

Full Length Research Paper

# The relationship between power distance and organizational commitment in primary schools

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The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between organizational commitment and power distance. The study has a correlational survey research model. The population of the study consists of a total of 4838 teachers working in the primary schools in the center of the city of Balıkesir and in the centers of its districts in the 2012-2013 educational year. The sample of the study consists of 1506 teachers that were selected using the purposive sampling method. Data were collected using *Power Distance Scale* and *Organizational Commitment Scale by Iopment Hofstede*. In data analysis, independent group *t*-test and ANOVA were used. In order to determine the level of the relationship between power distance and organizational commitment, Pearson correlation test and simple linear regression analysis were performed. The study has found that the level of the power distance that the teachers perceive in schools was at the medium level and that their commitment to their institutions was mostly emotional commitment. The correlation between power distance and organizational commitment was found to be negative, at low level and significant. In the sub dimensions of organizational commitment, the correlation between power distance and emotional and normative commitment was found to be negative; and the correlation between power distance and attendance commitment was found to be low and positive.

**Key words:** Power, Power Distance, Commitment, Organizational Commitment.

## INTRODUCTION

Human management is related to a large extent with the shaping of the human behavior in the desired course. In order to achieve this, their behavior should be influenced. Influencing behavior may be possible by using a certain power (Şimşek, 1999). Because schools are organizations that are based on human beings and the relationships among them, the administrators of the schools must know human beings and their traits, administer

them and know the assumptions on human beings (Bursalıoğlu, 2012). Individuals' behaviors in organizations are oriented and shaped by individuals' perceptions of the power margins of the organizations and their administrators.

Power distance is related to the unequal distribution of the power among the individuals and in the organizations in a society. The distance that the power causes among

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the members of a society is realized according to the social values of that society and the existing differences in the distribution of power are adopted in time (Hofstede, 2001). In such societies, those who are hierarchically powerful do not have to find the right thing to be right. For their rightness is based on the power that they have. In some societies and cultures, those with little power have acknowledged the unequal distribution of power (Sargut, 2010).

Hofstede (2001) examines national culture in terms of power distance, avoiding ambiguity, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity traits and long-term/short-term adjustment. The notion of power distance is related to how employees behave when they carry out the orders of their superiors based on their perceptions of the power of those who give orders. Individuals whose perceptions of power distance are high carry out the orders of their superiors without questioning (Sargut, 2010). On the other hand, in cases where perception of power is low, subordinates see themselves as equal, or very close, to their superiors (Öğüt and Kocabacak, 2008).

The superior-subordinate relationship is a basic human relationship which bears a resemblance to more deep-rooted relationships in the past lives of the individuals. Because family and school environments differ greatly from one culture to another, it is highly possible to find the traces of such differences in the exercise of power in hierarchies (Hofstede, 2005). Those with lower power distance have the belief that in order for an administrator to give an order to them, the administrator must be more knowledgeable than them about the issue about which he gives orders. According to them, the hierarchical structure can only include some rules and they may vary according to circumstances. If the top management has different rights than others, this may cause dissatisfaction and subordinates should be able to meet with their superiors whenever they want to do so (Sofyalioğlu and Aktaş, 2001). The distance that the power creates among the individuals of a society take place according to the values and norms of that society, and the differences in the degree of power that are adopted by the society become institutionalized by being internalized by the society in time. In terms of the distribution of power balances, different societies or cultures create different criteria (Basım, 2000). Societies that strive to lessen the differences that stem from power represent the culture in which power distance is low; societies in which power has been institutionalized represent the culture in which power distance is high (Terzi, 2004). The level of power distance can change in time. A culture with a low level of power distance does not feel uncomfortable with such power differences as social class discrimination or organizational seniority. On the other hand, a culture with a high level of power distance acknowledges the discrimination among people with different statuses, and

the social and organizational status of an individual affects the individual's own behaviors and the behaviours of others toward that individual (Hofstede, 2005).

