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Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Identification: The Mediating Role of Fit to Organization

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal the effect of perceived organizational support (POS) on organizational identification (OI) and to test the mediating role of fit to organization (FO) within the context of academicians. Data are collected by questionnaire from 193 academicians who are determined by total sampling method. Correlation and Regression analyses are performed to test the research hypotheses. Results show that there is a strong correlation among variables and perceived organizational support is a significant contributor to organizational identification. Moreover, POS has an insignificant effect on OI, while FO significantly affects OI. With reference to Regression analysis, we also performed the Sobel test in order to determine the significance of the mediator effect. Sobel test results confirm that fit into organization of participants has a significant effect on OI; meanwhile, it is a mediator between organizational support perceived by participants and their organizational identification.

Keywords: Perceived organizational support, person-organization fit, organizational identification.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are important psychological mechanisms in which their basic function is to produce goods or services and to provide a livelihood for people (Levinson, 1965: 375). With a good understanding of their employee's relations with the organization in all dimensions, they could maintain their activities productively and efficiently. For this reason, there is increasing attention about employees' commitment and dedication to their organizations as employers (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986: 500). Reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960), social exchange (Blau, 1964) and organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986, Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) are the main concepts that used for explaining reciprocal loyalty. Reciprocity process generally conceptualizes as the fulfillment of mutual expectations and needs in the relationship between employee/employer and organization (Levinson, 1965: 384). Gouldner (1960: 76), verbalize this process as "...if others have been fulfilling their status duties to you, you in turn have an additional or second-order obligation to fulfill your status duties to them". Reciprocity norm is a beginning mechanism for interpersonal relations that compelling positive treatment (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003: 491-492). While organizations, as employers, value their workers' commitment and loyalty, employees are much more concerned with the organization's commitment to them. Within this context, for the employees, accessing needed knowledge and resources, being appreciated, respect, rewarded with some benefits such as payment or bounty are perceived as deeming worthy by the organization (Rhodas & Eisenberger, 2002: 698). Blau (1964) who states that any exchange relationship occurs on the basis of social and economic relations, asserts that exchange relationship has a social nature and rest upon prudential gesture of goodwill or/and trust. He also addresses that this relationship is arising from mutual benefits. Thus, social exchange theory emphasizes especially the importance of employees' motivation and its relation to the achievement of common organizational goals (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003: 492).

Organization Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986: 501) which emphasize reciprocity behavior supposes that to determine the organization's readiness to reward increased work effort and to meet needs for praise and approval, employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Eisenberger et al. (1986) handle this belief as Perceived Organizational Support (POS). POS theory closely associated with a variety of concepts such as affective commitment, effort-reward expectancy, continuance commitment, supervisor support and job satisfaction

in organizational context (Rhodas & Eisenberger, 2002: 699). OI is a perceptual or cognitive construct, which can be defined as a specific form of social identification where the individual defines himself or herself in terms of their membership in a particular organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992: 104-105). OI occurs when employees consider each cases/actions from the organizational point of view while performing organizational activities and to support these activities in a healthier manner by enabling employees to act in the best interests of the organization (van Knippenberg & van Schie, 2000: 138). Furthermore, OI is a type of psychological attachment that occurs when members adopt the defining characteristics of the organization as defining characteristics of themselves (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994: 242). POS and OI are closely related concepts to each other. And, fit to organization (FO), namely person organization fit (POF), is an important predictor of this relation. The FO concept simply indicates the perceived compatibility of an employee with organization and its environment (Kristof, 1996: 3). Good person-organization fit occurs when employee's personal values, career aspirations, knowledge, skills and ability are compatible with the organizational culture and with the requirements of his or her job (Zhang, Fried & Griffeth, 2012: 221).

According to social exchange theory, the resources provided by others are considered more valuable if they are based on the choice of the other party rather than the sources outside the control of the two parties. Therefore, organizational awards such as payment, bonuses, job enrichment and influence on organizational policies, and appropriate business conditions contribute more to the POF when they are provided by voluntary behavior of the organization, instead of external restrictive factors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002: 698). This fact is also antecedent for OI. Moreover, POF has a strengthening effect on this relationship.

In literature, research subjects and their relations with different variables are researched and investigated ((e.g. Afsar & Badir, 2016; Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003; Bremner & Goldenberg, 2015; Feather & Rauter, 2004; Loi, Chan & Lam, 2014; Wayne, Shore & Liden, 1997). However, the number of studies subjecting the relations between POS and OI are very limited (e.g. Cho & Treadway, 2009; Edwards & Peccei, 2010; He, Pham, Baruch & Zhu, 2014), in other words this subject is not extended in the literature. Further, the mediating role of FO, which is an important indicator for POS and OI relation, has not been searched. This fact constitutes the main motivation of this study. Within this context, the aim of this study is to determine the effect of POS on OI and to test the mediation effect of FO at this relation in terms of academicians.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Perceived Organizational Support

