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The Impact of Workplace Spirituality on Organizational Commitment at Schools: The Moderating Effect of Gender

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of workplace spirituality on organizational commitment and the moderating role of gender. 112 teachers, working in Gaziantep, in the 2015-2016 academic year, were assessed using the workplace spirituality scale improved by Ashmos and Duchon and translated into Turkish by researchers and also the organizational commitment scale by Meyer and Allen, adapted to Turkish by Wasti. At the end of the research, it was found that there was a moderating role of gender in relation to workplace spirituality with organizational commitment. While the spirituality of the in workplace increases, organizational commitment increases, and male teachers' organizational commitment was more than female teachers'.

Keywords: *Workplace, spirituality organizational commitment, gender, the moderator effect.*

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Introduction

Nowadays one of the biggest problems in the workplace is that the individual's spirituality is not compatible with the monotony of the workplace. While knowledge, technology and the economy satisfied humans, at the end of the 20th century, it changed the balance between the material and spiritual life and by reckoning without humans' moral and social values. There is a need for people to make as much of life in its every phase (Spinelli, 2007). One of the most important factors for organizations to bear in mind is the power of the individual's commitment to it (organization). The individual's acceptance of an organization's goals and objectives and making an effort to realize organizational goals and objectives to maintain his duty in the organization is the indicator of organizational commitment (Balay, 2000).

Ashmos and Duchon (2000) have described in the literature the concept of workplace spirituality in order to express the integration of an individual's values and organizational values. Spirituality is dismissed for consideration as a concept that tries to explain the encouragement of employees' inner power and a more effective approach in organization (Donde and Dennis, 2000). Spirituality is not only related with religion, it can also be a form of understanding people's philosophy, values, personal matters and reality (Kellehear, 2000). In his work, Albanese (1990) shows that spirituality is the awareness of being human existence and deep internal ties. Spirituality in the workplace helps to make the work meaningful and integrating people with the community. Therefore, the person's spirituality in the workplace not only takes the edge off stress, conflict and absence with increasing performance but also allows him or her to be a good person (Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Karakas, 2010).

Although there has been a great deal of research on workplace spirituality recently, there is not agreement on any common definition. With all example definitions, we can define workplace spirituality as making the individual's life meaningful (Plowmon and Duchon, 2005), to be consistent with the individual's values and organization (Mitroff and Denton, 1999) a common culture grown by workmates in the workplace in order to allow the individual's life to be meaningful, to have a sense of belonging to the community and to follow a peaceful life (Sheep, 2006) as a result of being consistent with the individual's values and the organization's values (Amm, Malumed, Wisnieski, Askar and Syed, 2004).

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Sub-dimensions of Workplace Spirituality

In order to understand the newly coined term better, the sub-dimensions should also be clear. Similar statements in sub-dimensions of workplace spirituality focus on the common term as used in definitions. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) examine workplace spirituality in three dimensions such as; inner life, significance and sense of community. The sub-dimensions of workplace spirituality, inner life, is not only the individual's doing his best in the workplace, in addition, it is expressed to state his own perceptions, (Fox, 1994, Vaill, 1998, Ashos and Duchon, 2000, Miliman et al., 2003)

The significance in delineating a relationship between an individual's work and spiritual values, making his life meaningful and also lastly his sense of community can be defined as the individual's overrating his work, the perception of organization as a whole while having meaningful relationship with others (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Miliman and others 2003).

Organizational Commitment

To keep an organization alive, an individual should commit to it. Commitment is regarded as a loyalty agreement (Ashforth, Horrisan and Carley 2008) with the aim of completing the goals and objectives of individuals and organizations (Allen and Meyes, 1993). While Allen and Meyer (1991), express the term of organizational commitment as a characteristic psychological state meaning that individuals decide to go on to work at an organization in relation with worker and organization, Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) express as worker's will to keep up and integrate with organization and the psychological approach of worker to it. Commitment to organization is the perception between the worker and the organization's harmony (Bateman and Straser, 1984). All definitions, can be summed up by saying that organizational commitment is a worker's will to stay in an organization the quality of their relations and the internalizing of the purposes, loyalty and effort.

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) examined the organizational commitment from three perspectives. These were integration, identification and internalization. (Baley, 2000; Lee, 2000; Meyer, Stenley and Hers-covitch, 2002; Lee, 2000; Basoran, 2000; Bursalioglu, 2005). There are three sub-dimension of organizational commitment. These are the strange commitment of a worker to an organization, identification and effectiveness and worker's internalizing the goals of organization. A worker adheres to an organization with continual commitment in order not to lose his investment in case he leaves the work. Lastly, normative commitment is the significance as a moral duty for continuing to work in his organization. This approach stems from the worker thinking that the organization treats him well and fails to give service in return for it (Olcum Cetin 2004). When it scans the area, it can be seen that there are many classifications except for them (Kanter, 1968; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Mouday, Steers and Porter, 1979).

