

Loneliness in Workplace: The Dilemma of Identification with the Organization

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Abstract

The goals of this study are to examine employees' perceived levels of organizational identification (OI) in terms of their sense of workplace loneliness (WL), to determine whether there is a significant relationship between these concepts and, if any WL exists for an employee, to reveal its role in a workplace on the employees' OI. A significant and negative relationship was found between WL and OI; a significant and negative relationship was found between the independent sub-variable, emotional deprivation, and OI. Also, a significant and positive relationship was found between social friendships and OI. It was found that a 1 unit increase in the emotional deprivation sub-dimension caused an increase of 0.111 units on OI, and a 1 unit increase in the social friendship sub-dimension caused an increase of 0.836 units on one's OI.

Keywords: Work Behaviour, Workplace Loneliness, Organizational Identification, Business Life

Introduction

As a necessity of being a social species, humans are in constant communication with the people around them in their lives. People need to be together with other individuals in order to gain, develop and live with the qualities they have, and this is an important requirement for every person. Individuals experience a sense of loneliness when this need is not adequately met. People continue their lives within the framework of the relationships they have established with individuals involved in their social lives. Individuals primarily seek social relationships to meet their requirements to feel included and establish social connections in order to meet their belonging needs. Therefore, loneliness arises with one's inability to meet their personal needs with the social network that they are a part of.

The majority of human life is spent working. Therefore, the workplace is a very rich area in terms of the emergence of positive and negative feelings and emotions which are at the center of human life. However, the feelings experienced at work have clearly been barely addressed and discussed in terms of organizational behavior (Muchinsky, 2000).

Especially in today's world, where information and communication technologies are very developed, it is becoming increasingly difficult to establish real social relations due to an increasing use of the internet and virtual teams and increasing competition in businesses. As a result of all of this, WL has recently become a serious issue that has attracted attention and is understood to have devastating effects on employees' working performances (Peng et al., 2017). In order to achieve positive results in business lives, to make a difference, to have features which will pass competitors, and also to work in harmony with colleagues, loneliness has become a necessity of the business world. OI studies have also increased for these reasons. The degree to which employees identify with their organizations, the positive or negative changes which occur before and after they connect to them, and the causes and consequences have been frequently investigated and discussed. Many studies on OI also show that there have been more positive changes in the behaviors of individuals who mostly identify with their organization, and it has been found that drives such as a desire to quit, job dissatisfaction, lack of motivation, and inefficiency are less common. In addition, an employee who identifies with their organization sees the successes or failures of their organization as their own success or failure and works with a higher motivation and desire to achieve their goals.

It was stated that employees who strongly identify with their organizations will be faithful to the values of their organizations and will do their best to raise its reputation and earnings. In this context, employees' ability to relate with their organizations is considered to be an important element in achieving long-term personal efficiency and organizational efficiency (Yi and Uen, 2006:369). In addition to it being psychologically important for workers to feel loyal to their organizations, the concept of OI has been the subject of research in recent years in terms of its impact on the organizations' financial performances because OI is observed as one of the leading determinants of sales success at both the individual and group levels (Millward and Postmes, 2010:335). OI is a concept that emphasizes how workers express their beliefs and experiences towards their whole organization (Hatch, 1997:275).

The concept of loneliness is generally considered a psychological condition which is caused by a decrease in the number of social relationships of an individual or a poor quality in their current relationships. Loneliness, which is suffered in business lives, is experienced only in a limited way within an individual's workplace as a result of a general feeling of loneliness. Even if a person has extremely healthy relationships in their daily life and does not feel lonely, they may face some problems in developing social relations and receiving social support in their working environment. WL caused by one's social environment is due to disconnections of social communication networks or a failure to become a member of a group.

Currently, people are at work for most of their lives and spend their time with colleagues. OI is actually at the heart of the reasons such as more efficient teamwork, decreased or eliminated environmental stress, and increased motivation. In this context, it is possible to say that the feeling of WL will negatively affect an employee's OI. It is very important to minimize WL as well as increase OI in enterprises. The aim of the research carried out in this context is to examine whether there is a significant relationship between WL, which is an important problem of modern business lives, and employees' identification with their organizations, to determine the direction and level of organizational loneliness perceived by employees in their workplaces if there is a significant relationship, and to examine the statistical difference of WL and OI according to demographic factors. This research is important in terms of examining WL, which is thought to have a negative impact on the integration of employees for the purposes of their organizations, in terms of detecting the necessary administrative behaviors for creating an optimal organizational atmosphere and in terms of contributing to the literature of organizational behavior.

Literature Review

Workplace Loneliness

Some social networks are developed within each organization. The concept of loneliness arises when individuals are unable to participate in these social networks or evaluate themselves as part of these social

networks. A sense of loneliness outweighs the other feelings in individuals who do not participate in or are not interested in activities within the organization (Mercan et al., 2012). In the modern world, on the one hand, people are trying to improve the quality of business lives, while the highest efficiency and best performance are expected from those who work. Those who work can be driven to extreme stress, loneliness or competition in the face of these expectations (Wright, 2005). Loneliness can be defined as the perception of deprivation that people feel if their social needs are not being met and their social relations are not adequately established (Ernst and Cacioppo, 1999:1). According to another definition, loneliness is expressed in the form of a situation that occurs for individual reasons, and in the event of a negative difference between the expected and experienced relationships in businesses and a lack of power to change this situation (Wright et al., 2006:59-60). The feeling of loneliness experienced in business life differs from the general feeling of loneliness and can only be effective in a work environment. In other words, a person who has very healthy relationships in their daily life and does not experience a feeling of loneliness may have difficulties in establishing social relations and receiving social support in the work environment. This can cause them to experience feelings of exclusion and loneliness in their business life (Doğan et al., 2009:272). The concept of loneliness in organizational terms is a case of someone being on their own due to social deficiencies or inadequacies caused by their organization, along with an inadequate quality level of interpersonal communication (Wright et al., 2006). According to De Jong-Gierveld (1998), loneliness emerges as shortcomings in people's social lives and negative perceptions of their relationship were developed by them (De Jong-Gierveld, 1998). WL is characterized as an undesirable state of mind caused by a lack of interpersonal relationships and the inability of those who work to socialize (Ghadi, 2017:83). WL is considered to be more of a state of one distancing from their social environment, isolating themselves and being on their own.

