Analysis of the Relation of Teachers' Organizational Identification and Organizational Communication

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Abstract

In this study the relationship between the organizational identification and organizational communication of primary school teachers is examined through path analysis. The study group in the study is formed by (n=362) primary school teachers working at primary schools located in the center of Bolu in the 2011-2012 academic year. In the study, data were collected through "Organizational Identification Inventory" and "Organizational Communication Inventory". In the analysis of the data in order to identify teachers' organizational identification and organizational communication levels, the percentage, the frequency values, the mean, and standard deviation scores were calculated. Meanwhile, the relationship between organizational identification and organizational communication levels were examined through path analysis. In the study, the mean score about primary school teachers' organizational identification level is ($\bar{x}$=3,89, S=,67). In the study, it was found that the highest mean score about primary school teachers' organizational communication level is at the "Mission Essential Communications" sub-dimension $\bar{x}$=3,89 (S=,67) while the lowest mean score is at the "Feedback" sub-dimension $\bar{x}$=3,49 (S=,80). In the study, the results of path analysis done to identify the relationship between organizational identification and organizational communication levels of teachers revealed that the model is consistent as GFI: 0,99, AGFI: 0,96 and CFI: 1,00.

Key Words

Organizational Identification, Organizational Communication, Primary School Teacher, the Relational Model Scan, Correlation, Path Analysis.

Organizations are established to carry out specific purposes and are the successful structures to the extent they reach their aims. Organizations should effectively employ human factor which is one of the significant sources to reach their aims and sustain their continuation in competitive world (Topaloğlu, 2010). Today, one of the fundamental problems of

the organization could be expressed as "harmonization of workers' aims with organizations' aims". Initially, in order to sort this problem out within the attitudes towards job, the study results of such typical subjects as organizational commitment, organizational loyalty, and job satisfaction have been benefitted from (Eicholtz, 2000). Nowadays, it is not surprising regarding the organizational behavior studies to be more benefitted from psychology and sociology (Polat, 2009).

Bringing the membership of organization an important part of workers' personalities and providing them with being proud while defining themselves as the member of organization in today's conditions play a key role in gaining long-term successes (İşcan 2006). Therefore, organizational

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identification subject, which is required to be examined, has come into prominence in today's organization life.

Organizational identification is admitted as the critical basic component of organizational behavior literature affecting satisfaction of workers and benefit of organization by researchers (Mael & Ashfort, 1989). Lee defines organizational identification as the wide personal identification degree of individuals with their organizations (cited in Patchen, 1970). Patchen describes identification as the portrayal consisting of participation, success and job loyalty (Patchen, 1970). Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994), portrays identification as an approach concerning manner. Other researchers define identification in terms of individual and organization. Mael and Ashforth (1989) define identification as the perception of being one with organization and experiencing the success and failure of organization as if his/her own ones. Tompkins and Cheney (1987) define identification from the point of view of individual. Generally, many identifications are classified as individual and organization centered. Tompkins and Cheney (1987) assert identification is both product and process. Kogut and Zander (1996) identify identification as rules and regulations employed to coordinate behaviors of individuals. Whereas Mael and Ashforth (1989) defines identification as a part of social identities and result of organizational identity, Tompkins and Cheney (1985) define identification as a concept directing members of organization to accept organizational decision statements, behave according to organizational functions, and adopt the types of organizational behaviors.

