

DEAR COLLEAGUE, TELL ME, DO YOU REALLY KNOW ME? THE IMPACT OF SELF - VERIFYING FEEDBACK ON WORKPLACE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND INDIVIDUAL WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR.*

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ÖZET

Öz doğrulayıcı geri bildirim kişinin esenliğini ve psikolojik tutarlılık halini etkilemektedir. Öz doğrulama çabalarının sıklıkla özel hayat bağlamındaki sosyal ilişkilerde incelendiği, iş bağlamında yapılmış çalışmaların az olduğu görülmektedir. Bu çalışma iş yerinde alınan öz doğrulayıcı geri bildirim insan ilişkileri ve çalışanın iş yeri davranışları üzerine etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında 30 katılımcı ile yüz yüze derinlemesine görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiş ve katılımsız gözlem yapılmıştır. Bulgular alanyazına birkaç noktada katkı sağlamaktadır: mesai arkadaşlarından öz doğrulayıcı geri bildirim almanın iletişimi güçlendirdiği, etkin görev dağılımı vasıtasıyla daha etkin takım çalışması sağladığı, çalışan ve öz doğrulayıcı geri bildirim aldığı mesai arkadaşı arasında güven tesis ettiği, duygusal bağlılık oluşmasına yardımcı olduğu ve örgütsel vatandaşlık davranışlarının ortaya çıkmasına katkıda bulunduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öz Doğrulayıcı Geri Bildirim, Örgütsel Vatandaşlık Davranışı, Duygusal Bağlılık, Güven, İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi

JEL Kodları: D23, M12, O15, J24

ABSTRACT

People need to obtain feedback that verifies the self-views which they hold about themselves, as it is needed for psychological well-being and consistency. Trying to get self-verifying feedback, namely self-verification strivings research is mostly conducted in personal settings and intimate relationships. Thus, more research examining the topic in organizational settings and business relationships is needed. This paper aimed to study self-verification strivings of employees in organizational settings and to obtain an understanding of the influence of confirmatory feedback on workplace behavior and relationships. The research was exploratory in its nature, thus a qualitative research design was used and in-depth interviews with 30 participants were conducted. Additionally, the researchers made non-participant observation in the workplaces of the participants. The study presents several contributions to the field: It showed that receiving confirmatory feedback improves communication between colleagues; it enables effective division of work which in turn improves teamwork; it ensures the colleagues to have precise expectations about each other's performances, it contributes to trust between the employee and the verifier, it helps the formation of affective commitment towards the organization and contributes to the development of organizational citizenship behaviors.

Keywords: Self-verifying Feedback, Trust, Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, Affective Commitment, Human Resource Management

JEL Codes: D23, M12, O15, J24

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1. INTRODUCTION

Self-verification theory, developed by Swann (1985), argues that people try to get feedback which confirms their own ideas and beliefs on themselves. The theory portrays people's need to consistency about their self-views (Swann, 1987, 1985). When they receive confirmatory feedback, they become certain on their self-views. Self-views serve maintaining coherence by helping the individual to make sense of life and experiences, make predictions about the world and guide behavior. A stable self-view makes up person's knowledge systems (Swann, 2011). As reported by Swann, self-verifying feedback assures that individual's system is in balance. It also improves his psychological well-being and maintains his psychological coherence (Swann, 2011). On the other hand, if the person receives self-discrepant feedback (feedback that does not support one's self-view), he can be impaired seriously. Because when the self-view is threatened, person faces the possibility of losing his sense of control (Swann & Hill, 1982). To avoid this, he engages in self-verification strivings. Cable and Kay (2012) define this concept as trying to lead others to know oneself as the individual knows thyself. Self-verification strivings involve behaving, speaking, dressing in a way that would ensure getting self-verifying feedback from others and preferring selected environments which would grant receiving this type of feedback (McCall & Simmons, 1966; Swann 2011; Swann, De La Ronde & Hixon, 1994; Swann, Pelham & Krull, 1989).

Self-verification is studied in romantic relationships and personal domain mostly (e.g. Emery, Gardner, Carswell & Finkel, 2018; Kwang & Swann, 2010; Weger, 2005). Also, there are several research on self-verification in groups and in organizational settings (e.g. Amarnani, Restubog, Shao, Cheng & Bordia, 2022; Booth et al., 2020; London & Smither, 2002; Messick & Mackie 1989; Swann, Polzer, Seyle & Ko, 2004; Swann, Kwan, Polzer & Milton, 2003).

