

REFLECTIONS OF CONFORMITY LEVEL IN PRESS ENTERPRISES

Ahsen ARMAĞAN*

Basın İşletmelerinde Uyma Düzeyinin Saptanması

Son yıllarda özellikle sosyal psikolojik nitelikli, bilimsel araştırmalarda popüler olan iki kuram, organizasyonların yeniden yapılanmasında önemli rol oynamaktadır. Bunlardan ilk koşulsallık yaklaşımıdır. Konjonktürel değişime koşul olarak organizasyonların fiziksel yapılanmasında ve iç dinamiklerin kurumsallaşmasında bize önemli veriler sunmaktadır, diğeri ise İzlenim Yönetimi Kuramıdır. Özellikle bu kuram 1985 yılından günümüze kadarki süreçte bireylerin iç ve dış çevresel etkileşim örüntüsüne anlam bilimsel düzeyde yaklaşmıştır. Bu konuda araştırma verileri henüz çok azdır.

Kendine sunum olarak ta belirtebileceğimiz, izlenim yönetimi kuramı, bireylerin çeşitli taktik ve teknikler kullanmak yolu ile, etkileşimde bulunduğu diğer bireylerin algılarını yönetim ve kontrol altına alma süreci olarak tanımlanmakla özellikle bu

*Yard. Doç. Dr., Ege Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Gazetecilik Bölümü

kuramdan hareketle bir örgüt içinde performansta ilerleme, çatışma çözme, prososyal davranışları pekiştirme, kariyerde ilerleme ve uyma düzlemi yaratma gibi yaşamsal olarak örgütün harcını oluşturan olguları belirlemek ve etkileşimsel ortamı zenginleştirmek olanaklı hale getirilmektedir.

Sosyal çalışmada izlenim yönetim kuramı, temel alınarak konformite (uyma) olgusu analiz edilmekte, ayrıca basın işletmelerinin konformiteye bakış açıları irdelenerek, düşük ve yüksek konformite davranışlarının avantaj ve dezavantajları değerlendirildikten sonra uygun düzeydeki konformitenin kurumsallaşması üzerinde durulmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: İzlenim Yönetimi, Konformite (Uyma), Basın İşletmesi ve Konformite

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Introduction

Two theories, which are especially popular in scientific research in recent years, played important role in the modification of organizations. The first of these, the contingency theory, has presented us important data in the physical and operational construction of the organizations. The later is the impression management theory, which has approached to people's internal and external relations at cognitive level in the period of process since 1985 up till now. Research data in this field is still very little.

Impression Management Theory, sometimes called as self presentation, is the process which people attempt to manage or control the perceptions of others from them (Luthans, 1992 : 76-

80). With the help of this theory, organizational behaviour got richer through examining and investigating performance, operation, pro-socialism, professional promotion and expectation for reward and conformity.

Taking Impression Management Theory as basis in the current study, the subject of conformity has been focussed and view points to conformity in press enterprises have been analysed. In addition to this, advantages and disadvantages of low and high Conformity behavior were evaluated and focus was given on institutionalisation of conformity at a proper level.

What Is Conformity and What Is Its Reflection in Press Enterprises

It teaches individuals in the socialisation period uniqueness and they can put forward their personalities and act at home and work places according to their own values. When social interaction is in question, however, individuals exhibit different behavioural patterns than the ones they have been taught (Giacalone, rosenfelt, 1992:219-277)

Conformity is the process in which individuals imitate their own behaviours to those of others. Most people discovered that they received more ascent and affection in crowded and general environments if they resemble their behaviours to those of others and in this way affected people and thus obtained good rewards, instead of behaving differently and so feeling frustrated, lonely, anxious and isolated (Freedman, Sears, Carlsmith, 1978 pp: 422-462).

The same are valid for business environment. Especially at present, managers and employees who have relations with internal and external environments organize their relations and thus can obtain more spiritual and material awards (Luthans, 1992: 76).

