

## Interrelation Between Organizational and Professional Commitment: Application on Airport Security Officer in Turkey

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**Abstract:** The most important stakeholder of safety is human resources. Those who are responsible for airport security work in a wide area of responsibility, with the increasing use of high technology and security arrangements. Despite this, the majority of security problems experienced in the aviation sector is seen to be effective on the basis of the human factor.

In the first part of the study dealing with airport security concept and security personnel are summarized in the literature. In the second section, previous studies regarding organizational commitment are briefly described. Airport security staff in Turkey is decided to be the core field of study. In the study, Organizational Commitment Scale, accepted in the literature to be belonged to MAYER & ALLEN, is used. In this context, a survey is made with members of SİHAGÜVDER and as well as with other security personals.

In conclusion, it is observed that the airport security personnel review scale items different than from previous researches. In this respect, the result is obtained and recommending that it would be fruitful to develop a new scale for airport security personnel working at critical points. While airport security personnel's commitment to organization and profession is evaluated, the low profile points of staff's commitment to organization and profession are also determined. In line with the results, some of the approaches to increase security personal's commitment to profession and organization are suggested.

**Keywords:** Airport security personnel, Airport security system, professional commitment, organizational commitment.

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### 1. Introduction

Security relates to feeling safe from threats, worries or hazards (Ergül, 2014:166). Natural disasters, refugee influx, terrorist attacks and climb of ethnic nationalism are among the factors directly or indirectly affecting any state's security (Çomak, 2008: 3). On a conceptual scale, security integrates not only elements of threat and attacks but also involved components of defense, precaution and deterrence (Akyıldız, 2002: 35). Security on a broader perspective can be defined as the struggles and skills of global states and nations to eliminate potential threats and safeguard their autonomous identities and functional unity in the face of rival powers (Buse, 117). Terrorist attacks currently stand before us as an outcome of globalization. Autonomy pleas of subculture groups in nation states, advanced technology, new weapons, suicide bombers, weapon-transformable planes and similar factors conjointly spread and globalize terrorist methods.

### 2. Literature Review

September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks fueled a breakdown in the 21st century's international system. In the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> a major

shift was recorded in the quality and quantity of security approaches and conceptions (Sandıklı, 2012: 3). September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks foregrounded multidimensional security strategies and empowered the chain between global system and national politics. Led by the UN, active involvement of international organizations to this process and urging the organizations to be active practitioners of novel security approaches have also been investigated within this context. Post September 11<sup>th</sup> evidenced the nonexpendable position of security personnel as a vital shareholder in aviation sector and security personnel were rightfully granted with their acknowledged role. Any potential threats and attack sources against aviation security have been identified and effective tactics and targets of such threats have been exposed.

In the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, General Accounting Office Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) reported that security systems run by private companies exhibited low performance. The agency reported that employing unqualified personnel; high ratio of employee turnover and low wages were the most essential causes in this failure. September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks exposed the

security lack in USA transportation security system (Dempsey, 2008:231). After September 11th attack USA annulled security services offered by private security companies and resolved to provide security service via national state bodies (Uryan, Kaptı, 2011: 164).

To ensure airport security presently integrated security measures are practiced. Technological security systems have become operable systems via human skills. In that regard security system/gadgets at airport security check points and security personnel play the dominant role in the efficient provision of security services (Yılmaz et al., 2014). Further to that, modern technology still requires to be guided by human intellect.

