Is Organizational Trust Associated With Organizational Prestige? A Political Party Example

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to set forth the effect of the corporate prestige perceived by the members on organizational trust and organizational commitment in an organization based on voluntary membership. Within this scope, a field study was carried out on 120 members of youth section members of a political party which is powered in Turkey since 2002. Findings of hierarchical regression analysis indicate that organizational trust variable does not play a strong intermediary role between prestige perceptions and organizational commitment relationship among our sample. Details and constraints of the study findings are discussed in the study.

Keywords: Trust, Organizational Trust, Image, Commitment,

1.Introduction

Hoffman and Moore (1984) stated that an enterprise is "a pattern of human relations" and emphasized the judicial and moral aspects of the enterprises and the importance of the structure directed to the individual and the value relations of the individual as well as the economic benefits. Organization life is a social life style in which inter individual relations, cooperation and interactions are experienced. While the rules, processes and the interactions between the individuals create environments which make the organizations different from each other, they have determining role on the behaviors and decisions of the organization members. This behavioral interaction approach used in the literature to explain the behaviors and attitudes of the organization member in the organization is not only affected by the processes and applications inside the organization. Environmental changes both affect the organizations and change the structure of the interaction between the organization and its members.

Organizations which continuously change form to cope with the problem of orientation to the environmental change, global economic and political crises bring the organization managements to a bottleneck strategically; on the other hand, the increasing risk perception changes the structure of the relation between the organization members and the organization. Changes experienced, increasing uncertainty perception and the concerns have increased the importance of the concepts of trust and fiduciary relationship both for the individuals and the establishments, as the concept of trust is expressed as a factor that decreases the risk and uncertainty. (Kollock, 1999:335, Morgan & Hunt, 1994, Creed & Miles, 1996, Meyerson et.al 1996). Luhmanm mentioned that "a system requires trust as an input condition in order to stimulate supportive activities in situations of uncertainty or risk" (Luhmann 1988; 103)In this context, recently increasing number of studies in the organization literature focusing mainly on the concepts of behavior of cease of employment and the employee belonging emphasizes the vital importance of cooperation in corporations and can be accepted as an indicator of the issue of trust.

Organization-member relation based on the economic benefit developed with the negative effect of the economic concerns substantially creates operational and labor cost problems in long term especially in profit-oriented corporations. While the current organization-member relation developed in parallel with the tight cost management policies structured by the organizations based on the increasing operational costs is based mostly on economic or instrumental forms, emphasizing the importance of the social relations in the organizations in the relevant literature, applications and advices for supporting have become an important field of the human resources literature.

The concept of trust is the basis of strength of the social bonds and relations ensuring the continuity of the relations of individuals and structures with each other. Within this scope, trust is defined as: "Trust is the degree to which the trust or holds a positive attitude toward the trustee's goodwill and reliability in a risky exchange situation" (Das & Tang, 1998, p. 494). Within this scope, it is assumed that the concept of trust is effective in terms of the perception of risk and uncertainty (Kollock, 1999:335, Morgan & Hunt, 1994).For example, Bhattacharya et al. (1998) expresses the trust as follows. Trust exists in an uncertain and risky environment; trust reflects an aspect of predictability – that is, it is an expectance" (Bhattacharya et.al, 1998). In this sense, the concept is shaped based on the similarity between the parties and the experiences. (Creed & Miles, 2005) Increasing importance of trust brings this question or questions with it. What and why the individuals trust or what does kind of structures build trust or which elements are accepted trustworthy. Within this scope, many researchers bring forward suggestions or antecedents for building trust in the corporation.

