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ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS, ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM, ORGANIZATIONAL REVENGE, INTENTION TO QUIT: A STUDY ON RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

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Abstract

The aim of current research is then to assess organizational stress, organizational cynicism, organizational revenge and intentions to quit of research assistants employed in faculty of economics and administrative sciences in a state university within Ankara and to determine the impact of all three factors on the intention to quit. All research assistants in the faculty of economics and administrative sciences included to the study and didn't sampling. 71 research assistants of 108 in the faculty participated in the study. Thus, the participation rate in the study was determined to 65.74%. The study was conducted from May to June 2014. Response categories of statements in the survey form were weighted according to five degrees. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed with SPSS 20 software. As a result of the study a significant relationship was found between intention to quit and cynicism, stress, revenge. As a result of multivariate regression analysis only cynicism was found to be an important determinant of the intention to quit. ($\beta=.387$; $t=2,487$; $p<,05$).

Keywords: Organizational stress, organizational cynicism, intention to quit, organizational revenge

1.Introduction

In the organizations cynicism is the natural reaction arising from apathy and being ignored. Cynic employees transform into individuals who feel disappointed thus who entertain less positive feelings to the organization itself. Failure of organizations to meet the expectations of employees triggers disappointment among the personnel, which in turn bring about cynicism (Çağ, 2011:67). Organizational cynicism is the negative attitude a person holds toward his/her organization. At this point it would be significant to underpin three vital dimensions playing role in the emergence of cynicism; 1) believing that the organization has no integrity (Cognitive Dimension), 2) negative opinions about the organization (Affective Dimension) and lastly 3) tendency to derogate the organization (Behavioral Dimension) (Dean, Brandes and Dharwadkar, 1998:345). There are a number of factors fueling cynicism within organizations. To name a few; misguided attempts of transformation, excessive stress and role load, unmet personal and organizational expectations, unsatisfactory social support, insufficient levels of promotion compared to the high level of competition, conflict of objectives, increased levels of organizational chaos, lowness of the level of effectiveness in decision-taking process, lack of communication, violations of

psychological agreement, dismissal (Altınöz et al. 2011:290). There is a wide body of research demonstrating that cynicism has a negative effect on the loyalty and motivation of personnel and continuity of team spirit (Karadağ et al. 2014). It is also feasible to classify forms of organizational cynicism as social/institutional cynicism, employee cynicism, organizational change cynicism and duty cynicism (Abraham 2000).

Stress on the other hand has constituted a significant main topic since the 20th century for the researchers and practitioners in the fields of psychology, organizational behavior, health and medicine. The findings obtained from all these studies point to the fact that stress leaves adverse effects on employee performance as well as psychological & physical wellness including immune system (Jain et al. 2007).

Organizational stress forms a phenomenon within work environment, sources of stress and state of anxiety. Organizational stress can be defined as, in the event that individuals hold certain expectations about the organization or work itself, the potentially harmful effects of the qualities of work that stimulate personal energy (Gök, 2009:431). There may be a wide range of stress resources impacting the employees in any given organization; yet the most widely encountered ones are work-related stress resources; dismissal, lowering the position, problems with the management, changes in working conditions (not being promoted, extensive work hours etc.), work design, work demands, boring/routine tasks, positive changes (new employment, promotion, achievement etc.), work deliveries, fear of failure, unsatisfactory support, uncertainty of the job duties, role conflict, change, novel technologies, excessive or inadequate work load, strict rules and regulations, insufficient level of involvement with decision-taking process, inadequacy of interpersonal relations, organizational structure, organizational leadership, organizational policies, communication problems, control inadequacy, unfair payments, lack of organizational culture, absence of shared aims, beliefs and sensations and lastly, incongruities between company values and employee values (Gümüştekin and Öztekin, 2004:64). Once the stress emotion felt in the workplace climbs higher, role expectations of the employees are affected negatively which in turn forces pressure on the state of organizational loyalty and intention to quit (Lou et al. 2007).

In a given organization stress can be managed on two levels. The first one is on organizational level in which organizational regulations are arranged and the second one is on personal level in which personal regulations are conducted. As regards organizational level, management interrelation between stress resources and challenges are analyzed without calculating personal variables. On the other hand personal regulations focus on affective process which is a reflection of the relations among people and the stages and cognitive processes (Dimitriu and Mitovski, 2009).

Revenge behavior on the other hand implies an action aimed towards correcting the perceived injustice and resulting inequality. The individual is convinced that once s/he takes revenge from the person or organization inflicting harm upon him/her only then can the justice be reestablished and equality can be reassured. Revenge behaviors can be directed to persons as well as organization itself. A number of researches suggest that most of the negative actions within organizations are aimed towards revenge-taking (Akın, et al. 2012:79). The tools employed by revenge-oriented people to accomplish their aim should be evaluated within a wide range of perspective. Revenge-taking can possess a variety of forms unfitting into conventional norms or measures of aggressiveness or violence (Sommers et al. 2002).