1.1. Outcomes of self-verifying feedback

When people give and receive confirmatory feedback for each other's self-views, interpersonal relationships and interactions gets smoother. Because when people know one another, they have mutual predictability and trust (as predictability is an important part of trust). Relationships get predictable, simple and safer (North & Swann, 2009; Rempel, Holmes & Zanna, 1985; Tyler, 2001). Receiving self-verifying feedback makes sure that the experiences are coherent, relationships are predictable and thus, brings stability into people's lives. The resulting psychological comfort helps reducing worries and even improves individual's physical health (North & Swann, 2009; Swann, Chang-Schneider & Angulo, 2007).

The studies that focus on self-verification in groups present its outcomes in organizational settings: Polzer, Milton and Swann (2002) argue that group members desire to get self-verifying feedback from other members, so that they know the others see them as they see themselves. In group relationships, self-verification is a part of the processes that people negotiate their identities. Studies show that self-verifying feedback in group settings decreases communication problems (like misunderstandings) and thus the possibility of conflicts. It also creates mutual predictability, helps the formation of commitment, ensures a match between capabilities and expectations and, improves interpersonal congruence and performance in group work (Polzer et al., 2002; Swann et al., 2004; Swann et al., 2000). Additionally, in small and diverse groups, as people know each other well, fear of being misunderstood, fear of the other and the hesitation of stating debatable opinions are reduced. The group can produce creative and innovative solutions and ideas more (Polzer et al., 2002; Seyle, Athle & Swann, 2009).

Regarding the information provided by the literature, current paper has two major points of origin. First, the rich accumulation of studies mostly focuses on the personal domain, not the organizational domain and second, the patterns of modern life make business and business interactions a major part of people's lives, as they are at their offices almost more than the half

of day time. Thus, self-verification strivings in organizational settings still need academic attention. The vast literature on self and other self-related concepts show that people's self-views are formed based on how the others see them. Additionally, to ensure coherence and consistency, people need consistent self-views and to get consistent self-views, they need to get confirmatory feedback from others. So, the following question arises in one's mind: remembering that modern people's lives are mostly dominated by work, can they maintain their self-views (and psychological coherence and well-being) only via verifying feedback received from family members and friends? Thinking about the time spent at the office and the centrality of work and career in modern people's lives, probably not. People increasingly define themselves via their professions and accomplishments in their careers and, business relationships seem to be increasingly important for them.

Additionally, self-view formation process is influenced by the cultural context (Marshall, 2001), so does feedback-seeking behavior (Sully De Luque & Sommer, 2000). So, self-verification processes like self-verification strivings and getting discrepant and verifying feedback may also be unlike in divergent cultural contexts. Türkiye, the residence to the researchers, is a setting where self-verification research has attracted only minor attention: to our knowledge, there are only few research examining the topic in the Turkish context (Akun & Behrem, 2019; Tayfur, 2012; Yıldırım & Akın, 2021), Conducting the research in Türkiye, could provide additional insights into the topic. Thus, this paper aimed to examine employee self-verification strivings in organizational settings, motivated by a fundamental question of curiosity: how do employees feel when they receive confirmatory feedback and how does confirmatory feedback influence their relationships with colleagues and their workplace behavior (if it does)?

2. METHOD

The current study intended to obtain an understanding of the potential impact of confirmatory feedback on interpersonal relationships in the workplace and individual workplace behavior.

Research questions were as follows:

- How does self-verifying feedback that is received from colleagues influence employee's relationships with the feedback providers?
- How does the employee feel after getting confirmatory feedback from colleagues?
- Do receiving confirmatory feedback from colleagues influence individual workplace behavior?