The term POS basically refers employee's perception about organization's commitment to himself/herself (Settoon, Bennett & Liden, 1996: 220). Mutual relations between employees and organizations are based on exchange of impersonal sources such as money, service and knowledge or socio-emotional sources such as approvals, respect and liking. Employers generally value to employee loyalty and commitment, since organizationally committed employees perform beyond expectations, avoid from absenteeism and voluntary resigning from the job. However, employees are much more concerned about organization's commitment to themselves (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002: 698). According to Gouldner's (1960) reciprocity norm, if an individual behave in a good manner to someone, this behavior would absolutely find reciprocity. Responsibility of refunding all benefits arising from reciprocity norm contribute strengthening interpersonal relations. Reciprocity norm also goes for employer and employee relations. Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades (2001: 42) state that there is a relation between POS and employees' refunding responsibility. On the basis of reciprocity norm, they also posit that employees feel an obligation to help organization's welfare and also achievement of its goals. Within this context, felt obligation mediated the associations of POS with affective commitment, organization spontaneity, and in-role performance. Moreover, the relationship between POS and refunding responsibility increases in the case of an employee assume existence of reciprocity norm. Hence, POS theory postulate employees' evaluation about their contributions. According to theory, employees of the organization have general beliefs about how the organization value their efforts and how it care of their well-being (Eisenberger et al. 2001: 42).

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), in their assessment about social exchange theory, emphasize that the resources provided for the adoption of reciprocity between the employer and the organization should be based on discretionary choice and voluntary actions rather than the influence of actors, which cannot be controlled. In their study, Eisenberger et al. (1986: 501-506), assume that exchange ideology is one of the major predictors of employees' effort-outcome expectancy and affective commitment. Additionally, POS increase employees' reward anticipation in return for effort-outcome expectancy related behaviors. For this reason, POS supports to put more effort forth achieving organizational goals by leveraging employees' effort-outcome expectancy and affective commitment to

organization. In this context, POS causes employees to respect much more for organization's priorities. Rhodes and Eisenberger (2002) who search antecedents and consequences of POS, in their study, conclude that the fairness is the strongest antecedent of POS, which is followed by manager support and reward/work conditions. Yet, study also concludes that affective commitment, job satisfaction, positive mood at work, intention to stay and intention to leave are the most related consequences of POS. According to authors, POS serves an important socio-emotional function besides creating a felt obligation to aid the organization. When employees perceive POS at high degree, they find their job more pleasurable, are in a better mood at work, and suffer fewer strain symptoms such as fatigue, burnout, anxiety and headaches.

Shanock and Eisenberger's study (2006) which focuses on the effects of executives POS perceptions on the employees' POS perception reveals that the executives' POS perceptions have a significant effect on their subordinates' POS perceptions and performance. Wayne, Shore and Liden (1997), in their study searching the relationship between POS and LMX within social exchange perspective, state that although POS and LMX have different antecedents and consequences, the quality of LMX has a significant effect on POS. Further, LMX plays a critical role which effect employees' organizational support perceptions. Similarly, Settoon et al. (1996) has not found any significant relationship between POS and LMX. Results of the study refers that there is a stronger correlation between POS and organizational commitment rather than POS and LMX. However, mutual trust and loyalty among subordinates and executives, relationships and changes which rest upon interpersonal affect and respect for each other cause exhibiting more expected-extra performances or more organizational citizenship behavior. Maertz Jr, Griffeth, Campbell & Allen (2007) who explore the effects of POS and perceived supervisor support (PSS) on intention to leave, deduce that there is a significant correlation among POS, PSS and intention to leave. But, the relation between POS and intention to leave is stronger in lower PSS to the degree of high PSS. They also state that POS constitute an important predictor for intention to leave when supervisor support is not existent. In other words, as supervisor support increases, the predictive role of POS is also decreasing within the context of its effect on intention to leave.

Fit to Organization

Employees commit to their organization for many reasons. However, commitment to an organization involves more than financial inducements, the attractiveness of some specific tasks or certain job-level

and organizational level characteristics. Although, works done by the employee could be a determiner for commitment in case it holds intrinsic value to him/her (Moynihan & Pandey, 2008: 214). Being an employee of an organization also requires coordination and harmony of personal values/culture with organizational values and culture psychologically. This value and goal congruence generally called as person-organization fit (POF) by industrial and organizational psychologists, when it is taken together with the congruity of abilities and skills (Youngs, Pogodzinski, Grogan & Perrone, 2015: 37). Chatman (1989: 339) defines POF as “*congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of person*”.

According to POF theory, certain characteristics of an organization have the potential to be compatible with the characteristics of an individual. As a consequence, individuals' attitudes and behaviors are influenced by this compatibility (Kim, 2012: 832). Extended literature presents a variety perspective about POF (McDonald, 1993:16). POF is a concept that is searched/explained with various dimensions such as supplementary and complementary fit, need-supplies and demand-abilities. Supplementary fit, the major dimension of POF, occurs when a person possesses characteristics, which are similar to other individuals' characteristics in an organization environment while complementary fit refers constitution a whole of a person's characteristics with the environment or addition to it what is missing (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987; cited by Kristof, 1996: 3). From the needs-supplies perspective, POF occurs when an organization satisfies individuals' needs, desires, or preferences. On the other hand, the demand-abilities perspective suggests that fit occurs when an individual has the abilities required to meet organizational demands (Kristof, 1996: 3). To enable POF, both employee and organization should have a high degree of spirituality (Vallabh & Singhal, 2014: 198). On this process, founder of the organization plays a critical role in terms of his/her determining influences on newcomers or other members of the organization. Founder's personality inspires organization members and employees embrace the mission, vision, strategy, and culture established by the founder (Schnieder, 1987, 2008; cited in Gardner et al., 2012: 589-590). A successful POF has important positive contributions for both founder and the organization. Chung (2017: 343) asserts that the more employees share values with the organizations, the more they contribute the organization in constructive ways, and they are less likely to engage in destructive behaviors since they have congruent values to their organizations. In other words, POF requires coherence among knowledge-skills-abilities of the individual and the task demands or critical requirements of the job as well as achieving

