QUALITY CULTURE, ETHICAL CLIMATE, PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the existence of a relationship among the Quality Culture, Ethical Climate of an organization, Organizational Commitment and Person-Organization Fit is investigated using the data collected from manufacturing firms which are operating in automotive sector in Gebze region. Hypothesized relationships are tested through a survey study of 253 employees in these firms which are currently applying TQM practices. A hypothetical relationships tested by regression analysis. The coefficients obtained from the regression model supported the proposed model. The findings revealed that Quality Culture and Person-Organization Fit were found to be significantly related to Organizational Commitment. Also, Quality Culture and Ethical Climate were found to be significantly related to Person-Organization Fit.

Keywords: Quality Culture, Ethical Climate, Person-Organization Fit and Organizational Commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Many companies undertaking TQM programmes have, in recent times, switched their attention from applying the tools and techniques of TQM to attempting to align their TQM programme with their prevailing organizational culture (Maull et al., 2001). Advocates of organizational excellence eschew the problems associated with achieving a flexible, adaptable and committed workforce in organizations (Reeves and Bednar, 1994). This is because they lack a dominant and coherent culture, in which values, commitments and approaches are likely to diverge, which can present a barrier to co-operation, joint action and problem solving across the organization. Thus, managers should periodically analyze the relevance of corporate values to the evolving organizational environment. As a result, enabling managers to adapt and nurture the constructs that support the development of an aspired organizational culture.

There has been a push to understand the nature of organizations through the concept of climate. Research has demonstrated that climate is a significant factor that influences both productivity and satisfaction among its members. The factors that influence the perception of ethical behavior in an organization would be extremely important for the leadership or managers of any group of people in order to foster ethical conduct as opposed to unethical conduct (Malloy and Agarwal, 2003).

Climate refers to the ways organizations operationalize routine behaviors and the actions that are expected, supported and rewarded (Schneider and Rentsch 1988). A firm's Ethical Climate dictates its ethical values and the behaviors expected. Victor and Cullen define Ethical Climate as, "the prevailing perceptions of typical organizational practices and procedures that have ethical content (1988; 101)." A firm's Ethical Climate may be viewed as a composite of organizational members' perceptions of the ethical values and behaviors supported and practiced by organizational members. When a climate is created in which ethical values and behaviors are fostered and supported, more ethical behavior is expected to exist (Upchurch and Ruhland, 1996; Wimbush and Shepard, 1994).

Creating an Ethical Climate via ethical codes, ethical policies, and rewards/punishments should reduce the chance of unethical choices as defined by the organization (Schwepker, et.al., 1997).

Many researches about person-organization fit have shown essential implications for organizational outcomes and also individual well-being. For example, the fit between a person's values and organizational values is associated with behavioral and affective outcomes, such as greater organizational commitment, better job performance and longer tenure (O'Reilly et. al., 1991; Vianen, 2000).

We examine empirically the relationship among

Quality Culture, Ethical Climate, Organizational Commitment and Person-Organization Fit. We hope, the results of our study may provide useful insights for more effective management. We begin by describing the theoretical foundation for this research problem. Next, we discuss research methods and results. We interpret our findings, assess contributions to theory, and discuss.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Quality Culture and Organizational Commitment

Total quality management, is another different dimension of the culture movement. Organizational culture and total quality management has combined together in order to reach perfection and quality. To work with the organizational culture or to change the organizational culture is inevitable (Lewis, 1996). For the total quality management to be implemented common values, sample models and organizational understanding should be changed. These changes will affect the basic believes and values of the workers concerning their work (Ngowi, 2000). Therefore organizations define their organizational cultures before implementing their TQM (TKY) programmes (Maull et al., 2001). Organizational culture affects the activities and behaviors of the workers. It also changes their expectations regarding their works (Reeves and Bednar, 1994). Focusing on quality is a change towards making radical arrangements in the inherent culture of the business (Sandholm, 1999).

Total quality management is a philosophy which the organization can use for the betterment of the organization's own performance. Technique and tools it harbors inside serve as basis. Thus it can become a precedent to a culture to be formed and is open to change (Page and Curry, 2000). Lakhe and Mohanty (1994), lists the criteria necessary to improve the Quality Culture as such;

- ✔ Process, procedure and policy of the organization should emphasize the quality certainly.
- ✔ Anybody working in the organization should understand the importance of the quality in fulfilling the aims of the business.
- ✔ Workers at all levels should for sure be aware of the requirements and needs of the customer.
- ✔ Business infrastructure should permit the continual betterment attempts.
- ✔ Internal and external customer requirements should be integrated into quality plan of the business.
- ✔ Using performance criteria based on customer is

important.
- ✔ A tight communication network should be developed.
- ✔ Customer loyalty should be developed.
- ✔ Values and believes concerning customer should be emphasized and assisted by top management.

