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# Business Excellence And Organizational Commitment In Seasonal Hotels\*

## Sezonluk Otellerde İş Mükemmelliği ve Örgütsel Bağlılık

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**Abstract:** *This paper aims to set the critical link between organizational commitment and business excellence in seasonal hotels where the seasonal staffing is the matter in service offerings. Assuming the perceptual difference of permanent and seasonal managers and employees towards their companies, the level of their continuance commitment and perception of their business excellence were sought through a face-to-face questionnaire form at their workplaces. Differences between each group were analysed through t-test, Analysis of Variance, Tukey Honestly Significance Difference test (T-HSD). In order to clarify the link between groups and to create map, correspondence analysis was run. Findings show that business excellence perception makes difference on continuance commitment; permanent staff and managers have higher level of commitment. It can be concluded that managers of seasonal hotels should value and consider the whole workforces and should create business excellence if their goal is to perform better and make difference against their competitors.*

**Key words:** *Organizational commitment, Business excellence, Seasonal hotels, Correspondence Analysis.*

**Öz:** *Bu çalışma hizmet sunumunda sezonluk personelin sorun olduğu sezonluk otellerde örgütsel bağlılık ve iş mükemmelliği arasındaki önemli bağı belirlemeye çalışmaktadır. Kadrolu ve sezonluk yönetici ve çalışanların kendi firmalarına yönelik algısal farkları var sayılarak söz konusu grupların maliyet bazlı bağlılık düzeyleri ve iş mükemmellik algıları yüz yüze görüşme yoluyla araştırılmıştır. Gruplar arasındaki farklar t-testi, Varyans Analizi ve çoklu karşılaştırma testlerinden Tukey Honestly Significance Difference test (T-HSD) ile sınanmıştır. Gruplar arasındaki bağı netleştirmek ve bir harita oluşturmak için uyum analizi kullanılmıştır. Bulgular maliyet bazlı bağlılık açısından iş mükemmelliği algısının fark yarattığını, kadrolu personel ve yöneticilerin bağlılık düzeylerinin daha yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Sezonluk otellerin yöneticileri daha iyi başarı göstermek ve rakiplerine üstünlük sağlamak için tüm iş gücüne değer vermeli, tüm personeli dikkate almali ve iş mükemmelliği yaratmalıdırlar.*

**Anahtar sözcükler:** *Örgütsel bağlılık, İş mükemmelliği, Sezonluk oteller, Uyum Analizi.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In organizations where the human factor is seen as the major competitive challenge, organizational commitment (OC) is considered as one of the factors contributing to a healthy organizational climate, higher morale and motivation. Implications of organizational commitment can be for both the employees and organizations (Goulet & Frank, 2002; Subramaniam & Mia, 2001; Kacmar et al, 1999; Boselie et al, 2001; Mullins, 1996). In individual sense, committed individual will be more eligible to receive both intrinsic rewards-job satisfaction and better relationships with colleagues, and extrinsic rewards-bonuses and awards. In terms of organizational implications, since the employees' commitment is seen negatively associated with absenteeism, turnover and lateness to work, this will impact the overall performance of the organization. There is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and participative management process (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Subramaniam & Mia, 2001). On the other hand, as the organizational environment is perceived as positive, satisfaction level increases and desire to leave the organization decreases (Boselie & Wiele, 2001). Commitment acts as a moderator in organizational change (Yousef, 2000). In order to attain employee satisfaction in the organization, quality of supervisor and subordinate (Kacmar et al, 1999), supportive management, clearer vision, customer focus and compensation or shared gains are considered to be important (Boselie & Wiele, 2001). Committed employees who feel organizational ownership produce quality products and services with customer satisfaction internally and externally (Johnson, 1993) since commitment engages emotional energy and attention to them (Ulrich, 1998). The concurrent process of production, delivery and consumption of services (Dale et al, 1997) in hotel businesses requires employees to act on the quality of the processes and thus the outcomes of them. Committed employees with this energy and attention can foster the positive results, create differences and thus compete better (Bowen & Siehl, 1997; Yeung & Berman, 1997, Sabuncuoğlu, 2000).

