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## The Mediating Role of Corporate Communication in the Effect of Leadership Style on Organizational Commitment and Research

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### **Abstract:**

Today, highly competitive conditions, numerous alternatives for consumers, and rapidly changing market conditions make it increasingly difficult for businesses to survive. For these and many other reasons, businesses have had to transform themselves to remain relevant, create efficient working environments, and get one step ahead of the competition. As a result, concepts such as employee attitudes and behaviors, manager-employee relationships, leadership styles, organizational commitment, and organizational communication have become crucial for businesses. The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of the leadership styles of managers on the organizational commitment of employees and investigate the mediating role of corporate (organizational) communication in this relationship in order to contribute to the literature and act as a guide for managers. In this context, leadership styles, organizational commitment, and corporate (organizational) communication are discussed along with relevant theoretical frameworks, and these theories are supported by survey research conducted with public employees working in municipalities on the European Side of Istanbul.

**Keywords:** Leadership style, organizational commitment, corporate (organizational) communication

### **1. Introduction**

Organizations are built on certain common goals. The duty of the organization's management is to ensure that these goals are achieved and that the processes run smoothly along the way. Consequently, the leadership styles adopted by the managers and their communication with employees are crucial factors. Establishing healthy communication is one of the priorities in achieving organizational goals. Organizational communication consists of the exchange of information between internal and external constituents. A healthy communication, on the other hand, is important for the continuity of organizational activities. Understanding the feelings and thoughts of employees, establishing good relationships, and determining motivational elements through healthy communication are also effective strategies for creating organizational commitment. Positive feelings and thoughts, the bond established with the organization, and the adoption of organizational goals and objectives are among the elements that constitute organizational commitment. The concepts of leadership styles, organizational commitment, and corporate communication that are important for organizations are examined in detail in this research.

### **2. Literature Review**

#### *2.1. Manager, Leader, Leadership Concepts, Definitions and Importance of Leadership Styles*

In order to achieve organizational goals, businesses should have effective and efficient management. Combining labor, capital, and human elements effectively and ensuring that the organization functions in an efficient way in line with certain goals and objectives to achieve certain goals are among the basic duties of organizational management. The person who gets the work and activities done in this process is the manager. It can be argued that the most important skill of an individual in a managerial position is decision-making. The manager has the authority to give orders to and manage the employees. The most important task of the manager, who employs and supervises their team, is to ensure that all organizational functions, such as planning, organizing, and coordination, are carried out in an effective and efficient way (Güney, 2007:84).

The manager is the authorized person who brings the employees of the organization together and ensures that they work in cooperation towards the goals and objectives of the organization (Tekin, 2008:15). The manager is the intermediary between the organization and its employees who work to make sure that the work gets done (Akşit, 2010:17). In short, the authority of the manager stems from their status. The manager is someone who can make others do

the work by taking advantage of this status to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. Managers are expected to have certain skills such as planning, organization, coordination, and control.

The leader, on the other hand, is also a person who makes sure that people work to achieve a common goal and a person who can make a group of people adopt certain ideas, follow them, and implement them through orders and instructions (Koçel, 2011:465, Güney, 2020:26). Due to globalization, increasing competitive conditions, dynamic structure in commercial activities, and rapid developments in technology, businesses are in a constant race with each other to maintain their existence and differentiate themselves from their competitors. Because of this situation, the concepts of leadership and leadership have become much more relevant today.

Leadership is the process by which a person can influence a community of people and direct them in line with certain goals to achieve personal or common goals of the community under certain circumstances (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2001:173). Leadership means being an inspiration to others by pioneering a new path. It is the driving force in any organization. Leadership requires a vision with the ability to predict the future.

Leadership in businesses is a skill that increases the performance of employees and enables the business to achieve its goals. Leadership plays an important role in changing business environments and ensures the success of businesses in the long term. Additionally, it supports individual development and social justice in businesses. Leaders help businesses adapt to environmental changes by increasing their flexibility and improving employee motivation and commitment. Leadership is an important concept that affects the overall performance of the business. Businesses that face challenges such as overcoming problems, adapting to environmental changes, and creating new systems need effective guidance from leaders. Changing customer expectations also affects expectations from the leadership. Leaders determine the vision of the business and work to align the employees' goals with this vision. They also play an important role in determining the strategies and managing the processes of the business (Sayan, 2018:36).

