The Effect of Private Security Police Cooperation Perception on Private Security Officers’ Professional Commitment Level

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Abstract:
The main purpose of this study is to reveal the effect of private security officers’ police cooperation perception on professional commitment. The population of the study includes the private security officers working in Bursa province in Turkey. Random sampling is conducted in the study. As a result of questionnaires, 702 data were found analyzable. In this study, the Professional Commitment Scale developed by Meyer et al. (1993) and Private Security Police Cooperation Level Scale developed by the researcher was used. According to the result of the study, it was revealed that there is a positive relationship between police cooperation perception and professional commitment, and police cooperation perception predicts professional commitment by 31%.

Keywords: Private security, police, private security police cooperation, professional commitment

1. Introduction

The private security sector shows rapid growth in Turkey in parallel with the developments in the world. The number of private security personnel employed in this field exceeded the number of police officers, as well as the private security company and the training institution which have been increasing day by day. Private security officers, who can be employed in both public and private, are in constant relation with the police because of the nature of the work.

Nowadays, public administrators have started to develop projects under the scope of Public Private Partnership (PPP) with private security officials in order to provide public security more effectively. The projects developed in this context bring private security and police closer together. Researches in this direction predict that this trend will continue to increase.

The results obtained in the studies on this topic show that both private security officers and police desire this cooperation to be improved. The climate created by the developed cooperation and the positive results obtained as a result of this cooperation may have an impact on the professional commitment levels of private security officers. In the literature, no research was made in this direction. Therefore, the study was carried out to find an answer to the question “Does private security officers police cooperation perception effect the organizational commitment?”

As a result of the analysis made in the light of the data obtained with the questionnaire, it was determined that police cooperation has an effect on professional commitment and on its sub-dimensions.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Private Security in Turkey

Private security sector sat on the legal ground with the law nr. 2495 on “Maintaining the Protection and Establishing the Safety of Some Institutions” which came into force in 1981 for the self-protection of the institutions with the strategic and economic value of Turkey. As it is mentioned in its name, the law addressed the public sector rather than the private sector. In 1992 and 1995, the law was amended to expand its scope. However, these changes did not respond to the demand of the Turkish private security sector (Gülcü, 2002). To meet the sector demands in Turkey in parallel with developments in the World, the law nr. 5188 on "Private Security Services" was adopted in 2004 (Demirci, 2019).

After this amendment, the sector grew rapidly. The number of private security companies, which were only 15 in 2004, reached to 1429 in 2018. The number of private security officers with ID card were 57,855 in 2004 increased by 19 times in 2018, reaching 1,122,225. The number of private security personnel working in the sector has reached 312,244. Of these, 97,718 are employed in the public sector and 214,526 in the private sector (Demirci, 2019). Moreover, according to the European Association of Private Security Companies (CoESS) 2015 report, financial size of the private security sector in Turkey is more than 3 billion euros. So, it is expected that the private security sector has growth potential in parallel with the developments in the world. (Demirci, 2019).

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In Turkey, private security officers, in the framework of Law No. 5188, can be employed in two different ways, basically as unit and sub-contracting. The unit is in the form of employing private security personnel within the body of the individual, institution, and organization requesting private security permit. The sub-contracting is the way that the person, the institution and the organization who want to obtain private security permit have purchased this service from the company which is certificated by the Ministry of Interior. However, the amendment made with the Decree Law No. 696 in 2018 modified and changed the form of employment of private security officers at the public. Therefore, private security officers can be employed 4 different way in Turkey such as private-unit, private sub-contracting, public-unit and public sub-contracting (Demirci, 2019).

### 2.2. Private Security-Police Cooperation and Relationship

Private security officers and the police are in contact in many areas. Since they almost work in the same manner, they usually come across while working. On the other hand, private security sector elements have the potential to use force. The States consider them to be under control. So, all functions are always inspected by police. Also, as a result of the recognition of the contribution of this relationship to public safety, projects have been developed in many countries especially in the context of public-private cooperation (Demirci, 2019). It is seen that these projects have continued increasing in the last thirty years (Nalla and Hwang, 2006: 487).