Two qualities thought to contribute to loneliness were identified. Lonely people approach interacting with their social circles in biased and overly cynical expectations.

There are no basic social skill characteristics among lonely people, and this deficiency is an obstacle to them forming long-term friendships with other people (Burger, 2006:481). Weeks et al. (1980) listed cynicism, a fear of self-reflection, effort, misfortune, boredom, lack of physical attractiveness, people taking care of the group members they are in and not wanting to have intercourse with other people, lack of opportunities, and a reluctance towards interacting with other people and non-personal situations as the causes of loneliness. Structural features of one's social network and environment (Kraus et al., 1993), personality (Kraus et al., 1993; Wright, 2005; Atak, 2009; Nayyar and Singh, 2011; Olenik-Shemesh and Zeidner, 2013; Teppers et al., 2013; Koçak and Yener, 2019), social climate (Wright, 2005; Erdil and Gülen Ertosun, 2011), social intelligence (Silman and Dogan, 2013), and organizational and social supports (Wright, 2005; Wright et al., 2006; Rhodes, 2014) are mentioned as antecedents of WL in the relevant summary, which may have a part in the occurrence of WL.

The first classification of the concept of loneliness has been carried out by Weiss (1973), and they approached it with the dimensions of emotional loneliness and social loneliness. Wright et al. (2006) approached WL in two dimensions - emotional deprivation and social friendships based on this typology of the general concept of loneliness. The emotional deprivation dimension exhibits the nature of an individual's relationships with colleagues, while the social friendship dimension exhibits its quantity (Çetin and Alacalar, 2016).

The emotional deprivation dimension refers to the qualitative aspects of business friendship relationships. These qualities include feeling alienated, isolated, disconnected and emotionally distant from others (Wright, 2005). According to Weiss (1973), emotional loneliness occurs when emotional attachment in intimate (close) relationships disappears. Hollow marriages, divorce, and death are among the causes of this kind of loneliness. Feelings such as anxiety, indescribable fears, hypersensitivities to small things, a tendency to misinterpret the affectionate or artful behavior of others, and paranoia are symptoms seen in people who are

experiencing emotional loneliness (Perlman and Peplau, 1998:574). Emotional deprivation that can occur in one's business life can be said to be an employee protecting themselves against others, avoiding sharing their feelings and thoughts with others, and the idea that their colleagues will not understand them (Wright, 2005).

The social friendship dimension refers to a situation where an employee does not participate in a social communication network in their business or does not see themselves as part of their network. A lack of communication in the social friendship sub-dimension of WL is regarded as an important factor (Asunakutlu, 2002:62). Social friendships express quantitated aspects of business-friendship relationships. These factors are spending time with colleagues at work, spending time with others, feeling part of a group, being in social environments frequently, and having trust-based relationships (Wright, 2005). Loneliness in the dimension of social friendships is defined as the feeling that arises as a result of a lack of social relations between individuals in a workplace or the inadequacy of individuals to accept themselves into a group within an organization. Due to the inadequacy of relationships with colleagues and the number of friends (Keser and Karaduman, 2014), it is known that an environment of friendship or workplace friendship increases communication, reduces work stress, helps employees perform their duties more efficiently, and helps in the process of organizational change. Therefore, organizations should encourage the formation of friendships and friendships between colleagues (Berman et al., 2002). Based on all of these statements, WL is defined as an individual's lack of emotional deprivation and social friendships in their work relationships (Wright, 2005).

When the literature regarding this matter is assessed, it is observed that an employee's loneliness in their workplace is associated with different aspects, such as the organizational climate (Wright, 2005), their intention to leave (Chen et al., 2016; Erdirençelebi et al., 2020), personality traits (Levin and Stokes, 1986; Cheng and Furnham, 2002; Wiseman et al., 2006; Tezer and Arkar, 2013), organizational silence (Guo, 2020; Erdirençelebi et al., 2020), communication competence (Reinking and Bell, 1991), emotional

exhaustion (Anand and Mishra, 2019), organizational trust level (Giderler et al., 2017; Özmen, 2020), job stress level (Fernet et al., 2016), interpersonal trust levels (Rotenberg, 1994), social support (Ginter et al., 1994; Van Baarsen, 2002; Bowling et al., 2004; Ponizovsky and Ritsner, 2004; Lunsy, 2004; Duru, 2008; Çetin and Alacalar, 2016), creativity level (Gafoor, 2020), alienation to work (Şantaş et al., 2016), social isolation levels (Steinberg et al., 1999), organizational commitment level (Mellor et al., 2008; Yılmaz, 2008; Çivitçi and Çivitçi, 2009; Yılmaz and Altınok, 2009; Ayazlar and Güzel, 2014), organizational support level (Çetin and Alacalar, 2016; Dönmez and Topaloğlu, 2020), job satisfaction level (Chan and Qiu., 2011; Dönmez and Topaloğlu, 2020) and their amount of organizational cynicism (Hoşgör and Cin, 2020).

