide a competitive advantage to the company (Daft 2004; Pfeffer 1994). Theoretically or in practice, white-collar employees, contemporarily defined as knowledge workers, especially know what is happening inside the organization and how the organizational strategies are being implemented, as well as the proposals behind them and their respective roles in implementing those strategies. At the end of the twentieth century, automation and productivity reduced the percentage of the traditional workforce, with intelligent, intellectual elite managers and engineers using their analytical skills to design products and processes and select and manage customers. Thus, today's workforce has authority to access information, and roles and responsibilities inside a company are more extensive and complex than before. The white-collar workforce is depicted as a core instrument for improving organizational performance, which is the main reason, both theoretically and practically, that top managers try to participate with and involve knowledge workers in corporate strategies and decisions and are sensitive to their feelings, attitudes and opinions (Kaplan and Norton 1996:5-6). Reputation is based on visibility, but it deals with how people evaluate the information they receive, so the information or assumptions of the modern-day employee about the organization's reputation have a significant role in shaping outsider perceptions.

Employees are also human beings and have various memberships in different industrial or social clubs/groups where they may form judgments about their organization based on outside assessments. Especially organizations boundary workers, such

as sales representatives, might easily see customers' or outsiders' direct reactions to the organization and its activities during their daily work. Employees' perceptions about organizational prestige are formed by consolidating their own individual working experiences, information that they get from inside and outside of the company, and outsider judgments and perceptions (Dowling 2001). Thus, at the end of this cognitive process, employees create their own, unique assessment of prestige, which has been affected by their attitudes about the organization. Of course, all levels of employees do not have access to a wide range of information about organizational issues. However, institutionalized firms are using new management practices, such as employee participation programs, quality circles, internal communication programs, PR activities, company newsletters or formal information channels, which transfer information like corporate vision, mission statement, ethics codes and tactics to employees for improving product or organizational effectiveness (Cotton 1993). Thus, we assumed that assessments about organizational reputation, especially by senior, white-collar, knowledge workers, are refined and include correct information about the firm's features and future projections. An individual in an organization actively monitors organizational actions on social issues because such actions can be especially character-enhancing or damaging to self-image. Members concern themselves with the organization's image because it affects others' views of themselves. (Dutton and Dukerich 1991) Based on the stakeholder approach, we assumed that employees perceived organizational prestige is a unique type of organizational reputation perception by inside stakeholders (Herbach et al. 2004). Therefore, we define perceived organizational prestige as the interpretation of corporate reputation by employees or insiders' aggregate responses or reactions to outsider beliefs or presumptions about the organization.

### *Organizational Identification*

In previous studies, organizational identification described a situation that occurs when resemble of organization and individual goals or internalized organizational values and goals by employees (March and Simon, 1958; Hall et al. 1970; Lee 1969,1970; Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Based on Tajfel's classic identification definition, cognitive awareness of the membership of a group and its emotional value to this membership (Tajfel 1982), organizational identification defined perception of oneness with or belongingness to some human aggregation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992), process of incorporating the perception of oneself as a member of a particular organization into one's general self-definition (Dutton et al., 1994). Concept was also describes as process that individuals cognitive adaptation of organizational values and goals to his own identity and used those features to describe himself (Pratt, 1998; Herrbach, 2006). Thus, identification is an active process in which individuals link themselves to social actor elements (Cheney, 1983). Despite their heterogeneity, all of these definitions of the identification process imply that organization members have linked their membership to their self-awareness, either cognitively (the feeling of being part of an organization and internalized organizational values), emotionally (pride in membership) or both (Riketta, 2005). In addition to this variety of definitions, we defined organizational identification as individuals' cognitive adaptations of an organization's goals and values.