As the research questions had an exploratory nature, a qualitative research design was preferred. The aim of this selection was obtaining a naturalistic understanding of human experience (Todd, Nerlich & McKeown, 2004); and making sense of the topic at hand by shedding light to the meanings that people give to it. (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindal, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The study focused on collecting information about how does the employee feel upon getting confirmatory feedback from colleagues and, how self-verifying feedback affects (if it does) workplace relationships, so the sample had to be a group of participants who work in an organizational setting which requires employees to work in interaction with colleagues on a regular basis. Working with others as a routine part of a workday would ensure the chances of giving and receiving feedback. Due to the efforts of improving quality of education, new and participative managerial methods based on teamwork are used in schools (Gökçe, 2009; Hall, 2001). Thus, schools rely on teamwork in their daily operations, which requires frequent communication between organizational members. In Türkiye, the routine operation in schools include the functioning of various teams like teachers' board and coteries (based on expertise, like science teachers' coterie, music teachers' coterie). Teachers meet regularly to produce syllabus, make educational plans, ensure coordination, prepare exams, manage projects and

organize events. All of these meetings and the nature of teamwork grants in-person communication and provides plenty of chances to the teachers and principals to give and receive self-verifying feedback. Additionally, unlike many other white-collar employees, teachers do not have private offices. They share a teachers' room. After, before, or between their classes, they spend their time in teachers' room and work, rest, chat or read there, with other teachers. Sharing the physical work space also provides chances to communicate and bond, and to exchange self-related feedback. Thus, the purposive sample of the study was composed of teachers (high school and primary school teachers who work at private and public schools) in the city of İzmir, Türkiye.

The sample contained 30 teachers and it was formed to be inclusive of both genders and school types:

- Gender: 16 female teachers and 14 male teachers.
- The type of school: 17 teachers from public and 13 teachers from private schools. This distinction was made based on the knowledge that different ownership structures cause differences in working conditions and expectations about performance in schools.

An interview protocol was prepared to guide the researchers and, potential participants were contacted. Appointments for the interviews were organized based on participants' availability. The volunteering participants were assured about anonymity and were briefed about the research. Before the interviews and observations, the researchers reflected on their personal ideas on the subject and found out potential individual biases and previously held beliefs. The aim was to grant confirmability and to prevent biases and beliefs to influence the process of developing an accurate understanding of the phenomenon. In order to build trust between researchers and the participants, some personal interaction was incorporated before the interviews and the observations. The researchers both have sociable and talkative personalities, thus it was easy for them to initiate personal interaction with participants. Hereby the participants did not feel tense and stressful and they did not feel like strangers.

The interviews were conducted at places of participants' selection: places that they would feel comfortable and at ease. Most of the participants preferred having the interviews in their schools. That was an invaluable opportunity for the researchers to make observations at the schools. The researchers arrived at the schools prior to the interviews and spent 3 to 4 hours at teachers' room, observing teachers' interactions. They also did not leave the school right after the interviews: they spent additional time observing and occasionally, chatting with the teachers. 150 hours of observation was made during the field study. The researchers tried to understand the interpersonal relationships in the settings as they had the chances to have a better, a closer perspective as an outsider (Kostera, 2007). They preferred to take a back seat, merely observe, take notes and avoid possible interference, so that the members of the organization be as they normally are in the daily organizational routine (Ciesielska, Boström & Öhlander, 2018).

Most of the interviews were recorded with participant permission. Some participants did not accept the recording, during these interviews the researchers relied on their field notes. In addition to the interview recordings and field notes, the researchers kept diaries which involved their observations, notes and feelings about the interviews and participants. The recordings were transcribed verbatim right after every single interview. Participants and interviews were given numbers. All confidential information about the participants were removed from the transcriptions for anonymity purposes. During the field study, the researchers listened to the audiotapes, examined the transcriptions and analyzed the data set at the same time. Researchers stopped conducting interviews upon data saturation, as data sets the sample size in purposive sampling. This is called as the golden standard by Morse (1995).

To ensure trustworthiness, the researchers followed Lincoln and Guba's criteria (1985). For credibility, continuous triangulation was employed. The researchers checked the data, their

interpretations of data and the related theories, going back and forth between them. Moreover, they used prolonged engagement: 150 hours of non-participant observation was made. Field notes included information about the setting, participants' relationship with colleagues, his/her behaviors, attitudes and reactions. Additionally, three random transcriptions were selected and sent to the related participants for checking and all were approved.