In organizations with low power distance, the centralization of power is not welcomed and the employees believe that they should also be part of the decision-making process (Rodrigues, 1998). In such organizations, the inequality between the administrators and employees is low and the centralization and hierarchy is at a minimum. The opportunities of the organization are distributed equally among all the members of the organization. The administrators are not inspectors or individuals to be obeyed; rather they are democrats that guide their subordinates. Power distance tends to diminish in parallel with social progress (Spencer-Oatey, 1997; Kasuyai, 2008). The level of power that the employees in organizations perceive of their organization and administrators forms a basis for the status of themselves and others in the organization; for the value of their organization to them-their value for the organization; and for their level of organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment has been an important issue in organizational studies due to the employees' productivity and due to the fact that it accounts for employees' intention to leave the workplaces. Although most of the studies on the subject have been carried out in North American contexts, over the past thirty years an intercultural literature on organizational commitment has been in the making and accumulating. However, it has been stated that because the effects of culture on organizational commitment are not discussed conceptually, because organizational commitment is measured with different tools, because reliability is not given enough care, and because samples show great diversity, the development and consequences of organizational commitment in different cultural contexts have not been understood adequately (Wasti and Önder, 2009). The most comprehensive meta-analytical evaluation of the studies on organizational commitment that have been made in recent years has shown that proposing the intercultural meaning and differentiation of the concept of organizational commitment is one of the three priorities of the future studies on the subject (Meyer et al., 2002). Organizational commitment broadly means an individual's psychological commitment to the organization including such things as attendance to work, loyalty and belief in organizational values (Çetin, 2004). Organizational commitment is the individual's acceptance of the organizational aims and values, his efforts for the realization of these aims and his desire to maintain his membership to the organization (Durna and Eren, 2005). It has been stated that organizational commitment consists of three dimensions which are emotional commitment, attendance commitment and normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

Beyond being an instrumental value, institutional commitment is the employee's implementation of his own role solely for the benefit and advantage of his organization in line with the aims and values of the organization. Committed employees have a strong belief in the values and aims of the organization and accept the orders and expectations willingly. Furthermore, employees exert extraordinary effort for the realization of the aims as expected and are determined to remain as members of the organization. Committed employees are naturally motivated (Balay, 2000). Commitment has three phases as obedience, involvement, and developing identity. At the obedience phase, the individual recognizes the impact of other people in order to introduce himself. With this recognition comes the individual's feeling of pride for being a part of the organization. At the final phase, the individual notices that the values of the organization are praiseworthy and that they are almost the same as his own values (Çetin, 2004). According to Allen and Meyer (1990), organizational commitment consists of three dimensions as emotional commitment, attendance commitment (rational commitment), and normative commitment. Emotional, attendance and normative commitments are distinctively considered as the dimensions of organizational commitment by the employees who experience each of these psychological conditions at different levels (Wasti, 2003).

Emotional commitment means the employee's identification of himself with the organization and his intrinsic feeling that he is part of that organization. The desire to remain within the organization can be defined as 'not being able to run the risk of leaving the organization because of one's labor of long years in the organization, or as the risk of high financial cost in case one leaves the organization, or as not having different alternatives other than remaining within the organization. On the other hand, the obligation of remaining within the organization can be defined as the individual's feeling of responsibility for the institution or organization whose part he once was (Allen and Meyer, 1990). This type of commitment is the best type of commitment of an employee to his organization. Such employees are the ones that all employers dream about and who are really committed to his organization and are loyal employees. Such employees are really willing to take extra responsibilities. They have positive attitudes towards the work and are ready to exert extra effort (Çetin, 2004). Attendance commitment denotes taking and accepting the risk of financial cost of leaving the organization. According to this, if leaving the organization will cost much more than one earns in the institution, the employee will be committed to the organization. At the same time, this approach examines organizational commitment in terms of award-cost perspective. The factor that is stressed here is that the relationships between the organization and the individual are mutually changeable.

