

THE RELATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM AND TRUST WITH SPECIFIC FOCUS ON THE EMPLOYEES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTION OPERATING IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF THE ATATURK FOREST FARM

Hasan Gokhan Dogan^{1,*} and Mustafa Tezcan²

¹Kirsehir Ahi Evran University, Agricultural Faculty, Department of Agricultural Economics, Turkey; ²Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, The Ataturk Forest Farm Directorate, Turkey.

*Corresponding author's e-mail: hg.dogan@ahievran.edu.tr

The present study examines the relation between organizational cynicism and trust with specific focus on the employees of the Ataturk Forest Farm. Exploratory factor analysis, t-test and ANOVA tests were used in investigating the relation between organizational cynicism and trust. The sample of the study was determined on the basis of the voluntary participation method and consisted of the employees of 74 production businesses working at the Plant Production Directorate, Milk Factory, and Fruit Juice and Honey Factory of the Ataturk Forest Farm operating in Ankara in 2021. An information sheet including "Organizational Cynicism Scale" and "Organizational Trust Scale" as well as the socio-demographical properties was used in the study as the data collection tool in order to collect the necessary information. Reliability analysis of the organizational cynicism and trust scales was done and the scales were found reliable for this study. After that, according to the results of the exploratory factor analysis conducted with the data collected by the both scales, the organizational cynicism and trust scales were divided into three dimensions each. The relation between organizational cynicism and trust indicated that the first, second and third dimensions of the organizational cynicism had a statistical difference of $p < 0.10$, $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.05$, respectively from the organizational trust. As a result, no relation was found between organizational cynicism and trust regarding the employees of the Atatürk Forest Farm. The statistical differences as a result of the ANOVA test also confirmed these findings. However, the trust of the employees in their organization, managers and colleagues can be considered in the centre of their hopelessness, negative thoughts and even their sense of belonging.

Keywords: Human resource, organization pessimism, employee's behaviour, labour problems, trust atmosphere, corporate performance.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations have always been a leading structure for the problems that need to be solved in a society. Production technologies that have been rapidly developing, the increase in the need for qualified labour force, increase in the competitive conditions in the market are the causes that further increase the existing value of the human factor. Today, organizations carry out quite diverse social and economic activities and have vital importance in producing solutions against the complex problems of our time. The initial studies on organizations didn't take human factor into consideration. Later on, human factor was found to be worth studying by several researchers who introduced first studies

involving human factor. The concepts of organizational cynicism and trust are one of the topics the importance which have been understood in the last half century.

Organizational cynicism: Organizational cynicism can be defined as the behaviours of an employee towards the institutional organization he or she works for. There have been several academic studies upon the emergence of this concept. Studies have acquired a deeper dimension subsequently (Yalçınkaya, 2014). The concept of organizational trust became a subject of the literature on organizational behaviour and it refers to a multidimensional trust meaning including the dimensions of trust in organization, trust in managers and trust in colleagues (Joseph and Winston, 2005). The concept of cynicism



derived from the word “sinic” of the old periods while sinics were known to be relentless critics while the modern meaning of the word involves pessimism and distrust. The common point of old sinics and modern sinics is hopelessness (Yeşilçimen, 2015). Cynicism believes in the existence of life based on a relation of mutual interest and represents an understanding distant from goodness (Reyhanoğlu, 2007). Organizational cynicism includes the negative feelings or behaviours of an individual towards the organization. Therefore, it leads to being in a hopeless and distrustful state of mind (Lorcu, 2019). Based on the definitions for organizational cynicism, it can be said that various concepts were included into the concept of organizational cynicism throughout its historical development. Organizational cynicism is first referred to be a rejection of goodness and sincerity for an organization. Later on, conditions such as selfishness, deceit, pessimism, distrust and psychological withdrawal were included into this definition due to probable further questioning of rejection of goodness and sincerity. Cynicism is a phenomenon of thought that belongs to people who are constantly critical, self-indulgent, and full of negative thoughts (Erkutlu ve Ozdemir, 2018). Here, what matters is the fact that organizational cynicism is based on a philosophical thinking that has existed for a long time. This helped the development of the definition of organizational cynicism as the concept of the philosophy of cynicism started from Greece and reached to America. As a result, cynicism was blended with several cultures. The concept of organizational cynicism has, therefore, several different definitions (Tink, 2019). It can be argued that the cynicism phenomenon that appear in almost every organization has a significant effect on the areas including the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization. Organizational cynicism provides a basis for abandoning principles such as righteousness, honesty, justice and faith for the sake of a personal interest as well as for people to criticise and discredit the organization, and be possessed by negative feelings and thoughts. Based on this point, organizational cynicism can be examined in three dimensions including “cognitive”, “affective” and “behavioural” (Atay, 2014).

