



Mobbing, Organizational Identification, and Perceived Support: Evidence from a Higher Education Institution¹

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of the current study is twofold. First, it investigates the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification (OI) as an organizational attitude. Second, it explores the moderating effect of perceived organizational support (POS) on the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification. We proposed that perceived organizational support acts as a moderator between mobbing and organizational identification.

Research Methods: We used a cross-sectional design and data were gathered from employees working in a higher educational institution. The sample yielded 152 complete surveys, including 123 academics and 29 administrative staff. The questionnaire included measures of mobbing, perceived organizational support, and organizational identification. **Findings:** The results of the moderated regression analysis do not provide support for the moderating effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification. However, the findings demonstrate that, rather than a moderating variable, perceived organizational support is positively associated with organizational identification.

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Implications for Research and Practice: The results of the current study highlight the effect of organizational support in increasing the organizational identification levels of employees to their organizations. It would be beneficial for future research to assess the moderator effect of other dispositional or situational variables on the proposed relationships. Moreover, future research might also investigate other work outcomes, such as intention to leave, job satisfaction, and job performance.

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Introduction

Mobbing is defined as “hostile and unethical communication, which is directed in a systematic way by one or few individuals mainly towards one individual who due to mobbing is pushed into a helpless and a defenseless position and being held there by means of continuing mobbing activities” (Leymann, 1996, p.168). This has gained growing attention during the last decades in both theory and practice. Empirical research provides evidence that mobbing may lead to detrimental outcomes at both individual and organizational levels. Individual consequences of mobbing are concentrated on the increasing rates of victims’ psychological stress, such as anxiety, depression, and lack of concentration. Organizational consequences are focused on increasing absenteeism and turnover, losing competent and successful employees, reducing organizational loyalty and credibility, job alienation, and decreased organizational commitment (Dean, Brandes, & Dharwadkar, 1998; Ertüreten, Cemalçılar, & Aycan, 2013; Leymann, 1990; Zapf et al., 1996).

The prevalence of mobbing may vary according to the type of organization. In this regard, educational institutions rank high for mobbing and bullying complaints (Namie & Namie, 2009). Leymann (1996) indicates that in educational work settings, colleges and universities are over-represented in locations in which mobbing occurs. Likewise, the report of The Grand National Assembly of Turkey (2011) indicates the widespread rate of mobbing in educational organizations in Turkey. Studying mobbing in educational settings is worthy for a number of reasons. First, the quality of interpersonal relations, such as collegiality, is an important factor in the retention of faculty (Norman, Ambrose, & Huston, 2006). Second, most of the literature on conflict gives special importance to the structural and interpersonal opportunities for disagreement and hostility in higher educational settings (Keashly & Neuman, 2010). Moreover, when mobbing occurs in an educational organization, regardless of its level, the whole system of learning is interrupted because employees and students struggle for stability (Blasé & Blase, 2003; Hornstein, 2003). Therefore, the prevention and management of the mobbing process are considered vital for the effectiveness of educational systems.

The aim of the current study is twofold. First, it investigates the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification (OI) as an organizational attitude. OI is defined as “perception of oneness with or belongingness to” the organization (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.34). In other words, it refers to the overlap

between the self-concept of an employee and the goals of the organization (Van Dick et al., 2004). Although it has attracted scholars' interest since the 1990's, to the authors' knowledge no research has taken into account the effects of mobbing prevalence on the individuals' sense of belonging and identity to the organization in educational settings. Universities and colleges are considered 'holographic organizations' (Albert & Whetten, 1985); that is, a place where members share a common organization-wide identity and are thus less likely to experience competing demands from department-level or occupational identities (cited in. Mael & Ashford, 1992, p.104). Therefore, the exploration of the plausible effects of mobbing on the employees' organizational identification in a higher educational setting warrants research attention.

