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**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION,  
ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AND WORK ALIENATION**

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***Abstract***

Organizational trust has long been accepted and considered as an important factor for organizational effectiveness, stability and sustainability. Last term studies are focus on organizational trust. This study focuses on the relationships among organizational trust, job satisfaction and work alienation in the work places. These relationships were tested for a sample of 237 employees working for public and private companies in Istanbul, Turkey. Organizational trust has received relatively minor attention in terms of related research variables, one of them being work alienation which is included in this study. Results of the SPSS analysis indicated that job satisfaction and organizational trust are related with work alienation. Another finding is that organizational trust is associated with job satisfaction. On the contrary, as for the mediation effect, work alienation did not mediate the relationship between organizational trust and work alienation. The practical and theoretical effects of the findings are further discussed in the paper.

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**Keywords:** Work Alienation. Organizational Trust, Job Satisfaction.

## **1. Introduction**

Researchers studying organizational trust claim that organizational trust effects employees' several work attitudes and behaviors such as turnover intention, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Paliszkievicz, Koohang & Nord, 2014; Güçel, Tokmak & Turgut; 2012). Previous research about work alienation has focused on variables such as isolation in organizations, organizational leadership, work experience, organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment (Shehada and Khafaje, 2015; Nelson and O'Donohue; 2006). Many studies examined the influence of organizational trust on the

attitudes and behaviors of employees. However, few studies exist referring to the relationship between organizational trust and work alienation. This study examines the relationship between perceived organizational trust and work alienation.

Academicians and practitioners, who are interested in organizational behavior, have main purpose of understanding the effects of human behavior on organization's effectiveness. Namely, organizational trust is one of the important factors for peaceful, successful and efficient workplace (Zalewska, 1999; Callaway, 2007). Therefore, organizational trust has attracted attention of researchers working in the field of organizational behaviours. There is a wide range of studies in the literature that investigate job satisfaction, work alienation and organizational trust (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Kim et al., 2005, Rodriguez et al., 2008). Furthermore, job satisfaction is thought to become one of the fundamental elements when it comes to productivity and efficiency of organizations (Moynihan, Boswell and Boudreau, 2000).

Researchers claim that work alienation is practiced not only by employees working in machine-paced work places but also by managerial and administrative employees (Blauner, 1964; Horton, 1964). Accordingly, work alienation accepts that organizational members at managerial and middle ranks may experience work alienation as a mission of the owner of contemporary organizational truths, such as disapproved vocational expectancy, role disagreement, and a lack of social membership (Korman et al., 1981). Researchers argue that job/work alienation is effected by the level of self-determination, training, payment, job satisfaction, employee benefits, and job design. (Comm and Mathaisel, 2000).

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of each of the organizational trust dimensions on work alienation and the effects of work satisfaction on this relationship. In the study, first, a brief literature review and theoretical framework is given. Then, the research model is developed and hypotheses are built as research questions. Lastly, we test the hypotheses using regression analyses for the data gathered from a sample of organizations.

## **2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1. Organizational Trust**

Trust is suggested to have an underlying effect on organizational success and it shapes employee engagement (Tan and Christy, 2000). Literature claims that when organizational members have high level of trust to their organization and supervisor, they can pay more attention to their jobs (Tummers, Dulk, 2013). Therefore, it will bring extra profits for both themselves and their organization. Additionally, previous research shows that organizational trust is positively related with customer satisfaction, business transactions, employee motivation and commitment (Ganesan, 1994; Doney and Cannon, 1997; Brockner et al., 1997). On the other side, a lack of organizational trust leads to failure of organizations (Bromiley and Cummings, 1996). If there were insufficient organizational trust, organizational members would need more energy to maintain their attention.

McAllister (1995) defines organizational trust as being sure of other's behavior, sense, sincerity and words to act in conformity with all of these. According to Mishra (1996), organizational trust refers to behaving against others bluntly, fairly, with concern and realistically in interactions and in the

organization. Organizational trust provides organizational members being sure of workplace behavior and procedures even under hazardous circumstances and having favorable expectancy about workplace behavior and procedures (Cemaloğlu & Kılıç, 2012). According to another definition, organizational trust is the unconditional acceptance of actions of the organization and supervisors by employees (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995).

