Relationship Between the Organizational Change and Organizational Cynicism: A Research in Denizli Organized Industrial Zone

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to measure whether the workers have relevant feelings of distrust and skepticism of individuals for their organizations as a result cynicism in the environment of change and if it exists to measure of this relation's level and direction. The research was conducted on a total of 100 white-collar workers who are working in the enterprises operating in Denizli Organized Industrial Zone by survey method. The data obtained from the survey methodology was subjected to a variety of statistical analyses. Significant differences has emerged when examining the relationships of employees of organizations with cynicism based on the changes in the organizations, personality cynicism, cynicism focuses on trust in organizations and management trust, and cynicism in organizations.

Keywords: Cynicism, organizational cynicism, organizational change

Introduction

While organizations endeavor to cope with the changes that are taking place in economic, technological and social environments which are becoming more complex nowadays, employees have increasingly become a source of resistance in a negative manner rather than adapting to these conditions (Stanley et al., 2005: 430). Both sectoral developments and many incorrect and unsuccessful changes and transformations practices arising from the management of organizations have seriously led to feelings of insecurity, uneasiness, suspicion of organizational politics and practices, alienation and various negative thoughts, attitudes and behaviors of employees. All these negative attitudes and behaviors are called cynicism.

The ability of businesses to continue their operations with high performance is closely related to their compliance with change conditions. The attitudes of employees, who have cynical attitudes, such as feeling insecurity towards authority, disparaging communication and instruction within the organization, and making negative criticism of managers in the face of this change constitute a source of resistance that hinders the business to adapt to change. In such an environment, organizational cynicism appears due to many factors. When we look at the businesses that are undergoing a process of change, cynicism originating mainly from change, cynicism focusing on organization and manager in this change, personality cynicism that is present in individuals' personalities and that they transmit to the work environment, and cynicism which is based on skepticism stand out. This situation can adversely affect organization-developing activities.

Conceptual Framework
The Concept of Cynicism

While cynicism is defined as "not liking others and not trusting others" (Brandes et al., 2008: 235), Bateman et al. (1992: 768) defined cynicism as "negative and insecure attitudes towards authorities and institutions" (Arslan, 2012: 13). In the most general sense, anyone who believes that individuals care only for his or her interests and who accordingly regards everyone else as self-seeker is called "cynical" and the philosophy that tries to explain this is called "cynicism". In its modern interpretation, cynicism is used to define captious, choosy, or critical people (Erdost et al., 2007: 517).   The basic belief about cynicism is that principles like honesty, truthfulness and sincerity are sacrificed for more individual interests (Bakker, 2007: 123). While cynicism phenomenon affects the social experience of the people in the general sense, at the same time it affects the relations between especially employers and workers in the business world and the organizations (Özler et al., 2010: 48-49).

Organizational Cynicism

Everyone involved within an organization must first trust in the organization, then in the others in the organization, and this trust must be mutual. In organizations where trust is a dominant feeling, cynical feelings cannot shelter; and where insecurity is dominant, the number of cynics increases. The cynical concept conceptualized by Goldner et al. (1977) is the belief that there is a lack of sincerity in the behaviors, all the decisions taken and the management understanding within the unity of the organization. Starting from this point, it would not be wrong to say that cynicism represents "bad impression".

It is seen that the concept of organizational cynicism is a phenomenon involving the attitudes of the individual and the three dimensions of organizational cynicism are stated as follows: In the cognitive dimension process, the person becomes aware of the changes, compares the organizational elements with their own values and develops negative reactions in the direction of their own values (Piderit 2000: 786; 2006: 144). The emotional (affective) dimension of organizational cynicism consists of emotions such as interest-excitement, surprise-surprising, distress-suffering, anger-aggression, disgust-alienation and humiliation-despise (Dean et al., 1998: 346). As a matter of fact, when individuals think of their organizations, they show sarcastic attitudes, feel angry, embarrassed, and even disgust. In the behavioral dimension, the individual's negative beliefs and attitudes are reflected in his behaviors, and individuals begin to exhibit derogatory behavior, pessimistic estimates (Card, 2015: 87) and cynical and cunning attitudes against the organization. The changing environment, on the other hand, includes negative behaviors that are observable both in response to intentions and in response to change stimuli (Piderit, 2000: 786).

