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**PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATIONAL  
COMMITMENT: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATION-BASED  
SELF-ESTEEM**

**by**

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## ÖZET

Algılanan örgütsel destek, çalışanların, örgütlerine olan katkılarına ne derece değer verildiğine ve refahlarının ne derece önemsendiğine dair geliştirdikleri inançlardır. Çabalarının ödüllendirildiğini ve duygusal ihtiyaçlarının örgüt tarafından içtenlikle giderildiğini hisseden çalışanlar, bu olumlu yaklaşıma, örgütün faaliyetlerine katılımlarını, örgütün hedeflerine ulaşmasına dair istekliliklerini ve örgütte kalma arzularını arttıran bir ait olma ve özdeşleşme hissi ile, yani, örgüte bağlılık ile karşılık vereceklerdir. Çalışanların iş ve örgütsel deneyimler doğrultusunda gelişen öz-saygı düzeylerinin, iki unsur arasındaki takası etkileyebileceği düşünülmektedir. “Örgüt Kaynaklı Öz-saygı” bireyin kendisini çalıştığı organizasyonun üyesi olarak ne derecede yetkin, değerli, önemli ve işe yarar hissettiğini ifade eden bir kavramdır. Bu araştırmanın amacı algılanan örgütsel desteğin, örgütsel bağlılığın gelişimini etkileyip etkilemediğini ve bu etkinin gücünü belirlemede örgüt-temelli öz-saygının düzenleyici bir rol oynayıp oynamadığını ortaya koymaktır. Araştırma 80 kadın 68 erkekten oluşan toplam 148 kişi üzerinde yapılmıştır. Katılımcılar çeşitli işyerlerinde çalışan beyaz yakalı çalışanlardan oluşmaktadır ve araştırmaya katılım gönüllü gerçekleşmiştir. Çalışmada Eisenberger ve arkadaşlarına ait Algılanan Örgütsel Destek Ölçeğinin kısa versiyonu (1997); Pierce ve arkadaşlarının Örgüt-Temelli Öz-Saygı Ölçeği (1989) ve Meyer, Allen ve Smith’in Örgütsel Bağlılık Ölçeği (1993) kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada, algılanan örgütsel desteğin, örgütsel bağlılık üzerinde anlamlı bir olumlu etkiye sahip olduğu ortaya çıkmış; örgüt-temelli öz-saygının bu ilişkide kısmi bir düzenleyici etkisi olduğu bulunmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Algılanan Örgütsel Destek, Örgüt Kaynaklı Öz-saygı

## **ABSTRACT**

Perceived organizational support is an employee belief that the organization cares for and values his or her contribution to the success of the organization. When employees feel that their organization is ready to reward their efforts and fulfill their socioemotional needs, they reciprocate this favorable treatment with organizational commitment. An individual's self-esteem, formed around work and organizational experiences, is expected to influence such an organization-employee exchange. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment as well as the mediating role of organization-based self-esteem in this relationship. The sample was drawn from several work places. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 148 white collar employees. Participants completed the short version of Perceived Organizational Support Scale (Eisenberger et al., 1997), Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale (Pierce et al., 1989) and Organizational Commitment Scale (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993). The correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis methods were used to test the hypotheses. The results indicate that perceived organizational support and organization-based self-esteem are significantly correlated. Moreover, results indicate that there is a significant relationship between organization-based self-esteem and organizational commitment. However, organization-based self-esteem partially mediated the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment.

**Key Words:** Perceived Organizational Support, Organization-Based Self-Esteem

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|      |                                  |
|------|----------------------------------|
| POS  | Perceived organizational support |
| OBSE | Organization based self-esteem   |
| OC   | Organizational commitment        |

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Figure 1: The Research Model

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Research on perceived organizational support began with the observation that managers are concerned with their employees' commitment to the organization. For employees, the organization serves as an important source of *socio-emotional* resources, such as respect and caring, and tangible benefits, such as wages and medical benefits. When organizations recognize their employees, they help to meet employees' needs for approval, esteem, and affiliation. Positive valuation by the organization also provides an indication that increased effort will be noted and rewarded. Therefore, employees take an active interest in the regard with which they are held by their employer.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) holds that in order to meet *socio-emotional* needs and to assess the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Such perceived organizational support would increase employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded. Moreover, behavioral outcomes of POS include increases in in-role and extra-role performance and decreases in stress and withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism and turnover (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995).

On the other hand, it has been persuasively argued that due to the high degree of situational strength characterizing most organizational contexts, personality exerts relatively little

influence in the workplace. But one personality attribute that predictably and consistently enhances understanding of organizational behavior is 'self-esteem'. Researchers have distinguished among several types of esteem, including global self-esteem (an individual's overall evaluation of worth), role-based self-esteem (worth derived from employment in a particular position), and task-based self-esteem (worth based on self-efficacy). Within the last five years, an additional form, "organization-based self-esteem" (OBSE), has appeared in the literature. OBSE reflects the degree to which employees self-perceive themselves as important, meaningful, effectual, and worthwhile within the organizational setting (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham, 1989). POS increase organizational commitment by creating a felt obligation to care about the organization and help it meet its objectives. Employees who perceive the organization as caring for their well-being are, therefore, assumed to be more likely to reciprocate not only in engaging in various forms of pro-social behavior directed toward the organization, but also by developing a stronger sense of organizational commitment. Social identity theory states that "people remain loyal when they feel that their organizations ... value and appreciate them." (Tyler, 1999, p.235). According to social identity theory when people think that their organization appreciates and values them, this is an indication of organizational respect for them or of their high status within the organization (Tyler, 1999). High status is likely to increase people's organizational commitment because it improves their social identity.

Commitment is one of the major core variables of interest in management and organizational behavior studies. Researchers are searching to understand its causal antecedents. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee commitment to the organization. In addition, the

relationship between POS and OBSE will be examined. Moreover, the link between POS and organizational commitment through OBSE will be studied. To express more explicitly, the major focus of the present study is to understand the mediating role of OBSE between POS and organizational commitment.

In the present study, first, the literature on POS, OBSE and organizational commitment will be reviewed and then empirical research based on these theoretical approaches in organizational settings will be presented. Then, hypotheses regarding the relationship between POS-OBSE and organizational commitment and the research model will be put forward. Then the results of the study will be presented. Finally, the results will be discussed based on the findings and the literature, last but not least managerial implications and limitations of the study will be given.

## **2 PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT**

### **2.1 Definition of Perceived Organizational Support**

The Social exchange theory that was developed by Blau (1964) has recently been applied widely in organizational settings to understand if the actions or implications of the organizations may create employee obligation and desirable performance. Such exchange ideologies are based on the ‘norm of reciprocity’ which explains that people should, and typically do, help or assist those who have assisted or helped them (Chew & Wong, 2008). Perceived organizational support theory draws on the social exchange perspective to explain employee-organization relationships. In that perspective, the value is affected by the interaction of two parties (employee and organization). Each party has perceptions and expectations regarding the behavior of the other party, but these expectations and perceptions are related with the timing or the specifics of what each party must render. If both parties benefited from the exchange, neither will know whether the expectations of the other have been fully met. Thus, social exchanges involve reciprocity (Tansky & Cohen, 2001). Based on the above arguments, perceived organizational support encompasses the employees’ perception about their organizations’ concern with their well-being and their contributions. Perceived organizational support covers the degree to which employees feel that the organization that employs them is willing to fairly compensate them with the exchange of their efforts, help them in case of need (e.g. illness or work related issues), make their work interesting and stimulating, and provide them with adequate working conditions (Aube, Rousseau & Morin, 2007).

According to Eisenberg et al. (1986), perceived organizational support is developed by two ways; 1) the personification of organization and 2) rewards based on the organization's discretion. Individuals personify the characteristics of the organization with humanlike attributes and any treatment that was taken from the organization is attributed as an indication that it favors or disfavors those (Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003). Employees who perceive the organization as caring for their well-being are, therefore, assumed to be more likely to reciprocate not only by engaging in various forms of prosocial behavior directed toward the organization (Lee & Peccei, 2007). As noted by Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, and Rhoades (2001), the felt obligation to reciprocate caring with caring, in both behavioral and attitudinal terms, can be expected to be more pronounced among employees who have a stronger exchange ideology. It can also be expected to be more marked where the organization is thought to provide valued support on a voluntary basis, rather than out of necessity or because it is forced to do so by outside agencies (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberg et al., 1997). Moreover, perceived organizational support can trigger the employees' belief about the taken rewards which were given because of the discretionary choice of the organization rather than external constraints beyond the organization's control (Loi, Hang-Yue & Foley, 2006). Eisenberg et al (1986) developed the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support as a measure of this global belief in the organization's willingness to exchange rewards for effort and loyalty (Hutchison, 1997). In the next section, the antecedents and consequences of POS will be presented. Then, the literature will be reviewed on organizational commitment as one of the consequences of POS. POS have many positive contributions in terms of work-related attitudes such as intention to stay in the organization, job satisfaction, positive mood etc.

One of the consequences of POS is organizational commitment. In the next section POS will be reviewed.

## **2.2 The Antecedents of Perceived Organizational Support**

On the basis of organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), three general forms of perceived favorable treatment received from the organization (i.e., fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions) should increase POS. Procedural justice concerns the fairness of the ways used to determine the distribution of resources among employees (Greenberg, 1990). Shore and Shore (1995) suggested that repeated instances of fairness in decisions concerning resource distribution should have a strong cumulative influence on POS by indicating a concern for employees' welfare. Cropanzano and Greenberg (1997) distinguished between structural and social aspects of procedural justice. Structural determinants involve formal rules and policies concerning decisions that affect employees, including adequate notice before decisions are implemented, receipt of accurate information, and voice (i.e., employee input in the decision process). Social aspects of procedural justice, sometimes called interactional justice, involve the quality of interpersonal treatment in resource allocation. Social aspects include treating employees with dignity and respect and providing employees with information concerning how outcomes are determined. Perceived organizational politics is related to the concept of procedural justice, referring to attempts to influence others in ways that promote self-interest, often at the expense of rewards for individual merit or the improvement of the organization (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, and Toth, 1997). Therefore, widespread organizational politics may strongly conflict with perceptions of fair

procedures and outcomes (Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, and Birjulin, 1999), thus lowering POS.

