

Examination of organizational commitment levels of physical education and sports teachers according to various variables (case study of Kutahya province)

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Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the organizational commitment of the physical education and sports teachers, working in the center of Kutahya Province of Turkey, on the basis of their socio-demographic characteristics. One-hundred-and-twenty-six (126) physical education and sports teachers voluntarily participated in the study. Turkish version of the Organizational Commitment Scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1991) was used in this study for data collection. In order to set significant differences ($\alpha=0.05$) in the scope of the study, non-parametric statistical tests of Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were conducted according to the results of normality test. In conclusion while affective commitment of the participants' was found to be the highest continuance commitment was found to be the least. Also significant differences emerged between participants' organizational commitment sub dimensions and their gender, age, marital status and professional experience.

Keywords: Organizational commitment, physical education and sports teachers, sports.

INTRODUCTION

Employees strongly attached to their organizations are assumed to commit themselves to common objectives. In fact, there is a common foresight that organizational commitment raises from a kind of emotional tie and that an employee develops the feelings of reliability, intimacy and loyalty to her/his organization in proportion with the support s/he feels given by her/his organization and, in turn, s/he becomes a good member of the organization that much (12).

In the light of literature review, it is though those personal traits of the employees of an organization may be related to their organizational commitment levels (35). In addition, personal traits can also be considered as an important factor in predicting organizational commitment. There are only a limited number of studies examining the relationship between the personal traits and organizational commitment of employees (20). This situation is of high importance particularly for examination of organizational commitment levels of the physical education and sports teachers who have an effective educational role and place in directing and managing sports.

Organizational Commitment: Organizational commitment is the power of individual's identification with and participation in the organization. Components of such kind of commitment are defined as having strong belief in and adoption of the objectives and values of the organization, willingness to put forth extra effort for the benefit of the organization and being eager and willing to continue organizational membership (37). In other words, organizational commitment is the strong belief of the employee in the organizational objectives and values, adoption of these objectives and values by the same, intense desire to exert extra effort for organizational objectives and strong wish to stay within and remain a member of the organization (31). Sense of organizational commitment is thought to positively affect organizational performance and, in this framework, it is suggested to decrease undesired results such as tardiness, absenteeism and quitting and to make positive contributions to the product and service quality (9). Employees committed to their organizations are believed to work more and make more self-sacrifice for the achievement of organizational objectives. Organizational commitment issue has been studied from many aspects and this concept has been addressed in the

three components of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (30). Present study also addressed organizational commitment in these three dimensions (13).

Affective Commitment: Affective commitment, also called attitudinal loyalty, is related to the emotional business life reactions and is connected to like doing your job and to the satisfaction from colleagues, the job and the profession (3). Affective commitment results from harmonization of the personal and organizational values attaching employees to the organization emotionally and making them happy for being a member of the organization. Employees are emotionally committed to their organizations when they feel the overlapping between their own values and those of the organization (41). According to Allen and Meyer (1), factors effective on affective commitment are the job challenge, role clarity, openness of the management to new opinions, difference in objectives, commitment to colleagues, ethics and justice, personal importance, feedback and participation (32). Affective commitment is thought by the researchers to be the most useful type of commitment in terms of organizations; because, the individual eagerly puts forth intimate effort in line with the goals and objectives of the organization and tries to protect the tangible and intangible assets of the organization from external factors (16).

Allen and Meyer (1) listed the factors effective on affective commitment as follows: 1- Job challenge: the job performed by the employee in the organization is hard and challenging, 2- Role clarity: The organization clearly defines expectations from the employee, 3- Goal clarity: Employees have a clear idea of the reasons behind their organizational duties and jobs, 4- Openness of management to new ideas: high level management is open to and values any idea from their inferiors, 5- Commitment to colleagues: Close and intimate relations between the organization members, 6-Equality and justice: Justice in the distribution of organizational duties and resources, 7- Personal importance: Promotion of the feelings that the job performed by the employee significantly contributes to the objectives of the organization, 8 -Participation: To ensure participation of the employee in any subject and decision related to the organization and the job, 9- Feedback: To give continuous feedback to the employee about her/his work performance.