Adverse events and inconsistent practices frequently experienced in contemporary organizations such as worthless and inconsistent words, ignoring and disrespecting human emotions and individual needs, lack of honesty in the decision-making process, and lack of management's support in real sense, lack of interaction between leadership and member, unsuccessful change attempts, lack of leadership qualities of managers, and restructuring, shrinking, dismissal lead to the formation of cynicism (Mirvis and Kanter, 1989: 385-386; Naus et al., 2007: 688-690; James, 2005: 18-20).

Cynical attitudes and behaviors have four components: action, target, content and time (Delken, 2004: 14), and these components manifest themselves in a different way as cynical behavior emerges. This leads to different cynicism approaches, which are the types of cynicism (Dean et al., 1998: 343-344). Personality cynicism is a kind of skepticism, believing that the environmental and social relations are composed of people who are extremely self-confident, unsatisfied, deceitful, malevolent, and only interested in their own interests. Institutional / social cynicism is defined as a disappointment that emerges as a result of the notion that the unreal expectations of persons are not met by society, institutions or other persons (Pitre, 2004: 11). Employee cynicism emerges when the real personality and values of the individuals conflicts with the values of the organizations and the role ambiguity emerge. Finally, today's businesses' struggle to keep pace with change which is inevitable can result in employees' showing resistance to change (Wanous et al., 2000: 133). Thus, organizational change cynicism occurs in which the manager is accused of and the efforts of development and change are seen inadequate / unnecessary. Since change-sensitive

individuals are influenced negatively by their past negative experiences; so they resist and respond negatively to change efforts, which results in these individuals' becoming cynical individuals (Reichers et al., 1997: 49, Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2003: 637).

Organizational cynicism expresses a bad impression as a personality characteristic rather than a sharp and sudden personality change; and it is a form that occurs as a result of experiences. The destruction of this formation can be long and destructive for employees. Those who have cynical behaviors think that their organizations are far from justice, honesty and sincerity, and these opinions will eventually lead to the emergence of neural and emotional disorders and behaviors such as indifference to work, hopelessness, separation from work, insecurity, skepticism, disappointment, poor performance and lying (Akdağ, 2016: 796-797). In the organizational dimension, cynicism draws attention as a destructive element that negatively affects organizational satisfaction and loyalty, that brings about behaviors like alienation and insecurity and that also increases the speed of employee turnover (E. Pelit and N. Pelit, 5).

The research conducted after examining the causes and consequences of cynicism causing destructions in terms of both individuals and organizations focused on the management of cynicism (Treadway et al., 2004; Reichers et al., 1997; Wu et al., 2005; Özgener et al., 2008; Watt and Piotrowski , 2008). Determining the behaviors of employees that cause cynicism before they develop and trying to solve the discomforts before they cause bigger problems is of great importance in terms of reducing the cynical behavior as much as possible (Akdağ, 2016: 804). Moreover, in order to manage and prevent organizational cynicism in organizations where change is inevitable, it is necessary that the employees participate in the decision-making process, that entire causes and outcomes of the change be explained to the employees, that the employees be informed about the process, that the change expand into a process, that a trust environment be created via constructive and useful messages and that business environments in which employees can express themselves freely be created (Watt and Piotrowski, 2008: 28)

Organizational Change

The constant wave of change that is experienced today differentiated being active and efforts to develop new strategies from the transition processes between ages and reduced it to a very short time. Many of the changes taking place at the organizational level stem from efforts to adapt to their environment. Such changes also cause inevitable reactions to occur in the managers and employees (Turan, 2011: 52-53).