Just as employees form global perceptions concerning their valuation by the organization, they develop general views concerning the degree to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being (i.e., perceived supervisor support; Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Because supervisors act as agents of the organization, having responsibility for directing and evaluating subordinates' performance, employees view their supervisor's favorable or unfavorable orientation toward them as indicative of the organization's support (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Levinson, 1965). Additionally, employees understand that supervisors' evaluations of subordinates are often communicated to upper management, further contributing to employees' association of supervisor support with POS.

Shore and Shore (1995) suggested that human resources practices showing recognition of employee contributions should be positively related to POS. A variety of rewards and job conditions have been studied in relation to POS—for example, *recognition, pay, promotions, job security, autonomy, role stressors, and training*. According to POS, favorable opportunities for *rewards* serve to communicate a positive valuation of employees' contributions and thus contribute to POS. In several studies, employees were asked to rate the fairness of their outcomes relative to a reference group (distributive justice; Greenberg, 1990). In other studies, employees were asked simply to evaluate the favorableness of outcomes without a specified reference group, they most probably made such comparisons implicitly. Moreover, the organizations wish to maintain the employee's

future membership and this is expected to provide a strong sign of POS, especially in recent years, when downsizing has been widespread Armstrong-Stassen, (1997). Furthermore, *autonomy* is defined as employees' perceived control over how they carry out their job, including scheduling, work procedures, and task variety. Autonomy has traditionally been highly valued in Western societies (Aranson, 1995). By indicating the organization's trust in employees to decide wisely how they will conduct their job, high autonomy should increase POS (Eisenberger, Rhoades, & Cameron, 1999). *Role Stressors* refer to environmental demands with which individuals feel unable to cope (Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999). To the extent that employees attribute job-related stressors to conditions that are controllable by the organization, as opposed to conditions latent in the job or resulting from outside pressures on the organization, stressors should reduce POS. Stressors have been studied as antecedents to lessened POS named as work overload, role ambiguity and role conflict.

According to Wayne et al. (1997), *job training* is a practice conveying an investment in the employee, thus leading to increased POS. Dekker and Barling (1995) investigated the influences of workforce size and stress. They argued that individuals feel less valued in large organizations (*organization size*), where highly formalized policies and procedures may reduce flexibility in dealing with employees' individual needs. Although large organizations can show benevolence, as small ones, to groups of employees, the reduced flexibility for meeting the needs of individual employees, informed by formal rules, could reduce POS.

### **2.3 The Consequences of Perceived Organizational Support**

POS has been hypothesized to influence employees' general affective reactions to their job, including job satisfaction and positive mood. POS should contribute to overall job satisfaction by meeting socio-emotional needs, increasing performance-reward expectancies, and signaling the availability of aid when needed. Positive mood differs conceptually from job satisfaction in that it involves a general emotional state without a specific object (George, 1989). Mood has been proposed as the state component of affectivity, influenced by environment (George & Brief, 1992). POS may contribute to employees' feelings of competence and worth, thus enhancing positive mood (Eisenberger et al., 2001; George & Brief, 1992).

*Job involvement* refers to identification with and interest in the specific work one performs (Cropanzano et al., 1997; O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999). Perceived competence has been found to be related to task interest (Eisenberger et al., 1999). POS might increase employees' interest in their work by improving employees' perceived competence. POS should increase *performance* of standard job activities and actions favorable to the organization that go beyond assigned responsibilities. According to George and Brief (1992), such extrarole activities include helping fellow employees, taking actions that protect the organization from risk, offering constructive ideas, and gaining knowledge and skills that are beneficial to the organization. In the literature, extrarole behaviors were divided into those that are focused on helping coworkers and those that help the organization. These differences are to the extent that as helping others often helps the organization as well. POS is expected to reduce aversive psychological and psychosomatic

reactions (i.e., damages) to stressors by indicating the availability of material aid and emotional support when needed to face high demands at work (George, Reed, Ballard, Colin & Fielding, 1993; Armstrong-Stassen, 1998). Some investigators have found that POS has influences on such strains as exhaustion (Cropanzano et al., 1997), burnout (Cropanzano et al., 1997), anxiety and headaches (Armstrong-Stassen, 1998). Therefore, it is reasonable that POS could decrease employees' general level of stress (Viswesvaran et al., 1999). Witt and Nye (1992; Nye & Witt, 1993; Witt, 1991 (Nye & Witt, 1993; Witt, 1991) examined the relationship between POS and employees' intention to stay in the organization. These studies measured workers' propensity to leave the organization for example if they are offered slightly higher pay, more professional freedom or status, or friendlier coworkers. Desire to remain should be distinguished from the discomforting perception of being trapped in an organization because of the high costs of leaving (i.e., continuance commitment). Moreover, *continuance commitment* will be discussed in detail in the next section. Withdrawal behavior refers to employees' lessening of active participation in the organization. The relationship of POS to behavioral intentions to leave (i.e., turnover intention) have been investigated (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Wayne et al., 1997), as well as actual withdrawal behaviors such as lateness, absenteeism, and voluntary turnover (Jenkins, 1993; Fuller, Barnett, Hester and Relyea, 2003). Maintenance of organizational membership, high attendance, and punctuality provide publicly identifiable ways for employees to reciprocate POS.

POS may also increase affective organizational commitment, thereby decreasing withdrawal behavior. As can be seen, organizational commitment is one of the major

consequences of POS. In the next section, the definition, antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment will be reviewed.

### **3 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT**

Organizational commitment (OC) was first proposed and defined by Porter (1974) as ‘the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization’ (cited from Ketchand and Strawser, 2001; p.222). The concept of organizational commitment has been widely studied and elaborated in the organizational behavior literature. Researchers posit that, organizational commitment may not be a single construct; instead it may be multidimensional regarding different organizational perception of each employee and also to differentiate the term from other related constructs. There are many researchers who conceptualize organizational commitment as multidimensional. These dimensions are presented below:

#### **3.1 The Dimensions of Organizational Commitment**

The first model was developed by Angle and Perry (1981) which consists of two dimensions; value commitment and commitment to stay. The former one refers to the support of the organization’s value and the latter refers to being loyal as an organizational membership. Mayer and Schoorman (1992) proposed another model which includes two dimensions; continuance commitment and value commitment. The two models focused on the behavioral outcomes of commitment and relate continuance commitment with the decision to remain or quit the organization, whereas value commitment is related with the effort of gaining organizational objectives (Meyer and Hersovitsch, 2001). The other models which were developed after above ones concentrate on the mind-set (rather than behavioral consequences) that helps to combine the employee with the organization. The

first mind set (value commitment) is associated with the effort to achieve organizational goals. The second one (continuance commitment) is related with the cost-avoidance mind-set. Finally, the third one is due to “perceived obligation” to continue a course of action (Meyer and Hersovitsch, 2001). Another model of multidimensional commitment was proposed by O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) which was divided into three types; compliance, identification and internalization. Compliance includes attitudes and behaviors that are directed to acquire positive reinforcements or rewards. Identification occurs when an individual accepts the influence to develop a close relationship with the organization. In the third type, called internalization, the individual again accepts the influence but the reason is individual identification with the organizational values. However, because of the multicollinearity between internalization and identification, these two dimensions were collected under one dimension which is called normative commitment. Adding to these models, Jaros, Jermier, Koehler and Sinclch (1993) developed an alternative multidimensional model with the affective, continuance and moral dimensions. The affective one is characterized by the affective adjectives, continuance commitment includes the decision regarding the cost of leaving and finally moral commitment is defined as the internalization of the goals and values of the organization. Penley and Gould's (1988) model consists of three dimensions; moral, calculative and alienative. Moral commitment is the acceptance of and identification with organizational goals. Calculative commitment is related with the employee's receiving inducements to match contributions. Alienative commitment occurs when an employee considers that there are no longer rewards with the exchange of his/her investments, but stays in the organization because of environmental pressures. The final model which concludes the confusion or discussions among these models was developed by Allen and Meyer in 1996. Allen and

Meyer (1996) defined organizational commitment as '*psychological link between the employee and his or her organization that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organization*'. These researchers focused on the reason of the employees to stay in the organization. Therefore, they proposed a three-component model of organizational commitment; affective, normative and continuance commitment.

*Affective commitment* refers to employees' attachment to, involvement in and identification with the organization. The employee is willing to stay with the organization: the employee remains in the organization because he or she *wants* it (Allen and Meyer, 1990, 1996). In *normative commitment*, the employee feels an obligation to remain in the organization. This type of commitment is composed of internalized normative pressures to act in a way that fits with organizational goals and interests. In that case, individuals stay in the organization because they believe it is the '*right*' and '*a moral thing to do*'. Therefore, the employee remains in the organization because he/she *ought* to (Conway, 2004). Finally, in *continuance commitment* employees make a calculation about the cost of leaving the organization. They believe that, if they leave their organization they could never find such a job again. The employee remains in the organization because he/she *needs* to do it (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

In organizational behavior literature, organizational commitment is sometimes confused with organizational identification. Several studies tried to analyze the difference between these two constructs (Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006; Barge & Schluter, 1988; Mael & Tetrick, 1992; Male and Ashforth, 1992). Organizational identification is defined as "*the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual*

*defines him or herself in terms of the organization(s) in which he or she is a member*” (Male and Ashforth, 1992, p. 104). The construct is based on social identity theory which explains how individuals conceptualize themselves in intergroup contexts, and how an individual’s *own* place in society is defined (Bartels, Pruyn, Jong and Joustra, 2007). While organizational identification is a cognitive variable in which people consider their self values and self-concept in identifying with the organization, organizational commitment includes behavioral intention and internalization of organizational values (Male and Ashforth, 1992). Therefore, organizational commitment is considered to be a broader term from organizational identification in the sense that it incorporates intended behaviors (Caldwell, Chatman, & O’Reilly, 1990). On the other hand, the person who is committed to the organization is not only emotionally attached to the organization but also makes cognitive evaluations and uses of the organization as a tool for achieving personal goals (Ashforth and Mae1, 1989). Additionally, a person who is identified with the organization experiences a physical loss when he or she leaves the organization, whereas in case of commitment, the person will not experience such a feeling (Fuller, Marler, Hester, Frey and Relyea, 2006). In spite of the different perceptions about commitment, there is a core essence that characterizes the construct and distinguishes it from other constructs. Therefore, empirical research supports the view that identification is different from organizational commitment (Van Dick, Becker and Meyer, 2006).