When the researches on the relationship between the private security officers and the police are examined in the literature, in it is seen that there is a limited number of studies focusing on the security relationships of the private security officers and the police (Nalla and Hummer, 1999; Morley and Fong, 1995; Cunningham and Taylor, 1985). When these researches are examined, it is understood that the perceptions of the private security officers and the police towards the opposite side differ. Morley and Fong (1995), in their study, found that the private security officials were more optimistic than police in their perceptions of the relationship between them. Nalla and Hummer (1999) found that the private security officers respected the police and that the police were in a neutral position against the private security officers.

### 2.3. Professional Commitment

Professional commitment is defined as “a person’s belief in and acceptance of the values of his or her chosen occupation or line of work, and willingness to maintain membership in that occupation” (Vandenbark and Scarpello, 1994: 535). Professional commitment is the degree to which the individual establishes his profession in a central place in his life as a result of evaluation while gaining skills and expertise in a specific area (Baysal and Paksoy, 1999). Professional commitment indicates to prioritizing professional identity, making an effort for the profession, and complying to professional goals, values, norms and ethical principles (Lanchman and Aranya, 1986). When the occupation act as an important role in the life of the individual, the individual begins to internalize the values and ideology of that profession (Morrow, 1983, p. 489). After this period, the profession is no longer just a job to earn money for the individual. In order to be successful in a profession, individuals need a deep commitment that goes beyond the desire to make money (Benligiray and Sönmez, 2011, p. 29). Blau (2001) presumes professional commitment as the behavior of the employee to his profession and as the most descriptive type of adherence. Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) state the professional commitment to the psychological relationship between the individual and his profession and the emotional response to his profession.

Many researchers have dealt with professional commitment within a single and multidimensional way (Blau, 2003; Meyer, Allen and Smith, 1993; Blau, 1985; Aranya and Ferris; 1984). Since the three-dimensional (Emotional, attendance, normative) structure of Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) is used in this study, these sub-dimensions are discussed. Emotional commitment is that the individual likes his profession and therefore feels the desire to stay in the profession. Attendance commitment is going along with the profession by evaluating the conditions that the individual cannot bear the cost of his / her leaving. Normative commitment is the sense that an individual feels an obligation to stay in organization for the things organization has done for him or her.

There are many individual, organizational and professional outcomes of professional commitment that are effective in individual, organizational and professional factors (Meyer and Espinoza, 2016). Age (Benligiray, and Sönmez, 2013; Meyer, Allen, and Smith, 1993), educational status (Benligiray and Sönmez, 2013; Cohen, 2007), stress (Aydın, 2010), ethnic (Özer and Uyar, 2010), gender (Cunningham et al., 2012; Lee, Carswell and Allen, 2000), experience, tenure, seniority (Benligiray and Sönmez, 2013; Tang et al., 2012; Özmen et al., 2005), job satisfaction (Lu, et al., 2002; Kaldenberg et al., 1995; Tak and Çifçiçolu, 2008), burnout (Raiziene and Endriulaitiene, 2007) and organizational commitment (Cohen, 2007) can be count as the antecedents of professional commitment. In addition, professional commitment is related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment (Blau, 2000; Lee, Carswell and Allen, 2000), life satisfaction (Özdevecioğlu and Aktaş, 2007), commitment to work, family commitment (Benligiray and Sönmez, 2011), organizational citizenship behavior (Aslan, 2008), burnout (Yetgin, 2017; Firat, 2015) absenteeism (Woods et al., 2012),intention to quit (Lu, et al., 2002).

### 2.4. The Relationship between Police Cooperation Perception and Professional Commitment

When the researches in which private security and police cooperation are examined in the literature, it is understood that various positive and negative results of this cooperation are determined. The dramatic declines in crime rates, the sharing of information, good manners and resources between police and private security are among the positive results of this cooperation. The lack of a reduction in some of the target crimes, the inability to develop effective strategies
in some areas and the inability to perform cost-benefit analyses are considered to be among the negative results of this relationship (Prenzler and Sarre, 2012: 11).