According to Miller, Allen, Casey, and Johnson (2000) identification makes workers perceive the aims of organization and similarity areas in their values, shape the aims of organizations and activities and decrease the uncertainty by accepting organizational aims and values. Sammara and Biggiero (2001) state that organizational identification is composed of cognitive and psychological mechanism. Smitdts and Von Riel (2001) claim organizational identification has both cognitive and affective dimensions. From a very wide viewpoint, organizational identification includes the perception of distinguishing qualities shared by the members of the organization, supporting the organization attitudinally and behaviourally (Miller et al., 2000). Levinson states (1965) that whereas people in the past associate themselves with their names or their jobs, today people define themselves through

organizations they work for. Identification, being a part of individual's social identities, is the result of individual's organizational identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Pratt (1998) expresses that identification with organization satisfies holistic needs of individual. Social identity is the identification and evaluation of a person (Hogg & Vaughan, 2007). According to the social identity theory developed by Tajfel and Turner, group membership, which is meaningful to individual, leads personal identity to give way to social identity (Meşe 1999). Social identity is "knowledge of an individual concerning his/her membership of a social group which is emotional and meaningful to him/her" (Turner, 1982). Belonging to groups presents the initial references and models of identification to an individual enabling him to place in a social framework (Bilgin, 1995). Identification is one of the most crucial concepts of the Social Identity Theory (Hortaçsu, 2007). An increasingly interest regarding organizational identification in the literature has been aroused (Chreim, 2002). It is thought that organizational identification has a significant potential to the benefit of organization-individual and should be seen in the central position to analyze the connection between the individual and organization (Günberk, 2007). Organizational identification is a key and a strong connection that reflect a psychological situation between employee and organization. Moreover, it has a potential to account for many important attitudes and behaviors in the organization (Shamir and Kark, 2004).

In order for an organization to survive effectively and maintain its aims organizational identification is one of the important concepts (Eroğlu, 2008; Riketta, 2005). Organizational identification is generally accepted as the desired tie of individual to organization by researchers and pragmatists (Ashforth & Mael; Dutton et al., 1994; Pratt). Identification directs the members of organization to accept organizational decision statements, behave according to organizational functions (Tompkins & Cheney, 1985), and adopt the types of organizational behaviors (Shamir, 1990), besides identification creates the opportunity to shape the organizational aims and activities (Cheney & Tompkins, 1987). In all definitions regarding organization it is seen that there are such features as existence of common aims, formal and informal interaction between members, an identity approved by internal and external environment, pre-determined aims and studies, and stating duty and authority responsibilities (Türkmen, 2003). Organization is a social unit consisting of at least two persons to carry out cer-

tain aims. This situation necessitates the existence of a hierarchal structure between manager and workers (Eren, 2001; Öksüz, 1997). Organizations, having a common desire and will to carry out a common aim, are a community of people. The quality and quantity of communication among people should be high (Başaran, 2000). Organizational communication provides coordination of members' actions basically in a way to meet the objectives of organization, besides, it enables organization members to produce symbols, communicate via these symbols, and interpret them in order to improve motivation. Simply, organizational communication is like the messages exchanged in small groups clusters, which are both stylistically and without stylistically structured (Mutlu, 1998). Organizational communication provides coordination of members' actions basically in a way to meet the objectives of organization, besides, it enables organization members to produce symbols, communicate via these symbols, and interpret them in order to improve motivation. Simply, organizational communication is like the messages exchanged in small groups clusters, which are both stylistically and without stylistically structured (Mutlu, 1998). It is impossible for any organization to survive without communication. It is necessary to establish communication among organization employees in order for members of organization to carry out responsibilities and duties (Şimşek, 1997). Organizational communication is an internal and external information exchange performed to reach organization's aims about planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and evaluating activities (Yıldız, 1996). The relationship of education-organization and the results of these relationships have been emphasized as an important issue in recent years (Öksüz, 1997). The aims of education organizations require workers to work more and employ their powers coordinately. Hence, the importance of communication in education organizations is much more significant than the other organization (Başaran, 2000).

Education is an interaction process. The means of interaction is communication. Thus, in education organization communication process is the principal necessity for both management and education (Celep, 1992). It is necessary for educational administrators to work in a more informal milieu, to affect others instead of exercising power and to be well-educated in behavioral sciences (Bursalıoğlu, 1999).