The second purpose of the study is to explore the moderating effect of perceived organizational support (POS) on the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification. We proposed that perceived organizational support, the degree to which employees believe their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being and socio-emotional needs (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), acts as a moderator between mobbing and organizational identification. Perceived organizational support is important because it is thought to be the organization's contribution to a positive reciprocity dynamic with the employees. Also, when the organizational climate is not supportive, mobbing problems could proliferate within the organizations (Kasen, Johnson, Chen, Crawford, & Cohen, 2011). Therefore, perceived organizational support might play an important role in regulating the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification by decreasing the negative effects of mobbing.

In general, this study contributes to the literature in examining how organizational support mechanisms might influence the negative experiences of mobbing victims. Building on Tyler and Lind's (1992) Relational Model of Authority, we believe POS might provide additional insights in leading the exchange relationship between employee and organization, buffering the effects of mobbing.

The research questions of interest in the study are presented below:

- 1- What is the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification?
- 2- Does perceived organizational support act as a moderator between mobbing and organizational identification?

Mobbing

Mobbing is a complex phenomenon that involves hostile, abusive, repeated, undesired, and unreciprocated behaviors towards targets (Di Martino, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003). The term mobbing was first used by Leymann (1990) to describe a hostile workplace behavior. To be considered mobbing, these behaviors must occur on a frequent basis, at least once per week, and continue over a long period, at least six months (Leymann, 1996). The victims of mobbing are exposed to a broad variety

of hostile and abusive behaviors. Those behaviors range from permanent criticism of their work to detrimental comments, gossiping, rumors; attacks on their nationality, ethnic heritage, religious or political attitudes; or threats and acts of mild physical violence (Einarsen, 2000; Leymann, 1996; Zapf, Knorz, & Kulla, 1996). In higher educational settings, the most frequent hostile behaviors are reported as threats to professional status and isolation; undermining employees' professional standing, performance, authority, or competence; hindering access to key resources for their work; criticism of their work prevention of career development, rejection of ideas, accusation of mistakes and errors, and demoralizing activities (Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Yelgeçen, Tigrel, & Kokalan, 2009). Supporting this, Ak-Kucukcayir and Akbaba-Altun (2016) indicate that the consequences of mobbing might have severe and broader implications in educational institutions due to the possibility of physical violence and destruction. Likewise, Celep and Konakli (2013) report that the victims of mobbing in educational areas are affected physically, psychologically, and economically, resulting in lower levels of job performance and less satisfaction in family life.

The literature uses the terms 'workplace psychological harassment', 'workplace bullying', and 'mobbing' to describe the hostile behaviors in organizations. The majority of research indicates the positive association between mobbing, workplace bullying and harassment, and unfavorable individual and organizational outcomes (Francis, 2014). Thus, in developing conceptual clarity, the current study uses the phenomenon of mobbing (Leymann, 1996) in explaining and understanding this complex issue (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013).

Mobbing might lead to detrimental individual and organizational consequences. Accordingly, those hostile behaviors might take away a victim's sense of safety, security, and identity and may cause severe physical and psychological effects, such as anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, exhaustion, frustration, aggressiveness, tiredness, stress, and lack of concentration and motivation (Akgeyik, Güngör, & Uşen, 2007; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Kayaci, 2014; Leymann, 1990; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Yıldırım & Yıldırım, 2007, Yıldız, Tüzüntürk, & Giorgi, 2008). Regarding organizational outcomes, absenteeism, productivity loss, job dissatisfaction, and lower levels of trust have been reported as detrimental effects of mobbing (e.g., Akgeyik, Güngör, & Uşen, 2007; Cabaros & Rodrigues, 2006; Gül et al., 2010; Leymann, 1990).

Mobbing and Organizational Identification (OI)

Organizational identification is one of the most important conceptualizations regarding the relationship between the employee and his/her organization. OI has been found to be associated with important organizational variables such as job satisfaction, job involvement, turnover intentions, and in-role and extra-role performance (Riketta, 2005). Although initial researches on OI started with March and Simon's (1958, p.74) operational definition, interest in the topic widely increased

in the late 1980s (Riketta, 2005), particularly with the application of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to work settings.

