



## Organizational Prisonization as a New Conception

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### ABSTRACT

**Objectives:** This study aims to introduce the concept of "organizational prisonization" experienced by employees, and their reactions as "assimilation to" or "separation from" the organization; to introduce the measurement scales for all these variables developed; and also to test whether organizational prisonization predicts these reactions.

**Methods:** Preliminary studies with an emic approach following content analysis for the exploration of the variables, and for the development of scales; and an empirical study including factor and reliability analyses for the scales and regression analyses to test the prediction relation, were conducted.

**Results:** It was revealed that organizational prisonization significantly predicts the reactions of "assimilation to organization" in a negative way and of "separation from the organization" in a positive way.

**Originality:** The study claims that the prisonization concept which is so real and factual for the employees in today's organizations as well, and have a potential to be investigated for future researches in the field of organizational behavior.

## Yeni Bir Kavrayış Olarak Örgütte Mahkumlaşma

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### MAKALE BİLGİSİ

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### ÖZ

**Amaç:** Bu çalışma çalışanların deneyimlediği "örgütte mahkumlaşma" kavramını ve bu duruma tepki olarak ortaya konan "örgüte asimilasyon" ve "örgütten ayrışma" değişkenlerini tanıtmayı; örgütte mahkumlaşmanın bu tepkileri yordayıp yordamadığını test etmeyi; ayrıca bu değişkenlerin ölçümü için geliştirilen ölçeklerin tanıtılmasını amaçlamaktadır.

**Tasarım/Yöntem:** Değişkenlerin keşfi ve ölçek ifadelerinin geliştirilmesi için, sonuçları içerik analizi ile yorumlanan emic yaklaşım temelli ön çalışmalar ile; ölçekler için faktör ve güvenilirlik analizleri ve yordama ilişkisinin testi için regresyon analizlerini içeren ampirik bir çalışma yapılmıştır.

**Sonuçlar:** Bu çalışma örgütte mahkumlaşmanın çalışanın örgüte asimilasyonunu olumsuz yönde ve örgütten ayrışma tepkilerini olumlu yönde anlamlı şekilde yordadığını göstermektedir.

**Özgün Değer:** Bu çalışma ile "mahkumlaşma" kavramının günümüz örgüt çalışanları için de oldukça gerçek bir durum olduğu ve kavramın örgütsel davranış alanındaki gelecek çalışmalar için bir potansiyel taşıdığı düşünülmektedir.

## **1. Introduction**

Many of the studies on organizational behavior which have focused on individual-oriented problems including motivation aim increasing employee productivity. Some of these researches revealed that especially in the organizations where the production process is carried out within inflexible working hours and through strict practices, blue-collar employees exhibit better performances under traditional managements, where control and surveillance are intensely employed, and through extrinsic rewards (such as premiums, salaries etc.), and that therefore, they are much more motivated than white-collars, who involve in production process using their cognitive abilities (Cameron, Banko, & Pierce, 2001). On the other hand, it has been recognized that white-collars are motivated through intrinsic motivators such as being conferred upon autonomy and right to take initiatives rather than extrinsic rewards (Azoulay, Graff Zivin, & Manso, 2011; Baumeister, 1984).

Today, many corporate organizations, based upon the facts mentioned above, have attempts towards satisfying employees' autonomy-oriented psychological needs. Especially at organizations where creativity and intellectual outputs have the greatest importance, the working conditions of the employees are configured in liberal and flexible manners, completely aiming for employee needs, and free of strict practices as much as possible.

Considering the facts mentioned above, the working conditions of academicians working in universities, where the most of scientific and cognitive outputs are encountered, are expected to be more open to improvements, and be flexible and liberal, on the basis of the same idea. However, the management policies of the foundation-owned universities, increasing in number especially in the last two decades, employed to survive in an institutional manner in an economic competition environment, may be disappointing in terms of such expectations. In support of this, it is considered that in a structure where the organization determines the working conditions strictly, constantly controls and surveils its employees, and avoids involving the employees in decision-making processes and granting them with the right to take initiatives, the cognitive abilities may not be benefited in developing new and original ideas, therefore, the scientific production may not move forward out of a restricted frame.

Based on these, such conversion of the employee within the organization would be associated with the employee's feeling of suppression and imprisonment in the organization he/she works for. This research aims to explain this concept, which may also be defined as confinement or prisonization in an organization, based on criminological researches that make reference to convicted individuals, whose physical freedom are actually restricted. In the first place, individuals' feeling of suppression and imprisonment emerges as a consequence of both their denial from leaving a confined physical zone, and a cognitive-level perception originating from not being able to do things they want to do about their jobs.