### **3.2 The Antecedents of Organizational Commitment**

Many studies have been directed at determining its causal antecedents (Clugston, 2000; Dodd-McCue, Wright, 1996). The issue of commitment is particularly important for

managers (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1997). Along with the rapid change in organizations, managers constantly are searching ways to generate greater employee commitment in order to keep the organization's competitive advantage. Multiple and varied antecedents of commitment have been examined and can be classified as **personal** (age, sex, education, position and organizational tenure, perceived competence, skill, salary) **job** (skill variety, autonomy, job challenge, task interdependence, leader communication) and **organizational** characteristics (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

### 3.2.1 Personal Characteristics

Meyer and Allen (1984) have suggested that older workers become more attitudinally committed to an organization for a variety of reasons, including greater satisfaction with their jobs, having received better positions, and having "cognitively justified" their remaining in an organization. Meta-Analysis results showed that women tend to be more committed than men (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Education demonstrated a small negative correlation with commitment. Mowday et al. (1982) concluded "that this inverse relationship may result from the fact that more educated individuals have higher expectations that the organization may be unable to meet" (p. 30). It may also be that more educated employees have a greater number of job options and are less likely to become entrenched in any one position or company. The general assumption is that as individuals accumulate more years with a company, they are likely to receive greater investments (e.g, pension plan). It is important to differentiate tenure with the *organization* from tenure in a particular *position*. Naturally; the two concepts will be related to the extent that employees have not changed jobs within an organization. Organizational tenure, however, is likely to

be a better substitute measure of side benefits. Organizational tenure to be more related to commitment than was position tenure. In other words, years spent in a particular position might develop an employee's psychological attachment to an organization. Years spent in an organization are likely to yield greater side benefits, such as a pension plan, and develop greater commitment.

Another personal characteristic as an antecedent of organizational commitment is perceived competence. Studies revealed that individuals will become committed to an organization to the extent that it provides for growth and achievement needs (Bateman and Strasser, 1984). Highly *skilled* employees are of great value to organizations, which is likely to increase the rewards they receive, and thus increase their commitment. Howell and Dorfman (1981). *Salary* is generally considered to represent a side bet and to thereby increase commitment. Salary levels may also increase feelings of self-esteem and thereby account for the positive relationship with attitudinal commitment. Meta – Analysis indicated a consistent positive correlation between salary and commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

### **3.2.2 Job Characteristics**

The relationships between various job characteristics and organizational commitment have been examined in several studies (Spector, 1985; Fried & Ferris, 1987). Most authors have used Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristic model to suggest that enriched jobs are likely to yield higher organizational commitment (Steers, 1977). Some empirical studies (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Loner, Noe, Moeller, & Fitzgerald, 1985; Spector, 1985)

have generally supported its propositions; thus, it may provide a useful framework for examining relationships between aspects of jobs and organizational commitment. Studies indicated a positive correlation between autonomy and commitment. In addition, job challenge correlated positively with commitment, although job challenge is not formally a component of the job characteristic model, it emphasizes that more challenging jobs should yield higher commitment, particularly for employees with high growth need strength. Morris and Steers (1980) suggested that when employees experience high functional dependence, they become more aware of their own contribution to the organization and to their immediate work group (p. 56). This heightened awareness may enhance employees' ego involvement and thereby increase their commitment to the organization. The relationship between leader communication and OC was demonstrated and yielded a high positive correlation (Bruning and Snyder, 1983). Most probably, a supervisor who provides more accurate and timely styles of communication improves the work environment and thus s/he is likely to increase employees' commitment to their organization. Relations between participatory leadership and organizational commitment were reported a positive correlation (Jermier and Berkes, 1979; Rhodes and Steers, 1981). Jermier and Berkes (1979) found that participatory leadership was most effective at influencing the commitment levels of police officers working in ambiguous environments. Rhodes and Steers (1981) found a higher correlation between participatory leadership and organizational commitment in worker-owned, as compared with conventional, organizations. To sum up, evidence reports that the relations between various leader behaviors and organizational commitment are contingent on other factors in the work environment.

### **3.2.3 Organizational Characteristics**

Organization size (total number employees) and organizational centralization are the organizational characteristics that might affect organizational commitment. Naturally, larger organizations are seen as less personable and harder to identify with. On the other hand, larger organizations may increase the chances of promotions and other forms of side bets and increase the opportunities for interpersonal interactions, thus increasing commitment levels. Bateman and Strasser (1984), Morris and Steers (1980) showed correlations between organizational centralization and organizational commitment. Morris and Steers (1980) stated that perceived decentralization is likely to be associated with participative decision making and increased commitment levels through greater employee involvement. According to Mowday et al. (1982), there are three specific role states which are negatively associated antecedents of organizational commitment. These are role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. The most common assumption was that role states result from perceptions of the work environment and then influence affective responses. It is unclear whether the relationship between role states and commitment is direct or mediated by other variables, such as stress or job satisfaction. However, it is clear that employees who report greater levels of role strain also tend to report lower levels of commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

One possible antecedent of commitment is organizational culture. Important organizational culture writers such as Deal and Kenedy (1982) Peters and Waterman (1982) suggested that organizational culture could exert considerable influence on the functioning of organizations especially in performance and commitment. Some other writings

emphasized the issue of subcultures in organizations (Hofstede, 1998). The role of leaders was examined employees commitment in relation to the level of consent to, and conflict with managerial strategy (Brewer and Lok, 1995) Brewer described managerial strategy as cultural and human resources strategies. Moreover, commitment was highly dependent on managerial strategies and the level of employees' participation. Findings indicated the influence of organizational culture in commitment. Moreover, innovative cultures have strong positive influences on commitment while a bureaucratic environment has a negative influence on commitment (Lok and Crawford, 2001).

### **3.3 The Consequences of Organizational Commitment**

As an antecedent, commitment has most often been used to predict withdrawal behaviors. There are several behavioral outcomes of organizational commitment. These are lower turnover and higher performance. Highly committed employees are supposed to have a weak intention to quit. Such an outcome is implicit in the definition of organizational commitment. Studies by Angle and Perry (1981) and Jenkins (1993) for example have revealed a negative relationship between turnover intentions and organizational commitment. Studies illustrate that commitment correlates positively with attendance and negatively with lateness and turnover. Commitment demonstrated much larger correlations with two turnover-related intentions: (a) intention to search for job alternatives, and (b) intention to leave one's job (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Studies by Konovsky and Cropanzano (1991) and Meyer and others (1989) have uncovered a positive relationship between commitment and job performance. Employees

who are committed to their respective institutions are more likely not only to remain with the institution but are also likely to exert more effort on the behalf of the organization and work towards its success and therefore are also likely to be better performers than the uncommitted employees.

Few researchers predicted that commitment levels would influence performance, as most correlations were extracted from studies designed primarily to examine other relationships. Petty, McGee, and Cavender (1984) found an average correlation between job satisfaction and performance. Although higher levels of commitment may relate to improved job performance in some situations (e.g., Larson & Fukami, 1984), the findings in the literature state that commitment has relatively little direct influence on performance in most instances.

It is clearly understood that commitment as an independent variable has influences on turnover and performance. In the next section, the relationship between perceived organizational support and commitment will be reviewed.

### **3.4 The Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Commitment**

The relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is commonly explained by reciprocity and social exchange. The exchange theory conceptualizes a causal model that specifies the reciprocal relationships between organizational commitment and organizational support. According to that theory, there are

three principles; 1) rationality, 2) reciprocity and 3) specificity which explain the relationships (Blau, 1994). The third principle (specificity) asserts that an individual associates with others who can provide expected and desirable outcomes. For the employee, organizational support will be like a desirable outcome which increases employee commitment. To the organization, the employees' organizational commitment may be a desirable reward motivating its provision of support to the employee (Chueng, 2000). Above explanation may be triggered by the definition of perceived organizational support in which employees tend to ascribe human-like characteristics to the organization (Levinson, 1965) and that, in line with the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), favorable treatment by the organization creates a sense of indebtedness among employees to the personified organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In exchange of feeling under obligation, they become strongly attached to the organization. Therefore, they exchange their loyalty and effort for material and social rewards from the organization. According to Hutchison (1997), employees' attachment is a two-stage mediation process. If commitment is an expression of the employees' loyalty to the organization, and if the employees come to the organization with the intent to exchange that loyalty and efforts for resources and social reinforcements, then employees' perceptions of support from the organization should serve as the link between actions taken by the organization (commitment to the organization) and actions taken by the employee (commitment from the employee). The employees' perceptions of the sources of organizational support come from managers and supervisors which develop a global perception of the organization, which turns into employee commitment.

Existing research found that, there is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Shore, 1995). Employees with high perceived organizational support feel indebtedness to respond favorably to the organization in the form of positive job attitudes and organizational behaviors (Loi, Hang-Yue & Foley, 2006). When the relationship between different components of organizational commitment and perceived organizational support are tried to be elaborated, most of the above studies analyze the affective component of organizational commitment. According to these studies, employees affectively committed to the organization 1) by the felt obligation to contribute to the organization's well-being and help the organization reach its goals. Employees then would repay through affective commitment and indicate greater efforts at work (Eisenberg et al., 1986; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Rousseau, 1989; Schein, 1980; Wayne et al., 1997). 2) Perceived organizational support increases affective commitment by contributing to the satisfaction of the employees' socio-emotional needs such as esteem, approval and affiliation (Eisenberg et al., 1986; Fuller, Barnett, Hester & Relyea, 2003). That satisfaction will provide to enhance employees' social identity by being a member of that organization which creates greater affective commitment levels. Specifically, as argued by Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997), the satisfaction of important higher-order needs by the organization through the provision of valued rewards and support is experienced as psychologically fulfilling by employees. It is therefore, precisely these psychologically rewarding experiences that are at the basis of the development of affective commitment. 3) Being supported by the organization will make employees feel comfortable and competent which creates a positive mood. Employees who hold a positive emotional state will not intend to leave that organization and be affectively committed to it

(Eisenberg et al., 2001; Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003). It should also be mentioned that the studies of Rhoades et al. (2001) prove the idea that it is perceived organizational support which influences affective commitment and not the reverse (Aube, Rousseau & Morin, 2007). Thus,