A press enterprise is dependant on internal and external human resources in order that it can carry on its existence and produce services. Human resources constitute most of the inputs of the enterprise, such as government officials, sources of power, civil organizations, and public opinion. In reaching these sources, getting into contact with these sources, and in doing production for them, self presentations and conformity acts of managers and employees are of great importance. Again in business environment, for realization of the planned aims, doing production, and for achieving performance and productivity, reciprocal perceptions of both managers and employees, direction and obedience provide gains for both sides.

Through organizational culture and philosophy in a press enterprise and through their means myths, rituals, jargons and symbols, the managers and employees could be taught (by social pressure) to what extent they would act as conformists (Giacalone, 1989: 52-55). This is just like a uniform of roles cut out for an individual. For example, it is like a manager put on and takes of many uniforms of role in order to fulfil his roles (Luthans, 1991: 76-78). Employees also put on and take of uniforms of roles given to them by their managers. Employees themselves want to don these roles and try to play them well. At the end of every role

played, there is an expectation of reward. (nick names such as hard working manager, reformist manager or popular journalist, and manhandling journalist or material awards are in question).

Scientific research conducted on social effect and conformity (Sherif, 1936; Ash, 1956; Levin, 1971; While, 1972; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1984: pp:51-80) determined two types of conformity behaviour in individuals. They describe the first kind of conformity in which individuals conform both outwardly and inwardly as informational conformity, and the second kind, in which individuals conform only outwardly as normative conformity (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955: 626-636).

Research conducted in recent years on the subject of presentation (Leary&Kowalski, 1990: 34:38) found that inward values and objective ones are sincere presentation, individual's inward conflict and subjective ones are insincere presentation.

From the interaction between conformity and self presentation, the following matrix has been reached (Leary &Kowalski, 1990: pp.36). As can be seen from the matrix, the findings obtained are valid as perse for a press enterprise:

	Low Conformity	High Conformity
Sincere Individual intentions and social outcasts	Team Player	Different Drummer
Insincere	Yes-man	Hot Dog

A system of press enterprise or the rules themselves valid in the system are not important for teams players but being in a group in that enterprise is more important. The success or the failure of that particular group is perceived as the success or failure of that individual in the group. However, the situation is not the same for different drummers. These individuals show intimate, non-conforming behaviour in the group. Despite this, the success of the press enterprise and its aims are important for them. For this reason, they create environment for critics at most of the meetings and in the process of decision making, and they play the role of devil's advocate. Yes-men, on the other hand, are the ones that follow around in the hope of obtaining individual interests. Since they aim professional promotion and being popular, they show insincere adaptation by saying yes to everything. Hot dogs, on the other hand, are in pursuit of producing policy or political solutions so refuse to adapt the system and relations insincerely and they form a group that tries to display a single and strong image. On the other hand, social outcasts are considered to be out of these groups and are intellectual and seen as people who do not involve themselves in the system because they think that their own values conflict with those of a press enterprise. These people are in minority.

What Is Low and High Level Conformity How Can Optimum Level of Conformity be Realized in Press Enterprises

Low and high conformity levels have both positive and negative aspects.

Advantages of low conformity are seen especially in determining strategy, creating organizational change, making decisions and problem solving. In other words, in a low level conformist environment, individuals are more inclined to develop different ideas (Mitchell, 1987: 92-98), create solutions and innovations. Despite this, in a low level conformist atmosphere, since spirit of group and group unity can not be reached easily, general dissatisfaction of job, immorality, tiredness, absenteeism and indirect lack of productivity and loss of performance are observed in this kind of organizations.

High level conformist atmosphere (Peters & Waterman, 1992: 26) can contribute positively to the satisfaction between individuals through spirit of group, group unity and intimate communication, but since people would lose their difference as a result of appropriation of common rules and norms, the ratio of making mistakes in the decisions made would be high. Decisions are made by very casual unanimity. As a result, since the syndrome of thinking as a group would spoil the quality of decision making, it would be difficult to reach the desired aim.

