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## INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: ISTANBUL COMMERCE UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose-** Human factor is one of the most significant elements of an organization in terms of development and sustainability. Healthy work environment, suitable working conditions and feeling of fulfilment are very important sources of influence in organizational commitment. Similarly, those three concepts are also the fundamental components of organizational culture.

**Methodology-** The purpose of this paper is to identify the impact of organizational culture on organizational commitment. Data for this study were collected by conducting a survey among academic and administrative staff in Istanbul Commerce University. SPSS 22.0 statistical analysis software program was used in order to examine the responses.

**Findings-** The findings indicate that there is a moderate positive significant relationship between organizational culture and organizational commitment. In terms of demographics, marital status and job experience were found to be statistically insignificant with the employee perception of organizational culture.

**Conclusion-** On the other hand, factors such as gender, age, educational background, position and length of employment were found to be statistically significant with the perception of organizational culture. From the point of organizational commitment, gender, age, marital status and job experience were found to be statistically insignificant whereas educational background, position and length of employment were found to be statistically significant.

**Keywords:** Organizational culture, organizational commitment, Istanbul Commerce University, education, culture.

**JEL Codes:** M14, M12, I23

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In a world of increasing competition among businesses and effects of globalization on economy the organizations are more tend to make studies on organizational factors in order to survive. Many of these studies attempt to find ways to ensure the long-time engagement of qualified employees.

Organizational commitment increases productivity, provides competitive advantage and has a direct influence on the lifetime of an organization. This fact necessitates the accurate analysis and applicability of factors that reinforce commitment between the organization and the employee. Each organization is unique and has intrinsic values such as language, history, heroes, symbols and norms. Organizational development and lifetime of the organization increase as the characteristics of employees fit to the organizational culture.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and organizational commitment among the academic and administrative staff in the Istanbul Commerce University. In order to explore this issue, the paper will first review organizational culture and organizational commitment theories. This will be followed by

the analysis of the data obtained from the survey made in Istanbul Commerce University. The paper will be concluded with some commentaries and recommendations.

## 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

### 2.1. Organizational Culture

There has been numerous definition of organizational culture. Dursun defined organizational culture as common norms, attitudes and values that manage employee behaviour (Dursun, 2013). Sezgin & Bulut addressed organizational culture as a mechanism that determines the behaviour, regulates the rules, describes the fundamental assumptions of organizational process, interprets the cases, promotes the values, reinforce the commitment, increase mindfulness, and most importantly facilitates to draw lines in uncertain environment in the organizations (Sezgin & Bulut, 2013).

Organizational culture has a major role in terms of sense of belonging since it creates strong bonds and team spirit between members of the organization. As the organizations started to use organizational culture as a principal tool in organizational performance, recently more managers are focusing on this issue (Kaya, 2008).

There is a large amount of studies related to the components of the organizational culture. Those studies can be categorized to be values, assumptions, norms, beliefs, traditions, myths, heroes, language, symbols and ceremonies. Values include the entire organizational factors that have a vital role in the course of the business and overall goals and mission of the organization. Assumptions are the pre-determined facts such as true-false, rational-irrational, possible-impossible notions which forms the perceptions, ideas, emotions and attitudes of the members of the organization (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2005). Norms compose all rules that must be obeyed. Organizational norms are the determinant factors which either approve or disapprove the attitudes in the organization. Beliefs emerge as a synthesis of personal characteristics and cultural values and indicate the individual way of interpretation of social facts (Vural & Coşkun, 2007). Traditions are the daily repeating activities in the business. Myths are the stories either experienced or whispered among employees. Heroes are the inspiring people in the organization. Language is the unique jargon in the company. Symbols may illustrate organizational logo, motto, uniform, or even can be a t-shirt, hat, glass, pen or watch. Symbols create a sense of belonging and leads to the adoption of common values (Alamur, 2005). Ceremonies have a practical role in enabling the share of social values and feeding the roots of the organizational culture by bringing members of the organization together (Köse, Tetik, & Ercan, 2001).

