

EFFECTS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CAMPAIGNS ON EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN TOURISM SECTOR: A CASE OF TURKISH ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HOTELS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate organizational commitment and environmental anxiety of employees working in hotels with "eco-friendly institution" licence (green-star hotels) and to analyze whether green star hotel employees have more sustainable behaviors in their daily lives as they are trained in terms of environmental issues at their work places. Data is collected from four hotels in Turkey, where two of them have a green-star licence. Data gathered from 238 employees working in hotels revealed that green-star hotel employees have higher affective organizational commitment and higher sustainable behavior than the non-green hotel employees. Another result of this study puts forward that sustainable behavior mediates the relationship between affective commitment and the anxiety level of individuals about the environment. The study discusses important effects of green-star campaign as an important implication of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to Turkish tourism sector.

Key words: corporate social responsibility, environmentally friendly hotels, organizational commitment, sustainable behavior, environmental anxiety.

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Introduction

Tourism is one of the most important sectors in the world economy with more than one billion people travelling all around the world. However, it also has some negative effects on environment and the term of "sustainable tourism" has emerged due to the growing concerns about protecting environment for future generations. By bringing corporate social responsibility (CSR) to the tourism companies like travel agencies and hotels, more competitive and sustainable tourism industry will be developed. Correspondingly with the trends in world tourism sector, Turkish tourism is also in a period of change with a global perspective. For this purpose, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Turkey has started a

campaign to reward environmentally friendly hotels as part of its efforts to improve the quality of service offered. The campaign prioritizes hotels that volunteer to participate in the program and any hotel applying for the "eco-friendly institution" license, symbolized by a green star, is required to meet certain measures set by the Ministry, including water and energy conservation, cleanliness and 119 other requirements ("Green star" campaign," 2008).

1. Environmental Anxiety, Organizational Commitment and Sustainable Behavior

Previous studies on corporate social responsibility and environmentally consciousness (e.g. Arnaudov and Koseska, 2012; Rodriguez and Cruz, 2007) has focused on tourism sector and the hotel industry because of the great impacts of tourism sector on environment. Realizing the importance of "social responsibility" in tourism sector, we examined the environmentally consciousness of hotel employees in Turkey.

According to Hartman, Fok and Zee (2009), when employees believe that their organization supports the green movement, a number of positive feelings will result. And the study of Tilleman (2012) has shown that affective organizational commitment is positively related to employee perceptions of environmental management practices and the level of organizational commitment is influenced by employees' perceptions of their firm's environmental sustainability. Besides; researches has indicated that there is a significantly positive relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions and employees' organizational commitment (Ali, Rehman, Ali, Yousaf and Zia, 2010).

Chen and Chen (2012) indicate that employees' personal behaviors need to be changed when a hotel is trying to promote green measures. Hotels also need to make their employees fully understand why they implement the green policy, and what they can do to reduce energy consumption and reduce environmental pollution through personal behavior. Inside the hotel, training can increase employees' approvals toward the company, which means that green policy not only can enhance employees' behavior to protect the environment, but it can continuously advance the business to the goal of an excellent environment. In addition, training can make employees fully understand the concept of environmental protection, so that they might carry out the idea in both work and living environment (Chen and Chen, 2012). Therefore; Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are developed as below:

H1: Employees' of green hotels have higher affective organizational commitment.

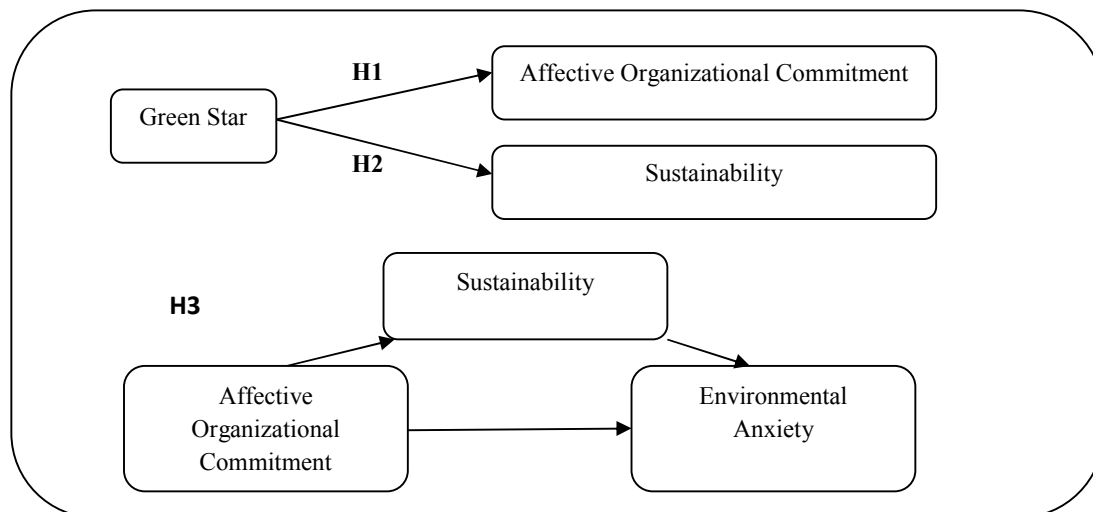
H2: Employees' of green hotels have more sustainable behavior.

