

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Teachers' loyalty to their supervisors and organizational commitment

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**A numbers of studies on teachers' organizational commitment based some findings of western context in Turkey. But some of the characteristics prove that organizational issues cannot be resulted with the terms in Western World. One of the new concepts in organizational issues for Eastern culture is loyalty to supervisor (in school context supervisor means principals). That new term focus on employees' commitment to a person rather than system or organization. Therefore this research aims to reveal relationship between the teachers' loyalty to supervisors and commitment to their organizations. The participants of the study consist of 412 teachers who serve in a city in Turkey. The results of the study showed that there were strong and significant relationships between the dimensions of loyalty to supervisors and teachers' organizational commitment in Turkish context. But one of the most fundamental result showed that affective, continuance and normative commitments were predicted by different dimensions of teachers' loyalty to their principals.**

**Key words:** Loyalty to supervisor, organizational commitment, teachers, Turkish context.

## INTRODUCTION

In 21st century, organizational paradigms have resuscitated in the light of the terms such as governance, collaboration, effectiveness and competition with the effects of post-modernist point of view. Over the years, loyalty in organization and organizational commitment has gained a reasonable reputation among the topics in organizational behavior research and educational administration. Most of the studies have focused on employee outcomes such as organizational effectiveness (Carmeli and Freund, 2004), performance and turnover (Ceylan and Doganyılmaz, 2007; Hartmann and

Bambacas, 2000), job satisfaction (Mc Guinness, 1998), motivation (Becker et al., 1996) and so on as a result of their loyalty. Two of the most effective ways of getting success are organizational commitment and loyalty to supervisor. These two terms have been discussed in education administration studies. Especially organizational commitment has been commonly investigated by the researchers (Gupta and Gehlawat, 2013; Steyrer et al., 2008; Wasti, 2003). On the other hand loyalty to supervisor is a hot topic for the studies in education and educational organizations. First organizational commitment

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**Table 1.** Participants.

Variables		f	%	N
Gender	Female	210	51	412
	Male	202	49	
Level of Education	Undergraduate	311	75	412
	Graduate	101	25	

sounds so familiar with the organizational theories. But its meaning is being discussed nowadays. Before discussing about the theories of “commitment” and “loyalty”, a brief definition and origin of the terms should be made clear. The term commitment dates back 15<sup>th</sup> century in the meaning of “action of officially consigning to the custody of the state,”. The term is a combination of commit + -ment (Anglo-French had *commettement*). The current meaning of the word is “the willingness to work hard and give your energy and time to a job or an activity”. Another key word of this research is “loyalty” which originally stems from a French word (*loyauté*). The original meaning of “loyalty” includes “fidelity; legitimacy; honesty; good quality”. The current meaning of loyalty is “a strong feeling of support or allegiance”. The definition and the origin of the words are supposed to contribute the discussions about the terms organizational commitment and loyalty to supervisors in organizational contexts.

The theory of organizational commitment includes two different points of views. The first one assumes organizational commitment as behavior. According to behavioral perspective organizational commitment is observable and measurable behavior. This model is revealed and developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) and called as three-component model of commitment<sup>0</sup>. This is most commonly used perspective in organizational research. In this study researcher preferred to use this model as theoretical framework. This perspective suggests commitment as an attitude towards organization. And it stresses the goals of the organization and individual's commitment to these goals (Blau and Boal, 1987). The most common definition of organizational commitment has been made by Mowday et al. (1979). They defined commitment consists of an individual to combine with the goal of organization and retention. This combination and retention includes three factors; perfect belief for organizational goals; readiness to work for organization; and willingness to become a part of the organization. Setting the fundamentals of organizational commitment both individual need to understand organizational goals, value, requirement and organizational structure take importance of individual's goals, value and needs (Morrow, 2011). Organizational commitment has three dimensions; affective, continuance and normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