Previous studies show that various models have been used in the researches related to the organizational culture. In this research, as for the Istanbul Commerce University sample, Harrison's measurement of organizational culture was applied. Harrison's model of organizational culture is based on 4 dimensions as power, role, task and existence. Pheysy (Pheysy, 1993) extended Harrison's model of organizational culture in a further research. Dimensions of Pheysy's model were power, role, achievement and support. In this research the responses were compared with the Pheysy's findings. Pheysy's model is defined below:

*Power Culture:* In this type of culture there is generally a single source of power based on inequality of access to resources (Şişman, 2002). There are two types of personal characteristics in this type of culture, namely dominance and submission. The expected leadership characteristics in this culture are power, justice and goodness. Leaders are supposed to not only have the authority but also to know everything. The followers are expected to be voluntarily submissive. The disadvantage of this culture is that the incentive of obeying the rules are caused by fear (Pheysy, 1993).

*Role Culture:* In this type of culture the organizational structure is hierarchical. A few people stay on the hedge as the top management. In the bottom layer various departments are located. The form of this culture is identical to Harrison's role culture model. It is a bureaucratic culture and the work is controlled by procedures and rules. It's excessively centralized and formal and the job description is more important than the person who fills the position (Erkmen & Ordu, 2001).

*Achievement Culture:* Instead of obeying the rules, organizations care more about the tasks to be completed. The employees are motivated in a way to produce their own solutions to the existing problems. The expectation from employees is that they advocate their time and energy to the organization's well being. In this type of culture it is assumed that people like to work in positions that they feel satisfied (Pheysy, 1993). This culture is similar to the Harrison's existential culture. The idea is that organizations are for the individuals therefore, the outstanding purpose of organizations is to promote the well being and happiness of the individuals (Bakan, Büyükbeye, & Bedestenci, 2004).

*Support Culture:* The outstanding values in this type of culture are sharing, friendship and belonging. Individuals are supposed to believe that they hold a share in the company as long as they feel the sense of belonging to the organization (Pheysy, 1993). This type of culture is similarly structured with the Harrison's task culture. This approach is based on organizational goals mainly centralized in task or work (Bakan, Büyükbeye, & Bedestenci, 2004). Support culture is formed by different task groups and each group has expertise in its own area.

### 2.1. Organizational Commitment

Porter (1974) defines organizational commitment as a phenomenon emerging from “employee’s attachment to the organization, characterized by an intention to remain in it and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization”. Based on this definition three components of organizational commitment can be revealed.

- “Employee’s identification with the values and goals of the organization”
- “The extent which employees feel committed to their organization by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving”
- “Employee’s feeling of obligation to remain within the organization” (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Organizational commitment which is a psychological attachment to the organization, includes involvement to the work, loyalty and a strong belief with the values of the organization. The degree to which an organization maintains its existence has a strong relationship to the employee turnover. In other words organizations need longer staying employees in order to continue their operations. Long term employees positively contribute to the organization as they stay with the organization (Çetin, 2004).

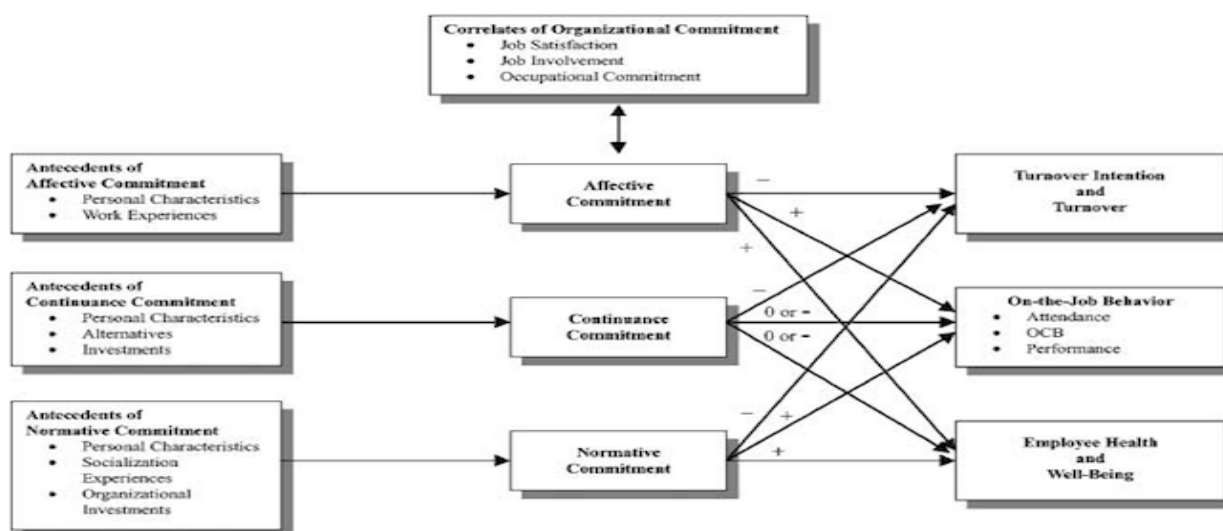
Many of the researches reveal that employees who are committed to their organization tend to be more proactive showing their support to the organization, less likely to leave it, and feel that they fit in so that they demonstrate positive attitude towards the organization. As expected, this type of high performing, educated and committed employees increase the productivity in the workplace (Stroh, Northcraft, & Neale, 1990).