On the other hand in organizational behavior literature growing number of researchers has approved social identity theory assumptions for defining prestige perception influence on employees' behavior. These studies mentioned that socially valued group membership fosters individuals self-esteem that maintain group attachments, thus favorable organizational reputation or prestige among perception employees fosters positive work attitudes such as commitment (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Dutton & Duckerich, 1991; Dutton et. al., 1994; Smidt's et al 2001). Hence perceived organizational prestige fosters positive evaluation of one's' self- image. Thus according to social identity theory; if employee's perception about working organization is positive or socially valued, they identify themselves with their working organization which informed organizational attachment (Mael & Ashforth, 1992:114, Elsbach & Kramer, 1996:468, Whetten & Mackey, 2002:403-404, Bhattacharya et. al., 1995:53; Mignonanac et. al., 2006:485, Bartels et. al., 2007:180). Based on these finding the aim of this study is to identify the effect of prestige perceptions on organizational trust and commitment.

When the relevant literature is analyzed, it is possible to say that trust and prestige concepts in organizations are examined by field studies carried out mostly in profit-oriented organizations, thus the concepts are examined in a relation pivoting on economic benefit. However, in this study, unlike the literature, member commitment will be evaluated on the axis of concepts of prestige and trust relating to an organization in which social benefit is in the foreground and membership is voluntary. In this context, a different insight will be offered to the literature on the point of trust building and directing, and the effect of the perception of prestige not mentioned before on the trust attitude of the members will be evaluated.

2. Theorical Background

2.1Trust

Concept of trust is defined differently by researchers. The concept has been seen close and related to the confidence concept. For example, while Cook and Wall (1980) recognized trust as showing faith and confidence in the ability and intentions of individuals where the consensus of opinion is trust between individuals and groups within an organization is a highly important ingredient in the long-term stability of the organization and the well-being of its members(Cook & Wall, 1980:39-40).

Lewicki et al., (1998) asserted that trust is usually linked with one's confidence and positive expectation, Dyer and Chu (2000) stated that trust is based on confidence that people represent in relationships with no concern about exploiting vulnerabilities. Within this framework, Trust is a psychological state comprising of one's intention to accept vulnerability to the actions of another party (Six, 2007; 290) or is a process structured depending on certain conditions (Paliszkiewicz, 2014). assumed trust as the belief that another party will: a) not act in a way that is harmful to the trusting firm; b) act in such a way that it is beneficial to the trusting firm; c) act reliably; and d) will behave or respond in a predictable and mutually acceptable manner Paliszkiewicz (2014;28). Likewise, Trust is also defined as the belief or expectation of an individual relating to the other party.

According to Rousseau (1998), trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another (Rousseau, 1998:395). Similarly, "Trust is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trust or, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer et al., 1995:712).

2.2 Organizational Trust

Organizational trust is defined as "a feeling of confidence and support in an employer… organizational trust refers to employee faith in corporate goal attainment and organizational leaders, and to the belief that ultimately, organizational action will prove beneficial for employees" (Gilbert & Tang, 1998: 322, Paliszkiewicz & Koohang, 2013). Trust is in an organization involves the employees' willingness to be vulnerable to their organization's action (Paliszkiewicz, 2011:21). Trust in organization means the belief of the employees that the commitments and behaviors of the organization will be consistent when an uncertain or risky situation is encountered and is mainly developed in 3 contexts as trust in organization, trust in director and trust in colleagues (Tan & Tan, 2000). Researchers that assess the organizational trust based on the organizational outputs evaluate the concept as a psychological structure shaped by internal policy and applications, and having important and positive outputs for the organization if it is built.

When the literature relating to organizational trust studies are examined, it is seen that there are mainly 3 basic trends. Within this context, researchers have conducted studied on the organizational benefits of trust with a pragmatic point of view; another group of researchers have worked to define the important factors in building or establishing trust within the framework of models and dimensions, and the last group of studies have mainly focused on the creating measurement of organizational trust such as Cook and Wall (1980), Cumminings and Bromiley (1996), Poliszkiewics et. Al (2014), Buttler (1991).