Continuance Commitment: This is the type of commitment based on economic interest of the

employee. Continuance commitment is the “need” of the individual to stay within the organization considering her/his investments in the organization and the costs s/he may incur in case of leaving (5). In other words, continuance commitment is continuance of organizational membership by the individual, considering the high costs s/he will have to incur in case of leaving (23). Main factors effective on continuance commitment are low possibility of reemployment, not having the qualifications required by another job, health reasons, and family issues, near retirement and material losses (8),

Allen and Meyer (1) summarized the factors effective on continuance commitment as follows: 1) Transfer of capabilities: The state of personnel to transfer her/his capabilities and experiences to another organization, 2) Education: Whether the educational background of an employee is beneficial for another organization, 3) Self-investment: An important share of the effort and time of the employee is invested in the current organization, 4) Pension liability: Fear of the employee to lose various earned rights, primarily the pension liability, in case of leaving the organization, 5) Alternative business opportunities: The state of employee to find an equivalent or a better job in case of leaving the organization

Normative Commitment: Normative commitment refers to the feelings of obligation that a person has to remain loyal to her/his organization and be willing to work there. This feeling results from the pressure of the organization members and the organizational culture. Either the members of the organization or the employee her/himself make the latter believe that s/he needs to stay in the organization (36). In other words normative commitment results from employee’s feeling that s/he owes to the organization. Trainings received from or the good relations established within the organization make the employee feel owed and grateful to the organization, thus, s/he continues working in the organization (38).

Meyer and Allen (29) suggested that while all three components of organizational commitment reduce the intention to leave the job, they - result from different factors and affect job-related behaviors other than organizational behaviors, such as job performance, as well. While it is possible to conclude from detailed examination that affective commitment develops as a result of positive work experiences and contributes to job performance, continuance commitment develops as a result of

seniority and lack of alternatives and has little impact on job productivity.

Normative commitment is the least searched commitment component and has been found to be related to personal loyalty norms of employees. In addition, its possible results on workplace have not been clarified yet (40). These three commitment components have three common points: Accordingly, three commitment components (18);

- (i) Reflect the relationship of employees with their organizations,
- (ii) Reflect a psychological state forming basis of the decision to continue organization membership,
- (iii) Results in development of a tie between the individual and organization, which reduces the possibility of leaving the organization.

Employees who are committed to their organizations act bearing in mind that they are members of the organization, which increases employee's both qualitative and quantitative contributions to the organization. This is the main reason why the organizations find commitment that important (11).

The present study conducted in this parallel aimed to examine the organizational commitment levels of the physical education and sports teachers working in Kutahya Province, according to different variables.

MATERIAL & METHOD

Study Group: One-hundred-thirty-four (134) physical education and sports teachers working in Kutahya Province of Turkey in 2013-2014 education year voluntarily participated in the study and were administered a questionnaire. However, 8 out of 134 questionnaires were excluded from -thus, totally 126 questionnaires were included in- the scope of the study. Examination of the demographic characteristics of the sample group showed that study group was composed of 103 male and 23 female physical education and sports teachers. According to the educational background variable, while 94 teachers had license degree and 32 teachers had master's degree. According to the age variable, 20 participants were in 21-35 age range, 25 participants in 26-30 age range, 33 participants in 31-35 age range, 29 participants in 36-40 age range and 19 participants in 41 and above age range. Marital status variable showed that 27 teachers were single

and the remaining 99 teachers were married. Examination of the professional experience variable revealed that 31 participants had 1-5 years of professional experience, 38 participants 6-10 years of experience, 43 participants 11-15 years of experience and 14 participants 16 and more years of experience.

Data Collection Tool: Data collection tools used in the present study are the personal information form developed by the researchers to measure distribution of personal information of the participants and the organizational commitment scale which is developed and revised by Meyer and Allen (28,29) and tested for validity and reliability for Turkish population by Baysal and Paksoy (4). The scale aimed to measure organizational commitment in the three basic components of commitment, which is affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (4).

Aimed to detect the organizational commitment levels of the physical education and sports teachers, the present study used questionnaire technique for data collection. Questionnaires were distributed to the participants by hand and returned after filled in. A five-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree) was used. First 9 items of the questionnaire form were developed by the researcher to detect the personal traits of the physical education and sports teachers, following 18 items aimed at measuring organizational commitment levels of the participants. First 6 of these 18 items aimed at affective, second 6 items aimed at continuance and the last 6 items aimed at normative commitment. Affective commitment items addressed at the participant physical education and sports teachers were mainly related to such statements as the sense of belonging to the organization, getting along with colleagues and superiors and being proud of working (for the school). Continuance commitment items addressed at the participant teachers were mainly related to the perceived obligation to continue working for the organization. Normative commitment items were related to loyalty to the organization and the values adopted by and job-satisfaction (from the school) of the physical education and sports teachers.