According to the World Wildlife Fund's Living Planet Report (2012); humans are using 30 per cent more resources than the Earth can replenish each year, which is leading to deforestation, degraded soils, polluted air and water, and dramatic declines in numbers of fish and other species and if natural resources continue to be exploited at the current rate two planets will be required by the year 2030. Besides, as mass media emphasizes the environmental problems faced by the earth and reveals the importance of protecting environment, anxiety of people toward environment is increasing. However, individuals working in green-star hotels learn sustainable behaviors from the training programs that are given in their hotels and this sustainable behavior can be assumed to decrease the anxiety level of individuals if those people are committed to their hotels as they probably are satisfied what they do in their work places. Thus, as they learn how to sustain the environment, they are expected to do the same behaviors at their homes and feel better to protect the environment. They will transfer what they have learned from the hotel training programs about environmental protection and they will imitate those behaviors in their daily lives at home. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is developed as below:

H3: Employees' sustainable behavior mediates the relationship between affective organizational commitment and environmental anxiety level of employees.

The model of the study is shown in Figure 1.

Fig.1 Model of the study



2. Method

2.1. Aim of the Study

The aim of this paper is to investigate if employees working in Turkish hotels are environmentally anxious and whether working in a hotel with "eco-friendly institution" licence has a role on employees' environmental anxiety, thus their sustainable behavior. Hotels have to educate their employees in terms of many environment related issues to meet the green-star licence requirements. Therefore, employees working in green-star hotels are expected to be educated in terms of sustaining environment and carrying that behavior to their homes. This study also investigates the relationship between the employees' affective organizational commitment and their hotels' green star licence.

2.2. Sample

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to the employees of four different hotels in Turkey. Two of the hotels have a green-star license. A total of 238 questionnaires were returned and 232 questionnaires were evaluated for further analysis. Majority of the respondents were male (%76), aged between 20 and 39 (% 87), graduated from a primary a school or a high school (% 58), with a work experience less than 5 years (% 46).

2.3. Measures

In this study a survey instrument including four major parts is developed. The first section of the survey consists of the demographic characteristics of the respondents like age, gender, job experience, the department he/she works in and level of education. The second section of the survey consists of questions regarding respondents' attitude towards environmental concern, which referred to the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) scale, originally developed by Dunlap & Van Liere (1978), and later revised by Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig & Jones (2000). The NEP scale has fifteen items. Eight of the items, if agreed to by a respondent, are meant to reflect endorsement of the new paradigm, while agreement with the other seven items represents endorsement of the dominant social paradigm which reflects a greater environmental anxiety (e.g. "We are approaching the limit of the number of people the Earth can support") (Anderson, 2012). In this study, 7 items reflecting the greater environmental anxiety was used and the reliability of the scale is found to be satisfactory (Cronbach Alpha Value .654). The third section of the survey is the Meyer and Allen's (1991) "Organizational Commitment Scale". It is composed of three subscales: affective commitment, normative

commitment and continuance commitment. In this study 8 itemed affective organizational commitment subscales was used to assess employee affective organizational commitment. The reliability of the organizational affective commitment scale is found to be satisfactory with Cronbach Alpha Value of .766. The last one was formed in order to measure the hotel employees' sustainable behaviors in terms of environmental issues in their daily lives and a thirteen items questionnaire was developed by reviewing the literature (Çabuk and Karacaoğlu, 2003; Alaş, Tunç, Kışoğlu and Gürbüz, 2009). The reliability of the scale is also found to be satisfactory with Cronbach Alpha Value of .793.

3. Results

The data were analyzed with SPSS for Windows 21.0. The correlations, means and standard deviation of variables were computed. The results are given in **Table 1**. As noted from the table affective commitment of employees is correlated with green star factor. Also it is negatively correlated with environmental anxiety and positively correlated with sustainable behavior. Sustainable behavior is correlated with green star factor and negatively correlated with environmental anxiety.

Tab. 1: Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations for variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1.Green Star or Not			1			
2. Affective Commitment	3,92	0,59	0,167 **	1		
3. Environmental Anxiety	2,74	0,69	-0,088	-0,147 **	1	
4. Sustainable Behavior	4,09	0,56	0,145 *	0,232 **	-0,211 **	1