Organizational trust: Several studies were conducted by experimental psychologists and political scientists on the concept of trust from scientific point of view while the sociology based theoretical aspect of these studies was incomplete. In recent years, sociologists started to deal with the issue of trust from sociological point of view (Lewis and Weigert, 1985). In the field of organizational behaviour, the concept of trust may have a personal meaning as well as an organizational dimension. The organizational dimension of trust refers to a common commitment and collaboration to achieve corporate goals. Individual dimension defines the willingness of individuals to work with the other members of an organization and their commitment to organizational

changes (Puusa and Tolvanen, 2006). Several researchers suggested that trust is necessary in the field of managerial and behavioural areas while this concept has never been defined in a certain way.

There are various approaches with regard to definition (Hosmer, 1995). According to Deutsch (1958), trust is the condition to place one’s confidence in another party while one party has an expectation from the other party and a high faith that this party would meet this expectation. According to Rempel *et al.* (1985), trust is the expectation and tendency to receive positive behaviours from the trusted party by means of the feelings of the trusting party including love, faith and happiness. According to Moorman *et al.* (1992), trust is defined to be “a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence”. According to Morgan and Hunt (1994) trust is the faith of one in the integrity and importance of the other.

Trust is a phenomenon affecting dependency where the trusting party activates without keeping his or her behaviours under control (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 1998). The presence of trust at the work place contributes to the development of corporate performance. It is essential to support the building of long term trust for the improvement of organizational performance. Consistent and mutual activities are carried out in an atmosphere of trust (Morgan and Zeffane, 2003). The lack of trust in the leader reduces the corporate performance in organizations. In organizations where trust is present, employees make themselves more coherent for the managements which don’t have control upon them. High organizational trust encourages voluntary cooperation and strengthens the communication networks within an organization. Trust encourages the sharing of the information of the employees of an organization for the benefit of that organization and contributes to the commitment of employees. Trust reduces fear in organizations and improves sharing of information. Cooperation is improved in organizations where trust is present and the interaction ways of individuals making up the organization are positively affected. In organizations where trust is present, there is an increase in commitment, atmosphere of transparency, information sharing, training and development (Renzl, 2008). The concept of trust has been subject to several branches of science. Trust is studied in various disciplines under topics including interpersonal trust, interorganizational trust, political trust, social trust and organizational trust. The concept of organizational trust is multidimensional including the concepts of trust in an organization, trust in managers and trust in colleagues (Joseph and Winston, 2005). Organizational trust can be considered as a psychological environment that needs to be created with the participation of organization members (Kocaoğlu ve Özdemir, 2020). The concept of trust has been addressed in the social sciences literature for a long time. There is a single definition of the concept of organizational

trust in the literature. Several researchers defined organizational trust in different ways (Rusu and Baboş, 2015).

Nyhan and Marlowe (1997) defined organizational trust to be “a type of trust with two dimensions consisting of a combination of trust by individuals who are members of an organization in their superiors and in their organization”. According to Zaheer *et al.* (1998) organizational trust functions at individual and corporate levels where the members of an organizations have trust in their organization. Organizational trust develops in line with expectations, predictability and opportunities and requires a process. Development of trust in organizations contributes to healthy relations and to the development of cohesive solutions with mutual benefit. Organizational effectiveness is increased and individuals of an organization can bunch up in organizations where organizational trust is present (Paçacı, 2019). According to Mayer *et al.* (2007) organizational trust is the willingness to take risk and be defenceless which develops by means of the elements including skill, altruism and integrity between subordinates and superiors in organizations.

The effect of trust and practices of cynicism in organizational cultures on the future accomplishment of an organization resulted in attractiveness and continuous interest in this subject. Considering the results, the idea of further analysing the studies in an organization still prevails. Within this framework, the process of change and development related to the perceived organizational cynicism and trust in employees was examined with specific focus on the Ataturk Forest Farm which is an affiliate organization of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study examined the relation between the subjects of organizational cynicism and trust. It was conducted in Ankara and its main body was consisted of the 183 employees working at the production facilities of the Ataturk Forest Farm, which is a public institution. The study was conducted with the 74 employees who participated in the survey among the 183 employees of the main body. The percentage of personnel participating in the study was 40.5%.