Organizational Identification

For what seems to be the first time in the related literature, the concept of organizational identification has been used by Lasswell (1935:29) in political science as a sociological and psychological term, and Lasswell defined OI as the process in which the perception of similarity occurs, driven by the emotional connection that exists between the individual and other individuals. The concept of OI has been expressed by Tolman (1943) in his business-related summary as a personal experience related to his own group and his affiliations with it. Tajfel (1982) stated that an awareness of one's membership to an organization and an association of awareness with prominent values are two elements necessary for identification. OI is the perception of belonging in which an individual feels whole while being with their organization and sees the successes or failures of their organization as their own successes or failures. In short, the perception of belonging that an individual feels towards an institution or organization (Mael and Ashforth 1992:103) is OI, which expresses a cognitive link between oneself and their identification with their organization (Dutton et al., 1994). According to Miller et al. (2000), OI is a comprehension of the distinctive characteristics adopted by the members of an organization and feeling in solidarity by providing behavioral and attitudinal support to their organization. According to Scott and Lane (2000),

psychologically, one feels their organization as being a part of themselves. According to Kogut and Zander (2005), OI is based on the rules and patterns which individuals use to coordinate their behavior. In the event of OI, the members of an organization contribute more personally to the benefit of their organization and represent their organization more willingly against the external environment (Schaubroeck et al., 2013:1152). When the definitions for the concept of OI are examined, it is observed to be conceptualized in general as loyalty (Tajfel 1978; 1982; Tompkins and Cheney, 1985; Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Van Dick, 2001), similarity (Hall et al., 1970; Dutton et al. 1994; Pratt, 2000; Scott and Lane, 2000; Van Dick, 2001; Brammer et al., 2015) and membership (Tolman, 1943; Tajfel, 1982; Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Rousseau, 1998; Van Dick, 2001; Gossett, 2002; Edwards, 2005).

After conceptualizing OI, it began to be encouraged within the framework of a social identity approach (Van Dick 2001:265-283). The Social Identity Theory basically assumes that an individual can have as much social identity as their number of group memberships, as well as a single personal identity, and that identifying with one group will not prevent the identification that they could feel with another group (Olkkonen and Lipponen, 2006:204). The two-way identification in question explains this assumption of social identity theory. In addition, in their studies, Dutton et al. (1994) drew attention to the necessity of the characteristics it places on an organization in order to understand an individual's OI based on the Social Identity Theory. OI occurs when individuals put the characteristics of their organization among their personal characteristics and make definitions of their own (Dutton et al., 1994). OI occurs when employees define organizational values together with their own values (Brammer et al., 2015:327). With OI, people can see their activities on behalf of an organization as their own activities. Thus, the objectives of an organization become the objectives of an employee, and the individual is motivated to work more to achieve these goals (Edward, 2005:208).

In the relevant article, OI has been associated with many issues. These are organizational justice (Cheung and Law, 2008; Dwarf et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2015), personality

traits (Aghaz and Hashemi, 2014), leadership traits (Eren and Titizoğlu, 2014; Carasco-Saul et al., 2015), cynicism (Polat and Meydan, 2010; Nartgün and Kalay, 2014), corporate social responsibilities (Kaplan, 2013), political behaviors (Başar and Basim, 2015), organizational loyalty (Ceylan and Özbal, 2008), organizational support (Özdemir, 2010; Turunç and Celik, 2010a), organizational allegiance (Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006; Çakınberk et al., 2011), organizational identities (Croucher, 2006; Cheung and Law, 2008; Podnar, 2011), organizational socialization (Balci et al., 2012), job satisfaction (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015), organizational trust (Tokgöz and Seymen, 2013), and organizational cultures (Schrodt, 2002). The reason for the following hypotheses is based on the facts that the concept of WL has not been previously associated with OI, and thin WL is a subject that researchers are relatively not interested in. They do quite little (experimental) work on etiquette (Dogan et al., 2009:272; Ertosun and Erdil, 2012:469; Lam and Lau, 2012:4265) to identify the relationship between WL and OI. WL can have a negative impact on OI. Based on these theoretical reasons, H1a was created. H1b was created in consideration of the notion that a potential elimination of emotional attachment in intimate (close) relations within an organization will reduce its workers' identification with their organization. In addition, H1c was created on the assumption that, for employees who usually do not spend much time on creating/maintaining workplace friendships and instead commit themselves to their organizational goals and objectives, their OI perceptions will increase when they express their quantitated needs in the form of spending time with colleagues at work, spending time with each other, and being in social environments frequently.

H_{1a}: There is a significant relationship between WL and OI.

H_{1b}: OI decreases as emotional deprivation increases.

H_{1c}: OI increases as social friendships increases.

H^{1d} was created in consideration of the idea that male employees may experience more loneliness in their workplaces due to the fact that the social roles of men and women and the differences in their upbringing styles may

result in men experiencing more loneliness and women having more friendships; men being reluctant to express their emotions and women having a higher level of expression than men. H1e was created because it is thought that male employees will identify more with their organizations because there are many roles waiting for female employees and they have role conflicts.

H_{1e}: WL varies significantly by employees' genders.

H_{1f}: OI varies significantly by employees' genders.

H1f was created because it is thought that employees may experience WL while they are subjected to more supervision in the public sector and do not have the flexibility to communicate with their friends at any time. H1g was created because it is thought that employees in the private sector will identify more with their organizations due to the ability to obtain more wages, and increase their career opportunities.

H_{1g}: WL varies significantly between the sectors.

H_{1h}: OI varies significantly between the sectors.