Positive organizational communication in education organization increases organizational identification. Organizational communication specifies the place of organization in society (Mısırlıoğlu, 1997). The importance of meeting worker's need for communication has been increasing in school communication studies (Ural, 2001). Communication skill is one of the fundamental skills in administration. Having better communication skill means having better administration skill (Tutar, 2002).

The effect of organizational communication on identification has been a subject of many studies. Cheney (1983), Smitdts, Pruyn, and Von Riel (2001), Scott, Corman and Cheney (1998), Kuhn and Nelson (2002), Dutton et al. (1994), Di Sanza and Bullis (1999), Pfeffer (1981), Yetim (2010) and Tüzün and Çağlar (2008) have carried out studies to determine the relation of organizational communication and organizational identification.

When the members of education organization obtain adequate and beneficial information related to their participation in duties and organizational jobs, their value perceptions of being organization member will increase. Hence, if workers of education organization acquire sufficient information concerning their roles, identification will strengthen (Tüzün and Çağlar, 2008).

Purpose

The aim of this study is to determine teachers' levels of organizational identification and organizational communication working at primary schools and examine the relation of between organizational identification and organizational communication levels through path analysis. In order to carry out this aim the following questions are employed to find an answer.

1- What is the organizational identification level of teachers working at primary schools?

2- What is the organizational communication level of teachers working at primary schools?

3- Is there a significant relation between organizational identification and organizational communication levels of teachers working at primary schools?

Method

Research Design

In this study, relational scanning model has been employed. Relational scanning models are research models aiming to determine the existence and/or degree of two or more variables. Relational analysis

has been performed in two ways. These are correlation and comparison (Karasar, 2007). Correlation has been employed to determine the relation between the teachers' organizational identification and organizational communication. Correlational researches emphasize the relation between two or more variables without interfering these variables (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, and Demirel, 2008).

Sample

The population of this study consists of 37 teachers working at primary schools within Bolu province in 2011-2012 academic year. The sampling of the study is 362 teachers who are randomly selected. According to Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan (2004, p. 50), "with 0,05 error rate the sampling composed of 278 people represents a population including 1000 people." The sampling corresponds to 35% of the study population.

In the study, 60,8% of the participants are female and 39,2% of them are male. Moreover, 47,5% of these teachers are classroom teachers, 52,5% of these teachers are subject-matter teachers. While 24,3% of the teachers having "2-5 years" professional experience are in majority, the rate of the teachers having "21 years and more" professional experience is 5,5%. 38% of the teachers have been working for "2-4 years" in the same school when compared in terms of working time in the same school.

Instrument

In order to collect data for the study, Organizational Identification Scale and Organizational Communication Scale have been applied.

Organizational Identification Scale: The scale, developed by Van Dick (2004), was translated into Turkish and then evaluated in terms of language proficiency and content validity by the experts. Organizational Identification Scale, developed by Van Dick (2004) and including 25 items, is explained in one-dimension. Reliability Coefficient for Organizational Identification Scale is 0.92.

Organizational Communication Scale: The scale was developed by Celep (2000) to measure teachers' levels of organizational communication and the construct validity of the scale was tested by Yetim (2010) with factor analysis to determine whether it has single factor or multi factors. Reliability Coefficient for Organizational Communication Scale is Cronbach α: 0,93 in all dimensions (including 34 items).

Procedure

The data of the study have been analyzed through SPSS 15 for Windows. In this study, frequency and percentages, which are related to the teachers' demographic features, have been calculated. Standard deviation and means of the data gathered from the sub-dimensions of the scales and research questions in line with the research aim have been examined by being calculated. In the five-point Likert scale for "Organizational Identification Scale and Organizational Communication Scale, the items are ranked as "I never agree (1,00-1,80), "I do not agree" (1,81-2,60), "I am not sure"(2,61-3,40), "I agree" (3,41-4,20), "I completely agree" (4,21-5,00).