The study first included data collection by means of an information sheet about the personal data of the employees (sex, marital status, education, age and time of work at the organization) and then relevant scales were used to collect information on organizational cynicism and trust. The organizational trust scale that was used in the study was created by Omarov (2009) through several foreign scales. Organizational cynicism scale was developed by Brandes *et al.* (1999) while the validity and reliability of its Turkey

form were provided by Karacaoglu and Ince (2012). After the data collection process, socio-demographic qualities were interpreted and the exploratory factor analysis was applied to the data set obtained from the scales of organizational cynicism and trust. The aim of the exploratory factor analysis, which is the most common application of dimensional reduction, was to shrink the data set for easier explanation (Brown, 2009).

RESULTS

Personal information of the employees/participants: The frequency and percentage distribution of the employees who participated in the study based on sex, section of work, age, work duration, vocational position, marital status and education level is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of employee’s personal information.

Sex	n	%
Male	63	85.1
Female	11	14.9
Total	74	100.0
Unit		
Plant Production	23	31.1
Milk	42	56.7
Fruit Juice and Honey	9	12.2
Total	74	100.0
Length of service		
1-10	43	58.1
11-20	10	13.5
21-30	19	25.7
31-40	2	2.7
Total	74	100.0
Age		
20-30	15	20.3
31-40	18	24.3
41-50	33	44.6
51-60	8	10.8
Total	74	100.0
Marital Status		
Married	57	77.0
Single	17	23.0
Total	74	100
Education Level		
Primary Education	24	32.4
High School	34	45.9
Two-year degree	5	6.8
Bachelor's degree	8	10.8
Master	3	4.1
Total	74	100.0
Vocational Position		

Civil Servant	3	4.1
Permanent Worker	65	87.8
Temporary Worker	5	6.8
Unit Manager	1	1.3
Total	74	100.0

It was observed that the 85.1% of the employees who participated in the study were male while 14.9% of them were female (Table 1). 31.1% of the employees worked in the plant production section, 56.7% in the milk section and 12.2% in the fruit juice and honey section. With regards to the length of service, 58.1% of them had a vocational seniority between 1 to 10 years, 13.5% between 11 to 20 years, 25.7% between 21 to 30 years and 2.7% between 31 to 40 years (Table 1). Regarding the age ranges of the employees, 20.3% of them were in the ages between 20 to 30 years, 24.3% between 31 to 40 years, 44.6% between 41 to 50 years and 10.8% between 51 to 60 years. On the other hand, it was observed that 77% of them were married while 23% were single. With regards to their education level, 32.4% had primary school, 45.9% high school, 6.8% two-

year degree, 10.8% bachelor's degree and 4.1% master education. Their vocational positions included 4.1% civil servants, 87.8% permanent workers, 6.8% temporary workers and 1.3% unit manager.

Exploratory factor analysis on organizational cynicism: First, the reliability analysis of the organizational cynicism scale, one of the scales used in the study was carried out specifically in the present study. It can be stated that the organizational cynicism scale is reliable for this research. Cronbach's Alpha value was determined to be 0.882 which can be considered a high reliability category (Table 2).

Table 2. Organizational cynicism scale reliability analysis.

Reliability Analysis	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.882
Number of Items	13

Following the reliability analysis of the organizational cynicism scale used in the study, an exploratory analysis was conducted with the data collected from the study. It is

Table 4. Organizational cynicism variance explanation.

Dimensions	Baseline eigenvalue			Rotated Total Factor Loads		
	Total	Explained variance (%)	Accumulated variance (%)	Total	Explained variance (%)	Accumulated variance (%)
1	5.738	44.137	44.137	3.947	30.360	30.360
2	2.329	17.918	62.055	2.726	20.970	51.329
3	1.315	10.116	72.171	2.709	20.842	72.171

Table 5. Scores of the organizational cynicism items, distributions per dimensions and factor loads.

Sr.		Dimensions			Average Score
		Cognitive	Affective	Behavioural	
1	I get stressed when I think of the organization I work for.	0.925			2.23
2	I get angry when I think of the organization I work for.	0.917			2.24
3	I rage when I think of the organization I work for.	0.914			2.06
4	I get worried when I think of the organization I work for.	0.814			2.25
5	We have an exchange of meaningful glances with my colleagues when there is talk about the organization I work for and about the employees.	0.563			2.75
6	I have a doubt whether a declared practice in the organization I work for will be realized.		0.816		3.15
7	I believe that there is a difference between what is told and what is done in the organization I work for.		0.755		3.00
8	There are very few common points between the policies, objectives and practices of the organization I work for.		0.699		2.94
9	I find few similarities between what is said to be done and what is actually done in the organization I work for.		0.591		3.00
10	Employees are expected to do something in the organization I work for but a different behaviour gets awarded.		0.543		2.86
11	I talk with others about how things are done in the organization I work for.			0.901	2.02
12	I complain to my friends out of the organization I work for about what is going on at work.			0.854	2.01
13	I criticise with others the practices and policies at the organization I work for.			0.725	1.79

