Summary
A Comparison of the Antecedents of Organizational Identification and Affective Commitment

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Many concepts have been suggested to identify the quality of the psychological bond between employee and organization in the industrial and organizational psychology literature. Organizational identification and affective commitment appear to be two of these concepts. Since these concepts were proposed, arguments on their conceptual and empirical proximity aroused interest. Some researchers claimed that these concepts were totally different (e.g., Ashforth & Mael, 1989), whereas others claimed that there was no distinction between them (e.g., Edwards, 2005). The idea that these concepts were both related but still different contructs have received some attention (e.g., Mael & Tetrick, 1992; Riketta, 2005; Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006).

Although many definitions of organizational identification have been proposed, Mael and Ashforth's (1992) definition of organizational identification is the most widely-accepted today. Ashforth and Mael (1989) defined organizational identification as the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization. On the other side, affective commitment was defined by Allen and Meyer (1990) as one of the three components of organizational commitment which represents employee's desire to stay at the organization.

The aim of the present paper is to provide further empirical support for the relationship between organizational identification and affective commitment according to their converging and diverging predictors. In the present study, it was considered that self-esteem, organizational-based self-esteem, need for affiliation, person-organization fit, job satisfaction, organizational justice were individual-based predictors, whereas strength of organization identity and perceived organizational prestige were organization-based predictors of organizational identification and affective commitment.

In summary, our hypotheses were as follows:

H1a. Need for affiliation is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H1b. Need for affiliation is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H2a. Person-organization fit is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H2b. Person-organization fit is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H3a. Job satisfaction is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H3b. Job satisfaction is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H4a. Distributive justice is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H4b. Procedural justice is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H4c. Interactional justice is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H5a. Distributive justice is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H5b. Procedural justice is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H5c. Interactional justice is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H6a. Organizational-based self-esteem is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H6b. Organizational-based self-esteem is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H7. Self-esteem is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H8a. Organization identity strength is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H8b. Organization identity strength is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

H9a. Perceived external prestige of the organization is positively related to organizational identification in organizations.

H9b. Perceived external prestige of organization is positively related to affective commitment in organizations.

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Method

Participants

Participants were 444 employees (170 women, 267 men) who worked in public and private sectors in Afyon, Ankara, Antalya, Balıkesir, Kayseri, Kırklareli in Turkey. The mean age and organizational tenure of the participants in public sector were 34.36 (SD = 9.32) and 6.20 (SD = 7.71) years, respectively. The mean age and organizational tenure of the participants in private sector were 29.66 (SD = 11.42), and 1.30 (SD= 0.57) years respectively. Overall mean age was 33.38 (SD = 9.91) and organizational tenure was 5.08 (SD = 7.07).

Measures

Organizational Identification Scale. Organizational identification was measured with six items which was developed by Mael (1988). Each item was rated on a 5-point scale from "1 = strongly disagree to "5 = strongly agree". The scale was adapted to Turkish and tested for its psychometric properties by Güleryüz (2004). The coefficient alpha of the scale was .80.

Organizational Commitment Scale. Organizational Commitment was measured by the scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). The scale consists of 3 subscales (affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment) and 24 items. The scale was adapted to Turkish and tested for its psychometric properties by Wasti (2003). The Turkish adaptation consists of 25 items. Coefficient alpha was found to be .83 for affective commitment, .87 for normative commitment and .77 for continuance commitment. Affective commitment subscale was used in the present study.

Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale. The scale was developed by Pierce et al. (1989) and consists of 10 Likert-type items. The scale was adapted to Turkish and tested for its psychometric properties by Güleryüz (2004). The coefficient alpha and one month interval test-retest reliability of the scale were .84 and .91, respectively.

Organization Identity Strength Scale. The scale was developed by Kreiner and Ashforth (2004) and adapted and tested for its psychometric properties by Güleryüz (2004). It consists of 4 items which are assessed on a 5-point scale ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". The coefficient alpha and one month interval test-retest reliability of the scale were .86 and .75, respectively.

Organizational Prestige Scale. The scale consists of 8 Likert-type (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree) items and was developed by Mael (1988). The scale was adapted to Turkish and tested for its psychometric properties by Güleryüz (2004). The coefficient alpha and one month interval test-retest reliability of the scale were .77 and .80, respectively.