In management literature, it is seen that trust is defined as a factor reducing operation cost of the organizations in the relation between organization and non-organization parties. (Creed & Miles, 1996). This macro view is more distinct especially in the studies examining trust and organizational performance relation (Chenhall &Smith, 2003, Ferres et. al, 2005, Cummings & Bromiley, 1996, Tan & Lim 2009). Within this framework, benefits created by the organizational trust especially in the relation between the organization and its member have become the main question in many studies in the field of behavioral sciences. Organizational trust perception increases information sharing among the organization members and improves the organization performance. (Paliszkiewics & Koohang, 2013).As also it was mentioned in meta-analysis which is performed by Dirks and Ferrin (2002) on 93 articles including trust concept, organizational trust increasing organizational commitment and work performance of the individuals.

Some researchers have addressed organizational justice perception assumed as one of the basic elements of the trust in the organization (Kickul et. al 2005, Aryee et.al 2002, Gilbert & Tang 1998, Brockner 1996) and the role of the directors, which is another important element (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002, Lester & Brower, 2003:Podsakoff et. Al, 1990, Pillai et. al, 1999,Korsgaard et. Al 1995, Konovsky & Pugh 1994, Joseph & Winston2005) and emphasized the premises of the organizational trust. Field studies, which may be classified as another group, have focused on the benefits provided by the feeling of trust between organization and its member in terms of corporations. For example, trusts perceived by the members have positive effects on the personnel development (Perry &Mankin, 2007) and corporate performance (Chenhall & Smith, 2003, Ferres et. Al, 2005, Bromiley & Cummings, 1997).

2.3 Organizational Prestige

The argument that prestige concept is effective on the behaviors of organization member has been addresses in the motivation model suggested by March and Simon. According to them, the perception of prestige is "organizations' position among other institutions which was constructed by individuals own prestige standards and outsiders prestige perceptions about organization" (March & Simon, 1958). The concept was defined by Mael and Ash forth studies as the degree of organizational prestige when compared to other institutions (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Bergami and Bagozzi associated concept with organizational status like well-recognized, well-prestige institute where Smithds et.al described organizational prestige as individual level interpretation and evaluation of organizational prestige based on employee's own information (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000, Smithd's et al., 2001).General emphasis of the said definitions is that organizational prestige is a feature which differentiates, separates the corporation from others and makes it perceived as more successful than its equivalents and more reliable. (Fuller et.al., 2006)

2.4 Organizational Commitment

In general, the meaning of commitment is a stabilizing or obliging force that gives direction to behaviors (restricts freedom, binds the person to course of action).

In this framework organizational commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and it has implications to decide to continue membership in the organization (Meyer et al., 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991, Meyer et.al., 1993, Meyer & Allen, 1997). Researchers argued that commitment binds individual to an organization which was established employees' interactions with their organizations than to take a decision to remain in organization (Porter et. al 1974, Meyer et. al, 2002). In the literature three behaviors are used to characterize organizational commitment; Acceptance of organizational goals and values, willingness to invest effort in organizations, Willingness to be a part or a member of organization./ Desired to remain in organization (Mowday et.al, 1979:227). According to Meyer and Allen (1991) who committed their organization based on affective tone, remains in organization because they "want" to stay (Meyer et al., 1990, Meyer & Allen, 1991, Meyer et. al., 1993, Meyer & Allen, 1997).

In related literature researches claimed that well-reputed or well-known, prestige organizations compose social approval among society. In this scope corporate reputation or prestige defined as perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future prospects that describe the firm's overall appeal to all of its key constituents when compared with other leading rivals (Fombrun, 1996). Organizational reputation or prestige is also defined as the aggregate evaluation constituents make about how well an organization is meeting constituent expectations based on its past behaviors (Rindova & Fombrun, 1998, Wartick, 1992). Reputations or organizational prestige formed mostly by interactions with organizations or personal experiences and information's gained from others where that information's provides trustworthiness to organizations. Where studies showed that there is a high correlation between reputation and supportive behaviors towards organization. (Reputation Institutions Report, 2003)

