

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT LEVELS OF EMPLOYEES WORKING AT HOTEL ENTERPRISES: THE CASE OF FIVE STAR HOTELS IN MARMARIS/MUĞLA, TURKEY

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Abstract

In this study, the organizational commitments of employees working at hotel enterprises were reviewed. The employees working at five-star hotel enterprises in Marmaris / Muğla region were selected as samples. The data were obtained by using questionnaire technique on 266 employees of eight five-star hotel enterprises. According to findings, the organizational commitment levels of participants are positive. The highest type of commitment detected is related with the affective commitment. This is followed by normative commitment and continuance commitment respectively. However, significant differences were identified between some demographic variables of employees and organizational commitment dimensions in terms of statistics.

Keywords: tourism, hotel enterprises, employees, organizational commitment

JEL Classification: M12, J20

1. Introduction

Today, for the establishments from all industries, it is possible to mention about many issues which require giving consideration to employees. In today's world, the establishments ought to think more strategic and place more importance to human factor than in the past due to global competition, fast growing and changing technology, new formed markets, fast changing of customers' expectations and needs (Çakıcı et al., 2010: 721). In another words, the intellectual capital which is gaining importance every passing day and the growing competition creates necessity to keep the employees in the organization who are acknowledged as the most crucial factors of the establishments (Doğan and Kılıç, 2007: 38). Likewise, Özutku (2008: 79 – 80) states that today, organizational success can not be achieved only by developing the employees' capabilities and emphasizes the importance of

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encouraging them for commitment to the organization. And Balcı (2003) considers the organizational commitment as both one of the basic activities of organizations to keep themselves alive, and one of their final objectives. Because the individuals with greater organizational commitments become more conformist, more satisfied and more productive; carry higher sense of loyalty and responsibility and cause less costs for the organization.

The employees of the organization show an active characteristic unlike the other factors of production. The harmony of personal and organizational goals has a great importance on the high organizational commitment of employees. In this context, it can be stated that employees have a close relation between their embracement of organizational purposes and their commitments to establishments they work within (İbicioğlu, 2000: 13). Thus Doğan and Kılıç (2007: 39) state that an employee with a higher organizational commitment strongly believes the goals and values of the organization and makes a willing effort in order to achieve what he/she is expected to do.

On the other hand, tourism enterprises and particularly hotels can continue their activities with a great number of employees, and majority of the services they offer can be executed by limited automation opportunities (Çakıcı et al., 2010: 721). Because of the labour - intensive structure of hotel enterprises, employees have an extra importance in such organizations. Thus, in many studies of the related literature, the importance of human resource is pointed out as a competitive factor in hotel enterprises (Goldsmith et al., 1997; Boella, 2000; Hoque, 2002; Hayes and Ninemeier, 2009; Wisikoti et al., 2012). In this context, it can be stated that selection of the right employee and keeping the qualified employees are important competitive criteria in terms of hotels. All kinds of investments to be made to employees in hotel enterprises are likely to return to organization as employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, efficiency, increase in quality of services, customer satisfaction; and consequently, the increase in organizational performance (Çakıcı et al., 2010: 721).

In this study, the organizational commitment perceptions of the employees working in hotel enterprises are reviewed in three commitment axes (affective commitment, normative commitment, continuance commitment). In the study, the concept of organizational commitment was mentioned at first, then the findings obtained from the review on hotel employees were discussed.

2. The Concept of Organizational Commitment and The Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

Although the organizational concept, which is one of the attitudes of employees related with work, has been much emphasized after 1970s, it is observed that no definite agreement could be provided between the authors on how to define this fact.

The reason for that are the researchers from different disciplines such as sociology, psychology, social psychology and organizational behaviour handled the subject on the basis of their areas of expertise. Therefore, many definitions of organizational commitment are available in literature (Atalay, 2010: 50). It is possible to summarize such definitions in Table 1.