Implementation of total quality is not easy. It is necessary that the culture of the organization be changed, the responsibility assumed by the management of the business and the integration in the process of betterment of the culture (Lakhe and Mohanty, 1994).
Taking into consideration above mentioned information, we predict that Quality Culture affects Person-Organization Fit and Organizational Commitment.

H1: Quality Culture is positively related to Person-Organization Fit
H4: Quality Culture is positively related to Organizational Commitment

Ethical Climate and Organizational Commitment

Although Organizational Commitment continues to interest researchers because of its positive effects on organizations, we know relatively little about the effects of the ethical context on Organizational Commitment. As such, we contribute to the Organizational Commitment field by assessing the effects of Ethical Climates on Organizational Commitment.

About Organizational Commitment inquiries remain popular. This maintains effort to study Organizational Commitment. There are important relationships with Organizational Commitment and a number of organizational phenomena such as absenteeism and tardiness (Bateman and Strasser, 1984), organizational citizenship behaviors (Williams and Anderson, 1991), and, in some cases, performance and productivity (Morris and Sherman, 1981). However, although the plenty of research on Organizational Commitment, we know relatively little about the effects of Ethical Climate on Organizational Commitment.

Organizational Commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization (Steers, 1977). According to Porter et al. (1974) Organizational Commitment can be characterized by: (1) a strong belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) willingness to exert considerable effort for the organization, and (3) a strong desire to remain a member of the organization.

The researches done recently have shown that organizational climates are related with Organizational Commitment of those who work (Randi, 1998; 386-392; Zehir, Elçi and Savi, 2003; Valentine et.al., 2002).

Similarly, a research done with marketing managers found a positive relation between Organizational Commitment and the dimension of the Ethical Climate regarding to its dimension. Finally, a research done with a group of hospital workers most of whom are women have shown that the workers are more committed to their organizations when the Ethical Climate they have chosen and the ethical work climates they work in match (Schwepker, 2001; 41-42).

Similar to recent studies with professionalized workers (e.g., Schwepker, 2001), Cullen and Victor (2003) found a positive relationship between Organizational Commitment and individual perceptions of principled Ethical Climates for the study. Their results showed that benevolent climates are positively related to Organizational Commitment while egoistic climates are negatively related to commitment. They also found a positive relationship of Organizational Commitment with a principled climate.

Cullen and Victor (2003)'s findings consistent with the research (Trevino et al., 1998; Wimbush and Shepard, 1994) perceptions of egoistic climates were negatively related to Organizational Commitment. If individuals perceive an egoistic or self-interested climate, they believe they are encouraged by the organization to promote their own self-interest and probably also view other employees as self-interested (Cullen and Victor, 2003; 138). Research in this area leads to the following hypothesis:

H3: Ethical Climate is positively related to Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment and Person-Organization Fit

Chatman (1989) defines Person-Organization Fit "as the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons" (p. 339). The emphasis here is on the congruity between personal and organization beliefs or individual and company goals. The degree of fit can also depend on how well a firm supports employee needs or on how appropriately the personality of an individual fits the company context "(Kristof, 1996; 4).

Person-organization (P-O) fit, or the compatibility between people and the organizations in which they

work, is a key to maintaining a flexible and committed workforce that is necessary in a competitive business environment (Cable and Parsons, 2001; 1). Several attempts to study Person-Organization Fit have been undertaken by a number of research studies (Valentine et al., 2002; Vancouver et.al., 1994; Vancouver and Schmitt, 1991, Dawes, 1988; Rothstein and Jackson, 1980; Sims and Kroeck, 1994; Snyder et al., 1988). Poor person-organization match has been shown to result in greater of turnover (Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et. al., 1991; Vancouver et.al., 1994; Vancouver and Schmitt, 1991) and poor job performance (Bretz and Judge, 1994; Downey et. al., 1975; Pritchard and Karasick, 1973; Tziner, 1987).

Organizational Commitment may also enhance individual's perceptions of P-O fit. Because Organizational Commitment is related to the degree to which employees take ownership of company values and prefer to help the firm (Mowday et. al., 1979), which would likely increase the perceived congruence between individual and company characteristics (Valentine et. al., 2002).