Ashforth and Mael (1989) defined social identification as the oneness with the group that leads to activities in support of the group (i.e., organization). Accordingly, the value congruence between the individual and the organization determines the quality of the identification process. Once organizational identification is formed, employees act toward the welfare of the organization. The main mechanism of this specific relationship depends on the assumption that an organization's successes and failures are felt personally by employees who are identified with their organizations. In other words, employees derive an important part of the proportion of their self-esteem from membership in their organization. OI can be revealed as a product of a positive relationship between the employee and the organization. However, one might presume that the experience of unpleasant behaviors (i.e., mobbing, workplace bullying, etc.) within the organization might have a detrimental effect on the organizational identification process.

The Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) serves as theoretical background for the association between mobbing and OI. The concept of Social Exchange Theory refers to an unspecified exchange where one party needs to trust the other, and the received benefits are reciprocal. In work settings, employees repay favorable work conditions through good performance and desired attitudes and behaviors without any formal contracts. That is, employees suffer a loss of identification when they perceive unfavorable treatments from their organization. Since mobbing is perceived as unfair by the victims, Social Exchange Theory presents the mechanisms through which mobbing is generalized into a negative evaluation of the employment relationship, leading to lower levels of employee OI.

Supporting the theory above, the study by Loh, Restubog, and Zagencyk (2010) reports a negative association between workplace bullying and workgroup identification in their cross-national sample including Singaporean and Australian employees. The authors suggest that mobbing signals to employees that they do not have meaningful relationships in their workplace, leading them to become less identified with their organizations (Loh et al., 2010). Escartin, Ullrich, Zapf, Schlüter, and Van Dick (2013) report that being identified with the workgroup reduces the odds of bullying on their sample of industry, service, and educational employees. Similarly, Topa and Moriano (2013) note that group identity and group support have negative effects on horizontal mobbing in a sample of Spanish nurses.

Although studies on the direct effect of mobbing on organizational identification are rare, the relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment is well documented. OI and affective organizational commitment (AOC) are similar, albeit different, concepts. The meta-analysis of Riketta (2005) notes that the shared variance between affective organizational commitment and OI is 61% (Riketta, 2005). Bowling and Beehr (2006) report a significant negative association between mobbing and organizational commitment in their meta-analysis. Consistent with these findings,

Cantisano, Domínguez, and Depolo (2008) reveal a moderate correlation between harassment and organizational commitment. Studies conducted in Turkey also confirm the negative effects of mobbing on organizational commitment on a sample of health sector employees (e.g., Özler, Atalay, & Şahin, 2008; Yüksel & Tunçsiper, 2011) and hotel workers (Pelit & Kılıç, 2012). Borrowing from affective organizational commitment literature, we presume that exposure to mobbing decreases the organizational identification of employees. Thus,

Hypothesis 1: Mobbing is negatively related to OI.

Moderating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Perceived organizational support is described as “a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values (employees’) general contributions and cares for their well-being” (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro, 1990, p.52). Employees develop general beliefs concerning how much their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being in order to assess the organization’s readiness to reward increased efforts (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001).

Perceived organizational support includes supporting attitudes and behaviors from co-workers, supervisors, and the organization, which indicates that the organization is ready to provide voluntary and consistent support to employees when needed (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). The common consequences of POS are commonly reported as high organizational commitment (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore and Tetrick, 1991; Shore and Wayne, 1993), positive emotions about the job (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 2001), low level of job stress (e.g., Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999), lower disengagement behaviors in the form of turnover intentions and absenteeism (e.g., Aquino & Griffeth, 1999; Turunç & Çelik, 2010), higher organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Shore and Wayne, 1993), and higher organizational identification (Turunç & Çelik, 2010).

Tyler and Lind’s (1992) relational model of authority theory provides a theoretical explanation for the moderating effect of POS. The theory provides that individuals tend to value group membership as it offers employees feelings of self-worth. The main part of this feeling is to the extent an employee believes that s/he is treated fairly and supported by the authority figures of the organization. Thus, it can be assumed that POS might be considered a signal for an individual, indicating that they are valued and cared for. In this sense, the victims of mobbing may also perceive support from their organizations. Thus, we argue that POS might hamper the negative effects of mobbing in a way that organizational support, as well as the presence of the effective implementation of workplace policies, help the victims cope with mobbing (Keashly, 2001). Alternatively, together with the Social Exchange Theory, based on the norm of reciprocity, the employee victims of mobbing who

perceive adequate support from their organization continue to repay, dedicate themselves, and identify with their organizations.