Employees sustain their organizational membership due to attitudinal and behavioural motives. Thus, most of the researchers who study organizational behaviour concentrate on the attitudinal measures whereas social and organizational psychologists and researchers give more attention to behavioural measures (Boylu, Pelit, & Güçer, 2007). Behavioral commitment is mostly related to the long term membership in an organization which stem from as an outcome of previous experiences (Çöl, 2004). Becker’s approach of behavioural commitment supports the idea that organizational commitment has a strong relationship with the potential costs that might occur as a result of leaving the organization and states that this is the key factor of behavioural commitment (Özcan, 2008).

On the other hand, attitudinal approach describes organizational commitment as “one’s identification of and involvement in a particular organization” (Paul V Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). According to Allen and Meyer, the commitment is related to psychological attachment one had to the organization and, it has more to do with attitudes instead of behavioural intentions. Its most common indicator is the employee’s loyalty to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Allen and Meyer characterized organizational commitment by three factors such as affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Below table illustrates the Allen & Meyer’s three-dimension organizational commitment model:

Figure 1: Three –Dimensional Organizational Commitment Model



Source: Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitz and Topolnytsky, 2002.

*Affective commitment*, is the voluntary membership of an employee to the organization for the employee's own sake. Affective commitment improves as the result of positive organizational experiences such as autonomy, fairness and reinforcement. Allen and Meyer (1990) discuss that in this type of commitment employees perceive themselves as an important part of the organization. Affective commitment is high when employees are willing to stay in the organization and when they internalize the goals and values of the organization (Ince & Gül, 2005).

*Continuance commitment* is conceptualized as the fear of monetary, professional or social loss as a result of leaving the organization. Employees feel that they need to stay in the organization due to potential costs of leaving it. In this regard, the perceived benefits that will be gained while remaining in the organization such as endeavour, money, time etc. exceeds the perceived costs or losses. As a result employee decides to stay rather than to leave the organization (Obeng & Ugboro, 2003).

*Normative commitment* is defined as the feeling of obligation to stay in the organization due to personal norms and values. Employees stay in the organization since they think that it is the right thing to do. They feel obliged to be loyal to their organization due to moral and ethical reasons (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Normative commitment is different than the affective commitment because the decision to stay or leave is mostly related to the feeling of obligation instead of the emotional involvement. In the same way it is also different than the continuance commitment since the decision to stay or leave does not depend on the fear of any kind of loss (Wasti, 2000). Normative commitment as opposed to the continuance approach depends on the virtue and moral norms rather than perceived benefits or losses (Ince & Gül, 2005). While affective and continuance commitment are basically influenced by tangible and intangible sources that will be gained after the employment, normative approach is mostly influenced by the previously gained values and norms (Ince & Gül, 2005).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and organizational commitment among the academic and administrative staff in the Istanbul Commerce University. Respondents were academic and administrative staff in the Istanbul Commerce University. The Istanbul Commerce University has been established by the the Foundation of Educational and Social Services of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce in 2001 and incorporates 6 faculty (Human and Societal Sciences, Management, Law, Communication, Engineering, Architecture and Design); English Preparatory Department and 4 institutes ( Foreign Trade, Social Sciences, Institute of Science and Institute of Finance) in addition to Application and Research Centre. 170 administrative and 250 academic staff, in total 420 personnel work in the Istanbul Commerce University.

