

PREVAILING ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY STRENGTH: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDENTITY, JUSTICE PERCEPTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Studies on the organizational identity concept has gained a considerable acceleration in the recent years while, organizational identity strength has been examined as a comparatively less studied aspect of organizational identity. On the other side there are various studies which put forth the positive relation between organizational justice perceptions(OJP) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The aim of this study is to reveal the effects of organizational identity strength(OIS) and OJP on the OCB. The sub-goal of the study is to present the importance of OIS on the informal organizational behaviors. In this study, survey method has been conducted with 294 white-collar workers who work in Turkish pharmaceutical industry. Data taken by the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS 18.0 program. Hierarchical regression analysis has been implemented to put forward the independent variables' effects on the dependent variable. Some of the hypothesis of the study has been accepted. The results also show that OIS has a considerable effect on the dimensions of OCB when compared to OJP.

Keywords: Organizational Identity Strength, Organizational Justice Perceptions, Organizational Citizenship Behavior

JEL Classification: M1

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational identity strength (OIS) concept may be interfused with organizational identity and organizational identification concepts, but generally organizational identity involves the other two. OIS emphasizes the central and permanent common values of the organizational identity while, organizational identification on the individual level, explains how the individuals feel oneness with those characteristics and how he/she feels belonging to the organizations. In this study OIS concept has been taken for research.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is an informal behavior on which various different organizational behaviors may be effective. Organizational commitment, identification, organizational justice are the concepts which previously have been founded effective on the organizational citizenship behavior (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Organ, 1990; Smith et al., 1983; Van Dyne et al., 1995; Fassina et al., 2008; Moorman et al., 1993). Besides, the most effective of those variables has generally been organizational justice perceptions (OJP). The previous studies on the OJP and OCB, has revealed that there is a positive relationship between those two concepts, and also that OJP in total or its' sub dimensions effect OCB in a positive way (e.g. Karriker and Williams, 2009: 127-128; Bienstock et al., 2003:371-372).

The aim of the study is to put forth the effects of OIS and OJP on the OCB. But as a sub-goal it is also aimed to present the impact of the OIS on the OCB and on its' dimensions. Together with this, OJP, which is a widely accepted antecedent of OCB, has been taken for emphasizing the effect of OIS. The originality of this study stems from the inquiry of the joint effects of OIS and OJP on the OCB. And also, no previous studies have been met about the relationship between the OIS and OCB, during the research.

In this study it is predicted that the organizational identity strength has a prior effect on OCB than organizational justice perceptions and also that the other variables' effects are insufficient without explaining the organization's central

identity which are the common mission, vision, purpose and a strong feeling of unity.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY STRENGTH

“Identity is the unique combination of characteristics that reveals an organization’s value-creating potential” (Ackerman, 2010: 37). Organizational identity is a kind of sharing system which stems from the organizational members’ awareness of belonging to the organization (Cornelissen et al., 2007: 53). Organizational identity is defined usually as a concept which includes the organization’s distinctive and central character, which also has temporal continuity (Cummings et al., 1985: 264). Organizational identity strength on the other side is defined as the degree of how much the organizational members perceive the identity as special or unique (Milliken, 1990: 49).

Organizational identity augments the members’ identification as it is impressive and attractive towards the members (Kreiner and Ashforth, 2004: 8). In a manner the attractiveness of organizational identity also comprises its strength.

A strong organizational identity will be a guide for both the current and the future members of the organization, as long as it meets the wants or needs of them. Henceforth, a strong organizational identity will provide integrity by attracting those individuals who are in concordance with this identity (Ashforth and Mael, 1996: 23-25). Ackerman (2010: 38) has also stated that there is a close relation between organizational identity strength and work performance.

Organizations are composed of many sub-cultures and also many sub-identities but among these the mission, vision, purpose and the unity which comprises the organizational identity strength play the biggest part at the top. Also, according to many researcher, organizational identity changes and must change in order to comply with changing market conditions (Oliver & Burgi, 2005; Fiol, 2001; Gioia & Thomas, 1996).

3. ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

Organizational justice involves both equity and fairness, where fairness means delivering the employee’s deserved right by the organization. On the other side, equity is the balanced situation, between the person’s inputs and outcomes and the other’s inputs and outcomes from the employee’s perspective.

In this study, Bienstock et al. (2003)'s organizational rights scale, which was inspired by Graham(1991)'s "The Political Framework for Organizational Rights and Responsibilities" model, has been used in order to measure the organizational justice perceptions.

Graham has classified those three rights as below:

- **Civil or citizenship rights:** increasing the salaries of and giving rewards to those who deserve,
- **Social rights:** treating equally in hiring, task distribution and evaluation process
- **Political rights:** the right of making decisions, taking part in problem solving processes, influencing the decision making process, and being valued for their work related ideas.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) concept had first appeared in the organizational studies in 1980s (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Smith et al., 1983). Smith et al. (1983), has defined OCB as the informal performance. Not everybody has to see herself/himself as a citizen of the organization, but thinking like a citizen increases that person's informal performance (Vigoda-Gadot and Drory, 2006: 3-4). OCB are not written in the job description and not formally rewarded (Dennis et al., 2006: 36).

In Graham's model citizens (employees) show citizenship behavior as they satisfy with the rights that the organization provides (or their perceptions of those rights). Graham (1991) has used the citizenship behavior and citizenship responsibilities synonymously and has applied his model to the organization structure. In this manner, he has stated the three dimensions of OCB:

- **Obedience;** is the recognition and acceptance of rational structure composed of rules and regulations.
- **Loyalty;** is a kind of commitment towards the organization, employees and the units.
- **Participation;** is the involvement in the management or in some decision making process.

Organizational citizenship presents a reciprocal exchange relationship. Employees feel as a citizen of the organization when they perceive that their wants and needs are met by the organization. According to Graham's model, organizations should provide people adequate civil rights in order make them show obedience behavior; they should provide social rights for employees to show loyalty behavior and should provide political rights for them to show participation behavior (Graham, 1991).

In the light of the literature, the constituted research model is on the Figure 1 below:

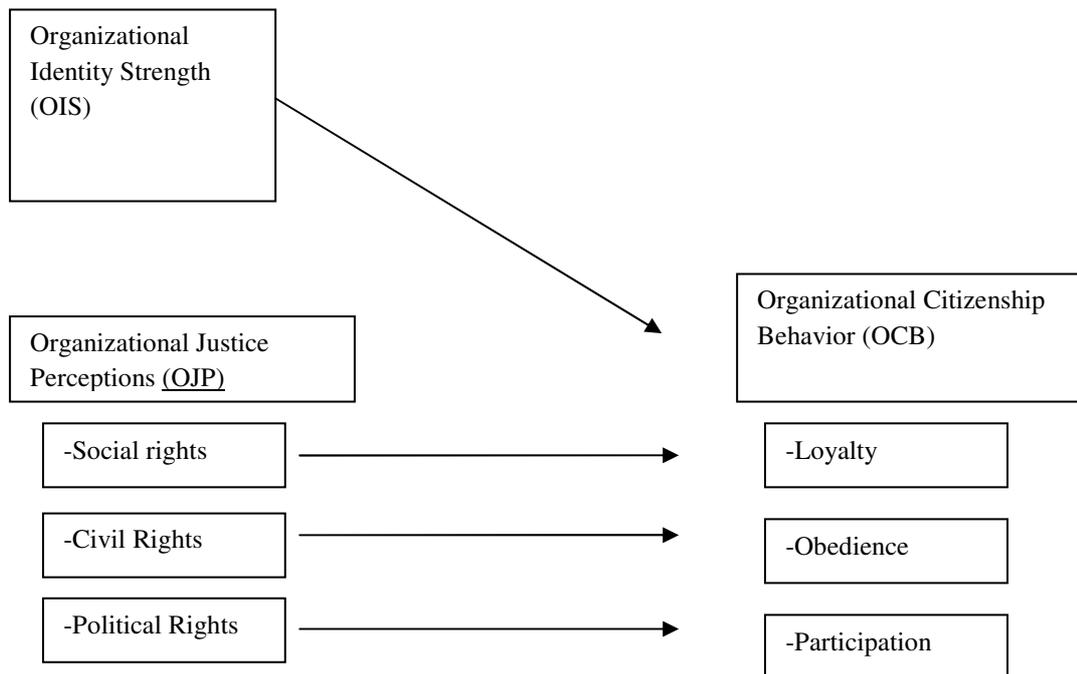


Figure 1. The Model of Research

The hypothesis of the research are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Organizational identity strength effects organizational citizenship behavior positively.

Hypothesis 1a: Organizational identity strength effects loyalty behavior positively.

Hypothesis 1b: Organizational identity strength effects obedience behavior positively.

Hypothesis 1c: Organizational identity strength effects participation behavior positively.

As inspired by Graham's organizational rights and responsibilities theoretical framework and also used by Bienstock et al., the hypothesis showing the relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior are as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Organizational justice perceptions effect organizational citizenship behavior positively.

Hypothesis 2a: Social rights effect loyalty behavior positively.

Hypothesis 2b: Civil rights effect obedience behavior positively.

Hypothesis 2c: Political rights effect participation behavior positively.

5. METHOD AND SCALES

The questionnaire of the research has been applied to 294 people from 8 companies in the Turkish pharmaceutical industry with the convenience sampling model. The questions were designed on a five-point Likert scale, 1 standing for totally disagree and 5 for totally agree.

The scales used in this questionnaire have been adapted by several studies. The OJP has been adapted by Bienstock et al. (2003)'s scale; OCB scale has been adapted by Van Dyne et al. (1994)'s scale revised by Bienstock et al.(2003). Finally, OIS scale has been adapted by Kreiner and Ashforth's (2004).

Kreiner and Ashforth's OIS is composed of 4 items and all of the items have been used in this questionnaire. The two of the items are as follows: "There is a common sense of purpose in this organization."; "This organization has a specific mission shared by its employees."

Bienstock's OJP scale is composed of 15 items, which is divided into three factors, which are composed of 5 items each: social, civil and political rights. Some of the items of the OJP scale are as follows: "Hiring practices are fair in this company.", "This company recognizes who works the hardest", "Employees have a say in how decisions are made." In this scale, the item "Members of this company who win Employee of the Month are those who work the hardest" under the political rights factor has not been included in the questionnaire. In the original scale this item has been used in a restaurant where they choose an employee of the month, but this would not be appropriate for the pharmaceutical sector.

The OCB scale which originally belongs to Van Dyne et al. (1994) but revised by Bienstock et. al. (2003) is composed of 15 items. This 15 items is also divided into three sub-dimensions which are; loyalty, obedience and participation. Each of the factors included 5 items. Some of the items are as follows: "I talk about the company favorably to other people.", "I come to work on time.", "I share ideas for the improvement of the company."

6. RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS

All the three variables of the study (OIS, OJP and OCB) are entered into reliability analysis through the Cronbach Alpha method. As it is evaluated from the outcomes of the reliability tests, the reliabilities of the variables OIS, OJP and OCB respectively are; $\alpha = ,919$; $\alpha = ,966$ and $\alpha = ,956$ which means they have high reliabilities (Kalaycı, 2010: 405).