Airport security personnel have to cope with constant pressure due to authority conflicts, escalating regulations on security and a broader scope of responsibility. It is a fact that competencies, authority and responsibility domains of airport personnel be supported since it is witnessed that a huge majority of security problems in aviation sector stem from human

factor (Yılmaz et al., 2014). Education, specialty, personnel qualifications and responsibilities sought in all airport security personnel are as listed in Figure 1. To prevent any security lack or to correct any potential security failures, security personnel in charge are expected to possess applicable qualifications, education, specialty and responsibility awareness which would in effect allow security staff to better adopt the new high technology (Pissens,2010). As pointed by Küçükönel(2001); "despite the major advancements in security system technologies, not any technology can replace any well trained and motivated security personnel, and provided that security system personnel are endowed with matching skills and decisions to efficiently operate the system and if there exists a well-organized, highly-motivated and informed aviation security unit, airfield security measures would be more smoothly practiced (Küçükönel, 2001: 178). In response to the development in Turkish aviation sector and commencement of civil aviation activities airports have become priority-protected facilities.

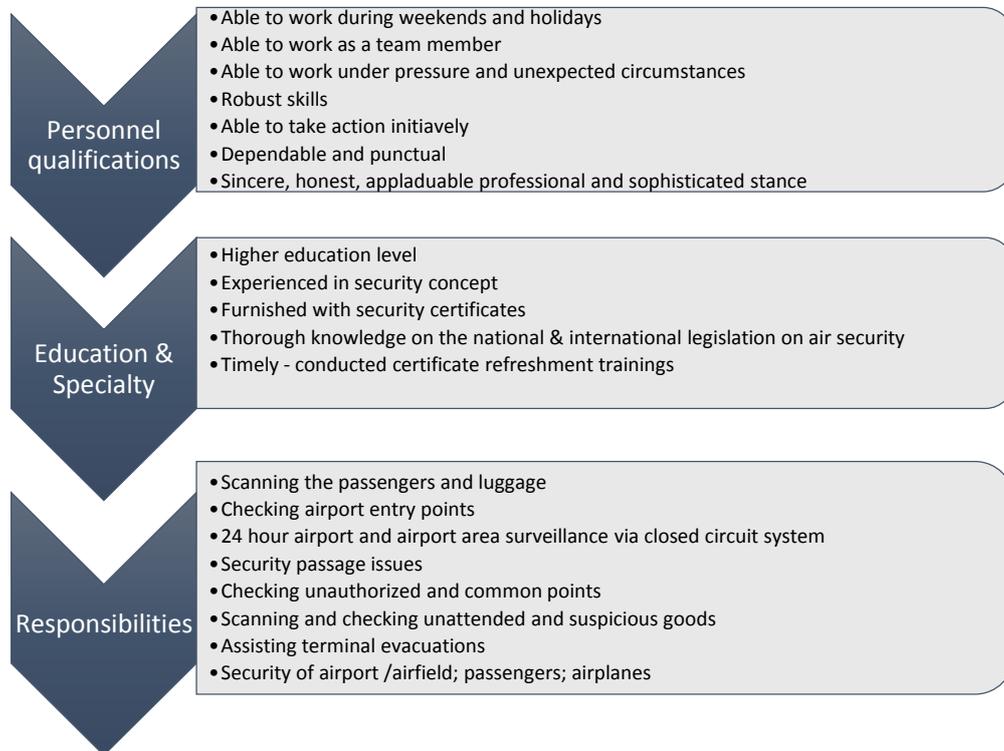


Figure 1: Qualifications of Airport Security Personnel  
Resource: (London City Airport, 2007)

On a historical basis there has been intense terrorist activism globewide since the 1960s and 1970s this upheaval fueled multiplication of security measures in Turkey-based airports. In 1988 "Regulation on Security Orders and Measures to Take on Airfields" was put into effect (Sayın, 2011). This regulation enforced structuring National Civil Aviation Security Board and Airport Security Commission and Private Security Association to operate in airfield security services (Uzuner, 2003: 64-65). In Turkey there are two effective national institutes playing role in civil aviation and security. These institutes are; General Directorate of Civil Aviation (SHGM) affiliated to the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communication and General Directorate of State Airports (DHMI). SHGM, within the framework of "Directive on Aviation Companies' Security Management and Organization" issued in 2010 enforced all organizations operating in aviation sector to restructure their security system as stipulated by the directive. As enforced in this directive airport operation bodies, airport and terminal operators, air taxi organizations, ground services and catering firms, authorized air freight agencies and general aviation companies, in addition to all relevant parties operating in civil aviation domain or airfield in particular, would form individual security units under specific terms in their own bodies (SHGM, 2014). Facilities and gears constituting the infrastructure of Turkish civil aviation sector are likewise operated by DHMI affiliated to the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communication (DHMI, 2011). There is a Private Security Unit supervised by DHMI in most parts of the airports.

