



THE EFFECTS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: AN INVESTIGATION ON TURKISH PORT STAFF

Gönül KAYA ÖZBAĞ¹, Osman ARSLAN¹

¹Kocaeli Üniversitesi Denizcilik Fakültesi

Corresponding author:

E-mail:gonul.kaya@kocaeli.edu.tr

Abstract

Several researchers have examined organizational commitment concept because it has varying positive consequences for the organization and employees. Therefore, the goal of this study is to examine if demographic characteristics of employees have a significant role in determining organizational commitment. Data gathered from 50 employees of the various ports in Kocaeli is analyzed by using t-test, Anova and Tukey test. The results revealed that marital status, educational level and job tenure have a significant effect on organizational commitment level of employees. On the other hand, the findings indicated that age and gender have no significant effect on organizational commitment level of employees.

Keywords: Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment, Demographic Characteristics

Özet

Örgütsel bağlılık kavramı birçok araştırmacı tarafından incelenmiştir çünkü örgüt ve çalışanlar üzerinde değişen olumlu sonuçları vardır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı, örgütsel bağlılığı belirlemede demografik faktörlerin rolü olup olmadığını incelemektir. Kocaeli'nin çeşitli limanlarında görev yapan 50 kişiden elde edilen veriler t-test, Anova ve Tukey testi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar, medeni durum, eğitim seviyesi ve iş kıdeminin çalışanların örgütsel bağlılık seviyeleri üzerinde önemli etkisi olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Diğer yandan, bulgular yaş ve cinsiyetin çalışanların örgütsel bağlılık seviyeleri üzerinde önemli etkisi olmadığına işaret etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygusal Bağlılık, Devam Bağlılığı, Normatif Bağlılık, Demografik Özellikler

INTRODUCTION

Over the past many years, organizational scholars have investigated organizational commitment (OC) concept because it plays a significant role in the relationship between the employee and the organization. Indeed, the idea that employees and their employer are involved in building an interdependent relationship, whereby one party's behavior influences the other is rooted in Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). According to the this influential theory, individuals who are emotionally attached to organization feel obligated to engage in beneficial behavior for the organization that is known as the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). Some of the beneficial outcomes of OC linked in the literature are increased job performance (Siders et al., 2001; Riketta, 2002; Chen & Francesco, 2003; Chen et al., 2006; Qaisar et al., 2012; Negin et al., 2013), employee job satisfaction (Porter et al., 1974; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Clugston, 2000; Harrison et al., 2006; Adekola, 2012; Shibeika, 2016), customer satisfaction and sales achievement (Allen & Meyer 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al. 2002; Gelade & Young, 2005; Güllüoğlu, 2011) creativity and innovation (Swales, 2000; Cekmecelioglu, 2006; Cekmecelioglu & Eren, 2007; Chang et. al., 2014) as well as decreased turnover and absenteeism (March & Mannari, 1977; Mowday et al., 1982; Porter et al., 1974; Mitchell et al., 2001; Chang et al., 2007; Bozeman & Perrewe, 2001; Wasti, 2003), burnout (Kalliath, 1998; Tan

& Akhtar, 1998; King & Sethi, 1997; Wright & Hobfoll, 2004), cynicism and bullying (Altınöz et al., 2011; Işık, 2015; Tepper, 2000; McCormack et. al., 2009).

Reviewing the literature reveals that OC has been considered as one of the best determinant for understanding the positive and/or negative behaviors of employees. Yet despite extensive investigation of the antecedents and consequences of commitment to an organisation, the concept is largely unexplored in maritime organisations. At present, it is common for shipping companies to deal with important concepts influencing employee behavior and attitude which includes satisfaction, motivation, engagement, commitment and loyalty since high turnover rate in maritime sector might lead to a loss for the industry in general and for the organization in particular (Bhattacharya, 2015). Therefore, shipping companies should examine the level of OC in order to maintain a steady supply of manpower and solve some management problems, such as low performance and high accident rate. Since the human resources are of great importance for the development and productiveness of port sector, they might be rated on how assertive and committed. In this regard, this study aimed to investigate OC of employees in ports using organisation commitment scale of Allen and Meyer (1996) as a measuring instrument.

1. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is an individual attitude may be defined as the psychological bond and attachment that employees develop with their organization (Meyer & Allen; 1991). It represents an individual's identification with the organization's goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Porter et.al., 1974). Meyer and Allen (1997; p. 3) stated that a "committed employee is one who will stay with the organization through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in a full day (and maybe more), protects company assets, and who shares company goals". They have extensively researched the concept and developed the three components of OC known as affective, continuance and normative commitment.

The authors define affective OC as the employee's involvement and emotional attachment to the organization because of their strong beliefs in the values and goals of the organization (p. 67). On the other hand, continuance commitment, refers to commitment that is based on the fact that the individual cannot afford to leave the organization. In other words, employees with a strong affective commitment stay with the organization willingly, whereas those with strong continuance commitment stay because they estimate the costs of discontinuing membership (Meyer et al., 1990; p. 710). Lastly, normative commitment reflects a sense of obligation to continue working for the organization. Scholars have examined the factors that influence OC and suggested that commitment may be linked to demographic and individual characteristics, job characteristics, leadership style and organizational characteristics (Steers, 1977; Colbert and Kwon, 2000; Kónya et al., 2016).

Hackman and Oldham (1976) argued that job characteristics including skill variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy and feedback increases the satisfaction of employees which further influence their commitment. Considerable amount of empirical studies provided evidence of strong correlations between dimensions of job characteristics and OC (e.g. Sneed & Herman, 1990; Flynn & Tannebaum, 1993). Besides, role stressors such as role ambiguity and role conflict have been found to have a negative impact on OC (Lambert et al., 2005; Anton 2009). Psychological empowerment that is defined more broadly as increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions reflecting an individuals orientation to his or her work role including meaning, competence, self-determination and impact (Spreitzer, 1995; p. 1443) is also reported to enhance employees' commitment (Henkin & Marchiori, 2003; Bhatnagar, 2007).

Perceived Organizational Support (PES) defined as the perception of being valued and cared about by the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990) have been found to encourage employees commitment to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990, 2001; Settoon et al., 1996; Randall et al., 2002; Rhoades et al., 2001). Moreover scholars investigated the correlation between various organizational structure dimensions such as centralization, formalization, standardization, size, complexity, the number of vertical hierarchy levels (Subramaniam & Mia, 2001; Subramaniam et al, 2002; Al-Qatawneh, 2014). Organizational climate is also a widely discussed topic in commitment literature and dimensions

including autonomy, reward, trust, fairness, communication, cohesiveness and collaboration (Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Benjamin, 2012; Fauziah et al., 2010; Jyoti, 2013) have been associated with OC. Finally, past studies have indicated that leadership styles have a strong impact on the level of organizational commitment of subordinates (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Chen, 2002; Lee, 2004; Dale & Fox, 2008; Hayward et al., 2004; Kent & Chelladurai, 2001).

Previous research has also shown that demographic and individual characteristics of employees have a significant role in determining OC. It has been determined OC has been related to demographic factors such as age (Greenberg, 1990; Rabindarang et al., 2014; Affum-Osei et al., 2015; Khan al., 2013), gender (Pala et al., 2008; Messner, 2017; Marsden et al., 1993), marital status (Dodd-McCue & Wright, 1996; 1999; Tsui et al., 1994; Tikare, 2015) tenure (Cohen, 1993; Nifadkar & Dongre, 2014) education level (Pala et al., 2008; Kónya et al., 2016). In line with the literature, this study examines the relationship between demographic factors and OC. Research on demographic factors and OC has been conducted in various organizational settings, such as manufacturing, health, education, construction, retail, security and hospitality sector. However, to the best of authors knowledge there is no research that have investigated the relationships between demographic factors and the three dimensions of OC in ports.

Current study specifically focused on the ports in Kocaeli because with 35 ports and an average of 75 million tons of cargo, Kocaeli is among the most important ports cities of Turkey. A lot of complex activities take place in the port terminal, like handling services for containers, general cargo, dry bulk and bulk liquids as well as transport and trans-shipment activities. Although human resources are the key asset for any organization to assure sustainable competitive advantage, staff's role and function is more prominent in ports and harbours. For instance, Darbra and Casal investigated a total of 471 accidents occurred in sea ports and found that accidents caused by human factors make a significant contribution (15,9%). In order to reduce the risk of accidents, a growing number of ports and terminals organise sophisticated training programmes but when these trained and qualified employees quit the employer have to bear the costs of recruiting and training a new employee. Responsible for millions of dollars in cargo going in and out, port managers have become more aware of the need to employ and retain well-qualified and committed staff. The higher level of commitment is vital to the success and survival of port organizations since it can decrease both the high accident rates the high costs associated with turnover.