In the literature, there is a study which determined that private security police cooperation perception has an effect on job satisfaction (Demirci, 2019). Other than this, no research has been found on the effect of private security police cooperation perception. However, previous research results of private security police cooperation are known that private security officers support the cooperation with the police, and private security officers intend to improve this cooperation (Nalla and Hwang, 2006; Nalla and Hummer, 1999). The positive results to be obtained as a result of the cooperation and the climate created by this cooperation may have a positive effect on the attitudes and behaviors of the individual. Therefore, this supported relationship can be effective on professional commitment which has many organizational and individual benefits. The perception of private security police cooperation, which is also effected on job satisfaction, can also be effected on professional commitment. The research hypotheses that have been reached as a result of this literature review are formed as follows;

- H.1. The private security police cooperation perception has an effect on professional commitment.
- H.1.a. The private security police cooperation perception has an effect on emotional commitment.
- H.1.b. The private security police cooperation perception has an effect on attendance commitment.
- H.1.c. The private security police cooperation perception has an effect on normative commitment.

3. Method

3.1. Purpose and Model of the Study

The purpose of this study is to test whether private security police cooperation perception has any effect on professional commitment. The design of the study, which was carried out within the framework of the quantitative paradigm, was determined as relation research. For this purpose, a questionnaire including the relevant scales was applied to private security officers working in Bursa province in Turkey to determine their professional commitment and police cooperation perception. The following model was formed as a result of the literature review.

![Figure 1: Model](image)

3.2. Universe and Sample of the Study

The private security officers working in Bursa province in Turkey are the universe of this study. As of November 2018, 14,951 private security officers work in Bursa. 3,940 of them were working at public and 11,011 of them were working in the private sector. Of these, 5,238 were working at units and 5,773 were working for private security companies.

A random sample was used in the study. The survey, which was prepared and sent by online, was sent to all public and private security unit supervisors and private security company supervisors in Bursa on early November in 2018. It was aimed to reach all the universe neutral by asking the supervisors to send the questionnaire to all private security officers in Bursa. The interviewee responses were checked on a daily basis. The answers were reviewed within the framework of the above mentioned naturally occurring quotas (public-private / unit-subcontracting) and 10 days after the first announcement, the research announcement was repeated once again. Since the participation was ended, the survey was closed to the answers at the end of November 2018. At the end of this process, 702 observation units were obtained.

3.3. Data Collection Tool

The questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire was prepared using the Professional Commitment Scale developed by Meyer et al. (1993) and the Perception of Private Security Police Cooperation Scale developed by the researcher (Demirci, 2019).

3.3.1. Perception of Private Security Police Cooperation Scale

Due to the lack of a Turkish scale to measure the private security police cooperation perception, started to develop a capable scale. In this purpose, first of all, to create an item pool, 12 private security officers were interviewed. 5 of the interviewee were working at public and 7 of them were working in the private sector. 4 of them were female and 8 of them were male. Also, 2 of the interviewee were a supervisor. The question “What do you understand the concept of private security-police cooperation?” was asked to the private security officers during the interview. The answers were “to provide
support when needed, to perform adequate communication, to have a mutual agreement, to speak the same language, to help when needed, to work towards the same purpose”. In case the interviewee’s responds started to be repeated with the same concept, the interview was ended by considering that the answers were adequate (Demirci, 2019).

Based on the interview results, question pool was generated. The items formed were subjected to the supervision of two academicians within the scope of expert opinion. The draft scale formed after the expert opinion consists of 6 items. Scale items are as follows (Demirci, 2019):

- I can provide adequate communication with the police during my duty.
- In general, private security - police cooperation is at the top level.
- We work for the same purpose as the police.
- I feel enough support from the police whenever I need them.
- Regarding my work, we can easily agree with the police.
- The police always help me to overcome the difficulties I encounter during my work.