Organizational identification forms the basis for employee attitudes and behaviors toward an organization (Van Kippenberg and Van Schie, 2000). Empirical research has highlighted the potential benefits of identification with organizations. A growing amount of research has found that organizational identification positively relates to organizational commitment, citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, and perceived organizational prestige, whereas it has a negative effect on an employee's turnover intentions ( Hall et

al. 1970; Van Dick et al., 2004; Bomber and Iyler, 2002; Mignonac et al., 2006, Riketta, 2005, Cole and Brunc, 2006). Based on Tajfel and Turners' social identity theory, individuals tend to look for positive social identity and self-image for social approval (Turner et al. 1979; Dutton et al, 1994). According to identification processes, when members believe that outsiders see their organization in a positive light, organizations become more attractive for them, and they take pride in their association and membership. They were basket in glory of this association (Cialdini 1976). An individual's self-image is influenced by characteristics that others infer about them, based on their social category here is called organizational membership (Hogg and Terry 2000). Thus, perceived organizational prestige fosters a positive evaluation of one's self-image. If an employee's perception about the organization is positive or socially valued, he/she self-identifies with the organization, which provide organizational identification and job satisfaction. Severity of interaction with organization, adequacy of organizational information and visibility of membership were also assumed to be the main antecedents of the identification process (Mael and Ashforth 1994; Bhattacharya et al. 1995; Smitdts et al. 2001; Dukerich et al. 2002; Liponnen et al. 2005; Carmeli et al. 2006). Thus, we anticipate that PEP is associated with job satisfaction and organizational identification.

### *Organizational Commitment*

In general, commitment is a stabilizing or obliging force that gives direction to behavior (restricts freedom or binds the person to a course of action). In this framework, commitment is a mindset with different focal points and forms, and it orients the individual to some sort of action that is distinct from motivation (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). More than 25 different definitions of organizational commitment have been found in the literature (Oliver, 1990). In Instrumental perspective commitment definitions were refered exchange based relationship between individual and working organization

(Hrebiniak and Alutto, 1972). If this exchange process effectively works, it establishes commitment between exchange partners (Blau, 1989; Becker 1960; Alutto, Hrebiniak 1972). The psychological perspective links conceptual relations with organizational identification and commitment and defining concept as an internalization of organizational goals and values, a willingness to invest effort in the organization and a sense of belonging, manifested as a wish to stay (Steers, 1977; Porter et al 1974; Mowday et al 1979). For Meyer et al., organizational commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for whether an employee decides to continue membership in the organization (Meyer et al, 1990; Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer et al, 1993, Meyer and Allen 1997). Researchers argue that commitment binds an individual to an organization, has a psychological structure that maintains employees' interactions with their organizations and influences employee decisions about remaining in the organization. Thus, affective commitment characterized, employee's emotional identification with organization and involvement in the organization. Individuals who commit to their organization based on affective tone remain in the organization because they "want" to stay. (Meyer et al, 1990; Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer et al, 1993; Meyer and Allen 1997).

Research on organizational behavior has demonstrated that organizational commitment has positive effects on employees' work attitudes just as it has positive correlations with participation, job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational effectiveness and an inverse relationship with turnover intention and actual dysfunctional turnover of employees (Steers 1977; Marhiue and Zajac, 1990; Angle and Perry 1981; Randall, 1990; Cohen, 1992; 1993; Riketta, 2002; Meyer et al., 2002). Organizational commitment is also associated with organizational identification (Ashforth, Mael, 1989; 1992; Van Dick, Wagner, 2002; Haslam et al., 2003; Pratt, 1998; Riketta, 2005; Van Kippenberg, Sleebos, 2006).

However, research has not adequately taken into account how external factors like organizational prestige or interpretation of reputation might influence organizational commitment. Few researchers have been interested in and focused on the interaction between organizational prestige and employee commitment. Carmeli and Freund claimed that PEP and organizational commitment are related with concept of organizational effectiveness (Carmeli, and Freund 2002: 61–62, Freund 2006; 78–79), while Mayer and Schorman found a direct relationship between value commitment and organizational prestige (Mayer and Schoorman 1998). Research showed that employees' positive perceptions about the organization's prestige, as well as external threats to the organization, enhance employee commitment (Riketta and Launderer, 2005). Thus, empirical results indicated that PEP has significant positive effects on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Herrbach et al. 2004; Carmeli and Freund, 2002; Carmeli, 2005; Carmeli 2005b; Freund 2006). Well-known research from Elmers and his colleagues gave new perspective to the relationship between PEP and commitment. The authors offered a 3-dimensional identification process, based on Tajfel's (1982) identification definition in which the emotional component was defined as a sense of emotional involvement with the group, which was called affective commitment (Elmers et al., 1999:385). Research findings have shown that perceived organizational prestige has positive effects on affective commitment via an organizational identification mediating effect (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000; Barters et al., 2007: 182, Carmeli et al. 2006). Based on these findings, we desire to test the variables relation in a collectivist, Turkish context, and postulate the following hypothesis.