The research team had the aim of granting mutual interaction between the theory and the data (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002), thus the data collection and analysis were concurrent. Data analysis was made using open coding / inductive constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). This method is relevant for pointing out the underlying facts as themes throughout the data set (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). All transcriptions were printed and read several times by the researchers. In doing so, they aimed to find out the emerging meanings and themes and to bring out the categories and the codes. The audio recordings were also listened to during the initial readings. As stated by Corbin and Strauss, data were broken down analytically and compared in order to find out differences and similarities (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), later they were grouped together as codes and were conceptually named. Subsequently, the codes were grouped based on similarities and categories were attained. The interpretations were double checked, repeatedly going back to the recordings, field notes and the transcriptions. The research team worked on the interpretations together, so that the construction of the interpretation is dependable and stable. During this process, the researchers went back and forth between data from interviews, field notes, their interpretations and the theory. As the process continued, coding became refined. At some point, the analysis no longer brought out new codes and categories, thus due to conceptual saturation, the researchers conducted no more interviews.

The following section will present the findings alongside with the related participant reflections.

3. FINDINGS

1950s: Confirmatory feedback influences an individual both sociologically and psychologically. Previous studies on self-verification were mainly on these effects experienced in marital relationships (e.g. Emery et al., 2018; Kwang & Swann, 2010; Weger, 2005). As the current study only addressed confirmatory feedback in the workplace, the field study did not focus on discrepant feedback. Findings present the influence of confirmatory feedback on employee's relationships in the workplace and on individual workplace behavior.

3.1. Improved communication

Improved communication is the first emerging theme of the study. The data set showed that receiving verifying feedback contributed to participant's communication with the verifier. When the participant received confirmatory feedback, she felt relaxed, safe and communication became easier and more comfortable.

Participant.22: *I was new at school back then. Nobody knew me, so talking to others was not easy. I had to think hard before talking, as they did not know me, I did not know them, I did not want to offend anyone, say something wrong. I didn't want them to have bad impressions about me. I was not talking much, not say much, less risky.*

Participant.3: *...as time passed and I get to know about them and they get to know about me, I relaxed, literally. I was talking and chatting as I wished. I was lucky, we had the chances to talk, know each other and bond.*

When the employee is known by the colleagues, as there is mutual predictability, communication is easy. On the contrary, when she is unknown to the colleagues, she has to

show efforts and spend time to make sure that interpersonal communication is accurate and healthy. As the participant does not get confirmation to her 'self', she has to adopt certain strategies in self-verification (McCall & Simmons, 1966; North & Swann, 2009; Swann, 2011; Swann et al., 1994; Swann et al., 1989). She has to give particular messages to colleagues so that she can get confirmatory feedback for her self-view. This means constantly striving to present to others who she is. In such a situation, she does not merely communicate with colleagues to inform them about her ideas, her needs and her wants; it becomes a complex process of self-presentation and trying to get verifying feedback. Participant statements showed that the energy and efforts spent on self-verification strategies and on communicating with this motive could have been spent for work. They reported that, when working with colleagues from whom they received confirmatory feedback and thus, who knew them, they could devote these resources to work related issues and activities. As Swann (2011) stated, the predictability created by being known in social settings provides a sense of comfort. That very comfort enables the employee to completely focus on work and duties. This can also be seen in Participant 5's reflection:

Participant.5: *We know each other for long, we know each other's styles, like how do I talk, what do I mean when I say something, they know me. That's a comfort, a luxury. We don't need to be cautious when talking, we don't think what will he think if I say this. We simply say what we need to say and we work, we concentrate on our jobs, not on what others will think about me, say about me.*

Communicating with others that does not know them creates anxiety, tension, stress and fear in employees. Because it involves the risk of making communication mistakes, producing conflict and creating a false and undesired image. When communicating with others who provide confirmatory feedback, they feel seen and understood for who they are and this creates a relaxed environment, as Participant 18 verbalized below.

Participant.18:... *Weapons down...*

This finding contributes to the idea that healthy communication is valuable in a workplace, because communication is seen as an important force for the organizing function (Putnam & Nicotera, 2009).

3.2. Simplified team work via effective task distribution

The next emergent theme was effective task distribution. When colleagues know each other well, they know each other with strengths, weaknesses, skills, expertise, characteristics, limitations and potential. Thus, when working with colleagues that they receive confirmatory feedback from and thus are known by, team work is simplified. The team tasks are distributed to members accurately based on skills, expertise, limitations and potential.