1. METHODOLOGY

1.1 Measures

Organizational Commitment Scale is developed by Meyer and Allen's (1991) scale that has three sub-scales such as continuance, normative and affective commitment. All items were measured on a five point Likert-type scale where 1= strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree. The high scores obtained from the scale (1- highest 5- lowest,) indicate lower level of continuance, normative and affective commitment in each sub-scale. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) of the organizational commitment scale was found to be 0,87.

2.2. Sample and Data Collection

Participants in this study were employees of the various ports in Kocaeli, Turkey. A total of 50 questionnaires were collected via face to face interactions. A majority of the respondents (58, 0%) were male. As to the educational qualification, 58,0% had obtained a university degree, and (42,0%) held a associate degree. 46,0% of the participants were aged between (35 – 43) years and the majority of the participants (40,0%) with job experience between (6– 8) years .

2.3. Results

2.3.1 Factor Analysis

In order to perform factor analysis the sample adequacy were checked and examined. For this evaluation the Kaiser-MeyerOlkin (KMO) and the results of Bartlett tests are examined. In order to claim that correlations are significant the significance level of Bartlett's test values should be less than 0.05. As it can be seen in Table 1, KMO and Bartlett's tests results are distributed appropriately and is

highly suitable for factor analysis. Barlett's Test "Chi-Square" values confirm that factor analysis results are valid ($p=0,000<0.05$).

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,676
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	636,651
	Df	136
	Sig.	,000

In this study as the method of rotation, oblimin was preferred instead of Varimax which is frequently used in the literature. Because in social sciences mostly the factors are correlated, oblique rotation technique would be the best solution. As can be seen in Table 2, some items are appeared to be loaded on multiple factors but since the difference between them is not higher than 0,1 these items are not deleted.

Table 2: Rotated Loads Matrix (Extraction Method: Principle Components Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser)

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
I feel like 'part of the family' at my organization	,968		
I feel a 'strong' sense of belonging to my organization	,922		
I feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization.	,868		
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	,821		
I am very happy being a member of this organization.	,794		
I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own	,749		
Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all ethical to me.	,517		
My organization deserves my loyalty because of its treatment towards me	,397		
I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up		,899	
I feel that I have very few options to consider leaving this organization.		,799	
Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.		,727	
One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice—another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here.		,706	
It would be too costly for me to leave my organization now		,576	
I feel I would be letting my co-workers down if I wasn't a member of this organization.			-,879
If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization			-,689
I feel that I owe this organization quite a bit because of what it has done for me	,386		-,564
Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my organization now		,454	-,545

2.3.2 Gender and Organisational Commitment

Table 3 shows t test results of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of the employees compared to their gender. The results indicate that there is not a significant difference among the commitment levels of respondents compared to their gender.

Table 3: Commitment Levels of The Respondents Compared to Their Gender

Commitment Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p
Affective Commitment	Female	21	1,7931	,39505	-,492	,625
	Male	29	1,8492	,40106		
Continuance Commitment	Female	21	3,0747	,60518	-,399	,692
	Male	29	3,1429	,58282		
Normative Commitment	Female	21	2,2989	,59157	-1,126	,226
	Male	29	2,4603	,33294		

2.3.3 Marital Status and Organisational Commitment

Table 4 shows t test results of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of the employees compared to their marital status. According to the results, employees who are married show much more continuance commitment to their organisations compared to single employees ($p=0.032<0,05$).