For an employee, a higher level of change relationship means more commitment of him to the system. More clearly, receiving a higher reward in comparison with the cost means more organizational commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990). This dimension of the organizational commitment is considered as a commitment that is developed as a result of the investments that the employees make to their organizations. According to this, commitment is something that an employee develops as a result of the fear of losing status, money, etc. that he gained during his employment in the organization by expending his labour, time and effort. The essential of attendance commitment is the need to remain in the organization (Yalçın and İplik, 2005). Normative commitment reflects the employees' feelings of responsibility regarding the concerns for remaining in the organization. Individuals' feelings of commitment to the organization is not because of the fact that they are expected to do so for their personal interests; it is because of their feelings for exhibiting certain behavioral actions because they believe what they do is correct and ethical (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

It is clear that there have been enough studies in the literature under different headings and about different types of relationships regarding power distance and organizational commitment. However, it has been considered that the studies that examine the relationship between power distance and organizational commitment is rather rare, that such studies are needed especially in educational institutions, and that such studies will make important contributions to the field and practitioners.

When one looks at the studies on power distance and organizational commitment, one sees that the perception of power distance is usually medium or high. According to the study *Power distance and its effect on communication in Turkish Armed Forces* by Akyürek (2001), the power distance values of the personnel in this organization was found to be a little above the medium value. In their study titled *Power distance between administrators and teachers*, Yaman and Irmak (2010) found that there is a high power distance between administrators and teachers. In addition, Basım (2000) in his study *An empirical study on military administrators within the context of the cultural dimensions of avoiding uncertainty and power distance*; Turan et al. (2005) in their study *Administrative and cultural values adopted by university administrators*; Gürbüz and Bingöl (2007) in their study *An empirical study on the predispositions that administrators of various organizations adopt towards such cultural dimensions as power distance, avoiding uncertainty, masculinity-femininity, individualism-collectivism*; and Aktaş and Can (2012) in their study *Cultural values of administrators and followers' behavioral preferences* found the power distance at medium or high levels. The studies that have been carried out in schools in Turkey on organizational commitment, it was found that organizational commitment

is in general medium or high. Similarly, Erdoğan (2006), in a study titled *The relationship between personal characteristics and organizational commitment of the administrators working in private and state-run primary education*; Özkan (2008), in a study titled *The level of organizational commitment of the form teachers in primary education according to some variables*; Erdaş (2009) in a study titled *The level of organizational commitment of the teachers in primary education in Denizli city center*; Budak (2009) in a study titled *Levels of organizational commitments of permanent and contractual teachers in primary education*; İmamoğlu (2011) in a study titled *The relationship between the levels of organizational commitment and perceptions of organizational justice of the teachers in primary education*; Cevahiroğlu (2012) in a study titled *The relationship between perceived leadership behaviors and organizational commitment of the branch teachers in primary education*; and Yumuşak (2013) in a study titled *An investigation into the relationship between exposure to mobbing at work and the organizational commitment of the teachers in primary education* found that organizational commitment is usually at medium level or slightly above the mean. Given the fact that organizational commitment can have an effect on organizational productivity, the effect of the perceived power of the organizational structure and the administrator of the organization on the employees seems to be inevitable. The perceived power distance can be an important factor for the attitude and behaviors in the organizational relationships of the employees. The scientific investigation of the relationship between these two factors may yield important data in the reorganization of education and in school management. A literature review has shown that there is no direct study in the literature on the relationship between power distance and organizational commitment in schools in Turkey. Within this context, the relationship between power distance and organizational commitment was determined as the topic of this study, and the problem was stated as “The relationship between power distance and organizational commitment in schools.” For the purpose of identifying the relationships between these two variables, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the levels of perceptions of the teachers in primary education on power distance and organizational commitment?
2. Do power distance and organizational commitment levels show a significant difference according to gender?
3. Do power distance and organizational commitment levels show a significant difference according to branch?
4. Do power distance and organizational commitment levels show a significant difference according to educational background?
5. Do power distance and organizational commitment levels show a significant difference according to the

locality of the school?

6. Is there a significant relationship between power distance and organizational commitment?

7. Is power distance a significant predictor for organizational commitment?

## METHOD

This study investigates “the relationship between the perception of power distance and organizational commitment in schools” and therefore adopts a correlational study method. A survey research is defined as that which elicits the views of the participants on a topic or event, or which aims to reveal the interests and skills of the participants and which uses larger samples than other types of research (Büyüköztürk et al., 2012). A correlational research is a type of research method which aims at finding out differences and the magnitude of differences between two or more variables (Karasar, 2010).