Even though no study directly investigated the moderating effect of POS on the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification (OI), the literature has documented possible moderating effects of POS on the relationship between mobbing/workplace bullying and several organizational outcomes. These outcome variables include turnover and job satisfaction (Francis, 2014; Quine, 2001; Djurkovic, McCormack, & Casimir, 2008). For instance, Quine (2001) reports that POS moderates the effects of mobbing on the relationship between bullying, job satisfaction, and propensity to leave in their sample of nurses. Djurkovic, McCormack, and Casimir (2008) demonstrate that POS moderates the effects of bullying on intention to leave in school teachers. Consistent with their results, Ciby and Raya (2014) also confirm the positive role of POS on workplace bullying and turnover intentions. In this sense, one might argue that POS allows an understanding of employees' favorable reactions to positive treatment by their organizations. As reported by Francis (2014), POS, as a moderating variable, lessens the negative effects on employees of workplace bullying on job satisfaction and intention to leave. In other words, the presence of POS helps the employees personify their organization and makes them have benevolent intentions, thus creating a feeling of identification toward the organization. The current study hypothesizes that the negative relationship between mobbing and organizational identification lessens when employees perceive higher organizational support. Thus,

H2: Perceived organizational support acts as a moderator on the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification.

Method

Research Design

The present study used the cross-sectional research design. The research design is quantitative and descriptive/correlational in nature.

Research Sample

The current study is part of a larger project on the individual and organizational outcomes of mobbing. The study was conducted in a higher education institution in Ankara, Turkey. We administered a self-report survey to a convenience sample of academics and administrative staff currently employed by the university. Convenient sample method was used to reach out to the participants. Participants were provided with a consent form describing the study's purpose and ensuring the confidential nature of the study. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, and 152 were returned. The response rate (43.4%) is satisfactory and similar to self-report survey research of this type (Babbie, 2001). The final sample consisted of 123

academics and 29 administrative staff. 103 participants were women (68.2%), and the average tenure was eight years.

Research Instruments and Procedures

Leymann inventory of psychological terror. Mobbing was assessed by using the Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terror (Leymann, 1996). The inventory includes 45 items. The sample items include "oral threats are made" and "your political or religious beliefs are ridiculed." The scale reflects mobbing behaviors, and the participants responded to the degree they have suffered from such behaviors during the last six months, on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (every day). The Turkish version of the instrument is borrowed from Erenler (2010). Three bilingual researchers reviewed and revised the items of the scale to better measure behaviors in an educational organization. No disagreements were identified among these three judges. Higher scores indicate a higher prevalence of mobbing. Although the original instrument consists of five subscales, the current study used the total score. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was .97 in the current study.

Perceived organizational support. We used an eight-item version of the scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) to measure POS of respondents. Participants rated eight items (e.g., Help is available from the organization when I have a problem) in terms of how applicable each statement was to their current job. Responses ranged from definitely disagree (1) to definitely agree (5), indicating that higher scores are representative of higher POS levels. The Turkish adaptation of the instrument is borrowed from Erenler (2010). The Cronbach alpha reliability score for the instrument in the current study was .86.

Organizational identification scale. Participants' organizational identification was measured by the Organizational Identification Scale (Mael, 1988). The scale includes six items. Cronbach alpha for this scale was found to be .81 (Mael, 1988). The sample items included "When someone criticizes the organization it feels like a personal insult". The Turkish translation of the organizational identification scale is borrowed from Güleriyüz (2004). The Cronbach alpha for Turkish form was found to be .80 (Güleriyüz, 2004). In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .91.