Therefore, within this research, the emphasis is on the organizational prisonization of employees, as a new understanding, and the employee reactions that may arise as consequences of organizational prisonization are presented.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Prisonization*

According to criminological researches, the "prisonization" resulting from the imprisonment of individuals who have been convicted due to violating laws, is defined as "inmate acquiring or adapting to the traditions, customs and general culture of the penitentiary to a greater or lesser degree" by Clemmer (1940, p. 270). Clemmer (1940) describes various universal factors that have effect on prisonization through the examples, where the inmate adopts his/her inferior role; learns to adapt to the structure and practices of the prison; becomes passive in satisfying his/her own needs, and assigns his/her responsibility for self-care to prison authority, automatically. By the end of the 1950s, Sykes (1958), extending the concept of prisonization based on Clemmer's study, suggests that there are five different kinds of deprivation, later to be called Deprivation Model, caused by imprisonment of the inmates, consisting of

deprivation of liberty, deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of heterosexual relations, deprivation of autonomy, and deprivation of security.

It is expressed that all these deprivations directly attack to the individual's individuality by isolating him/her from both the law-abiding society and the identity he/she created before his/her conviction (Sykes, 1958). He suggesting that such isolation would create a change in the perception of one's own character and self-worth, argues that the psychological effect that such an isolation has on the convicted would be more evident than the physical pain caused by punishment. Accordingly, Sykes (1958) suggests that an inmate would react to this process in two ways, being 'alienative' or 'cohesive'. He states that the alienative ones exhibit opposition and infidelity in their relations with other inmates, and that they aim only to eliminate their own deprivation and favour their own interests. He points out that these characters consist of aggressive and "threatening ball-busters" or "rats" within the prison. On the other hand, Sykes (1958) notes that the cohesive inmates are in an effort to relieve the pain of imprisonment by taking advantage of group solidarity by uniting within their own social groups. He also states that such type of inmates is also referred to as having more protection and support in the prison, compared to alienative ones, even such protection or support is an unstable structure.

Johnson (1961) similarly concluded that the inmates share common feelings of isolation from the society, guilt and deprivation, however, when they act individually to provide advantages for themselves rather than harmonizing with the other inmates in prison - such as refusing to act against prison officers or providing information for prison officers - they are called "rats". Since such type of inmates could not adapt to the subcultures the other inmates form, they adapt to prison itself and its rules.

In brief, the inmates with a survival instinct would either be involved in subgroups formed by other inmates to protect themselves in prison, and oppose to the practices of the prison as a cohesive response, or would assume the role of "rat" independently of such subgroups, and by submission to the practices of the prison, assimilate to the prison, only for protecting their own interests. As a matter of fact, this situation, called "prisonization", in support of Clemmer's definition, occurs due to assimilation of the inmates to the prison culture, to greater or lesser degree (Sykes & Messinger, 1960; Thomas & Petersen, 1977; Tittle, 1972). In other words, prisonization is a situational reaction to the deprivations arising from imprisonment (Smith & Hepburn, 1979).

## 2.2 Organizational Prisonization

Michel Foucault, a French philosopher and sociologist, states that employees, who have been separated from the social environment for a long time through isolation from the outside world are confined in their organizations (Giddens, 2000). In the Organization Theory, Foucault explains that the physical structure of an organization is primarily based on hierarchical order, favouring the superior-subordinate relationships, and is thus designed to facilitate the surveillance of employees. He states that in a similar manner surveillance is also important in prisons, and there is a structure aiming to keep the actions of the inmates under control. Prisons in contemporary society are inspired by the main principles of the 'Panopticon' prisons, proposed by Jeremy Bentham, one of the social philosophers of the 19th century, for the British Government (Giddens, 2000). Panopticons consist of a watchtower in the centre, and a chamber of cells at the outer borders. The cells have two windows, one facing the watchtower, and the other facing outside, and by this way the tower could watch each cell and maintains the control. Although the guards at the central watchtower are in the sight of the prisoners, the sight of prisoners is blocked by blinds.

Highlighted by Foucault, surveillance in Panopticon prisons plays an important role in almost every organization in contemporary societies. As the technology has made accumulated information and communication more available in an electronic environment, surveillance and control have gained much more importance. Lyon (1994) argues that in today's organizations, all kinds of information about individuals may easily be accessed by organizations and that we live in a kind of 'surveillance society'. In that mentioned surveillance society, every organization may turn into a kind of panopticon, using all the means of modern technology for the surveillance of and control over its employees. Security cabins, baffle gates and even fingerprint-based entry-exit systems to ensure that the employees' entry and

exit into the organization are recorded through staff cards by the minutes, that the employee's 'escape' from the physical environment is impossible, and thus, the control of the insiders and the isolation of them from the outside world; that the organization can be monitored through the surveillance cameras installed at every corner, creates a post-modern panopticon without ever need a single central watchtower.

Therefore, on the basis of the prisonization of the people convicted in prisons, employees losing their autonomy, restriction and factors that prevent professional development, and the loss of motivation those factors cause, the negative results in individual and organizational levels, and employees continuing to work in their organizations mostly due to underemployment and economic difficulties, lead to the consideration that employees may also experience prisonization in their organizations.

At this point, on the basis of the employee's feeling on confinement in the organization; organizational prisonization can be defined as the feeling of despair of an employee who uses cognitive skills, against restriction of liberty and autonomy, and not being able develop himself/herself professionally due to his or her economic obligations.