For this reason, a press enterprise is in the position of determining an optimum level of conformity taking into consideration the aspects of human resources, internal and external factors and its own targets (Martinko, 1991: 259-65). Optimum conformity level shows difference for every press enterprise. In general, optimum level of conformity can be obtained by adjusting the advantages of low conformity with those of high conformity. By a plain explanation, a press

enterprise is in the state of forming this balance taking into consideration to what extent it is open to creativity, risk, defeat, and change; to what degree it would conserve its status and continue its structure.

Lawrence&Lorch, Burns & Stalker, who conducted research of the structures and behaviours of organizations, found that conformity levels show difference according to the structure of organisation being mechanical (traditional) and organic (modern) (Galbright, 1993: pp. 87-92).

Research findings suggest that mechanical organizations, due to functional freedom, are the ones that give importance to group unification, avoid conflicts and thus prefer inclinations for high level of conformism to reach the maximisation of efficiency (Galbraith, 1993:pp.88). However, scientific findings also determined that mechanical organizations prefer low level of conformist tendencies in order to meet the differing internal and external needs of the environment (Yenersoy, 1997: pp.5-57) and they do this by realising more innovations, creativity, kaizen (jump in quality) and change. For this reason, it is necessary for organizations that they achieve optimum balance of conformity in the organization in order that they maintain their existence. In short, low conformist inclinations in mechanical organizations and high conformist inclinations in organic organizations are seen equivalent for coming to their end (Janis, 1972, Luthans, 1991: 72)

How Can Press Enterprises Institutionalize Conformity

Taking into consideration the aspect of press enterprise as being organic or mechanical, it is necessary to take the matter at both individual and institutional level in order to be able to place the conformity to the desired level.

At the first step, while recruiting personnel for the institution, it is looked at whether the qualifications of applicants are suitable to the philosophy of the institution. Election exams, in service training, plans for promotion in career must be adjusted according to the desired level of conformity (Sathe, 1983:pp.5-23).

For example, organic press enterprises should head towards personnel with aspects of more team player and yes man type, while organic press enterprises should head for personnel with aspects of different drummer and hog dog type (Ralslon, Priscilla, 1991: 253).

In establishing the desired level of conformity, organisational culture, strategies and their applications play an important role. For example, in press enterprises with mechanical aspects, ways of achieving high level of conformity can be listed as follows: increasing standardization, making the roles and status clear, bringing the communication channels into more line (vertical) position, applying more autocratic methods in the process of decision making, discouraging risk-taking, demanding for obedience to detailed procedures, rewarding, making the promotion in career more practical. These methods can be established through official and non-official corporate culture, and social pressure.

Conversely, in organic press enterprises, it takes more time for a low level conformity to be established. It is possible to establish an corporate culture that bears aspects such as methods and techniques of conflict, discussion and criticism, self management, self control, making it common to take responsibility, using line and line-and-staff communication channels, establishing methods and techniques of group working, and imaginative delegation (Raslon, Priscilla, 1991: pp.253).

Another aspect to be taken into consideration at the stage of institutionalising conformity is that sincere conformity should be encouraged in a press establishment environment as much as possible (Bandura, 1977, 358-72). Since rewarding political behaviours most of the time (for example, promoting an employee for his obedience to the manager) will create positive effects on other employees, in sincere conformity becomes widespread. Conversely, when objective criteria are taken as basis, tendencies of sincere conformity will increase among employees (Bandura, 1977).

Conclusion

One of the factor press enterprises should pay attention to in fulfilling their functions and being dominant in the environment is that they should establish appropriate conformity by taking into consideration internal and external variables.

High or low conformity behaviour that involves sincere and insincere elements would result in the survival or diminishing of that press enterprise.

For this reason, in the current study, focus was given on how press organizations could form the balance of conformity and how they could institutionalise conformity. Analysis were conducted within the framework of Impression Management Theory.

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