

## **ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT LEVELS OF FACULTY MEMBERS IN SPORT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN TURKEY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study aimed to reveal the organisational commitment levels of faculty members to teaching at higher education institutions in Turkey. To be able to obtain participants' views, the organisational commitment scale developed by Allen and Meyer in 1990 was used and data was analysed by means of the SPSS 17.0 program. A significant difference was found in the sub-components of affective commitment in terms of tenure related differences and tenure in job status in the organisation. Some significant differences were reported in age, education status and academic rank variables of continuance commitment. No significant differences were seen in any of the normative commitment variables. In addition, a significant positive, medium-level and linear relationship was found between affective commitment and normative commitment. Also a significant positive and linear but low level relationship was obtained between continuance commitment and normative commitment.*

**Key words:** Higher education; Sport schools; Organisational commitment; Faculty members.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Today's organisations expect their employees to make efforts to recommend success. Organisations take into consideration their employees' authority, their overcoming of problems, becoming successful and reaching perfection. Hiring employees with such features and motivating them to work for the long-term in relation to the objectives of the organisation are two important points to bear in mind. Urging the employees toward attaining the organisational goals, in other words, motivating them is connected not only with situational factors but also with individual differences (Kaya & Selçuk, 2007). Employees feeling a commitment towards the organisation where they work are indeed the principal and the necessary power for their institutions (Chen, 2004).

The fact that employees have enough knowledge and skills is not sufficient for organisational success on its own. The success of the organisations has to do with the reflection of employees' knowledge of and skills in their work. Positive attitudes, strong dependence and their feelings for the organisation are necessary (Bolat & Bolat, 2008). Organisational commitment is the most important factor in reaching organisational objectives. Therefore, all organisations expect to increase the level of commitment of the faculty members. The fact that employers make the employees feel they are distinguished, help them participate in decision making processes and conducting healthy communication is essential to create the kind of organisational commitment desired. Similarly, employees would be of the opinion that organisational commitment is beneficial not only for the organisation but also for them.

Taking into consideration management's support of organisational commitment of which they think they have a right, employees would also help the organisation's management to create an ideal working environment and understanding (Bayram, 2005).

Relevant literature suggests that Porter *et al.* (1974) came up with the most common definition of the organisational commitment concept. Commitment takes place, according to their definition, when individuals identify with the organisation and strive towards the objectives and values of the organisation (Çöl, 2004; Feinstein, 2006; Paulin *et al.*, 2006). Organisational commitment covers psychological holism, identification, stabilisation and behaviour (Drummond, 2000). Furthermore, organisational commitment is a feeling that reveals the harmony between belief and behaviour of individuals (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2001). Organisational commitment covers three components (Maxwell & Gordon, 2003):

- Acceptance of the organisation's goals and values and strong belief in them;
- Willingness to make efforts in attaining the organisational goals; and
- Strong desire to continue adherence to the organisation.

Some of the most widely recognised and used organisational commitment models in the literature are that of Allen and Meyer (1990), Cohen (2007) and Seymen (2008). Their models consist of three components: 'affective commitment'; 'continuance commitment'; and 'normative commitment'. *Affective commitment* is defined as the employee's affective attachment to the organisation, identification with it, internalisation of the organisation's values, goals and objectives, as well as making an effort to attain those goals and objectives and the desire to be a part of the organisation. *Continuance commitment* is the need to stay in the organisation because the employee perceives a high cost of loss when leaving the organisation, hence feeling the obligation to continue with the organisational membership. *Normative commitment* is the feeling of the employees not to leave the organisation because he/she feels a moral obligation and responsibility for the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Arnett *et al.*, 2002).

With the above-mentioned definitions, a long process is required to create the organisational commitment of employees. In the organisations where organisational commitment is not created, organisation culture is not settled and such organisations are faced with extinction in the long-term. The employees having a say in the management should pay attention to the topics (organisational commitment, organisational culture and organisational atmosphere), in organisational context. Higher education institutions, like other organisations, should hold the highest organisational commitment among their employees in the context of total quality.