There existed too many definitions about organizational trust as mentioned above. Taking main aspects used in definitions into account, it is possible to point out that organizational trust refers to positive considerations related to personal ideas and thoughts toward organization and organization members. The understanding level of trust leads to comprehend trust as a composition of emotional and cognitive components. Accordingly, organizational trust has critical importance for companies and it is related with human behaviors and attitudes in work places.

## **2.2. Work Alienation**

In recent decades, work alienation has been mentioned as one of the most significant socio-psychological notions for business life. Work alienation affects every aspect of work life and people spend most of their time at work. Therefore, events in the workplace are very influential in people's lives (Hirschfeld & Feild, 2000). People who are unhappy at work feel unhappy in their lives (Elma, 2003). Alienation was first described by Marx and Hegel (Banifatemeh and Rasouli, 2011). Later on, it has gained an important place in the literature (Banai and Weisberg, 2003). According to Marx, work alienation occurs under any circumstances in which the employee is isolated from his/her work, and the worker gives up his desire to control his own work. In general terms, people feel a break away from their surroundings. Faunce describes work alienation as a psycho-social disorder of modern life (Denhardt, 1971; Farahbod et al., 2012). However, Seeman (1959), unlike Marx, approaches the phenomenon of alienation from a socio-psychological point of view. From this point of view, personal evaluation of the individual is important in describing alienation. The concept of alienation was handled by Seeman in five dimensions: weakness, meaninglessness, normlessness, feeling of isolation, and self esteem. Work alienation is the result of the disagreement between the role that the job requires and the employee's own nature (Meszaros, 2004).

Work alienation can affect business life in many aspects. Previous studies have found negative relationship between work alienation and work performance. It has been found that employees who are alienated from the work exhibit negative behaviors within the organization and this, in turn, increases the cost for the organization (Hirschfeld, Field, & Bedeian, 2000). Studies in the field have showed that organizational members who are effected by work alienation, generally exhibit work delays, misdemeanor and tardiness in their work (Rezapour and Mousavian, 2007). One of the significant effects of work alienation is the reduction of productivity. Undoubtedly, productivity is an extremely important issue for companies. Some of the examples of negative effects of work alienation are that employees cannot be engaged in their work, work places are characterized with broken relationships, isolation from the environment, a coolness and indifference towards the work and environment (Ünsar ve Karahan, 2011).

As discussed in the literature, work alienation has some negative effects in organizations. It is extremely important for organizations to examine work alienation in order to eliminate its negative effects in work places. In this study, we will examine the relationship of work alienation with job satisfaction and organizational trust.

### **2.3. Job Satisfaction**

Researchers define job satisfaction in many different ways. According to Mottaz (1985) job satisfaction is the work member's level of favorable feeling toward the job and workplace. Job satisfaction is effected by various factors such as wage and salary, relations with peers and supervisors, feel of reconition, job security, career opportunities and working conditions. There were two remarkable thoughts; one of them underlines emotional situation related with accomplishment needs, and the other view refers to behaving as a complementary evaluation manner (Schwab and Cummings, 1970). We can consider job satisfaction in two ways. Emotional perspective refers to work members' felling about work and cognitive perspective refers to work members' thought about work. According to Locke (1969), job satisfaction is described as good feelings about target accomplishment.

Job satisfaction was started to be examined in the 1965s and 1975s, when researchers realized that job satisfaction was related to the level of job performance. Literature in job satisfaction, developed on this foundation, demonstrates the links between job satisfaction and work performance (Çetin, Güleç, & Kayasandık, 2015). In addition, job satisfaction can cause too many different outcomes for individuals and the organization. For instance, studies claim that job satisfaction is related with work alienation, stress, organizational trust and turnover (Fraser, 1987; Steinmann & Schreyogg, 1993; Zalewska, 1996; Reinhold, 1998). Moreover, job satisfaction is connected with work-related values and rewards (Vroom, 1964). After all, we can clearly say that job satisfaction is very important work members and organizations. This study measures the level of job satisfaction of employees.