Data Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to determine the factor structure of the Leymann inventory of psychological terror, perceived organizational support scale, and organizational identification scale with the maximum likelihood estimation. Before conducting CFA, skewness & kurtosis, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov, tests were performed for assumptions of CFA. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were assessed using moderated regression analyses. The moderated regression analysis was conducted by regressing the mobbing, perceived organizational support, and organizational identification on a linear combination of predictors, moderator, and predictors-moderator interactions.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA). Before conducting the analysis, the data were screened for assumptions of CFA, and there were no univariate and multivariate outliers. As no violations for multivariate normality were detected, we performed CFA on mobbing, POS, and organizational identification. For the mobbing scale, the single-factor model was tested. After removing the non-significant loadings of item 45 ($p=.12$, ns), item 43 ($p=.20$, ns), item 42 ($p=.19$, ns), item 44 ($p=.16$, ns), item 32 ($p=.14$, ns), and item 39 ($p=.14$, ns) and adding covariance terms between items 10-11, items 17-18, and items 26-36, the final model approached to adequate fit (χ^2 (df = 699) = 936.7, $p < 0.05$, cmin/df= 1.34, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.97, GFI = 0.55, SRMR= .008, and RMSEA = 0.07). We created the mobbing index by averaging the remaining 39 relevant items.

For the POS scale, the one-dimensional factor measurement model afforded a good fit to the data (χ^2 (df = 20) = 40.96, $p < 0.05$, cmin/df= 2.15, CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.95, GFI = 0.94, SRMR= .037, and RMSEA = 0.08), providing evidence that eight items were significantly loaded on the respective latent variable of perceived organizational support. Similarly, for the organizational identification, the single factor model fit the data well (χ^2 (df = 9) = 14.18, $p=.11$, cmin/df= 1.57, CFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.98, GFI = 0.97, SRMR= .027, and RMSEA = 0.04), providing evidence of a one-factor model.

Descriptive statistics. Table 1 shows the zero order correlations among the study variables as well as the reliability scores of the instruments.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations among Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Gender	-	.098	-.134*	.065	.136
2. Age		-	-.199*	.017	.079
3. Mobbing			(.97)	-.494**	-.154
4.POS				(.90)	.537**
5.Org. Identification					(.91)
Mean.	--	--	1.47	2.93	3.06
SD	--	--	.58	.82	.93

Note: Reliabilities are presented at the diagonal in bold. Sample size= 152

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, Gender was coded 0=women 1=men

The correlations between the study variables are somewhat in the hypothesized directions; such that, mobbing is negatively correlated with POS ($r = -0.49$, $p < .01$); however, it is not significantly correlated with organizational identification ($r = -0.15$,

$p > .05$) and POS is significantly and positively correlated with organizational identification ($r = 0.54, p < .01$). Those findings partially confirm the hypotheses of the study.

Hypotheses Testing

A moderated regression analysis was conducted with organizational identification as the dependent variable, mobbing as the independent variable, and perceived organizational support as the moderator. We followed the recommendations of Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003), and mean centered the independent variable and the moderator variable. We entered the independent and moderator variables in the first step, and the interaction term in the second step. Table 2 provides the hierarchical regression findings.

Table 2

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Predicting Organizational Identification

Predictors	B	R ²	Change in R ²	F
Step 1		.30	-	32,58**
Mobbing	.147			
POS	.609**			
Step 2			.010	22,59**
Mobbing	.058			
POS	.592**			
Mobbing*POS	-.129			

Note: N=152, ** $p < .01$

As can be seen in Table 2, mobbing and POS accounted for 30% variance in organizational identification [$F(2,151) = 32.58, p < .01$]. Among the direct effects, the standardized regression coefficient for POS ($\beta = .609, p < .01$) was significant; however, no significant main effect of mobbing was found. Thus, H1 is not supported. The second step of the regression model was significant [$F(3,151) = 22.59, p < .01$]. Among the direct effects, POS was found to be significant ($\beta = .59, p < .01$). However, change in R² was not significant. Thus, the interaction term was not found to be significant, meaning that the interaction term did not explain significant incremental variance in organizational identification. In congruence with this finding, H2 is not supported as the interaction effect was not significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