Tablo 1. Definitions of Organizational Commitment

Author / Authors	Definitions
Wiener, 1982: 418	Sum of normative pressures which were internalized to meet the organizational benefits.
Carson and Bedeian, 1994: 240	Individual motivation which provides to be employed in a selected profession.
Çöl, 2004	The force of person's connection with the organization.
Çetin, 2004: 90	Psychological commitment of the employee to the organization including participation to work, loyalty and faith in organization's values.
Tellefsen and Thomas, 2005: 24	A continuous desire which provides to sustain valuable relations. A concept which can hold the employee and organization together even in disappointments or in some problematic issues.
Doğan and Kılıç, 2007: 38	The desire of employees to stay in the organizations and their commitments to organization's goals and values.
Doğan and Kılıç, 2007: 38	Loyalty attitude of employee for the organization and interest given by him/her to make the organization successful.
Kaya and Selçuk, 2007: 179	A sense of feeling which comprises the functions of psychologic integration, providing stability and shaping behaviours; and brings the harmony between the employees' beliefs and behaviours into fore.
Bayraktaroğlu et al., 2009: 553	The degree of employees' commitment and devotion for the organization.

When all definitions made for organizational commitment is reviewed, it is seen that those definitions are focused on two basic approaches. Those are attitudinal and behavioural approaches. The reason for such a difference is that behaviour scientists and social psychologists considered the matter from different angles. While scientists who study in organizational commitment field rather emphasize attitudinal commitment, social psychologists are seen to focus more on behavioural commitment. Attitudinal commitment displays the identification of employees with

organizational purposes and their willingness to work in accordance with them. In this approach, affective reactions which are formed by individual's evaluation of the working environment and connect him/her to the organization play a role. And behavioural commitment derives from employee's commitment to behavioural activities. Employees displaying such commitment are attached to a certain activity of the organization rather than itself. For example, after the employee shows a behaviour, he/she continues to act the same way due to some factors, and after some time, he/she attaches himself/herself to this behaviour. After time goes on, he/she develops suitable attitudes for the said behaviour, and this increases the repetition possibility of the behaviour (Çöl, 2004; Çöl and Gül, 2005: 292).

Organizational commitment is a multi dimensional case. In other words, various factors play a role on individuals' commitments to organizations. Therefore, different classifications are seen related with the dimensions which form the organizational commitment in the literature (Ağca and Ertan, 2008: 391; Bayraktaroğlu et al., 2009). Such classification types related with the organizational commitment are as in Table 2.

Tablo 2. Classifications of Organizational Commitment

Author / Authors	Classification Form
Mowday's Classification	• <u>Attitudinal (Affective) Commitment</u>: Displays the identification of employees with organizational purposes and their willingness to work in accordance with them. • <u>Behavioural Commitment</u>: It derives from the commitment of the employee to behavioural activities. Employees displaying such commitment are attached to a certain activity of the organization rather than itself.
Etzioni's Classification	• <u>Moral Commitment</u>: When the employees follow the purposes useful for society, they become more committed to their organizations. • <u>Calculative Commitment</u>: Employees commit to their organizations for rewards they will obtain in return for their contributions. • <u>Alienative Commitment</u>: The commitment which is created when behaviours of the employees are limited and expresses a negative attitude towards the organization. The employee does not psychologically feel commitment to the organization, but continues his/her membership.

Author / Authors	Classification Form
O'Reilly and Chatman's Classification	• <u>Adaptation Commitment</u>: This commitment is created not for the shared values, but to gain certain rewards. The attraction of reward and repulsion of penalty are at the forefront. • <u>Identification Commitment</u>: This commitment is created in order to establish a satisfying relation with others or maintain that relation. The employee is proud of to be a member of a group. • <u>Internalisation Commitment</u>: Totally depends on the harmony between individual and organizational values. It is created when employees bring their inner world into conformity with the values system of other people in the organization.
Katz and Kahn's Classification	• <u>Narrative Circuit</u>: The employees feel commitment to the organization as result of intrinsic rewards. • <u>Instrumental Circuit</u>: Extrinsic rewards are effective in the actions of employees in the system. The incentive role of extrinsic rewards create the organizational commitment.
Wiener's Classification	• <u>Instrumental Commitment</u>: Refers to being calculative, beneficial and inclined to one's own interests and benefits. • <u>Normative-Moral Commitment</u>: It is the commitment type which is created by motivation based on value or moral.