Data Analysis: In the scope of the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire; firstly, reliability of the data collection tool for the study group was measured and, Cronbach's Alpha

internal consistency coefficient was calculated to be 0.721 for the whole scale. Secondly, single sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were made to reveal data distribution. In addition, histogram graphs were drawn using Skewness and Kurtosis values.

Analyses results produced negatively skewed distribution in the affective commitment, positively skewed distribution in the continuance commitment and vertical distribution in the normative commitment component. Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Walliss tests were made to detect significant differences between the organizational commitment levels of the study participants at the statistical significance $\alpha=0.05$.

RESULTS

Table 1. Organizational commitment levels of the participants.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Affective commitment	126			4.03	0.84
Continuance commitment	126	1.00	5.00	2.54	0.73
Normative commitment	126			3.00	0.66

According to analyses results, organizational commitment levels of the participants were

calculated to be in 4.03 ± 0.84 range for the affective commitment, to be in 2.54 ± 0.73 range for the continuance commitment and to be 3.00 ± 0.66 for the normative commitment components. Considering the highest and lowest possible scores to be obtained from components of the scale, the participants were observed to achieve the highest organizational commitment level in the affective commitment and the lowest organizational commitment level in the normative commitment component.

Mann Whitney U test conducted to detect the gender-based differences between the organizational commitment levels of the participants showed that gender-based organizational commitment differed significantly in favor of female participants in the affective commitment component ($p<0.05$; Table 2).

Kruskall Wallis test made to detect the age-based differences between the organization commitments of the study participants proved that age-based organizational commitment significantly differed in favor of the participants in 26-30 year age range in the affective commitment component and in favor of the participants in 21-25 year age range in the continuance and normative commitment components (Table 3).

Table 2. Organizational Commitment According to Gender Variable.

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Affective commitment	Male	103	60.07	6187.50	831.50	.025
	Female	23	78.85	1813.50		
Normative commitment	Male	103	63.15	6504.00	1148.00	.816
	Female	23	65.09	1497.00		
Continuance commitment	Male	103	63.14	6503.00	1147.00	.812
	Female	23	65.13	1498.00		

Table 3. Organizational commitment according to age variable.

		N	Mean Rank	df	Chi Square	P
Affective commitment	21-25	20	59.40	4	14.936	.005**
	26-30	25	85.64			
	31-35	33	64.30			
	36-40	29	47.93			
	41 and older	19	61.05			
Normative commitment	21-25	20	85.23	4	10.993	.027*
	26-30	25	67.20			
	31-35	33	53.20			
	36-40	29	57.28			
	41 and older	19	63.16			
Continuance commitment	21-25	20	87.80	4	19.165	.001**
	26-30	25	76.56			
	31-35	33	50.95			
	36-40	29	51.91			
	41 and older	19	60.21			

* $P<0.05$; ** $P<0.01$

Table 4. Organizational commitment according to marital status variable.

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Affective commitment	Single	27	61.91	1671.50	1293.50	.797
	Married	99	63.93	6329.50		
Normative commitment	Single	27	76.17	2056.50	994.50	.040*
	Married	99	60.05	5944.50		
Continuance commitment	Single	27	93.30	2519.00	532.00	.000**
	Married	99	55.37	5482.00		

* P<0.05; ** P<0.01

Table 5. Organizational commitment according to professional experience variable.

		N	Mean Rank	df	Chi Square	P
Affective commitment Normative commitment	1-5 years	31	63.19	3	5.43	.143
	6-10 years	38	72.58			
	11-15 years	43	54.17			
	16 or more years	14	68.18			
Continuance commitment Affective commitment	1-5 years	31	67.98	3	7.04	.071
	6-10 years	38	68.58			
	11-15 years	43	51.98			
	16 or more years	14	75.18			
Normative commitment	1-5 years	31	85.19	3	15.00	.002
	6-10 years	38	58.12			
	11-15 years	43	53.93			
	16 or more years	14	59.46			

Mann Whitney U test conducted to detect the marital status-based differences between the organizational commitments of the participants showed that marital status-based organizational commitment differed significantly in favor of single participants in the continuance and normative commitment components ($p < 0.05$; Table 4).

Kruskall Walliss test made to detect the professional experience-based differences between the organization commitments of the study participants revealed that professional experience-based organizational commitment significantly differed in favor of the participants with 1-5 years of professional experience in the normative commitment component ($p < 0.01$; Table 5).

DISCUSSION

Based on three-component organizational commitment model of Meyer and Allen, the present study compared the organizational commitment levels and demographic characteristics of the physical education and sports teachers working in the secondary and high schools located in Kutahya Province of Turkey.