This study aims to reveal faculty members' levels of organisational commitment to teaching at higher education schools of sport. Especially in determining the commitment levels of faculty members to their institutions will certainly contribute to education by quality staff in terms of vocational proficiency, as well as to the satisfaction of the needs of staff in the sport sector. It is also expected to help administrations to improve the strategies within such organisations. Since there has not been previous research on this topic, this study could contribute to filling the gap.

## METHODOLOGY

The sample of the study consisted of mainly faculty members teaching at schools for sport at higher education institutions in Turkey. A total of 123 faculty members from these schools participated in the study.

To determine the level of organisational commitment of the participants at their schools, a scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), was used based on the reported reliability of this scale by Deniz (2010). This organisational commitment scale is composed of 3 components: affective commitment (6 items); continuance commitment (6 items); and normative commitment (6 items). The data obtained was analysed using the SPSS 17.0 program. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale's reliability was found to be 0.816 for affective commitment, 0.654 for continuance commitment and 0.779 for normative commitment. The overall Cronbach Alpha coefficient value of the scale was found to be 0.862. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to reveal the socio-demographic variables of the study group. The differences between mean scores of the scale were measured using the t-test, which is employed for comparison of 2 independent groups according to independent variables. The Kruskal Wallis H-test was used for to analyse the scores of more than 2 groups, as the data did not satisfy parametric testing of the hypothesis. In cases where a statistically significant difference was found, the Mann Whitney U-test was employed to find the origin of the difference. The Spearman rank correlation coefficient was employed to determine the relationship between the mind-sets. The statistical significance level was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

## RESULTS

The findings obtained to reveal the level of organisational commitment of the faculty members teaching at schools of sport at higher education institutions are presented in the following tables in accordance with the objectives of the study.

The results indicated that there were no significant differences between the **gender** groups within the study regarding the 3 organisational commitment components (Table 1).

**TABLE 1: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDERS**

Scale	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t-Value	p-Value
Affective commitment	Males	93	20.76	5.02	0.184	0.855
	Females	30	20.56	5.33		
Continuance commitment	Males	93	16.20	4.73	-0.062	0.951
	Females	30	16.26	4.92		
Normative commitment	Males	93	17.34	4.98	1.022	0.309
	Females	30	16.30	4.48		

SD= Standard Deviation

A significant differences was found with regard to the **age** variable within the *continuance commitment* component of organisational commitment for the age group, 21 to 30 years (Table 2). Those who were younger had a higher mean score (Mean=19.71) in continuance commitment while in other components no significant differences were obtained.

**TABLE 2: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES AMONG AGE GROUPS**

Scale	Age	n	Mean	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	p-Value	U-test
Affective commitment	(a) 21-30	14	19.50	4.16	7.363	0.061	—
	(b) 31-40	43	19.55	5.42			
	(c) 41-50	46	21.21	5.34			
	(d) 51 +	20	22.90	3.37			
Continuance commitment	(a) 21-30	14	19.71	4.87	8.287	0.040*	a-b
	(b) 31-40	43	16.11	5.04			a-c
	(c) 41-50	46	15.80	4.60			a-d
	(d) 51 +	20	14.90	3.41			
Normative commitment	(a) 21-30	14	17.85	4.34	0.569	0.903	—
	(b) 31-40	43	16.90	5.14			
	(c) 41-50	46	16.82	4.75			
	(d) 51 +	20	17.55	5.11			

\* p<0.05 SD= Standard Deviation

A significant difference regarding **education status** was found in favour of the Bachelor's degree status graduates (Mean=20.66), when compared with the post-graduate status groups for the *continuance commitment* component of organisational commitment (Table 3). No significant differences were observed within the remaining components.