Source: Doğan, S., & Kılıç, S. (2007). "The Situation and Importance of Empowerment in Obtaining Organizational Commitment". Erciyes University the Journal of Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, July – December, (29), pp. 40 – 44.

In addition to these classification forms, Meyer and Allen (1991) have classified the organizational commitment by taking it into three groups: affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. This model developed by Meyer and Allen has been commonly in other studies in last 20 years (Yüksel and Tunçsiper, 2011: 57). The general acknowledgement of this classification in related literature have caused the said three commitment factors to be taken as basis in this conducted study as well.

Affective commitment defines the commitment of individual to the organization in an emotive way, his/her identification with the organization and staying in the organization with his/her own will and preference (Özutku, 2008: 82). And

McGee and Ford (1987) describe the affective commitment as the employees' acknowledgement of organizational goals and values, and make extraordinary efforts for the benefit of the organization. Affective commitment which states the happiness of being the organization member and an affective inclination, is the most desired type of commitment to be realised in organizations and wanted to be instilled to employees. Because the employees whose affective commitments are high stay in the organization with their desire, and make great efforts for the benefits of the organization (Uyguç and Çımrın, 2004: 92). Such employees are the loyal ones who devoted themselves to organization, and are eager to take additional responsibilities if required. Accordingly, the employees having this kind of commitment show positive attitudes to the work (Çetin, 2004: 95).

As for normative commitment, it is when the individual feels obligation to stay in the organization believing that he/she has responsibilities and duties for the organization. The obligation here does not depend on individual benefits. Contrarily; the individual's family, the society he/she belongs to or organization he/she works for continually states to him/her that loyalty is a virtue, or people who had worked in one organization for many years are praised in environments. Thus, the individual believes that loyalty is important and considers to stay in the organization as a moral obligation (Çöl and Gül, 2005: 294). In another words, the employee feels himself incepted to the organization for trainings he obtained or for his good relations, and continues to work in the organization for feeling gratitude (Demirel, 2008: 184).

Continuance commitment is the commitment which is created when an employee thinks that he/she is going to lose his/her acquisitions after leaving the organization; such as status, money etc. obtained with labour, time and effort during the time he/she worked in the organization (Yalçın and İplik, 2005: 398). The employees having this commitment believe that they will lose their investments and side benefits (medical benefits offered by the current organization, rights regarding seniority, advantages obtained from relations from in and out of the organization) and continue to work for the organization due to 'obligation' by considering that their job alternatives are limited. Such kind of employees think of leaving the organization when they find a good opportunity, and desire to be able to transfer to another organization (Özutku, 2008: 80; Eroğlu et al., 2011: 107 – 108).

The ones who have affective commitment think as "I work here because the people are great and the work is fun"; the ones who have continuance commitment think as "I would leave if I knew I could get another job that paid as much"; and the ones who have normative commitment think as "I work here because they hired me when I needed a job so I owe it to them" (Stup, 2006: 1).

The common point of these three commitment types is that there is a commitment between employee and organization which reduces the possibility of leaving the organization. Namely, in all three commitment types, the employees

continue to stay in the organization. However, the motive to stay in the organization depends on desire in the first one while it depends on obligation for the second one and necessity for the third. Meyer and Allen had not stated what the ideal, desired or average commitment level for affective, continuance and normative commitment should be. But the most desired situation is that the employees have a high affective commitment at first, then normative commitment and continuance commitment on the last place (Yalçın and İplik, 2005: 398 – 399).

3. Methodology

3.1. The Aim of the Research

In this descriptive study, the organizational commitment perceptions of the employees working in hotel enterprises were reviewed from the perspective of affective, normative and continuance commitment. The question which the study seeks for its answer is: At which level is the affective, normative and continuance commitments of the employees working in hotel enterprises?