harmony between individual's personality and the climate/culture of an organization (Bowen, et al., 1991: 38). In his inclusionary study, McDonald (1993: 16-18) consider POF with task, compensation and culture fit. Task fit denotes achieving a good match between task requirements and the abilities/skills of an employee. Compensation fit refers that POF takes place when employees perceive based on the social comparison that their efforts are being rewarded equitably. Moreover, cultural fit denotes the harmony of employee personality in relation to organizational culture, values, and norms.

As can be seen from the explanations made so far, the POF concept examines the fit notion within the context of interaction between individual and organization. However, the compatibility of an employee to his/her organization is also manifested in the theory of job embeddedness (Murphy, Burton, Henagan & Briscoe, 2013: 5; Reitz, 2014: 160; Reitz & Anderson, 2011: 320-321). Job embeddedness (JE) concept review employees' connections (links) with the organization and society from a wider perspective (Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006: 436). JE have three critical dimensions called as link, fit and sacrifice. Similarly with POF but also broader than it, **fit** refers “*employee's perceived compatibility or comfort with an organization and with his or her environment*” at JE theory (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski & Erez, 2001: 1104). The authors who consider fit in two aspects called as “*fit to organization (FO) and fit to community*”, state that there should be a harmony between employee's values, goals, plans, and the organizational culture. Further, the employee's job knowledge, skills or abilities, and his job demands must fit his/her current task. A better fit to organization and environment will result with better attachment/commitment to the organization both personally and professionally (Mitchell et al., 2001: 1104). To building fit in the organization, executives should primarily focus on employee recruitment and selection process. Determining the most important skills and then using role-play exercises or using pre-employment surveys will enable to improve employee's FO. To provide trainings, to share corporate culture that emphasizes the communication across the board and embracing common goals, to give promotions and financial rewards, to meet employees' long-term goals and to design a career path for the employees are other efficient instruments for executives to enable employee's FO (Holtom, Mitchell & Lee, 2006: 321-322). If an employee perceives high fit with the organization he/she will remain at his/her current job due to provid social, financial and psychological fit between his/her employer and community (Reitz, 2014: 162).

Organizational Identification

Organizational identification, which explained as a cognitive link between the definitions of organization and self-concept, defined by Ashforth & Mael (1989: 34) as “*the perception of oneness with or belongingness to a group, involving the direct or vicarious experience of its successes and failures*”. OI is a member’s definition of his/her own characteristics in the same way with organization’s characteristics. When members are strongly identified with the organization, the characteristics they use to identify the organization also define themselves. The power of the organizational identity of a member reflects the degree of commitment of his/her perceived self-concept to his/her organizational membership. When the social identity is not satisfactory for the member, he/she strives to leave the organization/group or to be subordinated in a different organization/group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Organizations have a holistic identity, which involves the beliefs that their members share with each other as distinct and stable. Strong organizational members engaged in organizational communication and affect the processes of constituting a holistic identity for members. If organizational practices do not coincide with holistic identity or members enact anomalous behaviors, organizational identity is disrupted. Due to the fact that the values and practices of a group become more salient, the tendency of members to identify with the organization is more likely (Dutton et al., 1994).

Identification tends to occur even if there is no strong leadership or member loyalty. In addition, identification defines the cognition of oneness instead of any behavior and effects functioning as precursors or consequences of cognition. Identification supports the individual to participate in facilities that appropriate with identity, to be satisfied with these activities and to intensify elements of group formation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Organizational identification in which occurs when employees’ socio-emotional needs are satisfied is the inclusion of the company’s goals in the employee’s social identity (Frenkel & Yu, 2011: 389). Individuals who are strongly identified with the organization are more likely to accomplish the tasks that benefit the whole organization rather than individual benefits (Farrell & Oczkowski, 2012: 367). A strong OI also results in some desirable outcomes such as OCB and intra-organizational cooperation. However, if the members perceive negative organization image some undesired outcomes such as depression, stress, conflict and less effort in achieving long-term goals can also be observed (Dutton et al., 1994: 240).