**H<sub>1a</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and affective commitment.

The relationship between normative commitment and perceived organizational support can be explained by the norm of reciprocity. According to that norm, a person who experiences favorable behaviors, attitudes or rewards from someone, feels the obligation to return to that favor. From the point of view of the employee; when the employee perceives that their employer indicates care about his/her well-being, he/she feels indebtedness to the organization and indicates loyalty. That kind of loyalty, specifically includes the normative part of commitment (Aube, Rousseau & Morin, 2007). Compared with affective commitment, normative commitment is developed through the economic aspect of exchange relationship (Shore & Tetrick, 1991). Therefore, we expect that,

**H<sub>1b</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and normative commitment.

Continuance commitment can be differentiated from the two dimensions above of commitment because of its underlying reason. Employees who have higher continuance commitment levels continue to work for the organization because of being in need of the

job. On the other hand, affectively and normatively committed employees do not leave the organization because they want and feel obligation to the organization respectively. According to Rhoades and Eisenberg's (2002) study, there is a weak negative relationship between continuance commitment and perceived organizational support. Additionally, perceived organizational support-continuance commitment relationship was variable, ranging from zero to large and negative. This negative relationship is explained with the decrease of feelings of being stuck in the organization, when the employee thinks that the cost of leaving it is influenced by the perceived organizational support. A high level of perceived organizational support may help to restore the balance between the positive reinforcements taken by the organization and the contributions of the individual. Specifically, when individuals perceive high level of organizational support, the costs attached to leaving the job will be perceived as less important than if they thought that they had given a great deal to the organization without having received anything in return (Aube, Rousseau & Morin, 2007). Also, O'Driscoll and Randall (1999) stated that, continuance commitment is more likely to be influenced by perceptions of being poorly treated rather than perceptions of support from the organization. Finally, Randall and O'Driscoll (1997) asserted that, continuance commitment creates a less intense relationship between the organization and the employee. The only significant tie is the survival of the organization. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated;

**H<sub>1c</sub>:** There is a negative relationship between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment.

## **4 ORGANIZATION BASED SELF-ESTEEM**

Self-esteem is a concept which has been investigated widely in the last decades. The first studies go back to Rosenberg (1965; cited in Pierce & Gardner, 2004) and the construct was defined as the overall self-evaluation of an individual regarding his/her competencies. In other words, it is the level on which the individual expresses approval or disapproval with him/herself. That is, the overall assessment of the individual's own value as a person. Korman (1970) defines self-esteem as the extent to which the person "sees him/herself as a competent, need-satisfying individual" (p.32) and as a conclusion the individual with a high level of self-esteem has a "sense of personal adequacy and a sense of having achieved need satisfaction in the past" (Korman, 1966, p. 479). A person with high self-esteem is thus expected to feel good about himself / herself and feel more or less satisfied. They would agree with statements like "I am a person of worth, on an equal plane with others" and "I am satisfied with myself" (from Rosenberg's, 1965 measure of self-esteem).

The concept of self-esteem has been identified in different forms of specificity in the literature. These forms are global and task or situation-specific self-esteem (Simpson & Boyle, 1975). Global self-esteem being the overall self-esteem the individual has and task or situation specific being the level of self-esteem the individual has when carrying out a specific task at hand.

The understanding of self-esteem in general and self-esteem within the work and organizational context is based mainly upon research conducted in the area of global self-esteem (Brockner, 1988). In 1989 Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham (1989)

introduced a new concept, the concept of organization-based self-esteem (OBSE). They defined it as the degree to which an individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, and worthy as an organizational member. The definition of the new term OBSE was of interest because it had been hypothesized that the self-esteem of an individual shaped around work and organizational experiences, would play an important role in establishing his/her work-related motivation, attitudes and behavior. Based on this, Korman (1970, 1976) had found that employees with higher levels of self-esteem were more inclined to have positive attitudes toward their workplace and perform better than colleagues with lower levels of self-esteem. An elaboration of the term OBSE included a self-evaluation of an individual's personal sense of worth as an organizational member. In consistence with the earlier findings of Korman (1971, 1976) on self-esteem, individuals with high levels of organization-based self-esteem feel that they are satisfying their needs through their organizational roles.

#### **4.1 The Antecedents of Organization-Based Self-Esteem**

This section will review findings regarding the determinants of self-esteem which is formed around work and organizational experience. Researchers have hypothesized that employees form a self-concept around work and that their experience at work, play a significant role in determining their level of self-esteem.

Researches on global self-esteem (Franks & Marolla, 1976; Korman, 1970, 1971, 1976) show that self-esteem is affected by several factors. These factors can be categorized as (1) signals sent by the environmental structures to which one is exposed, (2) messages sent by

significant others in one's social environment and (3) the individual's feelings of efficacy and competence derived from his/her direct and personal experiences. Based on these findings Pierce et al (1989) hypothesized that the determinants of OBSE are similar but founded in one's work and organizational experiences. The determinants of OBSE can be summarized as work environment structures, social messages received and internalized coming from meaningful and significant others, and direct and personal experiences. Analyzing the influence of work environment structures Korman (1971) found that employees working in mechanistically designed social systems were inclined to develop lower levels of self-esteem. Highly mechanistic structures rely upon rigid hierarchy, centralization, standardization and formalization. Individuals working in such environments have no possibility to self-regulate and self-direct their work which leads to lower levels of self-esteem. However, people centered systems with complex job designs, non-routine technologies and high involvement tend to see individuals as highly valuable organizational resources giving them greater opportunities to self-regulate and express themselves in their organizational roles. The opportunity of expression may lead to an increased likelihood of the individual attributing positive events to themselves which in turn leads to higher levels of OBSE.

Apart from the environmental structure of the employee, a second important source from which self-esteem emerges, are the social messages received and internalized that come from meaningful and significant others (Baumeister, 1999; Brockner, 1988). The more significant others communicate to the individual that he/she is able and competent, the more an individual will hold similar beliefs about himself/herself (Korman, 1970, 1976). In other words, an employee's OBSE is shaped according to the messages about the self that

are transmitted by others who evaluate the employee's work. When the messages are internalized and integrated into the person's conceptualization of and evaluation of the self, they become a part of the self-concept.

Finally, the role of direct and personal experience in the forming of OBSE is also important (Brockner, 1988; Korman, 1970, 1976). Individuals, who feel competent and efficacious, based on their own personal experiences like the successful completion of a project, hold positive images about themselves. Thus, successful experiences in the work setting will increase the level of the individual's OBSE, while the experience of failure will have the opposite influence. This relationship can be better understood when analyzed through Bandura's (1997) work on self-efficacy. Bandura puts forward that the impact of past performance (success or failure) on self-beliefs depends on the individual's interpretation of that performance and the attributions that are made. Employees who have successful experiences and who attribute the success to themselves are more likely to experience an increase in self-efficacy, which in turn and over time impacts OBSE (Gardner & Pierce, 1998, 2001). Similarly, an individual who experiences failure and attributes it to the self will eventually experience a decrease of self-esteem.

Researchers who have worked with the concept of global self-esteem (Brockner, 1988; Korman, 1970, 1976) claim that self-esteem is central to the explanation of employee attitudes (for instance job satisfaction), motivation, and performance. Looking at why this relationship is present, several self-regulatory mechanisms can give an explanation. The most visible explanatory mechanism is self-consistency motivation (Korman, 1970), self-enhancement motivation (Dipboye, 1977), behavioral plasticity (Brockner, 1988), self-

protection (Korman, 2001), or a combination of them (Dipboye, 1977). There are reasons for believing that the same self-regulatory mechanisms will play a role influencing the attitudinal, motivational and behavioral influences of OBSE.

The self-consistency motivation mechanism (Lee & Peccei, 2007) puts forward that people who have positive images of themselves will engage in behaviors, possess attitudes and choose roles that reinforce that positive image. In contrast, people who have negative images of themselves will engage in behaviors (or not put in a lot of effort) and possess attitudes that are consistent with that negative image.

The self-enhancement theory provides an alternative perspective on the underlying dynamics associated with self-esteem influences. This theory posits that low as well as high self-esteem individuals have basic needs to enhance their self-esteem (Dipboye, 1977, Sedikides, Gaertner & Tosuchi, 2003). It further postulates that low self-esteem individuals usually engage in “damage control”. They lack confidence in their ability to succeed (Campbell, 1990), and to prevent further erosion of their self-esteem, they commonly withhold task-related effort. This lack of effort then becomes the justification for their poor performance, rather than more enduring problems like their lack of ability.

The theory of behavioral plasticity refers to the extent to which an individual is affected by external factors for instance social influences. People with low self-esteem are more behaviorally plastic, that is reactive, than people with high self-esteem (Brockner, 1988). One attribute of low self-esteem individuals is that they seek out and respond to events in the environment, while high self-esteem individuals are more confident in their

competence and consequently attend to and react to external cues with lower intensity. Low self-esteem individuals experience more uncertainty as to the correctness of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and thus rely more on external cues to guide them.

The self-protective motivational mechanism is activated when employees feel they cannot meet performance expectations, and see the work environment as one that emphasizes punishment in motivating employees. Damage control which was discussed above would be evident when self-protection motivation is in operation. Self-esteem is a key dispositional precursor for both motivational systems. The various perspectives on how global self-esteem and therefore OBSE might affect human motivation differ on a number of issues. There is the long-term issue of whether humans are self-consistent or self-enhancing or do both under certain circumstances. There is also the issue of whether low self-esteem individuals are more reactive to cues in the social environment than high self-esteem individuals. These topics are still being investigated as opinions differ.

## **4.2 The Consequences of Organization Based Self-Esteem**

As previously noted scholars (e.g., Brockner, 1988; Korman, 1970, 1976) have hypothesized that self-esteem affects employee motivation, attitudes, and work-related behaviors. In this section, the studies will be reviewed which explored the consequences of OBSE in the work and organizational context.

Several empirical investigations provide us with insight into the relationship between OBSE and employee attitudes. Satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two work-related attitudes that have received virtually all of the research attention. Observations of a positive relationship between OBSE and workplace satisfaction are common. The Pierce et al. (1989) study reports on four different samples in which self-esteem correlated with job satisfaction. Several other investigations (Tang & Gilbert, 1994, 1998; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) showed a positive relationship between OBSE and most aspects of job satisfaction. Some other studies report a significant and positive relationship between OBSE and commitment (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Tang & Ibrahim, 1998). These findings implicate that employees with high levels of self-esteem are more committed to their organizations than their low self-esteem counterparts. The individual-organization relationship is also revealed by the degree to which the individual comes to identify with the organization. Kark and Shamir (2002; Shamir & Kark, 2004) observed a positive relationship between OBSE, and organizational identification among a sample of bank employees. Bowden (2002) also observed a positive relationship between organization-based self-esteem and organizational identification.