As a last remark intention to quit implies physically terminating the connection with one's workplace and it is viewed as saying *Yes* to the question; "if I had a financial security somewhere, would I then dare to leave my current job?" (Suadicani et al. 2013).

The aim of current research is then to assess organizational stress, organizational cynicism, organizational revenge and intentions to quit of research assistants employed in faculty of economics and administrative sciences in a state university within Ankara and to determine the impact of all three factors on the intention to quit.

2. Materyal and Metod

The population consists of research assistants employed in faculty of economics and administrative sciences in a state university within Ankara. There is no specific sampling in this research covering all of the research assistants employed in faculty of economics and administrative sciences. 71 research assistants of 108 in the faculty participated in the study. Thus, the participation rate in the study was determined to 65.74%. The research has been conducted between the dates May-June 2014. In order to measure organizational cynicism, Brandes, Dharwadkar & Dean's (1999) scale comprising of 13 statements has been harnessed. The scale consists of three parts namely cognitive, affective and behavioral cynicism. Entire list of questions on organizational cynicism has been weighed by a 5-Likert scale as 1=I totally disagree, 2=I disagree, 3=I partially agree, 4=I agree, 5=I totally agree. To measure the intention to quit, 3 -item "Intention to Quit" scale developed by Cammann et al. (1979) on the basis of Michigan Organizational Assessment survey has been utilized. Organizational stress scale has been structured by adapting the survey used in "Work Stress of University Instructors" prepared by Balci (1993). The statements in this scale have been weighed as 1=Quite a lot, 2=A lot, 3=Average, 4=Little, 5=None. Organizational Revenge scale on the other hand has been developed by Wade (1989) and encompassed 5 statements. This scale is also made of 5 stages and weighed as 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Occasionally, 4=Often, 5= Always.

According to reliability analysis based on the obtained findings, Cronbach alpha value of the questions in organizational cynicism and organizational stress scale is 0,943; Cronbach alpha value of the questions on organizational revenge is 0,921 and Cronbach alpha value of the scale on intention to quit survey is 0,854. Data obtained at the end of research have been computer programmed via SPSS 20.0. These computer data have been used to identify the existing correlation and conduct regression analysis.

3. Findings

In Table 1 distribution of participating research assistants with respect to several socio-demographic features has been provided. Accordingly, 43,7% of participating research assistants are females and 56,3% are males. 63,4% of participants are single while 36,6% are married. Average age of participants is such: nearly half of the participants is (49,3%) within 27-29 age interval; 46,5% have 3-5 years of employment service and 23,9% have 1-2 years of employment. With respect to employed departments, 26,8% of participants work in department of health administration, 15,5% work in department of business administration and public finance. 57,7% of participants are research assistants within the scope of Faculty Member Training Program (FMTP) while 21,1% are research assistants belonging to 50/d position.

Table 1. Descriptive Characteristics of the Participants

| Variables | Type | N | % | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------|------|
| Age | 24-26 | 10 | 14,0 | |
| | 27-29 | 35 | 49,3 | |
| | 30-32 | 15 | 21,1 | |
| | 33-35 | 11 | 15,4 | |
| Gender | Female | 31 | 43,7 | |
| | Male | 40 | 56,3 | |
| Marital Status | Married | 26 | 36,6 | |
| | Single | 45 | 63,4 | |
| Total Length of Employment | Less than 1 year | 8 | 11,3 | |
| | 1-2 years | 17 | 23,9 | |
| | 3-5 years | 33 | 46,5 | |
| | More than 5 years | 13 | 18,3 | |
| Employed Department | Department of Economy | 7 | 9,9 | |
| | Department of Business Administration | 11 | 15,5 | |
| | Department of Public Finance | 11 | 15,5 | |
| | Department of Political Science and Public Administration | 7 | 9,9 | |
| | Department of International Relations | 4 | 5,6 | |
| | Department of Social Work | 10 | 14,1 | |
| | Department of Health Administration | 19 | 26,8 | |
| | Department of Family and Consumer Sciences | 2 | 2,8 | |
| | Position in the Institution | Article 35. Research Assistant | 8 | 11,3 |
| | | 33/a Research Assistant | 7 | 9,9 |
| 50/d Research Assistant | | 15 | 21,1 | |
| FMTP Research Assistant | | 41 | 57,7 | |
| Total | | 71 | 100,0 | |

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on the levels of stress, cynicism, revenge and intention to quit of participant research assistants. As shown in the table average score of stress is 3.01 which is smaller than average scores of cynicism, revenge and intention to quit. Nonetheless it has also been designated that research assistants' intention to quit is far below the score averages. It has also been detected that cynicism and revenge score averages of research assistants are on average level.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Stress, Cynicism, Revenge and Intention to Quit

| | Means | Std. Deviation | Range | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------------|--------|----------------|-------|---------|---------|
| Stress | 3,0188 | ,767 | 3,67 | 1,33 | 5,00 |
| Cynicism | 2,9707 | ,909 | 3,92 | 1,00 | 4,92 |
| Revenge | 2,4225 | 1,143 | 4,00 | 1,00 | 5,00 |
| Intention to quit | 1,7887 | ,919 | 4,00 | 1,00 | 5,00 |

Table 3 manifests the relations among stress, cynicism, revenge and intention to quit. Accordingly the relations among these items are significant. In present research the highest relation has been detected between cynicism and stress ($r=-,723$; $p<,01$) while the lowest relation has been identified between stress and revenge ($r=-,277$; $p<,05$). There is a significant relation among intention to quit and cynicism, stress, revenge respectively.