In other hand researchers sought to analyze the structure of trust concept and thus sought to create models for establishing trust in an organization. Mishra's (1996) model for organizational trust identifies competence, openness, concern, and reliability to be important dimensions of trust. Trust concept is closely associated with trustworthy. In this sense, trustworthy features such as ability, benevolence, integrity, predictability, and openness are important elements of building trust.(Butler, 1991, Cummings & Bromiley, 1997, Mayer et.al 1995, McKnight et al. 1998, Mishra 1996, Swan et.al, 1985).In the literature,it was mentioned that two principal forms of trust; cognition-based trust is based on individual thinking about and confidence in the other and based on 'good reasons' as evidence of trustworthiness. The second type, affect-based trust, is grounded in the emotional bonds between individualsinvolving mutual care and concern(Lewis & Weight 1985,McAllister 1995, Paliszkiewicz, 2011;317)

In this frame work this study assumed that cognitive based trust model and reputation or prestige perceptions among organizations formed with on same ground and individual's prestige and trust perceptions' provide organizational commitment. We assumed that "individuals'organizational prestige perception will constitute organizational trust where these interactions establish or generate member's commitment to specific organization.

3. Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to measure the prestige and trust perceptions of the members of the youth section of a political party organization in Turkey related to the organization of which they are members and to put forth the interaction of trust perception and prestige perception consecutives mentioned in the relevant literature with the accepted organizational commitment variable. Within this framework, youth section members of the relevant political party in Bursa city and nearby districts constituted the samples of the study. 120 persons from the relevant population were reached in the field study conducted. Descriptive analyses conducted indicate that data obtained from 120 subjects can be used for the analysis.

4. Methodology of Study

Study is based on a questionnaire study. Similar field studies conducted in the relevant literature were considered as a result of the literature review made for the study question, and the prestige, organizational trust and organization commitment of the party members to their party were measured with the scales below. Scales below were used for this purpose.

Organizational Commitment: There are two basic scales accepted for measuring the organizational commitment in the relevant literature. One of these scales is "Three-Dimensional organizational Commitment Scale" developed by Meyer et.al.(1990,1994). The other scale accepted in the literature is one-dimensional "Organizational commitment Scale" developed by Porter et al.

Assuming that commitment of the subjects to the relevant organizations would be completely emotional, it was thought that the use of the scale suggested by Porter vd. Would be a more proper approach in this study. Within this framework, organization commitment of the relevant political party members was evaluated using the scale of (1974:605)15 developed by Porter vd (Porter vd., 1974:605 α=0.82–0.93). The validity of this scale, which was previously tested in terms of reliability and validity in Turkish (Tak et.al 2009 α=0, 84, Tanova et.al., 2002:800, α=0.86), was found to be α=0,80 in this study.

Organizational Trust: In the literature study conducted to measure the organizational trust levels of the subjects, it is seen that many scales were defined for the measurement of Organization trust in the relevant literature. (Rotter, 1967, Cook & Wall, 1980, Larzelere & Huston, 1980, Johnson-George & Swap, 1982, Butler, 1991, McCauley & Kuhnert, 1992, Currall and Judge, 1995). However, in this study, the trust of party members in their units and directors were measured by Organizational Trust Inventory (OTI) scale developed by Nyhan and Marlow Jr. in 1997 and consisting of 12 expressions. The scale designed by the researchers remarking the inadequacy of other Organizational Trust scales in the literature and considering the studies included in the relevant literature consists of 2 parts. While eight expressions included in the relevant scale question the basis of the trust of the subjects in their directors, four expressions question the trust atmosphere in their current unit. The validity of the relevant scale is very high in the original study. Reliability of the relevant scale in this study is found to be 0, 91.

Perceived External Prestige (PEP): This measure is based on Mael and Ashforth's "Perceived Organizational Prestige" eight item scale, a measure used by numerous scholars, including Mael and Ashforth 1992, (α=0.77), Smidts et.al.2001 (α=0.73), Herrbach et.al.2004, (α:0.86), Bhattacharya et al., 1995 (α=0.69),Lipponen et.al., 2005 (α=0.83). In this study scale's Cranbach α is 92.

