

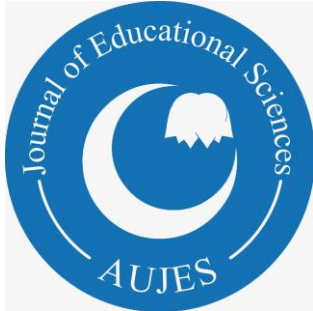
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Organizational Identification in Diverse Groups of Teachers

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Organizational Identification in Diverse Groups of Teachers

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to address the organizational identification of vocational and culture course teachers working in vocational high schools and to determine the degree to which they fit with organizational identification models. The research was designed in phenomenology design. The research group consisted of 6 culture course and 6 vocational course teachers working in a public vocational high school in Giresun Province. The participants were selected from the school where the researcher worked on the basis of volunteerism by using the convenience sampling method. In this study, two separate focus group interviews were conducted to determine teachers' views on organizational identification, and the collected data were analyzed in the MAXQDA data analysis program, and the results were interpreted. As a result, it was determined that all teachers were identified with their schools in general, but vocational course teachers were more likely to identify with the institution for which they worked than were culture course teachers. While it was common among the cultural course teachers that they could object to assigned tasks, if necessary, all the vocational course teachers indicated that they could participate in assigned tasks voluntarily and showed that they identified more with their organizations.

Key words: Organizational identification, Vocational high school, Vocational course teacher, Culture course teacher

Introduction

Like in any other social setting, people in organizations need to be quite clear about who they are as individuals and how they fit into their environment. This necessity brings along a deeper look into the working environment, organizational culture and employees' positioning within work settings. This is because identity construction regarding professional roles can be embedded in the perception of this positioning. As Gunbey & Karakutuk (in press) proposed, identity construction combines experiences with environments. Batool, Ibrahim & Adeel (2024) stress that organizational culture positively moderates the creative sharing of ideas and responsible leadership, which develops a sense of belonging and being valued. Similarly, Agyeiwaah, Bangwayo-Skeete & Opoku (2024) developed a model that explains how migrant workers' inclusion affects their identity, organizational behaviors, and well-being according to social exchange theory. The authors make a point by providing theoretical and practical perspectives on integrating migrant workers and including newcomers to foster organizational identification (OI). As Ashforth (2016, p. 362) formerly proposed, OI can be defined as a "fundamental binding of self-definition with the collective". OI goes beyond positive attitudes and being friendly. It acknowledges individuals as active agents who can influence their surroundings and ultimately their overall identity. Therefore, OI can be recognized as a way to provide new insights and suggestions for fostering a sense of community and building a sense of belongingness inside organizations.

The views of employees about unity or belonging to an organization are referred to as OI. Ashforth & Mael (1989) first coined the term as a definition of an individual in terms of the organizations in which he or she works. The term was developed from social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982), which contends that people simplify and make sense of a complicated social environment by classifying themselves and other people as members of specific groups. It also includes the psychological ties that workers have to the company they work for (O'Reilly, 1989). The acquisition of professional identity in organizations can be connected to relations with other groups within the organizations, particularly in workplaces embracing diverse groups. Zhongnan (2024) suggested that there are three ways to foster OI within diverse groups. First, according to Tyler's (1999) social identity approach, a supportive workgroup diversity environment can increase employees' OI by strengthening the organization's image and identity. This is because a well-known and appealing organization can increase workers' self-esteem by being a part of it. Second, theories of intergroup relations highlight the positive

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relationship between a person's social acceptance and relational value within a group and the fulfillment of their self-esteem (Leary & Downs, 1995). This is because self-esteem is a primary motivator for people to construct their social identities in relation to their group membership (Tyler & Blader, 2003). According to research by Jones and Volpe (2011), an individual's OI is significantly predicted by the size and quality of his or her social network within the organization. Social exchange theory serves as the last theoretical framework to explain the connection between the atmosphere of diversity in the workplace and each employee's sense of organizational identity. Employees' trust in the organizational setting and their characteristics make OI important for organizations with diverse groups. Conversely, it requires some leadership skills to make employees feel valued, and their need for belonging is met. Employees who identify with their organizations contribute to productivity by increasing their personal responsibility in the long term (Polat, 2009, p.1591), and the identified members of the organization form a whole with the values of the organization. In today's rapidly changing business world, organizations attach more importance to OI, known as 'we-ness', to retain their employees (Özcan, 2012:26). An important factor in creating a positive school climate in educational institutions is the strong OI of all stakeholders, especially students, teachers, parents and school administrators (Cilasun, 2020). In this context, the stronger the identification with the organization is, the easier it will be for the educational organization to achieve its objectives.

