

# THE ROLE OF PERSON-JOB FIT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON EMOTIONAL LABOR EVIDENCE FROM TURKEY

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the relationships between person-job fit, organizational commitment and emotional labor strategies. Data were collected from 125 aircrews in different Turkish airlines companies in Turkey. The person-Job fit scale, the organizational commitment scale and the emotional labor scale were administered. Results revealed that aircrew members who have high person-job fit should act less while serving to their customer that is, engage in less surface acting. The other salient result of this study is affectively and normatively committed aircrews don't prefer surface acting, conversely, continuously committed employees engage in more surface acting. At the end, the implications of the findings are discussed.

**Keywords:** Person-Job Fit, Affective Commitment, Normative Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Surface Acting, Deep Acting.

## INTRODUCTION

In global market, competitive advantage became highly important factor in all sector. It would be said that having and sustaining competitive advantage in airlines companies depend on some important factors such as safety of flight and quality of services in flight and on the ground. According to literature, service employee's behaviors are the most important determinant of the service quality (Pugh, 2001; Bowen, Siehl ve Schneider, 1989).

In airlines companies, cabin attendants are the sole service employees. And, they encounter different types of customers everyday. These workers try to satisfy customers. But, some the factors extremely changes related to customers for example, different custom, culture, personalities, religion and other demographic variables. These variables make cabin attendants jobs more demanding and energy using. Even in extreme situations, cabin attendants must be tolerable, friendly and helpful. In emergency situation, cabin attendants responsibilities increased. They have to make passengers ready to land or crash land, give them a quick information about the situation they are in, keep them seated and fastened, show all passengers place of emergency exit, procedures, and equipment (Mengenci, 2014). In airlines sector, if company wants to have and sustain its competitive advantage, it is important to understand relationship of these behaviour in the cockpit and cabin environment.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between person-job fit, organizational commitment and emotional labor behavior of aircrew members. In the emotional labor literature, as far as we know, there is a dearth of empirical evidence regarding this issue.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional labor has received considerable attention in recent years. Many jobs in service sector require a significant amount of emotional labor. Emotional labor is defined as “the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display” for a wage (Hochschild, 1983: 7). In the literature, it’s stated that there are two emotional labor strategies: surface and deep acting.

Surface acting is expressing organizationally required emotions by hiding real feelings. Deep acting involves changing one’s feelings in order to display organizationally required emotions. Generally research showed that deep acting is more likely to be perceived as sincere than surface acting so in terms of service quality and positive customers’ reactions, deep acting is more effective than surface acting (Grandey, 2000; 2003; Wharton, A.S., 2009). Since deep acting is more effortful than surface acting (Morris and Feldman 1996), we may expect that employees who fit better to their jobs engage in more deep acting when interacting with their customers.

Person-environment (P-E) fit theory provides the framework for examining the relationship between person-job fit and emotional labor in this paper. P-E fit is defined as “the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched” (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Wong, J., Wang, C., 2009). According to the concept of P-E fit attitudes, behavior, and other individual- level outcomes result from the relationship between the person and environment, neither only person nor only environment (Edwards, 1996).

In this broad concept, scholars identify several distinct types of fit such as person- vocation fit, person-group fit, person-organization fit and person-job (P-J) fit (Yang, F.H., & Chang, C.C., 2008; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001). Briefly, P-J fit is defined as the match between person’s characteristics and job’s characteristics (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). According to Edwards (1991), P-J fit occurs in two cases.

The first, when there is a match between the abilities, skills and knowledge of employees and the requirements of the job. Secondly, P-J fit occurs when needs, desires or preferences of an employee are met by the job. Employees who have high person-job fit should act less because their inner feelings are in line with desired emotions by their organizations and it’s easy to comply with the display rules by changing their feelings. On the other hand, P-E fit theory states that incongruity between the person and the environment may lead to psychological, physiological, and behavioral strains (Edwards and Van Harrison, 1993), so a stressful employee may engage in more surface acting to show desired emotions like cheerful and friendly. Thus, we can predict the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** P-J Fit is positively related deep acting and negatively related surface acting.