1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Agree a little, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree.

important for the data set and sample size to be suitable for this analysis in order to carry out the exploratory factor analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was carried out to test and the results are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity related to the organizational cynicism scale.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin		0.800
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Chi-square	707.44
	df	78
	Significance level	0.000*

*statistically significant at the level of $p < 0.01$.

Upon examining the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was obtained to be 0.800 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be statistically significant at the level of $p < 0.01$. These results indicate that there are statistically significant relations between the variables and that the data set is suitable for the factor analysis.

of dimensions created by the combination of the items related to the scale that was used and the determination of the variance ratio revealed by these dimensions. Table 4 includes the variance explanation results of organizational cynicism.

For organizational cynicism variance, the items of the scale were collected under three dimensions. The first dimension explained 4413% of the variance, the second dimension 1791% and third dimension 1011%. The accumulated variance of three dimensions explained 7217% of the total variance.

Distributions and factor loads of the items by dimensions were explained after determining the ratio of the number of dimensions to the total explained variance. The relevant results are given in Table 5.

The distribution of the items of the organizational cynicism scale indicated five items in the first dimension which were the items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11. The factor loads of the concerned items varied between 0.925 and 0.563. There were five items in the second dimension as well, which included the items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Their factor loads were in the range from 0.816 to 0.543. There were three items in the third dimension. The

factor loads of the item 12, 10 and 13 varied between 0.901 and 0.725.

Exploratory factor analysis related to organizational trust: Another scale that is used in the study is the organizational trust scale. The reliability analysis results related to the organizational trust scale are given in Table 3.6.

Table 6. Reliability analysis results of the organizational trust scale.

Reliability Analysis	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.933
Number of Items	22

The reliability results of the organizational trust scale showed that Cronbach's Alpha Value was 0.933. This value indicates that the scale had a high reliability level.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was carried out to test the compatibility of the data set that was collected in the study by means of the organizational trust scale. The test results are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity related to the organizational trust scale.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin		0.842
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Chi-square	1486.950
	df	231
	Significance level	0.000

The results of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were found to be sufficient with regard to the applicability of the exploratory factor analysis (Table 7). The KMO test result of 0.842 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were statistically significant at a level of $p < 0.01$.

It is essential to determine the number of scales for the organizational trust scale and to determine the variance explanation levels. Table 8 presents the dimensions and related variance ratios that are explained in relation to the dimensions.

The organizational trust variance explanation indicates that it was consisted of three dimensions in total. The obtained dimensions explained 65.25% of the total variance while the first dimension explained 29.47%, the second dimension 20.32% and the third dimension 15.46%.

Table 8. Organizational trust variance explanation.

Dimensions	Baseline eigenvalue			Rotated Total Factor Loads		
	Total	Explained variance (%)	Accumulated variance (%)	Total	Explained variance (%)	Accumulated variance (%)
1	10.218	46.447	46.447	6.483	29.470	29.470
2	02.298	10.446	56.893	4.472	20.326	49.796
3	01.840	08.366	65.258	3.402	15.463	65.258

The distribution of the items related to the dimensions and the determination of the factor loads are presented in Table 9.

When the distribution of the scale according to the items and factor loadings were calculated, the first dimension included ten items. Factor loads varied between 0.809 and 0.589. In the second dimension, the factor loads of the items were distributed between 0.889 and 0.530. There were six items in the third dimension and their factor loads were between 0.716 and 0.419.

A total of six dimensions were obtained from both scales used in the study. Three of these dimensions belong to

organizational cynicism and three of them to organizational trust. Investigating the interaction between these two scales, and therefore, between the two approaches, is another important stage of the study. In order to determine this, the statistical analysis of the dimensions obtained from the scales was made with the help of ANOVA test and the results are given in Table 10.

The first dimension of organizational cynicism differed statistically from organizational trust at a level of $p < 0.1$, the second dimension at a level of $p < 0.05$, and the third dimension at a level of $p < 0.05$ (Table 10).

Table 9. Scores of the organizational trust items, distributions per dimensions and factor loads.

