Teachers' perception on the Relationship between Change Leadership and Organizational Commitment

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Abstract: The aim of this survey is to analyze the perception of teachers regarding the relationship between change leadership and organizational commitment. The study sample is 221 teachers working in the schools of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Mardin during the 2014-15 educational year since it is easier to reach them. The sample choice of our study has been made by applying the disproportionate cluster sampling method. According to the linear regression analysis results; change leadership predicts organizational commitment in a positive way. Also, multiple regression analysis results indicate that change-selling behaviors of change leadership predict organizational commitment significantly. It is beneficial for principals who want to increase the organizational commitment of teachers to exhibit change leadership behaviors in schools.

Keywords: *Leadership, change, change leadership, organizational commitment*

Introduction

When it is considered that systems are born, develop and die like human beings, it is clear that new systems supplant old ones, which become useless; thus, change is unavoidable. Humankind exists in a dynamic structure needing constant change, and at this juncture, resisting change while desiring static order is a useless effort. The constant change in politics, science, art and life styles of people reflects the perception of education and educational systems. Undoubtedly, creating this kind of dynamism in systems and adapting people to change require change management skills. In this sense, change leadership has become one of most attention-grabbing leadership styles among all in the 21st Century (Avolio et al, 2008).

Change Leadership

The conceptual framework of change leadership is based on practice-oriented change literature (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999).The conceptual framework of implementing change literature evolved out of the three-step model of Lewin (1947) including "unfreeze-change-refreeze" (Liu, 2009). After Lewin, lots of change implementation models have been suggested, for example the five-step model of Judson (1991) and the eight-step model of Kotter (1996). In the 21st Century, change leadership—related to change implementation behaviors—has taken part in the literature (Caldwell et al, 2009). On the other hand, Herold and Fedor (2008) have developed a change leadership scale that includes the development of a vision, launching out, authorization and supervision in their research.

Nowadays, change leaders capable of adapting people to new systems and of overcoming running the system and evaluation process are supposed to be in organizations (Mackinnon, 2008). Especially when the responsibility of schools for transfering change in society is taken into consideration (Carnoy and Samoff, 2014), the importance of change leadership ability for school managers becomes clear. In this point, change leadership which supports the idea that leaders can change employees' expectations, perceptions and motivations with the help of their inspiration ability and also convince them of the necessity of change while increasing their pleasure levels (Avolio et al, 2008) has recently captured the attention of researchers. Moreover, the relationship of change leadership with different variables has been worked intentionally as leadership has no longer a traditional, bureaucratic and classical meaning, but rather one comprising various dimensions and effects.

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Several problems can arise in organizations managed by leaders who lack change leadership ability. Employees, unwilling or disqualified from obtaining new knowledge and skills, look askance at change; furthermore, they resist with the feeling of uncertainty arising from losing their routine (Cenker, 2008). As a result of this discomfort, employees resist change in numerous ways such as leaving employment and slowing, hindering, sabotaging, protesting, or expressing indifference toward work (Aksoy, 2005).

In today's organizations, workers increasingly are experiencing change, especially in comparison to those in the organziations of previous centuries. In addition, resistance to change is widespread due to some psychological, rational or social reasons. As a result, the significance of change leadership gradually is increasing and comprising a larger space in related literature. Having troubles in change leadership negatively can affect the efficiency of organizations and also the mood and efficiency of employees and their organizational commitment (Business Week, 2005). Hence, analyzing the relationship between change leadership and organizational commitment is important for the efficiency and persistence of organizations.

Organizational Commitment

While rapid development in the competitive environment of the World isinducing companies to invest more heavily in human resources, it is also directing them to benefit from present labor in maximum (Cavus and Gurdogan, 2008). As a result, organizations are trying to gain more efficiency with less expenditure. Undoubtedly, this is only possible with human source factor and employees' willingness for working in the organization as well as their continuity for work.