Subjects were asked to answer the scales above with a five point likert scale from "I strongly agree" to "I strongly disagree".

Demographic profile: In the study, 5 different questions were asked to the subjects to determine their age, education status, period of membership to the relevant party, marital status and gender for the purpose of putting forward the demographic profile of the sample.

5. Study Analysis and Findings

Data obtained within the study in a short period of one month were analyzed through SSPSS program. Findings obtained are below.

Findings on the demographic features of the subjects who participated in the study are given in the table below.

Table1: Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Profile of The Sample

	25 and below 48	26-30 age 25	31-40 age 20	41-50 age 15	51 and above 12
Age status					
Distribution Percent (%)	40	20,8	16,6	12,5	10
Education Status	High School 20	Vocational School ofHigher Education 4	University 84	Master 12	
Distribution Percent (%)	16,6	3,3	70	10	
Period of membership to the party	0-1 year 29	2-3 years 37	4-7 years 25	8-15 years 29	
Distribution Percent (%)	24,1	31	20,8	24,1	
Marital status	Married 55	Single 65			
Distribution Percent (%)	45,8	54,2			
Gender	Female 38	Male 82			
Distribution Percent (%)	31,7	68,3			

As seen in Table 1; when the age distribution of the sample is analyzed, it is seen that 40% is 25 and below, and when the education status is analyzed, it is seen that majority of the sample (80%) graduated from university or master. In terms of marital status, it is seen that the rate of married and single subjects is nearly at the same level, and 69% of the subjects consists of male members.

When the period of memberships of the party members participating in the study is analyzed, it is possible to say that the distribution is almost equal in the relevant classifications. Analyses conducted show that 55% of the memberships is 3 years and below, and 45% is between 4 and 15 years.

The descriptive statistics, means, standard deviations and correlations among the research variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Research Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
AGE	2,29	1,34	1								
EDUCATION	2,7	0,82	-,446**	1							
GENDER	1,73	0,44	,131	,038	1						
MARITAL ST.	1,53	0,5	-,73**	,334**	-,73	1					
SENIORITY	2,4	1,06	,617**	-,39**	,12	-,56**	1				
OC	4,11	0,51	,131	,051	-,104	-,131	,229*	1			
Trust Dept	4,13	0,75	,149	-,219*	-,035	-,186*	,073	,302*	1		
Trust Leader	3,95	0,7	,198*	,171	,037	,154	,04	,224*	,715**	1	
PRESTIGE	4,3	0,54	,262	-,196*	-,054	-,263**	,25**	,58**	,436**	,395**	1

OC: Organizational commitment, *p< 0.05, **p<0.01, ***p <0.001

As seen in the table, there is a statistically significant relation between trust of the subjects in their units and organizational commitment at the level of 0,302 (p≤0,05). Similarly, there is relatively low (0,224, p≤ 0,05) compared to the trust in the unit but statistically significant relation between organizational commitment and the trust in the director. On the other hand, when the relation between trust in the director and trust in the unit, which are two sub-items of organization trust, is considered, it is seen that there is a relation between the said variables having high correlation. (0,715, p≤0,01). It is also found in the study that there are relations between prestige perceptions of the subjects related to the organization and the trust in the unit (0,436, p≤0,01), trust in the director (0,395, p≤0,01) and organizational commitment (0,582, p≤0,01) which are strong at different levels.

Hierarchical regression analysis was applied to test the hypothesis developed for the purpose of defining the relation supposed to exist between the variables. In the analyses, intermediary role of the organization trust was tested in the relation between prestige perceptions of the subjects for the relevant party and organization commitment. Findings obtained are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Hierarchical Regression Anaysis

	Step 1 Trust leader	Trust dept	Step 2 OC	Step 3
Age	,179	-,045	,009	,029
Education	-,094	-,17	,238	,259*
Gender	-,013	,007	-,105	-,107
Marital status	-,006	-,134	,063	,085
Tenure	-,202	-,146	,022	,23
PEP	.378***	,416***	,582***	,54***
Trust leader				-,067
Trust dept				,163
R^2	0,194	0,226	0,405	0,418
ADJ R^2	0,154	0,185	0,373	0,376
F	4,530***	5,500***	12,816***	9,956***