Work alienation can be expressed as an attitude towards the employees (Hirschfeld and Field, 2000). Recent studies show that the attitudes can be changed (Wood, 2000). This study investigates the effect of work alienation on organizational trust. Thanks to the trustful practices of management and managers in the organization, that employees will start to trust their managers and their promises (Aryee et al., 2002; Özbek, 2006). Building such a positive environment will also reduce employees' tendency to work alienation. Therefore, when you increase trust within the organization, the tendency to work alienation will decrease. Accordingly, the hypothesis of the research can be expressed as follows;

*Hypothesis 1: Organizational trust will be associated with work alienation.*

According to the literature, job satisfaction is an important outcome of organizational trust. As we mentioned above, organizational trust has a significant influence on the efficiency of the firm. Because of these reason it is very important to determine the factors of organizational trust. Organizational trust may be more indicative of an organizational members' loyalty to the firm, contrarily particular duties, circumference, or place. Actually, an organizational member's satisfactionto their job may give rise to a stronger organizational trust and allow the organizational member's to knowledge a sense of belonging

(Mohamed, Kader and Anisa, 2012). Accordingly, the hypothesis of the research can be expressed as follows;

*Hypothesis 2: Organizational trust will be associated with job satisfaction.*

Researchers claim that if employees are satisfied with their work, they will have a more positive attitude towards their work. Therefore, it is very important to find antecedents of job satisfaction. Studies have shown that one of the factors influencing job satisfaction is work alienation (Schultz & Schultz, 1990). Knoop (1981), investigated teachers' job satisfaction in his study and he realized that work alienation is significantly related with job satisfaction. Previous research suggest that if an organizational member's job satisfaction is high, then, he/she is more satisfied with the job and has positive feeling toward the job as opposed to work alienation (Akıncı, 2002). In our research, we will examine the relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 3: Job satisfaction will be associated with work alienation.*

*Hypothesis 4: Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational trust and work alienation.*

### **3. Research Method**

#### **3.1. Sample and Data Collection**

Within the scope of this study, a survey was conducted on 237 employees. The data were evaluated using the SPSS 23.00 Statistical Package Program. Descriptive analysis was used when analyzing demographic information. Factor analysis and reliability analysis were conducted when the Likert scale was used. Correlation analysis was applied when the relations between the variables were examined. In addition, regression analysis was performed when hypotheses were tested.

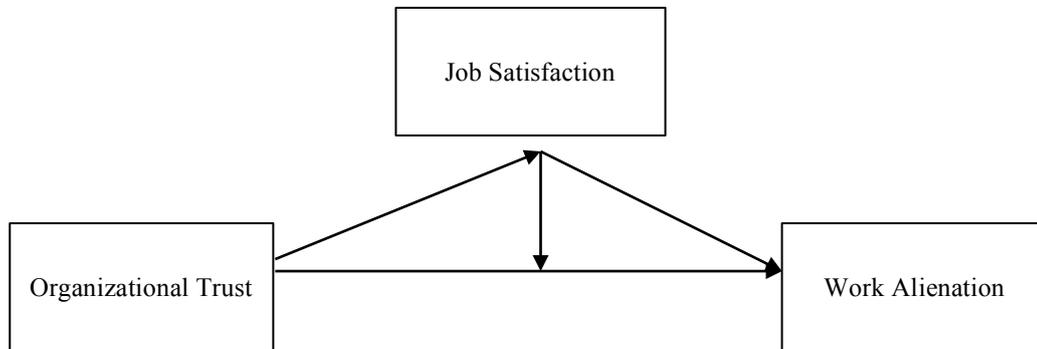
#### **3.2. Analyses**

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part includes demographic information and work-related information of employees. The second part of the questionnaire consists of scales related to organizational trust, work alienation and job satisfaction. Organizational trust was measured by a 12-item scale adapted from Nyhan and Marlow (1997). Work alienation was measured by a total of 15-items for the three components, which are self-estrangement, meaninglessness and powerlessness developed by Mottaz (1981). Lastly, job satisfaction questionnaire developed by (Fernandes and Awamleh, 2006) has 7-items. All scales have five alternatives ranging from (5) Strongly Agree to (1) Strongly Disagree.

### **4. Findings**

Research sample includes 237 employees working for different companies. Demographic characteristics of research sample indicate that within 237 participants, 85 were female and 152

participants were male. Those of whom 48.2 %(114 employees) were public sector staff, 51.8% (123 employees) was private sector staff. 34.5% of employees had work experience of 1 to 5 years, 21.5% experience of 6 to 10 years, 17.7% experience of 11 to 15 and 26.1% experience of more than 16 years.