The relation between the points the teachers had from Organizational Identification Scale and the points they had from the sub-dimensions of Organizational Communication Scale was examined through path analysis. Path analysis gives a way to separate direct and indirect relations between dependent and independent variables and to bring control error variable (Brannick, 2009 cited in Anıl & Güzeller, 2011).

The mean value for the primary school teachers' level of organizational identification is $\bar{x}=3,29$ (S=,71). When this value is analyzed, it could be expressed that the primary school teachers' level of organizational identification is moderate. The mean values of each sub-dimension in the scale concerning the primary school teachers' level of organizational identification have been mentioned. When the related table is examined, it is seen that in teachers' level of organizational communication the highest mean ($\bar{x}=3,89$, S=,67) (I agree) is in "Communication for Duty" sub-dimension.

The relation between the views the teachers held on Organizational Identification Scale and the views they had about the sub-dimensions of Organizational Communication Scale was examined through path analysis. It has been found out that there is a significant correlation between organizational identification and organizational communication. Insignificant X^2 values display that suggested model is consistent with the data obtained. Significant X^2 value shows that the model is not consistent with the data; accordingly, it is stated that the suggested model could not explain the observations (Sümer, 2000, p. 55). In the study, X^2 value was not significant ($p=,102$) ($p>,05$). That value of the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) is "0" shows the perfection of the suggested model. It is understood that the suggested model is not correctly defined when the value is above 0,10

(İlhan, 2005). In the study, RMSEA was 0,06 and it was considered as sufficient. In the literature, it is stated that GFI and AGFI indexes equal to means 1 excellent goodness of fit (İlhan, 2005). In the study, GFI was 0,99 and AGFI was 0,96 and they were sufficient. It is seen that organizational identification significantly predicts the sub-dimension "Communication for Informing", "Communication for Duty", "Feedback", and "Communication for Attitude and Behavior" of Organizational Communication. In this study, it has been concluded that organizational identification explains 56% of variance concerning "Communication for Informing", 44% of variance regarding "Communication for Duty", 48% of variance related to "Feedback", and 46% of variance with regard to "Communication for Attitude and Behavior." In regression analysis, the coefficient of determination is a statistic that tells how much strong a prediction is. It is employed to calculate the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that is predictable from the independent variable (Pedhazur, 1982). Considering the coefficient of determination; organizational identifying with the most "Communication for Informing" explains.

Discussion

In this study, the relationship between the levels of primary school teachers' organizational identification and organizational communication were investigated by means of the path analysis.

The effect of organizational communication on the organizational identification has been the subject of many research studies. For instance, Cheney (1983) stated that the content of the relationship between the employee and the organization had an influence on the identification process of the employee. Smitdts et al. (2001) also focused on the effect of communication content and climate on the organizational identification. Similarly, Scott et al. (1998) found that employees' selection of identification is related to the organizational actions. Also, Kuhn and Nelson (2002) indicated that the communication affects the identification of individuals to the organization where they work. Andrews, Basler and Coller (1999) found in their study that the employees playing a central role in the communication network of the organization and maintaining the flow of the message identify themselves the most with their organizations (cited by Tüzün & Çağlar, 2008). Moreover, there have been studies (Dutton et al., 1994) proving the effect of the individual's status on the identification power. As