Standardized beta weights are shown.
*p<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***p <0.001

6. Discussion

When the data obtained in the field study is analyzed, it is possible to say that data obtained is partially similar to the relations referred in the relevant literature. Findings of the regression analysis conducted indicate that there is statistically significant relation between prestige perception and organization trust ((β=37, p<0.001, (β=41, p<0.001) as also relation existing between prestige perception and organizational commitment (β=58, p<0.001). However, when the relation between three basic variables mentioned in the study is tested with the intermediary effect of the organizational trust perception, it is inferred that organization trust does not significantly change the effect of the members' prestige perceptions on the organizational commitment. (ΔR^2 =0.006, p<0.001). Within this framework, it was found in the study sample that prestige perception is an important factor which binds the members to the organization, but organization trust does not have an important or strong role in this relation. Results as also noted that education variable (β=25, p<0.05) is a variable which stands out more compared to the organizational trust. Where this findings showed that education level increases promote strong relationship between prestige and commitment interactions.

Results obtained show parallelism with the studies testing the commitment and prestige relation. (Herrbach et.al., 2004; Carmeli & Freund, 2002; Carmeli, 2005a; Carmeli, 2005b; Freund, 2006). Findings show that member's accepting their organizations as prestigious is effective on their trust in the organization. Data explain the prestige perception and organization trust although not yet very strong. R^2 =0.185, R^2 =0.154, p<0.001) However, when the commitment to organization is in question, subjects consider social status or organizational prestige rather than trust. It is thought that the reason of this finding depending on the sample's demographic profile. Descriptive statistics showed that 60 percentages of sample's age is lower than 30 age(see Table 1) and as also sample selected from the youth sections of governing political party which is in power since 2002.

In related literature this relationship discussed in Social exchange theory and in Social identity theory. Individuals' status or prestige which was gained from memberships of their groups or organization was argued in social-exchange theory, which was indicated that people enter into relationship to acquire valuable resources. These resources consist not only of material goods such as pay, but also social goods such as approval, trust, esteem and prestige (Blau, 1989). For example basic social exchange resource is status and employees gain status directly from their employer (I am valued by my organization) or indirectly from organizations' outsiders who, on the basis of their interaction with the organization, hold the employer in high esteem. (My organization is highly regarded and by extension so am I) (Fuller et al., 2006: 329). Consequently, in social exchange theory, status or prestige is defined as exchange instrument, and if the status necessary for employees than it is satisfied by the organization, prestige perceptions bind the individuals to organization. Based on Tajfel and Turners' social identity theory individuals tend to look for positive social identity and self- image for social approval. (Turner et. al 1979; Dutton et. al, 1994) According to identification process when members' beliefs that outsiders see their organization in a positive light, organizations become more attractive for them and they proud to be part of and being a member of it. Cialdini (1976) defined these employees as "They were basket in glory" (Cialdini, 1976: 366). An individual self- image was influenced by the characteristics that others inferred them based on their social category (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Thus, prestige answers the question "what do outsiders think of me because I belong to this organization?" or answered the social value of organizational membership (Dutton et al., 1994).

As conclusion findings of this study showed that reputation or prestige perception generate trust however especially among young population main antecedents for organizational commitment is organization prestige rather than trust. It is possible to say that as the subjects are young, the prestige of the relevant political party in the society has priority for them in building social identity in the society and receiving the acceptance of others, and is more determinative for them to continue party membership or place attachment to the party.

To validate the relationship this study identified, it should be repeated in various different and large samples. This study was aimed at specific population's only one rulling political party thus; this specialty of sample would affect the results. Therefore one should consider the effect upon this condition while interpreting the findings of this study. The study is limited by the use of a single PEP, commitment, trust scale thus more compressive focused scales would infer different results.

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