Although there are studies in the relevant literature which have reached different conclusions about the relationship of employees' ages with their loneliness levels, it can be suggested that it may be an important factor, especially with the effort and concern of loneliness rising in the first years of one's profession, the necessity and stress of working intensively can cause more loneliness compared to the following years. In this context, H1h was created because it is thought that younger employees may experience WL due to them being new to having work lives and being in the process of socially adapting to workplaces. H1k was created because it is assumed that employees with advanced age levels work in their existing institutions for many years and that, over time, they have emotional ties to their institution and will identify more with their organizations.

H_{1k}: WL varies significantly by employees' ages.

H_{1l}: OI varies significantly by employees' ages.

As employees' levels of education increase, it has been thought that they could experience loneliness in their workplaces because they see themselves as superior to

other employees, and so H1m was created. As employees' levels of education increase, it has been thought that OI would decrease, and H1n was created to reflect increases in employees' knowledge and skill levels, which influence their desire to work in a better job.

H_{1m}: WL varies significantly by employees' educational levels.

H1n: OI varies significantly by their educational levels.

It can be said that employees' satisfaction with their income levels is an indirect advantage which assists in relieving their loneliness. This concept is based on the argument that employees with high income levels can form more comfortable social and emotional friendships. H1p and H1r have been created on the assumption that as employees' monthly income levels increase, employees could relate to their colleagues at the levels they desire and would be happier in this sense, and they would therefore experience less loneliness in their workplaces and more OI.

H_{1p}: WL varies significantly by employees' monthly income levels.

H1r: OI varies significantly by their monthly income levels.

H1s was created because it is thought that the feeling of WL will decrease as employees' work experience increases and their experience gained in their specific job increases as a profession for many years or a certain period of time. H1t was created because it is thought that employees can do their jobs better as their work experience increases, and that the level of identification towards both their work and organizations will increase over time.

H_{1s}: WL varies significantly by employees' job experience.

H_{1t}: OI varies significantly by employees' job experience.

The Research Methodology

The Population and Sample of this Research

The participant sample of this study all consisted of employees who work in the Düzce, Sakarya and Zonguldak provinces in Turkey. They were private sector and public sector employees. Convenience sampling methods among the non-probable sampling methods were used in the study. Data has been obtained from 532 private sector employees;

however, a sample size of 515 persons has been obtained at an analyzable level. The research sample is not restricted to any sector or field of activity because WL is visible in every organization.

The Data Collection Method of the Research

The data to be used in the study has been obtained by applying a face-to-face survey method. The survey used to obtain data consists of 2 scales in the 5-way Likert structure, including WL and OI. In the study, a 16-point scale developed by Wright et al. (2006) and adapted to Turkish by Dogan et al. (2009) has been used to measure WL. A 6-point scale developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992) and adapted to Turkish by Tak and Aydemir (2004) has been used to measure OI.

The Research Model

The screening model's dependent variable is OI, the main dependent variable is WL, and the independent sub-variables are emotional deprivation and social friendship.



Figure-1 A Conceptual Model of this Research

The data required to test the hypotheses proposed within the scope of this research has been evaluated using the SPSS 20.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and AMOS 24.0 (Analysis of Moment Structures) programs. For the data set obtained from the scales used in this research, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (DFA), confidence analysis, corral analysis, multiple regression analysis, Independent Sample T test and One-Way ANOVA test have been applied.

Results

Descriptive statistics of the employees who participated in this research were given in Table 1. According to this table, 55.5% of the sample consisted of male employees and 44.5% were female employees. When the age distribution is examined, it is observed that 73% of the involved employees were between the ages of 21 and 40. It has been determined that 56.9% of the employees who participated in the study were university graduates. When the employees' monthly income levels were examined, the majority, 60.4%, had a monthly income in the TRY 2001-4000 range, while 21.4% of the sample had a monthly income lower than the minimum wage. Considering the work experience periods in the table, it has been determined that 78.8% of the sample had more than 1 year of work experience. When examined from the point of view of the sector, it was determined that 76.3% of the sample was made up of private sector employees.

Table-1 The Descriptive Statistics

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	286	55.5%
Female	229	44.5%
Age		
Younger than 21	51	9.9%
21-40	376	73.0%
41-60	85	16.5%
Older than 60	3	0.6%

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Gender		
Education Status		
<i>Primary School</i>	43	8.3%
<i>High School</i>	181	35.1%
<i>Associate</i>	172	33.4%
<i>Undergraduate</i>	107	20.8%
<i>Post-Graduate</i>	12	2.3%
Monthly Income Levels		
<i>Less than TRY 1000</i>	20	3.9%
<i>Between TRY 1001 - 2000</i>	90	17.5%
<i>Between TRY 2001 - 4000</i>	311	60.4%
<i>Between TRY 4001 - 6000</i>	77	15.0%
<i>TRY 6001 or more</i>	17	3.3%
Work Experience		
<i>Less than 1 year</i>	109	21.2%
<i>1-3 years</i>	184	35.7%
<i>4-6 years</i>	118	22.9%
<i>7-9 years</i>	41	8.0%
<i>10 years and above</i>	63	12.2%
Sector		
<i>Private</i>	393	76.3%
<i>Public</i>	122	23.7%

* TRY= Turkish Liras

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was applied to determine the structural validity of the scales used in this study, and the compliance values obtained as a result of the

factor analysis conducted for the WL scale, which consists of two dimensions, and 15 items are presented in Table 2.