Parametric tests were carried out in order to compare the respondent's perception of organizational culture and organizational commitment according to the independent variables such as gender, age, marital status, educational background, position, length of work and experience. Before analysis, to see whether the data meet the typical assumptions such as normality, homogeneity of variances, linearity and independence have been checked. Based on the obtained data, it was observed that the data were normally distributed. Therefore, parametric tests were used in this research.

Table 1 summarizes the analysis techniques. The data obtained were analysed by SPSS 22.0 software program. The significance level is  $p < 0,05$  thus the corresponding confidence level is 95%.

**Table 1: Grouping Variables and Analysis Techniques**

| Grouping Variable      | Analysis Technique                   |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Gender                 | Independent samples t test           |
| Age                    | One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) |
| Marital Status         | Independent samples t test           |
| Position               | Independent samples t test           |
| Educational Background | One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) |
| Length of Work         | One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) |
| Job Experience         | One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) |

Pearson's correlation technique has been used for investigating the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational culture. It indicated weak strength of association for results between 0 and  $\pm 0.29$ ; medium strength of association between  $\pm 0.30$  and  $\pm 0.59$ ; and high strength of association between  $\pm 0.60$  and  $\pm 1$  values. Participants were required to give answers to the questions in 5 point Likert scale such as 5- strongly favourable, 4-favourable, 3- undecided, 2- unfavourable and 1-strongly unfavourable. All respondents were Istanbul Commerce University staff and thus the results can not be generalized to other institutions. The study had same limitations as in the field of social sciences. The research

hypothesis is “ In the Istanbul Commerce University, there is a positive and significant relationship between the organizational culture and the organizational commitment”.

### 3.3. Analyses and Results

250 survey have been distributed and after eliminating the blank and semi-filled ones, 205 of them have been used in this research. Table 2. shows the demographic distribution of the respondents:

**Table 2: Demographic Distribution in Survey**

| Group                  | Sub-group            | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Gender                 | Female               | 95            | 46,3           |
|                        | Male                 | 110           | 53,7           |
| Age                    | 30-20 age            | 62            | 30,2           |
|                        | 31-40 age            | 84            | 41,0           |
|                        | 41-50 age            | 34            | 16,6           |
|                        | 51 age and above     | 25            | 12,2           |
|                        | Married              | 133           | 64,9           |
| Marital Status         | Single               | 72            | 35,1           |
| Educational Background | High School and less | 19            | 9,3            |
|                        | Associate degree     | 13            | 6,3            |
|                        | Bachelor’s degree    | 50            | 24,4           |
|                        | Post-graduate        | 123           | 60,0           |
| Position               | Academic             | 83            | 40,5           |
|                        | Administrative       | 122           | 59,5           |
| Length of Work         | 1-5 year             | 127           | 62,0           |
|                        | 6-10 year            | 36            | 17,6           |
|                        | 11-15 year           | 34            | 16,6           |
|                        | 16 year and above    | 8             | 3,9            |
|                        | 1-5 year             | 62            | 30,2           |
| Job Experience         | 6-10 year            | 56            | 27,3           |
|                        | 11-15 year           | 30            | 14,6           |
|                        | 16 year and above    | 57            | 27,8           |
| Total                  |                      | 205           | 100,0          |

First step of the study is to determine the levels of organizational culture and organizational commitment. For this purpose, min, max, average, ave / item and standard deviation values were calculated for each variable. Table 3 shows the results of this calculation. Levels of culture ie. power, achievement and support cultures were at medium with an exception of role culture which was at low level. The overall level of the organizational culture was medium (ave=46,51). As for the commitment, the continuance and normative commitments were at medium level but the affective commitment was at high level. This lead to a medium (ave=54,93) level for organizational commitment in total which is although a little bit higher but still the same level as for the organizational culture.

**Table 3: Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment Level of Participants**

| Points                          | N   | Minimum | Maximum | Average | Ave/m | SD   | Level  |
|---------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|-------|------|--------|
| Power Culture                   | 205 | 4       | 20      | 12,22   | 3,06  | 3,12 | Medium |
| Achievement Culture             | 205 | 4       | 20      | 12,07   | 3,02  | 3,64 | Medium |
| Support Culture                 | 205 | 4       | 20      | 12,32   | 3,08  | 3,50 | Medium |
| Role Culture                    | 205 | 4       | 18      | 9,89    | 2,47  | 3,67 | Low    |
| Organizational Culture Total    | 205 | 24      | 74      | 46,51   | 2,91  | 8,95 | Medium |
| Affective Commitment            | 205 | 7       | 30      | 20,94   | 3,49  | 4,83 | High   |
| Continuance Commitment          | 205 | 6       | 30      | 15,83   | 2,64  | 5,02 | Medium |
| Normative Commitment            | 205 | 7       | 30      | 18,16   | 3,03  | 4,76 | Medium |
| Organizational Commitment Total | 205 | 22      | 78      | 54,93   | 3,05  | 9,43 | Medium |

