Examination of organizational commitment levels of the academic staffs employed in sports sciences in Turkey

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the organizational commitment perceptions of academics who teach in the sports fields. Population of the research is composed of academics who teach in the sports fields as part of the academic staff. The research group consists of 408 academics who work in the field of sports sciences. In the research, a questionnaire form was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire consists of two parts. In the first part, there are 5 questions to determine the demographic and employment characteristics of the individuals, and in the second part, there are 18 questions in the form of a 5-point Likert scale to determine the perception of organizational commitment. Data analysis was conducted in SPSS 16 package program. When the organizational commitment perception according to demographic and employment characteristics was examined, it was found that emotional commitment perception differed only by the title variable. It has been found that academics with the title of Professor have higher emotional commitment than others.

Keywords: Organizational Commitment, Academic Personnel, Sports Sciences;

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1. **Introduction**

Academics who teach in the field of sports play important roles both in the development of sports education and in the development of athletes. It is critical for the academics to undertake duties affiliated to the organization and to express their opinions about the organization.

Organizational commitment is significant in terms of the performances of the organization members. Individual with a high commitment to the organization merge his/her goals and objectives with the goals and objectives of the organization (Nikpour, 2017; Al Zefeiti & Mohamad, 2017; Hafiz, 2017). This situation enables individuals to perform better in line with the organizational goals. Thus, better performance by the individuals for the organization affect the success of the organization positively (Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Joo & Bennett).

For an increase in commitment to the organization, it is essential for individuals to express themselves freely. The ability of individuals to express themselves in the best way within the organization is critical in strengthening their feelings of commitment to the organization (Özgener et al., 2008; Arslan, 2012).

The aim of this research is to examine the organizational commitment perceptions of academics who teach in the sports fields in Turkey. The high commitment of academic staff to the organization affect the quality of education, success of the students as well as academic advancements. This study is important in terms of determining the situation of organizational commitment of the academic staff.

1.2 Theoretical Principles

While organizational commitment is considered as the employee's acceptance of corporate goals and values, his/her efforts to achieve the specified goals and desire to continue to work in the organization; in another study, it is defined as the attitudes and behaviors, loyalty, identification with the job and compliance with the work of the employees. From a different perspective, organizational commitment can be outlined as an indicator of the degree of loyalty and commitment to the organization. (Kök and Özcan, 2012; Ali and Kakakhel, 2013).

For many organizations, labor turnover is an important cost factor, and increasing productivity and reducing staff turnover by decreasing this cost, is very critical for organizations. Organizational commitment is a very long-established subject and in recent years, has attracted the attention of both academics (especially social scientists) and practitioners working in the private or public sectors. One of the most important reasons for this intense attention is the possible positive effects of organizational commitment on employees and the performance of employees as a result of the significant relationships between important employee behaviors such as job performance, absenteeism, labor turnover and job satisfaction. (Yücel and Çetinkaya, 2015; Dou, Devos and Volcke, 2017).

Commitment has been an infeasible to measure aspect of engaging in relationships for years, however managers knew intuitively that this was a valuable goal. It is a generally accepted fact that organizational commitment, which plays an important role in increasing organizational effectiveness, should be promoted in enterprises. Due to its significant impact on organizational efficiency and effectiveness, the multitude of studies in the field of organizational commitment is not a surprise, but a need, and thus new studies advances. Mainly, organizational commitment which is considered as a concept that expresses commitment to the workplace both emotionally

and behaviorally has been examined from different perspectives in the literature. In the one hand, it is addressed as the dependent variable determined by factors such as age, employment duration and education, on the other hand, it is accepted as the determinant of different outcomes such as labor turnover, desire to leave, absenteeism and performance (Çöllü and Summak, 2010; Celep, 2014).

Commitment is expressed as a positive sentiment toward the organization, regardless of whether someone is working for the organization or whether it is one of the outside public opinion. On the other hand, commitment emphasizes the role of attachment felt by the employees and their desire to be employed by the organization (Ali and Kakakhel, 2013; Celep, 2014).