Recent discussions on loyalty concentrate on how much the concept covers all of the contexts in different cultures. According to Xie et al. (2012), in western

cultures, loyalty refers to employees' loyalty to organization. But in eastern cultures is it enough? Chen et al. (2002) do not think so. The concept of loyalty to supervisor comes from the study of commitment to supervisor. But with a little difference. Commitment refers the mutual dependence but loyalty refers unilateral dependence from subordinate to leader. Based on a study conducted in a Chinese setting, Chen et al. (2002) suggested that loyalty to supervisor is composed of five dimensions. The first of the dimensions is *dedication*<sup>0</sup>. That includes subordinate's willingness to dedicate him or herself to the supervisor and to protect the supervisor's welfare even at the expense of personal interests. The second dimension is *effort*. This dimension contains a subordinate's willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the supervisor. The third dimension is *following supervisor*. This focus on subordinate's desire to be attached to and follow the supervisor. The forth of the dimensions is *identification with supervisor*. This dimension includes subordinate's respect for the accomplishments of the supervisor, and a feeling of pride in being a subordinate to that supervisor. And the last dimension is *internalization*. It refers to value congruence between the subordinate and the supervisor. In Turkish culture or context teachers' loyalty to their supervisors might affect the commitment of teachers to their schools. In educational context employee refers teachers and supervisor refers school principals. Hence, the studies which investigated teachers' loyalty to their supervisors and their organizational commitment together in Turkish setting hasn't been found out up to now. But loyalty to supervisor can be a key mediating concept for schools with organizational commitment in Turkey. The widely used and investigated terms such as organizational commitment in educational research needs to be related with contextual based term which is commitment to the supervisor for Eastern cultures like Turkey to understand teachers' organizational behaviors. The results of the study are expected to contribute both for the decisions of the policy makers and other researchers for further research on loyalty to supervisor in educational context. Loyalty to supervisor might directly influence the organizational outcomes, so the study aims to answer these following questions:

1. What is the level of teachers' loyalty to their supervisors?
2. What is the level of teachers' organizational

commitment?

3. Is teachers' loyalty to supervisor the significant predictor of their organizational commitment?

## METHODS OF THE STUDY

This descriptive study was conducted in correlational design. The correlational design examines the relations between at least two separate phenomenon (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). It examines the significance of correlation between teachers' loyalty to their supervisors and their organizational commitment. At the same according to some organizational and personal variables the level of teachers' loyalty to their supervisors and their organizational commitment are investigated.

### Participants

Convenience sampling as one of the probability sampling type is used in this exploratory research where the researchers are interested in getting an inexpensive approximation of the truth. "This category of sample relies on available subjects who are close at hand or easily accessible. Under certain circumstances this category is an excellent means of obtaining preliminary information about some research question quickly and inexpensively" (Berg, 2001, s.32). Data was collected just before a meeting of teachers for an official district seminar in the fall semester.

Participants in the current study are 412 teachers who serve in state schools in Kadıkoy, Uskudar and Umranıye provinces in İstanbul. 210 (51%) of the participants are female and 202 (49%) of them are males. Another personal variable is teachers' academic level of education that can change the loyalty and commitment. 311 (75%) of the teachers have undergraduate level of education and other 101 (25%) of the teachers have graduate level of education. All of the participants take part in the study voluntary.

### Instruments

Loyalty to supervisor (LS) was measured by the 17-item scale with five dimensions developed by Chen et al. (2002). This scale was adopted into Turkish by Ceylan and Doğanılmaz in 2007. Another scale is "Organizational Commitment Scale" originally developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) and adopted into Turkish by Pelit et al. (2007). Both of the questionnaires consist of five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Factor analyses showed that Loyalty to supervisor (LS) scale and Organizational Commitment Scale have the same dimensions as suitable for the original scales. Cronbach Alpha  $\alpha$  was measured for each of the dimensions. Loyalty to Supervisor's dimensions; *dedication's* Cronbach Alpha value is 0.87; *Effort's* Cronbach Alpha value is 0.82; following supervisor's Cronbach Alpha value is 0.77; Identification with supervisor's Cronbach Alpha value is 0.89 and *Internalization's* Cronbach Alpha value is 0.87. On the other side the dimensions of organizational commitment are *affective commitment's* Cronbach Alpha value is 0.90; *continuance commitment's* Cronbach Alpha value is 0.89 and *normative commitment's* Cronbach Alpha value is 0.81. For reliable test scores, the magnitude of Cronbach's alpha is suggested to be at least 0.70 (Büyükoztürk, 2013; Pallant, 2001).

