

The Moderating Role of Organizational Trust On The Relationship Between Perception of Organizational Politics and Organizational Commitment: Research in Istanbul University

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Extensive Summary

Introduction

Technology is rapidly changing and information share is easier today and creating a proper organizational environment for academic members in the universities who produce research and knowledge and spread it to people is one of the most important conditions to raise better generations. An increase in perceived organizational satisfaction level of academicians will provide them to develop a commitment for their organizations which enable them to work in an effective and productive way through rational decisions; therefore, they can educate more creative generations both for their own and for the country's future. However, limited amount of organizational resources and limited time prevent them to fairly utilize organizational resources and cause a basis for conflict of interests between the employees and the emergence of perceived organizational politics. Therefore, today, while pursuing their own interests, organizations aim to prevent their employees to use the sources of organization on behalf of their own interests by offering promotions, increasing their salaries and keeping the employees' attendance. An increase in the perception of organizational politics which is defined as power struggles of employees on behalf of their own personal interests both reduces job satisfaction of organization members and weakens their organizational trust and loyalty.

Examining the literature on the negative relationship of perception of organizational politics with the organizational commitment, several studies have been found particularly investigating the regulatory and improving role of organizational trust within this relationship. The literature suggests that there is a negative relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment, and organizational trust of employees reduces this negative relation. It may be assumed that employees with high level of organizational trust and whose behaviors are highly

appreciated by their organizations lead a low level of negative effect of their perception of organization politics to their organizational commitment.

Data and Method

This study aims to find the distinctive role of the organizational trust in the relationship between the perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment. In line with this purpose, the research universe consisted of a total of 843 academic members working at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences in state and private universities in Istanbul. However, a questionnaire form measuring the behavioral variables used in the study was applied only to 543 of those working at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences in state and private universities in Istanbul. Incomplete or incorrectly marked questionnaire forms were excluded from the analysis and the research sample consisted of 267 academic members in total. The sample group was selected through the convenience sampling method. The sample size was calculated through the formula determined by Salant and Dillman, 1994. The data obtained from the academic members were collected between January 1, 2017 and January 1, 2018.

The findings were evaluated within 95% confidence interval with 5% significance level.

The first section of the questionnaire form included a personal information form, and the second section included Ferris and Kacmar's Perception of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS), Nyhan and Marlowe's Organizational Trust Inventory Scale (OTI) and Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ).

Descriptive statistical analyses of the data (numbers, percentages, means and standard deviations), reliability analysis, correlation and regression analysis were evaluated using the SPSS 22.0 program.

Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to test the main objective of the research, which is determination of the regulatory role of organizational trust in the relationship between the perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment (Baron and Kenny 1986; Usta, 2009). Following the hierarchical models, a test developed by Sobel was applied to determine its mediatory effect. The reduction in variance of the independent variable was measured to determine whether it is a partial or a whole mediator (Sobel, cited by; Çetin et al., 2012; <http://quantpsy.org/sobel/sobel.htm>).

Findings

The scales of organizational trust, organizational commitment and perception of organizational politics were evaluated together and correlation analysis was done to test their inter-significance levels. As a result, significant relationships were found among these three variables.

The regression analysis found a statistically significant cause-effect relationship between the perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment, and showed a significant negative relationship between the academic members' perceptions of organizational politics and their organizational commitment. In addition, it found a statistically significant cause-effect relationship between the perception of organizational politics and organizational trust, and a significant negative relationship

between the academic members' perceptions of organizational politics and their organizational trust. Finally, a statistically significant cause-effect relationship was also found between the organizational trust and organizational commitment, and a significant positive relationship was found between the academic members' organizational trust and their organizational commitment by the regression analysis. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to test the main hypothesis of the research, which is "***The organizational trust plays a regulatory role in the relationship between the perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment***", and it was found that there was a decline in the effect of the perception of organizational politics on organizational commitment when the scores organizational trust were added into the model. According to the complementary Sobel test results, organizational trust is a partial mediatory variable between the perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment.

Conclusion and Discussion

There are differences in organizational trust levels based on the subjective evaluations of the academicians due to emotional reasons such as job stress, fear of being unemployed, and concerns regarding promotion. Therefore, it can be stated that academicians exhibit politic behaviors as they politically perceive their organizations and have subjective evaluations, thus, this perception affects their trust and commitment levels as well.

It was concluded that organizational trust had a partial mediatory role in the relationship between the perception of organizational politics and organizational commitment and that the perception of organizational politics had a negative relationship both with organizational trust and organizational commitment. This result indicates that organizational trust of individuals is based on their perceptions of organizational politics and also their perception of organizational transparency shapes their organizational commitment. It can be concluded that employees who work in a working environment where promises are kept with a mutual cooperative work understanding with their co-workers adopt organizational values and work hard to reach organizational objectives and goals. In addition, when employees feel that their opinions are valued, promises are kept in a fairly-behaved democratic working environment with a cooperative work understanding among co-workers, they have confidence both in their co-workers and in the organization. Therefore, there will be an increase in the organizational trust of employees who exhibit cooperative attitudes rather than applying various affecting tactics that are not approved by the organization.

This study is significant because it examines intra-organizational negative factors preventing creativeness and freely decision-making of the academic staff and aims to create a more moderate and participatory organizational climate. In addition, it reveals that academic staff, who exhibit positive attitudes both to improve education quality in universities and contribute more to science, can attain their goals only in an organizational environment that increases their commitment and trust.

This research was conducted in a limited field; however, it is possible to extend its scope by including the employees working in all positions of the organizations in different sectors, analyze the relationship between their perception of organizational politics, organizational trust and organizational commitment and contribute to the literature. There was no equal distribution of the participants in terms of gender and

university type (state or private) in this study, and the number of males and private university employees included in the study was high; therefore, these factors should be considered for the studies to be conducted in the future.