pointed out by Dutton et al., the communication efficiency of the administration affects the identification power. On the other hand, Pfeffer (1981) found that the administration's effective communication does not necessarily result in the shared meaning which creates the feeling of belonging to and identification with the organization. Di Sanza and Bullis (1999) handle identification as a result of different elements and maintain that the administration's communication is one of the components leading to the member's identification with the organization (Tüzün & Çağlar). In his descriptive study entitled as "The Relationship between Public High Schools Teachers' Organizational Communication and Organizational Identification", Yetim (2010) found that according to the perceptions of high school teachers, there is a positive relationship between organizational identification and organizational communication. It was concluded in the study that the level of organizational identification had the most influential effect on the organizational communication's sub dimensions of "attitudes and behaviors of administrators and teachers" and "the information given by the high school administrators to the teachers about teachers' job descriptions". Tüzün and Çağlar's study "The Concept of Organizational Identification and its relationship with Communication Effectiveness" emphasizes the importance of the concept of identification and reviews discussions regarding this concept. Although the study does not include any suggestions, it offers an important perspective by discussing the role of identification in the organization and its effects on the organization. In the study, the concept of organizational identification was investigated and the organizational communication patterns were drawn attention to as patterns consolidating the organizational identification. According to Buchanan (1974), identification is the individual's emotional attachment to the purposes and values of the organization and to his/her role in the realization of these purposes and the values of the organization. From this definition, it can be understood that identification is made up of three components (Tosun, 1981). The main component of identification is the individual's strong belief in the purposes of the organization, its values and his/her acceptance of these purposes and values. The second component is the individual's voluntary action in his/her organizational role. Finally, the third component of the identification is the individual's willingness to maintain membership in the organization (Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970; Schein, 1971).

The current study showed that the levels of organizational identification of the primary school teachers ($\bar{x}$=3,29, S=,71) were at the average score level, which means that teachers moderately identify themselves with the organization where they work. It would be fair to state that the moderate identification with the organization shows that primary school teachers cannot identify themselves with their organizations at the desired level. In Çakınberk, Derin, and Demirel's (2011) paper entitled "The Formation of Organizational Identification through Organizational Commitment", teachers' identification levels were found to be high. In Yetim's (2010) descriptive study "The Relationship between Organizational Identification and Organizational Communication for High School Teachers", teachers' organizational identification with their organizations were found to be at the level of "I agree".

Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher and Christ (2005) found that when the school types become apparent, the extent that teachers in schools identify themselves with their schools becomes higher. In another study carried out by Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher and Christ (2004), it has been identified that the organizational identification has four types, such as career (personal), group, professional and organizational, and it has four different dimensions like cognitive, affective, behavioral and evaluation. According to Millward, Haslam, and Postmes (2007), the employees' level of identification with their working groups were more evident than their identification with the organization, and this relationship was found to be statistically meaningful. In another similar study carried out by Knippenberg and Schie (2000), the level of identification with the working group was found to be higher than the level of identification with the organization, and this relationship was found to be statistically meaningful.

The degree of the individual's identification with the organization reflects this/her degree of attachment to the organization. It can be stated that a higher level of organizational identification may lead to the desired organizational outcomes like intra-organizational co-operation and organizational citizenship (Dutton et al., 1994). Employees who are identified with their organization voluntarily support their organization and make an effort for its benefit (İşcan, 2006). Organizational identification is the individual's perception of him/herself as a whole with the organization and the feeling of his/her own success or failure in the case of the organization's success or failure. Organizational

identification is a result of organizational identity which is a part of the individual's social identity. When the employees perceive the organizational identification as their own identification, organizational identification will take place. When it is not perceived as the individual's own identification, it will not emerge (Ravishankar & Shan, 2008). Namely, individuals personalize themselves with the organization when they identify themselves with the organization (Mael & Asforth 1989). Thus, the different members of the organization classify themselves in a social group with different, central, and enduring qualities and the organizational identification becomes stronger (Dutton et al., 1994).

Organizational communication is established to accomplish specific purposes. Organizational communication plays a very important role in improving organizational integrity by enabling all members of the organization to interact with each other in line with organizational goals (Gürgen, 1997). The main goal of the communication as a system within an organization is to organize broken and scattered relationships and to ensure the unity of purpose. The main goals of the organizational communication can be listed as follows: to inform employees about the purposes and the policies of the organization, to give information to the employees about the tasks and activities required by the organization, to provide employees with the information regarding changes in the organization by means of educational efforts, to encourage innovation and creativity, to regulate the information flow among the employees and to give feedback (Dalay, 2001).

