



An Analysis of Effects of Transformational Leadership Perceptions of Employees on Organizational Commitment

Enis HEMEDOĞLU

İstanbul Üniversitesi
enishemedoglu@hotmail.com

Fetullah EVLİYAĞLU

İstanbul Üniversitesi
fetullahevliyaoglu@hotmail.com

The contemporary leadership literature divides leadership into two parts: Transformational and Transactional Leadership (Srithongrung, 2011). Transactional leaders motivate their followers by extrinsic rewards, though its effectiveness can be short term; after extrinsic rewards being obtained, the next rewards of the same level will lose effectiveness. Transactional leadership describes those who concentrate on accomplishing tasks and promise rewards for good performance, while disciplining poor performance. In contrast, transformational leaders achieve extraordinary outcomes by raising the level of motivation and morality in both themselves and their followers (Gao and Bai, 2011). Transformational leadership may enhance organizational commitment in the long term and giving that intrinsic rewards for transform employees' attitudes towards organizations in positive ways (Srithongrung, 2011).

During the last two decades, researches of transformational leadership has been focusing on exposing complexity of leadership behavior and leadership effectiveness (Piccolo ve Colquitt, 2006). Franke and Felfe (2011) examined about how transformational leadership affects employees' psychological problems; Mulla and Krishman (2011) examined the impact of transformational leaders' morale on their followers morale; Oreg and Berson (2011) examined influence of transformational leaders' personalities on employees' behavior who showed resistance to organizational change. Transformational leadership consists of four components: (1) inspirational motivation; (2) idealized influence; (3) individualized consideration and (4) intellectual stimulation (Chemers, 2000).

Organizational commitment is one of the striking and ongoing topics which managers are facing (Lo et al., 2010). Grusky (1966), one of the earliest people who defined organizational commitment, described commitment as "the power of person's commitment to organization" (Wahn, 1998; 256). The other definition for organizational commitment is person's unity of identity with certain organization, and the combined power of commitment (Leong, Furnham and Cooper, 1996). Organizational commitment is giving attention to people in organization; and this shows positive relationship between the two of them (Akbar and Zaman, 2011). According to

Joo (2010), organizational commitment is expressing employee's psychological relationship which specifying this person's identity in organization. Organizational commitment comes into prominence when the values and goals of the organization get attacked. The most common definition of organizational commitment is the connection between person and organization. However many of the researches only focus on the studies of employee' commitment (Cichy, Cha and Kim, 2009). There are many reasons for that, but the most important one is that all stakeholders have commitments with different motivations. In our research, we examined employee's commitment instead of all stakeholders. There many different possible classifications in literature about commitment. However, the three components described by Meyer and Allen (1991) had gotten more attentions. These three components are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

The aim of this research is exploring the effect of transformational leadership perceptions of employees on their organizational commitment. Therefore, at first we examined the relationship between transformational leadership behavior of managers and employee's organizational commitment. Then we also examined if transformational leadership perceptions and organizational commitment level changes based on employee' demographical properties (gender, age, education, experience).

The scope of this research is white-collar employees of one public transport company. 153 employees answered survey out of 367 white-collar employees in total but 9 of them couldn't be used because of the answers were inadequate. As a result, 39% (144 people) of white-collar employees' answers have been analyzed.

The survey used in research consists of three sections. In the first section, we used transformational leadership scale (TQL) established by Avolio and Bass for measuring the transformational leadership perceptions of employees. Standardization of the scope is created by akar (2002). In second section of survey, we used scope established by Allen and Meyer (1990); revised by Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) and standardized by Wasti (2000) for measuring the organizational commitment. Last section of survey consists of five demographical questions which are gender, age, education, experience in company and department. In this work, 5 point Likert scale is used. Expressions of Likert scale are 1-“Strongly Disagree”, 4-“Disagree”, 3- “Neither disagree nor agree”, 2-“Agree”, 1-“Strongly Agree”.

This study founded significant relationship between the perceptions of transformational leadership and organizational commitment to employees. In this significant relationship, three were significant effects of inspirational motivation on organizational commitment ant its components; affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

When the results of the similar studies examined, Srithongrung (2011) has found that inspirational motivation component of transformational leadership has significant effect on organizational commitment and, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration have no significant effects on organizational commitment. These results support our study. In other studies, Shiva and Suar (2010) have found that there is no direct effect of transformational leadership on organizational commitment, Gao and Bai (2011), Avolio et al. (2004) and Shamir, House and Arthur (1993) have found significant effects of transformational leadership on organizational commitment. As a result, most of the past studies, have similar results as our study.

In this study, as a result of the analysis, there are no significant differences between the perceptions of transformational leadership according to gender and level of education. There are significant differences between the perceptions of transformational leadership according to age groups and working time at the business. The transformational leadership, inspirational motivation and idealized influence perceptions of 20-29 age group are significantly lower than 30-39 age group. The transformational leadership and its dimensions perceptions of working less than one year group of employees are significantly higher than working between 1 and 4 years. The transformational leadership, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration perceptions of working less than one year group of employees are significantly higher than working between 4 and 7 years. Lastly, the individualized consideration perception of working less than one year group of employees is less significantly less than working more than 13 years.

In this study, as a result of the analysis, there are no significant differences between the organizational commitment of employees according to gender. There are significant differences between the organizational commitment of employees according to age groups, level of education and working time at the business. The organizational, affective, normative and continuous commitment of 20-29 age group are significantly lower than 30-39 and 40 and above age groups. The organizational and continuous commitment of employees graduated from high school is significantly higher than those graduated from university and master. Also, the affective and normative commitment of employees graduated from high school is significantly higher than those graduated from university. The organizational, affective, normative and continuous commitment of employees working between 1 and 4 years are significantly less than other working groups.

The result of this study could not be generalized due to it has been studied at one business. For the further research, the researchers should make a sectorial categorization, and study on both white-collar and blue-collars.