Organizational commitment is defined as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979: 226). In the literature, commitment is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct (i.e., affective, continuance, and normative) (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Affective commitment is concerned with the extent to which the individual “identifies with, is involved in, and enjoys membership in, the organization” (Allen and Meyer, 1990: 2).

The continuous component of organizational commitment is the desire to maintain organizational membership because of the costs of leaving. The investments (e g, time or effort) that employees made in their organizations and lack of another job alternatives leads

to this type of commitment (Becker, 1960; Vandenberghe, C., 2009). Finally, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment in the organization (Meyer and Smith, 2000). In summary, “employees with strong affective commitment remain because they want to, those with strong continuance commitment because they need to, and those with strong normative commitment because they feel they ought to do so” (Allen Meyer, 1990: 3).

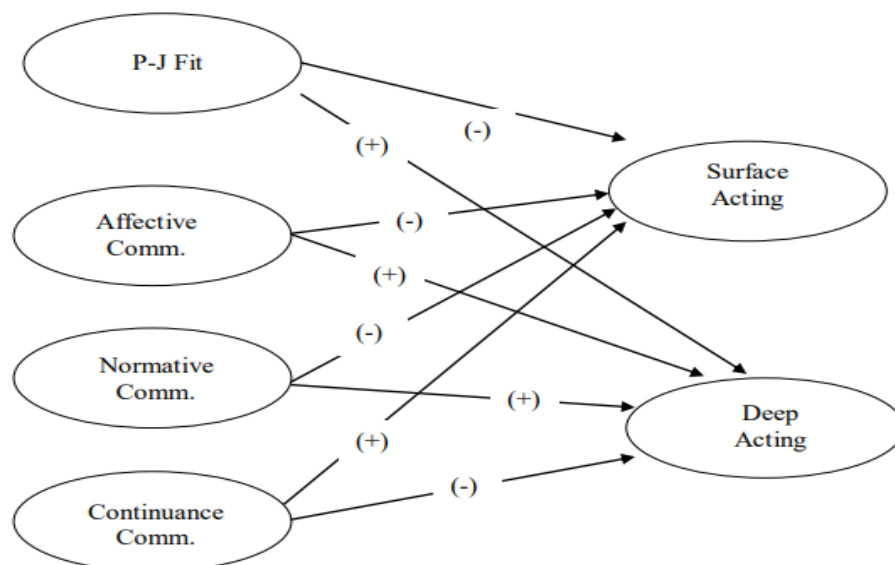
It is stated in the literature that, highly committed employees accept their organizations’ goals and values and are willing to show extra effort on behalf of the organization (Steers, 1977; Panaccio, A., & Vandenberghe, C., 2009). So we can expect that highly committed employees try to comply with organizational display rules and show greater effort to be perceived as authentic by their customer.

**H<sub>2a</sub>.** Affective commitment and normative commitment are positively related to deep acting, continuance commitment is negatively related to deep acting.

Although all three forms relate negatively to turnover, they have different implications for other types of work behavior (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnysky, 2002). Research shows that affective commitment has positive correlation with desirable work behavior (eg job performance, organizational citizenship behavior), conversely, continuance commitment is unrelated or negatively related in some cases (Morin, A.J.S., Morizot, J., Boudrias, J.-S., & Madore, I. 2011; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffn, & Jackson, 1989; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Meyer et al., 2002). So, affectively committed employees may engage in more deep acting to make a contribution on behalf of the organization, on the other hand employees who feel forced to remain in the organization may engage in more surface acting. In testing this idea, we predict the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>2b</sub>.** Affective commitment and normative commitment are negatively related to surface acting, continuance commitment is positively related to surface acting.