In this study, the highest average ($\bar{x}$=3,89, S=,67) among all the sub dimensions of primary school teachers' organizational communication was found to be "Communication with respect to the task at work". This sub dimension was respectively followed by "Communication to inform" ($\bar{x}$=3,66, S=,70), "Communication of Attitude and Behavior" ($\bar{x}$=3,62, S=,70) and "Feedback" ($\bar{x}$=3,49, S=,80). The average score in the sub dimension of the organizational communication of the teachers is at or above the average score. Considering the finding that the primary school teachers' organizational communication scores are at the average or above the average scores, it can be interpreted that the teachers can establish a relationship at the desired level. This finding is in line with the findings of similar research. For instance, Yetim (2010) came to the conclusion that the level of high school teachers' organizational communication was above the average score. Similarly, Okkalı (2008), Şimşek (2003), Aydoğan (2008),

Gürsun (2007), Çubukçu and Dündar (2003) and Karlı (2007) revealed similar results.

The relationship between the opinions of the primary school teachers regarding the organizational identification scale and their opinions as for the sub dimensions of the organizational communication scale has been analyzed by means of the path analysis in the current study. As a result of the analysis, it has been realized that there is a significant relationship between the organizational identification and the organizational communication. In other words, it was revealed that the organizational identification is explanatory of the sub dimensions of the organizational communication, such as "Communication to inform", "Communication with respect to the task at work", "Feedback", "Communication of Attitude and Behavior". In the current study, it can be concluded that the organizational identification justifies 56% of the variance of the "Communication to inform" sub dimension of the organizational identification. Similarly, it justifies 44% of the variance of the "Communication with respect to the task at work" sub dimension, 48% of the variance of the "Feedback" sub dimension and 46% of the variance of the "Communication of Attitude and Behavior" sub dimension. The finding of the current study corroborates with Yetim's (2010) conclusion that there is a positive relationship between organizational identification and organizational communication when the perceptions of the high school teachers are taken into consideration. Ceylan and Özbal's (2008) findings showing that the individuals' involvement in the organizational activities and the increase in their satisfaction can be used as effective tools for the organizational identification of the individual also corroborate with the finding of the current study.

Many studies have been conducted to identify the relationship between organizational communication and organizational identification. Dutton et al. (1994) concluded their study that the more accurate and adequate information the members of an organization receive from their organizations, the higher the level of identification with the organization becomes. Di Sanza and Bullis (1999) hold the idea that identification is a result of different components and put forth the idea that the communication established by the administration plays a key role in the identification of the members with the organization where they work. Smitdts and Von Riel (2001) probed into the effect of both communication and its content on the organizational identification and concluded that the communication

climate affects the identification process more than the content of the communication. Yıldız (2006), in his study entitled "The Role of Organizational Culture in the Formation of Organizational Communication", concluded that the perception of the organizational communication important for a proper relationship during the communication process and for the individuals' general satisfaction with the organization they are a member of. In addition, it was concluded that as a result of the individuals' proper communication, they become more identified with their organization. In the paper entitled "The Effect of Organizational Communication on Organizational Commitment", Başyiğit (2006) found that the employees' communication within the organization contributed to the formation of organizational commitment. Therefore, it would be fair to state that organizational identification, which is one of the dimensions of organizational commitment, gets stronger as the communication increases within the organization. In their study, Kuhn and Nelson (2002) came to the conclusion that the identification of a member of an organization with his/her organization is formed by the frequency of communication in the organization and the quality of the communication content. In brief, what has been revealed by most of the research studies revealing the positive relationship between organizational identification and organizational communication also supports the findings of the current study.

1- In order to increase teachers' organizational identification, there is a need for the primary school administrators to give more importance to the teachers' interests and needs, to pay attention to the teachers and to work harder to maintain reciprocal relationship among the teachers.

2- Administrators in primary schools should help teachers to boost their morale, motivation and efficiency by creating a positive organizational climate.

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