## **2. ATTAINING COMMITMENT**

It is important to know what to attain at the beginning of any effort. So, the meaning of commitment needs to be clarified. Though there is no consensus on defining commitment (Morrow, 1983), it is identified at least in three general themes as affective, continuance and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment refers to identification with, involvement in, and emotional attachment to the organization. Due to this type of commitment, an individual having strong affective commitment remains with the organization because of wanting to do so. However, continuance commitment refers to employees' recognition of the costs associated with leaving the organization and an individual having strong continuance commitment remains with the organization because he/she has to do so (Oliver, 1990). This may be derived from low perceived alternatives or high personal sacrifice associated with leaving. Normative commitment refers to commitment based on a sense of obligation to the organization. He/she ought to remain with the organization.

In building and improving commitment, a number of definite steps should be considered. Some of those can be as follows (Ulrich, 1998; Mullins, 1996):

- Employees need to be clear about the direction and goals of the organization.
- Role model of management for the commitment and thus a teamwork and collaboration should be stressed.
- Time and effort should be spent on training and development for the employees.
- Clear, visible and constant communication on information and information sharing.
- Financial interest, such as profit sharing, should be considered.
- Technology should be provided them for working easier.
- Concern for people and treating them with dignity and tolerating differences
- Work culture that includes openness, excitements, celebration etc.
- Participation on work decisions.
- Challenging work.

Knowing the impacts of commitment on characteristics of individuals can help decision makers on what to consider in attaining commitment. Research findings show that age has generally positive relationship with commitment. As the age increases, alternative employment options are supposed to decrease and the current jobs are seen more attractive (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Hunt et al, 1985). Though older workers are supposed to have stronger investment and greater history with their organizations than do younger, and their commitment may be more to their organization, age was found as negatively related to commitment in some studies (Kacmar et al, 1999). Besides age, women in general, have more commitment than men, since the barriers are considered as higher for women than for men (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Education is negatively related to commitment (Hunt et al, 1985). Lower education level reduces a person's chances of obtaining attractive employment choice (Savery & Syme, 1996), just as it is true for older age of persons. In terms of tenure, early employment socialization experiences that culminate formal membership, presence of enriched job characteristics (task identity, feedback) and existences of desired organizational structure (decentralization, functional dependence, formalization) are the means of influencing organizational commitment (Morrow, 1983).

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research presented here is a survey of employees and managers from seasonal hotels that operate in Aegean region of Turkey. Since this region is overwhelmingly the area for seasonal tourist destination, it is the appropriate place to study on seasonal hotels. Data were collected in summer of 2002, between June and October. Students who were assigned to accomplish their mandatory industrial training during this period handled survey instruments. They were given information about the process of distribution and collection of the forms.

### 3.1. Participants

Questionnaires were distributed to service personnel and to their managers who are more in touch with the customers. Of the 300 forms, the participants responded to 230 and only the 222 were correctly responded. Thus, 8 of them were not included in the data analysis. Response rate is 74 percent.

### 3.2. Measures

Two different scales were used to gather data. Following the introductory part-demographic questions, statements about the perception of organizational contexts in terms of business excellence variables were given. At the beginning, business excellence scale consisted of 19 statements. The first 16-item scale was adapted from Sharma et al (1990) that is based on the work of Peters and Waterman evaluating the eight attributes of excellence in business. These are as follows: close to the customer, a bias for action, autonomy and entrepreneurship, productivity through people, hands-on value driven, sticking to the knitting, lean staff, and simultaneous loose-tight properties (Sharma et al, 1990; Ropeter & Kleiner, 1997) People are free to find their own route after the vision and values set out by top management, namely visionary leadership approach (Furze & Gale, 1996). Additional 3 statements given by us were about learning perspective, use of internet (IT) for information, and common goal. Due to some researches, effective use of IT has increasing impacts on revenue, customer service and manpower productivity in hotel operations (Ingram, 1997). During the data analysis, considering the results of reliability analysis, only the eight items from original scale and one additional item, namely the learning perspective, were processed. The next part of the questionnaire form included statements about commitment. The scale consists of 4 items developed by Hunt et al (1985) to measure commitment. The responses to given attractive incentives to change the current company are accepted as indicators for the level of commitment. These incentives are more creative freedom, higher pay, more job status, and friendlier working environment (Hunt et al, 1985). Respondents were asked to respond to the statements about excellence and commitment in Likert response categories ranging from (1)=strongly disagree to (5)= strongly agree.