3.2. Population and Sample

The sample of this study consists of the employees working in five star hotel enterprises in Muğla / Marmaris vicinity. The reason to select Muğla / Marmaris vicinity is that the region is located at an important destination in terms of Turkish tourism. According to information from Turkish Republic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, number of foreign visitors in Turkey in 2011 is 31,4 million. In the same year, Muğla city ranked number three after Antalya and Istanbul by hosting 10% of the foreign visitors in Turkey. Marmaris vicinity is one of the important destinations of Muğla. The data were collected between July – August of 2012 by questionnaire method from the employees working at 8 five-star hotel enterprises who accepted to participate in the study. Since it is particularly difficult to reach the employees personally in high season, support was received from the related executives. 318 questionnaires out of 600 which were put in hotels had returned, but 266 questionnaires were obtained which were suitable to get data. Executives showed the reason for non-returned questionnaires as workload and hesitations of some employees to fill in the questionnaires.

3.3. Data Collection Instrument and Analyses

As stated above, questionnaire technique was utilised as data collection instrument. The questionnaire consists of two parts. In the first part, questions related with the demographic characteristics of participants are available. In the second part, organizational commitment scale which consists of 18 propositions is available. This scale was developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), and its translation into Turkish was

made by Bolat and Bolat (2008). The scale consists of three dimensions: *affective commitment*, *normative commitment* and *continuance commitment*. The variables in the scale were created in groups, and main titles of each scale were used to show the differences between them and prevent confusion with one another. 6 of the propositions in organizational commitment scale is about affective commitment, 6 of them is about normative commitment and again 6 of them is about continuance commitment. The participants were asked to what extent they agree with the propositions, and in evaluation of the statements, 5 point Likert type rating was used (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= not sure, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree).

The data obtained in the study were analysed by the help of SPSS 11.5 for Windows statistics package. In order to identify the demographic characteristics of employees, descriptive statistics were utilised. In order to test the reliability of organizational commitment scale, Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated. In order to interpret the participation levels of employees to propositions in organizational commitment scale; percentage distribution, arithmetic average and standard deviation values were utilised. And in order to examine whether or not the perceptions for organizational commitment scale differs according to demographic characteristics of the employees, independent samples t-test and one way ANOVA were performed.

3.4. Findings and Discussion

3.4.1. Demographic Findings

Demographic characteristics of the participants can be summarized as follows: More than half of the participants consist of males (69,9%) and single (60,9%) employees. In terms of distribution of employees' age ranges, the group between 19 – 25 and 26 – 34 age range is seen predominant. 28,9 % of the subjects consist of high school graduates, 26,3% of university graduates and 23,7% of associate degree. 51,1% of the employees stated that they had been working in tourism sector for 1 to 6 years, and 20,7% of the employees stated that for 10 years or more. From here, it is understood that each one of two employees have a sectoral experience from 1 to 6 years. It is noticeable that for employees' working periods in their current establishments, less than 1 year (28,6 %) and 1 - 3 years (36,1 %) options are predominant. According to that, it can be said that employee staff working at the hotels within the study may be deemed as new. This case either might have resulted from seasonal activity of some establishments or may be interpreted as an indication of general high employee cycling rate in hotel enterprises. Distribution of the employees according to departments they work are as follows: front office (36,1 %), food and beverage (25,5 %), housekeeping (10,2 %), technical service (7,1 %), accountant – financing (6 %) sales and marketing (% 3,4 %), human resources (% 3,4) and other departments (8,3 %).

3.4.2. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha test was utilised in evaluating the reliability of organizational commitment scale. The Alpha value ranks between 0 and 1, and in studies at social sciences, an acceptable value is desired to be at least 0,70 (Altunışık et al., 2010: 124). As seen in Table 3, Alpha values belonging to each item of organizational commitment scale is more than 0,70 and rank between 0,82 and 0,88. For the entire scale, Alpha value was calculated as 0,85. These values indicate that the reliability of scale used in the study is at high level.

Tablo 3. Reliability Findings of Organizational Commitment Scale

Dimensions of Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	The Number of Items
Affective Commitment	0,88	6
Normative Commitment	0,82	6
Continuance Commitment	0,82	6
Total	0,85	18

3.4.3. Descriptive Statistics

The answers given to the propositions in the scale were examined to identify the organizational commitment perceptions of employees. Answer categories were collected in five groups. Those are the ones who "strongly disagree (1)", "disagree (2)", "are abstainers (3)", "agree (4)" and "totally agree (5)".