On that point, we approach the conception of commitment which Harol Guetzkoz (1955) describes as feelings preconditioning individuals for certain ideas, organizations or peoples and providing aim continuity and also as behaviors taking form with the activities bringing the aim to fruition (Emhan and Gok, 2011). For Kanter, organizational commitment is a feeling which is necessary for the organization and which is based on personal experience. Organizational commitment is the energy and loyalty that employees voluntarily give to their work (Yavuz, 2008).

Kanter (1986) analyzed commitment under three dimensions including continuance, adaptation and control commitment (Coskuner and Yertutan, 2009). Continuance commitment is related to employees' cognitive systems. In this type of commitment, when employees consider cost, they realize that the cost of leaving the organization is more than the cost of staying in the organization (Topaloglu, 2010).On the other hand, interlock commitment (Kanter, 1968) (adaptation commitment) means that employees desist previous social relationships or involve social relationships through symbols, signs or joining ceremonies in an organization (Gul, 2002). Control commitment (Kanter, 1968) describes the process in which employees attach to organizational norms by forming their behaviors at will.

The Relationship between Change Leadership and Organizational Commitment

The relationship between leadership and organizational commitment was analayzed by Blau (1985), who discovered that the leadership style giving importance to employees compared to structural (mission-related) leadership has more effect on organizational commitment. Similarly, Williams and Hazer (1986) emphasized that leadership implementations giving importance to employees is a precondition for organizational commitment. Ince and Gul (2005) stated that when managers encourage employees to participate in the decision-making process and when they continuously strive forinnovations within the organization, the organization commitment level of employees will increase (Diker, 2014).

Avolio and his friends (2004) derived a significant and positive relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment in the research they carried out with 520 participants. The results of research revealed that change-oriented leadership, which is predominant in organizations having a reformer organization culture, positively affects employees' affective and normative commitments (Avoilo, Zhu, Koh and Bhatia, 2004). In another study, the relationship between six leadership attitudes identified by Conger and Kanungo and two organization commitment factors identified by Porter and Smith was analyzed. 245 people from six organizations in southeast America participated in the research. The factors of the two subjects were discussed, and 5/6 of leadership attitudes were found to be related to organizational commitment. These findings reveal that leaders' sensitivities toward employees' needs is related to having a clearer vision ofthe organization as well as to stating more clearly the objectives and values of the organization as they relate to organizational commitment. This research underlines the strategic role of managers, one which has been changing for a while now (Rowden, 1999; Karahan, 2008).

Cetin, Korkmaz and Cakmakci's study (2012) of transformational and transectional leadership effects and the interaction between leaders and members on teachers' organizational citizenship behaviors revealed that teachers exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors at a moderate level. Transformational leadership positively and

significantly affects the quality of relationship between the principals and teachers and teachers' organizational citizenship behaviors.

The effect of transactional leadership on the interaction between principals and teachers and teachers' organizational citizenship behaviors is significant and negative, while the interaction between principals and teachers has a positive and significant effect on teachers' organizational citizenship behaviors. Kul and Guclu (2010) researched the relationship between school managers' leadership styles and physical education teachers' organizational commitment. In their study, between the sub-dimensions of physical education teachers' organizational commitment and the sub-dimensions of school managers' leadership styles, a moderate negative significant relationship between transformational leadership and adaptation commitment, a moderate positive significant relationship between transformational leadership and identification and a high-level positive significant relationship between transformational leadership and internalization were discovered to exist. On the other hand, a high-level positive significant relationship was revealed to exist between school managers' processor leadership styles and the internalization sub-dimension of physical education teachers' organizational commitment (Kilincarslan, 2013).

The findings of the study of Yavuz (2009) called "A study on employees' attitudes towards transformational leadership and organizational commitment" revealed employees' attitudes towards organizational commitment to be moderate, while their attitudes towards transformational leadership is high-level. On the other hand, in the research of Buluc (2009) called "The perception of primary school teachers on the relationship between school managers' leadership styles and organizational commitment," a positive significant relationship was discovered to exist between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment. Also, a negative significant relationship was found out between Laissez-faire leadership behaviors and organizational commitment. Another finding of the study was a positive significant relationship between organizational commitment and conditional reward, a dimension of transactional leadership (Kilincarslan, 2013).