### 3.3. Analysis

In order to analyse significance between groups, t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted and to check the difference between groups T-HSD (Tukey Honestly Significant Difference) was used. In obtaining a perceptual map for the positions of excellence perception, commitment and demographic variables, correspondence analysis was employed. Correspondence Analysis (CA) as an interdependency technique enables dimensional reduction and conducts perceptual mapping. The categories of a question can be analysed to determine positions of the categories. Closely positioned categories together indicate high association and the possibility of combining the categories into a single category (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, 1995: 513). In order to analyse at least three categorical variables, multiple correspondence analysis was used in this study. It facilitates to analyse more than two categorical variables and displays communalities and relations between sub-categories of variables nested in cross-tabulation as  $r*c*m*...$

(Özdamar, 2002: 476). CA is best suited for exploratory data analysis (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, 1995). Data were analysed in SPSS statistical package version 8.0.

### 3.4. Findings

Of the 222 responses, 26,1 percent (58) were managers and 73,9 (164) percent were employees. Permanent staff (51,4 percent) and seasonal staff (48,6) were nearly the same. Males were overwhelmingly (70,3 %) more than females (29,7 %). The rate of tenure was 32,0 percent for working period as less than one year and 1-3 years. It was 23 percent for 4-5 years and 13,1 percent for the group working for 6 years or more. In terms of education, primary, lycée and university degree were 21,2 %, 39,6 % and 39,2 % respectively. Young groups were dominant in terms of age. Age group under 21 were 10,8 %, 21-25 ages were 36,0 percent, 26-30 was 30,2 %, and it was 15,8 for age group 31-35 and 7,2 for age group 36 and more.

For internal consistency between items of both scales, reliability analysis was run separately. Alpha (cronbach) was 0,8643 for 9-items excellence scale. [(F=16,32 p=0,0001; Hotelling's T-squared = 129,12; F=15,62, and p=0,0001). Alpha (cronbach) was 0,8903 for 4-items continuance commitment scale (F=22,67 p=0,0001; Hotelling's T-squared= 68,99 F=22,79 p=0,0001)] indicating high reliability. Both scales showed additivity. Additivity statistics for excellence scale was F=14,21 p=0,019. Additivity statistics for commitment was found as F=18,43 and p=0,012. Thus, comparisons were available due to the total scores for both scales.

Significance of the difference between group means of position, staff and gender those having two sub-groups was analysed by t-test. There is no difference for gender due to total scores of commitment and excellence (p>0,05). As seen in Table I of t-test for position and staff, perceptions about excellence dimensions of the company and attitudes towards alternatives differ between managers and employees as well as between permanent and seasonal workers.