**Figure 1 Theoretical model of Emotional labor, P-J fit, and Organizational Commitment Relationship**



## METHODOLOGY

### Subjects and Procedures

Data were collected from Turkish airlines companies' pilots and flight attendants in Turkey. A questionnaire survey was conducted. The questionnaire that includes demographic information, job satisfaction, stress and burnout items were delivered to 300 randomly selected Turkish airlines companies' pilots and copilots in Turkey. 125 surveys came back from Turkish Airlines companies. The sample included 53 female (42.4%) and 72 male (57.6%). The majority of the respondents were married (58.1%). The 57.7% of participants were pilot and 42.3% of participants were flight attendants. The range of pilots old was 26 thru 62 years and the average occupational tenure of respondents was about 9.35 years. 19.6 percent of participants have college degree and 28.7 percent has MBA degree and 21.7 percent of participants have other educational diploma.

## MEASURES

### Emotional Labor

To measure emotional labor, we used Turkish version (Oz, 2007) of the emotional labor scale developed by Brotheridge and Lee (1998). The scale consists of 19 items measuring the two dimensions of emotional labor. Participants were requested to evaluate each item in terms of the frequency of their feelings ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) were .872 for surface acting sub-scale and were .885 for deep acting sub-scale.

### Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment was measured by using the scale that was translated in Turkish by Wasti (2000) developed by Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993). The scale contains three dimensions of organizational commitment: Affective, normative and continuous commitment. Participants were asked to respond to organizational commitment scale by indicating the degree to which the condition applied to them on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In this sample, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .766; .765; and .784.

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### Person-job fit

Person-job fit was measured by Brkich, Jeffs and Carless (2002) scale. The scale has 6 items scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The factor analysis showed that the items loaded on only one factor. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .819.

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and intercorrelation of the variables

	M	Sd	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. P-J Fit	2,42	,63	-	<b>,536**</b>	<b>,376**</b>	-,150	<b>-,372**</b>	-,170
2. Affective comm.	2,45	,80		-	<b>,655**</b>	-,112	<b>-,484**</b>	,087
3. Normative comm.	2,64	,86			-	-,004	<b>-,451**</b>	,176*
4. Continuous comm.	3,36	,89				-	<b>,290**</b>	,180*
5. Surface acting	3,08	,83					-	<b>,280**</b>
6. Deep acting	2,42	,63						-

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The descriptive statistics and a correlation matrix are displayed in Table 1. As can be seen from this table, all commitment dimensions and surface acting means fall in the middle zone on the five point Likert Scale. In addition, flight attendance reports lower deep acting as compared to surface acting. On the other hand, person-job fit mean score is the lowest score.

Table 2. The Relationships between Organizational Commitment Dimensions & Surface Acting

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,575 <sup>a</sup>	,330	,314	,68966

a. Predictors: (Constant), continuous comm., normative comm., affective comm

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	28,397	3	9,466	19,901	,000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	57,552	121	,476		
	Total	85,950	124			

a. Dependent Variable: surface acting

b. Predictors: (Constant), continuous comm., normative comm., affective comm.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	3,664	,329		11,122	,000
affective	<b>-,289</b>	,102	-,281	-2,823	<b>,006</b>
1					
normative	<b>-,256</b>	,095	-,266	-2,686	<b>,008</b>
continuous	<b>,239</b>	,070	,257	3,422	<b>,001</b>

a. Dependent Variable: surface acting

Hypothesis H<sub>2b</sub> that affective commitment and normative commitment would be negatively related to surface acting, continuance commitment would be positively related to surface acting was supported.

As can be seen from the Table 2, affective commitment and normative commitment were negatively related to surface acting, whereas continuous commitment was positively related to surface acting. That is, employees who affectively and normatively committed to their organizations don't prefer surface acting.

**Table 3. The Relationships between Organizational Commitment Dimensions and Deep Acting**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,252 <sup>a</sup>	,064	,040	,54233

a. Predictors: (Constant), continuous comm., normative comm., affective comm.

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	2,400	3	,800	2,720	,048 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	35,294	120	,294		
	Total	37,694	123			

a. Dependent Variable: deep acting  
b. Predictors: (Constant), continuous comm., normative comm., affective comm.