	Dimensions			Average score
	Trust in manager	Trust in colleagues	Trust in organization	
I trust that my managers can do their job without causing other problems.	0.809			3.66
I can easily tell my managers anything about my job.	0.796			3.71
I trust my managers to make the right decisions about their job.	0.762			3.62
I trust that my managers will keep their promises.	0.754			3.60
I trust the truth of what my managers are telling me about anything.	0.741			3.81
I trust that my managers are adequately knowledgeable and resourceful in matters related to their job.	0.707			3.43
My managers are supportive and helpful whenever we need help.	0.698			3.87
What my managers say and do are consistent with each other.	0.623			3.54
I trust that my managers will do their job properly.	0.595			3.70
My managers take our opinion on decisions and procedures regarding employees.	0.589			3.29
My colleagues are doing their job even when the managers are not around.		0.889		4.04
I trust most of my colleagues that they will do their job best.		0.881		3.75
I trust my colleagues that they will not make my job difficult when it comes to demanding work.		0.776		3.93
If I encounter any difficulties in my workplace, I trust my colleagues to help me.		0.728		3.89
I trust most of my colleagues that they are experts in their job.		0.530		3.75
The organization I work for treats me always fairly.			0.716	3.51
I trust the policies of the organization I work for regarding employees.			0.704	3.32
The organization I work for is not interested in my problems.			-0.689	2.89
The organization I work for fulfils its promises.			0.685	3.40
If you do your job well, the organization I work for will reward you and support you.			0.548	3.33
I trust that the organization I work for is honest to me.			0.513	3.77
The organization I work for does not support me when I need it.			-0.419	3.23

1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Agree a little, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree.

Table 10. ANOVA test results of the relation between organizational cynicism and organizational trust.

		ANOVA					
		Squares	Summary	df	Average squares	F	p
Cognitive	Between groups	68.111		63	1.081	2.211	0.086***
	Within a group	4.889		10	0.489		
	Total	73.000		73			
Affective	Between groups	68.922		63	1.094	2.682	0.046**
	Within a group	4.078		10	0.408		
	Total	73.000		73			
Behavioural	Between groups	68.883		63	1.093	2.656	0.048**
	Within a group	4.117		10	0.412		
	Total	73.000		73			

Statistically significant at a level of *p<0,01, **p<0,05, ***p<0,10.

DISCUSSION

In today's conditions, human resources are of key importance in terms of ensuring the sustainable growth of organizations that are constantly evolving and capable of change. The highest use of the employee resources in a work environment can undoubtedly be achieved by the trust of the human resources in the organization against the cynicism policies of the organization. As a result of the researches and

analyses made to understand the relationship between organizational trust and cynicism, the interaction based on organizational trust and cynicism builds a strong network of relationship. A total of six dimensions were obtained from both scales used in the study. Three of these dimensions belong to organizational cynicism and three to organizational trust. The organizational cynicism results are consistent with the results of Brandes *et al.* (1999), who developed the scale, and Karacaoglu and Ince (2012), who

investigated the validity and reliability of the Turkey form. The results determined for organizational trust are similar to the results of Omarov (2009). Therefore, it can be stated that the results obtained from the study are in accordance with the theory. Investigating the interaction between these two scales, and therefore between the two approaches, is another important stage of the study. In order to determine this, statistical analysis of the dimensions obtained from the scales test was made with the help of ANOVA test and the results showed that the first dimension of organizational cynicism was statistically different than organizational trust at a level of $p < 0.10$, the second dimension at a level of $p < 0.05$ and the third dimension at a level of $p < 0.05$. The statistical differences in the results of ANOVA test indicated that there was no relation between organizational cynicism and organizational trust. When the literature is examined, it is stated in Chrobot-Mason's (2003) study that organizational trust decreases as the level of organizational cynicism increases. On the other hand, in the work of Andersson (1996), a negative relationship was observed between organizational trust and organizational cynicism. In the studies of Nyhan (1999) and Topaloglu (2010), it is stated that the perception of organizational trust has a decreasing effect on organizational cynicism.

Conclusions: These relationships point to the negative interaction between trust and cynicism. However, the fact that no relationship was found in this study may be due to the fact that the institution where the research was conducted was a private institution in Turkey. Atatürk Forest Farm was one of the provincial investments in the agricultural sector during the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Besides being a state institution, it is a symbolic institution of the country and the memory of the saint is respected. For this reason, the sensitivity shown in the selection of the employees and managers of the institution can be considered as a reason for the absence of such a relationship. However, the trust of employees in the organization, managers, and colleagues can still be considered to be in the centre of their hopelessness, negative thoughts and even their sense of belonging.

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