Within the scope of these items, the pilot application was conducted with 5-point Likert-shaped scale (1-Strongly disagree / 5-Strongly agree). After the pilot application, 64 private security officers data were obtained. Demographics of those participants are as below table (Demirci, 2019).

| Variables         | Variable Groups | n  | %  |
|-------------------|-----------------|----|----|
| Sex               | Male            | 44 | 68.8 |
|                   | Female          | 20 | 31.3 |
| Age               | Between 18-23   | 1  | 1.6 |
|                   | Between 24-29   | 10 | 15.6 |
|                   | Between 30-35   | 15 | 23.4 |
|                   | 36 and more     | 38 | 59.4 |
| Marital status    | Married         | 48 | 75  |
|                   | Single          | 16 | 25  |
| Educational level | Primary school  | 3  | 4.7 |
|                   | High school     | 26 | 40.6 |
|                   | Undergraduate   | 5  | 7.8 |
|                   | Graduate        | 27 | 42.2 |
|                   | Postgraduate    | 3  | 4.7 |
| Tenure            | Less than 1 year| 2  | 3.1 |
|                   | Between 1-5 years| 17 | 26.6 |
|                   | Between 6-10 years| 11 | 17.2 |
|                   | 11 year and more| 34 | 53.1 |
| Salary            | Between 1500-2000 TL.| 11 | 17.2 |
|                   | Between 2001-2500 TL.| 24 | 37.5 |
|                   | Between 2501-3000 TL.| 13 | 20.3 |
|                   | 3001 TL. and more| 16 | 25  |
| Employment        | Public          | 40 | 62.5 |
|                   | Private         | 24 | 37.5 |

*Table 1: Demographics of the Pilot Application Participants*

In order to test the validity and reliability of the scale which was used for pilot application, firstly Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted with “varimax”, then Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed. According to the results of KMO sample adequacy statistics obtained within the scope of EFA, interdepartmental links were highly compatible with factor analysis (KMO = 0.900). According to the Bartlett Sphericity test results, a sufficient relation was found between the items (chi-square (15) = 355,608; p <0.001). The scale can explain 77.733% of the total variance in this one-dimension form. Factor load values related to items of scale are presented in Table 2 (Demirci, 2019).
The third item was removed from the scale since its factor load was found to be less than 30. Then the EFA was repeated. In the test results, KMO = 886, Bartlett test (Chi-square (10) = 317,345; p < 0.001). Newly-formed factor loadings for scale items are presented in Table 3 (Demirci, 2019).

1 The use of groups of 27% in the determination of pole groups was suggested by Kelley (1939), who found that 27% of the groups that made the variance maximum in the pole groups.
Table 4: The T-Test Results of Draft Scale Items

The structure of the scale obtained by EFA was tested with CFA. The maximum likelihood technique was used to perform a confirmatory factor analysis. The prerequisite for this technique is the normal distribution of data. Therefore, the normality test was performed. Table 5 presents the normality test results of the scale. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), it was indicating that the data was normally distributed that skewness and kurtosis values were between -1,5 and +1,5 for each item (Demirci, 2019). As indicated in Table 5, the skewness and kurtosis values of all items have sufficient values.

Table 5: Normality Test of the Draft Scale

| Items                                                                 | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1. I can provide adequate communication with the police during my duty.| -0.806   | -1.113   |
| 2. In general, private security - police cooperation is at the top level. | -0.432   | -0.800   |
| 3. I feel enough support from the police whenever I need them.         | -0.633   | -0.509   |
| 4. Regarding my work, we can easily agree with the police.            | -0.582   | -0.533   |
| 5. The police always help me to overcome the difficulties I encounter during my work. | -0.658   | -0.401   |

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the scale are presented in Table 6. As it is indicated in Table 6, the ratio of the chi-square statistic to the degrees of freedom of the scale CMIN / DF (X2 / df) was 2.248; (Normed Fit Index) NFI value was .966; (Incremental Fit Index) IFI value was .981; (Tucker-Lewis index) TLI value was .942; (Comparative Fit Index) CFI value was .981 and The RMSEA value was found to be .042. According to the results of this analysis, it was seen that the scale provided adequate compliance values. So, it is considered that the scale is sufficient to use for the main application (Demirci, 2019).