Ave/m=Average points per item. Power culture had a negative significant relationship with achievement, support and role cultures. As the perception of power culture increases, the perceptions of the remaining cultures respectively decrease. Achievement culture had a positive linear relationship with support and role culture. As a result, an increase in the perception of achievement culture leads to an increase in the perceptions of support and role culture.

A negative significant relationship was found between affective and continuance commitments whereas a positive significant relationship was found between affective and normative commitments. According to this, as the perception of affective commitment increases, the perception of normative commitment also increases but, the perception of continuance commitment decreases.

We found that, the organizational culture had a moderate positive significant relationship with the organizational commitment. Moreover, power culture had a weak negative significant relationship with the affective commitment and a weak positive significant relationship with the continuance commitment. Finally, each of the achievement, support and role cultures had a positive significant relationship with affective and normative commitments.

**Table 4: Correlation Coefficients Belonging to the Relationships between Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment**

| Points                             | 1.      | 2.     | 3.     | 4.     | 5.     | 6.     | 7.     | 8.     | 9. |
|------------------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----|
| 1. Power Culture                   | 1       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |    |
| 2. Achievement Culture             | -,246** | 1      |        |        |        |        |        |        |    |
| 3. Support Culture                 | -,237** | ,633** | 1      |        |        |        |        |        |    |
| 4. Role Culture                    | -,300** | ,642** | ,612** | 1      |        |        |        |        |    |
| 5. Organizational Culture Total    | ,032    | ,832** | ,817** | ,806** | 1      |        |        |        |    |
| 6. Affective Commitment            | -,243** | ,304** | ,280** | ,337** | ,287** | 1      |        |        |    |
| 7. Continuance Commitment          | ,178*   | ,070   | ,025   | ,017   | ,107   | -,146* | 1      |        |    |
| 8. Normative Commitment            | -,084   | ,405** | ,445** | ,487** | ,509** | ,535** | ,005   | 1      |    |
| 9. Organizational Commitment Total | -,073   | ,397** | ,381** | ,428** | ,461** | ,705** | ,460** | ,781** | 1  |

N=205, \*\*p<0,01, \*p<0,05

The below results show the relationship of the organizational culture and organizational commitment with the demographic factors:

*Gender:* A significant difference was not found between achievement culture, support culture, role culture and organizational culture in total, in terms of gender. On the other hand, the mean of power culture was significantly higher for male participants. This indicates the perception of power culture of males was higher than that of females.

A significant difference was not found between organizational commitment in total and any of its sub-dimensions in terms of gender. This indicates the perceptions of affective, continuance, normative commitments and organizational commitment in total were at the same level for male and female participants.

*Age:* A significant difference was not found between achievement culture, support culture, role culture and organizational culture in total in terms of age. On the other hand, the mean of power culture was found significantly different in terms of age. That is to say, the group "31-40 age" has a higher mean of power culture than the groups "30-20 age" and "51 age and above" respectively.

A significant difference was not found between organizational commitment in total and any of its sub-dimensions in terms of age. This indicates the perceptions of affective, continuance, normative commitments and organizational commitment in total were at the same level for different age groups.

*Marital status:* A significant difference was not found between organizational culture in total and any of its sub-dimensions in terms of marital status. The perceptions of power culture, achievement culture, support culture, role culture and organizational culture in total were similar regardless of the marital status.

In the same way, a significant difference was not found between organizational commitment in total and any of its sub-dimensions in terms of marital status. Accordingly, the perceptions of affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment and organizational commitment in total were at the same level for married and single participants.

*Educational Background:* A significant relationship was not found between achievement culture, support culture, role culture and organizational culture in total in terms of educational background. On the other hand, the mean of power culture was significantly different for each group. The results show that the mean of power culture of the group "associate degree and below" was higher than that of the groups "bachelor's" and "post-graduates".