**H1:** Job satisfaction and organizational identification mediate the relationship between PEP and affective organizational commitment.

Studies thus far have only focused on

how employees' perceptions of the organization's prestige affect their attitudes toward the organization. However, these have not taken into account how employees' positive attitudes influence their perceptions about the organization. Researchers have devoted efforts to examining how organizational image or prestige fosters positive employee behavior (March and Simon 1958; Ashforth, Mael, 1989; Mael, Ashforth, 1992; Dutton and Dukerich 1992; Dutton et al. 1994; Carmeli and Freund, 2002; Carmeli, 2005; Carmeli 2005b; Freund 2006). On the other hand, little empirical work has been explored what kinds of organizational factors influence employees' perception regarding their organizations. We postulate that employees who are committed to and identify with their organization will view the organization as more reputable or prestigious than its relevant.

According to social identity theory assumptions, identification with an organization fosters insider favoritism and insider cohesion. Individuals who self-identify with the organization have insider biases based on a social categorization process in which they have similar identity features with the organization and other members. Thus, they show similar work attitudes, behaviors, preferences, and perceptions that contribute to insider cohesion. Insider biases and favoritism represent a striving for positively valued distinctiveness for one's own group to other and relevant outsiders to achieve a positive social identity (Turner et al 1979:190). Thus, individuals who have job satisfaction and identify themselves with the organization, have more defensive behavior against the events or threats that were negatively affect the social position of the organization. Thus, we postulate that committed and identified employees have an affinity for seeing their organization as more prestigious than others based on group favoritism (Elsbach and Kramer 1996: 446; Carmeli and Freund 2002: 61; Dutton et al. 1994; Elemers vd. 1992; Freund 2006:81). These theoretical and empirical findings lead us to propose our second research hypothesis.

**H2:** Affective commitment mediates the relationship between organizational identification, job satisfaction and PEP.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

The data used in this study are taken from four automotive industry firms (Firms A, B, C, and D) in Turkey that are listed on the Bursa Chamber of Commerce and Industry's annual ranking of Bursa's 250 Most Admired Companies of 2007. We thought that Bursa's automotive and textile firms represented a cross-section of those industries' positions in Turkey. While selecting our sample, we used six reputation criteria for the firms, which are also common dimensions of Fortune's Most Admired American Companies list and Alsop's 18 Immutable Laws of Corporate Reputation criteria (Alsop 2004). These criteria are: long-term sector operations (which we considered to be at least 30 years of sector experience), innovation, quality of management, financial soundness, product and service quality, and social responsibility. The scope of those features we reviewed the listed firms' web pages and documents whether they match those criteria. Then we found that only four automotive industry firms matched those criteria. These four firms are sector leaders in product and management innovation and sales returns. They have international foreign partners, have been operating in the automotive sector for more than 30 years and are trading worldwide. They retain qualified employees, and all of them have earned product and process quality awards, most notably an EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence) Award for one of the firms. Therefore, we decided that these four automotive industry firms are well-recognized and reputable. Then, we focused on these firm's white-collar employees for our research sample to discover their perceptions about their respective firms' prestige and its impacts on their attitudes about the organization.

Questionnaires were sent to 400 white-collar managers, and 206 usable questionnaires were returned. Out of these respondents, 83 percent of the participants were male, 51.2 percent held a B.A. degree and 12.6 percent hold an MA degree. The respondents' organizational tenure ranged from 1-16 years, with 23.2 percent 4-7 years, 37.7 percent 8 -15 years, and 18.4 percent over 16 years. All of them are full-time employees, and 75 percent of the participants are married.

### Measures

All items are measured on five-point scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). All scale items translated from English to Turkish and then translated back into English, based on a standard translation-back translation procedure. This was done to avoid any misunderstandings from an English-speaking lecturer.

**Organizational Commitment:** Affective commitment to the organization was assessed with the six-item affective commitment instrument that was developed by Meyer et al (1993) and used by other researchers in related issues for measuring the affective tone of commitment (Carmeli 2005, Carmeli, Gilat, Weisberg 2006, Freund 2006) or the emotional component of identification (Bergami and Baggozzi 2000). Some of the scaled items are "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own," "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me," and "I do not feel like part of the family at my organization" (reverse item). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to validate the scale of affective commitment (Jöreskog, 1993). Hereby, the results of the analysis prove the validity of the scale ( $\alpha = 0.75$ ; GFI= 0.99; AGFI= 0.99; CFI=1; RMSR=0.01; RMSEA: 0.01).