Hypotheses of the Study and Research Model

Perceived organizational support and fit to organization

In literature, a few researches conclude that POS is related to POF. Cable and DeRue (2002: 877) suggest that these two constructs are linked theoretically when employees ascribe dispositional traits and values to their organizations that match their personal values. Perceiving any support from current organization provides a feeling of obligation toward the organization’s welfare and goals. Meanwhile, organization member fulfils his /her socio-emotional needs and strength his/her belief that the organization recognizes and rewards enhanced performance. Thus, POS boost fit to organization of an employee (Chung, 2017: 332-333). Moynihan and Pandey (2008: 220) also state that organizations foster FO if they communicate the mission throughout the organization and ensure employee role clarity. Dawley, Houghton & Bucklew (2010: 243) who consider job fit as a dimension of job embeddedness, correlate employees’ fit with organization’s culture and job demands, while they assume that job fit is related with employees’ comfort levels in the organizations. Although they proposed that job fit heighten employee feelings of organizational support, we assume that the culture of an organization is an artifact of both shared values and management initiatives. Thus, managers could enhance employees’ fit to organization in terms of the culture that supports his/her compatibility and comfort. Gutierrez, Candela & Carver (2012: 1610) in their multi-dimensional study concluded that POS was a versatile factor, and it could have an important effect on POF. With reference to limited studies addressing the relationship between POS and FO, we can assume that employees fit to their organization in a better way when they perceive significant support from their organizations. Thus, we propose following hypothesis;

H₁: Organizational support perceived by academicians has a significant effect on fit to organization

Perceived organizational support and organizational identification

POS and OI are concepts that emerged from different theories. POS approach is developed based upon social exchange theory, social support theory, and reciprocity norm, while OI approach is derived from social identity theory. However, both of two approaches focus on the well-being of the organization and its members’ well-being (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). POS is antecedent of OI (He et al., 2014; Lam, Liu & Loi, 2016) and there is a close, direct and indirect relationship between two concepts (Demir, 2015; Ghosh, 2016; Marique, Stinglhamber, Desmette,

Caesens & Zanet, 2013; Sökmen, Ekmekçiöğlü & Çelik, 2015). Marique et al. (2013) state that fulfilment of socio-emotional needs through POS would heighten organizational attractiveness and increase the OI possibility of employees. Further, they assume that high degree POS contributes OI in socialization process and draw attention that OI is an alternative mechanism used for explaining the relationship between OI and affective commitment in the absence of strong exchange ideology. Edwards and Peccei (2010: 23-24) argue that POS and employees' perceptions about treatments have a significant effect on OI, and also predict that employees identify with the organization when they perceive that organization values their welfare. Another point that researchers have pointed out is that POS has directly and indirectly significant effect on organizational participation and intention to leave, and indirect effect took place through OI. Additionally, the organization's presented policies and applications within the scope of POS increase OI and also contribute to the production of positive outcomes by the employees. Explanations, given above, could be interpreted that POS is an antecedent for OI, namely POS could have a significant effect on OI due to the predicted outcomes. However, this effect has not tested in terms of academicians before, thus our second hypothesis;

H₂. Organizational support perceived by academicians has a significant effect on organizational identification

Fit to organization and organizational identification

Cable and DeRue (2002) stated that employees would feel involved with the organization when they believe that their values are congruent with the organization's values. Maxham and Netemeyer (2003) emphasized that employees who share the organization's values are more likely to perceive themselves as an integral part of the organization and to feel more responsible for the firm's performance and success. The greater POF not only would cause a higher identification of employees with the corporate goals and values but also they are more likely to feel ready to struggle and perform (Yaniv & Farkas, 2005: 449). Afsar and Badir (2016: 259) inferred that if the person-organization fit is related to strong social ties, POF can be strengthened with identification and it can be possible to constitute a strong tie between employees and the organization.

The bulk of research about the interaction between person-organization fit and organizational identification has shown that there was a significant relationship between these two constructs. Cable and DeRue (2002) stated that POF perceptions were related to organization-focused outcomes such as

organizational identification, OCB and so on. Anaza (2015) found that person-organization fit and person-job fit were positively related to organizational identification. Similarly, Mete, Sökmen & Bıyık (2016) determined that there was a positive relationship between person-organization fit and organizational identification. Sökmen and Bıyık (2016) also stated that there was a positive relationship between organizational commitment, person-organization fit, and organizational identification. Though there was sufficient evidence that reveals the relationship the subject matter variables in different research contexts, this study strives to ascertain the relationship between POF and OI in the context of tourism academicians. Thus, we suggest the following hypothesis:

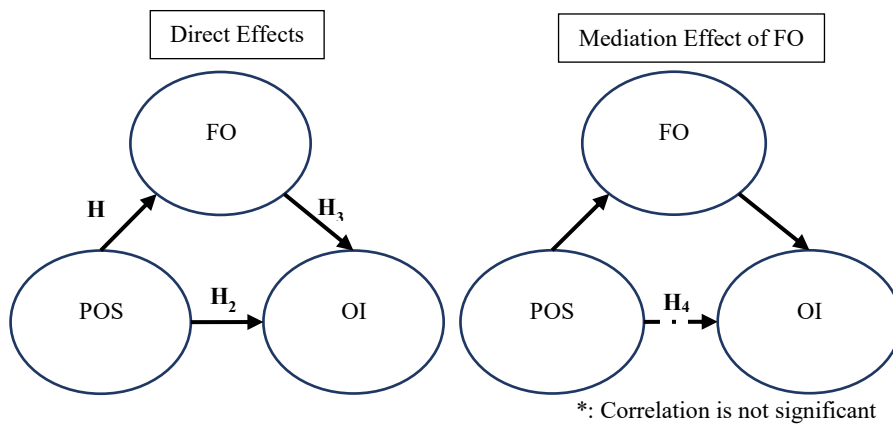
H₃. Fit into organization of academicians has a significant effect on organizational identification