Airport security personnel are in charge of guaranteeing the security of airport, passengers and luggage, airplanes, employees etc. before, during and after the flight experience (London City Airport, 2007). Private security staff supervised by DHMI are commissioned for control in a limited area within the terminal and take part in providing security for the airfield and miscellaneous buildings and plants affiliated to DHMI. In addition to DHMI private security personnel, personnel from General Directorate of Security Affairs, Private Company Security Personnel affiliated to terminal operations, Customs Enforcement Personnel and Military Personnel concomitantly work under Airport Local Authority in the procurement of security services in airports. As a consequence of privatization of terminal structures, Police Forces and Private Security Company Personnel are

employed in unison. In this collaborative work DHMI Private Security Personnel is commonly stationed as security staff in the critical checkpoints outside the terminal. In 2010, the National Civil Aviation Security Board resolved to provide more active roles for private security personnel in airports and to reassign police officers in airports to their fundamental duties (Arıkanoglu, 2010).

As a concept and intellectual perspective commitment is ubiquitous in any given space where there is a community feeling and it relates to emotional expression of a social instinct. Being one of the most strongly experienced human emotions commitment refers to our attachment to an individual, an idea and an organization and the responsibilities we are expected to fulfill (Çöl, Ardiç, 2008:158). Organizational commitment is studied in a multitude of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, social psychology and organizational behavior (Levent, 2005: 128).

Organizational commitment is among the attitudes that employees form toward their job. Organizational commitment is described such; "Employees' higher level of faith and acceptance of organizational objectives and values; employees' heightened level of motivation to achieve organizational objectives and to continue being employed as an active member in the organization" (Boylu, Pelit, Güçer, 2007: 56).

Another definition on organizational commitment was provided by Kanter (1968). Kanter (1968) analyzed organizational commitment under three dimensions as commitment to continuity, congruence and supervision. In commitment to continuity employees devote themselves to continue the existence of organization. Due to the efforts paid to remain as members of the organization, these individuals cannot bear the cost of quitting the organization and feel forced to continue their organizational membership. In commitment to congruence dimension, employees are attached to the organization by strong social relations. In commitment to supervision dimension, employees accept the rules and values of the organization as the proper behavior forms for their personal traits too (Nayir, 2013:181).

Organizational commitment starts the moment employees enter into a job through a psychological contract and upon collecting further insight on the organization, organizational values, norms and objectives; also by drawing links between his/her

personal objectives and organizational objectives and internalizing organizational objectives a person's organizational commitment develops (Gülova, Demirsoy, 2012: 56).

Despite the presence of various definitions, organizational commitment is commonly described as the feelings "a person develops toward his employed organization and institute". Components of organizational commitment toward an organization or institute are as listed below (Dolu, 2011: 18).

- Adopting organizational objectives & values and developing a strong faith toward these objectives & values,
- Exceeding the expectations to increase the development of organization,
- Developing a strong sense of commitment to continue organizational membership.

Profession can be described as people's engagement with a certain form of employment for a definite period of time to continue their daily tasks and earn financial yield to that end (Tak and Çiftçioğlu, 2010). The relations and emerging problems between a human's professional organizational life and non-organizational life are among the investigated subjects (Özdevecioğlu and Aktaş, 2007: 2). The first introduction of professional commitment concept by Greenhaus coincides with the year 1971. Nonetheless professional commitment, as elaborated today, was initially conceptualized within the framework of five-factor commitment model developed by Morrow. Within that context professional commitment can be defined as "forestaging professional identity; doing one's best for the betterment of one's profession; developing one's commitment to professional objectives, values, norms and ethical principles" (Tak and Çiftçioğlu, 2009).