There are many factors affecting the worker's organizational commitment. Recently, demographic variables which examine the worker's organizational commitment and their relations have been seen to increase (Dixon, Turnes, Cummighan, Sages & Kent, 2005; Simsek, 2002). Gender and marital status are two important demographic variables, which affect a worker's organizational commitment (Aven, Parker & McEnvoy, 1993). Aydin, Sariyer and Uysal (2011) who researched the impact of gender on organizational commitment, arrived at the conclusion that a male's commitment is more than a female teacher. However, in the review of literature, it is pointed out that there is no research related, with the moderating effect of gender on organizational commitment. This research aims to examine the moderating effect of gender on the relation of teachers' perception of workplace spirituality and their organizational commitment.

Method*Research Design*

This study used the correlational design. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2008), the correlational model is the research model which assesses the comments of the participants model which assess the comments of participants related to bivariate or aiming to determine its grade.

Study Group

The population of this study is comprised of teachers working in Gaziantep during the 2015-2016 academic year and the study group of this research was 112 teachers who are determined by random sampling. When the demographic features of teachers who participated in the study was examined, the majority of participants were seen to be male (n=132) The most frequent age range of the participants was middle age (n=92) and young teachers (n=94). These results were seen as being very close to each other and this which proved to be significant.

According to seniority more than half of the participants' teaching experience (57.7%) constitutes 1- 9 years, and according to marital status, participants' 66,1% were married. According to school types, variance the number of teachers who were at public school was again significant and the considerable majority of (n=156) these teachers work in high schools (n=182). Lastly, according to variance of educational background 78,6% of participants had bachelor's degree, and 21% had postgraduate degree.

Research Instruments and Procedure

In this study, three scales have been used in order to collect data; there were specifications in Likert-type scale collection tools that were (1) *I strongly don't agree* and (5) *I strongly agree*, these were graded in five-points. The scale Workplace Spirituality Questionnaire which was developed by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) and adapted to Turkish by two experts. Then, these two translations were back-translated to English again, since the scale will be applied to teachers concepts were adapted to education organizations without meaning change as "at school". The positions of that scale has been back-translated to English, by two experts whose native language was English. Then, the last version of the scale was applied to 30 teachers, and Cronbach's Alpha of this scale was found .855. KMO was found .798. Scale for sense of community, significance and inner life, composed of three sub-dimensions and 21 items. Factor analysis about workplace spirituality scale was as below.

Table 1: Tables of workplace spirituality scale, factor analysis, declared variance and Cronbach Alpha reliability Coefficient.

| Factor name | Clause number | Factor load | Explained Variance (%) | Cronbach's alpha - Reliability Coefficients |
|--------------------|---|-------------|------------------------|---|
| Sense of Community | 1- I see myself as a part of community | 0,415 | 27,119 | 0,824 |
| | 2- My headmaster supports my personal development | 0,639 | | |
| | 3- I gain many experiences supporting my personnel development | 0,55 | | |
| | 4- When I have fears, there is the environment to overcome. | 0,759 | | |
| | 5- When I have concerns, I can share with another. | 0,676 | | |
| | 6- We work together in order to solve disagreements. | 0,645 | | |
| | 7- I am assessed as one of a pair in school | 0,69 | | |
| | 8- I am admonished to take risks in the school. | 0,56 | | |
| | 9- They value me for myself in the school. | 0,557 | | |
| Significance | 10- I indulge in my work. | 0,504 | 10,203 | 0,792 |
| | 11- I believe that others love to work is result of my work. | 0,402 | | |
| | 12- My work is the power source of my spirit. | 0,746 | | |
| | 13- My work is related with important things in my life | 0,732 | | |
| | 14- I look forward to coming to work many times. | 0,725 | | |
| | 15- I see that there is a relationship between my work and wide range of community. | 0,654 | | |
| | 16- I am aware of personnel meaning that my work entails. | 0,706 | | |
| Inner life | 17- I look at life positively. | 0,617 | 8,378 | 0,66 |
| | 18- My intangible is effective in my decisions. | 0,482 | | |
| | 19- I see myself as a spiritual person. | 0,585 | | |
| | 20- Praying is an important part of my life. | 0,751 | | |
| | 21- I value my work mates' mental health. | 0,598 | | |
| | | TOTAL | 45,7 | 0,855 |

Table1 shows that while the greatest apportionment among dimensions are related to the *Sense of Community* (27.1%) the variance of the whole scale by 45.7% meaning that this scale is giving 45% of desired property. Although, this rate is not high, it is remarkable in point of obtaining the desired result. When we observe Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient among scale-factor dimensions, we recognize that the highest safety coefficient possessed by community perception (.824) while Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the entire scale-factor was .855.