N: 232, *. $p < 0.05$, **. $p < 0.01$

Hypothesis 1 (“Employees’ of green hotels have higher affective organizational commitment.”) was tested with One-Way ANOVA and supported. The results show that the means for affective commitment of green star hotels and non-green star hotels is significantly different. The mean for affective commitment of green star hotels is 3.97, while others’ is 3.7. ($F=6.629$, $p<.05$). Hypothesis 2 (“Employees’ of green hotels have more sustainable behavior.”) was also tested with One-Way ANOVA and supported. Employees of green hotels have higher scores of sustainable behavior and this difference is statistically significant ($F=4.943$, $p<.05$). The mean score of sustainable behavior of green-star employees is 4.12;

while the mean for sustainable behavior of non-green hotel employees is 3.90. Hypothesis 3 (“Employees’ sustainable behavior mediates the relationship between affective organizational commitment and environmental anxiety level of employees.”) was tested by Baron and Kenny’s (1986) method for mediation analysis. Four regression analyses were performed. In the first regression analysis dependent variable environmental anxiety was predicted using independent variable Affective Commitment. According to the results (Table 2) affective commitment predicts the change in environmental anxiety and this relationship is significant and negative.

Tab. 2: Regression for Dependent Variable Environmental Anxiety, Independent Variable Affective Commitment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	3,408	,302		11,304	,000
	AFFECTIVE.CO	-,171	,076	-,147	-2,255	,025

a Dependent Variable: Environmental Anxiety

In the second regression analysis, dependent variable Sustainability was predicted using independent variable Affective Commitment. According to the results (Table 3) affective commitment predicts the change in sustainability and this relationship is significant and positive.

Tab.3: Regression for Dependent Variable Sustainability, Independent Variable Affective Commitment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	3,224	,241		13,369	,000
	AFFECTIVE.CO	,220	,061	,232	3,624	,000

a Dependent Variable: Sustainability

In the third regression analysis, dependent variable environmental anxiety was predicted using independent variable Sustainability. According to the results (Table 4) sustainability predicts the change in environmental anxiety and this relationship is significant and negative.

Tab. 4: Regression for Dependent Variable Environmental Anxiety, Independent Variable Sustainability

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	3,796	,327		11,609	,000
	Sustainability	-,259	,079	-,211	-3,272	,001

a Dependent Variable: Environmental Anxiety

The last regression is a multiple regression analysis with independent variables Affective Commitment and Sustainability, and dependent variable environmental anxiety. According to the results (**Table 5**) Affective Commitment is no longer significant after controlling for Sustainability, so the results supports full mediation.

Tab. 5: Multiple Regression Analysis for Dependent Variable Environmental Anxiety, Independent Variables Affective Commitment and Sustainability

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
	(Constant)	3,408	,302		11,304	,000
	AFFECTIVE.CO	-,171	,076	-,147	-2,255	,025
	(Constant)	4,149	,396		10,477	,000
	AFFECTIVE.CO	-,121	,077	-,104	-1,569	,118
	Sustainability	-,230	,081	-,187	-2,828	,005

a Dependent Variable: Environmental Anxiety

Conclusion

In recent years there has been a great concern about the negative effects of tourism on environment. As people become more conscious of the need to protect environment, they began to prefer destinations and accommodations that practices tourism activities with minimum negative environmental impacts. Therefore, sustainability in tourism has been emerged.

Results of the study revealed the significant difference of employees' affective organizational commitment in terms of working in a green hotel or not. Individuals working in a green-hotel have significantly higher affective commitment than the employees of non-

green hotels. Affective commitment results from shared values and emotional attachment to the organization and this study show that practices to protect environment known by the employees has a role in this emotional attachment. It is important because by having green-star license; hotels will show their environmental consciousness and have both economic and organizational benefits with increasing affective commitment of their employees. Therefore, this study suggests that green-star campaign is important for achieving organizational goals as well as protecting environment for the next generations.

Another result of the study is that the green-star hotel employees have significantly more sustainable behaviors than the employees of hotels without an eco-friendly hotel license. Because; green hotel employees attends some training programs about environmental issues like energy consumption, water and waste management in their hotels and are also encouraged to take green initiatives. Thus, they learn about the necessary steps to protect environment like minimizing consumption of valuable resources and preventing pollution in their daily lives. As they practice what they have learned about environmental protection at their homes, their family members will also become more aware about the environmental issues. And a more conscious and environmentalist generation would be an important socio-economical contribution of environmentally friendly hotels campaign as well as its environmental influences.

An important finding of this paper is that as the employees' sustainable behaviors at their homes increase, their anxiety about the environmental issues and about the future of the world decrease. And affective commitment of employees, only if they have sustainable behaviors in their daily lives, affects their concern about the negative future of the world. This suggests that sustainable behavior of employees fully mediates the effects of affective organizational commitment on their anxiety about environment. Most probably; green hotel employees which have a level of high affective commitment, practice sustainable behaviors at their homes which they have learned from their hotels and their concern about environmental issues decreases as they do what needed to be done to protect the environment.

“Green-star” is an important corporate social responsibility campaign which has both organizational and environmental benefits. This study indicates that employees of green-star hotels not only have higher organizational affective commitment, they are also educated toward sustainable behaviors which will be carried to their homes. It is suggested that green-

star campaign should be promoted by the government and the mass media to encourage hotels to get involved to this eco-friendly initiative.

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