Some of the subdimensions of professional commitment are listed as commitment to professional career; commitment to professional ethics and professional objectives and fully internalizing organizational values (Şimşek and Aslan, 2011:420). Professional commitment that bears meaning under such definitions can be examined in three subdimensions. These are general attitude toward the job, idea of professional planning, and relative significance of the job (Morrow, 1983: 489). Meyer and Allen (1991) essentially grouped Three Dimensional

Professional Commitment in three dimensions as emotional, continuity and normative. In this study subdimensions of professional commitment are as explained below (Tak and Çiftçioğlu, 2009: 37):

Emotional commitment to the profession:

Emotional commitment to the profession refers to individuals' strong desire to be employed in the same profession. In parallel with the enhanced level of positive experiences, opportunities and satisfaction level employees' emotional commitment to their work also strengthens. Displaying emotional commitment to the profession in behavioral dimension is linked with employees' stronger attachment to professional development. To that end employees follow periodicals on their profession, attend professional conferences and keep abreast of scientific studies to hone their professional expertise.

Commitment to professional continuity:

Upon weighing the costs of quitting their job and benefits of continuing working the individuals decide to continue. Individuals resolve to continue their job not due to emotional or normative causes but due to external forces.

Normative professional commitment:

Normative professional commitment is the obligation to continue their job as a requirement or as a form of enforcement. Individuals internalize normative pressures to adopt certain behavioral forms. Those who benefit from internalization process develop a normative commitment to their job. For instance financial support to develop career is one condition that sets the fertile base for developing normative professional commitment. In a different case normative professional commitment is likely to emerge in families where more than one member is employed in the same profession.

The analyzed interrelation between organizational and professional commitment is mostly ubiquitous traditional professional groups (Özmen, Özer, Saatçioğlu, 2005:3).

In a study conducted by Ateş, Yılmaz, Sayın, and Gemic (2014) the earliest findings of phenomenological analysis on "Professional Commitment of the Airport Security Personnel in Turkey" highlighted the parallel necessity to delve into the topic within the framework of "Security" profession, thereby forming the fuel of this study.

Professional commitment refers to one of the major constituents of the work lives of security personnel employed in airports. By definition

professional commitment is; devotion of any security personnel or attachment & adoption of the values s/he chooses; his/her efforts to realize these values; motivation for professional development and willfulness to continue his/her profession.

Organizational commitment is one of the variables of this research. Conducted studies have so far indicated that organizational commitment and professional loyalty are two divergent concepts because organizational commitment surfaces as an outcome of the affection bond between the organization and individual or forging a sense of identification.

On the other hand professional commitment takes the stage when the efforts exerted by the employee to acquire skills and proficiency in specific domain begin to represent some critical value in his/her personal life and the moment it starts to occupy a central position (Benligiray, Sönmez, 2011: 30). A myriad of studies have manifested that heightened levels of organizational commitment and professional loyalty could boost employees' performance, and work satisfaction, organizational efficiency; and it would decrease absenteeism ranges and employee turnover rates (Top, 2012:260).

Although all three dimensions (emotional, normative and continuity) of professional loyalty listed above under professional commitment render certain effects on organizational commitment these effects all have different sizes. In that sense a person with higher sense of emotional commitment and/or normative commitment seeks to keep track of the latest news on his/her profession whereas a person with higher level of continuity commitment is less motivated to participate in professional activities. The impacts of emotional, normative and continuity commitments on work-related behaviors also differ. Emotional commitment and normative commitment positively affect organizational behavior whilst continuity commitment either negatively affects or does not affect organizational behavior (Aslan, 2008:165).