According to a definition, organizational change is defined as a " positive change in behaviors and action patterns of all organizational members (principally managers) that constitute the human orientation of the business " (Şimşek and Akın, 2003: 50). Kurt Lewin was one of the first to study the process of organizational change. Lewin examined the change in the business in three stages. These steps are behavioral analysis (defrosting, starting), transition phase (switching or actuation, continuation), re-freezing (desired state, freezing) phases (Kozak and Güçlü, 2003: 3). In the process of organizational change, differences take place in many fields that constitute the foundation of the organization, such as organizational goals, strategies, responsibilities, technological structures, organizational culture and organizational individuals; and it is often inevitable that change will affect these areas. Before the change takes place, it is important in this process to analyze and to interpret the advantages and disadvantages of the system and to prepare the system for the change. In their study, Lawrence and Yarlett (1995), emphasize particularly this issue, and they propose three key issues that managers should pay attention to in terms of change for a successful change of businesses. These are to build the system well, train the employees in the framework of this necessity, to bring them to the level of the qualities required by the job, and finally to motivate the employees effectively for a specific target (Sayli and Tüfekçi, 2008: 195-196).

The main characteristics of organizational change are: a) Organizational change has a complex feature because its subject is organizational structure, technology, and human. b) This change does not take place only once, but it is a phenomenon which organizations experience throughout their lifetime but which does not always show the same determination. (c) It can cause controversy in managerial activities due to its nature; and the reason for this is that the behavior of a manager who does not have the ability to change without altering the existing order of relations conflicts with his behavior in the organization to maintain a decisive position (Özkan,2002).

Today, rather than the necessity of change in organizations, it is discussed whether organizations change at a sufficient pace, how continuous change can be achieved, and how organizations can transform themselves into constantly learning organizations. In other words, the only thing that does not change in the organizations is the change itself (Koçel, 2011: 667-668). As Drucker put it, the important thing is "the placement of the ability to change within each organizational structure ....". The fact that what change can accomplish is so comprehensive causes positive results in the businesses, and at the same time, it creates resistance and bigotry against change. Resistance arises wherever there is change. If there is no resistance, there is no change. Managers who see at the beginning that certain persons or

groups might show resistance to change have to take the necessary precautions in time to remove this resistance (Turan, 2011: 51).

Cynicism as a Result of Organizational Change

In today's conditions where globalization is spreading rapidly, a pessimistic view of the struggles and efforts that organizations make as a result of change and behaviors of looking at change with suspicion can occur. As a result, cynicism levels in the individual inevitably increase. Organizational change usually begins in top management and changes are observed in some management specific behaviors. If it turns out that the promises and the statements made by the management are not true and in time are not realized, some employees may have negative attitudes towards the organization, the leader making the change and efforts made for the change. When the works made for change are unsuccessful, employees may feel cheated and frustrated (Abraham, 2000: 272).

There are several reasons why organizational change cynicism is important to organizations. If cynical individuals refuse to support the change in their organizations, organizational change cynicism can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. The fact that cynical individuals do not support change may lead to limited success or failure. Failure strengthens negative beliefs and prevents the desire to try organizational change again. Thus, it is less likely to achieve success in the attempts to change (Reichers et al., 1997: 48).

Change-focused cynicism is a negative attitude towards a particular organizational change. These negative attitudes include three dimensions. The first of these is the disbelief in the requests that the management determines or expresses for a certain organizational change (distrust in organization and manager); the second is the pessimism about change struggles (skepticism against change); and the third is the feeling of disappointment and tendency to behave in a humiliating and critical manner against a certain organizational change (employee and personality cynicism) (Turan, 2011: 104).

Research Methodology
Purpose, Hypotheses and Method of the Research

The study was conducted on white-collar employees working in the private sector in Denizli Organized Industrial Zone, in order to find out whether there is a relationship between the levels of organizational cynicism and levels of cynicism resulting from the distrust and skepticism that individuals have personally against their organizations. Levels of cynicism of change, trust-related cynicism, personality cynicism, employee cynicism based on skepticism, and their relations with each other have been examined.