## Sampling

The population of the study consists of a total of 4838 teachers working in the schools of primary education in the city of Balıkesir in the 2012-2013 educational year. The sample of the study was chosen using the criterion sampling method, which is one of the non-probability sampling methods. The schools which employ 15 or more teachers in the center and districts of the city of Balıkesir were taken as criterion. A total of 68 primary schools in 14 districts and 86 secondary schools in 17 districts met the criterion. 710 questionnaires were sent to the primary schools and 796 to secondary schools making a total of 1506 questionnaires. The return rate of the questionnaires is 78%. A total of 1167 questionnaires were returned and of these 73 were excluded from the study due to the fact that some items were marked incorrectly and some were left empty. The data in the questionnaires that were found to be valid were analyzed. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics on the sample.

## Data collection tools

In order to determine teachers' level of perception of power distance, the study employed the 5-item scale which was developed by Dorfman and Howell in 1988 and which was translated into Turkish by Akyol (2009). A factor analysis was carried out for these five items and it was found that they were collected under one factor. The variance that this factor accounted for about the scale was found to be 48,54%. The factor loaded values of the items in the scale are between 0.52 and 0.79. The Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value was calculated as 0.73. In order to determine teachers' levels of perception of organizational commitment, the study employed the 18-item scale which was developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) and which was translated into Turkish by Karagüzel (2012). The reliability values of this study are as follows: For the dimension of emotional commitment  $\alpha = 0.81$ ; for the dimension of normative commitment  $\alpha = 0.78$ ; for the dimension of attendance commitment,  $\alpha = 0.63$ . The general reliability that was calculated for the organizational commitment scale is  $\alpha = 0.83$ .

The intervals that were used to interpret the points obtained by the scales are shown in Table 2.

## Procedures

The collected data were analysed and evaluated using the SPSS

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics on the sample.

Variable		F	%
Gender	Female	601	55
	Male	493	45
Branch	Form Teacher	519	48
	Branch Teacher	575	52
Educational background	Associate degree	150	14
	Bachelor's degree	913	83
	Mater's degree	31	3
Locality of the school	City Center	387	35
	District Center	707	65

**Table 2.** Point evaluation intervals.

	Power Distance	Organizational Commitment	Sub-dimensions of Organizational Commitment (Emotional-Attendance-Normative)
1 Very low level	5 - 9	18 - 32.4	6 - 10.8
2 Low level	9.1 - 13	32.5 - 46.8	10.9 - 15.6
3 Medium level	13.1 - 17	46.9 - 61.2	15.7 - 20.4
4 High level	17.1 - 21	61.3 - 75.6	20.5 - 25.2
5 Very high level	21.1 - 25	75.7 - 90	25.3 - 30

v17.0. The points showed a normal distribution and therefore parametric tests were used. While testing the significance of the differences between mean scores, independent groups t-test was used in cases where there were two discontinuous variables. In order to find out the differences between the mean scores, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in cases where there were more than two discontinuous variables. For the significant findings that the ANOVA test yielded, post-hoc tests were employed to determine between which groups the variance was and the direction of the variance. The homogeneity of the variances was determined by looking at the Levene Statistical Values. In cases where there was a homogenous distribution of variances, the LSD test of the post-hoc tests was used, and where there was not a homogenous distribution of variances, the Games-Howell test of the post-hoc tests was used. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between the perception of power distance and organizational commitment, and simple linear regression analysis was used to test the predictive aspect.

## FINDINGS

**First research question:** *What is teachers' level of perception of power distance and organizational commitment?*

Table 3 shows the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the power distance and organization com-

mitment points.

As seen in Table 3, the mean point of power distance is found to be medium (13.78), the mean point of organizational commitment to be medium (58.58), the mean point of emotional commitment to be high (22.03), the mean point of attendance commitment to be medium (16.42), and the mean point of normative commitment to be medium (20.13). Broadly, it can be said that there is a balanced distribution between the perception of power distance and the levels of commitment.