Table-2 The Workplace Loneliness Scale/Fit Values

Compliance Criteria	χ^2	p	χ^2 / df	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR	NFI	GFI
Fit Values	107.071	0.000	2.894	0.06	0.973	0.03	0.960	0.964

When the compliance values in Table 2 are examined, it has been determined that the chi-square value is 107.071; the p value is 0.000; the RMSEA value is 0.06; the GFI value is 0.964; the chi-square/degree of freedom is 2.894; the SRMR value is 0.03; the CFI value is 0.973, and the NFI value is 0.960. The tested, standardized solution values for the WL scale are specified in Figure 2.

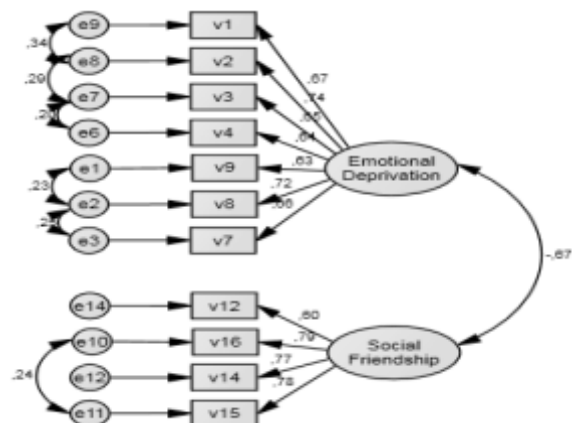


Figure-2 The Workplace Loneliness Scale/Standardized Analysis Values

During the Confirmatory Factor Analysis, five items have been removed from the scale, and the reliability analysis

results for the revised WL scale and scale dimensions are presented in Table 3.

Table-3 The Workplace Loneliness Scale - A Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
<i>The Entirety of the Scale</i>	0.719	11
<i>Emotional Deprivation</i>	0.866	7
<i>Social Friendships</i>	0.829	4

As a result of the analysis carried out, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.866 units for the emotional deprivation amount, 0.829 units for the social friendship amount, and 0.719 units for the entire scale. According to these values obtained, it has been determined that all dimensions and scales have internal consistency.

Another scale used in this research is the OI scale. The compliance values obtained as a result of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis applied to this scale consisting of 6 items are presented in Table 4.

Table-4 The Organizational Identification Scale/Fit Values

Compliance Criteria	χ^2	p	χ^2 / df	RMSEA	CFI	SRMR	NFI	GFI
Fit Values	12.199	0.094	1.743	0.03	0.997	0.01	0.993	0.992

When the compliance values in Table 4 are examined, it has been determined that the chi-square value is 12.199; the p value is 0.094; the RMSEA value is 0.03; the GFI value is 0.992; the chi-square/degree of freedom is 1.743; the SRMR value is 0.01; the CFI value is 0.997 and the NFI value is 0.993. In Figure 3, the standardized solution values for this scale are specified.

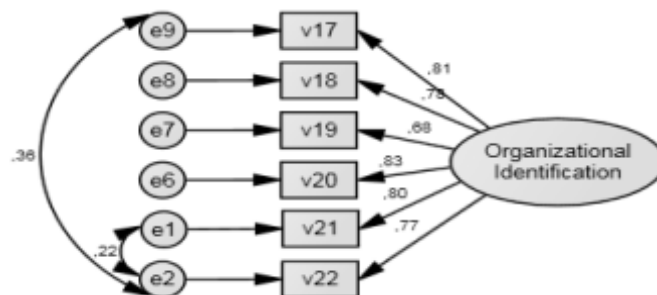


Figure 3 The Organizational Identification Scale/Standardized Analysis Values

The results of the confidence analysis carried out for the OI scale after the Confirmer Factor Analysis are expressed in Table 5. As a result of the analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha

coefficient was determined to be 0.907 units for the entire scale, and the scale has an internal consistency according to this obtained value.

Table-5 An Organizational Identification Scale - The Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
<i>The Entirety of the Scale</i>	0.907	6

It has been determined that the fit values of the WL scale which are expressed in Table 2 and the fit values of the OI scale in Table 4 have been found to be in line, in accordance with the accuracy statistics. The structural reliability of these scales is acceptable (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003).

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk values which were determined as a result of the normality test conducted

for the data obtained within the scope of this research are presented in Table 6. When interpreted by taking the Shapiro-Wilk values into account due to the sample size (n=515), it is observed that the data obtained from both scales and scale dimensions used in the research did not show a normal distribution. Therefore, the skewness and kurtosis values related to the relevant dimensions are also examined.

Table-6 The Normality Test Results

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistics	df	Sig.	Statistics	df	Sig.
<i>The Workplace Loneliness Scale</i>	<i>The Entirety of the Scale</i>	0.093	515	0.000	0.975	515	0.000
	<i>Emotional Deprivation</i>	0.080	515	0.000	0.969	515	0.000
	<i>Social Friendships</i>	0.184	515	0.000	0.926	515	0.000
<i>The Organizational Identification Scale</i>	<i>The Entirety of the Scale</i>	0.087	515	0.000	0.959	515	0.000

The skewness and kurtosis values of the data obtained from the scales are detailed in Table 7. When this table is examined, it has been determined that the skewness and kurtosis values of the data sets, which do not show a normal

distribution according to the Shapiro-Wilk values, are between -2 and +2 units, and these data sets show a normal distribution according to the classification by George & Mallery (2003).

Table-7 The Normality Tests - The Kurtosis and Skewness Values

		Statistics	Std. Error
<i>The Workplace Loneliness Scale</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	-0.487	0.108
	<i>Kurtosis</i>	-0.234	0.215
<i>Emotional Deprivation</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	-0.545	0.108
	<i>Kurtosis</i>	0.181	0.215
<i>Social Friendships</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	0.865	0.108
	<i>Kurtosis</i>	0.742	0.215
<i>The Organizational Identification Scale</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	0.456	0.108
	<i>Kurtosis</i>	-0.246	0.215

Table 8 shows the results of the Pearson correlation analysis of the research's variables. According to this table, a negative and low-level significant relationship has been found between the main independent variable, WL, and the dependent variable, OI. A negative and moderately

significant relationship has been established between the sub-independent value, emotional deprivation, and OI, and a positive and moderately significant relationship was found between social friendships and OI.