Research has shown that congruence between individual values and corporate values correlates significantly with such job outcomes as individual productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Some other researchers have also showed Organizational Commitment was positively related to Person-Organization Fit (Meglino et al., 1989; Chatman, 1991; Vancouver and Schmitt 1991; Ostroff, 1993; Valentine, et. al., 2002; Saks and Ashforth, 1997). Therefore, we hypothesis that:

H5: Employees' perceptions of P-O fit will have a positive impact on Organizational Commitment

Ethical Climate and Person-Organization Fit

Sims and Keon, (1997) purposed determine if there is a relationship between the Ethical Climate of the organization and the development of Person-Organization Fit. Results indicate that a match between individual preferences and present position proved most satisfying. Subjects expressing a match between their preferences for an ethical work climate and their present ethical work climate indicated that they were less likely to leave their positions. Another result of the researches, (1997) study provides partial support for the assumption that individuals and organizations with similar ethics and values provide satisfying environments. Finally, Sims and Keon's, (1997) paper indicated that as employees find themselves in work climates that are similar to their preferences,
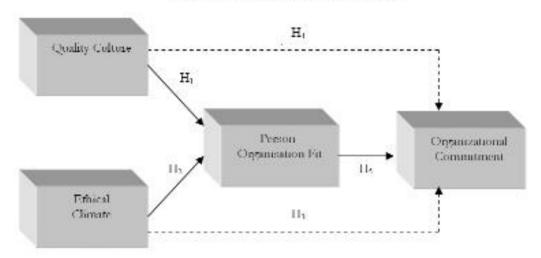
Figure 1: A path model of the study

they tend to be more satisfied and less likely to leave. The development of an ethical context might enhance Person-Organization Fit because employees often prefer moral company values (Vidaver-Cohen, 1998; Jose and Thibodeaux, 1999). Valentine et. al. (2002), also find that corporate ethical values were positively associated with Person-Organization Fit. The evidence suggests that Ethical Climate may be related to Person-Organization Fit as follows:

H2: Ethical Climate is positively related to Person-Organization Fit

The purpose of this study is to interrogate many proposed relationships that are not fully explored in the ethics literature. Our model (Figure 1) emphasizes associations among Ethical Climate, Organizational Commitment and Person-Organization Fit will be tested. This study is important because if managers develop strong Ethical Climates in their organizations, they can set a strong link up between the workers and their organizations.

METHOD
Procedure and Sample
The data was collected via questionnaire from employees who work in manufacturing firms which are operating in automotive sector in Gebze region. A total of 253 responses were collected from employees of ten automotive organizations which had adopted TQM programs.

Measures
The Ethical Climate (EC) measure, previously used by

Schwepker, Ferrell and Ingram (1997), consisted of seven items which measure the presence and enforcement of codes of ethics, corporate policies on ethics, and top management actions related to ethics. Higher average scores reflect employees' perception of a more Ethical Climate. Person-Organization Fit assessed with a 4-item scale developed by Netemeyer et.al. (1997). Organizational Commitment, on the other hand, was measured with the 4-item scale which is developed by Ackfeldt and Coote (2003), Babin and Boles (1998), Hartline and Ferrell (1996), Netemeyer et. al. (1997). Quality Culture was measured with the 10-item scale which is developed by Ahire et al. (1996). All items were measured on a five point Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree.

Sample Characteristics
The sample characteristics are as the following: Around 72,7% of the sample are males and 66% of them are married. The mean of the age is 33. Around 45% of the smple have university graduate degree and 33,5% of them have high school degree. The 39,8% of the respondents are office staff and 36,5% of them are middle level managers.

Data Reduction
Table 1 shows the results of a principal component factor analysis including a varimax rotation for each of 22 questionnaire items included in this analysis. Four of these items in the study were Organizational Commitment indicators, four were Ethical Climate indicators, four were Person-Organization Fit indicators and ten were Quality Culture indicators. The four factors captured all of the variance with 26%, 19%,

Table 1: Results of a Principal Component Factor Analysis

ITEMS	Quality Culture	Ethical Climate	Organizational Commitment	P-O Fit
All employee suggestions are evaluted	,798			
SPC is used extensively in our plant	,797			
Employees are encouraged to give suggestions	,769			
To achieve greater customer satisfaction, our company actively seeks ways to improve our primary product	,766			
Line workers have technical assistance available to them to help them solve quality problems	,740			
Quality information is displayed at most of the work stations	,739			
There are almost always some kinds of employee quality training going on in our plant.	,692			
Our company has been customer focused	,686			
Line workers are encouraged to fix problems they find	,648			
We have clear quality goals identified by top-level managers	,630			
At company wide meetings top-level managers often discuss the importance of quality	,623			
My company strictly enforces policies regarding ethical behavior.		,836		
My company has policies with regards to ethical behavior.		,830		
My company has a formal, written code of ethics.		,814		
My company strictly enforces a code of ethics.		,800		
Top management in my company has let it be known in no uncertain terms that unethical behaviors will not be tolerated.		,699		
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this company.			,836	
This company has a great deal of personal meaning for me.			,786	
I feel like part of the family at this company.			,757	
I feel emotionally attached to this company.			,729	
This organization has the same values as i do with regard to concern for others.				,736
This organization has the same values as i do with regard to fairness.				,689
This organization has the same values as i do with regard to honesty.				,650
I feel that my personal values are a good fit with this organization.				,588