Before the research questions were tested, whether the distributions related to dependent variables had normal distribution according to independent variable levels (gender and level of education) was examined and the values of standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis belonging to distributions were analyzed together with histogram graphics and it was determined that the distributions of both of the dependent variables provided the

conditions of normality according to the levels of the independent variables. Whether the distributions were linear was examined with scatter plots, and it was observed that dependent variables showed a linear distribution for each independent variable. Additionally, in order to determine the homogeneity of the variances, the Levene test was performed, and it was determined that the test results met the homogeneity in the independent variables.

### Process

The data collection tools used in the study were applied to total 412 voluntary teachers by visiting the schools in the sample after taking permission from the Directorate of National Education in İstanbul in the fall and spring semester of 2014-2015 academic year.

## FINDINGS

The findings of the research as a result of statistical analysis of the data are presented in this section. First of all descriptive values of the scales are measured via descriptive test in dimensions. Descriptive values are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for observed variables of the present study. Dimensions of loyalty to supervisor's minimum and maximum scores, means and standard deviation scores are presented. Participant teachers' minimum score is 5 in the dimensions of dedication, effort and following supervisor. In the dimensions of identification with supervisor and internalization minimum score is 30. Maximum scores show the same results except for the dimension of effort. Teachers get 20 maximum scores in the dimensions dedication and following the supervisors and 15 maximum score in the dimensions of effort, identification with supervisor and internalization. The means of the dimensions are quite different. Mean of the dimensions; the dedication is 14, 23; effort is 8,48; following the supervisor is 16,77; identification of the supervisor is 9,87 and internalization is 9,970. Another result presented in table 2 is the descriptive scores of the dimensions of organizational commitment. Minimum and maximum scores of affective and continuance commitments are the same. Minimum value is 10 and maximum score is 350. Minimum scores teachers get in the dimension of normative commitment is 6 and maximum value is 270. Mean scores of the dimensions; affective commitment is 21, 85; continuance is 20, 31; normative is 18,200.

### Prediction level of teachers' loyalty to supervisor to affective commitment

Researchers used multiple regression analysis to test the prediction level of teachers' loyalty to their supervisor dimensions to their affective commitment. The results of multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 3. The result of multiple regression analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between two of the dimensions of loyalty to supervisor and affective

**Table 2.** Descriptive values of the dimensions.

Scale		N	Min.	Max.	$\bar{X}$	SS
Loyalty to Supervisors	Dedication	412	5	20	14.23	1.244
	Effort	412	5	15	8.48	1.028
	Following supervisor	412	5	20	16.77	2.629
	Identification with supervisor	412	3	15	9.87	1.854
	Internalization	412	3	15	9.97	1.445
Organizational Commitment	Affective commitment	412	10	35	21.85	4.730
	Continuance commitment	412	10	35	20.31	4.821
	Normative commitment	412	6	27	18.20	3.988

**Table 3.** Regression results of teachers' loyalty to supervisor to their affective commitment.

Independent variables	Dependent variables	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	T	p	Zero Order r	Partial R
Constant		310.498	10.082	-	290.104	00.000	-	-
Dedication	Affective commitment	-00.387	00.075	-00.466	-50.143	00.356	-00.657	-00.425
Effort		-00.295	00.088	-00.356	-40.465	00.225	-00.421	-00.329
Following supervisor		-00.355	00.102	-00.366	-40.867	00.135	-00.488	-00.402
Identification with supervisor		-00.312	00.097	-00.295	-30.877	00.001	-00.571	-00.500
Internalization		-00.335	00.109	-00.280	-30.085	00.003	-00.598	-00.271
R=0.660	R <sup>2</sup> =0.215							
F <sub>(5-408)</sub> =54.062	p=0.000							