**Second research question:** *Is there a significant difference between the points of power distance and organizational commitment in terms of gender?*

Table 4 presents the t-test results in terms of gender. Table 4 shows that teachers' power distance points in schools do not show a significant difference in terms of gender. In terms of gender, there is not a significant difference between teachers' organizational commitment points ( $t = 1.50$ ;  $p > .05$ ) and attendance commitment points ( $t = 1.74$ ;  $p > .05$ ). However, there is a significant difference between teachers' emotional commitment points ( $t = 2.52$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and normative commitment points ( $t = 2.52$ ;  $p < .05$ ) in terms of gender. In both types of

**Table 3.** The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the power distance and organization commitment points.

Dimensions	N	$\bar{X}$	SS
Power distance	1094	13.78	3.85
Organizational commitment	1094	58.58	10.56
Sub-dimension of emotional commitment	1094	22.03	4.88
Sub-dimension of attendance commitment	1094	16.42	4.19
Sub-dimension of normative commitment	1094	20.13	4.74

**Table 4.** t-test results in terms of gender.

Dimensions	Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	SS	t
Power distance	Female	601	13.93	3.57	1.32
	Male	493	13.61	4.17	
Organizational Commitment	Female	601	58.14	10.68	1.50
	Male	493	59.11	10.40	
Emotional Commitment	Female	601	21.69	4.92	2.52*
	Male	493	22.44	4.82	
Attendance Commitment	Female	601	16.62	4.06	1.74
	Male	493	16.17	4.34	
Normative Commitment	Female	601	19.83	4.67	2.30*
	Male	493	20.49	4.80	

\*t > 1.96; p < .05.

commitment, male teachers feel more emotional commitment to their schools than the female teachers.

**Third research question:** *Is there a significant difference between power distance and organizational commitment points in terms of branch.*

Table 5 presents the t-test results according to branch.

According to Table 5, teachers' power distance points in schools do not have a significant difference (t= 0.11; p >.05). Their perceptions of organizational commitment show significant differences according to branch (t= 3.41; p <.05). It was found that form teachers feel more commitment to their schools than branch teachers do. Form teachers also feel more commitment to their schools than branch teachers do in terms of emotional commitment (t= 2.16; p <.05), attendance commitment (t= 2.37; p <.05) and normative commitment (t= 3.26; p <.05). It was found that form teachers feel more commitment to their schools than branch teachers do in all three sub-dimensions of commitment as well.

**Fourth research question:** *Do power distance and organizational commitment points have a significant difference in terms of educational background?*

Table 6 presents the one-way ANOVA test results in terms of educational background.

A detailed examination of Table 6 shows that in terms of the perception of power distance, there is a significant difference between the points of teachers with associate degrees and the points of teachers with master's degrees in the direction of teachers with associate degrees. On the other hand, there is a significant difference between the points of teachers with bachelor's degree and points of teachers with master's degrees in the direction of teachers with bachelor's degree. That the difference is between teachers with master's degrees and others may stem from the fact that the school administrators appreciate the teachers with master's degrees more than other teachers for their expending time and effort for their postgraduate studies. In addition, the number of teachers with master's degrees is low and they have the right to be expert teachers or school principals without any examination because of their master's degrees. These may be the reasons why such teachers feel more special and therefore are not affected much from the attitudes and behaviors of school administrators and feel the perception of power distance less.

When we look at the findings from the organizational commitment perspective, there is no significant difference between organizational commitment and emotional and attendance commitment sub-dimensions in terms of educational background. In the normative commitment points, it was found that there is a significant difference between the points of teachers with associate degrees

**Table 5.** The t-test results according to branch.

Dimensions	Branch	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	t
Power distance	Form Teacher	519	13.77	4.08	0.11
	Branch Teacher	575	13.80	3.64	
Organizational Commitment	Form Teacher	519	59.72	10.71	3.41*
	Branch Teacher	575	57.55	10.34	
Emotional Commitment	Form Teacher	519	22.36	5.05	2.16*
	Branch Teacher	575	21.72	4.72	
Attendance Commitment	Form Teacher	519	16.73	4.39	2.37*
	Branch Teacher	575	16.13	3.99	
Normative Commitment	Form Teacher	519	20.62	4.83	3.26*
	Branch Teacher	575	19.69	4.62	

\*t &gt; 1.96; p &lt; .05.