*Table 1. t-Test Results Of Commitment & Excellence For Position And Staff*

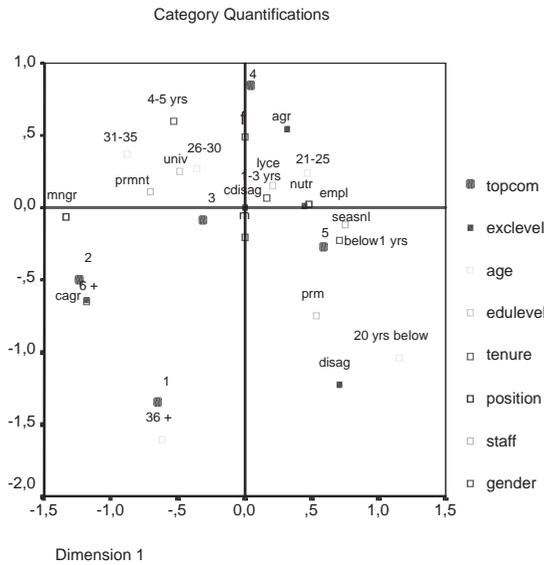
| Variables and sub-categories |          | Mean      | s.d.  | F    | p     | t     | p     |       |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Commitment                   | Position | Manager   | 11,34 | 4,70 | 0,244 | 0,000 | -4,71 | 0,000 |
|                              |          | Employee  | 14,72 | 4,68 |       |       |       |       |
|                              | Staff    | Permanent | 12,41 | 5,08 | 7,47  | 0,007 | -4,68 | 0,000 |
|                              |          | Seasonal  | 15,35 | 4,25 |       |       |       |       |
| Excellence                   | Position | Manager   | 36,20 | 6,71 | 0,66  | 0,42  | 7,11  | 0,000 |
|                              |          | Employee  | 29,01 | 6,58 |       |       |       |       |
|                              | Staff    | Permanent | 32,96 | 7,43 | 2,95  | 0,087 | 4,52  | 0,000 |
|                              |          | Seasonal  | 28,70 | 6,55 |       |       |       |       |

Significance between group means of tenure, age and educational level having more than two groups were examined by analysis of variance.

*Table 2. Results Of One-Way Anova And T-HSD For Tenure, Education Level And Age Categories Due To Total Scores Of Commitment And Excellence*

| Scale      | Categories | F     | p     | Sub-categories              | T-HSD |
|------------|------------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| Commitment | Tenure     | 7,35  | 0,007 | 6+ versus below 1 year      | 0,018 |
|            |            |       |       | 6+ versus 1-3 years         | 0,039 |
|            |            |       |       | 6+ versus 4-5 years         | 0,024 |
| Excellence | Tenure     | 11,88 | 0,001 | 6+ versus below 1 year      | 0,004 |
|            |            |       |       | 6+ versus 1-3 years         | 0,003 |
|            |            |       |       | 6+ versus 4-5 years         | 0,027 |
|            | Education  | 7,47  | 0,007 | University versus primary   | 0,017 |
|            |            |       |       | University versus lycée     | 0,002 |
|            | Age        | 7,82  | 0,006 | Age 31-35 versus 20 & below | 0,013 |
|            |            |       |       | Age 31-35 versus 21-25      | 0,039 |

As seen in Table II, tenure is significant between 6+ and all other age groups in terms of both commitment and excellence total scores. However, education level and age are significant in only excellence perceptions. Specifically, there is significant difference between university graduates and other graduates as primary level and lycée. In addition, age group 31-35 significantly differs from ages 25 and below.



*Figure 1. Perceptual Map Of The Categories*

Due to the correspondence analysis, a map was obtained showing the relations of total excellence, total commitment, position, staff, gender, tenure, education level and age with their sub-categories in two dimensions (see Figure 1). Dimensional values for each sub categories were given on Table III. In this respect, the ones who are at the age of 20 and below, with a tenure below one year, working seasonally and having primary (including secondary school) degrees certainly they disagree with the opinion given in commitment items and they are disagree with the opinion given in excellence scale. This finding indicates that their perceptions on company excellence are lower and they are not planning to stay with the organization if they have alternative incentives as higher pay, status, friendly atmosphere and more freedom.

On the other hand, the ones having lycée degree with an age between 21-25 years, who are employees working for 1-3 years, disagree in terms of commitment and agree or are neutral in terms of excellence of the company.