Staehle-Moody (1998) found that those with high OBSE do a better job coping with organizational change than their low OBSE counterparts, and that they are more proactive in their coping style. This observation is also consistent with Brockner's (1988) notions about behavioral plasticity. Several investigators looked at the relationship between OBSE, and employee turnover intentions and turnover behavior. Existing evidence (e.g., Bowden, 2002; Gardner & Pierce, 2001) explained negative relationships between OBSE and turnover intentions, and with turnover. It seems that those organizational members who

have come to believe that they are important and organizationally competent don't think about quitting, nor quit their jobs with the same frequency as those employees who have come to believe that they are not an "important part of this place."

Feedback seeking behavior is another consequence of OBSE. While the majority of research on global self-esteem would support the prediction that individuals with low OBSE would seek more feedback (Brockner, 1988), two studies indicated inconsistent results. Van Dyne et al. (1990) hypothesized that high self-esteem individuals would actively engage in feedback seeking behavior, using feedback information as a resource to assist them in performing well – a strategy to maintain high performance levels. Madzar (2001), on the other hand, argued that a superior's perceived leadership style (e.g., transformational and transactional) affects the feedback seeking behaviors of his/her subordinates. Madzar reasoned that low self-esteem individuals, in need of approval and self-affirmation, and in search of self-diagnostics will take advantage of the developmental support they receive from transformational leaders. High self-esteem individuals, who are less behaviorally plastic, are less influenced by the quality of their relationship with their supervisor. Therefore, they will be less likely to seek feedback. Studying a sample of medical technology employees in the United States, Madzar found OBSE to be negatively related to the degree of feedback seeking behavior from transformational leaders. At this point, it seems that high OBSE employees seek and use feedback as a strategy for maintaining high performance (and high OBSE), while low OBSE employees seek feedback when they perceive opportunities to self-enhance.

High self-esteem individuals try to sustain their performance at a high level. They can engage in behaviors that are consistent with and maintain their level of self-esteem, and by which they can self-enhance. In addition, it has been argued that high self-esteem individuals are more likely to have stronger self-efficacy than their low self-esteem counterparts (Gardner & Pierce, 1998), which contributes to higher performance levels under almost all role conditions (Bandura, 1997). Pierce et al. (1989) observed a positive and significant relation between OBSE and supervisor ratings of employee performance in two of three organizations studied. Van Dyne and Pierce (2003) also observed a positive relationship between OBSE and performance.

#### **4.3 The Role of Organizational Based Self Esteem as a Mediator Between Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Commitment**

OBSE has been shown to be related to a range of positive employee attitudes and behaviors at work. One of these correlated attitudes is POS. As a result, POS has attracted increasing interest among both organizational scholars and practitioners in recent years (Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002). One of the major focuses of this study is to explore the mediating role of OBSE between POS and employee organizational commitment. POS increase organizational commitment by creating a felt obligation to care about the organization and help it meet its objectives. Employees who perceive the organization as caring for their well-being are, therefore, assumed to be more likely to reciprocate not only in engaging in various forms of pro-social behavior directed toward the organization, but also by developing a stronger sense of organizational commitment.

According to Blumer (1969), individuals through a variety of processes, view themselves through how they are viewed by others. Thus, as individuals contact other people and entities that encourage certain systems of beliefs about the self, it becomes more likely that they will internalize those beliefs and that others' views will become a part of the self (Korman, 1971). If significant others and entities hold the self in high respect and regard, one's own self esteem will be high (Harter, 1993). In an organizational context, the organization itself can be considered an important *significant other* for employees (Van Dyne, Wandewalle, Kostova, Latham and Cummings, 2000). Therefore, the evaluation of the organization reflected in individuals' perceived sense of organizational support, may play an essential role in developing employees' OBSE.

As reviewed in the previous section, the socio-emotional perspective states that an increased level of OBSE is likely to be psychologically satisfying to employees. To some extent, individuals' psychological satisfaction is associated with the organization through perceived organizational support so that OBSE can be expected to improve their organizational commitment (Tang & Gilbert, 1994; Lee and Peccei, 2007). Research has shown a positive relationship between organization-based self-esteem and organizational commitment (Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Pierce et al., 1989; Pierce et al., 1993). Hui and Lee (2000) further suggested organization-based self-esteem upholds commitment even during uncertainty. **Hughes and Palmer (2007) investigated the mediating role of OBSE between psychological contract and organizational commitment.** They found that organizational commitment partially mediated this relationship. Fuller et al. (2003) studied POS and organizational relationship through OBSE from a social identity perspective. Social identity theory states that "people remain loyal when they feel that their

organizations ... value and appreciate them.” (Tyler, 1999, p.235). According to social identity theory when people think that their organization appreciates and values them, this is an indication of organizational respect for them or of their high status within the organization (Tyler, 1999). High status is likely to increase people’s organizational commitment because it improves their social identity. Moreover, social identity is reflected in people’s self-esteem (Chattopadhyay, 1999) Therefore, Fuller et al. (2003) hypothesized that the relationship between individuals’ **POS and organizational commitment is likely to be mediated to some degree by their OBSE**. They found that POS might be related to organizational commitment partly because of its impact on OBSE. Findings from the high-tech firms showed that OBSE can be developed by managers specifically in workers’ perceptions of the fulfillment of obligations in the work arrangement. Moreover, OBSE was found to influence workers’ ratings of organizational commitment (Hughes and Palmer, 2007).

In order to test the mediating role of OBSE, a researcher should conduct three regression analyses as stated by Baron and Kenny (1986, p. 1177):

- 1) regressing the mediator on the independent variable
- 2) regressing the dependent variable on the independent variable
- 3) regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and on the mediator

These three –independent– regression analyses present the tests of the relationship of the mediational model. To confirm mediation, the following conditions are necessary: *First*, the independent variable should influence the mediator in the first step of the three stage regression; *second*, the independent variable must influence the dependent variable in the

second step of the regression; and finally *third*, the mediator should affect the dependent variable in the third regression equation. If these conditions all confirmed in the predicted direction, then the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable should be less in the third equation than in the second (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Based on literature reviewed above, the second and the third hypothesis of the study will be as follows:

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a positive relationship between POS and OBSE

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a positive relationship between OBSE and organizational commitment.

Finally, it is proposed that POS influences organizational commitment through its influence on OBSE. In other words, OBSE mediates the relationship between POS – organizational commitment (OC). The fourth hypothesis emphasizes the influence of POS on organizational commitment through OBSE. Therefore, the last hypothesis will be as follows:

**Hypothesis 4:** OBSE will mediate the relationship between POS and organizational commitment.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Sample

In this research the respondents consisted of 148 white collar employees. The sample was composed of 80 females (54.1%) and 68 males (45.9%). Average tenure of employees is 13,5 years and organizational tenure of them is 6,6 years. Participants were between the ages of 22 and 52 and the mean age being 35.

### 5.2 The Research Model

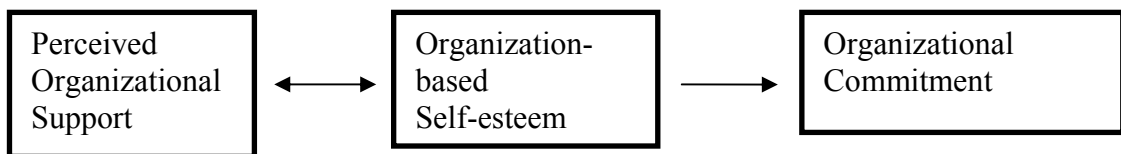


Figure 1. The Research Model

### 5.3 Hypotheses

The hypotheses are as follow:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between POS and OC

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between POS and OBSE

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between OBSE and OC

Hypothesis 4: OBSE will mediate the relationship between POS and OC

## **5.4 Research Design**

Design of the study is explanatory because it tries to explain the nature of certain relationships between research variables by hypothesis testing. It is an analytical one because the researcher is interested finding out whether some relationship exists among the variables investigated in the study.

## **5.5 Instruments**

The questionnaire used for this study included four parts. The first part asked for demographic information about the participants (6 questions). The second part consisted of short form of Perceived Organizational Support scale (8 questions). The third part consisted of Organization Based Self-Esteem scale (10 questions). The fourth part consisted of Organizational Commitment scale (18 questions).

### **5.5.1 Perceived Organizational Support Scale**

In this study shorter version of Perceived Organizational Support Scale (Eisenberger et al. 1986) is used. (see Appendix 1). Original questionnaire were translated and used by Akalın (2006). The scale consisted of 8 items and responses collected on a six point Likert type scale. The instrument used a 6 point scale strongly disagree (1) strongly agree (6) to measure level of Perceived Organizational Support. Higher scores indicated higher levels of Organizational Support.

### **5.5.2 Organization Based Self-Esteem Scale**

The Organization Based Self-Esteem scale was developed by Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham (1989). (see Appendix 2). The original questionnaire were translated and used by Buruk (2006). The scale consisted of 10 items and responses collected on a six point Likert type scale. The instrument used a 6 point scale strongly disagree (1) strongly agree (6) to measure level of Organization Based Self Esteem. The cronbach-alpha for 10 item in the original scale was .93 (Lee and Peccei, 2007).

### **5.5.3 Organizational Commitment Scale**

In the present study, Meyer and Allen's (1997) Organizational Commitment Scale was used (See Appendix 3). As mentioned in the literature review, organizational commitment has three dimensions. Each Six statements measures Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment respectively. Items related to organizational commitment were standardized in Turkish by Wasti (2000). Items were translated and back translated. This scale used by Buruk (2006). Higher scores indicated greater organizational commitment. The instrument used a 6 point scale strongly disagree (1) strongly agree (6) to measure organizational commitment. The organizational commitment scale consisted of 18 items and Cronbach-alpha reliability score was .93 (Wasti, 2000). The Cronbach-alpha Reliability score of the original scale was .94 (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

## **5.6 Procedure**

In each work place employees participated in the study during company time. The booklets that they were asked to fill out were distributed in a closed envelope. Respondents were assured about the confidentiality of their answers as they were told not to write their names on the booklet. The participants were asked to answer demographic questions on the first page of the booklet including their sex, age, job tenure, organizational tenure, marital status, and education level. For each participant the procedure took approximately 20 minutes.