Mediation Role of Fit to organization

OI is a concept that is different from FO, which includes more comprehensive, deeper ideas and it is similar only in certain dimensions with FO (Mitchell et al., 2001). However, FO, which is conceptually defined as the congruity of the values of the individual with the values of the organization, is under the influence of not only the support provided by the organization but also the non-organizational factors. The values and assumptions of an individual are directly influenced by the culture of society, which constitutes the upper culture (Smircich, 1983). While the behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions of the individual within the organization are affected by the support provided by the organization, the culture, which is the source of the FO, is more dominant in OI. Zhang et al. (2012) state that the construct of JE emphasizes the important roles of non-attitudinal and off-the-job factors in understanding employees' attachment to their organization which one is the antecedent of organizational identification. Ruiz-Palomino et al. (2013) concluded that PO-fit partially mediated the relationship between ethical culture and some outcome variables such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to stay, and willingness to recommend. Gutierrez et al. (2012), in their research, found that FO is the mediator between job satisfaction, developmental experiences and continuance commitment, as well as POS and affective commitment, which are also considered as organizational outcomes. Seong, Hong and Park (2012) infer that P-O fit mediates work status and organizational commitment. Bremner and Goldenberg (2015) indicated that person organization fit partially mediated the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment. Çelik and Damar (2017) found that

person-organization fit has a mediating role between organizational justice perception and work alienation levels in a positive manner. Thus, if the perception of organizational justice increase, work alienation level of employees will decrease with the help of person-organization fit. Chung (2017) ascertained that person-organization fit mediate the relationships between workplace ostracism and both organizational citizenship behavior and deviant behaviour. Although it can be assumed that OI as one of the organizational outcome closely related with other outcome variables. Thus, it is possible that PO-fit mediates between POS and OI as well. And, we suggest the following hypothesis and research model:

H4: Fit to organization has a mediator effect between perceived organizational support and organizational identification



METHODOLOGY

This study aims to reveal the effects of POS on OI and FO, and to measure the mediation role of FO between POS and OI. Within this scope, academicians from different universities throughout Turkey were assigned as the population of the study. Data were collected by total sampling method. Although all of the participants of population were reached, only 193 participants have returned. Thus, in February 2016, academic staff pages of tourism faculties were scanned and e-mail addresses were collected in an attempt to send the online-questionnaire form. Questionnaire form basically consists of four main sections where section B, C, and D consist of 7 point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree).

- a) **Section A:** In this section, there are some close-ended descriptive questions such as gender, the group of ages, marital status, title, and tenure.
- b) **Section B:** This section involves 8 items about organizational support. Although POS generally measured with Eisenberger and his

colloques (1986) 36-item scale, there are many shortened form of this scale consisting of 8 or 9 items. In this study, we measured POS with 8 item scale used by Rhoades ve Eisenberger (2002: 699) and its Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.944 for this study. Also, Factor analysis performed to assign validity revealed that POS is a unidimensional scale and it is valid due to the Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMS) coefficient 0.940 while the significance of Bartlett's test is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$).

- c) **Section C:** Third section of the questionnaire designed for the reveal how academicians fit to their organization. We preferred a 9-item FO scale measuring fit to organization, which is used by Wilson (2010) to measure FO at the

education sector. According to Factor Analysis results, FO scale is valid since the KMO coefficient is 0.898 and significance of Bartlett's test is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$).

- d) **Section D:** The final part of the questionnaire mainly measure OI of academicians with 8 items. OI scale was adapted from Mael and Asforth's study conducted in 1992. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.848 for OI scale. Additionally OI scale is unidimensional due to the fact that the validity test (Factor analysis). Scale's KMO coefficient is 0.857 and significance of Bartlett's test is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$).

The survey was conducted from 15th February to 15th May via an online questionnaire designed on Google Forms. Online questionnaire link was sent to 747 academicians, however 206 participants gave feedback to study. The fact remains that, 13 from was excluded due to the incomplete or incorrect information. Eventually, the study was conducted with 193 participants' contributions.

Descriptive Analysis

This section contains frequency and percentage analysis about some demographics of participants, and, the review of survey scales based on mean and standard deviation values for each item. Analysis of demographics shows that approximately 63.7% of participants are male and 69.95% of all is married. The major group within the context of ages is 25-34 ages with 35.8%, followed by 35-44 ages 28.5%. 34.7% of participants are research assistant, while 28.0 % is an assistant professor and 15.5% is associated professor. 44.6% of participants are working at the same university for more than 5 years, and the rest of the sample has less than 5-year carrier at their current institution.

In the ongoing process, POS, FO and OI level of participants is reviewed by mean and standard deviations in Table 1. As seen in Table 1, participants are highly identified with their current organization

“When someone criticizes my university, it feels like a personal insult” has lower mean among other items.