By examining the curricula of vocational and technical high schools, we have seen diversity in the structure of the programs, as the content is divided into two categories: vocational and culture courses. The objective of vocational courses is to teach students the technical theoretical knowledge, skills and habits required by the profession in appropriate educational environments within the school, in relevant workshops and laboratories according to the rules defined by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (MEB, 2008). On the other hand, culture courses provide education in different fields (branches) (Turkish Language and Literature, History, Geography, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Foreign Language, etc.). Hence, there is a diverse group of teachers that are vocation focused and culture focused. Ozdemir (2012) states that there is a common perception regarding the value given to some courses. Vocational courses seem to be more important and are valued more among students. However, the opposite is true for culture courses as students already have little interest in achieving academic goals. In addition, school management vaguely supports the imbalance by increasing the number of time slots for vocational courses and decreasing them for cultural classes. This results in both failing to give students a set of cognitive and affective values and knowledge with a consciousness of a shared culture and values (Taskin & Bozkurt, 2023) and creating disparities in the OI of teachers at the same school. Such disparities in the organizational environment are proven by Tutar, Ozturk Baspinar & Guler (2021) to possibly cause psychological and physical health problems for employees in addition to reducing job satisfaction and damage to work peace.

As Kreiner and Ashforth (2003) noted, OI might have implications at the individual, group and organizational levels. In addition, all three levels are interrelated in explaining meaning, belonging and control (Ashforth, 2001) in the workplace. However, another perspective is needed to specify the degree of identification as each dimension covers a different type of identification. A person who is defined as overidentified might lose his or her sense of self and be entirely absorbed into work and may not be willing to see the shortcomings of the organization, and the opposite is also possible. Kreiner & Ashforth's (2004) work to define an expanded model of identification, including identification, disidentification, ambivalent identification, and neutral identification, is an answer to the following questions: In what ways may an individual perceive themselves as in opposition to or different from the organization? What if an individual identified as both a part of and apart from the organization? And how would this impact the individual and the organization? While identification occurs when an employee defines themselves as having the same moral values, objectives and principles defined by their workplaces, disidentification occurs when individuals do not share the same attributes or principles as their organizations. Employees of an organization who identify themselves as ambivalent tend to spend important mental and emotional resources which could be used for activities that would benefit the organization. Besides, ambivalent workers are not willing to go above and beyond the call of duty when performing their jobs. This conflicting message can lead to feelings of hypocrisy, tension, and pressure to fit in (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). Finally, neutral identification is defined as a cognitive state and form of self-definition in and of itself. Elsbach (1999) defined it just the absence of perceptions and connection. People may also purposefully steer clear of strong attachments, whether positive or negative due to management philosophies (such as "I do not take sides; I just do my job"), self-descriptions (such as "I'm a loner," "I'm my own person"), or prior experiences with organizations ("once bitten, twice shy"). Therefore, for certain people, the real lack of organizational identity and disidentification can be self-defining.

Even though there are studies covering identity and OI (Brown, 2017); creative idea sharing and its relationship with OI (Batoool, Ibrahim & Adeel, 2024); the moderating role of OI in organizations (Mishra, Sharma & Uppal, 2024); its relationship with psychology capital (Gunes & Bulut, 2024); and the impact of OI on job satisfaction and time management, there has been no study regarding the OI perception of vocational

school teachers. First, we aim to address this lacuna by presenting an early attempt to investigate what teachers teaching vocational courses think about OI. Second, we aim to explore the views of culture course teachers toward OI via two different focus groups. As this kind of diversity has not been studied previously, we believe that this study will contribute to the literature on OI by answering the following questions:

- a. What does it mean for vocational and culture course teachers to work in a vocational high school in terms of OI?
- b. Do the views of vocational course and culture course teachers working in vocational high schools on OI comply with organizational identification models?
- c. What are the opinions of vocational course and culture course teachers working in vocational high schools about the image of their schools?