Participant.10: *I told you before, my principal and my colleagues in my coterie, they know me well. When we are sharing the tasks, when the principal is assigning us some duties, it is known... where am I good at, or where I will need help...some tasks, I am terrible at, like organizing shows, I cannot do it good, they know it, they never give it to me (laughs). This is good by the way, each job is in safe hands and the school runs good.*

Participant.19: *They know my limitations; they do not force me to things that I am weak at... I don't feel offended that they know my weaknesses, because it is good for me and for the school. We are efficient because we share the tasks well.*

As participants reflected, when colleagues know each other well, work is delegated effectively. Each employee is assigned to jobs based on abilities, in this way team resources are used with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, they have the chances to atone each other's weaknesses and compensate deficiencies and lack of experience. As London (2003) stated, group members' knowledge of other members' limitations and capabilities, their strengths and weaknesses would contribute to group processes. This is how team work is facilitated and colleagues are comforted. Team saves time, energy and efforts.

Using team efforts wisely leads to an enhanced team effectiveness. As, the level of effort and certain other factors determine the effectiveness of the group (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

Additionally, as self-verifying feedback improves communication, it indirectly contributes to teamwork. Healthy and effective communication prevents potential conflicts and problems, it helps bonding between members and thus, members can exchange ideas and feelings without the fear of being misunderstood, misjudged or excluded.

3.3. Accurate expectations about performance

Another theme was accurate expectations about performance. As participants stated, when the teacher is known well by the colleagues, principals and students, each of these parties have an accurate idea about what to expect from her.

Participant.8: *Another advantage is, no one has unreal expectations from you, because they know you, they know what you actually can do. So they never want you to do something that you cannot...believe me its precious because we have good performances thanks to this understanding.*

Participant.12: *... we are efficient as a team, because of knowing everyone good. We don't lose time, we don't waste efforts... some people think that, hmm it's a professional environment, I don't need them to know me, I don't need to know them, we just do our jobs. No, I disagree, relationships matter in performing, if my principal does not know me well, he can never know how to best use me...*

Arranging expectations from the participant based on her personality and professional capabilities creates reasonable performance expectations. Thus, the chances that participant meets expectations are high. This reduces ambiguity and uncertainty in workplace relationships, produces coherence and thus contributes to psychological well-being (Goffman, 1959; Swann, 2011). This finding added to Swann et. al.'s study (1992) in which they argued that discrepant feedback could lead to incorrect expectations from the individual. This may harm the interaction between parties and it can damage the intimate and marital relationships (Swann et, al, 1994). Findings extended the contribution of these studies by showing that self-verifying feedback ensures colleagues to have correct expectations from each other and prevents potential workplace relationship challenges and work related problems.

3.4. Trust

Participant reflections show that confirmatory feedback contributes to building trust between the person and the verifier, as behaviors and attitudes become mutually predictable. The individual and the colleague know each other's personalities and professional characteristics, thus they know if they can rely on each other and when and how to rely on each other.

Participant.24: *...if colleagues know each other, it's a trusting place. You don't have to watch for your back. You come with peace.*

Participant.9: *... I had to take some time off because of a family problem, a colleague took over my classes, but I never had a tiny amount of doubt. I knew that she would handle it very well, because we trust each other. I would do the same for her.*

This finding extended Burke and Stet's (1999) study to organizational settings: they argued that self-processes (self-verification) directly and indirectly leads to trust in intimate relationships, by replicating the same finding in workplace relationships. Because, the current study showed that confirmatory feedback from a colleague for individual's self-view leads to trust between the two. Zand (1972) defines trust as the process of becoming vulnerable to the other. Additionally, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) state that it is the individual's willing vulnerability to the other. This willing vulnerability is based on the belief that the other is honest, reliable and open. It is also based on confidence to the other. Regardless of the context,

trust is important in human interaction, Durkheim (1956) states that it is the foundation of social order. On the other hand, as a critic to Durkheim, Elster (1989) argues that social order is made up of the norms, rules and predictability of social life. But Mistral (1996) says that in the absence of trust neither the daily life nor the social order can be as they are. Because trust decreases uncertainty and it produces stability and coherence (Mayer et al., 1995; Porter et al., 1975). Trust in organizational settings, namely organizational trust is described by Gibbs (1972) as a climate that involves confidence in one another, acceptance of one another and mutual positive feelings. Cook and Wall (1980) add that trust is a must in creating a healthy climate in the organization and it is also vital for stability in the long term. Having noted these, it can be suggested that confirmatory feedback indirectly contributes to a healthy organizational climate via creating trust between colleagues.

