

EMINE OGUT

Selcuk University, Turkey

ALI SUKRU CETINKAYA

Selcuk University, Konya

ADEM OGUT

Selcuk University, Turkey

THE IMPACT OF TOLERANCE AS A COMPONENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON INDIVIDUAL STRESS

Abstract:

Organizational culture is defined as the values and behaviours that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization, includes an organization's expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that hold it together, and is expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions with the outside world, and future expectations. It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid. Can organizational culture be a source of stress on the employees? This research paper aims to answer that main research question. To that end an empirical study has been conducted in service industry, operating in Konya, in Turkey, in which the opinions of 144 employees have been analysed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and linear regression. The results show that "tolerance" component of the structure of the organizational culture has direct relationship with "success-driven stress" component of the structure of the stress ($R=0,17$, $R^2=0,03$). The relationship between tolerance and success-driven stress is significant ($t = 2,03$, $p = 0,044$). Organizations providing higher level of tolerance to employees results in higher employees motivation for being more successful at their works ($F = 4,135$, $p=044$).

Keywords:

Organizational culture, individual stress, stress for success, tolerance

JEL Classification: M10

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON INDIVIDUAL STRESS

Culture is simply defined as the values, beliefs and customs of a group or type of people. In a company or corporation, its culture is demonstrated by its management style, including the degree of autocracy or participation practised, and the expectations of employees (Thompson, Stradling, Murphy, & O'Neill, 1996). Organizational culture is defined by businessdictionary.com (2014) as the values and behaviours that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization, includes an organization's expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that hold it together, and is expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions with the outside world, and future expectations (Chan, Leung, & Yu, 2012). It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid.

Culture is an extremely powerful influence on people's behaviour. It is complex and multi-layered. What we describe as 'the' culture is, in fact, an amalgam of various cultures or sub-cultures which operate within the organization (Mallinger, 1986; Thompson et al., 1996). These sub-cultures are often a source of conflict and tension within an organization: Organizations are often arenas for dispute and conflict, and one of the main items under dispute is often values. Organizational culture normally has a number of sources, some complementary, some in conflict. These include national culture (for example, significant cultural differences between British organizations and their Japanese counterparts), sector values (for example, the significant differences between profit-oriented organizations in the private sector, professional values (for example, Code of Ethics), and individual beliefs particularly those held by certain charismatic or influential individuals within the organization (Cox, 1991; Erkutlu, Chafra, & Bumin, 2011; Jacobs, Hassell, Ashcroft, Johnson, & O'Connor, 2014; Mccarthy & Mcginn, 1995; Thompson et al., 1996).

Organizations in which a negative culture has evolved could be a very destructive one for the staff concerned, as well as the organization and its service users, as low morale saps motivation, commitment, creativity and job satisfaction (Saksvik, Nytro, Dahl-Jorgensen, & Mikkelsen, 2002; Seago, 1996). These are significant issues in relation to stress and stress management (Thompson et al., 1996).

Stress is a complex aspect of organizational life and one which has major costs and consequences. Unfortunately, the traditional view of stress is one which sees it simply as a weakness of the individual, rather than a dynamic interplay of personal and organizational factors (Boyd, Lewin, & Sager, 2009; Chan et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 1996). Excessive stress worsens the task, interpersonal, and performance of employees (Quinn, 2003; Rennesund & Saksvik, 2010; Williams, Manwell, Konrad, & Linzer, 2007).

Aim of this research is to investigate the impact of tolerance as a component of organizational culture on individual stress. A theoretical model was proposed based on literature review. During the literature review it was realized that there were limited researches investigating the effects of tolerance on individual stress. This research aimed to fill in this gap.

The main research question of the study: Can organizational culture be a source of stress on the employees? Based on the literature review of relevant studies and constructs, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Organizational culture has impact on personal stress.

METHODOLOGY

Measures

The theoretical model chosen for this paper consists of two main constructs: Organizational culture and stress. Each construct scales is based on the previous research. The construct measure for the organizational culture is adopted from the scale developed by Robbins (1994). The scale consisted of 26 items on a 5-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.95. The scale questioned the extent the respondents agree about the statements by their organization.

The construct measure for the stress is adopted from the scale developed by (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983). The scale consisted of 10 items on a 5-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) with a Cronbach's Alpha of .65. The scale questioned the extent the respondents agree about the statements by their own feelings.

A questionnaire was developed to collect primary data, and so to test hypothesis proposed on the theoretical model. Survey was conducted to the employees of business entities operating in Konya. Data was analysed based on 144 valid responses. Data was analysed with descriptive statistics, explanatory factor analysis (EFA) and linear regression modelling technique.

Data Analysis and Findings

EFA analysis suggested to group items of the organizational culture construct in four sub constructs: Organizational justice, organizational identity, tolerance, and risk-taking incentives. Further data analysis carried on composite variable of the "tolerance" sub construct of the organizational culture. EFA analysis also suggested to group items of the stress in two sub constructs: Success-driven stress and social defeat stress. Further analysis was conducted with these composite variables.