Table-8 The Correlation Analysis Results

			<i>Organizational Identification</i>
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>		Correlation	-0.202
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
<i>Dimensions of Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Emotional Deprivation</i>	Correlation	-0.419
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	<i>Social Friendships</i>	Correlation	0.545
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

Table 9 shows the ANOVA results of multiple regression analysis aimed at OI with the WL dimensions. As a result of the regression analysis performed, it has been found that the

regression model to be established expresses statistical significance.

Table-9 A Regression Analysis - ANOVA

<i>Organizational Identification</i>	Sum of the squares		Mean square	F	Sig.
	Regression	6125.787	3062.893		
Residual	13794.881	26.943	113.680	0.000	
Total	19920.668				

The results of the analysis performed are expressed in Table 10. When this table is examined, it has been determined that 30.5% of the change in OI is explained by changes in emotional deprivation and the social friendships dimension of WL. Accordingly, the value of productivity at work can be formulated:

$$"OI = 12.180 - (0.111 \times \text{Emotional Deprivation}) + (0.836 \times \text{Social Friendships})"$$

According to the formula obtained as a result of a regression analysis, it was determined that a 1-unit increase in the emotional deprivation dimension caused a decrease of 0.111 units on OI, and a 1-unit increase in employees' social friendship amounts caused an increase of 0.836 units on OI.

Table-10 A Regression Analysis - Model

<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Constant</i>	B	t	Sig.	R ²	Adjusted R ²
		<i>Emotional Deprivation</i>	-0.111	-2.776	0.006	0.308
	<i>Social Friendships</i>	0.836	9.871	0.000		

In Table 11, the relationship between WL and OI and the employees' genders were investigated. When this table is examined, it is determined that the significance values

obtained as a result of both tests are greater than 0.05 units, and that the OI and WL do not differ significantly according to the employees' genders.

Table-11 Workplace Loneliness & Organizational Identification – The Gender Component

The Independent-Sample T Test				Levene's Test for the Equality of Variances		T-test for the Equality of Means				
				F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	The Mean Difference	The Std. Error Difference
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Equal variances assumed	1.040	0.308	0.860	513	0.390	0.47502	0.55218
	<i>Male</i>	15.8986								
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Equal variances not assumed			0.866	499.3	0.387	0.47502	0.54864
	<i>Female</i>	15.4236								
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Equal variances assumed	7.310	0.007	1.164	513	0.245	0.60021	0.51568
	<i>Male</i>	42.2378								
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Equal variances not assumed			1.145	452.6	0.253	0.60021	0.52404
	<i>Female</i>	41.6376								

In Table 12, the relationship between WL and OI and the sector in which the participants worked is examined. When this table is examined, the significance values obtained as a result of both tests have been found to be lower than 0.05 units. Accordingly, it has been determined that WL and OI

statistically significantly vary between the sectors, OI for the private sector employees was higher than for the public sector employees, and, at the same time, the amount of WL was lower for the private sector employees than for the public sector employees.

Table-12 Workplace Loneliness & Organizational Identification – The Studied Sectors

Independent-Sample T Test				Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		The T-test for Equality of Means				
				F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Equal variances assumed	0.261	0.610	2.745	513	0.006	1.76006	0.64114
	<i>Private</i>	16.1043								
	<i>Public</i>	14.3443	Equal variances not assumed			2.841	213.412	0.005	1.76006	0.61962
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Equal variances assumed	4.268	0.039	-2.011	513	0.045	-1.20896	0.60113
	<i>Private</i>	41.6845								
	<i>Public</i>	42.8934	Equal variances not assumed			-2.153	226.633	0.032	-1.20896	0.56156

In Table 13, the relationship between WL and OI and the employees' ages was analyzed. When this table is examined, as a result of both analyses, it was determined

that the significance value is greater than 0.05 units, and that WL and OI do not differ significantly according to the employees' ages.

Table-13 Workplace Loneliness & Organizational Identification – Age

One-Way ANOVA		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Younger than 21</i>	51	16.0000	5.46992	0.76594	1.019	0.384
	<i>21-40</i>	376	15.8883	6.33663	0.32679		
	<i>41-60</i>	85	14.6118	6.18773	0.67115		
	<i>Older than 60</i>	3	15.6667	4.04145	2.33333		
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Younger than 21</i>	51	42.1373	6.12216	0.85727	0.986	0.399
	<i>21-40</i>	376	41.9495	5.86652	0.30254		
	<i>41-60</i>	85	42.1647	5.34711	0.57998		
	<i>Older than 60</i>	3	36.3333	7.50555	4.33333		

In Table 14, the relationship between WL and OI and the employees' training statuses is analyzed. When this table is examined, as a result of both analyses, it has been determined that the significance value is lower than 0.05 units. Accordingly, it has been determined that WL and OI

values vary significantly according to employees' education levels. However, a Post-Hoc analysis was carried out in order to determine which educational situations these differences are significant for.