The Rosenberg Self- Esteem Scale. It is a Likert-type scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). It was adapted to Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1986). Coefficient alpha was .71.

Motivational Orientation Inventory. The scale consists of three subscales (need for achievement, need for status and need for affiliation) which was developed by Barrick, Stewart and Piotrowski (2002). The scale was adapted to Turkish by Muçaoğlu (2006). Turkish version of the scale was found to have a similar factor structure. The items are responded on a 5-point scale. Coefficient alphas of the subscales were .88, .89 and .76, respectively. The need for affiliation subscale was used in the present study.

Organizational Justice Scale. The job control scale is a 20-item self-report measurement developed by Colquitt (2001). It consists of four subscales aiming to measure different aspects of organizational justice: distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice. The items are assessed on 5-point scales ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". The scale was adapted to Turkish and tested for its psychometric properties by Karabay (2004). Turkish version of the scale was found to have a three-factor structure in which interpersonal and informational justice were combined into a single factor: interactional justice. Coefficient alphas of distributive, procedural and interactional justice subscales were .89, .89, and .95, respectively.

Person-Organization Fit Scale. The person-organization fit scale was developed by Cable and Judge (1996) and adapted to Turkish by Karakurum (2005). Turkish version of the scale consists of three items with an coefficient alpha of .84.

Job Satisfaction Survey. The job satisfaction survey is a 36-item self-report measurement developed by Spector (1997). The items are assessed on 5-point scales ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". The scale was adapted to Turkish and tested for its psychometric properties by Ceylan (2009). Coefficient alpha and test-retest reliability of the overall scale were .88, and .86, respectively.

Results

Bivariate correlations, means, standart deviations and coefficient alphas are displayed in Table 1. Two separate hierarchical (sequential) regression analyses were conducted to determine the predictors of organizational identification and affective commitment. Results showed that organizational tenure, which is a demographic variable, predicted organizational identification but not affective commitment. Including this variable in only one

of the hierarchical (sequential) regression analyses (but not the other) would make any comparison between these analyses impossible. Therefore organizational tenure was excluded from the hierarchical (sequential) regression analyses altogether. For both analyses, in the first step, strength of organizational identity and perceived organizational prestige and in the second step, self-esteem, organizational-based self-esteem, person-organization fit, need for affiliation, job satisfaction, procedural justice, distributive justice and interactional justice were entered into the equation as a block. The first hierarchical (sequential) regression analysis was carried out using organizational identification as the dependent variable. It was found that strength of organizational identity (β = .22, t = 4.36, $p < .001$) and perceived organizational prestige (β = .26, t = 5.17, $p < .001$), which were entered into the equations as control variables, predicted organizational identification (R^2 = .171, $F_{2,434}$ = 44.698, $p < .001$). In the second step of first hierarchical (sequential) regression analyses, perceived organizational prestige (β = .18, t = 3.41, $p < .001$), organizational-based self-esteem (β = .22, t = 4.05, $p < .001$), person-organization fit (β = .15, t = 2.75, $p < .01$), and need for affiliation (β = .13, t = 3.08, $p < .01$) predicted organizational identification (R^2 = .092, $F_{8,426}$ = 6.612 $p < .001$). Self-esteem, job satisfaction, procedural justice, distributive justice and interactional justice, however, did not improve the prediction of organizational identification.

The second hierarchical (sequential) regression analysis was carried out using affective commitment as the dependent variable. In the first step, strength of organizational identity and perceived organizational prestige were entered into the equations as control variables and they significantly predicted affective commitment (R^2 = .275, $F_{2,434}$ = 82.380, $p < .001$). In the second step, it was found that both strength of organizational identity (β = .22, t = 4.04, $p < .001$) and perceived organizational prestige (β = .15, t = 3.05, $p < .01$) had significant predictive effects on affective commitment (R^2 = .075, $F_{8,426}$ = 6.151, $p < .001$). In addition, person-organization fit (β = .10, t = 1.99, $p < .05$), need for affiliation (β = .12, t = 2.94, $p < .01$) and job satisfaction (β = .20, t = 3.56, $p < .001$) significantly predicted affective commitment (R^2 = .075, $F_{8,426}$ = 6.151, $p < .001$). Self-esteem, organizational-based self-esteem, procedural justice, distributive justice and interactional justice did not significantly contribute to the prediction of affective commitment.

In summary, these results provided support for Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3b, 6a, 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b.