Method

This paper takes a phenomenological approach, as we believe that perception, beyond the dualism of body and soul, gives the cohesive perspective to the current existence Merleau-Ponty (1968) of OI. We also crosschecked Creswell's steps (2013, p. 81) with a phenomenological study and agreed that the OI phenomenon could be best elicited via the perceptions of teachers employed in the same school, where the researcher is one of 'them'. The first author ticked the second step suggested by Creswell by determining the diversity perceived among the teachers of the same school; therefore, the phenomenon defined by the authors is OI. Keeping her own experiences in parenthesis, the researcher formed two different focus groups for the best description of the perception of OI.

Study Group

The study group consisted of 6 vocational course teachers and 6 culture course teachers working in a public vocational high school in Giresun province. The participants were selected from the school where the researcher worked on the basis of volunteerism by using the easily accessible sampling method. The culture course teachers in the study group who participated in the research were coded as "P1, P2..., P4", and the vocational course teachers were coded as "V1, V2..., V5". Information about the study group profile is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic properties of the participants

Participant	Branch	Seniority	Time Spent at School (Year)	Participant	Branch	Seniority	Time Spent at School (Year)
P1	Physics	20	5	V1	Child Development & Education	17	12
P2	Maths	13	11	V2	Installation Technology & Air Conditioning	25	20
P3	History	17	1	V3	Installation Technology & Air Conditioning	9	3
P4	Psychological Counseling & Guidance	16	11	V4	Information Technology	16	12
P5	Literature	20	2	V5	Information Technology	18	3
P6	Maths	4	6 Months	V6	Child Development & Education	22	12

In this study, focus group interview questions prepared by the researcher were used as a data collection tool. Of the teachers who participated in the interviews, 6 were culture course teachers and 6 were vocational course teachers. The occupational experience of the teachers who participated in the interviews ranged between 4 and 25 years. The questions were prepared at the end of a literature review to understand the participants' perceptions of OI and to determine the participants' degree of identification with their schools and the image of the school. In focus group interviews, 10–12 people (Kara & Karadeniz Özbek, 2021) with the same demographic characteristics (age, socioeconomic level, occupation, etc.) usually come together with a moderator and the research topic is discussed in a group environment. Focus group interviews provide important clues to researchers in terms of understanding the dynamic relationships among people's behaviors, ideas, motivations, interests, and problems related to their actions (Aksit, 1992).

Validity and reliability

With respect to the data collection tool, 10 questions were initially prepared by the researcher and were evaluated by five experts, after which the questions were finalized. As a result of the expert evaluation, it was decided to determine seven questions. To ensure that the focus group interviews yielded results consistent with the literature, a pilot study was conducted with two teachers to check the validity of the questions. The two teachers in the pilot study did not participate in the focus group interviews.

Validity occurs when the phenomenon being studied by the researcher is observed as it exists without bias. In qualitative research, the consistency of the research process and results is important for validity (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). To ensure the validity of this study, the literature on the topic was reviewed, and the questions for the focus group interviews were prepared accordingly. Additionally, statements obtained from the opinions of the educators were supported by direct quotations.

The replicability of research findings is expressed in terms of reliability (Baltacı, 2019). To ensure reliability in this study, audio recordings were made during the interviews and the audio recordings were kept after the interviews. The teachers' responses to the research questions were exemplified by direct quotations. In qualitative research, internal reliability, which is based on the principle that more than one researcher measures an event in the same way, is used. For this purpose, more than one researcher is expected to analyze and compare the data, and in doing so, it is necessary to pay attention to the consistency between the coding methods (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). In this study, the coding of the researcher was checked by another researcher who is an expert in the field and a consensus was reached. Furthermore, to ensure external reliability, attention should be given to the following points: clearly describing the role of the researcher, defining the research group, research environment and process, defining the conceptual framework used in data analysis, and detailing the data collection and analysis methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To ensure the reliability of this study, the role of the researcher was clearly explained, and the study group, study process and data analysis were described in detail.