The prisonization starting with the imprisonment of an individual, is criminologically defined as assimilation of the convicted to the prison culture to a greater or lesser degree. However, unlike this definition, it is considered that the prisonization of the employee does not start immediately upon being admitted but develops over time as the number of experiences and deprivation within the organization, increase. No doubt that no individual would enter an organization, which he or she is admitted through a legal and psychological agreement, but would only be prisonized due to deprivation experiences. From this point of view, the concepts of assimilation and separation described in the criminological prisonization are considered to be the reactions that can occur as a result of the prisonization of the employee.

### *2. 3. Reactions of Organizational Prisonization: "Assimilation" and "Separation"*

On the basis of the definition of prisonization as a response to imprisonment (Smith & Hepburn, 1979), it can also be expressed that assimilation mentioned in organizational prisonization context has emerged as a situational reaction to deprivations related to organizational practices. At this point, the examination and definition of assimilation in a conceptual way gain importance in the name of understanding this given situational reaction.

The concept of adaptation, which is frequently encountered in the intercultural psychology literature, explains the relationship between culture and human behavior and the ways in which individuals react to cultural influences and expectations (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). The studies in this field analyze how individuals shape their behavior when they enter a new culture different from their own cultural environment, and this adaptation process is basically called "*acculturation*". Berry (1997) defines acculturation as the cultural change experienced by individuals who transition from their own cultural environment to a different one, and defines the psychological changes experienced by individuals as *psychological acculturation* and *adaptation*.

In the first half of the 1900s, the definition of the concept of acculturation reflects changes in the original culture patterns of two groups mutually, in the cases of direct contacts of groups of individuals from different cultures (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p.149). The classical definition of acculturation in which mutual change is emphasized, although in principle it is neutral, in practice, points out that one group will change more than the other (Berry, 1997). Berry (1997) suggested that acculturation attitudes can be categorized under four alternative strategies. Accordingly, that the minority group does not want to maintain the elements of their own cultural identities and wants to interact with the main culture, defines the strategy of *assimilation*. On the other hand, it is defined as a *separation* strategy, in which the minority group wants to maintain its own values by embracing the original cultural identity and rejects the interaction with the dominant culture it has entered. The efforts of the minority group member to maintain both their own cultural identity and to interact with the dominant culture will reveal the *integration* strategy as a result of the merge of the two different cultures. The integration strategy seems to be the most positive and constructive among other acculturation attitudes. However, in the cases the dominant

culture is inclusive and open, and the integration is freely chosen by the minority group, a cultural diversity based on the living of people of cultural differences with equal rights can be mentioned. If the minority individual, who is forcibly retained from his/her cultural heritage, is isolated and discriminated by the dominant culture, then the individual will want neither to maintain his/her cultural identity nor to interact with the dominant group culture, which is considered as a strategy of *marginalization*.

The individual's reaction to the prisonization process was previously described by Sykes (1958) on two alternatives, being alienative and cohesive. This response to survival is shaped by the degree to which the inmate is assimilated to prison. The alienative inmates try to protect their own interest by obeying the rules and practices of the prison, while the cohesive ones are separated from the prison by creating their own subgroups and are assimilated to the cultures of those subgroups. At this point, it can be said that the adaptation strategies occurring due to prisonization are based on the *assimilation* of alienative inmates to the prison, and the *separation* of the cohesive ones from the prison.

The alienative reactions of prisoners using the assimilation strategy refer to separation from the other groups of inmates, and assimilation to the prison. On the other hand, the prisoners with cohesive reactions are separated from the organizational structure by adapting to their subcultures. Sykes (1958) states that although both of the prisoners' responses are obligatory to survive in the prison environment, they may harm the inmates. As a matter of fact, both groups are separated from each other while being assimilated to one side. While losing the advantages, the institutional culture or the prisoner subculture of the groups they are separating from, they have to accept the rules and norms of the group they are assimilated, to survive.

In that case, it can be argued that the employees who have been prisonized in the organization, are *assimilated* by adapting to the organizational culture, practices and policies while by adapting to the rules and norms of the subgroups created or been joined in by themselves, are *separated*. In preliminary studies with an emic approach conducted for this research, participant employees who have been prisonized in their organizations have expressed their reaction to the situation they are in and their alternative mobility actions as 'conceding' and 'helplessness' in a passive way, or as 'individual and/or collective action' in an active way. So, these responses of the participants in terms of their alternative actions for prisonization may be a preliminary support for these hypotheses.

*Hypothesis1: Organizational prisonization level of employees predicts the level of assimilation to organization.*

*Hypothesis2: Organizational prisonization level of employees predicts the level of separation from organization.*

### **3. Methodology**

The variables, organizational prisonization, assimilation to organization and separation from organization, were adapted from criminological researches about "prisonization" of imprisoned people in penitentiary. Both for the exploration of the variables, and the development of measurement scales, theoretical models explaining inmate prisonization in criminological studies, and the data obtained from preliminary studies with an emic approach including four different versions were used.

Following the preliminary studies, an empirical research was conducted to test the factor structures and reliability of the scales and to see whether 'assimilation to organization' and 'separation from organization' are really the reactions of employees counter to organizational prisonization.