Discussion

In the present study, results of the hierarchical multiple regression analyses confirmed that strength of orga-

nizational identity and perceived external image of the organization, which are organizational antecedents, and person-organization fit and need for affiliation, which are personal antecedents, were predictors of both organizational identification and affective commitment. These findings are consistent with previous research findings on organizational identification and affective commitment (Bartels et al., 2007; Carmeli, Gilat, & Weisberg, 2006; Cole & Bruch, 2006; Coşkun, 2007; Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Özdemir, 2007; Riketta, 2005; Wiesenfeld et al., 2001). Because there is a limited number of studies exploring the relationship between strength of organizational identity and affective commitment, and need for affiliation and organizational identification (Cole & Bruch, 2006; Wiesenfeld et al., 2001); additional studies that are held in different cultures and samples are needed in order to make certain conclusions about these relationships.

On the other hand, it was found that organizational-based self-esteem, which is one of the personal antecedents, was a predictor of organizational identification but not a predictor of affective commitment. Several researchers remarked and supported the idea that organizational-based self-esteem is one of the important predictors of organizational identification (Shamir & Kark, 2004). In contrast, the finding that there is a relationship between organizational-based self-esteem and affective commitment is not consistent with previous research (e.g, Pierce et al., 1989; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Pierce & Gardner, 2004; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2005). Because the data were collected from different organizations and participants with different occupations, one potential explanation for this finding may be the heterogenous characteristics of this study's sample. Studies in the literature that show a relationship between organizational-based self-esteem and affective commitment generally have homogenous samples with respect to the type of participants' organizations and occupations.

In contrast to the finding mentioned above, it was found that job satisfaction predicted affective commitment but not organizational identification. It is presumable that employees who are highly satisfied with their jobs would have higher levels of affective commitment to their organization. Consistent with this expectation, the association between job satisfaction and affective commitment is demonstrated both theoretically and empirically (eg., Cordas, 2008; Lambert, 2004; Yang & Chang, 2008). One explanation for the contradictory finding about organizational identification and job satisfaction might be relatively low correlation between these variables. Mael and Tetrick (1992) noted that the correlation betweeen organizational commitment and job satisfaction was higher than the correlation betweeen

organizational identification and job satisfaction. In light of these findings, the association between these variables could be meaningless with respect to different samples. However, Van Knippenberg and Sleebos (2006) found that after controlling for the effect of organizational identification, affective commitment was positively related to job satisfaction, whereas when controlling for the effect of affective commitment organizational identification was not related to job satisfaction. On the other hand, organizational identification may be associated with different types of job satisfaction. For example, Nakra (2006) found that there was a positive association between employee's communication satisfaction in the organization and organizational identification.

While the discussion of why certain variables, but not others, predict organizational identification and affective commitment is worthy; with respect to our purposes, it is more important to rather discuss the similarities and differences between these two variables.

An important theoretical implication of this study is determining the commonalities (congruence) and differences (divergence) between organizational identification and affective commitment. As a result, strength of organizational identity, perceived external image of the organization, person-organization fit, and need for affiliation were found to be the overlapping predictors, whereas organizational-based self-esteem was a predictor of only organizational identification and job satisfaction was a predictor of only affective commitment. The fact that two different variables are not predicted by a third variable, however, does not give us any idea about whether these variables are same or different constructs.

Therefore, the findings that organizational justice and self-esteem were predictors of neither organizational identification nor affective commitment are not very crucial in light of the aims of this study. On the other hand, even though there are some overlapping predictors between these two variables, divergent pattern of relationship between organizational-based self-esteem and job satisfaction may reflect that organizational identification and affective commitment are different constructs. Nevertheless, the existence of common predictors provide a support for the findings and arguments which state that there is a relationship between these variables.

In light of the findings that these two variables are different constructs, the need for longitudinal studies becomes apparent in order to understand how these two constructs emerge in organizations. Furthermore, investigating the relationship between these two variables and organizational outcomes such as task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, turnover, intention to quit and organizational stress would have both theoretical and practical implications. Moreover, by increasing the levels of organizational identification and affective commitment of employees via organizational interventions, organizations may increase task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors and decrease turnover rates (of employees). Organizational identification or affective commitment may have a mediator role in relationship with these organizational outcomes. As a conclusion, further studies are needed to reveal the full picture about organizational identification and affective commitment with both their antecedents and consequences.