In general, considering the highest and lowest possible organizational commitment scores to be obtained by the physical education and sports teachers from the components of the scale, the participants were observed to achieve the highest organizational commitment levels in the affective commitment and the lowest organizational commitment levels in the normative commitment component. A study conducted on teachers working in the state primary schools in Manisa Province of Turkey produced results parallel to the present study (39).

Reasons behind higher affective commitment levels can be listed as (i) teachers integrate themselves with their organization, (ii) they internalize the works they perform, (iii) they work devotedly in line with the objectives of their organization and (iv) they feel responsible for the problems arising in the organization and try to solve them (39). Lower normative commitment levels may have resulted from the following:

- (i) Teachers think that their organization is not beneficial for them as much as it should be,

- (ii) They believe that they will not feel guilty if they leave the organization and
- (iii) They do not feel responsible for their colleagues (39).

Present study produced a significant gender-based difference in favor of women in the affective commitment component; because, as concluded by the researchers, female participants approached the item statements more positively than the male participants. Review of the international literature showed that females achieve higher levels of organizational commitment than males (19,25,26,33). This finding is parallel to the findings of the present study. However, some other studies found significant differences in favor of males. In the study conducted by Yalcin et al. (42) on physical education teachers and the study by Kirel (24) on supermarket employees concluded that male participants had higher arithmetic means of organizational commitment than their female colleagues. The reasons why these studies showed higher organizational commitment among female employees are the cultural differences, values, bureaucratic structure and legal regulations which are applicable in different countries of the rapidly changing and transforming world, where females are actively participating in the workforce. It is promising that females work at different management levels and achieve high organizational commitment in Turkey. Reflection of this finding to the field of physical education and sports teaching, which is a difficult profession to perform, is particularly pleasing and proud.

Results of the present study showed that age-based organizational commitment significantly differed in favor of the participants in 26-30 year age range in the affective commitment component and in favor of the participants in 21-25 year age range in the continuance and normative commitment components. This result can be explained with the direct proportion between professional experience and affective commitment: the latter increases in proportion with the increase in the former. In a similar study conducted on a sample group of primary school teachers to detect their organizational commitment levels, examination of organizational commitment levels of the participants on the basis of age variable showed that organizational commitment scores relatively increased in parallel with the age (22).

Affective commitment can be regarded as the most preferred type of organizational commitment

(10, 16). In parallel with this argument, Brown (7) suggested that affective commitment is given primary importance in the organizations as the commitment type which should be preferred most by the employees. In addition, employees with high affective commitment are expected to show more efficient work performance and make higher contributions to the realization of organizational objectives than those with high continuance and normative commitments (8, 17, 18, 23). In this scope, higher affective commitment perception levels (of the instructors) compared to the normative and continuance commitment perception levels can be interpreted as a positive finding.

A related study on the affective commitment levels of the physical education and sports teachers, working in Afyon Province of Turkey, produced no significant difference on the basis of personal variables (14).

The present study showed that marital status-based organizational commitment differed significantly in favor of single participants in the continuance and normative commitment components. This finding of the present study conflicts with many literature studies. Most of the studies made in Turkey suggest that married employees develop higher levels of organizational commitment than the single employees (6, 15). Some other studies have found no significant relationship between organizational commitment and marital status (2, 21). The difference of the present study from previous studies is that physical education and sports teaching profession is an application-oriented profession in addition to requiring theoretical knowledge. It is thought that the time spared by the married teachers for their home and children is spared by the single teachers for the in- and out-of-school physical education and sports activities.

Organizational commitment levels of the participants based on professional experience variable were found to significantly differed in favor of the participants with 1-5 years of professional experience in the normative commitment component ($p < 0.01$). This finding shows that physical education and sports teachers who have recently started teaching feel higher responsibility for their organizations. Marital status (due to the above-mentioned reason) and willingness in the first years of profession can be effective on this result as well.

Concept of organizational commitment attracts high attention from both academicians and

implementers today; however, it is observed not to have been clearly defined yet and to lead to incomprehensibility from various aspects. Organizational commitment refers briefly to the loyalty attitude of the employee towards her/his organization and the interest shown by the same for the success of the organization (9). Studies to be conducted on different fields such as physical education and sports are of great importance for development and generalization of sports.

In this respect, it can be suggested that researchers should make studies on the reflections of organizational commitment on teaching process of the physical education and sports teachers by enlarging study universe and sampling (other provinces of Turkey, regional differences, private schools, secondary education institutions, universities, public and private school difference, etc.) in the scope of increasing organizational commitment of the physical education and sports teachers.

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