The concept of organizational commitment emerges as one of the issues that are emphasized in the literature. However, despite many studies on the subject, there has not been a clear consensus about the concept. The reason is that the researchers who are in the fields such as organizational behavior, psychology and sociology, usually approach the concept in accordance with their own fields (Sencan et al., 2013).

Organizational commitment is expressed as internalization of goals and values by individuals, and emergence of the desire to remain in the organization as a result of high level of efforts for the mentioned goals and values. Today, while organizational change has an important place in the attempts of institutions to survive; individuals have become the most important element in these attempts because they affect every point in the organizations. This effect leads the concept of organizational commitment to become even more important for institutions. It will be easier for employees who have commitment to the organization to work for organizational development (Kök and Özcan, 2012).

People want to use their skills, knowledge and talents for the institution if their organizational commitment level increases. However, if the opposite situation exists, people want to leave and drift away from institution. In such situation, the institution has to face losses of time and cost. In addition to this, it is possible for the institution to face with leaves of employee. Organizational commitment, which is discussed structurally in multiple dimensions, clearly shows how important the human factor is in achieving organizational goals and in effective use of resources (Çöllü and Summak, 2010).

Institutions have to keep their skilled employees in order to be more successful. In order to ensure this, they need to increase satisfaction levels of their employees by meeting the spiritual, social and physical needs of them. Thus, while the efficiency of the employees increases within the scope of the activities, the competitive advantage of the institution against other companies also increases. In addition, job satisfaction of the employees with high organizational commitment also increases and these employees become more beneficial for the organization (Karataş and Güleş, 2010).

Organizational commitment is also expressed as a concept of change, also known as the reward value model. Just as employers are concerned with employees' loyalty and contribution to the company, employees are also concerned with how the organization value their contribution and how they maintain their well-being through a reward system. Rewards can be directly linked to the job itself through challenges of the job, work responsibilities, and supporting colleagues. However, if an institution fails to meet a person's expectations, it should

recognize that the work performance and organizational commitment of the employees will weaken, and employee absenteeism will increase.

There are many studies in the organizational commitment literature that show there are strong relationships between personal factors and organizational commitment. In the literature, personal or demographic characteristics are the most studied characteristics among the agents of organizational commitment.

In many studies, age was seen as an important factor on organizational commitment, but its value as an explanatory factor was questioned. There are some indications as studies conducted in the literature shows that employees are more attached in organizational sense as they get older (Ruokolainen, 2011). Employees with low levels of education generally have more difficulty in changing jobs and therefore show more commitment to their organizations. As the education level of the employee increases, the expectation from the organization will increase as well, resulting with a decrease in the level of (Celep, 2014).

Based on some research findings, it has been claimed that married women will have more organizational commitment than men towards the organization they work for because of their role in the family. In the business model theory, it is claimed that women and men will exhibit the same level of dedication to the organization they work in considering they have the same employment conditions. In his research with human resources managers, Whan (1998) concluded that women have more commitment to their organizations than men (cited by Joiner and Bakalis, 2006).

One of the factors related to the priority of the job in employee's life is the individual's marital status. It is suggested that individuals who are married or separated will find it more costly to leave the organization and therefore their organizational commitment will be higher. In his study on nurses, Blau (1985) has concluded that married nurses are more dedicated to their institution than unmarried ones. Organizational commitment of people working in human-intensive organizations such as health, education and security is more likely to affect home life more than other organizations (cited in: Celep, 2014).

Employment duration is also among the personal factors associated with organizational commitment. Since the employees who worked in the organization for a long time have a higher amount of effort and time spent on the organization, these employees achieve a certain status and got various promotion opportunities. Since these kinds of investments are not easily indispensable by the employees, the employee will feel committed to the organization (Bakan, 2011).