Table 4: Commitment Levels of The Respondents Compared to Marital Status

Commitment Dimensions	Marital Status	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p
Affective Commitment	Married	27	1,8148	,42950	-,036	,972
	Single	23	1,8188	,35856		
Continuance Commitment	Married	27	2,9407	,51684	-2,205	,032
	Single	23	3,3043	,64911		
Normative Commitment	Married	27	2,3704	,48081	-1,520	,135
	Single	23	2,5839	,51131		

2.3.4 Educational Status and Organisational Commitment

Table 8 shows t test results of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of the employees compared to their educational status. As the education status of the employees who participated in the survey was collected in two groups as associate degree and bachelor 's degree, t test was applied instead of Anova. The results indicate that there is no significant difference in regards to affective and continuance commitment levels of the employees according to their educational level. However there is a significant difference in regards to normative commitment levels of the employees ($p=0,041<0,05$). When mean scores of the associate and bachelor degree of the respondents is examined and it is clear that the respondents who have a associate degree (2,29) show much more normative commitment to their organisations compared to employees with bachelor degree.

Table 5: Commitment Levels of The Respondents Compared to Education Levels

Commitment Dimensions	Education	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p
Affective Commitment	Associate Degree	21	1,8651	,41035	,735	,466
	Bachelor	29	1,7816	,38602		
Continuance Commitment	Associate Degree	21	2,9810	,75870	-1,179	,247
	Bachelor	29	3,2000	,45356		
Normative Commitment	Associate Degree	21	2,2993	,55495	-2,100	,041
	Bachelor	29	2,5911	,42810		

2.3.5 Age and Organisational Commitment

According to the results shown in Table 6, there is no significant correlation between age and affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of the employees.

Table 6: Commitment Levels of The Respondents Compared to Age

Commitment Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Affective Commitment	17-25	7	1,9762	,14996	1,318	0,280
	26-34	18	1,7222	,45374		
	35-43	23	1,8696	,36222		
	44 and up	2	1,5000	,70711		
Continuance Commitment	17-25	7	3,0571	,29921	,616	,608
	26-34	18	3,2000	,69621		
	35-43	23	3,0957	,61753		
	44 and up	2	2,6000	,00000		
Normative Commitment	17-25	7	2,4694	,36621	1,935	,137
	26-34	18	2,4286	,59206		
	35-43	23	2,5652	,40055		
	44 and up	2	1,7143	,80812		

2.3.5 Job Tenure and Organisational Commitment

According to the results in Table 7, there is no significant difference between continuance and normative commitment levels of the port employees in regard to job tenure while there exists a significant difference in relation to affective commitment ($p = 0.005 < 0.05$). As Tukey test results shown in table 8 indicates, employees who had 16 years and upper job tenure showed more affective commitment in comparison with those who had less job tenure.

Table 7: Commitment Levels of The Respondents Compared to Job Tenure

Commitment Dimensions	Seniority	N	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Affective Commitment	2 and less	7	1,9762	,14996	4,299	0,005
	3-5	10	1,8667	,31230		
	6-8	20	1,7250	,45006		
	9-15	10	2,0333	,23307		
	16 and up	3	1,1667	,28868		
Continuance Commitment	2 and less	7	3,0571	,29921	0,718	0,584
	3-5	10	3,3000	,32998		
	6-8	20	3,1700	,73205		
	9-15	10	2,9000	,68799		
	16 and up	3	2,8667	,64291		
Normative Commitment	2 and less	7	2,4694	,36621	0,455	0,768
	3-5	10	2,6143	,28611		
	6-8	20	2,4286	,60786		
	9-15	10	2,4857	,33129		
	16 and up	3	2,1905	1,07222		

Table 8: Tukey Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable			Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	Dependent Variable
Dimension1	Affective	1-2	3-5	,10952	,17255	,969
			6-8	,25119	,15377	,484
			9-15	-,05714	,17255	,997
			16and up	,80952*	,24162	,014
		3-5	1-2	-,10952	,17255	,969
			6-8	,14167	,13561	,833
			9-15	-,16667	,15659	,824
			16and up	,70000*	,23049	,031
		6-8	1-2	-,25119	,15377	,484
			3-5	-,14167	,13561	,833
			9-15	-,30833	,13561	,172
			16and up	,55833	,21678	,092
		9-15	1-2	,05714	,17255	,997
			3-5	,16667	,15659	,824
			6-8	,30833	,13561	,172
			16and up	,86667*	,23049	,004
		16 and up	1-2	-,80952*	,24162	,014
			3-5	-,70000*	,23049	,031
			6-8	-,55833	,21678	,092
			9-15	-,86667*	,23049	,004

2.3.5 Department and Organisational Commitment

According to the results in Table 9, there is no significant difference between the level of affective and normative commitment of the port employees in relation to department whereas there is a significant difference in the level of continuance commitment ($p = 0.036 < 0.05$). According to the Tukey test results shown in Table 10, the difference exists among Planning and Customer Service department who showed more continuance commitment.