3.5. Affective organizational commitment

The next theme presents that confirmatory feedback, when received from a colleague, creates constructive and positive feelings in the individual. These positive feelings are not only towards the colleague but also towards the organization and they grow and create affective commitment towards the organization.

Participant.16: *...it is so good to know that people around you know who you are... I go to school with such an enthusiasm, like I am not going to work but to meet friends, like school is my place. I love my school.*

Participant.20: *I love the teachers, we know each other for years, its like a family... so that makes you love the school, love the job, feel like you are the one who owns the school.*

Meyer and Allen (1987) describe affective commitment as the individual's sentimental attachment to the organization: The individual is sentimentally attached and committed to her organization. Receiving verifying feedback, thus, being known by the colleagues creates positive feelings towards them, which results in a feeling of belongingness. Feeling "at home and with family" leads to affective commitment. Swann, Hixon, and De LaRonde (1992) have previously shown that receiving verifying feedback from the partner increased commitment to the relationship in marital association and Burke and Stets (1999) argued that self-verifying feedback leads to commitment in groups. Cable and Kay (2012), on the other hand, presented that self-verification strivings predicted organizational commitment positively. The current study supported these previous studies and it also contributed the literature by showing how self-verifying feedback may lead to affective commitment in organizational settings.

3.6. Organizational citizenship behaviors

The last theme shows that receiving self-verifying feedback contributes to the creation of organizational citizenship behaviors via having trusted and close relationships with supervisors and managers.

Participant.13: *I worked at a village school. We were only two teachers there. We get to know about each other quickly and we had such a good relationship... we backed each other in everything... what happens then is, you feel like you have to do more, more than what you actually should.*

Participant.14: *...we were like brothers and sisters... we were also painting the school in summer time, fixing the tables of the students... that was not our job to do. But we felt like we had to do it, because the school was our responsibility.*

As Participant 14 stated, due to his close relationship with the principal and other teachers, as they knew each other well and trusted each other, he felt indebted to the principal and the school, and undertook jobs and responsibilities which are not written in his job description. He felt the organization as his own. Thus, based on the data, it can be concluded

that self-verifying feedback contributes to the creation of organizational citizenship behaviors via building trusting relationships between subordinates and supervisors. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) was first coined by Smith, Organ and Near (1983). Organ (1988, p. 4) described the concept as voluntary conduct which contributes to the functioning of the organization and its performance. It is called as voluntary as it is neither formally included in the individual employee's job description, nor recognized and enforced by the formal policies and systems (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988; Smith et al., 1983). OCB is a precious asset for the organization, as the employee voluntarily contributes to the organization. It is stated to help the organization overcome the unexpected contingencies via enhancing flexibility (Smith et al., 1983). It is also claimed that the organization is very delicate if it only relies on the pre-determined and written prescribed behavior, thus OCB is important in strengthening the organization and handling the prevalent uncertainties of the modern business life Katz (1964).

Previous research showed that self-verification strivings predict new employees' OCB significantly in a positive way (Cable & Kay, 2012). Current research extends this finding via showing that receiving self-verifying feedback facilitates OCB via the trust based relationships between organizational members in vertical hierarchical associations.

4. DISCUSSION

As shown in the findings section, confirmatory feedback given by colleagues creates the following outcomes in organizational settings: improved communication, simplified team work via effective task distribution, accurate expectations about performance. It also helped building trust, contributed to affective commitment and the creation of OCB.