According to results in Table 1, participants think that their organization primarily values their contribution to its well-being (\bar{X} : 4.73) within the context of POS. This perception is followed by “when I do my best, my organization notice this (\bar{X} : 4.56). It is worthy that; participants are more fit into organization rather than the community (social circle). This may also enhance their OI since they are more integrated with the organization. When FTO of participants is considered, “I like the members of my workgroup” (\bar{X} : 5.48), “My job utilizes my skills and talents well (\bar{X} : 5.33)” and “I feel like I am a good match for this company (\bar{X} : 5.15)” are the most important indicators for participants in the context of fit into organization.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis for Survey Scales

| Factor | Item | $\bar{\chi}$ | s.d. | Factor | Item | $\bar{\chi}$ | s.d. |
|---|-------|--------------|------|---|-------|--------------|------|
| Organizational Identification ($\bar{\chi}$:4.87) | OI-1 | 4,13 | 1,80 | Fit to Organization ($\bar{\chi}$:4.92) | FTO-1 | 5,48 | 1,41 |
| | OI-2 | 5,41 | 1,40 | | FTO-2 | 4,03 | 1,65 |
| | OI-3 | 5,30 | 1,69 | | FTO-3 | 5,33 | 1,58 |
| | OI-4 | 5,05 | 1,65 | | FTO-4 | 5,15 | 1,64 |
| | OI-5 | 4,57 | 1,63 | | FTO-5 | 5,08 | 1,71 |
| | OI-6 | 4,78 | 1,77 | | FTO-6 | 4,73 | 1,79 |
| Perceived Organizational Support ($\bar{\chi}$:4.46) | POS-1 | 4,73 | 1,61 | | FTO-7 | 4,46 | 1,80 |
| | POS-2 | 4,21 | 1,87 | | FTO-8 | 4,93 | 1,81 |
| | POS-3 | 4,52 | 1,80 | | FTO-9 | 5,12 | 1,52 |
| | POS-4 | 4,48 | 1,68 | | | | |
| | POS-5 | 4,56 | 1,77 | | | | |
| | POS-6 | 4,32 | 1,65 | | | | |
| | POS-7 | 4,52 | 1,74 | | | | |
| | POS-8 | 4,36 | 1,72 | | | | |
| 1-Strongly Disagree \leftrightarrow 7-Strongly Agree | | | | $\bar{\chi}$: Mean, s.d.: standard deviation | | | |

(\bar{X} : 4.87) and perceive high-degree organizational support (\bar{X} : 4.46) while their FO level (\bar{X} : 4.92) is higher than OI and POS. “I’m very interested in what others think about my university” has the highest value among all items expressing OI of participants, while

Findings

With respect to the aim of the study, firstly, correlations among OI, POS, and FO were calculated in Table 2. As seen in Table 2, the OI of participants

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

| | | OI | POS |
|-----|-------------------------|---------|---------|
| POS | Pearson Correlation (r) | 0,526** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) (p) | 0,000 | |
| FO | Pearson Correlation (r) | 0,635** | 0,601** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) (p) | 0,000 | 0,000 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

is highly correlated with POS (r: 0.526, p<0.05) and FO (r: 0.635, p<0.05). On the other hand, POS is also highly correlated with FO (r: 0.601, p<0.05).

According to the results, any organizational support perceived by participants significantly affects their FO level (F: 207.367, β : 0.722, p<0.05). Each increment at

Table 3: Regression Analysis

| Model | Dependent Variable | Unstandardized β | Standard Error | Standardized β | t | Sig. | F value | Adjusted R ² | Sig. |
|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|--------|--------------|---------|-------------------------|-------|
| 1 | FO | POS | | | | | | | |
| | Constant | 2.039 | 0.211 | --- | 9,684 | 0,000 | 207.367 | 0.518 | 0,000 |
| | POS | 0.646 | 0.045 | 0,722 | 14,410 | 0,000 | | | |
| <i>FO= 2.039 + 0.722*POS</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | OI | POS | | | | | | | |
| | Constant | 2.869 | 0.247 | --- | 11,626 | 0,000 | 73.160 | 0.273 | 0,000 |
| | POS | 0.449 | 0.053 | 0,526 | 8,553 | 0,000 | | | |
| <i>OI= 2.869 + 0.526*POS</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | OI | FO | | | | | | | |
| | Constant | 1.672 | 0.257 | --- | 6,502 | 0,000 | 166.053 | 0.462 | 0,000 |
| | FO | 0.650 | 0.050 | 0,682 | 12,886 | 0,000 | | | |
| <i>OI= 1.672 + 0.682*FO</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | OI | POS, FO | | | | | | | |
| | Constant | 1.642 | 0,259 | --- | 6,334 | 0,000 | 83.401 | 0.462 | 0,000 |
| | POS | 0.061 | 0,065 | 0,071 | 0,930 | 0,353 | | | |
| | FO | 0.602 | 0,073 | 0,631 | 8,245 | 0,000 | | | |
| <i>OI= 1.642 + 0.631*FO</i> | | | | | | | | | |

In consideration of Correlation analysis results, research hypotheses are tested with Regression analysis. And, to test the mediating effect of FO Baron and Kenny’s (1986) approach is adopted. Baron and Kenny’s approach predicts to occur three main conditions (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1176);

- a) Variations in levels of the independent variable significantly account for variations in the presumed mediator. In other words, POS of participants should significantly affect FO.
- b) Variations in the mediator significantly account for variations in the dependent variable. Thus, the POS of participants should have a significant effect on OI.
- c) when Paths a and b are controlled, a previously significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables is no longer significant, with the strongest demonstration of mediation occurring when Path c is zero..... When Path c is reduced to zero, we have strong evidence for a single, dominant mediator. If the residual Path c is not zero, this indicates the operation of multiple mediating factors. Namely, POS’s effect on OI should decrease or should not be significant when FO count in the Regression model as a mediator.