Linear regression analysis was used to test if the "tolerance" component of the organizational culture structure significantly predicted "success-driven stress" component of the stress structure. The results of the regression indicated the tolerance predictor explained 17.20% of the variance ($R^2=.030$, $F(3,781)=4.135$, $p<.05$) for the success-driven stress. It was found that tolerance significantly predicted success-driven stress ($\beta = .172$, $p<.05$).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Research findings suggested that organizations providing higher level of tolerance to their employees results in higher employee motivation for being more successful at their works. Practitioners need to be aware of this issue and pay great attention to provide more tolerance to workers in their organizations. This research was limited to the service industry. Similar researches can be conducted in other industries to see the differences.

REFERENCES

- Ashford, S. J. (1988). Individual Strategies for Coping with Stress during Organizational Transitions. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 24(1), 19-36. doi: Doi 10.1177/0021886388241005
- Boyd, N. G., Lewin, J. E., & Sager, J. K. (2009). A model of stress and coping and their influence on individual and organizational outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 75(2), 197-211. doi: DOI 10.1016/j.jvb.2009.03.010
- Chan, I. Y. S., Leung, M. Y., & Yu, S. S. W. (2012). Managing the Stress of Hong Kong Expatriate Construction Professionals in Mainland China: Focus Group Study Exploring Individual Coping Strategies and Organizational Support. *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management-Asce*, 138(10), 1150-1160. doi: Doi 10.1061/(Asce)Co.1943-7862.0000533
- Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A Global Measure of Perceived Stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385-396. Doi: Doi 10.2307/2136404.
- Cox, T. (1991). Organizational Culture, Stress, and Stress Management. *Work and Stress*, 5(1), 1-4. doi: Doi 10.1080/02678379108256997
- Erkutlu, H., Chafra, J., & Bumin, B. (2011). Organizational Culture's Role in the Relationship between Power Bases and Job Stress. *Hacettepe Universitesi Egitim Fakultesi Dergisi-Hacettepe University Journal of Education*(40), 198-209.
- Jacobs, S., Hassell, K., Ashcroft, D., Johnson, S., & O'Connor, E. (2014). Workplace stress in community pharmacies in England: Associations with individual, organizational and job characteristics. *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*, 19(1), 27-33. doi: Doi 10.1177/1355819613500043.
- MacLennan, B. W. (1992). Stressor Reduction - an Organizational Alternative to Individual Stress Management. *Stress & Well-Being at Work*, 79-95. doi: Doi 10.1037/10116-006
- Mallinger, M. A. (1986). Stress Management - an Organizational and Individual Responsibility. *Training and Development Journal*, 40(2), 16-17.
- Mccarthy, E., & Mcginn, A. (1995). Organisational Culture, Job Satisfaction and Work Stress - the Case of Irish Women Pilots. *Applications of Psychology to the Aviation System - Proceedings of the 21st Conference of the European Association for Aviation Psychology (Eaap), Vol 1*, 81-90.
- Munz, D. C., Kohler, J. M., & Greenberg, C. I. (2001). Effectiveness of a comprehensive worksite stress management program: Combining organizational and individual interventions. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 8(1), 49-62. doi: Doi 10.1023/A:1009553413537
- Newton, C., & Jimmieson, N. (2004). Organisational culture, stress, and coping: Qualitative and quantitative exploration. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 56, 149-150.
- Prestonshoot, M. (1995). The Unconscious at Work - Individual and Organizational Stress in the Human-Services - Obholzer,a, Roberts,Vz. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 9(1), 89-91.

- Quinn, A. J. (2003). Organisational culture, school leadership and teacher stress: The relationship to referral rates for student misbehaviour. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 55, 205-205.
- Rennesund, A. B., & Saksvik, P. O. (2010). Work performance norms and organizational efficacy as cross-level effects on the relationship between individual perceptions of self-efficacy, overcommitment, and work-related stress. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 19(6), 629-653. doi: Pii 919350935.
- Robbins, S. P. (1994). Örgütsel Davranışın Temelleri, Öztürk, A. (çev.), Eskisehir: Etam A.S. Yayınları, Turkey.
- Saksvik, P. O., Nytro, K., Dahl-Jorgensen, C., & Mikkelsen, A. (2002). A process evaluation of individual and organizational occupational stress and health interventions. *Work and Stress*, 16(1), 37-57. doi: Doi 10.1080/02678370110118744
- Seago, J. A. (1996). Work group culture, stress, and hostility - Correlations with organizational outcomes. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 26(6), 39-47. doi: Doi 10.1097/00005110-199606000-00013
- Thompson, N., Stradling, S., Murphy, M., & O'Neill, P. (1996). Stress and organizational culture. *British Journal of Social Work*, 26(5), 647-665.
- Tyssen, R., Vaglum, P., Gronvold, N. T., & Ekeberg, O. (2005). The relative importance of individual and organizational factors for the prevention of job stress during internship: a nationwide and prospective study. *Medical Teacher*, 27(8), 726-731. doi: Doi 10.1080/01421590500314561
- Williams, E. S., Manwell, L. B., Konrad, T. R., & Linzer, M. (2007). The relationship of organizational culture, stress, satisfaction, and burnout with physician-reported error and suboptimal patient care: Results from the MEMO study. *Health Care Management Review*, 32(3), 203-212.