**Organizational Identification:** We used the six-item scale of Mael and Ashforth (1992) to assess organizational identification. This six-item scale was previously tested (Tak and Aydemir 2004) on a Turkish (N=425,  $\alpha = 0.88$ ) sample. Sample items in-

clude "When someone criticizes my organization, it feels like a personal insult." For this study, confirmatory factor analysis results are  $\alpha = 0.75$ ; GFI= 0.94; AGFI= 0.80; CFI=0.90; RMSR=0.07; RMSEA: 0.08.

**Perceived External Prestige:** This measure is based on Fortune magazine's Annual Survey of "America's Most Admired Corporations," an index of eight attributes that has been used by numerous scholars, including Fombrun and Shanley (1990), Fryxell and Wang (1994), and Carmeli (2002, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2004). The eight attributes are quality of management, quality of product, innovativeness, long-term investment value, financial soundness, development and retention of talented people, community and environmental responsibility and use of corporate assets. For this study, the overall index has been used, but we divided the "development and retention of talented people" attribute into two components to avoid misunderstanding. We asked respondents to assess their firm's HRM policies by responding to the following: "My Company has a reputation among its key competitors for having better invested in its employees," and "My company has a reputation among its key competitors for having a high level of qualified employees." We have found that nine items were loaded on a single factor ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ; GFI= 0.94; AGFI= 0.89; CFI=0.95; RMSR=0.04; RMSEA: 0.06).

**Job Satisfaction:** Job satisfaction was measured by three items taken from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire Satisfaction Subscale (Spector 1997) ( $\alpha = 0.55$ ). Sample items are: "All in all, I am satisfied with my job," "In general, I don't like my job," (Reverse item), and "In general, I like working here." (GFI= 0.99; AGFI= 0.98; CFI=1; RMSR=0.02; RMSEA: 0.01). This scale is simple and short, which makes it ideal for use in questionnaires that contain many scales (Spector 1997: 57). This instrument has been frequently used by Turkish researchers, and the scale was previously tested by Tak and Aydemir in 2004 (N=425,  $\alpha = 0.68$ ).

**RESULTS**

The descriptive statistics, means, standard deviations and correlations among the research variables are presented in Table 1. As we expected, perceived organizational prestige is significantly related to affective commitment ( $r=0.56, p<0.001$ ), organizational identification ( $r=0.50, p<0.001$ ) and job satisfaction ( $r=0.47, p<0.001$ ). It was also significantly but weakly associated with age ( $r=0.15, p<0.05$ ) and the education level of the employees ( $r=0.14, p<0.05$ ). Organizational identification is significantly correlated with affective commitment ( $r=0.69, p<0.001$ ), job satisfaction ( $r=0.30, p<0.001$ ) and education level ( $r=0.17, p<0.05$ ), and employees' affective commitment to the organization is also related to their job satisfaction ( $r=0.43, p<0.001$ ).

We conducted a second analysis to test the extent to which the different firms' answers were similar to each other. We first conducted ANOVA to compare the means of the firms. When the ANOVA procedure indicated statistically significant differences across the four firms, we performed a t-test to derive some indication of which groups (firms A, B, C and D) differ from the others, comparing the groups to each other. Table 2 shows the results of the comparisons of the group means of firms A, B, C and D for all variables. Through t tests to compare variables, we found no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the PEP and organizational commitment of the firms, while the mean scores of the variables of job satisfaction and organizational identification were significantly different from each other.