Table 6: The Results of Confirmatory Factor Analyses of Draft Scale

| X² | df | CMIN/DF | NFI | IFI | TLI | CFI | RMSEA |
|----|----|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 11,241 | 5 | 2,248 | .966 | .981 | .942 | .981 | .042 |
| Acceptable compliance | <5 | >.90 | >.90 | >.90 | >.90 | <.08 |
| Excellent compliance | <3 | >.95 | >.95 | >.95 | >.95 | <.05 |

The Cronbach’s Alpha value of the scale was calculated as .925, when the analysis was conducted on 702 data obtained from actual application (Demirci, 2019). As a result of the normality test, it was determined that all values were between +1,5 and -1,5. The data were evaluated as a normal distribution (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).
3.3.2. Mesleki Bağlılık Ölçeği

The professional Commitment Scale developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) has tri sub-dimensions (Emotional, attendance, normative) including 18 items. This scale has been translated and tested for validity and reliability by many Turkish researchers (Yetgin, 2017; Özmen et al., 2005; Baysal and Paksoy, 1999). Cronbach Alpha value of the scale used in this study was obtained as .889. As a result of the normality test, it was determined that all values were between +1.5 and -1.5. So, the data were evaluated as normally distributed (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

The questionnaire consists of 31 items, 8 of which are related to demographics, 18 of which are related to Professional Commitment Scale and 5 of which are related to Perception of Private Security Police Cooperation Scale.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1. Demographics of Participants

The demographics of the participants are indicated in Table 7.

| Variables   | Variable Groups | n   | %  |
|-------------|-----------------|-----|----|
| Sex         | Male            | 432 | 61.5|
|             | Female          | 270 | 38.5|
| Age         | Between 18-23   | 6   | 1   |
|             | Between 24-29   | 84  | 12  |
|             | Between 30-35   | 192 | 27.4|
|             | 36 and more     | 420 | 59.8|
| Marital status | Married      | 486 | 69.2|
|             | Single          | 216 | 30.8|
| Educational level | Primary school | 90  | 12.8|
|             | High school     | 348 | 49.6|
|             | Undergraduate   | 204 | 29.1|
|             | Graduate        | 42  | 6.2 |
|             | Postgraduate    | 18  | 4.7 |
| Tenure      | Less than 1 year| 12  | 1.7 |
|             | Between 1-5 years| 246 | 35  |
|             | Between 6-10 years| 186 | 26.5|
|             | 11 year and more| 258 | 36  |
| Salary      | Between 1500-2000 TL | 150 | 21.7|
|             | Between 2001-2500 TL | 342 | 48.7|
|             | Between 2501-3000 TL | 96  | 13.7|
|             | 3001 TL. and more| 114 | 16.2|
| Employment  | Public          | 528 | 75.2|
|             | Private         | 174 | 24.8|
| Employment  | Unit            | 564 | 80.3|
|             | Sub-contracting | 138 | 19.7|

Table 7: Demographics of the Participants of the Study

4.2. Participants Police Cooperation Perception and Professional Commitment Perception Level

Participants level of police cooperation perception, professional commitment and its sub dimensions are indicated in Table 8. The participants police cooperation perception level is high (3.6154), professional commitment level is
moderate (3,1239), emotional commitment level is moderate (2,7411), attendance commitment level is high (3,5470), and normative commitment level is moderate (3,2179).
As Table 11 is examined, it is understood that there is a significant relationship between police cooperation perception and attendance commitment. The regression model was found to be statistically significant (β = 0.491 and p <.005). As a result of the ANOVA test, it is understood that police cooperation perception significantly predicts attendance commitment (F=277,266 and p<.005). R^2 which indicates the prediction level of police cooperation perception to the attendance commitment is calculated as .284. According to these results, it can be stated that police cooperation perception predicts 28% of attendance commitment in accordance with p<.005 significance level. The H.1b. hypothesis is accepted.