Table-14 Workplace Loneliness & Organizational Identification - The Educational Statuses

One-Way ANOVA		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
Organizational Identification	<i>Primary School</i>	43	18.4419	6.14237	0.93670	5.940	0.000
	<i>High School</i>	181	16.2818	6.43110	0.47802		
	<i>Associate</i>	172	15.6163	5.85930	0.44677		
	<i>Undergraduate</i>	107	14.2150	6.02671	0.58262		
	<i>Post-Graduate</i>	12	11.0000	5.08116	1.46680		
Workplace Loneliness	<i>Primary School</i>	43	39.5116	5.65421	0.86226	3.513	0.008
	<i>High School</i>	181	42.1271	6.09010	0.45267		
	<i>Associate</i>	172	41.6221	6.12083	0.46671		
	<i>Undergraduate</i>	107	42.9813	4.61536	0.44618		
	<i>Post-Graduate</i>	12	44.4167	4.71860	1.36214		

The homogeneity test results performed to determine the technique to be selected in the Post-Hoc analysis are presented in Table 15.

Table-15 The Homogeneity Test of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	0.495	4	510	0.739
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	4.099	4	510	0.003

When the results in Table 15 are examined, it is observed that the variance belonging to OI is homogeneous, while the variance belonging to WL is not homogeneous. However, considering that the distributions in the groups are not equal, the Scheffe test for OI was preferred in the post-Hoc analysis, and the Tamhane's T2 was preferred for WL. When examined in detail, it was determined that the difference of OI according to the employees' educational statuses was significant between the primary education, undergraduate and postgraduate degree holders; the level of OI was higher for the primary education than the undergraduate degree holders, and much more than the acceptable, the master's degree holders and the identification with employees' organizations decreased as

their levels of education increased. It was determined that the difference of WL according to one's educational situation is significant only between the primary school and undergraduate degree holders, and WL was higher for the undergraduate degree holders compared to the primary school graduates.

In Table 16, the relationship between WL and OI and the employees' monthly income levels was analyzed. When this table is examined, as a result of both analyses, it is determined that the significance value was greater than 0.05 units. Accordingly, it was determined that WL and OI do not differ significantly according to employees' monthly income levels.

Table-16 Workplace Loneliness & Organizational Identification – Employees' Monthly Income Levels

The One-Way ANOVA Test		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	F	Sig.
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Less than TRY 1000</i>	20	17.8500	4.88041	1.09129	2.894	0.055
	<i>Between TRY 1001 - 2000</i>	90	15.0333	5.40796	0.57005		
	<i>Between TRY 2001 - 4000</i>	311	16.2058	6.36138	0.36072		
	<i>Between TRY 4001 - 6000</i>	77	14.0909	6.46281	0.73651		
	<i>TRY 6001 or more</i>	17	14.3529	6.63270	1.60866		
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Less than TRY 1000</i>	20	39.5500	5.57697	1.24705	1.580	0.178
	<i>Between TRY 1001 - 2000</i>	90	41.6667	5.63696	0.59419		
	<i>Between TRY 2001 - 4000</i>	311	42.1286	6.04255	0.34264		
	<i>Between TRY 4001 - 6000</i>	77	41.8442	5.32636	0.60700		
	<i>TRY 6001 or more</i>	17	44.1176	4.24091	1.02857		

The homogeneity test results performed to determine the technique to be selected in the Post-Hoc analysis are presented in Table 17.

Table-17 The Homogeneity Test of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	1.474	4	510	0.209

When the result in Table 17 is examined, it is observed that the variance belonging to OI is homogeneous. However, considering that the distributions in the groups are not equal, the Scheffe test has been preferred in post-Hoc analysis. As a result of this test, the significance value has been found to be greater than 0.05 units among all groups. Therefore, it has been determined that the difference of OI according to the employees' monthly income levels is not due to their groups, but from within their groups (between

groups= 442.1 units & within groups= 19478.5 units).

In Table 18, the relationship between the duration of work experience and WL and the participants' OI has been analyzed. When this table is examined, as a result of both analyses, it has been determined that the significance value is greater than 0.05 units, and accordingly, OI and WL do not vary significantly according to the duration of the employees' work experience.

Table-18 Workplace Loneliness & Organizational Identification – Employees' Work Experience

One-Way ANOVA		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F	Sig.
<i>Organizational Identification</i>	<i>Less than 1 year</i>	109	16.6972	5.73247	0.54907	2.345	0.054
	<i>1-3 years</i>	184	16.1033	6.08368	0.44849		
	<i>4-6 years</i>	118	14.9746	6.62740	0.61010		
	<i>7-9 years</i>	41	15.6098	6.78925	1.06030		
	<i>10 years and above</i>	63	14.1111	6.03247	0.76002		
<i>Workplace Loneliness</i>	<i>Less than 1 year</i>	109	42.4312	5.63614	0.53984	1.491	0.204
	<i>1-3 years</i>	184	41.3370	5.60206	0.41299		
	<i>4-6 years</i>	118	42.0508	6.74676	0.62109		
	<i>7-9 years</i>	41	41.4878	5.41351	0.84545		
	<i>10 years and above</i>	63	43.1905	4.95417	0.62417		

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the current research results, a negative and low-level significant relationship has been found between WL and OI. A negative and moderately significant relationship deprivation has been established between emotional deprivation and OI, which are independent sub-variables, and a positive and moderately significant relationship was found between social friendships and OI. Accordingly, H1a, H1b and H1c have been evaluated and accepted. It has been determined that WL and OI did not differ significantly according to the employees' genders, ages, monthly incomes or work experience levels, and accordingly, H1d, H1e, H1h, H1k, H1p, H1r, H1s, and H1t have been rejected. It has been determined that WL and OI differed statistically significantly between the sectors - the OI levels for the private sector employees were higher than for the public sector employees, and at the same time, the levels of WL were lower among the private sector employees than the public sector employees. Thus, H1f and H1g have been accepted. WL was found to be higher among the undergraduate degree holders compared to the primary school graduates. As the employees' levels of education increased, it was determined that their senses of identification with their organizations decreased. Accordingly, H1m and H1n have been determined and accepted.