**Table 6.** The one-way ANOVA test results in terms of educational background.

Dimensions	Branch	n	$\bar{X}$	SS	Sd	F	Difference (Post-Hoc)
Power Distance	1. Associate	150	14.16	4.43	1091	3.721*	1 > 3
	2. Bachelor's	913	13.78	3.76			2 > 3
	3. Master's	31	12.09	3.11			
Organizational Commitment	1. Associate	150	59.77	10.56	1091	1.698	
	2. Bachelor's	913	58.46	10.49			
	3. Master's	31	56.35	12.35			
Emotional Commitment	1. Associate	150	22.50	4.91	1091	0.853	
	2. Bachelor's	913	21.96	4.89			
	3. Master's	31	21.74	4.66			
Attendance Commitment	1. Associate	150	16.26	4.88	1091	0.571	
	2. Bachelor's	913	16.47	4.05			
	3. Master's	31	15.74	4.83			
Normative Commitment	1. Associate	150	21.00	4.90	1091	3.828*	1 > 2
	2. Bachelor's	913	20.03	4.66			1 > 3
	3. Master's	31	18.87	5.80			

\*p &lt; .05.

and teachers with bachelor's degrees in the direction of teachers with associate degrees. It was found that there is a significant difference between the points of teachers with associate degrees and teachers with master's degrees in the direction of teachers with associate degrees. In terms of personal rights and retirement, there

is no difference between the teachers with associate degrees and teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees. That teachers with associate degrees feel inferior may stem from their need for a higher commitment to the organization. Consequently, this may be considered as the cause for their high levels of

**Table 7.** t-test results in terms of the locality of the school.

Dimensions	Locality of the school	n	$\bar{X}$	SS	t
Power distance	City Center	387	14.20	3.91	2.65*
	District Center	707	13.56	3.80	
Organizational commitment	City Center	387	58.70	10.88	.28
	District Center	707	58.51	10.40	
Emotional Commitment	City Center	387	21.90	4.95	.61
	District Center	707	22.09	4.85	
Attendance commitment	City Center	387	16.75	4.23	1.95
	District Center	707	16.23	4.16	
Normative Commitment	City Center	387	20.04	4.84	.47
	District Center	707	20.18	4.68	

\*p &lt; .05.

**Table 8.** Correlation between power distance and organizational commitment.

Dimensions		Organizational Commitment	Emotional Commitment	Attendance Commitment	Normative Commitment
Power distance	r	-.14**	-.29**	.15**	-.13**
	N	1094	1094	1094	1094

\*\*p &lt; .01.

perception of normative commitment than other teachers.

**Fifth question:** *Is there a significant difference between power distance and organizational commitment points in terms of the locality of schools?*

Table 7 shows the t-test results in terms of the locality of the school.

According to Table 7, teachers' points of power distance in schools show a significant difference in terms of the locality of schools ( $t = 2.65$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The findings show that teachers working in the schools in city centers have higher levels of power distance perceptions than the teachers working in the schools in district centers. Teachers' organizational commitment points do not show a significant difference in terms of the locality of schools ( $t = 0.28$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Nor is there a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of emotional commitment ( $t = 0.61$ ;  $p > .05$ ), attendance commitment ( $t = 1.95$ ;  $p > .05$ ) and normative commitment ( $t = 0.47$ ;  $p > .05$ ) in terms of the locality of schools.

**Sixth research question:** *Is there a significant correlation between power distance and organizational commitment?*

Table 8 presents the results of the correlation analysis between power distance and organizational commitment.

According to Table 8, there is a low and negative significant correlation ( $r = -.14$ ;  $p < .01$ ) between teachers' perceptions of power distance in schools and organizational commitment. Table 8 also shows that there is a low, negative and significant correlation between power distance and emotional commitment ( $r = -.29$ ;  $p < .01$ ); a low, negative and significant correlation between power distance and normative commitment; and a low, positive and significant correlation between power distance and attendance commitment ( $r = .15$ ;  $p < .01$ ). As the perception of power distance in schools increases, the organizational, emotional and normative commitments decrease but attendance commitment increases.