For the organizations embodying professional employees the interrelation between professional and organizational commitment is even more critically significant since organizational commitment of the professionals devoted to their profession and objectives is in quite a low level. It was on the other hand ascertained that individuals

committed to both their profession and the organization exhibited behaviors to bolster organizational efficiency. That being the case organizations should, by setting a favorable stage to award professional activities and enable the employees to follow latest updates on their domain, seek the ways to align professional expectation and organizational objectives and unite under the same perspective. It can thus be feasible to concomitantly experience feel professional commitment and organizational commitment and to connect both commitments in the direction of the very same objective (Çöl, 2004:5).

### 3. Objective, Scope and Method

Population of this research was designated as airport security personnel in Turkey. In this study Meyer and his colleagues' (1991) the recognized Three Dimensional Professional Commitment scale in relevant literature was utilized. Turkish adaptation of the same scale was developed by Tak and Çitçioğlu (2009). Within that scope SİHAGÜVDER members in particular and security personnel from other companies were surveyed. The total number of airport security personnel was computed as N=1.608. Sampling was selected via convenience sampling method and judgment sampling method from this universe. In the process of sampling selection below specified formula was harnessed (Bartlett, Kotrlík and Higgins, 2001:47).

**t:** in infinity degrees of freedom, theoretical table value on alpha error value,

**p:** percentage of witnessing the questioned case in the entire society,

**q:** percentage of not witnessing the questioned case in the entire society,

**d:** deviation of which effect size can be acceptable from the results obtained earlier,

Table 1. Calculation Formulas of Population

$$n = \frac{1.608 * 1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5}{(1.608 - 1) * 0,05^2 + 1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5}$$

n = 283

In the sampling within the thresholds of 5% error margin and 95% reliability, t value for the sampling selection was accepted to be 1,96. Representing the percentage of witnessing the questioned case in the entire society, p value was employed as

$p=0,5$  that stands for the widest range. Representing the percentage of not witnessing the questioned case in the entire society,  $q$  value was employed  $q=0,5$  that stands for the largest range. Acceptable range of deviation in measuring the effect size of the scale was hypothesized as  $d=0,05$  for 5% range. Sampling number obtained for 1.608 participants was computed as 283.

Selected method in the distribution of surveys was online distribution method. Online survey distribution was conducted on <http://www.sihaguvder.com/> Internet address. Around 1.000 surveys were distributed for filling and were communicated via SİHAGÜVDER. 288 participants answered the survey that was open for 45 days. In survey analysis IBM SPSS Statistics 20 program was employed.

#### 4. Findings and Analysis

Within the scope of this study a total of 288 airport security personnel answered the survey questions. 97,3% of the participants were well male as seen in Table 2. Since most of the security personnel were male, males occupied the larger portion in survey participation ratio. 271 of survey participants were married (Table 3).

Table 2. Gender

Gender (N=288)	Percentage
Male	97,3%
Female	2,7%

Table 3. Marital status

Marital status (N=411)	Percentage
Single	5,9%
Married	94,1%

82,3% of participants were of the age range 36-42 (Table 4) and 91,8% had over 10 years of professional seniority (Table 5). Age and seniority range are equally high, which leads to the hypothesis that survey respondents were effectively familiar with the investigated profession and the organization.

Table 4. Age

Age (N=288)	Percentage
18-21	0,5%
22-28	3,6%
29-35	4,5%
36-42	82,3%
43-49	9,1%

Table 5. Professional Seniority

Professional (N=288)	Seniority	Percentage
Below 1 year		1,4%
1-5 years		5,0%
6-10 years		1,8%
11-15 years		61,8%
16-20 years		29,1%
21 years and above		0,9%

15,0% of participant security personnel had high school diploma, 25,9% had associate degree, 56,8% had graduate and 2,3% had post graduate education (Table 6). As seen, 85% of the sampling in sum graduated from a higher education institute.