#### **3.1. Preliminary Studies**

Four different studies which were carried out on 66 people were conducted in order to discover the counterpart of the concept of prisonization for the employees' experiences in the organizational setting. Participants composed of 49 females and 17 males between the ages of 22 and 64, were selected by snowball sampling among academicians working at foundation and state owned universities in Turkey.

In two of these studies, it was aimed that, without mentioning the concept of prisonization, only the associations attributed by the participants were obtained, while in the other two, the responses on prisonization, received by mentioning imprisonment/confinement, were evaluated. In both couple of studies, which are associative and based directly on the concept, two different methods, one being open-ended direct interviews and the other being open-ended questionnaires via a scenario, were used. Thus, the similarities and differences between the descriptive responses on the concept were examined by comparing the themes obtained from four different preliminary studies through content analysis.

### *3.1.1 Preliminary Study-I*

In this preliminary study, face-to-face interviews with 13 academicians, 10 females and 3 males, between the ages of 32 and 59, were conducted using structured open-ended questions. Responses to the questions were recorded with audio recorder by getting permission from the participants. The records were transcribed and the themes were determined by content analysis (See Table 1). In their responses to questions, employees were found to frequently feel confined in the cases "restriction" and "frustration", and have identified the feeling of confinement with emotions such as "despair" and "anxiety". Considering that the prisonization experienced by the inmates is referred to directly as "despair" in criminological studies, the findings seem to have similarities with responses by the employees. The 12 of the interviewed employees, 5 responding "sometimes", reported that they felt confined in their organizations. Another important finding is that the participants often refer to oppressive organizational practices as the cause of this feeling. When autogenous causes were mentioned, they usually responded "economical obligations" and "conceding".

### *3.1.2 Preliminary Study-II*

In this preliminary study, face-to-face interviews with 11 academicians, 8 females and 3 males, between the ages of 24 and 55, were conducted using structured open-ended questions. Responses to the questions were recorded with audio recorder by getting permission from the participants. The records were transcribed and the themes were determined by content analysis (See Table2). The interviewees described the practices of their current organizations, as "oppressive", "restrictive in terms of autonomy" and "centralism". Individuals, while stating that they feel "incompetent", "frustrated" and "worthless" in this environment, referred to the effect of this situation on them, as "restriction", "exhaustion", "work-family conflict" and "negativity". When asked about the reactions they could give in response to these practices, the answers frequently emphasized the themes of "despair" and "turnover intention".

### *3.1.3 Preliminary Study-III*

In this preliminary study conducted with 22 academicians, 18 females and 4 males, between the ages of 22 and 65, participants were asked to read a scenario that includes organizational practices that may trigger the organizational prisonization of an employee. Then, it was asked how the character in the scenario called Deniz felt against the current organizational practices. As similar in the 2nd preliminary study, the participants were expected to respond on the basis of the association with the script. Participants, in their responses, expressed Deniz's feelings using the terms "confined", "under pressure", "distressed", and "restricted" according to the organizational environment in the scenario. The effects of these feelings on Deniz are referred to as "loss of motivation and performance", "depression" and "worthlessness". As in other preliminary studies, the effect of the situation on Deniz's opinions on the organization has been expressed with the themes of "loss of belonging" and "turnover intention" (See Table 3).

### *3.1.4 Preliminary Study-IV*

In this preliminary study conducted, using the same scenario in the previous study, the participants were asked answer whether the character called Deniz felt confined in the organizational environment, organizational or autogenous causes of this feeling, and the effects of this feeling on the individual. The participants of this preliminary study were 20 academicians, 13 females and 7 males, between the ages of 22 and 64. In this study aimed to find out

the effect of organizational environment described in the scenario, by directly asking the feeling of confinement. According to the responses given; 19 of the participants who read the scenario stated that Deniz would feel confined under these organizational policies. Participants have defined the feeling of confinement using the terms of "restriction", "frustration", "economic obligation" and "despair". Organizational practices such as "oppressive management" and "excessive control" were named among the causes of confinement. The effects of this situation on Deniz are represented by themes such as "negative", "misery", "confinement", "burnout" and "obstruction of social life". As in other preliminary studies, themes such as "loss of belonging" and "loss of performance and motivation" are seen as the consequences of confinement; and also, "turnover intention" as well as the "individual action" and "collective action" options, are considered in the reactions of Deniz against these practices (See Table 4).