**Figure 01.** Final Research Model

Reliability analysis was conducted in the research and ‘Cronbach alpha coefficient’ for the reliability of the scales. Mostly, Cronbach alpha levels are found to be 0.70 or above that is noted to be receivable for construct. Table-2 shows results of reliability analysis. All the components, which are namely work alienation, organizational trust and job satisfaction, have alpha values higher than that of 0.70. Additionally, Table 2 shows factor analysis results for all of the variable components.

**Table 01.** Factor Analysis

Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>

	1	2	3
OT5: My level of confidence that ___ will be able to do his or her job in an acceptable manner is ___.	,791		
OT7: My confidence in ___ to do the job without causing other problems is ___.	,770		
OT11: The level of trust among the people i work with on a regular basis is ___.	,756		
ÖT12: The degree to which we can depend on each other in this organization is ___.	,754		
ÖT1: My level of confidence that ___ is technically competent at the critical elements of his or her job is ___.	,754		
ÖT8: My level of confidence that ___ will think through what he or she is doing on the job is ___.	,752		
ÖT10: My level of trust between supervisors and workers in this organization is ___.	,733		
ÖT6: When ___ tells me something, my level of confidence that I can rely on what they tell me is ___.	,731		
ÖT2: My level of condifence that ___ will make well thought out decisions about his or her job is ___.	,638		
ÖT3: My level of confidence that ___ will follow thought on assignments is ___.	,542		
ÖT9: My level of confidence that this organization will treat me fairly is ___.	,528		
WA5: I have a little oppourtunity to use my real abilities and skills in the type of work I do.		,852	
WA4: My work does not provide me with a sens of personal fulfilment.		,848	

WA3: My work felt me being punished.		,830	
WA10: I am not able to make changes regarding my job activities.		,777	
WA12: I am not allowed to make most work decisions without first consulting my superior.		,767	
WA13: When doing my job I cannot perform my own expectations.		,743	
WA11: My daily activities are largely determined by others.		,740	
WA1: My work is often routine and dull, providing little opportunity for creativity.		,738	
WA8: My work is not a significant contribution the successful operation of the organizations.		,713	
WA9: I do not understand how my work role fits into the overall operation of this organization.		,693	
WA7: Sometimes, I am not sure I completely understand the purpose of the organizations.		,690	
WA6: I do not understand how my work fits with the work of others.		,677	
WA2: My work is not a challenging activity.		,612	
JS4: I am satisfied with the recognition I get for the work I do.			,759
JS2: I find that my opinions are respected at work.			,680
JS5: I am satisfied with the way my pay compares with that for similar jobs in other firms.			,561

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

OT: Organizational Trust, WA: Work Alienation, JS: Job Satisfaction

**Table 02.** Reliability Analysis

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Organizational Trust	11	,949
Work Alienation	13	,955
Job Satisfaction	3	,783

Correlation analysis, as seen in Table 3, indicates that significant relations between work alienation, job satisfaction and organizational trust exist. Organizational trust has been found to be related with work alienation ( $r = .289$ ), and job satisfaction ( $r = .644$ ) at the 0.01 level. Work alienation was also correlated with organizational trust ( $r = .289$ ), and job satisfaction ( $r = .280$ ) at the 0.01 level. In addition, Job satisfaction was related with organizational trust ( $r = .644$ ) and work alienation ( $r = .280$ ) at the 0.01 level.

**Table 03.** Mean and Standard Deviation Values and Correlation Values of the Variables Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Organizational Trust	3,5297	,88990	237
Work Alienation	3,2642	1,06369	237
Job Satisfaction	3,4958	,94205	236

**Correlations**

		Organizational Trust	Work Alienation	Job Satisfaction
Organizational Trust	Pearson Correlation	1	,289**	,644**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000
	N	237	237	236

Work Alienation	Pearson Correlation	,289**	1	,280**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000
	N	237	237	236
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	,644**	,280**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	
	N	236	236	236

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis was used in order to test predicted research hypotheses. The results of regression analyses are shown in Table 4. Results of the hypotheses tests for the variables mentioned in our research model, indicate that all the hypotheses were supported with the exception of hypothesis for ‘mediating effect. Regression analysis results indicate that relations between the variables are statistically significant.