commitment ( $R=0.660$ ,  $R^2=0.215$ ) his relationship addresses ( $F_{(5-408)}=540.062$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). That means all of the independent variables together explain 210.5% of the change in affective commitment. According to standardized regression coefficient, the order of importance of predictor variables are dedication ( $\beta=00.466$ ), following the supervisors ( $\beta=00.366$ ), effort ( $\beta=00.356$ ), identification with supervisor ( $\beta=00.295$ ) and internalization ( $\beta=00.280$ ). In view of the regression coefficient significance, as predictor variables identification with supervisor and internalization are found to be significant predictors ( $p<0.05$ ). The correlation level between significant predictors and dependent variable (controlling the effects of other independent variables) shows that correlation level is  $r=0.500$  between identification with supervisor and affective commitment;  $r=0.271$  between internalization and affective commitment. The regression equation is: Affective Commitment = ( $00.312 \times$  Identification with Supervision) + ( $00.335 \times$  Internalization) + 31.498.

#### Prediction level of teachers' loyalty to supervisor to continuance commitment

Researchers used multiple regression analysis to test the prediction level of teachers' loyalty to their supervisor dimensions to their continuance commitment. The results of multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 4.

The result of multiple regression analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between two of the dimensions of loyalty to supervisor and continuance commitment ( $R=0.432$ ,  $R^2=0.154$ ). This relationship addresses ( $F_{(5-408)}=470.695$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). That means all of the independent variables together explain 150.4% of the change in continuance commitment. According to standardized regression coefficient, the order of importance of predictor variables are dedication ( $\beta=00.221$ ), following the supervisors ( $\beta=00.256$ ), effort ( $\beta=00.663$ ), identification with supervisor ( $\beta=00.381$ ) and internalization ( $\beta=00.476$ ). In view of the regression coefficient significance, as predictor variables effort and following the supervisor are found to be significant predictors ( $p<0.05$ ). The correlation level between significant predictors and dependent variable (controlling the effects of other independent variables) shows that correlation level is  $r=0.387$  between effort and continuance commitment;  $r=0.322$  between following the supervision and continuance commitment. The regression equation is: Continuance Commitment = ( $00.465 \times$  effort) + ( $00.233 \times$  Following the Supervision) + 32.124.

#### Prediction level of teachers' loyalty to supervisor to normative commitment

Researchers used multiple regression analysis to test the

**Table 4.** Regression results of teachers' loyalty to supervisor to their continuance commitment.

Independent variables	Dependent variables	B	Standard error	$\beta$	T	p	Zero order r	Partial R
Constant	Continuance Commitment	320.124	20.100	-	300.821	0.000	-	-
Dedication		-0.455	0.149	-0.221	-30.551	0.332	-0.521	-0.465
Effort		-0.465	0.133	-0.663	-40.663	0.002	-0.555	-0.387
Following supervisor		-0.233	0.091	-0.256	-50.855	0.003	-0.375	-0.322
Identification with supervisor		-0.356	0.478	-0.381	-40.741	0.855	-0.965	-0.490
Internalization		-0.299	0.102	-0.476	-40.663	0.445	-0.426	-0.562
R=0.432 $F_{(5-408)}=47.695$		R <sup>2</sup> =0.154 p=0.001						

**Table 5.** Regression results of teachers' loyalty to supervisor to their normative commitment0.

Independent variables	Dependent variables	B	Standard error	$\beta$	T	p	Zero order r	Partial R
Constant	Normative Commitment	300.564	10.758	-	320.021	0.000	-	-
Dedication		-0.223	0.185	-0.521	-30.560	0.000	-0.489	-0.366
Effort		-0.335	0.169	-0.452	-30.932	0.125	-0.462	-0.415
Following supervisor		-0.562	0.123	-0.462	-30.569	0.352	-0.655	-0.466
Identification with supervisor		-0.196	0.099	-0.469	-30.711	0.221	-0.854	-0.422
Internalization		-0.285	0.142	-0.511	-30.533	0.345	-0.425	-0.365
R=0.341 $F_{(5-408)}=44.451$	R <sup>2</sup> =00.112 p=00.001							

prediction level of teachers' loyalty to their supervisor dimensions to their normative commitment. The results of multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 5.