Data collection

Teachers were informed about the focus group interview process. It was presented as preliminary information that there were no right or wrong answers in the interviews and that there were questions that they would express their opinions about organizational identification in general. The reason for recording the interviews was explained as the transcription of the conversations into text and the most accurate transfer of the participants' statements. Only their expressions were used, and their identity information was kept confidential. The total number of teachers participating in the focus group interviews was 12. Two different focus group interviews were conducted separately with vocational course teachers and separately with culture course teachers.

For the focus group interview, it is necessary to organize a place where the participants can feel comfortable and where there are no details that may distract the attention of the participants. To achieve this goal, the interviews were conducted in the teachers' rooms of the schools outside of class hours. The participants were numbered from 1 to 6 and positioned in a circle. The moderator and the observer were placed after number 6 and before number 1. Before collecting the data, the participants were asked whether anyone objected to the voice recording. As a result of the fact that there was no objection, the voice recorder started to operate at the time of the interview. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher and moderator introduced themselves and informed the participants about the purpose of the study. A total of 7 questions were asked, and details about how long the interview would take were given. Both focus group interviews were completed without any interruptions. In both interviews, the answers to the questions became more sincere after a while. Teachers provided more sincere answers as they shared their feelings. At the end of both interviews, all of them stated that the interviews were like a therapy for them and that they were more aware of their feelings. It was observed by the researcher that the facial expressions of the teachers, who were anxious at the beginning of the interview, relaxed as their sharing with their colleagues increased.

Data Analyses

The descriptive analysis method, one of the data analysis methods, was used to analyze the data. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011), descriptive analysis is the description and interpretation of the findings obtained in the light of a predetermined framework. In the descriptive analysis method, the data obtained from the interviews are interpreted and transferred to the reader after being arranged. According to this method, the data obtained were classified and interpreted within the framework of the themes created. Finding themes is one of the most important parts of qualitative research analysis (Gunbey, 2016). The aim of descriptive analysis is to clearly reflect the views of the interviewed or observed individuals by including direct quotations. In this context, direct quotations were made from the opinions of vocational and culture course teachers in the presentation of the findings. The data collected by the researcher were classified within the framework of the

themes obtained from the literature. The focus group interviews conducted in this study were analyzed through the stages of interpretation and interpretation. The interviews were analyzed and transcribed from the voice recorder and thematic coding was subsequently revealed by listening to the audio recordings repeatedly. MaxQDA qualitative data analysis program was used to analyze the data.

Ethics committee approval process

The ethics application for the study was made on 04/10/2023, and the research was carried out with the approval of the Giresun University Ethics Commission dated 08/11/2023 and numbered 10/08.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the findings obtained from the focus group interviews with vocational and culture course teachers working in vocational high schools, and the themes and codes obtained by analyzing the data are presented.

Findings on the Definition of OI

Teachers in both groups stated that they worked with students with low academic levels, but their identification has the same meaning as their students' success in social and sporting activities. It is possible that teachers' job satisfaction and identification with their organizations seem to be intertwined. For example, one of the participants said (P6): "When children are successful, it makes us happy. When they taste the feeling of success, their self-confidence increases, which makes both them and us very happy". On the other hand, another participant (P1) said, "Their achievements in social and cultural areas make us very happy. The slightest change in the success of children with family deficiencies makes us happy". While culture course teachers always had questions in their minds while doing school-related work, vocational course teachers stated that they voluntarily took part in school-related work. Additionally, both groups stated that they work in a fair environment.

Findings on OI Model and Teacher Fit

As a result of the focus group interviews with vocational and culture course teachers, their views on organizational identification were discussed in terms of their conformity with basic identification, developed identification and structural identification models.

By explaining the psychological bond of the individual with his/her organization, these models also explain situations in which identification with the organization changes. Among the models that emphasize the link between identity and identification, the model developed by Scott et al. (2005) explains different identity characteristics, the model developed by Kreiner et al. (2004) explains the relationship between the individual and the organization while Reade's model aims to explain the precursors and differences of identification with the organization and the group (Tokgöz, 2012). The teachers of the culture courses in this study were compatible with identification and structural and basic identification; however, the teachers of the vocational courses were compatible with all the identification models.

According to Reade's (2001) basic identification model, the support of managers, the prestige of the organization, and career development opportunities within the group come to the forefront. In the model, in-group identification precursors and organizational identification precursors are seen as the same, and the strength of the emotional bond, which individuals establish with the group they are in, expresses organizational identification. This identification individual exhibits communal behaviors such as loyalty to the group and cooperation and shares the values of the organization.