Table 6. Education level

Education level (N=288)	Percentage
Elementary ed.	0,0%
High school	15,0%
Associate degree	25,9%
Graduate	56,8%
Postgraduate	2,3%

A high ratio of SİHAGÜVDER members contributing to sampling selection were employed in General Directorate of State Airports (DHMİ) (Table 7). Of the 288 security personnel participating the survey 269 personnel were employed in DHMİ. Distribution of survey respondents are as exhibited in Table 8.

Table 7. Employed institute

Institute (N=288)	Percentage
DHMİ	93,2%
EGM Police Department	0,5%
Private Security Company	6,3%

Table 8. Position

Position (N=288)	Percentage
Security Manager	1,4%
Security head	3,1%
Guard and security personnel	86,4%
Police officer	0,5%
Private security personnel	8,6%

13-item scale of professional commitment was examined in terms of consistency. 220 survey participants responded to professional commitment scale. Items were tested for reliability and it was detected that if 2 items were excluded of the scale, factor reliability would be increased. Remaining 11 items of professional commitment scale were also tested for reliability and it was detected that if 2 item was excluded of the scale, factor reliability would be increased.

Table 9. Professional Commitment Scale Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
,865	11

Table 9. Organizational Commitment Scale Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
,790	10

For both scales, Varimax Method was employed in factor analysis rotation. Within that framework, main components equal to the number of great eigenvalue were selected as one method also supported in relevant literature. As "Rotated Component Matrix" table was examined it surfaced that there was no value below threshold load value. By excluding two overlapping items

from the scale the same process was reiterated. Table 9 demonstrates that 15 items were adequate to conduct measurement.

In the ensuing stage Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Sampling Compliance Coefficient (0,87) and Bartlett Test of Sphericity ( $p < 0,001$ ) were examined (Table 10). Obtained test findings verified that obtained data were convenient for factor analysis. In the next stage Levene test was harnessed to check variance homogeneity of variables ( $p < 0,001$ ). It was then resolved to utilize correlation matrix in the analyses.

Table 10. KMO and Bartlett's Test Table

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,857
Bartlett's Approx. Chi-Square Test of Sphericity		1028,841
df		55
Sig.		0,000

The findings of analysis are as outlined in Table 11. Results of factor analysis demonstrate that the scale is three dimensional (respective eigenvalues as 5,02; 1,96 and 1,27) and this structure explained 57% of the total variance.

Table 11. Rotated Matrix Table1

		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Emotional Commitment	I dislike being a Security Staff. (T)	,738		
	I fail to identify myself with Security Profession. (T)	,766		
	I have regrets about having chosen Security Profession	,676		
	Being a Security Staff is important for my professional personal image. (T)	,579		
	I see Security Profession as an exciting job.			,690
Professional Continuity	I am honored to be a Security Staff.			,687
	Changing profession now would be too costly for me.		,885	
	If I change my profession my life would heavily turn upside down.		,869	
	I would have to make many personal sacrifices now to change my profession now.		,756	
	Changing profession would be too hard for me now.		,722	
Normative Commitment	I have given so much to this profession that I just cannot quit now.			,552
	I feel no pressure to continue Security Staff position. (T)			,682
	I am still working as a Security Staff due to my professional loyalty.			,641
	I feel a professional responsibility to continue working as a Security Staff.			,623
	I believe those people trained in a certain profession have the responsibility to continue their job for a reasonable period of time			,619
Percentage of explained variance		0,15	0,20	0,21

1Table specifications: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations. (T) Reverse Scored