As seen in Table 4, weighted arithmetic mean of the answers given to each dimensions in organizational commitment scale differs between 3,47 and 2,95. The highest average belongs to "affective commitment" ($\bar{X}$: 3,47) dimension, and the lowest average belongs to "continuance commitment" ($\bar{X}$: 2,95) dimension.

The propositions which become prominent in affective commitment dimension are "I consider the problems of establishment I work in as my own problems and try to solve them (65,1%) and "Working in this establishment has a great meaning for me (64,7%). The subjects have perceived the affective commitment dimension over the middle value of Likert scale. From here, it can be stated that affective commitment levels of the hotel employees within the scope of the study is high.

The prominent propositions in normative commitment dimension are "I feel a responsibility which requires me to continue to work for this establishment (64,7%)" and "If I received a more advantageous offer from another establishment today, it wouldn't sound good to me to leave the establishment I'm working now (55,3%). Employees have evaluated such organizational commitment dimension close to "I agree" option.

Table 4. Perceptions for Organizational Commitment Scale

Items	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	$\bar{X}$	Standard Deviation
Affective Commitment							
Item 1	6,8	16,2	24,1	38,7	14,3	3,47	1,12
Item 2	5,6	24,1	25,9	28,9	15,4		1,15
Item 3	3,8	14,3	17,3	47,4	17,3		1,05
Item 4	6,8	13,9	25,9	34,2	19,2		1,15
Item 5	6,8	4,5	35,0	35,7	18,0		1,05
Item 6	2,3	15,4	17,3	44,4	20,7		1,04
Normative Commitment							
Item 1	9,8	7,1	30,1	34,2	18,8	3,40	1,17
Item 2	9,4	18,0	25,9	34,6	12,0		1,16
Item 3	3,4	10,9	21,1	50,4	14,3		0,97
Item 4	4,9	18,0	24,4	35,7	16,9		1,11
Item 5	9,4	24,1	17,3	30,8	18,4		1,27
Item 6	7,5	16,5	20,7	28,6	26,7		1,25
Continuance Commitment							
Item 1	13,9	11,3	26,3	37,6	10,9	2,95	1,2
Item 2	20,3	29,7	16,9	21,4	11,7		1,32
Item 3	15,0	27,1	17,3	28,6	12,0		1,28
Item 4	18,8	23,3	25,2	21,1	11,7		1,28
Item 5	17,3	28,2	25,2	18,4	10,9		1,24
Item 6	13,2	9,4	28,2	37,2	12,0		1,19

And the prominent proposition in continuance commitment is “Even if I wanted, it would be very difficult for me to leave this establishment now (49.2 %)”. The employees have perceived such dimension of organizational commitment close to middle value of Likert scale. From here, it is understood that the subjects are likely to be in an “unsure” inclination about continuance commitment.

3.4.4. The Relationship between Demographic Variables and Organizational Commitment

In order to review whether or not the perceptions concerning organizational commitment differ according to demographic characteristics of the subject, independent sample t-test and one way ANOVA was performed. At first, the gender variable was considered. In the performed independent sample t-test, no statistically significant difference was found between the gender of participants and affective

commitment ($t = 0,750$, $p > 0,05$), normative commitment ($t = -0,743$, $p > 0,05$) and continuance commitment ($t = 0,909$, $p > 0,05$).

In the next stage, age variable was considered. In order to review whether or not the perceptions concerning organizational commitment differs according to the ages of participants, one way analysis of variance was used. A statistically significant difference was found between the age variance and affective commitment dimension ($F = 4,879$, $p < 0,05$). In order to identify between which groups the difference is, Scheffe Post Hoc test was applied. As the result of the analysis, it was detected that the participants in "age 45 or more" group perceived affective commitment dimension more positive than the ones in "age 18 or under", "age 19 to 25" and "age 26 to 34" groups.

Another demographic variable included in the analysis is the educational status. Statistically significant differences were found between the educational status and affective commitment ($F = 6,054$, $p < 0,05$) and continuance commitment ($F = 5,252$, $p < 0,05$) dimensions. As the result of applied Scheffe Post Hoc test, it was identified that in terms of affective commitment dimension; the difference was between "primary education" and "high school", and "primary education" and "bachelor's degree" options, and in favour of "primary education" option. And the difference in terms of continuance commitment is between "high school" and "bachelor's degree" levels and in favour of "high school" option.