According to the results of the focus group discussion with the culture course teachers, the identification of some of the participants can be explained by basic identification. For example, one of the participants who provided an example of basic identification stated that the distribution of departments in his school was fair and that the interests of the teachers were always at the forefront (P5). In this way, basic identification is provided by the support of the administrator and the individual's feeling that he/she is working in a fair organization, as stated in Reade (2001).

One of the vocational teachers (V5) stated that "Because of the equality that is being observed in this school, I think that it has a positive effect on the environment." Another participant (V6) said, "No one's interests are higher than the interests of others. Whatever is necessary is done". Another participant (V4) said, "Our administrators willingly help us when we cannot do something. Although we have some responsibilities and I am asked for something else, I fulfill their requests without questioning them." As Kağıtçıbaşı (2004) noted, as a result of the support of the manager, the individual feels respected in the organization and exhibits positive attitudes and behaviors toward the organization and the manager, proving that basic identification is realized.

Kreiner and Ashfort (2004), in their improved identification model, addressed organizational identification with the dimensions of identification, nonidentification, ambivalent identification, and neutral identification to allow individuals to define themselves in different ways.

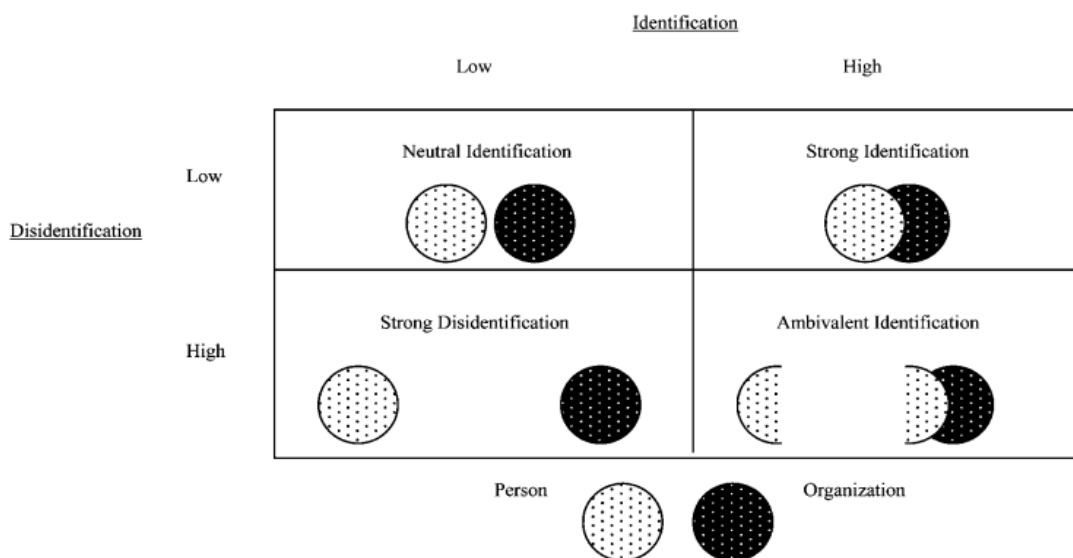


Figure 1. The expanded model of identification. (Adapted from Ashforth, 2001; Dukerich et al., 1998; Elsbach, 1999)

Kreiner and Ashfort (2004) define identification as the positive relation of a person to an entity. In this context, as a result of the focus group interviews with the culture course teachers, it was observed that some of the participants had identification dimensions. For example, one of the culture course teachers (P3) said, "If any of my relatives wanted to work here, I would tell them to choose this school without hesitation because I feel like I have been working here for years". P5 stated that she had been working at this school for 2 years, that it was a large family and that she felt like part of this family. One of the vocational course teachers (V2): "I can work voluntarily in all school-related work even if I do not have a duty. Because the institution I work for is considered my home". Another participant (V5) said, "Unfortunately, I have never experienced such a sincere working environment in any of the schools in which I have worked thus far. People are truly honest here; I have friends I see outside the school", demonstrating his identification with the institution. As Rousseau (1998) states, the individual who sees himself as part of the organization experiences identification and becomes part of the group.