Those who do not adequately perform in their businesses due to WL will find themselves caught up in the sense of failure, and the idea of inadequacy will cause their work insatiability to be lost (Wright, 2005). Employees who experience WL will be less satisfied with their work. As a result of the inability to share important information due to the inability to exchange sufficient information among the employees who are alone in their organizations, there will be a decrease in their work performances (Demirbaş and Hashit, 2016:139-140). In many respects, the most direct and satisfactory solution for loneliness is to establish new relationships with people or to develop existing relationships. Rokach (2013) noted that there are strategies of participants who identify themselves as alone for dealing with loneliness, such as acceptance and thinking, self-improvement and understanding, having a social support

network, distancing and rejection, religion and faith, and increased effectiveness.

Loneliness in a business life is a topic that is more raised with negative connotations, and according to the results of this conducted research, WL has been found to negatively affect the attitudes and behaviors of the employees towards their work and organizations. As one's WL perception increases, their levels of positive attitudes and behaviors decrease, such as in their role performances (Lam and Lau, 2012), subjective well-being (Erdil and Gülen Ertosun, 2011; Bakioğlu and Korumaz, 2014; Yurcu and Kocakula, 2015), emotional intelligence levels (Mercan et al., 2013), business performance levels (Akçit and Barutçu, 2017; Amarat et al., 2018), creativity levels (Peng et al., 2017), job and life satisfaction levels (Wright, 2005; Mellor et al., 2008; Yilmaz and Altinok, 2009; Akduru and Semerciöz, 2017; Cindiloglu, 2017), psychological capital (Mercan et al., 2013), emotional attachment levels (Özçelik and Barsade, 2011), work stress levels (Aykan et al., 2019), organizational commitment levels (Wright, 2005; Ertosun and Erdil, 2012; Ayazlar and Güzel, 2014), organizational communication levels (Koçer et al., 2018), leader-member interaction levels (Cindiloglu, 2017), and organizational citizenship levels (Lam and Lau, 2012). As one's WL perception decreases, their levels of negative attitudes and behaviors decrease, such as burnout (Aşık, 2016), climate of organizational fear (Wright, 2005), workaholism (Karakaya et al., 2015), job satisfaction levels (Wright, 2005), intention to quit (Gülen Ertosun and Erdil, 2014), and abusive management (Ay, 2015). One of the situations that can occur in cases of WL is a decrease in OI. It is thought that the current study will contribute to the relevant literature in terms of revealing the relationship between WL and OI. Kramer et al. (1996) noted that OI increases the sense of trust in employees and prepares the basis for the formation of cooperation understanding and stated that there is a motivating factor for employees in achieving organizational goals.

The researches in the relevant literature provides common conclusions that OI positively affects organizations and individuals (Knippenberg and Schie 2000; Ashforth and Mael in 1989; Dutton et al. 1994; İşcan, 2006; Chreim

2002; Brown, 1969; Knight and Haslam, 2010; Tokgöz and Seymen 2013). It is observed that OI is positively related with leader-member interactions (Loi et al., 2014; Katrinli et al., 2008; Sollitto et al., 2016; Sökmen, 2020), job satisfaction levels (Knight and Haslam, 2010; Sycamore et al., 2016; Akbas and Cetin, 2015; Sökmen, 2020; Van Knippenberg and Van Schie, 2000), organizational commitment levels (Ertürk et al., 2005; Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006), organizational support levels (Van Knippenberg et al., 2007; Alparslan et al., 2014; He et al., 2014; Cho and Treadway, 2016), organizational images (Dutton et al., 1994), organizational citizenship behaviors (Karabey and Iscan, 2007; Tokgöz and Seymen, 2013), psychological resilience levels (Finished et al., 2013), organizational identities (Olkkonen and Lipponen, 2006; Cheung and Law, 2008; Koçak, 2019), job loyalty levels (Chughtai and Buckley, 2003; He et al., 2013; Ötken and Erben, 2010; Karanika-Murray et al., 2015), organizational justice (Cüce et al., 2013), corporate social responsibilities (Brammer et al., 2015), and corporate reputations (Keh and Xie, 2009; Öz and Bulutlar, 2009; Podnar, 2011; Öncer and Yıldız, 2012). The sources also conclude that OI is negatively related with the intention to leave (Mael and Ashforth, 1995; Abrams et al., 1998; Cole and Bruch, 2006; Van Knippenberg et al., 2007; Sycamore et al., 2016; Turunç and Celik, 2010a; Long, 2018), perceptions of political behavior (Başar and Filizöz, 2015; Erkutlu and Chafra, 2016), levels of alienation feelings (Çalışkan and Pekkan, 2017; Demir, 2020), stress levels (Turunç and Çelik, 2010b), and cynicism levels (Polat and Meydan, 2010). OI is a bridge between an organization and employees, making it easier for employees to cope with uncertainty by increasing their commitment to their organizations. Therefore, it is important for organizations to take some measures on WL when they find that they have a negative impact on their workers' OI. In this context, employees should receive support from management in order to form strong friendships and achieve social rapprochement (Ay, 2015:1119), social integration, a sense of belonging, appreciation, respect, and mentoring/coaching requirements should be met within an organization's (Yakut and Certel, 2016:172) picnics,

birthday celebrations, etc.. Such activities should be organized, and effective communication channels should be provided within organizations by ensuring that employees are protected against loneliness (Erdirençelebi and Ertürk, 2018).

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