14%, and 10% of the variance respectively. Items can be dropped if factor loadings are less than. 400. The lowest loading in this study was .639, factor loadings above. 40 can be retained in exploratory studies (Hair, Anderson and Tatham, 1987), so all items were retained in the analysis.

Descriptives, Correlations and Alpha Reliabilities of the Measures

Displayed in Table 2 are the correlations across Quality Culture, Ethical Climate, P-O Fit and Organizational Commitment. As shown in the Table, all variables are significantly and positively correlated with each other.

Table 2: Descriptives, Correlations and Alpha Reliabilities of the Measures

	MEAN	SD	OC	EC	POF	QC
OC	3,59	,95	,87a	,473**	,597**	,535**
EC	3,69	,85		,91a	,694**	,525**
POF	3,15	1,02			,90a	,514**
QC	3,65	,82				,93a

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
a Chronbach alfa

Chronbach ? statistics were computed with values of. 87, .91, .90, .93 for each of the four factors, respectively. For exploratory research, Chronbach ? greater than. 70 is generally considered reliable (Nunnally, 1967).

Regression Analysis

Having identified four factors for these organizations, a primary purpose of this study was to observe the relationship between these factors. As shown in Table 1, the factors described in section data reduction were utilized as independent variables to determine their usefulness for predicting changes in the dependent variables. For each of the factors, a factor variable was created by averaging the responses for this items contained within the factors (n=253). These hypothetical relationships are shown in Fig.1. Regression was used to explore these relationships.

Table 3 shows the result of regression analysis, relating these three factors to Organizational Commitment. This table shows only the statistically significant models. As shown in Table 3, all of the regressions were highly significant (p<.01).

Table 4 shows the result of regression analysis, relating two factors to Person-Organization Fit. This table shows only the statistically significant models. As shown in Table 4, all of the regressions were highly significant (p<.01).

Table 3: Organizational Commitment Regression Summary

	Dependent variable: **Organizational Commitment**		
	Quality Culture	Person-Organization Fit	Ethical Climate
Sig.	.000	.000	.836
β	.306	.429	.014
Sig.	.000		
F ratio	61.830		
R2	.427		

Table 4: Person-Organization Fit Regression Summary

	Dependent variable **Person-Organization Fit**	
	Quality Culture	Ethical Climate
Sig.	.000	.000
β	.207	.586
Sig.	.000	
F ratio	131.705	
R2	.513	

In Table 3; Factor 1 was significantly related to Organizational Commitment. Factor 3 was not related to Organizational Commitment. This implies that Ethical Climate does not affect Organizational Commitment. Factor 4 was significantly related to Organizational Commitment. This implies that person- organization fit affects Organizational Commitment. In Table 4; Factor 1 and 3, are significantly related to Person-Organization Fit.

Discussion and Implications

The factors that we created in this study were found to be related to Organizational Commitment within the plants in these firms. As is shown in Table 3, Person-Organization Fit and Quality Culture were found to be significantly related to Organizational Commitment. On the other hand Ethical Climate was not found related to Organizational Commitment. We also found that Quality Culture and Ethical Climate were found to be significantly related to Person-Organization Fit.

On the other hand, according to our findings, Person-Organization Fit fully mediates the relationship between Ethical Climate and Organizational Commitment. This mediation suggests that Ethical Climate increases Person-Organization Fit through its positive effects on Organizational Commitment.

Quality Culture impacts the employees' activities and behaviors. By means of this impact, employees will have similar basic believes and values concerning their work with the other person and the organization. This case, will supply to spread Quality Culture in organization and also it will obtain to facilitate employees' adaptation to organization and to increase the employee's commitment to their organizations. Ethical Climate supplies employees both to adapt and to feel dependence to their organizations. If an organization's Ethical Climate similar with the employees' values, the employee can easily adapt to their organization.

Consequently, if managers want to increase to employee's Organizational Commitment, they should diffuse the Quality Culture and should strengthen Ethical Climate in their organizations.

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