**Table 1***Themes of Preliminary Study-I*

Questions	Theme	Frequency
In your opinion, under which conditions people feel "confinement"	Restriction	13
	Frustration	2
	Despair	3
How would you describe "confinement"	Anger	3
	Anxiety	3
	Stress	2
	Yes	7
Do you feel confined in the organization you work for	Sometimes	5
	No	1
	None	4
What are the autogenous reasons of such feeling of confinement	Personal Perception	3
	Economical Obligations	2
	Conceding	2
What are the professional reasons of such feeling of confinement	Conflicts with Characteristics of the Profession	6
	None	5
What are the organizational reasons (arising from organizational structure, managers, senior management) of such feeling of confinement	Oppressive Management Practices	11
	Management with a Mandating Manner	3
	Distrust	2
	Despair	3
What effects does this feeling have on you	Nervousness	3
	Misery	2
	Loss of motivation	9
What effects does this feeling have on your work	Loss of performance	5
	Loss of belonging	7
What effects does this feeling have on your opinion on your organization	Distrust	2
	Economical Obligations	2
	Despair	7
How do you react to these practices / Do you have any alternative action plans to change this	Turnover Intention	2

In conclusion, in these exploratory studies conducted on the organizational prisonization of the employee, themes that are similar with the definition of the concept have been encountered whether the feelings of "imprisonment" being given or not given directly in questionnaires. From the suggestion of criminological studies that inmates, who experience prisonization may assimilate by adapting to prison management, the effects expressed through "despair", "conceding", "economic obligations" and "silence" themes from the preliminary studies may support the prediction that the assimilation might be among the potential consequents of organizational prisonization. On the other hand,

“individual or collective actions”, which are among the alternative action options against prisonization, may provide prediction on opposition to organization management, which results from this separation reaction of prisonized employee.

**Table 2**

*Themes of Preliminary Study-II*

Questions	Theme	Frequency
What is your opinion on the existing management practices of your organization	Oppressive	4
	No autonomy	4
	Centralism	3
What do you feel upon encountering such practices	Incompetence	3
	Disgusted	3
	Worthlessness	3
What are the autogenous reasons of such feeling	None	6
What are the professional reasons of such feeling	None	5
	Conflicts with Characteristics of the Profession	3
What are the organizational reasons (arising from organizational structure, managers, senior management) of such feeling	Oppressive Management Practices	5
	Organizational Injustice	4
	Work load	4
	Strict Working Conditions	3
What effects does this feeling have on you	Restriction	3
	Work-Family Conflict	2
	Exhaustion	2
What effects does this feeling have on your work	Negative	2
	Loss of performance	6
	Loss of motivation	4
What effects does this feeling have on your opinion on your organization	Interferes with Professional Development	4
	Loss of belonging	6
How do you react to these practices / Do you have any alternative action plans to change this?	Despair	5
	Turnover Intention	4

### 3.2. Development and Testing of the Scales

Scales were developed for the measurement of organizational prisonization and the reactions of organizational assimilation, organizational separation. Two focus-groups and a pilot study during the process were conducted.

*Organizational Prisonization:* Based on both the findings from the definition of prisonization in criminological studies, and the themes from the preliminary studies conducted for the exploration of the concept, four items were developed to represent the emotional status of the employees experiencing organizational prisonization.

*Assimilation and Separation Reactions:* As reactions by the convicted individuals, who are prisonized during their imprisonment, were referred to as adaptation to prison and assimilation to or separation from the prison, the reactions of the employee against prisonization were also evaluated under two different categories, being assimilation to and separation from the organizational culture.

In developing the items that are required for the measurement of organizational assimilation and separation, the definitions in criminological studies were benefited, and each item was adapted for employees. Accordingly, there were 19 items developed for the assimilation reaction which was defined as despair, deviation from inmate codes,

infidelity to the other inmates, opposition to other inmates, adaptation to the traditions, customs and culture of the prison; and 16 items developed for separation reaction which was defined as adaptation to inmate codes and norms, opposition to organizational policies and practices, separation from the traditions, customs and general culture of the prison, forming their own social groups and group solidarity.

**Table 3**

*Themes of Preliminary Study-III*

Questions	Theme	Frequency
1. What do you think Deniz feels upon such practices? Describe shortly.	Confinement	9
	Under pressure	6
	Distressed	5
	Restricted	4
	None	9
a) Considering Deniz, what are the autogenous reasons of such feeling?	Economic Obligations	4
	Silence	2
b) Considering Deniz, what are the professional reasons of such feeling?	Conflicts with Characteristics of the Profession	18
	Oppressive Attitudes	9
c) Considering Deniz, what are the organizational reasons (arising from organizational structure, managers, senior management) of such feeling?	Commercialization of Education	8
	Distrust	5
	Loss of motivation	6
d) What effects does this feeling have on Deniz?	Depression	4
	Worthlessness	4
	Loss of performance	12
e) What effects does this feeling have on Deniz's work?	Loss of motivation	11
	Loss of Belonging	11
f) What effects does this feeling have on Deniz's opinion on his/her organization?	Turnover Intention	10
	Turnover Intention	17
	Individual Actions	7
2. If you were Deniz, how would you react to these practices / what alternative action plans would you develop?	Collective Actions	6

*Focus Group 1:* In the first focus group, the items that were developed to be used in the instruments, were discussed by a group of five academicians from the fields of Organizational Behavior and Psychology, to see the face validity before running a pilot study. The four items of the Organizational Prisonization Scale were evaluated by the focus group may sufficiently represent emotional status of the employee experiencing prisonization. Regarding the items of Assimilation and Separation Reactions, as a result of the study within the focus group; repeating items were eliminated, and items with lower clarity were simplified. In this respect, eight of the assimilation items and five of the separation items were eliminated, and the scale was revised to include 11 items for each reaction.