In his study called "The effect of leadership styles exhibited by primary school managers on teachers' organizational commitment," Sezer (2005) discovered significant relationships to exist between primary school managers' transformational leadership behaviors and "internalization" and "identification" sub-dimensions of organizational commitment. Also, significant differences were found to exist between transactsonal leadership styles and adaptation commitment, a sub-dimension of teachers' organizational commitment.

In their study titled "The effects of transformational leadership on organizational commitment," Wiley and Sons (2004) carried out a scale to 520 personals and nurses employed in a state hospital in Singapore. After analyzing whether or not transformational leadership had an effect on organizational commitment, they found the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment to be direct rather than indirect (Kilincarslan, 2013).

In order to investigate the relationship between change leadership and organizational commitment, Liu (2009), in his study involving 488 employees working in 20 different organizations recently experiencing change, stated that change leadership has two dimensions: change-selling behaviors and change-implementation behaviors. The results of hierarchical linear modeling revealed that these two dimensions have different effects on employees' organizational commitment.

While change-selling behaviors include developing a vision, and presenting as well as marketing to employees the change which will be experienced in the organization, change implementation behaviors include implementing the change step-by-step, providing the necessary technical and educational support, watching the process in the correct way and making it successful (Burke, 2002; Galbin, 1996).

During the last quarter of the century, the rapid development of technology has affected the nature of change. Change that previously was considered a transition process has been considered an open-ended, radical, complicated, not only organizational but more personal and continuous process. Recent leaders are experiencing difficulty in understanding the nature of change and do not know how to manage change or overcome change-derived problems (Anderson and Anderson, 2010). Therefore, in the new century, it is significant to create a deeper and more complicated change perception and to develop new leadership skills as well as strategies. An individual feeling loyal to his organization works there caressively, considers his organization as his own family and so increases the efficiency of himself and his organization (Dincer, 1994). To create such a healthy, successful structure in schools is made possible only by increasing the organizational commitment of teachers. The duty of increasing the organizational commitment of teachers belongs to school managers. Leadership styles of school managers can increase or decrease teachers' organizational commitment (Gill, 2002). Consequently, this research is important for analyzing the relationship between change leadership styles and organizational commitment.

The Purpose of This Study

This study aims to analyze the perceptions of teachers regarding the relationship between change leadership and organizational commitment.

With the main purpose stated above, answers to following questions have been searched:

1) Does change leadership perceived in a school environment predict teachers' organizational commitment? If so, in which ways does it predict organizational commitment behaviors?

2) Do leaders' change-selling behaviors perceived in a school environment predict teachers' organizational commitment? If so, in which ways do they predict organizational commitment behaviors?

3) Do leaders' change implementation behaviors perceived in a school environment predict teachers' organizational commitment? If so, in which ways do they predict organizational commitment behaviors?

Method

Study Group

The population of this study is teachers working in cities of the Southeast Anatolian Region during the 2014-2015 academic year. The irrational cluster sampling method, which is defined as randomly choosing groups rather than specific individuals, has been applied. The study group are 221 teachers working in the cities of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Mardin since these teachers are easily accessible. Each school in each city is accepted as a cluster, and schools are chosen randomly with minimum requirements. For deciding the number of the study group, to the formula prepared for the size whose main mass number is certain, 221 teachers is adequate for %95 confidence level (Ozdamar, 2003). 221 out of 263 questionnaires, delivered to teachers, were returned and incorporated into the study. %84.03 of the questionnaires, delivered to teachers, were returned to the researchers.

While %50.7 of the teachers (n=221) participating in this study are male (n=112), %49.3 are female (n=109). %59.5' of the participants are married (n=131), whereas %40.5 of them are single (n=89). The most frequent age range of the participants is 21-33 years (n=119) with a percentage of %53.8. On the other hand, the most frequent seniority range of the participants is 1-10 years (n=126) with a percentage of %57.