1.3 Related Researches

In the organizational behavior literature, the concept of organizational commitment is among the frequently examined topics. Many studies have been conducted to measure the relationship of organizational commitment with different variables. In this section of the study, various studies which examine organizational commitment by associating it with different variables have been analyzed.

The relationship between professional stress and organizational commitment was tested by Ali and Kakakhel (2013) with the participation of 334 medical representatives working in national and multinational pharmaceutical companies in Pakistan. Professional stress was evaluated

separately as physiological and psychological stress. A negative correlation was seen between both physiological and psychological stress experienced by the employees and their organizational commitment levels.

Demirtaş (2015) has investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment in primary schools and as a result, he found that there is a positive and significant relationship. It was stated by the researcher that job satisfaction and organizational commitment affect each other reciprocatively.

In their studies, in which they applied applications to public and private sector employees, Yücel and Çetinkaya aimed to reveal the relationship between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment. As a result, it was concluded that there are significant relationships between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment.

In their studies that examine the effect of a positive school management on organizational commitment Balay et al. (2017) found that positive school management predicted teachers' perceptions of organizational commitment positively, moderately, and significantly.

As a result of the study in which Köybaşı, Uğurlu and Ceylan (2017) examined the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational image, it was found that there is a positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational image and organizational commitment, and that organizational image significantly predicted organizational commitment.

Dou, Devos and Volcke (2017), in their studies, in which they examined the relationships between school autonomy, main leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, presented that instructional and transformational leadership had an important and positive effect on teachers 'organizational commitment.

As a result of their work, Kim and Kim (2017) found a positive relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment and autonomy, and they expressed that employees who are free in their work environment are more likely to embrace their jobs and are satisfied with their duties. In the same study, it was concluded that there is a negative relationship between autonomy and intention to quit.

Gökkaya, İzgüden and Erdem (2018), as a result of their studies that examine the relationship between academics' informal relationships and organizational commitments, determined that there is a positive and significant relationship in the level of organizational commitment of informal relationships in the dimensions of emotional and normative commitment.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Model

In this study, data was collected through the scale within the scope of descriptive survey model. The model of the research is given below.
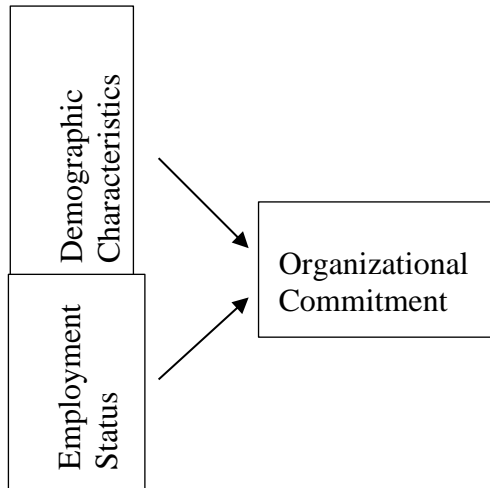
Figure 1. Research Model

2.2. Research Group

Population of the research is composed of academics who teach in the sports fields as part of the academic staff. The research group consists of 408 academics who work in the field of sports sciences.

Table 1. Demographic and Employment Characteristics of the Participant Academics

n=408		Frequency	%
Gender	Female	32	7.8
	Male	376	92.2
Age	20-29	40	9.8
	30-39	88	21.6
	40-49	176	43.1
	50 and older	104	25.5
Marital Status	Single	80	19.6
	Married	328	80.4
Employment Period	1-5 years	112	27.5
	6-10 years	88	21.6
	11-15 years	32	7.8
	16-20 years	24	5.9
	21 and more years	152	37.3
Title	Research Assistant	72	17.6
	Lecturer	56	13.7
	Assistant Professor	112	27.5
	Associate Professor	128	31.4
	Professor	40	9.8

In Table 1, demographic and employment characteristics of the academics participating in the research are examined. Among the participant academics, 92.2% are male, 43.1% are between 40-49 years old, 80.4% are married, 37.3% have been serving for 21 years and over, and 31.4% are associate professors.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