*Pilot Study:* The pilot study was conducted with the participation of 34 academicians accessing the scales that were used in the measurement of variables, using a hyperlink provided on the Internet. Internal consistencies of the items for the measurement of organizational prisonization, as well as assimilation and separation reactions against prisonization, were evaluated through reliability analysis. Accordingly, results of the reliability analysis for 4- items organizational prisonization scale ( $\alpha=.95$ ), organizational assimilation reaction scale ( $\alpha=.72$ ) and organizational separation reaction scale ( $\alpha=.73$ ) were found to be satisfactory.

*Focus Group Study 2:* A five-person focus group consisting of three linguists, a measurement-evaluation specialist, and a forensic psychologist was formed to test the clarity of the items in the developed scales, for those who are not in the field of Organizational Behavior as well. The focus group assessed the clarity of each item and made

suggestions for improvements that would make the items more comprehensible. On the other hand, items with potential to cause different semantic perceptions were also discussed, and one item was revised.

After this stage, it was found appropriate to implement the scales to the main sampling group to test the relationship between organizational prisonization and assimilation and separation reactions.

**Table 4**

*Themes of Preliminary Study-IV*

Questions	Theme	Frequency
1. Do you think Deniz would feel confined upon encountering such practices	Yes	19
	No	1
a) Considering Deniz, what are the autogenous reasons of such feeling?	None	17
b) Considering Deniz, what are the professional reasons of such feeling?	Conflicts with Characteristics of the Profession	12
	None	8
c) Considering Deniz, what are the organizational reasons (arising from organizational structure, managers, senior management) of such feeling?	Oppressive Management	9
	Excessive Control	8
	Uneducated Managers	5
	Deprivation of Autonomy	4
	Distrust	3
	Negative	5
	Misery	4
d) What effects does this feeling have on Deniz?	Confined	3
	Burnout	3
	Obstruction of Social Life	3
	Loss of performance	11
e) What effects does this feeling have on Deniz's work?	Loss of motivation	8
	Loss of belonging	10
f) What effects does this feeling have on Deniz's opinion on his/her organization ?	Loss of Reputation	2
	Restriction	7
2. How would you describe "confinement"?	Frustration	4
	Economical Obligations	4
	Despair	4
3. If you were Deniz, how would you react to these practices / what alternative action plans would you develop	Turnover Intention	13
	Individual Actions	11
	Collective Actions	5
	Conceding	2

### 3.3 Sample

The sample of the research was determined by snowball sampling, among academicians working at universities in Turkey and white and golden-collar employees working in private and public organizations. Of the participants (N=296), 180 were female, 116 were male (std. deviation: .49), and the average of their ages was 34.96 (std. deviation 9.21).

### 3.4 Procedure

All scales of the research were sent to the participants in the sample via emails and social media, using an on-line form creating on the Internet. In the instructions at the beginning of each scale, the participants were informed that the data obtained will be carefully preserved, they will be only used for scientific purposes by the researcher, and the data will be collectively analyzed statistically. As each question on the on-line form is marked as "required to fill", missing data from the participants were avoided.

### 3.5 Measures

*Organizational Prisonization Scale:* For the measurement of the concept of organizational prisonization, four items were developed benefiting both from the conceptual definitions in the field of criminology, and from the prisonization themes obtained from the preliminary studies conducted under this research. The scale uses a 6-point Likert type (1: strongly disagree, 6: strongly agree) scoring system and does not contain reverse items.

*Organizational Assimilation Scale:* The concept of organizational assimilation is based on the reactions by the inmates who have experienced prisonization in criminological studies. Sykes (1958) distinguished these reactions as assimilation of inmates into prison conditions, and opposition to the prison by forming groups with other inmates. It was also reported that the inmates who were assimilated to prison conditions were also close to the administration and exhibited infidelity to other inmates. From this point and the themes of the preliminary studies, a total of 11 items, four for both 'adaptation to organization' and 'isolation from coworkers' dimensions, and three for 'infidelity to coworkers' dimension, were used for the measurement of organizational assimilation. The scale uses a 6-point Likert type (1: strongly disagree, 6: strongly agree) scoring system and does not contain reverse items.

*Organizational Separation Scale:* Based on the distinction by Sykes (1958) on the reactions of the prisonized inmates, the separation group, opposing the prison by forming subgroups with the other inmates, was explained as the concept of organizational separation for the employees. The scale containing 11 items, five in 'group solidarity' dimension, and six in 'opposition to organizational practices' dimension, used for the measurement of organizational separation. Items were answered through a 6-point Likert type (1: strongly disagree, 6: strongly agree) scoring system and does not contain reverse items.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 Reliability of the Scales

Reliability analysis was conducted for all the scales used in the measurement of the variables that were included in the study. According to the results obtained, it has been found out that the Cronbach alpha for the Organizational Prisonization Scale ( $\alpha=.94$ ) and for the Organizational Separation Scale ( $\alpha=.78$ ) are above .70, it is close to the limit of .70 for the Organizational Assimilation Scale ( $\alpha=.68$ ).