Data Collection Tools

In the questionnaire delivered as a data collection tool, in order to measure change leadership behaviors, the change leadership scale developed by Liu (2010) and adapted into Turkish by Savas and Cagrici (2014) has been applied. Since Barlett's test results of the change leadership scale are significant and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient is .945 and p<0.05, data matrix is suitable for factor analysis. Cyclical items (DU1 and DU5) among the items of the scale were removed from the questionnaire. After factor analysis, 16 items remained in the scale, which initially included 18 items. The change leadership scale which was similarly adopted as two dimensions by Savas and Cagrici (2014) had two dimensions in our study after the factor analysis. Factor1 (Change leadership change-selling behaviors) explained %32.68 of total variance in the scale, factor2 (Change leadership change-implementation behaviors) explained %36.67 of total variance and these two factors explained % 69.35 of total variance. Cronbach's Alpha reliability co-efficient is.937 for factor 1, .934 for factor 2 and .955 for the total.

The organizational commitment scale was developed as a "three-dimensional visual commitment scale" including 18 items by Meyer and Allen (1997) and was adapted to Turkish culture as an "organizational commitment scale" by Karakus (2005). Since Barlett's test results are significant and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient is .752 and p<0.05, datamatrix is suitable for factor analysis. Cyclical items(OB17) and items of wrong dimensions (OB4, OB5, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB19, OB20 and 0B21) were removed the scale. After factor analysis, 12 items remained in the scale, which initially included 21 items. The organizational commitment scale, which was adopted as three dimensions by Karakus (2005), similarly had three dimensions in our study after the factor analysis. Factor 1 (emotional dimension) explained %21.34 of total variance, factor 2 (continuation dimension) explained %19.31 of total variance, factor 3 (Normative dimension) explained %17.31 of total variance and these three factors explained % 57.95 of total variance. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient is .772 for factor 1, .721 for factor 2, .730 for factor 3 and .715 for the total. Data were analyzed in terms of validity and reliability. Factor analysis results and the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient showed that the scales were valid and reliable.

Findings

Descriptive Analysis and Correlation Matrix on Variables

Table 1. Change Leadership and Organizational Commitment Mean, Standard Deviation and Standard Error Results

Variables	$\overline{\text{X}}$	SD	Std. Error
Change Leadership Change Selling	3.433	.830	.055
Change Leadership Change Implementation	3.521	.770	.051
Change Leadership General	3.483	.743	.050
Emotional Commitment	3.685	.822	.055
Continuation Commitment	2.849	.896	.060
Normative Commitment	3.407	1.006	.067
Organizational Commitment General	3.337	.585	.039

Table 2. The correlation of the relationship between change leadership and organizational commitment

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Change-Selling Behaviors Of Change Leader	1						
2. Change Implementation Behaviors Of Change Leader	.743***	1					
3. Change Leadership	.921***	945***	1				
4. Emotional Dimension of Organizational Commitment	.136*	168*	164*	1			
5. Continuation Dimension of Organizational Commitment	219**	173**	208**	.337***	1		
6. Normative Dimension Of Organizational Commitment	-.039	-.118	-.088	.211**	-.212**	1	
7.Organizational Commitment	.175**	.136*	.164*	.847***	.616***	.444***	1

*p<,05, **p<,01, ***p<,001

Table 2 displays the arithmetical means and standard deviations of teachers' participation levels compared with items in the scales of the research. It shows that teachers' perceptions of managers' change leadership change-selling behaviors, change leadership in general and teachers' continuation commitment, normative commitment and organizational commitment levels are moderate. Moreover, teachers' perceptions of school managers' change leadership change implementation behaviors and teachers' emotional commitment levels are high.

In table 2, the correlation matrix indicates the relationship between variables analyzed in the research. When significant relationships are checked, it is clear that there is a positive correlation between change leadership in general and change leaders' change-selling behaviors, change leaders' change implementation behaviors, and organizational commitment in general, and organizational commitment's emotional, continuation dimensions. The sub-dimensions of change leadership and organizational commitment have a positive correlation. A negative correlation exists between continuation dimension and emotional dimension of organizational commitment.