As Table 12 is examined, it is understood that there is a significant relationship between police cooperation perception and normative commitment. The regression model was found to be statistically significant (β = 0.339 and p <.005). As a result of the ANOVA test, it is understood that police cooperation perception significantly predicts normative commitment (F=240,154 and p<.005). R^2 which indicates the prediction level of police cooperation perception to the normative commitment is calculated as .255. According to these results, it can be stated that police cooperation perception predicts 26% of normative commitment in accordance with p<.005 significance level. The H.1c. hypothesis is accepted.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

Revealing the private security officers police cooperation perception and professional commitment level, the study was carried out to test whether police cooperation perception has any effect on professional commitment or not. According to the results of the study, it was determined that the private security officers working in Bursa had high-level police cooperation perception and moderate level professional commitment. Meanwhile, according to literature review, it was assumed that police cooperation perception could have an effect on professional commitment. Research results confirm this hypothesis. It was revealed that there was a moderate (.560) correlation between police cooperation perception and professional commitment. At the same time, it was revealed that police cooperation perception predicted 31% of professional commitment.

The study also tested whether the perception of police cooperation has an impact on the sub-dimensions of professional commitment. According to the results of the study, it was determined that the levels of emotional and normative commitment of private security officers working in Bursa were moderate and their attendance commitment levels were high. Although there is a weak correlation between police cooperation perception and emotional commitment, there is a moderate correlation between police cooperation perception and attendance commitment, and there is a moderate correlation between police cooperation perception and normative commitment. While the police cooperation perception predicts the emotional commitment by 5%, predicts the attendance commitment by 28%, and predicts the normative commitment by 26%.

The results of the research indicate that police cooperation is important for private security personnel and this cooperation has an important value on professional commitment. For this reason, cooperation activities between private security and police may benefit from providing security on the one hand, on the one hand, it may be useful to increase the professional commitment levels of private security officers. It is known that there is a relationship between professional commitment and job satisfaction, organizational commitment, commitment to work, life satisfaction, productivity, and motivation. Private security officers, whose professional commitment level is raised, can be ensured on this occasion to acquire many of the above-mentioned job attitudes.

The private security officers, who started to work at the public in Turkey as worker after the amendment made with the degree law nr.696, may intend to change their position with the comfortable one reasoning that the private security work is hard and working hours is not stable. Therefore, private security managers in the public should take measures to increase the professional commitment of private security officers. Otherwise, they are likely to have difficulties in preventing their competent human resources from shifting to other areas. For this reason, public
administrators will be able to increase the professional commitment of the private security officers in their orders if they develop projects that aim to improve the cooperation between police and private security. In this way, they can provide private security officers with many job attitudes such as organizational commitment (Lee, Carswell and Allen, 2000) and organizational citizenship behavior (Aslan, 2008), as well as reduce the private security officers intention to quit (Lu et al., 2002).

This research is of great importance as there is no research investigating the impact of private security police cooperation perception on professional commitment in the literature. Meanwhile, the perception of private security police cooperation, which has an impact on professional commitment and job satisfaction, may also have an effect on the other job behaviors. In this direction, it is necessary to determine which job attitudes of private security police cooperation perception is effective. On the other hand, it is known that there is a relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment. The perception of police cooperation, which has an effect on both job satisfaction and professional commitment, may also play a role in the relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment. Therefore, there is a need for further research on this topic. Apart from all these, it is understood that the perception of cooperation between police and private security officials has changed in researches in the literature (Nalla and Hummer, 1999). Therefore, it is considered that there is a need for research in this direction on the police officers. In addition, there are research results that demographic differences (age, gender, tenure, education level, etc.) have an effect on professional commitment. It is also needed to reveal whether the demographics of private security officers have any effect on professional commitment.

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