### 4.2 Factor Structure of Scales

#### 4.2.1. Organizational Prisonization Scale

There are four items in the scale developed to measure the level of organizational prisonization. The factor analysis for the scale items reveals a one-factor structure as expected (KMO = .843, Bartlett Sphericity Test Chi Square: 1213.596,  $p < .001$ ).

#### 4.2.2. Organizational Assimilation Scale

On the basis of the factor analysis of the scale where the employee's level of organizational assimilation was measured, one of the items was removed from the scale due to the factor loading below .50, and the other items were found gather around three factors (KMO = .756, Bartlett Sphericity Test Chi Square: 703.197,  $p < .001$ ). These three factors were called 'adaptation to organization', 'infidelity to co-workers' and 'isolation from co-workers' in

accordance with the definitions given in the literature. These three dimensions explained 60.1% of the total variance. The factor loadings and the variance values are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5**  
*Results of Factor Analysis for Organizational Assimilation Scale*

FACTOR	ITEMS	Adaptation to Organization	Isolation from Co-workers	Infidelity to Co-workers	Explained Variance	Cronbach Alpha
F1	I adopt the value system of my organization.	.83			28.6%	.79
	I find most of my organization's rules and norms acceptable.	.82				
	I comply with my organization's rules and norms without opposing.	.78				
	I show the ultimate attention to have a good relationship with my organization's management.	.62				
F2	I'm not interested in what my colleagues think about the organization's practices.		.75		16.1%	.54
	I become irritated when my colleagues share their negative opinions on the practices of the organization.		.75			
	I don't feel that I belong to any group of colleagues in my organization.		.65			
F3	I report my colleagues' negative opinions about the decisions on the practices of the organization, to the management.			.84	15.4%	.57
	I support sanctions against those who violate the rules and norms of the organization.			.64		
	I defend the management against my colleagues' reactions to the decisions on the practices of the organization.			.57		

#### 4.2.3 Organizational Separation Scale

On the basis of the factor analysis of the scale where the employee's level of organizational separation was measured, two of the items were removed from the scale due to the factor loading below .50, and the other items were found gather around two factors (KMO = .776, Bartlett Sphericity Test Chi Square: 770.593,  $p < .001$ ). These two factors were called as 'opposition to organizational policies' and 'group solidarity' in accordance with the definitions given in the literature. These two dimensions explained 55.8% of the total variance. The factor loadings and the variance values are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**  
Results of Factor Analysis for Organizational Separation Scale

FACTOR	ITEMS	Group Solidarity	Opposition to Organizational Policies	Explained Variance	Cronbach Alpha
F1	In my organization, my close colleagues protect me against the negative practices of the organization.	.82		31.6%	.80
	In my organization, I protect my close colleagues against the negative practices of the organization.	.82			
	In my organization, I feel safe with my close colleagues.	.78			
	In my organization, my close relationship with my colleagues makes me feel stronger against unfavorable events due to management's practices.	.74			
	In my organization, I express my negative opinions freely, when I'm with my close colleagues.	.50			
F2	In my organization, I resist not to implement the decisions related to my job and department when they are against my values.		.81	24.2%	.71
	I make individual efforts to change some rules and practices of my organization.		.77		
	I oppose to the decisions related to my job and department, when they are made without involving me in.		.71		
	I'm involved in the collective actions of my colleagues against the organizational practices.		.59		

#### 4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Before to test the hypotheses about the prediction relations between organizational prisonization and assimilation and separation reactions; the correlations between these variables were tested. According to the analysis, it has been found out that organizational prisonization has a negative significant correlation with assimilation to organization ( $r = -.22, p < .001$ ), and a positive significant correlation with separation from organization reaction ( $r = .13, p < .05$ ).

Results of the regression analysis revealed that the organizational prisonization has a negative effect on the assimilation to organization ( $\beta = -.22, p < .001$ ) and can reduce assimilation reaction by 5%. So, the first hypothesis was supported. The effects of organizational prisonization on the dimensions of assimilation reactions were also examined. According to the results of the regression analyses, it has been found out that prisonization explains 3% of 'infidelity to co-workers' negatively ( $\beta = -.16, p < .01$ ), while it positively explains 5% of 'isolation from co-workers' ( $\beta = .23, p < .001$ ). However, the most notable finding was that the organizational prisonization reduces the 'adaptation to organization' by 17% ( $\beta = -.41, p < .001$ ).

On the other hand, it was found out that the effect of the organizational prisonization on separation from the organization is 2% ( $\beta = .13, p < .05$ ). So this result shows that the second hypothesis was supported as well. It was also found that prisonization has a positive but weak effect of 2% ( $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ) on 'opposition to organizational policies', a dimension of separation, and no significant effect on 'group solidarity', which is another dimension. Results of the regression analyses were shown in Table 7.