Regression Analysis of Change Leadership and Organizational Commitment

Table 3. Linear regression analysis results of teachers' perception on change leadership and organizational commitment

Model	Independent variables	B	Std.Er	β	t	p
1.step	Constant	1.967	.421	-	4.671	.000
	Gender (dummy)	.146	.083	.125	1.768	.078
	Age	.051	.017	.658**	3.070	.002
	Seniority	-.042	.017	-.533*	-2.530	.012
2. step	Constant	1.576	.448	-	3.515	.001
	Gender (dummy)	.127	.082	.109	1.547	.123
	Age	.050	.017	.643**	3.031	.003
	Seniority	-.041	.016	-.517*	-2.480	.014
	Change Leadership	.123	.052	.156*	2.364	.019

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment
ΔR^2 = .024* ; *p< .05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Regression analysis results indicate that when demographic variables are kept under control, change leadership predicts organizational commitment significantly (β=0.156, p<0.05). 1 unit of increase in change leadership causes 0.156 unit of increase in organizational commitment. Change leadership explains % 2.4 of organizational commitment (ΔR^2=0.024; p<0.05) which means change leadership behaviors of school managers provide an increase in organizational commitment.

Table 5. Multiple regression analysis results of teachers' perception on sub-dimensions of change leadership and organizational commitment

Model	Independent variables	B	Std. Er.	β	t	p
1.step (enter)	Constant	1.967	.421	-	4.671	.000
	Gender (dummy)	.146	.083	.125	1.768	.078
	Age	.051	.017	.658**	3.070	.002
	Seniority	-.042	.017	-.533*	-2.530	.012
2.step (stepwise)	Constant	1.605	.440	-	3.650	.000
	Gender (dummy)	.137	.082	.117	1.673	.096
	Age	.050	.016	.639**	3.015	.003
	Seniority	-.041	.016	-.514*	-2.473	.014
	Change leadership change-selling behaviors	.117	.046	.166*	2.539	.012

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment
ΔR^2_{change} = .028*, *p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001

In multiple regression analysis, when demographic variables are kept under control in Step 1 and change implementation behaviors as well as change-selling behaviors (the sub-dimensions of change leadership) are integrated into the model by applying the stepwise model in Step 2, it is clear that only change-selling behaviors of change leadership predict organizational commitment significantly (β=0.166, p<0.05). In Step 1 it is obvious that age positively affects organizational commitment while seniority negatively affects it. 1 unit of increase in change leadership change-selling behaviors causes 0.166 unit of increase in organizational commitment. As an explained variance ; % 2.8 of organizational commitment is explained with change leadership change-selling behaviors (ΔR^2=0.028; p<0.05), meaning that change leadership change-selling behaviors of school managers provide an increase in organizational commitment.

Discussion and Conclusions

Change, inevitably prominent in today's organizations, decreases the motivation of employees and negatively affects organizational commitment due to several psychological and social reasons; including the feeling of uncertainty it induces. On that point, a change leader is supposed to create a positive working environment, to increase motivation, to decrease change-related problems at a minimum level and so to increase the organizational commitment of employees (Burke, 2002). The findings of this research verify this hypothesis and indicate a positive significant relationship between change leadership behaviors and employees' organizational commitment. In this regard, the way for employees to devote themselves to the organization itself as well as adapt to its changes is to exhibit some change leadership behaviors such as overcoming the negative feelings caused by change, convincing employees of the need for change, and providing the required support for change. As Guetzkow (1955) emphasized, preparing an individual emotionally and cognitively for the activities of an organization is significant for organizational commitment (Emhan and Gok, 2011).

A research of Ozden (1997) about the effects of managers' behaviors on teachers' organizational commitment indicates that %40 of teachers' commitment to the schools they work in is related to satisfaction with managers' behaviors, while %20 of it is related to teachers' participation in school management. This reveals how much teachers' organizational commitment is affected by managers' behaviors and other factors.

The effect of managers' leadership styles on employees' organizational commitment has been analyzed extensively by researchers. Those researchers whose results are parallel to this study include Ozden (1997), who finds teachers' commitment to the schools in which they work to be closely related to managers' behaviors; Avolio, et. al., who find a positive significant relationship between leadership styles and employees' organizational commitment; Guclu (2010), who finds that managers' leadership styles predict physical education teachers' organizational commitment; and Sezer (2005) and Buluc (2009), who find a positive significant relationship between school managers' leadership styles and teachers' organizational commitment.