**Table 1**  
Means, Standard Deviations, And Correlations of research variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Age	2	0.94	1								
Education	2.5	1.20	<b>0.23***</b>	1							
Tenure	2.59	2.91	<b>0.37***</b>	0.10	1						
Marital status	1.15	0.42	-0.0	<b>0.24***</b>	0.06	1					
Gender	1.66	0.60	<b>0.35***</b>	0.08	0.00	-0.01	1				
Affective commitment	2.9	0.68	<b>0.17*</b>	-0.12	0.06	-0.01	-0.05	1			
Organizational identification	2.91	0.69	0.12	-0.17*	0.06	-0.05	-0.05	<b>0.69***</b>	1		
PEP	2.91	0.59	<b>0.15*</b>	<b>-0.14*</b>	0.07	-0.02	0.02	<b>0.56***</b>	<b>0.5***</b>	1	
Job Satisfaction	2.78	0.47	0.02	-0.04	0.10	0.08	0.04	<b>0.43***</b>	<b>0.3***</b>	<b>0.47***</b>	1

**Table 2**  
ANOVA Table of Firm A, B, C, D

Variable	Firms Means				ANOVA F(df)	A		B		C	
	A	B	C	D		A B t(df)	A C t(df)	A D t(df)	B C t(df)	B D t(df)	C D t(df)
Aff.Com	3.73	3.97	3.85	4.05	1.594(3)	1.753(99)	0.921(106)	2.423(103)	0.881(99)	0.441(96)	1.554(103)
PEP	3.72	3.80	4.16	3.95	2.235(3)	3.819(106)	2.139(106)	2.005(103)	1.323(99)	1.323(96)	1.645(103)
JS	3.65	3.68	3.87	3.92	4.425*(3)	2.94***(99)	2.47***(106)	2.25(103)	4.927(99)	2.57***(96)	.636***(103)
OI	3.80	3.99	3.71	4.16	5.036*(3)	0.437(204)	1.12*(106)	3.014(1003)	2.19*(99)	1.259(96)	3.2***(103)

### Hypothesis Testing

To test the specific hypothesis of the study, a hierarchical regression analysis with mean-centred variables was conducted (Kenny et al, 1998; Cohen and Cohen, 1983). Four conditions have to be met in order to demonstrate mediation: (1) the initial variable (i.e., perceived external prestige) should be related to the mediators (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational identification); (2) the initial variable should be related to the outcome variable (i.e., organizational commitment); (3) the mediators should be related to the outcome variable; and (4) the association between the initial variable and the outcome variable should be reduced when the mediators are included in the predictive model. If the inclusion of the mediators in the regression model reduces the beta coefficient of the initial variable to near zero, the mediators are said to fully mediate the relationship between the initial variable and the outcome variable. If its beta coefficient value is reduced but a statistically significant influence remains, the mediators can be said to partially mediate the relationship between the initial variable and the outcome variable (Baron and Kenny 1986:1177).

Based on ANOVA and t-test findings, we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis to assess our first hypothesis for each firm.

Step 1 showed that while controlling for demographic variable effects, PEP has a significant effect on job satisfaction (for firm A:  $\beta=56$ ,  $p<0.001$  and for firm D:  $\beta=62$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and organizational identification (for firm B:  $\beta=46$ ,  $p<0.001$  and for firm D: ( $\beta=51$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). However, part of our results indicate that these relationships were not valid for firms B and C. For firms B and C, PEP does not have a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction (firm B:  $\beta=15$  and firm C:  $\beta=17$ ), while it does have a significant effect on organizational identification (firm B:  $\beta=54$ ,  $p<0.001$  and firm C,  $\beta=65$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). In Step 2, PEP has a significantly positive association with affective organizational commitment (firm A:  $\beta=67$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm B:  $\beta=65$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm C:  $\beta=47$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; and firm D:  $\beta=46$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and when job satisfaction and organizational identification were added to PEP and the control variables, the Step 3 results showed that only organizational identification has a significant effect on affective commitment for all firms (firm A:  $\beta=30$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm B:  $\beta=61$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm C:  $\beta=81$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; and firm D:  $\beta=40$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Job satisfaction does not have a significant effect on affective commitment; this finding is valid for firm A ( $\beta=14$ ), B ( $\beta=4$ ) and C ( $\beta=02$ ) but not for firm D ( $\beta=34$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). After adding the mediator

**Table 3**  
Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Firm A, B, C, and D :  
Effect of Pep on Job Attitudes