## **5.7 Data Analysis**

The analyses below were conducted by SPSS 13 to get the results:

- 1) To measure the internal consistencies of the scales Cronbach-alfa analysis
- 2) Principle Component Factor Analysis
- 3) Regression Analysis

## 6 RESULTS

In this part first, factor analyses results will be given and then means, standard deviations, correlation matrix and reliability analyses of the variables will be reported then hypothesis result will be presented.

### 6.1 Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1** Descriptive Statistics For the Sample

| Gender | N   | Percentage | Average<br>Tenure | Org.<br>Tenure | Age<br>Range | Mean<br>Age |
|--------|-----|------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Men    | 68  | 45.9%      |                   |                |              |             |
| Women  | 80  | 54.1%      |                   |                |              |             |
| Total  | 148 | 100%       | 13.5 years        | 6.6 years      | 22-52 years  | 35 years    |

Descriptive statistics results for the sample are shown in Table 1. As can be seen, this sample consisted of 148 white collar employees, 80 females (54.1%) and 68 males (45.9%). Average tenure of employees is 13.5 years and organizational tenure of them is 6.6 years. Participants were between the ages of 22 and 52 and the mean age being 35.

## 6.2 Factor Analyses Findings

The factor analyses results of Organization Based Self-Esteem Scale and Organizational Commitment Scale are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.

**Table 2**  
**Factor Structure of Organization Based Self-Esteem**

|                                                                            | Factor Loadings |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
|                                                                            | 1               | 2       |
| <b>Factor 1: Organization Based Self-Respect</b>                           |                 |         |
| obse10: Çalıştığım yerde herkesle iyi geçinirim                            | .805            |         |
| obse4: Çalıştığım yerde bana herkes çok güvenir                            | .800            |         |
| obse5: Çalıştığım yerde herkes benim söylediklerime inanır                 | .747            |         |
| obse8: Çalıştığım yerde her durumda işe yarar biri olarak tanınırım        | .724            |         |
| obse9: Çalıştığım yerde her zaman verimliyimdir                            | .687            |         |
| obse7: Çalıştığım yerde herkes için değerli biriyimdir                     | .672            |         |
| <b>Factor 2: Organization Based Self-Confidence</b>                        |                 |         |
| obse1: Çalıştığım yerde her zaman sözü geçen biriyim                       |                 | .902    |
| obse3: Çalıştığım yerde çok önemli biriyim                                 |                 | .844    |
| obse2: Çalıştığım yerde her zaman ciddiye alınan biriyim                   |                 | .820    |
| obse6: Çalıştığım yerde her zaman yaptığım işlerle farklılık yaratabilirim |                 | .617    |
| Percentage of explained variance                                           | 36.05           | 34.15   |
| Total variance                                                             |                 | 70.20   |
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy                                       |                 | .85     |
| Bartlett's test of sphericity                                              |                 | 990.57* |

\*P<.001

As can be seen from Table 2 Organization Based Self-Esteem was composed of two factors. The items loaded under the first factor indicate leadership characteristics. This factor has been named **Organization Based Self-Respect** and explains 36.05% of the variance. This factor is composed of six items and its cronbach-alfa reliability score is .88. The second factor of the scale contains items like trustworthiness, being able to work with others and some other competencies that lead to increase the employees' efficiency so that it is named as **Organization Based Self-Confidence**. This factor explains 34.15% of the

variance. It contains four items and has a reliability of .86. Both factors explain a total of 70.20% of the variance.

**Table 3**  
**Factor Analysis of Organizational Commitment**

|                                                                                   | Factor Loadings |       |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------|----------|
|                                                                                   | 1               | 2     | 3        |
| <b>Factor 1: Affective Organizational Commitment</b>                              |                 |       |          |
| oc14: Çalıştığım kur kalmak manevi yüküm hissetmiyor                              | .795            |       |          |
| oc8: Çalıştığım kuruma "duygusal olarak bağlı" hissetmi                           | .758            |       |          |
| oc5: Çalıştığım kurumun benim için özel bir anlamı var                            | .758            |       |          |
| oc3: Çalıştığım kuruma karşı güçlü . aidiyet duygum yok                           | .743            |       |          |
| oc11: Kendimi "ailenin bir parçası" gibi hissetmiyorum                            | .722            |       |          |
| oc1: Meslek hayatımın kalan .....beni çok mutlu eder                              | .666            |       |          |
| oc18: Bu kurum benim sadakatimi hak ediyor                                        | .637            |       |          |
| oc7: Çalıştığım kurumun .... kendi meselelerim hiss                               | .611            |       |          |
| oc9: Çalıştığım kuruma çok şey borçluyum                                          | .587            |       |          |
| oc10: İnsanlara yükümlülük hissettiğim .... ayrılmazdım                           | .539            |       |          |
| <b>Factor 2: Continuance Organizational Commitment</b>                            |                 |       |          |
| oc15: Dışarıda çok az seçeneğim olduğu için ...ayrılmayı düşünemiyorum            |                 | .780  |          |
| oc2: Şu an bu kurumda çalışmaya mecburum                                          |                 | .758  |          |
| oc13: Çalıştığım kurumdan ayrılmam alternatiflerin az..... olumsuz olur           |                 | .728  |          |
| oc6: Şu anda..kurumdan ayrılmak ..... hayatımın çoğu alt üst olur                 |                 | .694  |          |
| <b>Factor 3: Normative Organizational Commitment</b>                              |                 |       |          |
| oc12: Benim için avantajlı da olsa, .... ayrılmanın doğru olmadığını hissediyorum |                 |       | .723     |
| oc16: Eğer çalıştığım kuruma kendimden bu kadar çok şey vermiş olmasaydım..       |                 |       | .688     |
| oc17: Kurumdan şimdi ayrılısam kendimi suçlu hissederim                           |                 |       | .685     |
| Percentage of Explained Variance                                                  | 29.70           | 14.89 | 14.20    |
| Total Variance                                                                    |                 |       | 58.80    |
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy                                              |                 |       | .87      |
| Bartlett's test of sphericity                                                     |                 |       | 1073.89* |

\*P<.001

Table 3 displays the results of the factor analysis of the Organizational Commitment scale. As can be seen, the scale, consistent with the literature consists of three factors. The items measuring affective organizational commitment loaded under the first factor which explains 29.70% of the variance. The affective organizational commitment factor's

cronbach-alpha score is .90. The second factor of the scale is called continuance organizational commitment just as in its original (Meyer and Allen, 1993) study. The continuance organizational commitment factor explains 14.89% of the variance. This factor's cronbach-alpha score is .76. The third factor is similar to the original scale named as normative organizational commitment. The normative organizational commitment factor explains 14.20% of the variance. This factor's cronbach-alpha score is .61. The total variance explained by these three factors is 58.80%.

The original scale consists of 18 items. Each 6 item measures Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment and Normative Commitment respectively. The original scale was developed on the basis of American culture and standards. However, in the present study the distribution of factors for each type of commitment was not found as in the original scale. Specifically, Affective Commitment was composed of 10 items, Continuance Commitment was comprised of 4 items, and Normative Commitment was consisted of 3 items.

Moreover, in the factor analyses, items loaded under 0,5 and loaded more than one factor were discarded from the scales. Furthermore, in order to understand the factor structure of the scales principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used. Any item with a factor loading less than .50 or loading to more than one factor was discarded from the analysis. Factor with Eigenvalue over 1.00 or more were taken into consideration in total variance explained.

For Perceived Organizational Support Scale factor analysis results showed that the items are loaded on a single factor (Sipahi and Yurtkoru and Çinko, 2008). Each item's factor loadings and percentage of explained variance scores are shown in (Appendix 5). Factor's cronbach-alpha score is .88. Factor explains 56.268% of the variance.

### 6.3 Reliability Analyses

Cronbach-Alpha scores of scales and subscales are shown in Table 4. Scales internal consistencies are ranged from .81 to .90. All of the alpha scores both for scales and subscales are found higher than .70 except for the subscale normative organizational commitment.

**Table 4        Scales and Subscales Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients**

| <b>Scale</b>                          | <b>Cronbach <math>\alpha</math></b> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Perceived Organizational Support      | .88                                 |
| Organizational Based Self-Esteem      | .90                                 |
| Organizational Commitment             | .81                                 |
| OBSE Self-Respect                     | .88                                 |
| OBSE Self-Confidence                  | .87                                 |
| Affective Organizational Commitment   | .90                                 |
| Continuance Organizational Commitment | .76                                 |
| Normative Organizational Commitment   | .61                                 |

#### **6.4 Correlation Analysis**

Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix were recalculated with the subscales found after the factor analyses and the other scales. Results are given in Table 4. According to Table 5 none of the correlations between independent variables are higher than is .70. It was concluded that there is no multi co-linearity between perceived organizational support and organization based self esteem factors so that these variables can take place in the research model.

In the present study, firstly it was hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between POS and OC. Findings showed a significant positive correlation between POS and Affective and Normative commitment (affective commitment  $r = .68$   $p < .01$ ; normative commitment  $r = .25$   $p < .01$ ). Different from these positive correlations, it was found a significant negative correlation between POS and Continuance Commitment ( $r = -.30$   $p < .01$ ). Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

The second hypothesis of the study was that there would be a positive correlation between POS and OBSE. Results supported this hypothesis. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis showed a significant positive correlation between POS and OBSE (OBSE self respect  $r = .50$   $p < .01$ ; OBSE self confidence  $r = .37$   $p < .01$ ).