Within this scope, three-step Regression analysis is performed and results are presented in Table 3.

POS, contribute their fit into organization in proportion to 72% by explaining 52% of total variance. Thus, the first hypothesis of the study “**H₁: Organizational support perceived by academicians have a significant effect on FO**” is accepted.

Regression Model 2 consists measuring effects of POS on OI. Test results confirm that POS significantly affect the OI level of participants (F: 73.160, β : 0.526, p<0.05). In other words, the more support is given by organization the more participants become identified with the organization. The contribution rate of POS at this process is approximately 53% for each increment. Thereby, the second hypothesis of the study is also accepted which refers to “**H₂: Organizational support perceived by academicians have a significant effect on OI**”. On the other hand Model 3 refers that FO significantly affects OI (F: 166.053, β : 0.682, p<0.05). Each increment at FO contributes at the rate of %68 OI of participants. So, “**H₃: Fit into organization of participants have a significant effect on OI**” is accepted.

Regression Model 4 measure the mediator effect of FO on OI. As mentioned before, the predetermined significant effect of POS on OI should be insignificant as soon as FO variable count into the regression model. Anyway, Model 3 indicates that POS has an insignificant effect on OI (p: 0.353, p>0.05), while FO significantly affects OI (p<0.05). In other words, if we simultaneously take into consideration any effects of POS and FO on OI, each increment at FO increases OI

Table 4: Sobel Test Results

| | <i>Input</i> | | <i>Test statistic (z)</i> | <i>Std. Error</i> | <i>p-value</i> |
|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <i>a</i> | 0.646 | <i>Sobel test:</i> | 7.15070135 | 0.054 | 0.000 |
| <i>b</i> | 0.602 | <i>Aroian test:</i> | 7.1376924 | 0.054 | 0.000 |
| <i>S_a</i> | 0.045 | <i>Goodman test:</i> | 7.16378169 | 0.054 | 0.000 |
| <i>S_b</i> | 0.073 | | | | |

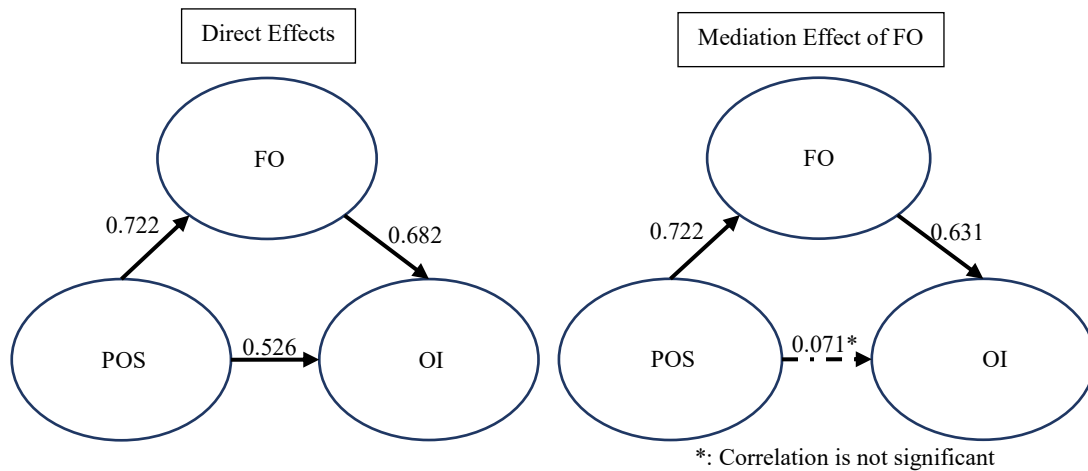
level of employees at the rate of %63, meanwhile POS's effect on OI is insignificant although it was significant before. Thus, we resume that fit into organization is a mediator between POS and OI, and the last hypothesis of the study is accepted referring "*H₄: FO has a mediator effect between POS and OI.*"

With reference to acceptance of *H₄*, SOBEL test is performed in order to determine the significance of the mediator effect. Preacher and Leonardelli (2001), state that SOBEL test works in large samples and aims to test whether a mediator carries the influence of an independent variable to the dependent variable. Also, with respect to the model, *S_a* and *S_b* values should be positive and p-value should be significant (p<0.05) so as to accept the mediator effect. Results in Table 4 confirm that FO has a significant effect on OI, meanwhile, it is a mediator between POS and OI (z: 7.150, p: 0.000, p<0.05). Results obtained from SOBEL test support our last hypothesis in which referring FO is a mediator between POS and OI.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The major contribution of this study is the assertion of significant effects among POS, OI and FO. In addition, the mediating role of FO between POS and OI is also identified. All of four hypotheses were supported suggesting that POS has a significant effect on FO (*H₁*) and OI (*H₂*), FO has a significant effect on OI (*H₃*) and the mediating role of FO between POS and OI (*H₄*).