Regression Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1,484	,259		5,727	,000
affective	-,011	,081	-,016	-,135	,893
1					
normative	,120	,075	,187	1,593	,114
continuous	,110	,055	,178	1,998	,048

a. Dependent Variable: deep acting

Hypothesis H<sub>2a</sub> that affective commitment and normative commitment would be positively related to deep acting, whereas continuous commitment negatively related to deep acting was not supported by our results. There was significant positive relationship between continuous commitment and deep acting.

**Table 4. The Relationships between Person-Job Fit and Surface Acting**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,372 <sup>a</sup>	,139	,132	,77583

a. Predictors: (Constant), pjobfit

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	11,915	1	11,915	19,796	,000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	74,034	123	,602		
	Total	85,950	124			

a. Dependent Variable: surface acting  
b. Predictors: (Constant), pjobfit

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	4,274	,277		15,441	,000
1					
Pjobfit	-,492	,110	-,372	-4,449	,000

a. Dependent Variable: surface acting

**Table 5. The Relationships between Person-Job Fit, and Deep Acting**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,170 <sup>a</sup>	,029	,021	,54772

a. Predictors: (Constant), pjobfit

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	1,094	1	1,094	3,648	,058 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	36,600	122	,300		
	Total	37,694	123			

a. Dependent Variable: deep acting  
b. Predictors: (Constant), P-J fit

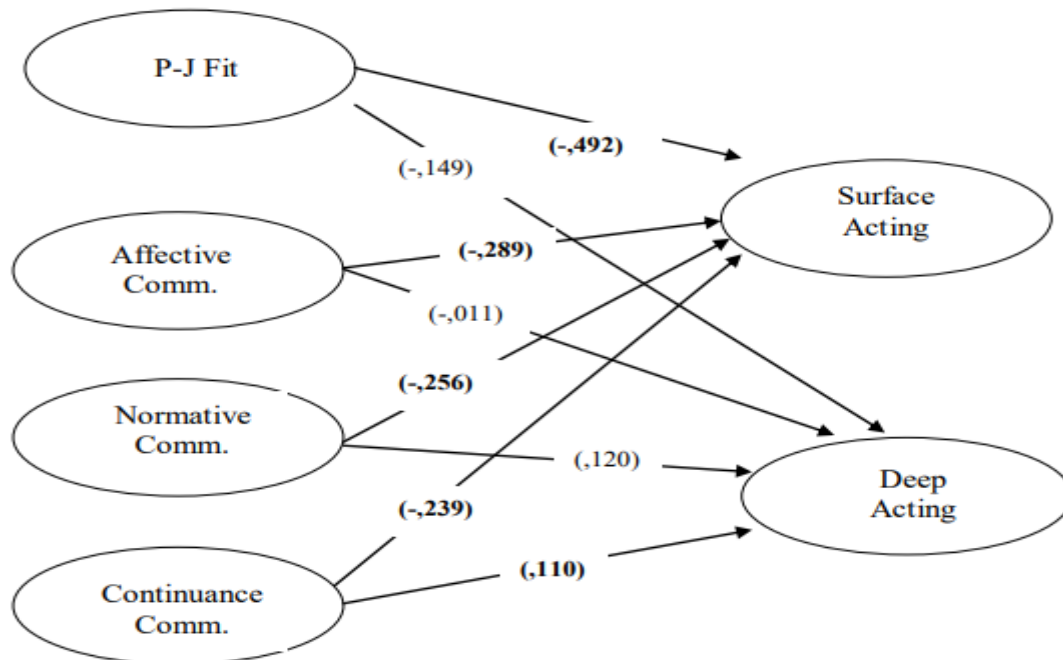
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2,506	,196		12,785	,000
	pjobfit	-,149	,078	-,170	-1,910	,058

a. Dependent Variable: **deep acting**

Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> predicted that P-J Fit was positively related deep acting and negatively related surface acting. To analyze the relationships between person-job fit and emotional labor regression analysis was conducted. Results are reported in Table 4 and Table 5. As expected, P-J fit had significantly negative relationship with surface acting. But we can see from the Table 5 that, contrary to our expectation, the relationship between P-J fit and deep acting is not positive. The correlation coefficient between P-J fit and deep acting is not significantly negative at the 0,05 level. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

As in the Figure 2, Study results show that there are significant negative relations found between surface acting and P-J fit, Affective commitment, Normative commitment, and Continuance commitment. And also, there is significant positive relation found between deep acting and Continuance commitment.