**Hypothesis H1 is supported ( $\beta =, 239$  \*\*,  $p <0.001$ )** as a result of the regression analysis for the relation between the independent variable of organizational trust affecting the dependent variable of work alienation as shown in Table 9.2. Organizational trust was important predictor of job satisfaction. **Hypothesis H2 for the relationship between organizational trust and job satisfaction is supported ( $\beta =, 193$  \*\*,  $p <0.001$ ). Similarly, Hypothesis H3 is supported ( $\beta =, 257$  \*\*,  $p <0.001$ ) for the relationship between independent variable of job satisfaction and the dependent variable of work alienation as shown in Table 4.**

Hypotheses 4 claimed that job satisfaction would mediate the relationship between Organizational Trust and Work Alienation. A mediated regression analysis was performed to test this relationship. Findings revealed that Work alienation was not a significant mediator for the relationship between organizational trust and job satisfaction. Therefore, **Hypothesis H4 is supported ( $\beta =, 092$ \*\*\*,  $\beta =, 098$ \*\*\*,  $p <0.001$ ).**

**Table 04.** Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results

	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Std. Error	Sig.	Adjusted R Square	F
1 <sup>st</sup> Regression	Organizational Trust	Work Alienation	,272	,000	,080	21,420
2 <sup>nd</sup> Regression	Organizational Trust	Job Satisfaction	,193	,000	,412	165,758
3 <sup>rd</sup> Regression	Job Satisfaction	Work Alienation	,257	,000	,075	19,932
4 <sup>th</sup> Regression	Organizational Trust	Work Alienation	,098	,019	,092	12,969
	Job Satisfaction		,092	,056	,092	12,969

**Table 05.** Hypotheses

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Supported/ Not supported</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<i><b>Hypothesis 1:</b> Organizational trust will be associated with job satisfaction.</i>	<b>SUPPORTED</b>	<i><b>P&lt;0.001</b></i>
<i><b>Hypothesis 2:</b> Job satisfaction will be associated with work alienation.</i>	<b>SUPPORTED</b>	<i><b>P&lt;0.001</b></i>
<i><b>Hypothesis 3:</b> Organizational trust will be associated with work alienation.</i>	<b>SUPPORTED</b>	<i><b>P&lt;0.001</b></i>
<i><b>H 4:</b> Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived organizational trust and work alienation.</i>	<b>NOT SUPPORTED</b>	<i><b>P&gt;0.001</b></i>

## 5. Conclusion and Discussions

The notion of, organizational trust, work alienation and job satisfaction have been the interest of many investigators in recent years. Most of the research studies have shown that these concepts are critical to the organization's efficiency and sustainability. Employees, who have high job satisfaction and organizational trust, are more successful in their jobs. In addition, these employees develop a kind of feel of belonging to the workplace. Also, they can easily manage organization-related duties. On the contrary, work alienation has many negative impacts on employees and can lead to reduced performance and productivity.

Employees will start to trust their managers and the words they give, thanks to the trustful practices of the managers in the organization. Organizational trust will increase employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Aryee et al., 2002; Özbek, 2006). On the other hand, our research findings indicated that a negative relationship exists between organizational trust and work alienation as consistent with the literature (Özbek, 2011; İşçi et al., 2013). Organizational trust has been identified as a critical component for the well-being of organizational members with human capabilities, job satisfaction and longterm stability (Cook, and Wall, 1980; Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis and Winograd, 2000). In addition, organizational trust should be concerned about the well-being of the members of the organization and job satisfaction which is a sign of their psychological well-being (Rowden, 2002).

The aim of this study is to measure the relationship between organizational trust, work alienation and job satisfaction. The results of this research conducted both at public and private companies have shown that organizational trust is associated with work alienation and job satisfaction. Also, job satisfaction had direct effect on work alienation. However, job satisfaction did not have a mediator effect on the relationship between organizational trust and work alienation. Therefore, our hypotheses regarding these relationships are supported. Unfortunately, the fourth hypothesis was not supported. A result of the analyses, we have found that there is a strong correlation between the three variables. Companies should take into account these results for their sustainability.

As for the study limitations, the research could not be carried out on a comprehensive sample due to financial and time constraints. On a more comprehensive sample, it is possible to increase the generalization of the findings and the research already conducted. This study contributes to the existing

knowledge base by examining the relationship between work alienation, organizational trust and job satisfaction.

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