In order to measure the validities of the scales factor analysis is conducted. The KMO (Keiser-Meyer-Olkin) values for the OIS, OJP and OCB variables are found statistically significant ($p = ,000$) ($KMO = ,846$; $,924$; $,931$ respectively) which means that those variables are convenient for the factor analysis. Total variance explained values represent similar results with the original studies. OIS is composed of one factor which explains the 80,5 % of the variable. OJP, is divided into three factors which explains 83 % of the variable. Finally OCB is divided into three factors which explain the 81,8 % of the variable.

6.2. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

A series of regression analyses have been conducted in order to test hypotheses and sub-hypotheses. The outcomes of the first regression analysis are presented in Table 1. As it is seen in the table during the hierarchical regression analysis, OIS is entered into the analysis in the first phase. In this phase or model, the adjusted R^2 value is ,548 which means that OIS explains approximately 55 % of OCB ($p = ,000$; $p < ,05$). In the second phase of the analysis, OJP is entered in the analysis. The adjusted R^2 value of this second model is ,556 which shows that OJP makes just a ,009 value increase in the R^2 . This value, although very low when compared to the OIS's value, however statistically significant ($p = ,013$; $p < ,05$). These results show that OIS and OJP affect OCB statistically and that OIS' effect on OCB is higher than OJP's. When the B values are evaluated, it is seen that, OIS' value is ,574 while OJP' is ,127 which is also very much lower than OIS. So Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are accepted.

Table 1. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Model Summary for OCB 1

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Change Statistics		
				R^2 Change	F Change	Anova Sig.
1	,741(a)	,549	,548	,549	356,068	,000**
2	,748(b)	,559	,556	,009	6,238	,013**

*a. Independent Variable: (Constant) Organizational Identity Strength

b. Independent Variable: (Constant) Organizational Identity Strength, Organizational Justice Perceptions

c. Dependent Variable: Organizational Citizenship Behavior

** $p < ,005$

In the second regression analysis OJP sub-dimensions are evaluated. As it is seen in the model summary in Table 2, when three factors of OJP entered together,

their adjusted R^2 value has become ,025 which is still low when compared to OIS' effect, but higher than the outcomes of the first regression analysis. Anova F values also reveal that the model is statistically significant ($p= ,000$ and $p= ,001$).

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Model Summary for OCB 2

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Change Statistics		
				R ² Change	F Change	Anova Sig.
1	,741(a)	,549	,548	,549	356,068	,000
2	,758(b)	,575	,569	,025	5,745	,001

*a. Independent Variable: (Constant) Organizational Identity Strength

b. Independent Variable: (Constant) Organizational Identity Strength, Social Rights, Civil Rights, Political Rights

c. Dependent Variable: Organizational Citizenship Behavior

** $p < ,005$

Table 3 states the coefficient values of the same analysis. While OIS has the highest B coefficient (,569), civil rights' B coefficient follows this with ,184. Social and political rights on the other side have very low B values and their significance levels are above 0,05, which means that their effects on the dependent variable are statistically insignificant. This states that the effect of OJP on OCB is highly dependent on civil rights.

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Coefficient Outcomes for OCB

Model		Coefficients		Standard Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,491	,134		11,152	,000

	OIS	,664	,035	,741	18,870	,000
2	(Constant)	1,332	,139		9,601	,000
	OIS	,569	,053	,635	10,746	,000
	Social Rights	,050	,059	,059	,854	,394
	Civil Rights	,184	,058	,217	3,178	,002
	Political Rights	-,091	,065	-,103	-1,397	,164

In order to test the sub-hypothesis hierarchical regression analysis' are conducted on the sub-dimensions of OCB which are loyalty, obedience and participation. According to the results observed in Table 4, OIS explains 66 % of loyalty behavior, while the sub-dimensions of OJP which are social, civil and political rights explain 0,25 % . B and t values are the highest in OIS while those values gradually decrease in civil and political rights. Also, the t values reveal that just OIS (B= ,565; p= ,000) and social rights' (B= ,126; p= ,014) effects on the dependent variable are significant which means that OIS and social rights have positive effects on loyalty behavior. So Hypothesis 1a and Hypothesis 2a are accepted.