The current study aimed to examine the relationship between mobbing and organizational identification, as well as the moderating effect of perceived organizational support on this relationship. The study results showed that mobbing

is not significantly associated with organizational identification and POS did not influence the strength of the relationship between the mobbing and organizational identification. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that POS is positively and directly associated with organizational identification, consistent with Eisenberger and Stinglhamber's (2011) findings. Similarly, Lam, Liu, and Loi (2016) found the positive effect of POS on organizational identification. Regarding the studies in educational settings, the findings of the study confirmed Sokmen, Ekmekcioglu, and Celik's (2015) study, in which a positive relationship was found between POS and organizational identification with a sample of research assistants from different public universities.

The results failed to replicate the direct effect of mobbing on organizational identification in Loh et al. (2010). There might be other factors affecting employees' identification to their educational organizations other than mobbing. In other words, organizational identification might be more related to global beliefs concerning the well-being of employees rather than specific ones, such as mobbing. Literature suggests that prestige and distinctiveness of the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Lee, 1971), opportunities for career advancement, positive interpersonal relationships (Johnston & Hewstone, 1990), and higher perceived access to organizational hierarchy foster organizational identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Lee, 1971; Reade, 2001), while workplace ostracism (Wu, Liu & Hui, 2010) diminishes the levels of organizational identification.

The lack of a relationship between mobbing and organizational identification might be explained by the fact that individuals are motivated to achieve and maintain positive concepts of themselves. As OI refers to the extent to which employees define themselves by organizational attributes, employees who have favorable work experiences might be more prone to develop OI for their organizations. In this sense, our study results might support this assumption by validating the positive association between POS and organizational identification in congruence with the previous literature (e.g., Edwards, 2009; Edwards, & Peccei, 2010; Fuller, Barnett, Hester, & Relyea, 2003; Riketta, Van Dick, & Rousseau, 2006; Caesens, Marique, & Stinglhamber, 2014). More clearly, it can be argued that when employees perceive support from their organizations (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), this might increase their sense of self-regard and lead to an increase in their identification levels to their organizations (Edwards & Peccei, 2010).

Alternatively, Turkey's standing on power distance (Hofstede, 1983) might be an important reason for the insignificant relationship between mobbing and organizational identification. Moreno-Jiménez et al. (2008) indicate that countries characterized by high power distance tend to experience higher levels of mobbing. Despite its higher level, mobbing is generally more accepted in high power distance cultures (Loh et al., 2010). In this sense, Lim (2011) reports significant differences between US and Singaporean employees' workplace bullying experiences. As a high-power distance culture, Singaporeans report significantly lower levels of workplace

bullying exposure with respect to the frequency. Thus, consistent with the literature, it might be argued that individuals in Turkey, as a high-power distance culture (Hofstede, 1983), are less likely to be responsive and voice their opinions about mobbing relative to counterparts from low-power distance cultures (Lim, 2011). Consistent with this argument, the fear of power and position were found to be the most important organizational factor that leads to mobbing in Turkey (Akar, Anafarta and Sarvan, 2011). However, as the current study has not measured the cultural value orientations of the participants directly, future studies assessing espoused the cultural value orientations of participants would provide more accurate information of the impact of cultural effects.

Conclusion

The study results highlight the importance of providing organizational support on the organizational identification level of employees to their organizations. That is, one might argue that educational institutions would greatly benefit from having employees who perceive high organizational support. Accordingly, enhancing organizational support is one of the most important ways to increase feelings of organizational identification. Valuing employees' contributions, acting in their best interests, and showing concern are some ways to enhance their perceptions of organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Moreover, such perceptions can be enhanced by human resources practices as well as managerial staff, such as maintaining open channels of communication and providing ethical and favorable working environments to educational employees (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).

Recommendations

The present study is not without its limitations. First, given the cross-sectional research design of the study, we are unable to refer any causal relationship among the study variables. Future studies might benefit from collecting data in different times to obtain further causality linkages between these variables. Second, as the variables were measured using the same method source at a single measurement time, common method error bias might affect the results (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Although several remedies were taken, future research can minimize the bias by using multiple sources and methods. Given these results, it would be useful for future research to assess the moderating role of other dispositional or situational variables such as locus of control, personality type of employees, and organizational culture and/or power distance. Moreover, future research might also investigate other work outcomes such as intention to leave, job satisfaction, and job performance.