Self-verifying feedback among colleagues eases the communication process and thus improves it. It also enhances collaboration indirectly and thus improves team work. As stated in the literature (Main, 2010), professional dialogue (in this case, simplified by working with a colleague that confirms person's self-view via confirmatory feedback) promotes collaboration. Additionally, as confirmatory feedback improves communication, it creates a positive communication climate. That, also is suggested to contribute to maintaining relationships (Canary, Stafford, Hause & Wallace, 1993; Canary & Stafford, 1992; Messman, Canary & Hause, 2000). Keeping these in mind, we can argue that self-verifying feedback, besides improving communication and fostering the development of new workplace relationships, also helps maintaining the existing ones.

On the other hand, team effectiveness is simplified through improved communication, as communication is a team process (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Marks, Mathieu & Zaccaro, 2001). Craig (1999) states that people experience life via communication and thus, improving communication means improving the overall life experience, both in professional and in private settings. By providing the employees with opportunities to get to know one another, management could enjoy the positive influence of confirmatory feedback on interpersonal communication, workplace relationships and individual workplace experience. Human resource management activities focusing on improving organizational communication, teamwork effectiveness and performance expectations should address the influence of confirmatory feedback.

As stated above, current findings supported Burke and Stets' (1999) study suggesting that self-verification operates directly on the behavioral measures of commitment and it indirectly increases commitment and emotional attachment via trust and self-feelings. Participant reflections showed how confirmatory feedback contributed to mutual trust and the creation of affective commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) described affective commitment as the employee being emotionally attached and identified with the organization and happy being a member of it. Their commitment model offered affective, normative and continuance commitment components to the concept (Meyer & Allen, 1987). They are different than one another and related to a number of organizational outcomes. Affective commitment on the

other hand, is the one that has a significant relationship with individual workplace behaviors like performance, OCB and attendance. It is also known to have a negative relationship with work-family conflict and stress (Meyer et al.2002). Thus, confirmatory feedback may contribute to these desired workplace behaviors and may prevent the undesirable ones via fostering affective commitment.

Lastly, the current study extended previous research by showing that self-verifying feedback contributes to organizational citizenship behavior in organizations. As stated by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter (1990) and Robinson and Morrison (1995), employee's relationship with his/her manager has an effect on OCB, via establishing employee's perceptions on the leader. The current findings showed self-verifying feedback's role in strengthening the employee-manager relationship, building trust among them and thus contributing to OCB. OCB not only enhances organization's flexibility (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983) which is precious in handling turbulence and uncertainties, but it also positively influences profitability (Koys, 2001), productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff & Blume, 2009). Additionally, it is reported to be negatively related with unit-level costs and turnover (Podsakoff et al., 2009), actual turnover, turnover intentions and absenteeism (Podsakoff et al., 2009). OCB is a highly desired individual workplace behavior as it benefits the organization in multiple ways.

With these in mind, it would be correct to say that interpersonal relationships matter in all organizations, thus having colleagues who know you well matter, too. Having colleagues who know you well and give you verifying feedback contributes to individual psychological well-being and it develops emotional bonds, not only between colleague and the individual but also the organization and the individual. These bonds contribute to the development of trust, affective commitment and OCB.

Findings of the current study emphasize the roles of managers and human resources function. Knowing the positive impact of confirmatory feedback from colleagues on workplace relationships and individual workplace behavior, managers and human resources departments should create the climate and the chances for the organizational members to spend time together and to know each other. Socializing alternatives like company picnics, family weekends, corporate social responsibility projects, art workshops, corporate sports events should be frequently provided to the employees. Workplace design should also be changed to serve the purpose: coffee corners, shared work stations, team rooms, large and welcoming cafeterias that encourage sitting and eating together and coffee break gardens are among the options. Managing people has no standard recipes to follow to attain desired purposes. Thus, being a manager is multi-faceted and complex in all that it demands, but research contributes to the management knowledge and provides directions, like the current study humbly attempted to do.

Future research may also enrich the cumulative knowledge on the issue: the role of self-verifying/self-discrepant feedback on leader-follower relationships and the impact of self-verifying/self-discrepant feedback on human resources processes like performance evaluation, career progress and promotion need to be investigated.

The current paper has a number of limitations: field study was conducted in İzmir, Türkiye, thus findings may be different in different settings like other cities of the country, and other countries, due to sub-cultural and cultural differences. The sample was purposefully selected as teachers, due to the constant interaction between colleagues. Findings may be different with a different sample, as professions differ based on the nature of interaction between colleagues.

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