**Table 5**  
**Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix**

| Scales and Subscales                    | N   | Mean | Median | St.  | 1      | 2     | 3     | 4      | 5     | 6      | 7   | 8 |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|------|--------|------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-----|---|
|                                         |     |      |        | Dev. |        |       |       |        |       |        |     |   |
| 1 Perceived Organizational Support      | 145 | 4.03 | 4.00   | .81  | —      |       |       |        |       |        |     |   |
| 2 Organization Based Self-Esteem        | 144 | 4.34 | 4.30   | .64  | .47**  | —     |       |        |       |        |     |   |
| 3 Organizational Commitment             | 135 | 3.58 | 3.61   | .62  | .52**  | .32** | —     |        |       |        |     |   |
| 4 OBSE Self-Respect                     | 147 | 4.10 | 4.00   | .77  | .50**  | .86** | .17*  | —      |       |        |     |   |
| 5 OBSE Self-Confidence                  | 145 | 4.50 | 4.50   | .68  | .37**  | .92** | .38** | .61**  | —     |        |     |   |
| 6 Affective Organizational Commitment   | 144 | 3.75 | 3.70   | .90  | .68**  | .44** | .87** | .34**  | .44** | —      |     |   |
| 7 Continuance Organizational Commitment | 142 | 3.46 | 3.50   | 1.02 | -.30** | -.18* | .20*  | -.26** | -.09  | -.24** | —   |   |
| 8 Normative Organizational Commitment   | 143 | 3.15 | 3.00   | .91  | .25**  | .10   | .66** | .02    | .15   | .45**  | .03 | — |

\*P<0.05 \*\*P<0.01

The third hypothesis of the study was that there would be a positive correlation between OBSE and OC. Findings partially confirmed the third hypothesis. Correlation analysis showed a significant positive correlation between OBSE Self- Respect, OBSE Self-Confidence and Affective Organizational Commitment (OBSE Self Respect  $r = .34$   $p < .01$ ; OBSE Self Confidence  $r = .44$   $p < .01$ ). That is, the higher the levels of OBSE the higher the levels of affective commitment. However, results showed a significant negative correlation between OBSE Self-Respect and Continuance Commitment ( $r = -.26$   $p < .01$ ). That is, when OBSE Self – Respect increases Continuance Commitment decreases (see Table 5).

#### **6.5 The Role of Organization Based Self-Esteem As A Mediator Between Perceived Organizational Support And Organizational Commitment: Three Stage Multiple Regression Analysis**

Organization Based Self Esteem (OBSE) is shown as a mediator in Figure 1. In order to test the mediating influence, OBSE was tested in a three stage multiple regression analysis (Caliguiri, Hyland, Joshi & Bross, 1998). In this analysis, first the influence of the independent variable on the mediator was examined. If the result is significant the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variables is analyzed in the second step; the third step is carried out if the results are significant. In the third step the independent variable and the mediator are entered into the model together. If the mediating variable predicts the dependent variables significantly and the significance found in the first step of the analysis is found insignificant mediating role of the mediator variable is partially accepted or if the independent variable disappears in the third step, then the mediating role is fully accepted.

The fourth hypothesis of our research was as follows: “the influence of perceived organizational support on organizational commitment would be lower than the influence of OBSE on organizational commitment when the organization based self esteem intervenes” In order to test this hypothesis three stage regression was conducted. Results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6**  
**The Role of Organization Based Self-Esteem as a Moderator Between Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Commitment Three Stage Multiple Regression Analysis**

| First Step                      |                      |                        |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Predictors                      | OBSE Self respect    | OBSE Self Confidence   |                      |
| Perceived Support               | .497***              | .372***                |                      |
| <b>R<sup>2</sup></b>            | .247                 | .138                   |                      |
| <b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>   | .242                 | .133                   |                      |
| F Value                         | 47.85***             | 23.46***               |                      |
| Second Step                     |                      |                        |                      |
| Predictors                      | Affective Commitment | Continuance Commitment | Normative Commitment |
| Perceived Support               | .655***              | -.295**                | .249**               |
| <b>R<sup>2</sup></b>            | .429                 | .087                   | .062                 |
| <b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>   | .425                 | .081                   | .055                 |
| F Value                         | 109.82***            | 13.94**                | 9.63***              |
| Third Step                      |                      |                        |                      |
| Predictors                      | Affective Commitment | Continuance Commitment | Normative Commitment |
| Perceived Support               | .617***              | -.231                  | .296**               |
| OBSE Self-Respect               | -.154                | -.236*                 | -.226*               |
| OBSE Self-Confidence            | .307***              | .144                   | .175*                |
| <b>R<sup>2</sup></b>            | .488                 | .118                   | .093                 |
| <b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>   | .478                 | .100                   | .074                 |
| <b>R<sup>2</sup> difference</b> | .053                 | .019                   | .019                 |
| F Value                         | 45.82***             | 6.43**                 | 4.93**               |

\*P<0,05 \*\* P < 0.01 \*\*\*P < 0.001

Three stage multiple regression analysis showed that OBSE has a full mediation only on Continuance Commitment. For affective commitment it can be concluded that OBSE self confidence partially mediated the relationship between POS and Affective Organizational Commitment. In the second step of the analysis Beta coefficient was found .655 ( $p < .001$ ) and POS significantly predicted AC. However, in the third step the Beta coefficient of POS was found .617 ( $p < .001$ ). Between the two factors of OBSE, Self confidence significantly predicted AC ( $\beta = .307$   $p < .001$ ). Results showed that POS is a significant predictor of AC. OBSE has no significant mediating role between POS and normative commitment. Therefore, the hypothesis about the mediating role of OBSE was partially confirmed.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influences of perceived organizational support and organization based self esteem on organizational commitment. Specifically, the study focused on the mediating role played by organization based self esteem. Moreover, the direct influence of POS on OC was examined. For this purpose the researcher developed a mediator model of the relationship between POS – OBSE – OC. It was then tested through three stage regression analyses using a sample of white collar employees from a wide range of business sectors based on convenience sampling method. The results of the analyses firstly tried to establish single, significant correlations between POS – OBSE and organizational commitment. Then, the role of OBSE as a mediator of the relationship between POS and organizational commitment was examined. Findings showed some significant correlations between POS, OBSE and organizational commitment. Moreover, results indicated that OBSE partially mediated the relationship between POS and organizational commitment. In this section, various outcomes will be discussed and implications for management and study limitations will be put forward.

It was first hypothesized that there was a positive relationship between POS and organizational commitment. The data did support the hypothesis. Consistent with the findings in the literature the results showed a significant positive correlation between POS and affective commitment. The meta-analysis of research on POS, carried out by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) indicated that three general categories of favorable treatment received by employees (fairness of treatment, supervisors support, and rewards and job conditions) are positively related to POS, which, in turn, is associated

with outcomes favored by employees (e.g., increased job satisfaction, positive mood, and reduced stress) and the organization (e.g., increased affective commitment and performance and reduced turnover). As was expected, POS is strongly associated with affective commitment, which is consistent with previous studies conducted in similar organizational settings (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Thus, POS is likely to lead employees to develop a sense of belonging to and pride in their organization. More specifically, the results of this study indicate that POS and affective commitment strongly correlated ( $r=.68$   $p<.001$ ). For normative commitment, the results in the correlation analysis show that there is a significant correlation between POS and normative organizational commitment ( $r=.25$   $p<.001$ ). This relationship has also been supported in similar findings in the literature (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky, 2002). Thus, the greater the extent to which employees perceive that the organization is giving them support, the more they feel a moral obligation to keep working for that organization. Since they perceive they are supported and valued by their organization, they think that it is not moral to leave the organization.

The negative association between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment ( $r= -.30$   $p<.001$ ) is interesting. Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro (1990) suggested that POS should increase forms of commitment. However, Shore & Wayne (1993) found that support was related only to affective commitment. It is known that continuance commitment is based on the calculation about the cost of leaving the organization. Employee remains in the organization because he/she needs to do it (Allen and Meyer, 1990). In this framework, organizational support may serve a dual purpose of enhancing “desirable” attitudes and simultaneously reducing commitment based on lack of job alternatives or feelings of entrapment. Specifically,

employees who experience support and feel emotional attachment to their organization may have no need to justify their continued presence in other terms, such as lack of alternative job opportunities. Consistent with previous literature, a negative correlation was found between POS and continuance commitment such that individuals with strong levels of POS were less likely to feel that they “had to” remain with the organization or with the same profession because of the lack of attractive alternatives or due to the disruption in their life that leaving would involve. That is, POS might reduce feelings of entrapment (i.e., continuance commitment) that occur when employees are forced to stay with an organization because of the high costs of leaving (Shore and Tetrick, 1991).

Exhibition of high affective commitment and low continuance commitment among employees may be regarded as the ideal profile for an organization because it would elicit higher motivation and job performance, and possibly increase prosocial behaviors within the organization (Harris, Hirschfield, Field, & Mossholder, 1993). On the other hand, Mayer and Schoorman (1992) have cautioned that this may not always be the most favorable scenario, as employees who are low on continuance commitment may quit the organization when other job opportunities arise. If other organizations promote values and goals that are parallel with those held by the individual, affective attachment to their present organization may not be sufficient to counterbalance the lack of continuance commitment.

The present study showed a strong positive correlation between POS and OBSE ( $r = .47$   $p < .001$ ). Consistent with existing literature and arguments (Lee and Peccei, 2007) POS was found to have a positive impact on OBSE. The evaluation of the

organization reflected in individuals' perceived sense of organizational support, may play an essential role in developing employees' OBSE. The results for the POS—OBSE association is also consistent with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Perceived organizational support may also directly influence work outcomes through the signals the company sends regarding the employees' work contributions (Michaels and Dixon, 1994). Eisenberger et al. (1986) suggest that POS is “. . . influenced by various aspects of an employee's treatment by the organization, (including) the frequency, extremity, and judged sincerity of statements of praise and approval . . . pay, rank, job enrichment, and influence over organizational policies” (p. 501). Perceiving that the company values the employee's contribution may indicate that the organization regards the employee as performing at an acceptable and desirable level. This signal may subsequently result in a positive attitude towards both the job (i.e., satisfaction) and the organization (i.e., organizational commitment), as well as increase the desire to perform at a high level. This is consistent with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which states that the employee will experience a need to reciprocate (Gouldner, 1960) for high levels of POS, possibly with positive job attitudes and behaviors and performance (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1990).

The three stage multiple regression analysis provided partial mediation between POS and organizational commitment. Specifically, it was found that OBSE partially mediated affective commitment and fully mediated continuance commitment. Moreover, OBSE did not play a mediating role between POS and normative commitment. Results concerning affective and normative commitment indicate that there are other mechanisms through which POS has an impact on affective and

normative organizational commitment. These may include non-OBSE related socio-emotional factors.