**Seventh research question:** *Is power distance a good predictor for organizational commitment?*

Table 9 presents the regression analysis results regarding the prediction of emotional commitment.

Table 9 shows that power distance is a significant predictor for emotional commitment ( $F = 101,46$ ;  $p = .00$ ). This predictive aspect accounts for 9% of the variance in teachers' levels of emotional commitment. The standardized regression coefficient took the value of  $\beta = -.29$ . According to the t-test for the significance of regression coefficients, the t value was found to be  $t = 51.64$  and  $p < .05$ . According to this, the power distance in schools is a good predictor of teachers' emotional commitment.

**Table 9.** Results of the simple linear regression analysis regarding the prediction of emotional commitment of organizational commitment.

Variables	B	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	t-value
Constant	27.127			-	51.64 <sup>*</sup>
Power distance in school	-.370	-.29 <sup>**</sup>	.09	-.29	-10.01

N = 1094; F = 101.46; \*\*p < .01.

According to Table 9, it can be said that a 1-unit increase in power distance will reduce the level of teachers' emotional commitment to 0.370 unit.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study has found that teachers' perceptions of power distance in schools is at a medium level. According to the findings of a study by Hofstede (2001), Turkey is among the countries which are examples of a culture with high power distance. When we examine the findings of the studies that were carried out on power distance in recent years in Turkey, we see that in some studies power distance was found to be at medium levels (Akyürek, 2001; Basım, 2000; Turan, Durceylan and Şişman, 2005; Gürbüz and Bingöl, 2007, Aktaş and Can, 2012; Sargut, 2010), and in some at high levels (Yaman and Irmak, 2010). It can be said that power distance in schools increases if the school administrators move away from democratic way of thinking when using their powers. Teachers' belief that school administrators discipline the teachers by keeping themselves at a distance from teachers may have resulted in the discernibly high perceptions of power distance. Given the time that elapsed after Hofstede's study (2001), it can be said that power distance has been in a tendency to decrease.

Organizational commitment was found to be at a medium level as a whole; at a high level in emotional commitment sub-dimension, at a medium level in attendance commitment sub-dimension, and at a medium level in normative commitment sub-dimension. In some studies carried out in schools in Turkey, organizational commitment was found to be at a medium level (Erdoğan, 2006; Özkan, 2008; Erdaş, 2009; Budak, 2009; İmamoğlu, 2011; Cevahiroğlu, 2012 and Yumuşak, 2013). In the dimension of emotional commitment, which means internalizing the values of the institution, identifying oneself with the institution, considering the institutional problems as one's own problems, and one's loyalty to the institution, the perception was found to be higher compared to other dimensions.

The power distance that teachers perceive in schools is at a medium level and differs according to gender. In some studies (Akyol, 2009; Terzi, 2004; Turan, Durceylan and Şişman, 2005; Macit, 2010; and Jahangirov, 2012), it was found that teachers' perception of power distance

does not differ according to gender. This confirms the findings of the present study. Teachers' level of organizational commitment in general does not differ significantly in terms of gender. However, it significantly differs in the emotional and normative sub-dimensions of commitment. Male teachers feel a bit more emotional and normative commitment to their institutions than female teachers. It can be said that this difference between males and females in Turkey is the result of the general acceptance in the public that social roles that have been cast on females come before the work life. Teachers' attendance commitment does not differ significantly according to gender. However, some studies found significant differences in the organizational commitment points in terms of gender. In their studies, Cevahiroğlu (2012), Erdaş (2009), Budak (2009), İmamoğlu (2011) and Yumuşak (2013) found that male teachers perceive organizational commitment at higher levels than female teachers. According to the results of the studies made by Erdoğan (2006), Özkan (2008), Kılıçoğlu (2010) and Gülle (2013), the perception of organizational commitment does not differ significantly in terms of gender.