Disidentification is a way of consciously separating one's identity from the organization. The individual has a negative perception of the organization's goals and objectives (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004). The culture course teacher (P4) has been working in this school for 11 years with students who are academically weak and he wants to work with students who are better. As stated by Kreiner and Ashforth (2004), since the individual does not adopt the values of the organization, he/she does not feel that he/she belongs to the organization, causing the state of nonidentification. The interview findings with vocational course teachers revealed no evidences that could be an example of the nonidentification dimension.

It is also possible to be defined as both identifying and not identifying with the organization at the same time. In cases where the aims and objectives of the organization are unclear or communication is poor, the individual may identify with the organization on the one hand and not identify with some aspects of it on the other hand. This is referred to as 'ambivalent identification' (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004). One of the participants (P1) who showed an example of ambivalent identification as a result of the interview with the teachers of the culture course:

"This school does not offer any opportunities; in fact, there are many drawbacks. It is a school where academically very unsuccessful students come together, and when I look at it from the point of view of my own branch, I can never get efficiency. Despite all these negatives, I can say that there is a very good synergy between me and my colleagues. Everyone is very helpful to each other, we work in a pleasant environment...In

this school, the students do not satisfy me academically, I do not work efficiently professionally, but I have friends who are a source of happiness in terms of my friendship environment so I do not plan to leave". This participant both stated that he was not happy working academically in the organization and showed an example of ambivalent identification by stating that he was happy thanks to his harmony with his colleagues. As Tüzün (2006) points out, the individual's values and the organization's values may be consistent or contradictory. In this context, the individual accepts some values and rejects others. There was no statement that could be an example of ambivalent identification in the results of the interviews with the vocational course teachers.

In the neutral identification dimension of the developed identification model, the individual feels neither positive nor negative toward the organization. One of the participants (P6) who showed an example of neutral identification in this dimension said, "I would like to help with something I can do, but if the job is left to me and I am told to do it every time, then I look for an ulterior motive". Another participant (P2) said, "When we are given a task by the school administration, I look at the task, see if it is related to me and think why my other friends are not doing it. If it is related to my work, then I do it. In the early years of my career, I used to volunteer to do all the tasks, but as I got more senior, I felt less inclined to do them". Individuals with neutral identification consciously avoid excessive involvement (positive or negative) because of their past experiences with their organization. Another participant (P4) stated that "every job can be done depending on the situation but in some cases teachers should know how to say no", and as Kreiner and Ashfort (2004) stated, by working with the mentality of "I just do my job", they are neutral toward the goals and values of the organization and feel less involved in the organization compared to other members who make extra effort.

The structural identification model developed by Scott, Corman and Cheney (1998) discusses the concept of commitment. Positive outcomes such as organizational identification and loyalty are measured by the level of commitment. An individual's work group determines his or her identity in the group in which he or she works as shown in the figure below.

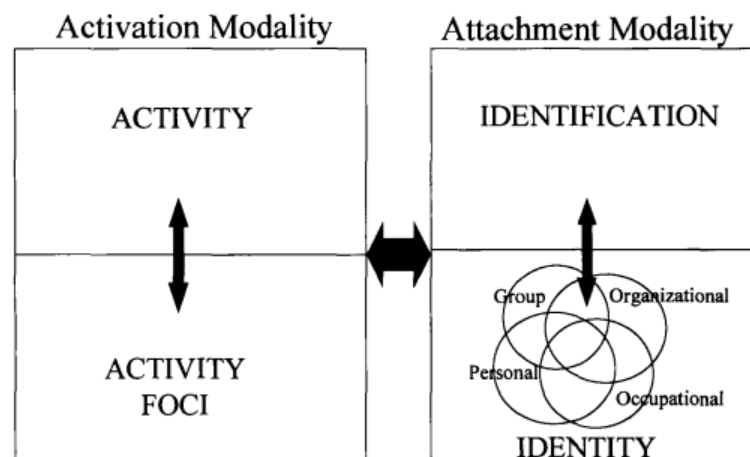


Figure 2. Scott, Corman and Cheney's Structural Identification Model (Scott et al., 1998).