Another demographic variable reviewed is that the job experience of participants in tourism sector. Statistically significant differences were found between the job experience and affective commitment ($F = 13,403$, $p < 0,05$) and normative commitment ($F = 5,809$, $p < 0,05$) dimensions. Scheffe Post Hoc test displays a difference between "less than 1 year" and "4 to 6 years" options in terms of affective commitment and in favour of "less than 1 year" option. Related with the affective commitment level; there are also differences between "10 years or more" and "1 to 3 years", and again "10 years or more" and "4 to 6 years" options. Both two differences are in favour of "10 years or more" option. The difference in normative commitment level is between "less than 1 year" and "4 to 6 years" options, and in favour of "less than 1 year" option.

In the next stage, job experiences of the subjects in the establishment they are currently working in were taken to analyse. A statistically significant difference was found between this demographic variable and affective commitment dimension. Scheffe Post Hoc test displays a difference between "10 years or more" and "1 to 3 years", and "10 years or more" and "4 to 6 years" options and in favour of "10 years or more" option.

The last considered demographic variable is the department which the subjects are employed. A statistically significant difference was found between the department variable and affective commitment dimension ($F = 3,290$, $p < 0,05$). According

to the result of Scheffe Post Hoc test, this difference is between “technical service department” and “food and beverage department”, and in favour of “technical service department”.

4. Conclusions

Today, one of the basic purposes for the establishments from all fields is to be able to stay competitive. It is obvious that in reaching that purpose, many factors have an effect. However, the human resources became an element which is overemphasized by organizations in recent years. The reason for that arises from the inimitable feature of human factor. In this context, it is witnessed that many establishments today build their competition strategies on their human resources. Thus, to be able to draw qualified personnel to the establishment and keep them in for a long time is accepted as an important competitive power in terms of today's establishments. The labour - intensive structure of hotel enterprises make the human factor much more important. In hotel enterprises where automation opportunities are limited, the employees are regarded as a basic resource to reach organizational effectiveness.

In this study, it was aimed to identify the organizational commitment levels of employees working in five star hotel enterprises. The prominent findings in the study can be summarized as follows:

For the organizational commitment perceptions of hotel employees, the affective commitment creates the most important dimension. The employees have displayed a high level of positive participation to propositions in this dimension. Therefore, it is understood that affective commitment levels of the employees are high. The employees are in a strong sense of belonging to the establishment they are working in and feel an emotional bond. Moreover, they think that the establishment they work in means a lot of things for them, that they think the establishment's problems as their own problem and try to solve them, and that they would feel happy to stay in that organization for the rest of their professional lives.

The second important dimension in the organizational commitment perceptions of hotel employees is the normative commitment. The employees have also displayed a high level of positive participation to propositions in this dimension. Namely, it is understood that normative commitments of the employees are high as well. The employees think that the establishment they are working in deserves their loyalty, that they owe so much to the establishment and feel responsibility for other employees and therefore do not want to leave the establishment, that it will not be right to leave even if they receive a more advantageous job offer from another establishment.

The least effective dimension in organizational commitment perceptions of hotel employees is the continuance commitment. The employees displayed an unsure inclination for propositions in this dimension. The employees are in an

unsure inclination to propositions such as no other job opportunities are present for them to consider leaving the establishment they are currently working in, their lives will be upside down to a large extent in case they leave this establishment, and it will be very difficult for them to leave the establishment they are currently working in.

Limitations and suggestions for further research

This study limited with the employees working in five star hotel enterprises. In the following studies, in terms of comparing perceptions concerning organizational commitment on the basis of establishment scale, it may be useful to include the employees working in small scale hotels within the study. Another limitation for the study is that the sample is limited with the hotels in Marmaris vicinity. In the following studies, it may be useful to include other destinations in Turkey to the sample, even the city hotels. However, it may be suggested for the researchers in this field to review the organizational commitments of employees working in tourism establishments other than hotels as well.

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