The results show that there is a strong correlation between POS and OI and FO. In consideration of Correlation analysis results, Regression Analysis was performed to test research hypotheses. According to the results, any organizational support perceived by participants significantly affect their FO level This finding supported by Cable and DeRue (2002) who observed strong support on the relationship between person-organization fit perceptions and perceived



In sum, the study reveals that there are significant correlations among POS, FO, and OI. By considering any possible effects, POS significantly affects fit into organization of participants; meanwhile POS also significantly affects their organizational identification process. Moreover, FO significantly affects organizational identification of participants; simultaneously FO is a mediator between POS and OI of participants.

organizational support, offering positive evidence about the convergent validity of employees' person-organization fit perceptions. Dawley et al. (2010) also assigned that job fit can increase the overall perception of organizational support. In addition to these parallel results, we also assume that the culture of an organization is an artifact of both shared values and management initiatives. Thus, managers could enhance employees' fit to organization. The positive climate that the organization will provide to the employees

in terms of participation in the decisions and taking the initiative will ensure a more harmonious working environment and sharing culture. In this way, it will be possible for the organizational values to spread to all members of the organization and the formation of a common working discipline. This will also cause the members of the organization to spend extra effort to adapt to the organizational culture. Meanwhile, the organization member fulfills his /her socio-emotional needs and strength his/her belief that the organization recognizes and rewards enhanced performance.

Any possible effect of participants' perceived organizational support on their organizational identification level was tested with another Regression modeling (model 2). Test results confirm that there is a significant effect between these two variables. The convergence of this finding with other studies' findings verified that POS is a significant antecedent of OI. For example, Edwards and Peccei (2010) who tested a simultaneous multi-foci model found that POS has a positive effect on identification. Moreover, they concluded that organizational support has a direct and indirect effect on outcomes through OI. Marique et al. (2013) argued that employees are very likely to strongly identify themselves with their organization when they perceive a high level of organizational support. He et al. (2014) inferred that POS is positively related to OI. In another study, Sökmen et al. (2015) ascertained that there is a positive and significant relationship between POS and OI. Similarly, Ghosh (2016) determined the same relationship between POS and OI. Either of the convergence of relevant studies with our findings or from our understanding, it is possible to say that POS is an important antecedent of employee work attitudes and behaviors, thus their identification with the organization.

The results also contribute to the literature by demonstrating the possible effects of FO on OI (model 3). In consideration of model 3, it is observed that if the FO of participants increases, they are more likely to feel identified with the organization. This result is congruent with other studies' results that confirmed the possible effects of FO on OI. For example, Anaza (2015) ascertained that POF has a significant relationship with OI. Similarly, Demir, Demir & Nield (2015) inferred that the person-organization fit has a significant effect on organizational identification.

With reference to predictions of the Sobel test, the predetermined significant effect of POS on OI should be insignificant when FO variable count into the model. Results show that POS has an insignificant effect on OI, while FO significantly affects OI. Thus, we observed that fit into organization is a mediator between POS and OI.

After that in order to determine the significance of the mediator effect, we performed the Sobel test. Sobel test results confirm that fit into organization of participants has a significant effect on OI; meanwhile, it is a mediator between organizational support perceived by participants and their organizational identification. In our framework, even though FO is affected by not only organizational but also non-organizational factors, organizational culture has strong influence on OI. While the behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions of the individual within the organization are affected by the organizational support, the culture, which is the source of the FO, is more dominant in OI.

From theoretical and practical explanations of this study, a major implication of the study is that a manager should concentrate on matters that increase workmates' perceived organizational support and empowering them to raise their fit into organization and identification. From this point of view, we suggest some other implications:

- Managers should be aware that they could develop highly organizational identification despite the low organizational support by increasing the prestige and reputation of their organizations.
- Managers should be fair in sharing resources and in their behaviors towards workmates in order to increase the identification level of them with the organization. By providing autonomy to employees, supporting knowledge sharing, and encouraging the delivery of proposals, managers can increase the level of individual effort, POS, commitment, and OI.
- Managers should consider the relationship between the employee and the organization as the norm of reciprocity, and remember that this is an ideology of exchange. In this context, managers should follow and define the level of workmates' exchange ideology and should use this relationship to increase the perception of identification and support.
- Although this study is one of prior studies discussing mediating role of FO, this subject is still need to improve with more studies that are comprehensive.
- To corroborate the mediating effect of FO further studies using multiple research methods should be conducted.

This study emphasize the importance of FO, OI and POS in terms of hospitality industry. However, similar studies need to be conducted in different

organization types to increase the validity of constructs and the contribution to current literature. Finally, this study has also some limitations like others conducted in social sciences. First, conclusions of the study derived from a limited sample. Further data used in the study was gathered in a certain period. Thus, both conclusions and implications could not be generalized. Antecedents of both three construct could have noteworthy effects on the results. However, this study excluded those potential effects due to objectives of the study. Eventually, this study measure a mediating effect through certain variables such as POS and OI, but there could be additional constructs, which are also a determiner to this mediator, and this constitutes a limitation for this study.

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