Change leadership, in contrast with a mission- or result-oriented leadership, suggests a process-oriented leadership including employees' approach to change and following employees' needs through change. This study claims such a leadership perception strengthens employees' organizational commitment. On that point, this study aligns with the research of Blau (1985) and Hazer (1986), which states that process-oriented leadership, specifically giving importance to employees' ideas and emotions, contributes more positively to organizational commitment. When we consider that change leadership requires paying attention to employees' needs during the process of change, the research findings suggesting a high-level positive significant relationship between school managers' change leadership change implementation behaviors and teachers' emotional commitment are more meaningful. Undoubtedly, considering employees' needs and expectations during the process of change implementation positively affects their emotional commitment to the organization.

Few studies directly analyze the effects of change leadership on organizational commitment. Herold and Fedor (2008) recently conducted one of the first studies analyzing the relationship between change leadership and change commitment; however, unexpectedly, they determined that change leadership did not have a significant impact on change commitment. On the other hand, Liu (2009) emphasized that there was a positive significant relationship between change-selling behaviors and employees' emotional commitment while stating that there was no significant relationship between change implementation behaviors and change commitment. Liu emphasized that leaders' change-selling behaviors predicted employees' organizational commitment in the context of the positive significant relationship between change-selling behaviors and employees' emotional commitment, while change implementation behaviors could only be related to emotional commitment in the organizations whose employees had a high level of organizational commitment. Also, Liu (2009) underlined that his study was the first empirical research differentiating change-selling behaviors and change implementation behaviors, and he related the poor relationship between change leadership and change commitment to the lack of that difference in previous literature. Similar to the research findings, in the study he carried out in a national telecommunication company, Lines (2004) discovered that a good change management and employees' participation in the change process have outstanding effects on organizational commitment, attaining the objectives and diminishing the resistance of employees that develops as a result of feelings of uncertainty. In the study he carried out with 761 employees in the Victoria state of Australia on the relationship between organizational commitment and accepting the change process and change management implementations, Iverson (1996) determined a positive significant relationship and also underlined the importance of organizational commitment's role in the change process.

When we compare the results of our study with those of other studies analyzing effective change leadership and organizational commitment, for example those of Lines (2004), Iverson (1996), Herold and Fedor (2008) and Liu (2009), it is clear that effective change leadership (including change-selling behaviors and change implementation

behaviors) is a pre-condition for employees of today's constantly changing organizations to feel committed to their organizations and to contribute to the change process instead of resisting it.

Geijsel, et. al. (2003) presented another research study analyzing teachers' organizational commitment during the school reform process and the effect of school managers' change leadership on teachers' commitment to the school. Geijsel et. al. (2003) stated that effective change management increases the efforts of teachers regarding implementation of ongoing changes in schools. Furthermore, they emphasized that school managers must have effective change leadership skills in order to make school reforms successful. Unfortunately, in present schools teachers are expected to accept these changes without considering whether or not they approve. Thus, teachers are more likely to criticize and resist change rather than interiorize or participate in it. It is clear that the only way for teachers to feel a part of both the organization and its change process— thus leading them to support the success of its changes—is an effective change leadership.

Considering alongside the results of our study the similar findings of recent studies, it is an unavoidable fact that our current educational system—exposed to constant change implementations due to various breakdowns—strongly needs qualified change leaders with extensive knowledge of and skills related to change management in order to increase teachers' organizational commitment, to make them believe in the necessity of change, to diminish their resistance to change and to make them a part of change.

In terms of the potential limitations of our study, there are numerous other variables that researchers planning to carry out similar studies can analyze in relation to change leadership. Moreover, these researchers might implement larger study groups in different locations.

Consequently, it is urgent to make educational managers knowledgeable and skillful on change leadership and its effect on employees. Making educational managers exhibit more change leadership behaviors can increase teachers' organizational commitment.

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