Table 3. Relations among Stress, Cynicism, Revenge and Intention to Quit

| | | Stress | Cynicism | Revenge | Intention to Quit |
|-------------------|---|---------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| Stress | r | 1 | | | |
| | p | | | | |
| Cynicism | r | -,723** | 1 | | |
| | p | ,000 | | | |
| Revenge | r | -,277* | ,361** | 1 | |
| | p | ,019 | ,002 | | |
| Intention to Quit | r | -,398** | ,501** | ,347** | 1 |
| | p | ,001 | ,000 | ,003 | |

** . Correlation coefficient matters in 0.01 margin of error (2-way).

* . Correlation coefficient matters in 0.05 margin of error (2-way).

Table 4 illustrates the result of multivariate regression analysis examining the effects of stress, cynicism and revenge on the intention to quit. According to the Table, 28,5% of the total variance on the intention to quit can be explained via stress, cynicism and revenge. Established model is linear and meaningful ($F=8,919$; $p<,01$). Besides, 2.141 Durbin Watson value and smallness of variance swelling coefficients than value 10 indicate that there is no multi-connection and autocorrelation among independent variables (stress, cynicism and revenge). The performed regression analysis was found that cynicism alone is a significant determinant on the intention to quit ($\beta=,387$; $t=2,487$; $p<,05$).

Table 4. The Impact of Organizational Stress, Cynicism and Revenge on The Intention to Quit

| Model | | Non standardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | VIF |
|-------|------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| | | Beta | Standard Error | Beta | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | ,518 | ,931 | | ,556 | ,580 | |
| | Stress | -,083 | ,179 | -,069 | -,462 | ,646 | 2,095 |
| | Cynicism | ,387 | ,156 | ,383 | 2,487 | ,015* | 2,223 |
| | Revenge | ,153 | ,089 | ,190 | 1,715 | ,091 | 1,150 |

Regression Model Summary:
R= 534
R²=,285
F=8,919
p<,01
Durbin Watson=2,141
VIF: Variance Inflation Factor
*: Important determinant

4. Conclusion and Discussion

Organizational stress is the impact created on individuals who possess inadequate levels of organizational loyalty or work motivation and its emergence can be attributed to a variety of factors. Organizational cynicism, on the other hand, involves an employee’s negative attitude to his/her organization and illustrates this particular individual’s pessimistic, demeaning and critical behavioral tendencies to his/her organization. The other concept, revenge, demonstrates a contradictory correlation with forgiving. Organizational revenge matures in the form of the willingness of an employee to punish the one/ones because of which s/he has faced unjust treatment, loss and unfair procedure, negative experience in his/her employment place.

Current research has been conducted to assess organizational stress, organizational cynicism, organizational revenge and intentions to quit of research assistants employed in faculty of economics and administrative sciences in a state university within Ankara and to determine the impact of all three factors on the intention to quit. There has been no specific sampling in this research covering the overall research assistants employed in faculty of economics and administrative sciences. In order to measure organizational cynicism, Brandes, Dharwadkar & Dean’s (1999) scale comprising of 13 statements has been harnessed. To measure the intention to quit, 3-item “Intention to Quit” scale developed by Cammann et al. (1979) on the basis of Michigan Organizational Assessment survey has been utilized. Organizational stress scale has been structured by adapting certain changes into “Work Stress of University Instructors” survey prepared by Balcı (1993). To gauge organizational revenge, the scale developed by Wade (1989) has been employed.

As shown in this research, average score of stress is 3,01 which is smaller than average scores of cynicism, revenge and intention to quit. Nonetheless it has also been designated that research assistants' intention to quit is far below the overall score averages. The lowness of the Intention to Quit is considered to be related to the assumption that responses that research assistants from Faculty Member Training Program (FMTP) gave played a significant determiner role. It is also considered that this finding is also related to the fact that researchers receiving training within the scope of FMTP are obliged to pay compensation upon completing their master's degree.

In this research the highest correlation has been identified between cynicism and stress ($r=-,723$; $p<,01$) and the lowest one between stress and revenge ($r=-,277$; $p<,05$). There is a significant relation between intention to quit and cynicism, stress and revenge respectively. It can thus be argued that research assistants heavily experience a reaction originating from organizational cynicism which is in another saying apathy and being ignored.

Additionally multivariate regression analysis employed in present research has identified that cynicism alone is a significant determinant on the intention to quit ($\beta=,387$; $t=2,487$; $p<,05$). This finding is indeed worthy of deeper analysis. It can thus reasonably be argued that greater effort should be exerted to mitigate cynic behaviors witnessed in faculty research assistants.

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