According to the interviews conducted with the teachers of the cultural courses, some of the participants' identification can be explained by structural identification. For instance, one of the participants (P4) said, "We have a high number of students who come from broken families, and the families have no expectations or concerns about the educational status of their children. In this case, the task falls to the teachers. In this sense, our school, with all its teachers, is very committed to this task". He emphasized the concept of commitment, which is important in structural identification, and provided an example of structural identification. Another participant (P2) said, "I am very happy to work here, but the interests of the students come first; we should all think about that. The interests of our students come before the interests of the school. Even there, decisions can be made against me. This situation does not bother me". There is a direct correlation between the degree of identification and the degree to which a person is affected by the situation in which they find themselves. In sudden crisis situations, individuals in an organization become more supportive of the organization, their willingness to cooperate increases, and organizational identification occurs (Scott, Corman and Cheney, 1998).

As a result of the interviews with the vocational course teachers, one of the participants (V3) who showed an example of structural identification said, "Since we are all in the same boat, in my opinion, the interests of our school should have prioritized our individual interests". The other participant (V1) stated that he

wanted to work in this school until he retired and that this was due to the working environment and his relationship with his friends (V5): "I am here as I wanted to be in the same city as my partner, but I do not plan to leave this school because I like the school environment and my friends". In this way, as Scott, Corman and Cheney (1998) note, structural identification is expressed both as a process of commitment and as a product that emerges as a result of that process. Commitment is expressed in terms of the social membership perceived by the individual and the relationship between the individual and the social environment in which he/she is located.

Findings on OI Model and Teacher Fit

Organizational image, as defined by Öricü (2003), is the perception of an organization by individuals and the impression they have of the organization. Organizational image is created as a result of the interaction between environmental elements and organizational members. This image is positive when individuals outside the organization perceive the organization positively, and negative when they perceive it negatively. As a result of the interviews with the culture course teachers, the majority of the participants showed that they were affected by the negative organizational image perceived by other individuals toward the institution they worked for. For example, one of the participants (P6) said, "Negative thoughts affect me a little bit. When they ask me where I work and I say vocational college, the conversation stops there. Because it is considered to be the school where the most unqualified students come from". Another participant (P3) stated that the perception created by the outside world affects him negatively. A negative experience with any part of an organization can create a negative image. The fact that external stakeholders and members of an organization who have in-depth knowledge of the organization have positive and accurate impressions leads to a positive organizational image (Bakan, 2005). For example, one of the participants (P2) said, "I do not think that the parents of the students who know us, who know our school, have a negative perspective".

As a result of the interviews with vocational course teachers, some participants showed negative image perceptions. For example, one of the participants (V1) said, "Of course, it affects me negatively when others say that my school has little success and is bad. However, I continue to do my job because my conscience is clear. There is a perception of vocational high school teachers outside, and this situation affects me and I am sure my other friends negatively". Another participant (V6) said, "In some schools, we hear that children who do not study are told that if you do not study, you will go to vocational high school, which shows that, unfortunately, society's view of our school is negative. I am not very negatively affected by this situation, but it is frankly hurtful to me that what we are doing is not appreciated and seen by people". Negative perceptions of an organization's image are known to have a negative impact on members of the organization and cause them stress, as noted by Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail (1994).

Conclusion & Recommendations

OI is defined as an individual's acceptance of belonging to a particular group and the overlap between the values and goals of the organization and his or her own values. In this study, the qualitative views of vocational and culture course teachers working in vocational colleges on organizational identification were examined using a focus group interview technique. When examining the differences in the views of culture and vocational course teachers on organizational identification, no difference was found between the degree and type of identification of teachers with the school where they work according to demographic and professional characteristics. This situation is consistent with the findings of some studies on teachers' organisational identification in the literature (Aliyev, 2014; Kaplan, 2020; Kurtuluş & Karabıyık; Mıhçı, 2019; Özbaş, 2020; Sezgin-Nartgün & Demirel, 2016; Yaşa, 2018). Teachers' organizational identification does not differ significantly according to their length of service in their schools. The results of Polat's (2009), Aliyev's (2014) and Akpınar's (2014) studies are similar to these findings. While there were participants among the cultural course teachers who wanted to continue their profession in other schools due to academic inadequacy, it was observed that all the vocational course teachers were willing to continue their profession in this school.