The "Organizational Commitment Scale" factor of teachers (OCS) which was developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) was used. OCS, which was adapted to Turkish by Wasti (2000) consisted of three scales: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment in 18 items. For testing the internal consistency of organizational commitment scale the Cronbach Alpha internal consistent coefficient was calculated as for affective commitment size was .791, for continuance commitment size was .623 and for normative commitment size was .744.

Data Analyses

This study benefited from SPSS 20.0 packed program to analyze the data. Before starting to test the data, it was analyzed by using correlation-analysis and hierarchic multi regression-analysis, as called and defined countable and evaluated in the view of abortive value, crosswise value, multi change and normativity.

In our research model while dependent variable, interpretive-routine of teacher organizational commitment level dependence variables, teachers’ workplace spirituality perceptions and demographic variables as gender, age and seniority variables were analyzed with hierarchic multi regression analyses controlled these demographic variables. Our research model showed that the perception workplace spirituality of teachers’ organizational dependence both directly and indirectly is affected. In this study the moderating (moderator) role of gender was interpreted for workplace spirituality and organizational commitment perception.

Moderating effect, which was defined by Baron and Kenny (1986), was a procedure of dependent variable to independent variable, effect on dependent variable and defining power of it. When (P) Predictor, (C) criterion, (M) Moderator variable is accepted.

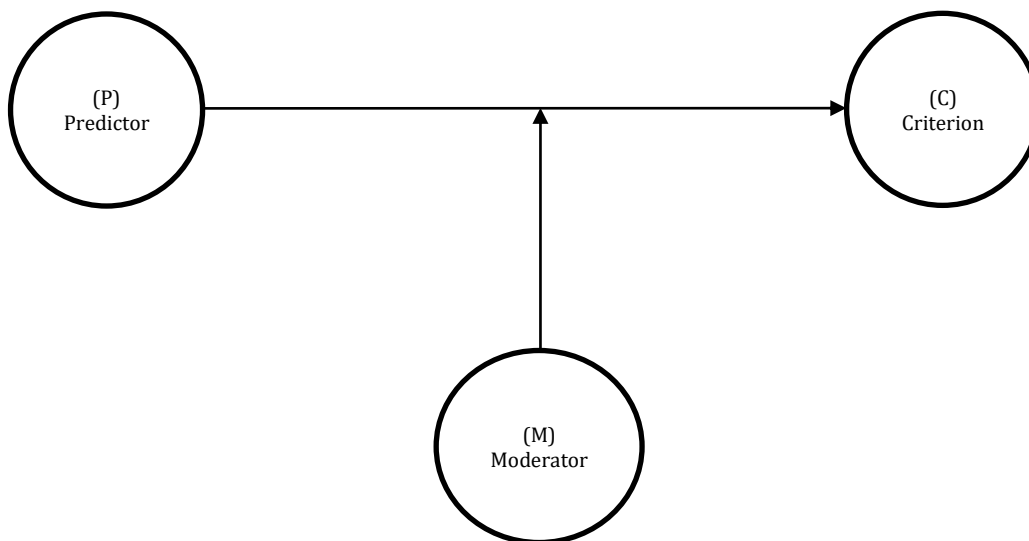


Figure 1. Baron and Kenny's Moderator Effect Model

As shown in Figure 1 if the relationship is logical as a result of interaction (P) Predictor and (M) moderator, so there is an effect of facilitated relation to criteria. For detecting effect of facilitation ModGraph-I excel packet program was used as advised by Boran and Kenny (1986).

Findings

In the investigation to define organizational commitment’s relation with teachers’ workplace spirituality correlation analysis was used. The correlation relationship between dependent variables and independent variables were indicated in Table 2.