A significant relationship was not found between affective commitment, normative commitment and organizational commitment in total in terms of educational background. On the other hand, the mean of the continuance commitment was significantly different in terms of educational background and was higher for the group "associate degree or less" than the group "post-graduates". In other words, the perceptions of continuance commitment for the group "associate degree or less" were higher than that of "post-graduates".

*Position:* The mean of the role culture was not statistically different in terms of position. On the other hand there was a significant relationship between power culture, achievement culture, support culture and organizational culture in total in terms of position. Administrative staff had a higher perception of power culture than the academic staff whereas academic staff had higher perceptions of achievement culture, support culture and organizational culture in total than the administrative staff.

A significant relationship was not found between continuance commitment, normative commitment and organizational commitment in total in terms of position. On the other hand the mean of affective commitment was significantly different in terms of position and was higher for the academic staff than the administrative staff.

*Length of Work:* A significant relationship was not found between achievement culture, role culture and organizational culture in total in terms of length of work. On the other hand, a significant relationship was found between power culture and support culture in terms of length of work. The group which has worked "11 years and more" had a higher perception of power culture than the group "1-5 years". Furthermore, the group which has worked "1-5 years" had a higher perception of support culture than the group "6-10 years".

There was not a significant difference between affective commitment, normative commitment and organizational commitment in total in terms of length of work. However, the results show that the group which has worked "6-10 years" and "11 years and more" had a higher perception of continuance commitment than the group which has worked "1-5 years".

*Job Experience:* A significant relationship was not found between organizational culture in total and in any of its sub-dimensions in terms of job experience. That is to say, groups with different job experiences had same perceptions of power culture, support culture, achievement culture, role culture and organizational culture in total.

Finally a significant relationship was not found between organizational commitment in total and in any of its sub-dimensions in terms of job experience. That is to say, groups with different job experiences had the same perceptions of affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment and organizational commitment in total.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The achievement of an organization is directly linked to the organizational culture which develops integrity and mutuality in the organization. Various organizational identities such as production and services, technology and other advantages can be imitated by many firms but except for the organizational culture which is unique and inimitable.

Organizations which develop their own culture and manage to sustain it would have a more competitive advantage than their competitors in terms of organizational commitment. Such organizations by attracting more qualified employees and having an increased market share would eventually have a longer organizational lifetime.

This study found that, in the Istanbul Commerce University, there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and organizational commitment. This result was consistent with the findings in the previous research studies.

In the perception of organizational culture of the Istanbul Commerce University staff, the role culture was found to be weak whereas the power, support and achievement cultures were at moderate. This reveals that there are mutuality among the departments in the university and employees are integrative and supportive to each other in management.

In the perception of organizational commitment of the university staff, affective commitment was found to be at high whereas the continuance and normative commitments were at medium level. High affective commitment means that the staff are loyal and psychologically attached to the university. As Çetin (2004) also stated, high commitment means employee's voluntary stay in the organization. Affective commitment is the best form of organizational commitment. In fact those employees are desired by every employer because of their loyalty. They have incentives to take additional responsibility and tend to support their organization whenever necessary.

In the Istanbul Commerce University, affective commitment of academic staff is higher than the administrative staff. This is mainly because of the difference in their perception of organizational culture. The perception of power culture is high for the administrative staff, whereas the perceptions of achievement and support cultures are high for the academic staff. Males with an associate degree or less, working 11 years or more, 20-30 years and 51 or above years old tend to have a higher perception of power culture. Further studies needed in order to increase the affective commitment of this demographic profile. Academic personnel connected to the rector office and administrative personnel to the secretary office. Administrative personnel perceive authority as a dominant formation as a result of adopting to the power culture. Future researches, surveys and case studies are recommended in this field in order to develop methods to change this perception.

Motivation, productivity and organizational success increase only if the organization had a strong organizational culture that internalized by the members of the organization. This would be achieved by the communication, social interaction and teamwork. Top management and the other people at managerial positions should give importance to these issues. Employees should feel that their job is valuable not only for themselves but also for the organization and the society as a whole. They should be promoted, seen as values, and suitable working conditions should be provided in order to improve employee fit to the organization. Future studies for the purpose of developing organizational culture would contribute to the improvement and persistence of the organizational commitment as long as they adapt to the needs and wants of the fast changing world.

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