Table 4. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Outcomes for Loyalty Behavior

	R ²	B	t	Sig.
Organizational Identity Strength	,659	,565	12,400	,000
Social Rights	,025	,126	2,474	,014
Civil Rights		,077	1,547	,123

Political Rights		,032	,561	,575
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The results of the analysis on “obedience behavior” are represented on Table 5. OIS explains 29 % of obedience behavior ($p = ,000$; $p < ,05$). Social, civil and political rights explain 0,44 % of obedience behavior in total, while their B coefficients are ,045 ($p = ,566$), ,285 ($p = ,000$) and -,244 ($p = ,005$) respectively. Those values show that civil and political rights have statistically significant effects on the obedience behavior. When B values are evaluated, it can be said that civil rights effect obedience behavior positively while political rights effect negatively. So while Hypothesis 1b and 2b is accepted; the negative effect of political behavior is a salient result.

Table 5. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Outcomes for Obedience Behavior

	R ²	B	T	Sig.
Organizational Identity Strength	,292	,467	6,632	,000
Social Rights	,044	,045	,574	,566
Civil Rights		,285	3,718	,000
Political Rights		-,244	-2,808	,005

In the last regression analysis “participation behavior” of OCB is evaluated. As it is seen on Table 6, OIS explains approximately 52 % of participation behavior while social, civil and political rights explain 0,24 % of it. When B and t values are evaluated, it is recognized that the highest values explaining participation behavior belongs to OIS variable ($B = ,578$; $t = 10,049$). When OJP dimensions are evaluated it is seen that the only statistically significant variable is civil rights ($p = ,009$). Henceforth, while the Hypothesis 1c is accepted, Hypothesis 2c which suggested that political rights effect participation behavior positively, is rejected.

Table 9. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Outcomes for Participation Behavior

	R ²	B	T	Sig.
Organizational Identity Strength	,518	,578	10,049	,000
Social Rights	,024	,084	1,312	,190
Civil Rights		,165	2,635	,009
Political Rights		-,105	-,113	,141

Discussion

The results of the study show that OIS' effects on OCB and on the sub-dimensions of OCB are higher than the OJP's and OJP's subdimensions' effects. This outcome reveals that, the components of organizational identity strength; mission, vision, purpose and feelings of unity, which are generally accepted and shared, have higher effects than OJP on explaining OCB. In other words if the employees perceive a strong organizational identity and embrace it as a uniting whole, this effects their OCB in a positive way, while OJP has also a positive effect but lower when compared to OIS. Revealing the effects of OIS on OCB statistically, Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 1a, 1b and 1c are accepted.

Hypothesis 2a which state that social rights effect loyalty behavior positively and Hypothesis 2b which states that civil rights effect obedience behavior positively, are accepted either. These results put forth that, if the organization provide its employees social rights (or the employees perceive that the organization provides social rights), in other words if the employees perceive that they are treated equally regarding other employees (in hiring, distributing the tasks, rewarding etc.) this situation leads to an increase in employees' loyalty behavior (e.g. defending the organization to outsiders or other employees, or praising the organization). On the other side if the employees perceive that the organization

provides civil rights, (which also means fairness) this will lead to an increase in the employees' obedience behavior.

The statistical analysis has not revealed any relationship between political rights (inclusion in the decision making process, discussions etc.) and participation behavior, consequently Hypothesis 2c is rejected. Besides as an unexpected consequence, it is seen that the civil rights have a positive effect on the participation behavior. Another unexpected outcome is the political rights negative effect on obedience behavior, which may be a future study's research issue.

This study, while supporting the previous studies' results on the OJP and OCB concepts has also put forth a new model by including the organizational identity strength. With this model it is expected to make a contribution both scientifically to the management and organizational studies and to the managers in practice, by emphasizing the importance of the organizational identity strength in effecting the informal performance.

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