Work-related experiences play a central role in defining the individual's relationship with the organization. Kostova, Latham, Cummings and Hollingworth (1997) found that OBSE partially mediates the relationship between members' perceptions of their level of influence in the organization and their organizational commitment. On many occasions organizational scholars have called for an expanded role for influence by organizational members, suggesting that greater levels of influence increases member self-esteem and subsequently their commitment to the organization. With respect to this, Phillips and Hall (2001) suggested that OBSE may provide insight into the process through which the influences of organizational support are produced. They found that OBSE mediated the relationship between perceived organizational support, and job performance, and affective and continuance commitment. Similarly, Abbott (2000) found support for the hypothesis that increases in job complexity that accompany the adoption of team-based systems leads to an increase in employee self-esteem, which in turn leads to an increase in organizational commitment.

Moreover, Gardner et al. (2000) explored the relationship between POS and employee performance. They theorized that POS is a form of communication that signals to employees the degree to which the organization values them. This message, when internalized, becomes a part of the employee's organization-based self-esteem, which in turn motivates the employee to engage in behaviors that are consistent with the view of the self as organizationally competent, worthwhile, and valuable. Perceived organizational support may communicate similar messages and then may contribute

the development of OBSE which in turn increase employees' emotional attachment, involvement and identification to the organization. Leaders have an important role in this sense. They are the key persons to construct positive and productive working environment. They can improve their followers' self-esteem by giving support and vision. Over time employees with perceived support come to believe that they are significant worthy and valuable to the organization and this message becomes integrated into beliefs about the self. Employees with high self-esteem are motivated by self consistency to maintain a positive self-image. Empirical studies supports the claim that an individual's self-esteem, formed around work and organizational experiences, as reflected by organization-based self-esteem, may well play a significant role in shaping work-related attitudes such as organizational commitment. The existing literature indicates that OBSE mediates the relationship between POS and each type of OC (Chen et al., 2005; Hughes and Palmer, 2007). In the present study, however, OBSE did not mediate the relationship between POS and normative commitment. It can be explained through methodological concerns. In this study the sample was composed of different work settings. Some participants who have to remain in the organization because of the nature of their job and circumstances might not need to have OBSE.

## **7.1 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

Some of the limitations of the study as well as implications for future studies should also be mentioned. First, the sample size is one of the limitations of the study. There are 148 participants in this study. The sample size could be larger for more powerful

results. Second, the sample was comprised of from a variety of sectors. The sample could have been formed based on a specific business sector.

The results do not allow us to determine to what extent POS influences the different forms of organizational commitment. To obtain further support for the potential causal links between these variables, future studies should be based on longitudinal design. In addition, given that the variables were measured by using the same method at a single measurement time, the common method variance bias may have influenced the results (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This bias should be minimized by using multiple methods and multiple sources.

Finally, considering the encouraging results of the present study, future research could investigate more discrete dimensions of organizational support in order to achieve a finer understanding of the relationships between POS and each dimension of organizational commitment. In the literature, POS is usually considered as a unidimensional construct (Eisenberger et al., 2004). However, Osca, et al. (2005) recently developed a three-dimensional scale of POS including supervisory and colleague support, training and acknowledgement, and rewards. Future research may focus on this three dimensional perceived organizational support scale. This may provide fruitful results

## **7.2 Managerial Implications**

It is clear that POS and OBSE have demonstrated their empirical utility in research on a broad range of constructs in the organizational sciences. At this point, we can

conclude that self-esteem, both organization-based (Pierce et al., 1989) as well as global (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach & Rosenberg, 1995) plays a central role in the direction and motivation of human behaviors. Just as importantly, the organizational policies, programs, and procedures that lead to the healthy development of employee self-esteem will be beneficial both for the organizational and the individual level. Managers have the mission that they need to improve their employees self-esteem in order to contribute in achievement of organizational and personal goals of the members.

This research also provided the importance of organizational support. The results of this study generally suggest that managers should seek to increase the level of support given to the employees by the organization. By implementing policies and work processes that send signals to employees that the organization cares about the employee's well-being and values his or her contributions, the company will both increase employee self-esteem as well as their level of organizational commitment. For example, programs and processes such as realistic job previews, flexible scheduling, participatory decision making, and employee award programs may work to benefit the organization by reducing the impact of job-related stress on employees' likelihood of developing poor work attitudes and voluntarily leaving their jobs. In sum, support such as encouraging employees and acknowledging their hard work may also act to send the message that the company supports them in their tasks and positions.

## 8 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma, iş yaşamınızdaki uygulamalara ilişkin bir çalışmadır. Bu amaçla hazırlanmış olan bu anket formunda sizden istediğimiz, soruları kendi fikirlerinizi ve yaklaşımlarınızı dikkate alarak doldurmanızdır. Bize vereceğiniz cevaplar sadece ilgili bilimsel araştırma dahilinde kullanılacak ve kimliğiniz kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Cevaplarınızın gizli tutulacağına dair bize olan güveninizi sağlamak için sizden isminizi veya kimliğinizi açığa çıkartacak herhangi bir işareti anket formu üzerine yazmamanızı önemle hatırlatırız.

Vereceğiniz katkı için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Cinsiyetiniz:

Kadın ( ) Erkek ( )

Yaşınız :

\_\_\_\_\_

Medeni Durumunuz:

Evli ( ) Bekar ( )

En son mezun olduğunuz eğitim kurumu

İlk Öğretim ( )

Lise ( )

Üniversite ( )

Yüksek Lisans ( )

Doktora ( )

Kaç yıldır çalışma hayatındasınız?

\_\_\_\_\_

Şu anki işyerinizde kaç yıldır çalışıyorsunuz?

\_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT SCALE**

1. Çalıştığım kurum fikirlerimi önemser
2. Çalıştığım kurum refahıma gerçekten önem verir
3. Çalıştığım kurum benim amaçlarıma ve değerlerime büyük önem verir
4. Herhangi bir sorunla karşı karşıya kaldığımda çalıştığım kurum yardıma hazırdır
5. Çalıştığım kurum yaptığım dürüst bir hatayı bağışlayacaktır
6. Çalıştığım kurum fırsat bulsa beni istismar eder
7. Çalıştığım kurum bana çok az ilgi gösteriyor
8. Çalıştığım kurum özel bir iyiliğe ihtiyacım olursa bana yardım etmeye isteklidir

### APPENDIX 3

#### ORGANIZATION BASED SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

**Lütfen her bir ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz ve bu ifadelere ne derece katıldığınıza ilişkin görüşünüzü “Tamamen katılıyorum” dan “Kesinlikle katılmıyorum” a doğru uzanan ölçek üzerinde belirtiniz.**

1. Çalıştığım yerde her zaman sözü geçen biriyim
2. Çalıştığım yerde her zaman ciddiye alınan biriyim
3. Çalıştığım yerde çok önemli biriyim
4. Çalıştığım yerde bana herkes çok güvenir
5. Çalıştığım yerde herkes benim söylediklerime inanır
6. Çalıştığım yerde her zaman yaptığım işlerle farklılık yaratabilirim
7. Çalıştığım yerde herkes için değerli biriyimdir
8. Çalıştığım yerde her durumda işe yarar biri olarak tanınırım
9. Çalıştığım yerde her zaman verimliyimdir
10. Çalıştığım yerde herkesle iyi geçinirim

## APPENDIX 4

### ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT SCALE

**Lütfen her bir ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz ve bu ifadelere ne derece katıldığınıza ilişkin görüşünüzü “Tamamen katılıyorum” dan “Kesinlikle katılmıyorum” a doğru uzanan ölçek üzerinde belirtiniz.**

1. Meslek hayatımın kalan kısmını çalıştığım bu kurumda geçirmek beni çok mutlu eder
2. Şu an bu kurumda çalışmaya mecburum
3. Çalıştığım kuruma karşı güçlü bir aidiyet duygum yok
4. İstesem de, şu anda çalıştığım kurumdan ayrılmak benim için çok zor olurdu
5. Çalıştığım kurumun benim için çok kişisel (özel) bir anlamı var
6. Şu anda çalıştığım kurumdan ayrılmak istediğime karar versem, hayatımın çoğu alt üst olur
7. Çalıştığım kurumun meselelerini gerçekten de kendi meselelerim gibi hissediyorum
8. Çalıştığım kuruma kendimi "duygusal olarak bağlı" hissetmiyorum
9. Çalıştığım kuruma çok şey borçluyum
10. Buradaki insanlara karşı yükümlülük hissettiğim için çalıştığım kurumdan şu anda ayrılmazdım
11. Kendimi çalıştığım kurumda "ailenin bir parçası" gibi hissetmiyorum
12. Benim için avantajlı da olsa, çalıştığım kurumdan şu anda ayrılmanın doğru olmadığını hissediyorum
13. Çalıştığım kurumdan ayrılmam alternatiflerin az olması nedeniyle benim için olumsuz olurdu
14. Çalıştığım kurumda kalmak için hiçbir manevi yükümlülük hissetmiyorum
15. Dışarıda çok az seçeneğim olduğu için çalıştığım kurumdan ayrılmayı düşünemiyorum
16. Eğer çalıştığım kuruma kendimden bu kadar çok şey vermiş olmasaydım, başka yerde çalışmayı düşünebilirdim
17. Kurumdan şimdi ayrılısam kendimi suçlu hissederim
18. Bu kurum benim sadakatimi hak ediyor

## APPENDIX 5

### POS Factor Analysis Results

|                                                       | Factor Loadings |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Perceived Organizational Support Items</b>         | <b>Total</b>    |
| 1. ...fikirlerimi önemser                             | 4.501           |
| 2. ... refahıma gerçekten önem verir                  | .947            |
| 3. ...benim amaçlarıma ve değerlerime ... önem verir  | .617            |
| 4. ...herhangi bir sorunda ... yardıma hazırdır       | .534            |
| 5. ...yaptığım dürüst bir hatayı bağışlayacaktır      | .503            |
| 6. ... fırsat bulsa beni istismar eder                | .356            |
| 7. ... bana çok az ilgi gösteriyor                    | .293            |
| 8. ... ihtiyacım olursa bana yardım etmeye isteklidir | .248            |
| Factor's internal consistency (Cronbach $\alpha$ )    | .88             |
| Total variance                                        | 56.268          |
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy                  | .90             |
| Bartlett's test                                       | 562.02*         |

\*P<.001

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