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Yıldırma, Örgütsel Özdeşim ve Algılanan Destek: Bir Yüksek Öğretim Kurumundan Bulgular

Atıf

Coskuner, S., Costur, R., Bayhan-Karapinar, P., Metin-Camgoz, S., Ceylan, S., Demirtas-Zorbaz, S., Aktas, E. F., & Ciffiliz, G. (2018). Mobbing, organizational identification, and perceived support: evidence from a higher education institution. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 73, 19-40, DOI: 10.14689/ejer.2018.73.2

Özet

Problem Durumu: İşyerlerinde önemli stres kaynaklarından biri olarak kabul edilen yıldırma, "bir veya birkaç kişi tarafından en az altı ay süre ile sistematik olarak genelde bir kişiye karşı uygulanan, düşmanca ve ahlak dışı hareketler içeren ve bu kişinin yardımsız ve savunmasız bir duruma düşmesine neden olan davranışlar" olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu kapsamda yıldırma, çalışanlara üstleri, astları veya eşit düzeyde olanlar tarafından sistematik biçimde uygulanan, en az altı aydır devam eden, her türlü kötü muamele, tehdit, şiddet ve aşağılama içeren davranışlar olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

Yıldırmanın hedefi olan birey, hem kendisi hem de örgüt için ciddi sonuçlar doğurabilecek fiziksel ve psikolojik sorunlarla yüz yüze gelmektedir. Tekrarlanan olumsuz davranışlarla karşılaşan kişi, kendisini dışlanmış, aşırı çalışmaya zorlanmış ve kişilik hakları, mesleki statüsü ve sağlığı açısından zedelenmiş hissetmektedir. Bu nedenle bireysel ve örgütsel düzeyde olumsuz sonuçlara neden olabilecek yıldırmanın farkına varılması, nedenlerinin belirlenmesi ve çözüm önerilerinin

geliştirilmesi büyük önem taşımaktadır. Yıldırımaya maruz kalma durumu farklı sektör çalışanlarında görülmekle birlikte araştırmalar yıldırmanın en yaygın olduğu ortamlardan birinin akademik ortamlar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Mobbing ile Mücadele Derneği'ne göre yıldırma davranışları Türkiye'de en fazla üniversitelerde görülmektedir. Ancak ilgili alanyazın incelendiğinde eğitim ve yükseköğretim kurumlarında, yıldırmanın çeşitli bireysel ve örgütsel tutumlarla ilişkisini ele alan kapsamlı çalışmaların sınırlı sayıda olduğu görülmüştür.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu doğrultuda çalışmada yükseköğretim kurumlarında çalışan akademik ve idari personelin maruz kaldıkları yıldırma davranışları ile örgütsel özdeşim ve algılanan örgütsel destek değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkiler incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın iki amacı bulunmaktadır. Bu amaçlardan ilki; üniversitede yıldırma ile örgütsel özdeşim arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Örgütsel özdeşim, örgütün ve çalışanın amaçlarının bütünleşmesi veya uyuşmasıdır. Örgütsel özdeşimin gerçekleştiği durumlarda çalışanlar kurumlarına karşı aidiyet hissetmekte, sadakat göstermekte ve kurum değerlerini benimsemektedirler. Çalışanların yıldırma davranışlarına maruz kalmalarının onların kurumlarına karşı hissettikleri örgütsel özdeşimlerini azaltacağı düşünülmektedir. Çalışmanın ikinci amacı ise yıldırma ve örgütsel özdeşim arasındaki ilişkide algılanan örgütsel desteğin düzenleyici etkisini ortaya koymaktır. Örgütsel destek, örgütün çalışanın katılımına önem vermesi ve iyiliğini önemsemesine ilişkin duygulardır. Çalışanın örgütsel desteğin varlığını algılamasının, yıldırma davranışlarının örgütsel özdeşim üzerindeki olumsuz etkisini azaltabileceği öngörülmektedir. Bu çerçevede çalışma kapsamında test edilecek hipotezler aşağıda yer almaktadır:

H1: Yıldırma ile örgütsel özdeşim arasında negatif yönde bir ilişki vardır.