Table2. Relation Of Teacher Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Commitment Correlation Indicated

| | Mean | Std. Er. | SD | WS | Affc. C. | Cnt. C. | Nor.C. | Org. C. |
|---------|------|----------|-----|--------|----------|---------|--------|---------|
| WS | 3.73 | .04 | .46 | 1 | | | | |
| Affc. B | 3.23 | .07 | .70 | .510** | 1 | | | |
| Cont. B | 2.90 | .08 | .81 | -.027 | -.110 | 1 | | |
| Nor. B | 3.08 | .08 | .86 | .519** | .540** | .061 | 1 | |
| Org. B | 3.07 | .05 | .52 | .486** | .686** | .465** | .828** | 1 |

When the correlation table is analyzed, participants’ average perception about workplace spirituality was X=3.73 for *I agree* point and X=3.07 for *Partially I agree*. It is established in this correlation analysis of workplace spirituality and organizational commitment that there was a weak positive direction relation between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment (r=.486, p<.001). There was a positive meaningful relation between workplace spirituality, affective commitment (r=.486, p<.001) and normative commitment, and there was not any meaningful relation with continuance commitment. According to this, when teachers’ workplace spirituality perception increases, organizational commitment, especially from affective side and values, also increases.

For established the effect of gender differences to the teachers’ workplace spirituality, the method advised by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used. Specifically, the essential dependent variable of facilitated (workplace spirituality), z value was calculated and then standardized. The aim was to avoid any problem of multi-equal-linearity between main effect and interaction effect. (Frazier and Baron, 2004). The hierarchic multi regression results were presented below in Table 3.

Table 3: The Role of Gender Moderator Between Teachers' Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Commitment

| | | B | Std. Err. | Beta | t | p | F |
|---|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | (constant) | 3,734 | 1,135 | | 3,289 | ,001 | |
| | Age | -,034 | ,051 | -,431 | -,669 | ,505 | ,976 |
| | Senior | ,045 | ,053 | ,543 | ,842 | ,402 | |
| 2 | (constant) | 3,85 | ,999 | | 3,854 | ,000 | |
| | Age | -,038 | ,045 | -,478 | -,843 | ,401 | |
| | Senior | ,045 | ,047 | ,546 | ,963 | ,338 | 11,792*** |
| | Z WS | ,251 | ,044 | ,481 | 5,732 | ,000 | |
| 3 | (constant) | 3,832 | 1,012 | | 3,786 | ,000 | |
| | Age | -,037 | ,045 | -,473 | -,828 | ,410 | |
| | Senior | ,045 | ,047 | ,546 | ,958 | ,340 | 8,768*** |
| | Z WS | ,251 | ,044 | ,480 | 5,694 | ,000 | |
| | Gender(Dummy) | ,013 | ,096 | ,012 | ,138 | ,891 | |
| 4 | (constant) | 3,739 | ,999 | | 3,743 | ,000 | |
| | Age | -,033 | ,044 | -,424 | -,752 | ,454 | |
| | Senior | ,042 | ,046 | ,503 | ,895 | ,373 | |
| | Z WS | ,163 | ,062 | ,312 | 2,645 | ,009 | 8,035*** |
| | Gender(Dummy) | ,016 | ,094 | ,015 | ,168 | ,867 | |
| | WS X gen. (dummy) | ,175 | ,087 | ,237 | 2,022 | ,046 | |

Depend variable: organizational commitment

*p<0.5, **p<0.1, ***p<0.001 ; WS: workplace spirituality, gen: gender

When table 3 was analyzed it could be seen that there was an effect of gender as moderator role on workplace spirituality and organizational commitment (Beta=1.370, p<.05*). After the results were analyzed by the ModGraph-I program, the effect of gender moderator role on workplace spirituality and organizational commitment was indicated explicitly in Figure 3.