The relationship between employees and their organizations plays an important role in OI. Being a vocational or cultural course teacher does not have a significant effect on the relationships between teachers. A positive organizational climate and positive communication between employees enabled both groups of teachers to identify with their organizations. When the organizational member participates in the mutual transfer process within the organization and adopts the values, identification with the organization is realized. According to Haslam (2004), when an individual identifies with his/her organization and adopts group membership, he/she is more motivated to contribute to group goals as opposed to personal interests. As stated by Başer & Ehtiyar (2019), appreciation and motivation increase the motivation of employees and help them identify with their organizations. The literature review has shown that the content of the communication that the organization or management establishes with the employee is a factor that influences identification.

While it is common among cultural course teachers that they can object to the assigned tasks, if necessary, all vocational course teachers indicated that they can voluntarily participate in the assigned tasks and showed that they are more likely to identify with their organizations. It is assumed that the fact that vocational course teachers are more together with their students has an effect on the higher level of organizational identification of vocational course teachers compared to branch teachers. The views of the culture course teachers working in vocational high schools on organizational identification were investigated, and the participants' agreement with the organizational identification models was examined. The majority of the participants identified with their organizations. A significant proportion of teachers are satisfied with their work in these schools. Working in vocational schools does not contribute academically to cultural course teachers. The main reason for this is that students with low performance in secondary school are directed to vocational schools. As a result, teachers' academic knowledge atrophies rather than progresses. In this case, although some teachers show an example of nonidentification, at the same time, both the positive and fair attitudes of the school administration and cooperation in the working environment contribute positively to their identification. Furthermore, studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between teachers' perception of administrative support and their organizational identification (Gillet, 2013; Uzun, 2018; Van Knippenberg, 2007). A positive organizational communication climate increases organizational identification. As stated in the literature, when individuals adopt the behavioral patterns of the organizations they belong to and feel connected to that organization, it means that there is identification (Balay, 2014).

When the views of the vocational course teachers on organizational identification were examined, it was found that all the participants identified with the organization they were in. It is inevitable that individuals who share common beliefs with their organizations and fully adopt the values and goals of the organization will identify with their organizations. As Ricketta (2005) states in the literature, an individual who is in solidarity with his/her organization and who develops his/her attitudes and behaviors toward the organization in a positive way provides OI. Teachers identify with the school in which they work and adopt the school's successes as their own successes and its failures as their own failures. In this context, teachers feel a sense of psychological commitment and belonging to their schools, tend to internalize the aims, values and culture of the organization, and see themselves as part of the organizational unit.

According to the views of the participants working in vocational colleges on the image of their schools, the time spent in the profession and the sector in which they work do not affect their perceptions of the image of their schools in any way. Studies in the literature (Smidts, Pruy, & Van Riel, 2001; Edwards, 2005; Keh & Xie, 2009) have shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between perceived organizational image and OI. In this sense, as employees' perception of organizational image increases, the level of OI also increases. The majority of the participants were willing to continue their work in the organization despite negative image perceptions in the environment and wanted to continue for many years. In this context, it can be said that perceived negative image does not have a strong effect on identifying with the organization.

This research was conducted with teachers working in a vocational high school. As a result of this research, it was found that there are very few studies on the types of OI of vocational high school teachers in Türkiye. So, it is suggested that the types of organizational identification of teachers should be addressed in future studies. Conducting the study in different provinces and different institutions will make it possible to conduct comparative studies on the organizational identification of vocational high school teachers. It is believed that expanding the literature on this topic will contribute to the recognition of the importance of organizational identification. This study, which was conducted according to teachers' perceptions, can be improved by taking the opinions of students, who are the other stakeholders of the school, and by investigating the effects of teachers' organizational identification levels on students' achievement. This study, based on teachers' perceptions, can be developed by applying it to the perceptions of school administrators, students and parents. For policy makers, it could be suggested that newly appointed or reassigned teachers should be supported by school administrators and senior staff in the process of adapting to their schools. Harmony between school management, teachers and the school should guide the process. To increase organizational identification, democratic, collaborative, and communicative working environments should be created. The working conditions of teachers should be improved by the school administrator, their achievements should be appreciated, and they should be proud of being teachers of the school where they work.

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