**Table 7**  
Contribution of Organization Prisonization to Prisonization Reactions

Dependent Variables	Organizational Prisonization			
	$\beta$	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Organizational Assimilation	-.22***	.22	.05	15.042
Infidelity to Co-workers	-.16**	.16	.03	7.937
Isolation from Co-workers	.23***	.23	.05	16.129
Adaptation to Organization	-.41***	.41	.17	58.857
Organizational Separation	.13*	.13	.02	5.327
Opposition to Organizational Policies	.15*	.15	.02	6.291
Group Solidarity	.08	.08	.01	1.857

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

## 5. Conclusion, Discussions, and Suggestions

Prisonization, which begins with imprisonment of an inmate without his or her consent, is defined as the process of individual's adaptation to the conditions of the prison during the imprisonment period (Clemmer, 1940). Being placed in the prison after conviction is not a choice made by the individual with his/her willpower, and inmates give the control of their lives to the prison authorities. On the other hand, employees join in an organization through a legal agreement by their own free will to fulfill the job assigned to them with the expectations of improving themselves professionally and meeting their psychological and physiological needs. However, in today's organizations including practices in an oppressive, inflexible, highly control-oriented and surveillance based structure creates an environment in which the employees feel despair, misery and confined in their organization. These experiences as parallel with the results attained from the emic studies conducted as parts of this research, not only lead to the deprivation of physiological and psychological needs to motivate the individual in a productive way, but also make them to give the control of their lives to the organizations in which they mostly have to continue to work for due to economic obligations. Therefore, with an inspiration from the criminological researches, prisonization seems so real and a noteworthy fact for the employees in today's organizations as well.

In studies on prisonization, criminologists argued that individuals react to this process in multiple ways. Sykes (1958) has two main categories for these reactions. Accordingly, prisonized inmate would either obey the rules and norms of the prison institution being assimilated, or would oppose to the prison institution and its rules by forming their subgroups together with the other prisoners. Sykes (1958) stating that the obedient group would face other inmates' opposition in this process, reported that the loyalty of the assimilated community would be towards the organization, while the loyalty of the opposition group would be towards the inmate community they belong to.

In this study, the reactions emerging during the prisonization of employees were also defined by in parallel with that categorization of Sykes and named after Berry's (1997) acculturation strategies. Prisonized employees' obedience to organization's rules and norms, by adapting to the organization, isolating themselves from other employees and exhibiting close connection with the management is called *assimilation*, while their opposition to rules and norms of the organization and the development of an opposing attitude in solidarity with his colleagues is called *separation*.

By means of regression analyses run, effects of organizational prisonization on the assimilation to and separation from the organization were examined. Consistent with Sykes' prisonization reactions; despite it's of a lower degree, the significant effect of the organizational prisonization to separation from the organizational culture was found ( $\beta = .13, p < .05$ ).

On the other hand, the effect of the organizational prisonization on the assimilation reaction was found to be negative ( $\beta = -.22, p < .001$ ). In other words, organizational prisonization seems to prevent the emergence of assimilation reaction. At this point it is necessary to recall the definition made based on the categorization of Sykes

(1958). Employees preferring organizational assimilation, become obedient to the rules and norms of the organization, favor the management, and oppose to and exhibit infidelity to other employees, like the inmates who are adapting to prison conditions. However, it seems that this works in a different way in the organizational environment than it is in prison conditions. As a matter of fact, the level of adaptation of an employee experiencing organizational prisonization decrease significantly ( $\beta = -.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ), while his or her infidelity declines ( $\beta = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The prisonized employees also seem to be isolated from coworkers ( $\beta = .23$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this case, it is understood that organizational prisonization prevents the employee from having a close and complying attitude towards the management and does not allow him/her to develop a positive or negative relationship with his/her coworkers. Therefore, it is seen that the employee who feels prisonized in his/her organization cannot adapt to the organizational rules and norms and the value system, in terms of assimilation. At this point, it is also understandable that an employee ceases emotional investments to his/her relations within the organization and isolates himself/herself from coworkers.

Therefore, findings from the research suggest that the organizational prisonization of employees may develop negative attitudes towards their organizations. Considering desperation and misery feelings emerged through prisonization, the employees experiencing these feelings would eventually face the negative effects on their own personal and professional lives. So, studying on potential antecedents especially related to organizational deprivation factors leading to organizational prisonization; and other probable consequents of it in individual and organizational manner, can be taken into account for further researches, and for managements of organizations to plan improvement interventions.

## 6. Limitations

To begin with, the participants involved in the study are white and golden collar employees, who work using their cognitive skills. During this study, organizational prisonization and its reactions have been defined through the preliminary studies through the responses of academicians. Following, an empirical research was conducted to test the hypothesized relations. Although the sample of the research was included of the academicians working in Turkey at the beginning of the research, the academicians probably hesitated to participate due to the unfavorable condition in the country due to the coup attempt, at the time of the research. Therefore, the sample could not reach a sufficient number of participants for the purposes of the research. For this reason, in addition to the academicians, white and golden-collar workers of various professional groups, working in the public and private sectors were included in the sample.

Since it has been focused on that the intrinsic motivators are more salient for the employees of intellectual production in the light of the literature, sample of this study has also been focused on these employees as well. Therefore, the results obtained from this study were generalized for the employee group using cognitive skills. After all, the study of the effects that organizational prisonization has on blue-collar workers may also be important for further studies, in analyzing the effects that participant diversity has on the concept.

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