Table 9: Commitment Levels of The Respondents Compared to Department

Commitment Dimensions	Department	N	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Affective Commitment	Operation	13	1,7692	,38813	,563	,802
	Technical	5	1,9000	,22361		
	Planning	8	1,8333	,53452		
	Pilotage	3	1,6667	,57735		
	Sales	5	1,9667	,24721		
	HR	3	1,9444	,09623		
	Finance	3	1,6667	,57735		
	Customer S	6	1,6389	,49907		
IT	4	2,0417	,08333			
Continuance Commitment	Operation	13	3,1692	,64728	2,343	,036
	Technical	5	3,3200	,36332		
	Planning	8	2,8500	,46291		
	Pilotage	3	3,2667	,23094		
	Sales	5	3,0400	,51769		
	HR	3	3,4000	,20000		
	Finance	3	2,8667	,23094		
	Customer S	6	2,5667	,87101		
IT	4	3,9000	,11547			
Normative Commitment	Operation	13	2,3626	,55823	,979	,466
	Technical	5	2,9143	,25951		
	Planning	8	2,5179	,28508		
	Pilotage	3	2,4762	,29738		
	Sales	5	2,4571	,25555		
	HR	3	2,4762	,59476		
	Finance	3	2,0476	,78680		
	Customer S	6	2,3333	,77547		
IT	4	2,6786	,35714			

Table 10: Tukey Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Customer Service	Operation	-,60256	,26983	,405
	Technical	-,75333	,33105	,380
	Planning	-,28333	,29525	,988
	Pilotage	-,70000	,38658	,675
	Sales	-,47333	,33105	,880
	HR	-,83333	,38658	,452
	Finance	-,30000	,38658	,997
	IT	-1,33333*	,35290	,013
IT	Operation	,73077	,31259	,344
	Technical	,58000	,36674	,809
	Planning	1,05000	,33479	,069
	Pilotage	,63333	,41755	,841
	Sales	,86000	,36674	,341
	HR	,50000	,41755	,953
	Finance	1,03333	,41755	,274
	Customer Service	1,33333*	,35290	,013

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between demographic factors of employees and organizational commitment. In consistent with Salami (2008) & Pourghaz (2011) studies the results of this research revealed that age and gender have no significant effect on organizational commitment level of employees. It is noteworthy that there are inconsistent results in relation to age and gender factor when the studies of commitment literature is examined. For instance, some authors (e.g. Affum-Osei et al., 2015; Kumasey, 2014) found male employees were more committed compared to females whereas the others found that women displayed higher levels of commitment than men (e.g. Angle and Perry, 1981; Mowday et al., 1982).

Furhermore, the findings indicated that employees who are married show much more continuance commitment to their organisations compared to single ones. Married people have more family responsibilities and need more stability and security in their jobs and, therefore, are likely to be more committed to their current organization than their unmarried counterparts. The Anova results of the study indicate that the respondents who have a associate degree show much more normative commitment to their organisations compared to employees with bachelor degree. The result was inconsistent with the finding of Amangala (2013) who suggests that highly educational qualification may lead to high commitment level. This may be due to the fact that employees with bachelor degree may have other opportunities of employment.

The results further suggested employees who had 16 years and upper job tenure showed more affective commitment in comparison with those who had less job tenure. However, there is no significant difference between continuance and normative commitment levels of the port employees in regard to job tenure. This finding of the current study is in support of Igbal's research (2011) that concludes the longer an employee stays with the organization and the older s/he become the feelings of responsibilities for outcomes relevant to him/her also increases. Meyer & Allen (1997), also suggest that as an individual's length of service with a particular organization increases, he or she may develop an emotional attachment with the organization that makes him/her difficult to change the job. Consequently, the overall findings of the study contribute to the literature by shedding a new light on how different demographic factors can improve different dimensions of organizational commitment.

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