H2: Yıldırma ile örgütsel özdeşim arasındaki ilişkide örgütsel desteğin düzenleyici rolü vardır. Şöyle ki, örgütsel destek arttıkça, yıldırmanın örgütsel özdeşim üzerindeki etkisi azalmaktadır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Çalışmada veri toplamak amacıyla Leymann (1996) tarafından geliştirilen ve araştırmacılar tarafından üniversite ortamına uygun olarak çevirisi düzenlenen 45 maddelik Psikolojik Terör Envanteri, Eisenberger ve arkadaşları (1986) tarafından geliştirilen ve Türkçe adaptasyonu Erenler (2010) tarafından gerçekleştirilen sekiz maddelik Algılanan Örgütsel Destek Ölçeği ve Türkçe formunun geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışması Gülerüz (2004) tarafından yapılan altı maddelik Örgütsel Özdeşim Ölçeği'nden (Mael, 1988) yararlanılmıştır.

Çalışmaya konu olan veriler, Ankara'da bir devlet üniversitesinde çalışmakta olan akademik ve idari personelden toplanmıştır. Dağıtılan 350 ölçek setinden %43,4 cevaplanma oranıyla 152 personelden geri dönüş alınmıştır. Toplamda çalışmanın örneklemini 123 akademik ve 29 idari personelden oluşmuştur. Katılımcıların, %68,2'si kadın, %31,8'i erkek ve üniversitedeki ortalama hizmet yılı sekiz yıldır. Verilerin analizlerine geçilmeden, ölçüm geçerliliğini test etmek amacı ile kullanılan tüm ölçekler için doğrulayıcı faktör analizleri yapılmıştır. Önerilen hipotezleri test etmek

için ise Cohen, Cohen, West ve Aiken'in (2003) yöntemi ile düzenleyici regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Yapılan analizler sonucunda, yıldırma ve örgütsel desteğin örgütsel özdeşimdeki varyansın %30'unu açıkladığı görülmüştür. Doğrudan etkiler arasında örgütsel desteğin standardize edilmiş regresyon katsayısı ($\beta = .609, p < .01$) anlamlıdır ancak yıldırma üzerinde anlamlı etkisi bulunamamıştır. Böylelikle, araştırmanın birinci hipotezi desteklenmemiştir. Örgütsel desteğin düzenleyici rolünün test edildiği ikinci aşamada ise örgütsel desteğin yıldırma ile örgütsel özdeşim arasındaki ilişkide düzenleyici etkisinin anlamlı olmadığı görülmüştür. Böylelikle, araştırmanın ikinci hipotezi de reddedilmiştir. Ancak, çalışma bulguları algılanan örgütsel desteğin örgütsel özdeşim üzerinde doğrudan anlamlı ve olumlu yönde etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir ($\beta = .59, p < .01$).

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri: Elde edilen sonuçlar, çalışanların kurumlarına olan örgütsel özdeşimlerinin artması ya da azalmasında yıldırma davranışları haricinde algılanan örgütsel destek gibi başka faktörlerin de etkili olabileceğini göstermiştir. Bir diğer ifadeyle, örgütsel özdeşim üzerinde yıldırma davranışlarının yıkıcı etkilerinden çok; çalışanların iş yerlerinde desteklendiği ve yönetimi arkalarında hissettikleri durumların daha çok etkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu bulgu, çalışanlarının örgütsel özdeşim ve aidiyetlerini artırmak isteyen eğitim kurumları yöneticilerine örgütsel desteğin önemi ve yararları hakkında uygulamaya dönük katkılar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yıldırma, örgütsel özdeşim, algılanan örgütsel destek, yüksek öğretim kurumları, üniversite.