The research hypotheses have been formed in the following way:

H1: There is a significant relationship between change-based cynicism and personality cynicism in organizations.
H2: There is a significant relationship between change-based cynicism and trust and trust in management- oriented cynicism in organizations.
H3: There is a significant relationship between change-based cynicism and skepticism as an indicator of cynicism in organizations.
H4: There is a significant relationship between change-based cynicism in organizations and general organizational cynicism levels of individuals.
H5: There is a significant relationship between personality cynicism and trust and trust in management- oriented cynicism in organizations.
H6: There is a significant relationship between personality cynicism and skepticism as an indicator of cynicism in organizations.
H7: There is a significant relationship between personality cynicism and general organizational cynicism levels of individuals in organizations.
H8: There is a significant relationship between trust and trust in management- oriented cynicism and skepticism as an indicator of cynicism in organizations.
H9: There is a significant relationship between skepticism as an indicator of cynicism and general organizational cynicism levels of individuals in organizations.

Descriptive research was carried out in order to test these hypotheses and questionnaire was used as the data collection method in the research. In the preparation of the questionnaire, organizational cynicism scale was used which was adapted by Kanter and Mirvis (1989) and used by Stanley et al. (Stanley et al., 2005) and Reichers et al (Reichers et al., 1997). The language equivalency was applied to the questions in the questionnaire by the researcher. The questionnaire consists of 33 questions in total. The first 9 questions in the questionnaire aim to measure the change cynicism /cynicism that emerges with the change; 7 questions, the cynicism that emerges as a result of distrust in the manager and organization; 5 questions, innate personality cynicism; 5 questions, cynicism that emerge with skepticism. The other questions in the questionnaire represent personal questions about measuring demographic characteristics.

The analysis was performed with SPSS 17, a statistical evaluation program. First, the reliability of the scale was measured by Cronbach's Alpha and found to be 0.685. If the obtained alpha coefficient is between 0.60 <a <0.80, the scale is considered reliable in the literature. Correlation analysis was performed in testing the hypotheses.

Findings of the Research

42% of the participants are women, 58% are men; 76% are younger than 35 years old, 62% are married, 43% have an associate degree and 57%

have a bachelor's degree. The proportion of employees that has worked for 1-5 years is 37%; 6-10 years is 35%; and 11 years or more is 28%. When we look at the characteristics of the sample in general; it can be said that it is a sample with adequate working experience and a balanced sample in terms of gender and marital status. Employees' change-based cynicism, personality cynicism, trust and trust in management oriented cynicism and cynicism relations in organizations have been subject to correlation analysis.

Table 1: Correlations

		Change.	Personality	Manager.	Skeptic.	Organization. Cynicism
Change Based Cynicism	R	1	,541**	-,183	,258**	,543**
	P		,000	,069	,010	,000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Personality Cynicism	R	,541**	1	-,221*	,065	,441**
	P	,000		,027	,521	,000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Distrust in Manager and Organization	R	-,183	-,221*	1	,321**	-,166
	P	,069	,027		,001	,100
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Skepticism as an Indicator of Cynicism	R	,258**	,065	,321**	1	,117
	P	,010	,521	,001		,245
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Organizational Cynicism	R	,543**	,441**	-,166	,117	1
	P	,000	,000	,100	,245	
	N	100	100	100	100	100
**p<0,001						

According to the findings, it can be said that there is a high positive correlation of 54.1% between change-based cynicism and personality cynicism. According to this, as the change based cynicism increases, the personality cynicism also increases. That is, the H1 hypothesis, which expresses the relationship between the two variables, has been confirmed. There has been no significant relationship found between change-based cynicism and trust and management-oriented cynicism in organizations as seen in the table. Accordingly, the H2 hypothesis was rejected. There has been a high positive correlation of 25.8% found between the change-based cynicism and the skepticism as an indicator of cynicism. Accordingly, as change-based cynicism increases, the skeptical behaviors of individuals also increase. In other words, the H3 hypothesis, which expresses the relationship between the two variables, has been verified. There has been a high positive

correlation of 54.3% found between change-based cynicism and general organizational cynicism levels of individuals. Accordingly, as change-based cynicism increases, general organizational cynicism levels of individuals also increase. That is, the H4 hypothesis, which expresses the relationship between the two variables, has been verified.