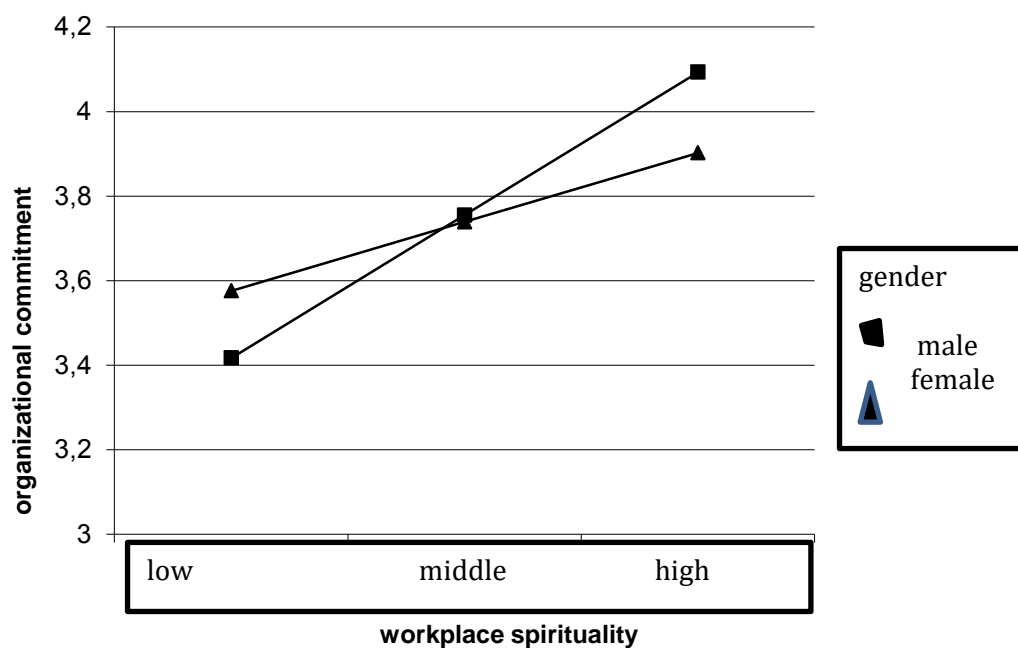


Figure 3. Effect of Gender Moderator Role on Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Commitment of Teachers

When figure 3 was analyzed, it was observed that when teachers' workplace spirituality increased their organizational commitment also increased. According to this investigation into the existence of workplace spirituality in schools, male teachers' organizational commitment was higher than female teachers' organizational commitment.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the effect of the gender moderator role on workplace spirituality and organizational commitment was investigated to try to create a more equitable life style for teachers and help teachers to belong to their community. In correlation between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment ($r=,486^{**}$, $p<,001$), it was recognized that

there was a meaningful weak positive direction relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment. There was positive meaningful moderate relation between workplace spirituality, affective commitment ($r=.510^{**}$, $p<.001$) and normative commitment ($r=.519^{**}$, $p<.001$), and there was no logical relation with continuance commitment. Also, when teachers' workplace spirituality perception increased, organizational commitment especially their relation to school and normative commitment from affective was also increased. Similar to the results found in this investigation. During the investigation, it was found that there was a meaningful positive direct relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment. According to the study done by Rego and Cunha (2008), when workplace spirituality increased, employee affective commitment and normative commitment seemed to be higher while their continuance commitment was relatively low. In the light of these results, it can be inferred that when teachers express and perform their spirituality, their organizational commitment is increased.

The results indicated, that there was an effective role of dissimilar gender on workplace spirituality and organizational commitment ($Beta=1.370$, $p<.05^*$). When male teachers workplace spirituality increased, their dependency to school was more when compared to female teachers. This could be due to male teachers need more defined criteria than female teachers need. As human body requirements should be satisfied, the human spirit's needs must also be satisfied. Male teachers when performing their work are satisfied from the aspect of spirituality. Due to the existence of workplace spirituality in schools, male teachers are tied spiritually to their school and work places, and they are satisfied spiritually as they perform their jobs. Consequently, male teachers work more peacefully and are more productive in their schools. Also, due to the meaningful work done by male teachers, values of spirituals direct at their life and dependence perception is expressed more as compared to female teachers.

These results, indicating that male teacher organizational commitment is higher than female teacher organizational commitment are supported by investigations done by Aranya, Kushnir and Valancy (1986). Although, there are some studies in the relevant literature, which indicate that female organizational commitment is greater (Gould, 1975; Allen and Meyer, 1991), there are investigations which show male organizational commitment is higher (Aranya and others, 1986; Chusmir, 1982; Graddick and Farr, 1983). On the other hand, some researchers have found no relationship between gender moderator (Fry and Grandfeld, 1980; Cromie, 1981; Brunning and Snyder, 1983).

As result, when teachers perceived school as a peaceful and safe place to perform their values comfortably, it seems that their effective and normative commitment is increased. However, we should note that when male teachers workplace spirituality is increased, their relation to school is increased more as compared to female teachers' level.

Suggestions

It is recognized that in educational organizations workplace spirituality can influence organizational commitment. A valuable and important initiative for school directors to consider to increase workplace spirituality behavior thereby, making school indispensable for teachers, thus increasing teacher productivity. To increase teacher organizational commitment, especially male teacher, could perform some different activities for workplace spirituality.

This investigation detected that there was an effect of gender moderator role on workplace spirituality and the organizational commitment of teachers. Researchers can investigate the effect of other demographic variables such as age, senior etc. Due to lack of investigation on workplace spirituality in educational organizations and hasn't been searched elaborately, could observed with other variables, (e.g. work satisfaction). Investigations could be extended on the moderator effect while some research could be done on the reasons why male teachers' workplace spirituality was higher than that of female teachers.

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