In the research as a data collection tool, a questionnaire form was used. The questionnaire form consists of two parts. In the first part, there are 5 questions to determine the demographic characteristics and employment status of the individuals, and in the second part, there are 18 questions in the form of a 5-point Likert scale to determine the perception of organizational commitment. In order to measure organizational commitment, the study named "Commitmentto Occupations: Extension and Test of a Three-Component Conceptualization" developed by Meyer et al. (1993) was used. The scale is referred to as "Organizational Commitment Scale" in the Turkish literature. Turkish validity and reliability study were performed by Wasti (2000). The scale consists of three sub-dimensions.

The emotional commitment subscale consists of 6 questions, the normative commitment subscale consists of 6 questions and the continuation commitment subscale consists of 6 questions. Cronbach Alpha values of the sub-dimensions are 0.792 for emotional commitment, 0.781 for normative commitment and 0.802 for continuation commitment.

Table 2. Test of normality of dependent variables in the research

n=408		Organizational Commitment Scale Sub-dimensions		
		Emotional commitment	Normative commitment	Continuation Commitment
Normal Parameters	Mean	19.35	16.94	17,70
	Std. Deviation	3.98	3.01	2,92
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		0,742	0.784	1.196
p		**0,641**	**0.570**	**0.114**

In Table 2, the normality assumption regarding the organizational commitment perceptions was tested. As a result of the analysis, it was accepted that the sub-dimensions of organizational commitment and organizational cynicism scales provided the normality assumption (p>0,05). As normality assumption was ensured, it was decided to use parametric tests of t test and ANOVA test.

2.4. Data analysis

Data analysis was done in SPSS 16 package program. The decision whether the indifference tests will be parametric or nonparametric tests was determined by Kolmogorov - Smirnov Test. It was decided that the sub-dimensions fit the normal distribution conditions since "p" values were not at the 5% significance level within the scope of the test results. It was decided to use the parametric tests of t test and ANOVA test.

3 RESULTS

Table 3. Satisfaction Status of the Academics Regarding the Working Conditions

	Frequency	%
Very satisfied	48	11.8
Satisfied	240	58.8
Indecisive	88	21.6
Not satisfied	32	7.8

As shown in Table 3, when satisfaction status regarding the working conditions of the academics is examined, 58.8% of them are satisfied and 11.8% of them are very satisfied.

Table 4. Perception of Organizational Commitment Regarding Demographic and Employment Characteristics

n=408		Mean ± Std. deviation		
		Emotional commitment	**Normative commitment**	**Continuation commitment**
Gender	Female	22.25±7.32	16.00±4.89	17.25±2.36
	Male	19.10±3.60	17.02±2.87	17.74±2.98
	t	1.533	0.646	0.321
	p	0.132	0.521	0.749
Age	20-29	20.80±2.68	17.00±2.12	17.40±2.19
	30-39	16.63±4.75	17.27±3.82	17.27±2.41
	40-49	19.09±3.13	17.54±2.72	17.90±3.87
	50 and more	19.84±5.11	15.61±2.93	17.84±1.62
	F	0.420	1.190	0.136
	p	0.739	0.324	0.938
Marital Status	Single	18.20±4.13	17.10±2.02	17.80±1.81
	Married	19.63±3.95	16.90±3.23	17.68±3.15
	t	1.020	0.184	0.112
	p	0.313	0.855	0.911
Employment Period	1-5 years	18.21±3.06	17.00±2.98	17.64±2.56
	6-10 years	20.63±2.06	15.81±3.12	16.18±3.68
	11-15 years	17.25±1.25	16.50±1.91	18.25±3.43
	16-20 years	24.66±4.61	21.00±3.00	18.33±4.04
	21 and more years	19.05±4.96	17.00±2.86	18.42±2.38
	F	2.464	1.890	1.109
	p	0.058	0.128	0.364
Title	Research Assistant	18.44±3.77	17.33±2.44	17.55±1.66
	Lecturer	18.00±5.29	16.66±1.52	16.00±2.00
	Assistant Professor	17.57±3.41	19.92±3.29	17.35±2.49
	Associate Professor	18.81±2.28	15.75±2.84	17.81±4.05
	Professor	24.20±3.49	17.80±2.94	19.00±2.23
	F	**3.306**	1.512	0.480
	p	**0.013**	0.205	0.789
Satisfaction Status	Very satisfied	22.16±6.64	18.33±1.86	17.83±2.04
	Satisfied	20.96±3.55	16.83±3.32	17.73±3.47
	Indecisive	16.72±2.24	17.36±2.15	17.45±2.25
	Not satisfied	17.75±2.06	14.50±3.31	18.00±1.41
	F	3.489	1.419	0.043