There has been a negative correlation of 22.1% found between personality cynicism and trust and management oriented cynicism in organizations. Accordingly, as the level of personality cynicism of individuals increase, the levels of trust and management oriented cynicism in organizations decrease. The reason for this is that individuals look for a means which they can trust when they are internally cynical. Accordingly, the H5 hypothesis, which expresses the relationship between two variables, has been verified.

There has been no significant relationship found between personality cynicism and skepticism as an indicator of cynicism as can be seen in the table. Accordingly, the H6 hypothesis was rejected. There has been a high positive correlation of 44.1% found between individuals' personal cynicism and general organizational cynicism levels. Accordingly, the H7 hypothesis, which expresses the relationship between two variables, has been verified. There has been a high positive correlation of 32.1% found between trust and management-oriented cynicism and skepticism as an indicator of cynicism. Accordingly, as trust and management-oriented cynicism increase in organizations, the skeptic behaviors also increase. Accordingly, the H8 hypothesis has been verified. There has been no significant relationship found between skepticism as an indicator of cynicism and general organizational cynicism levels as can be seen in the table. Accordingly, the H9 hypothesis was rejected.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this research, the changes and transformations experienced by organizations have been tried to be related to the dimensions of cynicism experienced in organizations. When the literature is examined, it is noteworthy that despite the fact that researches on cynicism and organizational cynicism have been carried out in our country, there are fewer researches conducted on the inevitable effects of change and management on the cynical attitudes of employees. It is particularly thought that the examination of the cynicism levels of individuals who are particularly resistant to change and approach to change with suspicion will contribute to the literature.

According to the findings obtained in the research, the fact that demographic characteristics of the white-collar employees working in the organizations are different does not have a significant effect on the levels of

cynicism of employees. The reason for this is that the employees working in these businesses which operate corporately are usually in the same age range (young personnel). According to the observations obtained from the questionnaires, the qualifications of the personnel were taken into consideration in the organizations rather than the characteristics of the individuals such as age, gender, marital status etc. However, it has been found that the employees were exposed to some organizational cynicism according to their seniority and departments. Another finding is that employees at the administrative level did not admit the presence of cynicism in their organizations and they thought that their employees are treated fairly while the employees had feelings of distrust and skepticism especially against management, therefore they showed cynical attitudes. The findings of the research are in parallel with the studies carried out in the literature. In Albrecht's (2002) study on change- based cynicism, it was found that honesty, ability and trust perceptions of employees at the top management level in the businesses affected cynicism. It can be said that employees who do not believe in their organizations' change management efforts (Abraham, 2000; Dean, 1998) and who perceive change as an uncertainty will resist to change (Reichers, 1997), and that this type of organizational environment, together with negative attitudes, will push individuals towards cynicism.

When we look at the organization employees' change-based cynicism, personality cynicism, trust and trust in management oriented cynicism in organizations and cynicism relations in organizations, there has been highly significant differences found. The reason for this is that the personnel especially hierarchically at the lower level think that managements are not honest about the changes and their causes; therefore, they show negative attitudes with a tendency towards skepticism.

According to these results, negative attitudes and detachment from the organization of especially the employees who affect the performance and productivity of the businesses at the top level will affect the organization in the negative direction. For these reasons, it is of utmost importance that the cynicism that emerges in the organizations be recognized and managed. Since the results of the research are specific to the said sample, it will be useful for the generalization of the results to conduct the further studies on the subject in a more comprehensive manner and to include different academic organizations / institutions / sectors into the research. At the same time, it is thought that supporting with qualitative researches the causes and consequences of the differences found as the result of the research will contribute a lot to the literature.

Acknowledgement

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