*Table 3. Dimensional Values For Variables*

| <b>Variables</b>       | <b>Sub-categories</b> | <b>D1</b> | <b>D2</b> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Gender</b>          | Male                  | 0,00      | 0,00      |
|                        | Female                | 0,00      | 0,49      |
| <b>Staff</b>           | Permanent             | -0,71     | 0,11      |
|                        | Seasonal              | 0,75      | -0,12     |
| <b>Position</b>        | Manager               | -1,34     | -0,07     |
|                        | Employee              | 0,47      | 0,02      |
| <b>Tenure</b>          | Below 1 year          | 0,71      | -0,23     |
|                        | 1-3 years             | 0,16      | 0,07      |
|                        | 4-5 years             | -0,54     | 0,60      |
|                        | 6+ years              | -1,19     | -0,65     |
| <b>Education level</b> | Primary               | 0,53      | 0,75      |
|                        | Lycée                 | 0,21      | 0,15      |
|                        | University            | -0,49     | 0,25      |
| <b>Age</b>             | 20 & below            | 1,16      | -1,04     |
|                        | 21-25 years           | 0,47      | 0,24      |
|                        | 26-30 years           | -0,36     | 0,28      |
|                        | 31-35 years           | -0,88     | 0,37      |
|                        | 36+ years             | -0,62     | -1,61     |
| <b>Texcel</b>          | 1 certainly disagree  | 0,00      | 0,00      |
|                        | 2 disagree            | 0,70      | -1,23     |
|                        | 3 neutral             | 0,44      | 0,01      |
|                        | 4 agree               | 0,31      | 0,55      |
|                        | 5 certainly agree     | -1,19     | -0,64     |
| <b>Tcommitment</b>     | 1 certainly disagree  | -0,65     | -1,35     |
|                        | 2 disagree            | -1,24     | -0,50     |
|                        | 3 neutral             | -0,32     | -0,09     |
|                        | 4 agree               | 0,04      | 0,85      |
|                        | 5 certainly agree     | 0,58      | -0,27     |

The ones working for at least 6 years or above, with an age at least 36 years, who are managers and who are male have very strong perception on excellence and lower scores on commitment. This finding indicates that managers having more experience with the company, who are older and who are male are not willing to change the organization. These findings are consistent with the findings in the commitment literature.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL SUGGESTIONS**

For organizations to serve better, extra efforts are necessary from their employees to make difference through their organizational processes, and thus to compete better. However, directing the members of any organization to act voluntarily for extra efforts, organizational commitment should be valued and be supported. Establishing business excellence in organizations can be one of the ways to achieve such commitment. It can be said that, business excellence enforces organizational commitment and such commitment can contribute to the business excellence.

The primary focus of this research is to seek the link between organizational commitment and business excellence. Due to the findings of the present study, the following can be underlined:

- There is no significant difference between males and females concerning their excellence perception and commitment levels.
- Managers perceive their workplace more excellent than the employees
- Permanent staff perceives their workplace more excellent than seasonal staff.
- Managers and permanent staff are more committed to their organizations and they are not about to change their organizations for alternative incentives (pay, status, freedom and friendlier environment).
- The ones having positive excellence perception have also higher continuance commitment.
- The gap of commitment level between managers and employees; between permanent staff and seasonal staff can be interpreted as the problem derived from the inefficient endeavours or measures of the managers in installing excellence in the organizations (i.e. seasonal hotels).

This study reveals that there is mutual link between excellence perception and commitment feeling. This link implies the mutual efforts of managers and employees. In other word, commitment alone makes nothing but managerial efforts to create excellence make difference to benefit from committed workforce. Thus, the gap between these two components should be considered. The findings indicate that the managers of seasonal hotels should focus on employees as an organization sub-group and should focus on seasonal staff, to benefit from commitment and to sustain excellence in their hotels.

This study has some limitations and the findings are limited to the data gathered in seasonal hotels. In addition, its concern is the population recruited in Turkish seasonal hotels. In order to support and generalize the findings of the present study, similar research should be conducted in hotel businesses established as full-time services, namely city

hotels those serving different customers and recruiting on a full-time base in Turkey. It is also recommended to include both types of hotels in cross-cultural perspectives.

Since the committed staff efforts are beneficiary for both individuals and organizations, seasonal hotel management should consider the following in order to be an efficient and effective organization:

- Policy change in recruitment structure such as part-time staffing during off-season,
- Participatory management approach to exploit human knowledge and creativity,
- Compensational options for seasonal personnel during off-season,
- Training and development for seasonal personnel to improve their skills and competence,
- Considering their skills, suitable form of empowerment can be established to exploit benefits of participation on work decisions.

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