p	0.023	0.249	0.988

When the organizational commitment perception according to demographic and employment characteristics is examined in Table 4, it is determined that the emotional commitment perception differs only according to the title variable (p<0,05). According to the Tukey test, which is one of the Post Hoc tests conducted in order to determine from which variable the difference originated, it was determined that the academics with the title of Professor have higher emotional commitment than others.

4 DISCUSS

In this study, the organizational commitment perceptions of the academics in the sports department were examined. In the study, it was determined that the perception of academics' emotional commitment was higher than their perception of attendance commitment and normative commitment. The emotional commitment perception is followed respectively by the perception of attendance commitment and normative commitment. Sert (2010) explained that emotional commitment of the employees has turned out to be high because they identified themselves with the organization, are happy being a member of the organization and because of the ambitions and goals of the organization as well as their passion for their role within the organization. On the contrary, Eğilmezkol (2011) found in his study that attendance commitment was lower than emotional and normative commitment

Organizational commitment perceptions of the trainers according to the demographic characteristics were examined. It is determined that emotional commitment, normative commitment and continuation commitment did not differ according to the gender, educational status, and employment period of the trainers. Fırat (2015) and Korkmaz (2017) have concluded that that socio-demographic characteristics are not effective on organizational commitment. Karakaya and Karademir (2013) have found that male physical education teachers who have an undergraduate degree have higher organizational commitment perceptions. In the study of Güllüoğlu (2011), it was concluded that men show a higher level of commitment than women. Taşlıyan et al. (2015) found that academics between the ages of 35 and 39 have the highest perception of organizational commitment, while they did not find any difference in the perception of organizational commitment by gender. Karakaya et al. (2019) has found out that there is a highly significant relationship between emotional and normative commitment and education factor in their research that they conducted with academic and administrative personnel. When the organizational commitment perception according to demographic and employment characteristics was examined, it was found that emotional commitment perception differed only by the title variable. It has been found that academics with the title of Professor have higher emotional commitment than others. However, Demirkol (2014) has found that the emotional commitment perceptions of the educators did not differ according to the title.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the relationship between academics' perceptions of organizational commitment was examined and it was attempted to determine whether these perceptions differed according to demographic and employment characteristics. In the study, it was determined that the perception of academics' emotional commitment was higher than their perception of attendance commitment and normative commitment. The emotional commitment perception is followed respectively by the perception of attendance commitment and normative commitment. Organizational commitment perceptions of the trainers according

to the demographic characteristics were examined. It is determined that emotional commitment, normative commitment and continuation commitment did not differ according to the gender, educational status, and employment period of the trainers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations in the research are as follows:

• Employees should be free in how to do and how to manage their jobs and managers should encourage their employees to be effective in decisions within the organization.

• Failure or negative behavior of academics can lead to negative consequences both for the institution and students. In this regard, it may be recommended to take necessary measures and precautions by the management.

• It would be efficient in ensuring the satisfaction of academics from their jobs and their commitment to the organization to receive suggestions and criticisms with a tolerant, fair, and participatory management approach and to encourage a collaborative working environment.

• In future studies, studying different sectors could enable a comparative study with academics.

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