**TABLE 3: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES BASED ON EDUCATION STATUS**

Scale	Educ. status	n	Mean	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	p-Value	U-test
Affective commitment	(a) Bachelor	9	19.33	6.32	0.902	0.637	—
	(b) Master's	27	20.25	5.26			
	(c) Doctorate	87	21.00	4.91			
Continuance commitment	(a) Bachelor	9	20.66	4.92	8.926	0.012*	a-b
	(b) Master's	27	16.96	4.07			a-c
	(c) Doctorate	87	15.52	4.70			
Normative commitment	(a) Bachelor	9	16.00	3.57	2.724	0.256	—
	(b) Master's	27	18.37	4.59			
	(c) Doctorate	87	16.80	5.03			

\* p<0.05 SD= Standard Deviation

Significant differences were found with regard to the **academic rank status** in the lower dimension of *affective commitment* and *continuance commitment* for organisational commitment depending upon academic captions in research group (Table 4). It has been reported that *affective commitment* is higher in academic staff (Mean=24.37), with the title of professor. The fact that score averages were lower where the academic title was higher, a lower dimension of *continuance commitment* was determined. The lower mean scores were found among the higher rank academic faculty members. Research assistants and the instructors attained higher mean scores of 19.20 and 18.94 respectively.

**TABLE 4: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES BASED ON ACADEMIC RANK**

Scale	Acad. Rank	n	Mean	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	p-Value	U-test
Affective commitment	(a) Professor	8	24.37	1.06	11.082	0.050*	a-d a-e c-d
	(b) Assoc. Prof.	6	20.50	4.41			
	(c) Assist. Prof.	49	21.38	5.35			
	(d) Res. Assist.	15	18.40	4.85			
	(e) Lecturer	27	19.74	5.31			
	(f) Instructor	18	20.72	4.66			
Continuance commitment	(a) Professor	8	14.87	2.03	24.781	0.000*	a-f b-d b-f c-d c-e c-f
	(b) Assoc. Prof.	6	13.50	4.03			
	(c) Assist. Prof.	49	14.04	3.73			
	(d) Res. Assist.	15	19.20	5.45			
	(e) Lecturer	27	17.70	5.05			
	(f) Instructor	18	18.94	4.10			
Normative commitment	(a) Professor	8	19.37	6.61	7.369	0.195	—
	(b) Assoc. Prof.	6	20.16	6.17			
	(c) Assist. Prof.	49	16.34	4.80			
	(d) Res. Assist.	15	16.60	4.96			
	(e) Lecturer	27	17.74	4.61			
	(f) Instructor	18	16.50	3.76			

\* p<0.05

SD= Standard Deviation

It has been reported that *affective commitment* is higher in academic staff (Mean=24.37), with the title of professor. The fact that score averages were lower where the academic title was higher, a lower dimension of *continuance commitment* was determined. The lower mean scores were found among the higher rank academic faculty members. Research assistants and the instructors attained higher mean scores of 19.20 and 18.94 respectively.

Concerning **job status** (Table 5), the only significant difference was found between heads of departments (Mean=23.42) and 'Other' (Mean=19.95) groups for the *affective commitment* component of organisational commitment.

**TABLE 5: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES BASED ON JOB STATUS**

Scale	Job status	n	Mean	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	p-Value	U-test
Affective commitment	(a) Manager	3	25.00	1.00	10.812	0.013*	c-d
	(b) Assist Man.	6	22.00	2.75			
	(c) Head Dept.	19	23.42	3.37			
	(d) Other	95	19.95	5.30			
Continuance commitment	(a) Manager	3	14.66	1.15	3.899	0.273	—
	(b) Assist Man.	6	14.50	2.88			
	(c) Head Dept.	19	14.78	4.96			
	(d) Other	95	16.66	4.83			
Normative commitment	(a) Manager	3	21.00	3.60	5.674	0.129	—
	(b) Assist Man.	6	18.83	6.11			
	(c) Head Dept.	19	15.26	5.27			
	(d) Other	95	17.22	4.66			

\* p<0.05 SD= Standard Deviation

For the **job tenure status** variable (Table 6), significant differences were found between the groupings in the study with regard to the *affective commitment* component of organisational commitment. The highest mean (Mean=23.03) was scored by the 21+ years grouping representing the more experienced faculty members who showed stronger feelings of *affective commitment*.