	FIRM A				FIRM B				FIRM C				FIRM D			
	Step1 JS	Step 2 OI	Step 3 Aff. C.	Step 3 JS	Step1 JS	Step 2 OI	Step 3 Aff. C.	Step 3 JS	Step 1 OI	Step 2 Aff. C.	Step 3 JS	Step 1 OI	Step 2 Aff. C.	Step 3 JS		
<i>Control variables</i>																
Age	.33	-.06	-.18	-.17	-.41*	.09	.196	.154	-.117	-.07	.07	.141	-.27	-.147	-.24	-.039
Education	.17	.18	.204*	.122	.076	-.003	-.13	-.13	.345*	.20	.15	-.01	.037	-.112	-.118	-.036
Tenure	.174	-.09	.09	.09	.46*	.04	-.15	-.20	-.043	-.01	-.03	-.03	.256	.234	.214	.032
Marital status	.092	-.04	.117	.11	.09	.132	.145	.05	-.32	-.13	-.09	.01	.05	-.146	-.03	.002
Gender	.187	.05	.05	.03	-.02	.1	.088	.027	.13	.102	-.131	-.21	.155	-.142	-.02	-.02
<i>Independent variable</i>																
PEP	.569***	.464***	.674***	.448***	.15	.542***	.651***	.312***	.179	.658***	.471***	.106	.623***	.519***	.463***	.038
<i>Mediator variable</i>																
Job Satisfaction(JS)				.149			.043				.021					.345*
Organizational Identification(OI)				.304**			.613***				.315***					.402**
$\Delta R^2$				.098			.271				.374					.147
Total $\Delta R^2$	.377	.281	.571	.67	.141	.381	.593	.337	.218	.475	.283	.631	.472	.402	.299	.454
Adjusted $R^2$	.302	.194	.519	.617	.013	.233	.532	.303	.118	.408	.192	.566	.400	.320	.203	.35
F	5.02***	3.25***	11.04***	12.64***	1.10	4.10***	9.75***	24.51***	2.19	7.11***	3.10***	9.66***	6.56***	4.93***	3.13*	4.33**

Standardized beta weights are shown.

variables into the model, the effect of PEP on affective commitment dramatically fell. (For firm A: Step 2,  $\beta=67$ ,  $p<0.001$  and Step 3,  $\beta=44$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; for firm B: Step 2,  $\beta=65$ ,  $p<0.001$  and Step 3,  $\beta=31$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; for firm C, Step 2,  $\beta=47$ ,  $p<0.001$  and Step 3,  $\beta=10$ ; and for firm D, Step 2,  $\beta=46$ ,  $p<0.001$  and Step 3,  $\beta=03$ , insignificant). Adding job satisfaction and organizational identification to the second equation produced a significant change in the  $R^2$  of the models (firm A,  $\Delta R^2=0.09$ ; firm B,  $\Delta R^2=0.27$ ; firm C,  $\Delta R^2=0.37$ ; and firm D,  $\Delta R^2=0.14$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Therefore, we concluded that for firms A and B, organizational identification has a partially mediating effect on the relationship between PEP and affective commitment. For firms C and D, organizational identification provides a fully mediating effect on the relationship between PEP and affective commitment. However, our results also indicate that job satisfaction does not play a mediating role between the initial and dependent variables. Consequently, our findings partially support H1. We have discovered the relationship between PEP, organizational identification and affective commitment, but we could not find any role for job satisfaction in the relationship between PEP and affective commitment.

To explore the effect of job attitudes on PEP, we conducted another hierarchical regression analysis. Table 4 (a, b, c, and d) pre-

sents the results of multiple hierarchical regression analyses. The results of the first regression showed that controlling for demographic variable effects, organizational identification (firm A:  $\beta=42$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm B:  $\beta=78$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm C:  $\beta=76$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; and firm D:  $\beta=41$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and job satisfaction (firm A:  $\beta=37$ ,  $p<0.001$  and firm B:  $\beta=36$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) have a significantly stronger effect on affective commitment and , while the effect of job satisfaction on affective commitment is non-existent for firms D and C (firm D:  $\beta=04$  and firm C:  $\beta=012$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). In Step 2, we tested the effects of organizational identification and job satisfaction on the PEP of the firms. The results indicated that organizational identification predicts a favorable PEP (firm A:  $\beta=24$ ,  $p<0.05$ ; firm B:  $\beta=53$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; firm C:  $\beta=66$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; and firm D  $\beta=38$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). However, job satisfaction only has a significant effect on PEP for firms A and D (firm A:  $\beta=44$ ,  $p<0.001$  and firm D:  $\beta=51$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). When organizational commitment is added to the equation as a mediator variable, the Step 3 organizational identification effects on PEP fall to  $\beta=01$  for firm A,  $\beta=13$  ( $p<0.01$ ) for firm B,  $\beta=74$  ( $p<0.001$ ) for firm C, and  $\beta=37$  ( $p<0.01$ ) for firm D. The effect of job satisfaction falls dramatically for firm A ( $\beta=024$   $p<0.05$ ), whereas it increases for firm D ( $\beta=50$   $p<0.001$ ). Two significant value changes in  $R^2$  occurred after adding affective commitment to the models.