**Figure 2. Theoretical Model of Emotional labor, P-J fit, and Organizational Commitment Regression Results**



**DISCUSSION**

The present study investigated the relationships between person-job fit, organizational commitment and emotional labor strategies. We attempted to find an answer to the question whether employees who fit better with their jobs and committed their organizations spend more effort to be authentic to customers. Person-environment theory and organizational commitment literature support this assumption. According to Edwards (1991), when there is a match between the abilities, skills and knowledge of employees and the requirements of the job and when needs, desires or preferences of an employee are met by the job, P-J fit occurs. So, employees who have high person-job fit should act less because their inner feelings are in line with desired emotions by their organizations.

On the other hand, because organizational commitment is characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization (Porter et al, 1974), we expected that highly committed employees would show greater effort to be perceived as authentic by their customers. To test this conclusion, H<sub>1</sub> was predicted “P-J Fit is positively related deep acting and negatively related surface acting”. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported by results of the study.

As expected, we found that the higher the P-J fit reported by the flight attendants, the lower level of surface acting. But unexpectedly there was also negative relationship between P-J fit and deep acting. Briefly, flight attendants who fit better with their jobs, engage in neither surface acting nor deep acting while interacting with their customers. In addition to Hochschild (1983)’s definition, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) stated that service providers comply with display rules in a third way, namely, through genuine emotion.

Research has focused generally on surface acting and deep acting (Brotheridge and Lee,



2002; Grandey, 2003), because of their negative effects, such as burnout. But employees may naturally feel what they are expected to express without acting or managing their emotions. This may be the explanation of our results and we need to expand our research to include genuine emotions.

Also in study, **H<sub>2a</sub>**. “Affective commitment and normative commitment are positively related to deep acting, continuous commitment is negatively related to deep acting” was predicted. One unexpected finding was that there were no significant relationships between organizational commitment dimensions and deep acting. There can be several possible explanations to this finding. In the organizational commitment literature, there is ambiguity about commitment and performance relationship. Although Mowday, Porter, and Dubin (1974) suggest that highly committed employees may perform better than less committed ones, Steers (1977) concluded that no association exists between commitment and subsequent job performance. Another explanation is also likely that there are potential mediating situational variables that must be examined. Our result showed that there is no direct relationship between commitment and deep acting.

Finally, **H<sub>2b</sub>**. “Affective commitment and normative commitment are negatively related to surface acting, continuance commitment is positively related to surface acting” hypothesis was predicted. Results showed that while affective and normative commitment negatively related to the surface acting, continuance commitment positively related to it. This result supports the other research results that organizational commitment dimensions have different implications for different types of work behavior (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnytsky, 2002). Affectively or normatively committed flight attendants who stay with their organizations because they want to and because they feel they ought to do so don't prefer surface acting while interacting with their customers.

Continuous commitment which means that people stay with the organizations because of they need to, engages in more surface acting. Surface acting is less effortful than deep acting (Morris and Feldman 1996). Flight attendants who need to stay with their organizations conform to display rules with minimum level of effort. To test this conclusion, **H<sub>2b</sub>**. “Affective commitment and normative commitment are negatively related to surface acting, continuance commitment is positively related to surface acting” was predicted. According to results, there were negative relationship found between affective commitment, normative commitment and surface acting but there was not found positive relationship between continuous commitment and surface acting. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported by the results of the study.

The biggest challenge and limitation of this study was the sample size. According to airlines sector size, sample size might be good but not enough. That's why results can't be generalized. On the other hand, this study might give important information about what is going on in the cabin and cockpit.

The present study provides insights into the importance of organizational commitment and P-J fit in emotional labor. There is evidence that three commitment dimensions have differentiated effects on emotional labor behavior and person job fit related with emotional labor strategies. The study makes a contribution to the emotional labor and organizational commitment literature.

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