The result of multiple regression analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between one of the dimension of loyalty to supervisor and normative commitment ( $R=0.341$ ,  $R^2=00.112$ ). This relationship addresses ( $F_{(5-408)}=44.451$ ,  $p<00.01$ ). That means all of the independent variables together explain 110.2% of the change in normative commitment. According to standardized regression coefficient, the order of importance of predictor variables are dedication ( $\beta=00.521$ ), following the supervisors ( $\beta=00.462$ ), effort ( $\beta=00.452$ ), identification with supervisor ( $\beta=00.469$ ) and internalization ( $\beta=00.511$ ). In view of the regression coefficient significance, as predictor variables effort and following the supervisor are found to be significant predictors ( $p<00.05$ ). The correlation level between significant predictors and dependent variable (controlling the effects of other independent variables) shows that correlation level is  $r=0.489$  between dedication and normative commitment. The regression equation is: Normative Commitment = ( $00.521 \times$  Dedication)+32.124.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study show that there is a significant

relationship between dimensions of loyalty to supervisor and organizational commitment of teachers. Identification with supervisor and internalization as dimensions teachers' loyalty to their supervisor are the significant predictors of affective commitment. On the other side effort and following the supervisor as dimensions of teachers' loyalty to their supervisors are the significant predictors of continuance commitment. Finally the results show that dedication as a dimension of teachers' loyalty to their supervisor is a significant predictor of normative commitment. Chen et al. (2002) states loyalty to a person (supervisor or principal) is much more important for the employee (teacher in this research) than committing a system or an organization.

Teachers' affective commitment to their organizations or schools contains their characteristics and perceptions towards their schools. It addresses their support to the goals of school (Mir et al., 2002). Yung et al. (1998) and Lyons et al. (2006) suggest that organizational commitment for the ones who work in public organizations is effected by their inner thoughts and perceptions. So teachers' identification with their supervisor and internalization the thoughts and feelings of their own supervisors address the inner thoughts and perceptions of teachers. Meyer et al. (1993; 2002) argue that strong affective commitment to an organization arises because teachers share values with both the organization and its members and principals and it is therefore predicted to be

positively associated with the loyalty of teachers to their supervisors in eastern culture. Teachers' commitment and loyalty thus arguably play an important role in the principal-agent issues surrounding the separation between the ownership and control of an organization (Brown et al., 2011).

Continuous commitment is explained as teachers' preferences to keep on working for their organization and their needs to stay in their workplace (Sezgin, 2010). Weng et al. (2010) suggest that teachers' continuous commitment become stronger and stronger via social networks at workplace but career expectations can be defined as fundamental determinants as continuous commitment. As a relational-oriented culture in Turkish context principals or supervisors might be more important factors to effect teachers' commitment. The effort of teachers and their followings to their supervisors may be one of the most important determinants of continuance commitment. That means these factors keep teachers in their school and strengthen their continuance commitment. Teachers' normative commitment can be explained as a combination of an individual values and school values. Ensuring normative commitment means to have individuals ready to keep their commitment for a long time. Chowwen (2012) addresses normative commitment as an upper degree of other dimensions of the organizational commitment. McDonald and Gandz (1991) state that in case of consolidation of individual and organizational expectation normative commitment becomes stronger naturally. With the result of the study it can be assert that teachers' dedication to themselves to their supervisor strengthen teachers' normative commitment in Turkish context.

Depending on the results of the study, researchers suggest that organizational commitment is not enough to explain teachers' behaviors, perceptions and attitudes at schools in Turkey. Subsequent research should be focus on teachers' loyalty to their supervisors. And these studies should be designed according to qualitative research paradigm to get knowledge about the phenomena deeply. Second suggestion of the researcher is that organizational commitment should be raised by enhancing the loyalty level of teachers to their supervisors. Therefore new ways to promote teachers' loyalty to their supervisor should be investigated.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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