Table 4

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Firm A, B, C, D: Effect of Job Attitudes on Pep

	FIRM A			FIRM B			FIRM C			FIRM D		
	Step1	Step 2	Step 3	Step1	Step 2	Step 3	Step1	Step 2	Step 3	Step1	Step2	Step3
<i>Control variables</i>												
Age	-.02	-.02	.08	-.189	.11	-.05	.14	.01	.028	-.08	.306	.38*
Education	.029	-.137	-.15	-.177*	-.13	.018	-.001	-.18	-.18	-.09	-.05	-.05
Tenure	.09	-.123	-.178	-.233	-.09	.11	-.08	.062	.054	.026	-.17	-.17
Marital status	.08	.05	.001	.09	.12	.032	.007	.147	.148	.007	.11	.11
Gender	-.056	-.199	-.169	.03	.03	.002	-.209*	-.13	-.015	.02	.016	.017
<i>Independent variable</i>												
Organizational Iden(OI)	.427***	.247*	.0157	.78***	.539***	.137**	.769***	.669***	.744***	.418**	.383**	.37**
Job Satisfaction(JS)	.371***	.443***	.247*	.04	.008	.035	.012	.135	.136	.365***	.513***	.502***
<i>Mediator variable</i>												
Affective commitment			.542**			.365***			.10			.203
$\Delta R^2$			.14			.183			-.01			-.81
Total $\Delta R^2$	.526	.42	.559	.777	.383	.549	.629	.47	.474	.454	.575	.576
Adjusted $R^2$	.469	.35	.493	.737	.272	.455	.573	.39	.38	.365	.506	.495
F	9.21***	6.02***	9.06***	19.47***	3.46**	5.80***	11.16***	5.85***	5.08***	5.11**	8.34***	.14***

\*standardized beta weights are shown

Our results showed that adding affective commitment to the equation produced a significantly positive change in  $R^2$  only for firms A and B (firm A,  $\Delta R^2 = 0.14$  and firm B,  $\Delta R^2 = 0.18$ ), whereas it produced a negative change in  $R^2$  for firms C and D. Thus, our findings indicate that affective commitment has a partially mediating effect on the relationship between organizational identification and PEP for firm B, while it has a fully mediating effect for firm A. Our results also showed that affective commitment has a partially mediating effect on the relationship between job satisfaction and PEP for firm A, while this relationship does not exist for firm B.

## DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to explore the relationship between the workplace attitudes of white-collar employees and their perceptions about their organization's prestige, which is defined as an employee's reputation perception. Reviewing the related literature led us to propose that perceived external prestige has a positive influence on workplace attitudes, such as organizational identification, commitment and job satisfaction. We also anticipated that positive workplace attitudes are maintaining favorable perceptions about an organization's prestige.

The findings of our research support the first hypothesis that job satisfaction and organizational identification mediate the relationship between PEP and organizational commitment. Our results show that PEP is associated with organizational identification and job satisfaction for firms in which organizational identification and job satisfaction play either a partially (for firm A and B) or fully (for firm C and D) mediating role the relationship between PEP and affective commitment. Our results confirm other previous relevant research findings that show a similar interaction between PEP, organizational identification, and affective commitment relationship (Bergami and Baggozi 2000; Barbers et al 2007; Carmelli et al. 2006). We found that if employees perceive their orga-