**TABLE 6: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES BASED ON JOB TENURE STATUS**

Scale	Tenure status	n	Mean	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	p-Value	U-test
Affective commitment	(a) 0-5	11	18.09	4.03	10.871	0.028*	a-e b-e
	(b) 6-10	21	19.57	4.71			
	(c) 11-15	34	20.47	6.00			
	(d) 16-20	31	20.74	5.09			
	(e) 21+	26	23.03	3.62			
Continuance commitment	(a) 0-5	11	18.63	4.63	3.431	0.488	—
	(b) 6-10	21	16.00	5.92			
	(c) 11-15	34	16.23	4.71			
	(d) 16-20	31	15.64	4.82			
	(e) 21+	26	16.03	3.69			
Normative commitment	(a) 0-5	11	16.45	3.61	7.243	0.124	—
	(b) 6-10	21	17.76	4.84			
	(c) 11-15	34	16.32	4.98			
	(d) 16-20	31	16.00	4.78			
	(e) 21+	26	19.11	4.91			

\* p<0.05 SD= Standard Deviation

A significant difference was found for the *affective commitment* component between the groups in the study with regard to the **tenure status** at their **own institution** (Table 7). This difference was between the groups with 1 to 3 years (Mean=18.66), and 10+ years (Mean=21.78) experience. Those who had more than 10 years experience had a higher mean score for *affective commitment* compared to their colleagues with the least years of experience.

**TABLE 7: ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT DIFFERENCES BASED ON TENURE STATUS OF FACULTY MEMBER AT OWN INSTITUTION**

Scale	Tenure own	n	Mean	SD	X <sup>2</sup>	p-Value	U-test
Affective commitment	(a) 1-3	18	18.66	5.01	8.130	0.043*	a-d
	(b) 4-6	12	18.83	5.14			
	(c) 7-9	19	19.68	5.94			
	(d) 10+	74	21.78	4.64			
Continuance commitment	(a) 1-3	18	14.50	5.79	4.658	0.199	—
	(b) 4-6	12	16.08	5.97			
	(c) 7-9	19	18.05	4.31			
	(d) 10+	74	16.18	4.29			
Normative commitment	(a) 1-3	18	16.44	4.47	0.611	0.894	—
	(b) 4-6	12	16.41	4.99			
	(c) 7-9	19	17.73	4.71			
	(d) 10+	74	17.18	5.03			

\*p<0.05

SD= Standard Deviation

The **relationship** between *affective* and *normative commitment* of organisational commitment (Table 8) was significant, positive, linear and at a medium level ( $r=0.437$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Similarly, a significant, positive and linear, but low level of relationship was observed between *continuance* and *normative commitment* ( $r=0.246$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

**TABLE 8: CORRELATION AMONG COMPONENTS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT**

Scale	Identifiers	1	2	3
1. Affective commitment	r	1		
	p	-	—	—
	N	123		
2. Continuance commitment	r	0.025	1	
	p	0.781	-	—
	N	123	123	
3. Normative commitment	r	0.437*	0.246*	1
	p	0.000	0.006	-
	N	123	123	123

r = Correlation coefficient      p = Significance      N = Number of subjects

\* p<0.05

SD= Standard Deviation

## DISCUSSION

Employees and managers should hold positive attitudes and behaviour in institutions where competition is stronger due to globalisation and to avoid extinction. One of the factors that influence these attitudes and behaviour is organisational commitment. An analysis of the following findings was, therefore, taken into account to shed light on this area of study.

In the present study, no significant difference was observed in terms of the gender variable ( $p < 0.05$ ). This confirms the findings of previous research related to this study. It is assumed that higher education institutions provide more equal working conditions to the faculty members when compared to those in other sectors. Some researchers (Tao *et al.*, 1998; Özmen *et al.*, 2005; Kormaz, 2010) also found no significant difference between genders concerning organisational commitment.

A significant difference occurred with regard to age for the continuance commitment component of organisational commitment in the case of the 21 to 30 year group (Table 2). It was found that younger faculty members had higher mean scores due to a more positive response to the statements. Based on a meta-analysis, age had a weak, but more positive affective and normative dimension relationship according to Meyer *et al.* (2002). Some researchers (Shaw *et al.*, 2003; Smeenk *et al.*, 2006; Popoola, 2009), found that age did have an affect on organisational commitment. On the contrary, Tao *et al.* (1998), in their study reported that no significant relationship was observed for age and organisational commitment, while Meyer *et al.* (1993) found that age related to all three components of organisational commitment although the relationship was low but still positive.