It was detected that not all the scale items were conceptually loaded to the factors they belonged to (emotional, continuity and normative). Unlike conceptually-applied scale options as "I am honored to be a Security Staff", "I see Security Profession as an exciting job" and "I have given so much to this profession that I just cannot quit now" were listed under "normative commitment". In order to comprehend the difference witnessed in this scale Meyer et al.'s (1991) Three Dimensional Professional Commitment scale practices and Tak and Çitfçioğlu's practices (conceptual scale) were reanalyzed. Within that approach conceptual scale practices were applied on nursing profession. Conceptual scale was primarily dominated by females. Conceptual scale was also conducted among nurses from different age groups. The sampling analyzed within the scope of present research is airport security personnel. Security personnel exhibit different approaches than nurses to items "feeling honored of their profession" and "seeing the profession as exciting". 91,5% (see Table 2) of security personnel analyzed within the scope of this study is age 36 and above. Considering the professional depreciation rates and ages of the majority of surveyed security personnel, it surfaced that most of them were either qualified for a pension or close to the end of retirement age. Hence the option in conceptual scale "I have given so much to this profession that I just cannot quit now" is likely to have been in a different factor in survey practice. Based on these findings it was resolved to ignore above-listed items while explaining the research results.

As the results of this analysis manifest the most effective subdimension is commitment for professional continuity in the professional loyalty of airport security personnel with respect to the factor loads. This factor singly explains 20% of the total variance. As the expressions loaded to this factor are examined it surfaces that factor loads vary between 0,88 and 0,72. As factor loads of professional commitment of security personnel are examined the second most effective subdimension surfaces as professional emotional commitment. This factor singly explains 21% of the total variance and factor loads vary between 0,73 and 0,57. Based on factor loads, it surfaces that the least effective factor in professional commitment is normative professional commitment.

## **5. Conclusion**

To the end of providing security in civil aviation activities novel technologies and processes are

being developed each new day. The primary objective of these technologies is to assist duty personnel in the decision making and application practices during airport security processes. A well-educated and motivated security personnel qualified to harness modern technologies is the foundational element in achieving airport security.

In this study the objective has been to conduct "professional commitment" survey among security personnel employed in Turkish airports and Three Dimensional Professional Commitment scale has been utilized to serve this objective. Employed scale measures emotional, professional and normative commitment dimensions and professional loyalty that have been acknowledged in relevant literature. There has not been any representative study earlier that utilized this conceptual scale to analyze airport security personnel in Turkey. This implementation demonstrated that airport security personnel commented differently on the scale items differing from the comments in previous studies. From that viewpoint it is suggested to develop an original scale to measure airport security personnel's professional commitment or to measure professional commitment via different scales in literature.

At the end of conducted analysis it was identified that with respect to factor loads, questioned airport security personnel developed professional continuity commitment most significantly. This indicates the fact that respondent airport security personnel selected to continue their current profession upon weighing the cost of quitting their job and/or benefits of continuing their profession. The reasons of high frequency of professional continuity commitment among security personnel might be explained with the public officer status of these employees; limited number of private companies operational in their specialized field, that is airport security, and aside from public airports the infeasibility to be employed in any other public positions in their professional field. Based on these reasons it can be argued that airport security personnel opt for continuing their profession due to external forces.

The three professional commitment styles in conceptual scale are likewise linked with "the likelihood to continue one's profession". Further to that, the intensity of an individual's desire to continue his/her profession is also likely to vary in relation to the type of commitment. The findings of

this study point to the advantages of empowering the professional commitment of airport security personnel. Aside from airport security personnel's professional continuity due to external pressures, it is suggested to develop their emotional commitment toward the profession.

Having considered airport security service processes it becomes evident that security personnel play an unquestionably critical and substantial role in the entire process. Effective communication, stress management, problem solving and relevant personal development trainings could be rendered to improve airport security personnel's motivation. Additionally it could be beneficial to increase salaries to boost security personnel's social welfare level, build social facilities, and set up music, sports, and drama clubs to allow the personnel's self expression in matters aside from professional competencies. Adding to all the listed suggestions a system for suggestions, complaints and gratitude could be designed for the betterment of airport security systems of the personnel. In the case that certain employees increase system efficiency via practicing offered suggestions, rendering awards to the ones with higher-performance ratios could also contribute to developing professional commitment in a wider array of aspects.

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