nization in a positive light, as also individuals have higher job satisfaction and identification, they have emotional bond with organization which was affective commitment. The data support the assumptions of social identity theory that a positive and stronger external prestige fosters individuals' positive memberships in organizations (Whetten and Mackey, 2002; Bhattacharya et al, 1995; Mignonanac et al, 2006). PEP and organizational identification both increase employees' affective commitment (Carmeli and Freund 2002; Freund 2006). PEP also promotes a positive perception of a job and job expectations so that it is a source of greater satisfaction. Besides theoretical similarities to relevant research, our results show some variety in the relationships of variables for the different firms, especially in either the partially or fully mediating roles of organizational identification and job satisfaction. We thought that the divergent results of the mediating role of job satisfaction on organizational identification could be dependent on a firm's special features. While investigating this differentiation among the firms, we compared the firms' features, especially their origins. We recognized that firms A and B have local origins and are local investment firms, whereas firm C is a foreign direct investment firm, and firm D is a joint venture. Thus, origin differentiation might affect the results for the firms or explain the reason why job satisfaction and organizational commitment play partially mediating roles on PEP and affective commitment for local investment firms, while they play fully mediating roles for foreign firms. Perceived prestige is very important for employees of foreign investment firms in fostering positive attitudes, emotions toward the organization, or organizational attachment. However, employees of local firms do not need a perception of prestige to enhance emotional bonds or attachments. Employees of local firms have an affinity for attachment to national firms. Consequently, our findings demonstrate that employees' positive perceptions of an organization's prestige and reputation lead to desired

workplace attitudes, such as job satisfaction, commitment and identification, which are also defined as determinants of an employee's intention to remain in an organization (Steers, 1977; Marsh, Manari 1977; Mobley 1982; Mitchell 1981; Moore 2000; Lee and Mowday, 1987; Tett and Meyer, 1993; Somers 1995; Cohen 1993).

This study also indicated that strong workplace attitudes predict positive perceptions of organizational prestige. Our results indicate that for local firms, affective commitment has a fully (for firm A) or partially (for firm B) mediating affect on the relationship between organizational identification and PEP. Organizational commitment did not play a mediating role for foreign firms. In general, we support the assumptions of social identity theory, wherein identification with an organization fosters positive distinctiveness among relevant outsiders. Individuals who identified themselves with organizations based on similar identity features (Pratt 1998) have job satisfaction and affective commitment, perceives their organization in a prestigious and more positive light. Identification fosters such characteristics as group cohesiveness and positive group distinctiveness, which provide a competitive advantage for the organization. Thus, employees who identify themselves with an organization adapt organizational features with themselves; react to organizational traits or issues more powerfully than others, in order to protect their social identity (Dutton et al. 1991, 1994).

Our findings show mutual interactions between PEP and organizational attitudes, such as organization identification and affective commitment, as well as effects of organization features, such as origin, on employee perceptions and attitudes. The results indicate that PEP has an effect on organizational identification and the affective commitment of employees and that positive work attitude enhance positive distinctiveness to an organization's perception. On the other hand, the effect of job satisfaction in our firms is controversial. For firm A and D,

job satisfaction has a significant effect on perceived prestige, organizational identification and commitment, whereas for others it has no effect. Thus, the impact of job satisfaction on these models must be revisited.

In addition, this study provides support for the argument that organizational identification and organizational commitment are related but distinct concepts. Our findings show that organizational identification and affective commitment are highly correlated ( $r=.69$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and that organizational identification provides affective commitment for all firms (firm A:  $\beta=.42$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ; firm B:  $\beta=.78$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ; firm C:  $\beta=.76$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ; and firm D:  $\beta=.41$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, employees identify with the organization, fostering emotional bonds between themselves and their organizations, in Turkish context similar as foreign examples (Van Kippenberg and Sleebos 2006; Mael and Tetrick 1992; Haslam et al. 2003, Van Dick and Wagner, 2002).

#### *Limitations and Directions for Future Research*

To validated the relationship that we were identified, have been need to be repeated in various different samples. This study was aimed at specific populations which are member of well-regarded and well reputed organizations members in related sector in Bursa thus this specialty of sample would affect the results. Therefore one should consider the effect upon industry and firms situation on society while interpreting the findings of this study. The study was limited by the use of a single PEP scale which was focus on general organizational activities and overall performance among dimensions thus more compressive and more prestige indicator focused scales would be inferred different results.

Several directions for future research can be suggested. It would be interesting and would be different when investigate relations with variables on disreputable firms or compare the results of well reputed and disrepute firm's results. Future studies will exa-

mine relations on other populations, different samples such as other level employees or managers. Also the relationship between variables would be extend with different settings and variables such as turnover intention, affinity of attachment among employees, rivals reputation effect or other working organization alternatives.

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