A significant difference was found in terms of the education background variable at the continuance commitment of organisational commitment (Table 3). It was found that the continuance commitment mean scores decreased when academic rank was higher. Based on relevant literature, for instance, Çutuk (2011) suggests that there was a negative correlation between organisational commitment and education background. It turned out to be that the higher the education background, the lower the organisational commitment.

It has been found that affective commitment was higher for the academic rank of professor. In contrast, for continuance commitment the mean score was lower as the academic rank became higher, which is confirmed by previous findings (Table 4). Boylu *et al.* (2007) in their study found that the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of academic staff ranking, depended on the department and university in general, which is comparable to the findings of the present study where no significant difference was found for the normative commitment in the department where they were affiliated. For normative commitment in terms of attitude toward the university in general, there was a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in terms of attitude toward both the university and the department.

A significant difference was found between the groups in the current study with regard to tenure status of faculty members at their own institution for the affective commitment component of organisational commitment. The affective commitment mean scores of the faculty members, who served more than 10 years at the organisation, were found to be higher.

The findings of Çutuk (2011) are in agreement of the present study. The longer the employees worked at the institution, the more committed they were to their organisation.

When the results were examined in terms of components, it was found that a significant difference existed between the affective commitment component in terms of job status, tenure status and tenure status within the faculty member's own organisation, while no significant relationship was observed in terms of gender, age, education background and academic rank. The continuance commitment component of the scale produced a significant difference in terms of age, education background and academic rank. For this component, no significant difference was obtained in terms of gender, job status, tenure status and job tenure status. Likewise, for normative commitment, no significance difference was found in terms of any of the variables. Wasti (2000), in his study on employees in Turkey, found a negative relationship between normative and affective commitment and taking leave from work. Continuance commitment was, therefore, not a factor that influenced taking leave from work.

Researchers found that those having affective commitment stayed in the organisation because they wanted to, while those with strong normative commitment stayed because they had to do so, and those with strong continuance commitment stayed because they needed to work in the organisation. Bolat and Bolat (2008) and Seymen (2008), suggested that this situation could be interpreted as desire (affective), need (continuance) and obligation (normative).

Arbak and Kesken (2005) explain in their research that the reasons for organisational commitment were primarily personal characteristics, work experience, job and function. In the same study, it is suggested that discontinuity, performance and release are the most mentioned outcomes of organisational commitment. In the current study, a positive, linear and medium level of correlation between affective and normative commitment (Table 8), helped faculty members who participating in the study to see themselves as part of their organisation. This enhanced the feelings of assignment and responsibility that they internalised, motivated continuance with their organisation and positively influenced commitment to their institution.

Creating a shared vision within the organisation should be one of the most important tasks of administrators. It is necessary that they should make their employees feel important in the organisation in terms of organisational commitment. Therefore, providing participation in decision-making, delegation of authority and providing resources needed may be beneficial (Bolat & Bolat, 2008). It may be difficult and take a lot of time to create an organisational commitment in sport education institutions, as well as other institutions. In addition to this, maintaining organisational commitment may require extra effort.

In a nutshell, the levels of organisational commitment of faculty members teaching at higher sport education institutions vary in all components. Therefore, it is highly essential that administration and faculty members should take into consideration the factors that would strengthen the level of organisational commitment and encourage employees to stay in the organisation. Faculty members that work in one of the sectors that deal with the individual, such as sport teaching institutions do, have the duty to educate those that would shape society and future generations. The feeling of organisational commitment of faculty members in sport education schools where they teach, will be effective in the performance of the institution and

quality-assurance. Running activities at an effective level in sport education institutions mainly depends on high levels of commitment of faculty members. Internalisation of values and aims of the organisation by faculty members will enable them to work more for their institutions and wish to stay employed at the institution. This situation would create a satisfactory working environment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of study, the following suggestion can be made to increase the level of the organisational commitment of sport education institutions:

- Some systematic practices should be included for the development of organisational commitment in sport education institutions;
- Suggestions of and criticism from faculty members should be taken into account when creating and developing organisational commitment in these institutions;
- An effective communication and reward system should be established within the sport education institutions,
- Individual goals of the faculty members and objectives of the organisation should be combined and be encouraged.

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