Teachers' perception of power distance in schools does not differ significantly in terms of branch. In a study with students in different branches, Macit (2010) found that students' perception of power distance do not differ. Studies made by Erdoğan (2006), Erdaş (2009) and Budak (2009) found that branch does not affect the perception of organizational commitment.

The present study has found that teachers' perception of organizational commitment significantly differs in terms of branch. It was found that form teachers feel more committed to their schools than branch teachers do. A significant difference was found also in the emotional, attendance and normative commitment sub-dimensions in terms of branch. In all sub-dimensions, form teachers feel more committed to their schools than branch teachers do. The high levels of commitment of form teachers in all sub-dimensions of organizational commitment may be the result of the fact that they teach the same classes for a long time.

Teachers' perception of power distance in schools shows significant difference in terms of the locality of schools. The task of inspection in primary education institutions is a function of local educational inspectors. The offices of local educational inspectors are in

Provincial Directorates for National Education.. Educational inspectors, provincial directors of national education, deputy provincial directors of national education or departmental directors are near the schools in city centers, which makes the inspection of such institutions possible at any time. This makes it necessary for the school administrators to keep their schools ready all the time for inspection. It is possible that this pressure on school administrators may affect their attitudes and behaviors negatively. It can be said that this negative effect on school administrators may increase the power distance in schools. However, a study by Macit (2010) showed that students' perception of power distance does not differ in terms of the locality of the schools.

Teachers' organizational commitment points, together with its sub-dimensions, do not show a significant difference in terms of the locality of the school. Because all schools are easily accessible and because teachers working in primary education institutions in villages and living in city centers have the necessary transport facilities, it can be said that the locality of the school does not affect the levels of organizational commitment. In a study, Özkan (2008) reached similar findings and concluded that the levels of organizational commitment do not differ significantly in terms of the locality of schools. According to Yumuşak (2013), there is no difference between emotional commitment points; however, he found that the levels of normative and attendance commitments of teachers living in city centers are higher than those of teachers living in small towns.

There is a low, negative and significant correlation (14%) between teachers' perception of power distance in schools and their organizational commitment. As the perception of power distance in schools increases, teachers' organizational commitment decreases.

A low, negative and significant correlations (29%) was found between power distance and emotional commitment. As the perception of power distance in schools increases, teachers' emotional commitment decreases.

There is a low, positive and significant correlation (15%) between teachers' perception of power distance in schools and their attendance commitment. As the perception of power distance in schools increases, so does teachers' attendance commitment. Though it would be desirable to have low power distance in all organizations, maintaining a certain level of power distance for teachers may contribute positively to the attendance of teachers to schools.

There is a low (13%), negative and significant correlation between teachers' perceptions of power distance in schools and their normative commitment to schools. As the perception of power distance in schools increases, teachers' normative commitment decreases. When we examine the studies made in Turkey, we see that some correlations regarding power distance or organizational commitment have been identified. For example, İmamoğlu (2011) found low (38%), positive and signifi-

cant correlations between identification sub-dimension of organizational commitment and the perception of procedural justice. Kılıçoğlu (2010) identified a low (21%), positive and significant correlation between organizational climate and organizational commitment. In a study, Yücel and Koparan (2010) found a medium (41%), positive and significant correlation between power distance and genderual harassment behavior. Akyol (2009) found a medium, positive and significant correlation between power distance and work-oriented leadership style.

The present study concluded that the power distance that teachers perceive in schools is a good predictor of their emotional commitment. This predictive aspect accounts for 9% of the variation of teachers' level of organizational commitment ( $r^2 = .085$ ). This means that teachers' perception of 1-unit power distance in schools results in a .374-unit decrease in their perceptions of organizational commitment.

By training first the school administrators and then all the administrators within the whole body of the Ministry of National Education about "power distance", it may be possible to reduce the power distance boosting factors in their attitudes and behaviors.

Creating a power distance profile by extending such studies into private schools, new insights can be introduced into the area.

Furthermore, by carrying out this study in the universities it may help develop new paradigms about the concept of power distance in higher education.

This study is based on 'power distance' which is one of the cultural dimensions defined by Hofstede and can be replicated with its other cultural dimensions.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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