One of the most important elements that make up a business is human capital. Creating a successful business is possible if the individuals working in the organization carry out their jobs in the most efficient way possible. People need a driving force that will enable them to work in line with the goals and objectives of the business. Not every manager may have this competence or energy, which is why leadership styles adopted by managers are crucial in directing the work of individuals towards a certain goal.

## *2.2. Types of Power in Leadership*

The types of power utilized by leaders depend on leadership style and personal approach. There are five types of power in literature: legitimate power, reward power, coercive power, expert power, and charismatic power.

### 2.2.1. Legitimate Power

Legitimate power is based on superior-subordinate relationships in which subordinates comply with the orders coming from higher positions. This power is obtained through a certain position, status, and rank within the organization (Güney, 2017:247, Saruhan and Yıldız, 2007:84). Members of organizations based on a legitimate power structure follow the orders of their superiors due to the rules.

### 2.2.2. Reward Power

Reward power is the power to influence the members of the organization through the knowledge that they will be rewarded if they fulfil their duties and responsibilities (Yıldırım, 2022:10). This form of power is based on the leader's authority and effort to direct the team members and increase motivation through a material or moral reward system.

### 2.2.3. Coercive Power

Coercive power means that managers force their employees through financial or moral threats of punishment and make moves to intimidate them, which may cause fear in organizational members. Excessive use of this type of power by managers may cause unrest within the organization and cause it to lose its efficiency (Yılmaz, 2012:388). It is essentially a power based on fear and coercion. It is a type of power used by the leader if the members of the organization fail to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. Pay cuts, reprimands, and suspensions are some of the types of punishment in this type of power.

### 2.2.4. Expert Power

Expert power is the power of the leader or manager to influence the members of the organization with their knowledge, experience, and skills. The fact that the leader is an expert in the field and can effectively transfer this knowledge to the other party reveals the effect of this type of power (Koçel, 2011:452). Power based on expertise is obtained through knowledge, skills, and experience in a certain area.

### 2.2.5. Charismatic Power

Charismatic power is based on the individual's personality traits. This type of power is based on admiration, and it is revealed when leaders set an example for others and inspire them with their unique characteristics (Küçüköğlü, 2013:6). Charismatic power is a rare source of power that evokes admiration, respect, and a sense of similarity that not everyone can have. Power based on liking occurs when leaders can influence people based on their personal characteristics and mobilize them towards certain goals.

### 2.3. Leadership Styles of Managers

Under constantly developing and changing market conditions, management and leadership approaches have inevitably shaped and evolved along with this change. Many studies have been conducted on various leadership styles from the past to the present.

#### 2.3.1. People-Centered Leadership

People-centered leadership represents a leadership style focused on attention and support for followers. These leaders are empathetic, helpful, and concerned for the well-being of those around them. People-centered leadership strengthens the sense of belonging and places importance on sensitivity and empathy (Alga, 2017:101). This leadership style is a leadership approach in which the leader cares about the needs, personal development, and well-being of employees.

#### 2.3.2. Job-Centered Leadership

In the job-centered leadership style, the leader is task-oriented. The goal of the leader is to determine the roles and duties of employees, establish performance standards, and measure performance through productivity (Saygılı, 2023:213). In the job-centered leadership style, the goal is to achieve success through a certain level of productivity. In this sense, the leader evaluates the performance of the employees and aims to increase work efficiency. Performance management is used in the context of business or production to measure and improve performance and contribute to the achievement of the business's goals.

#### 2.3.3. Democratic Leadership

Leaders who adopt a democratic leadership style care about the opinions of group members and utilize them in decision-making (Barutçugil, 2014:83). Democratic managers create an environment in which everyone shares their opinions. They support their employees and care about their opinions; they aim to reach common ground with employees by making joint decisions. This approach increases employee motivation, encourages teamwork, and strengthens communication within the organization (Eroğlu, 2019:15). In summary, in democratic leadership, the ideas and thoughts of employees are given importance. The leader also includes employees in the decision-making process.

#### 2.3.4. Participative Leadership

Participative leaders tend to solve work-related problems together with their employees. When making decisions, they always take the opinions of employees into account and try to reach a solution by applying their suggestions along the way (Çoban, 1999:93). Participative leaders are leaders who make decisions together with their subordinates.

#### 2.3.5. Liberal (Laissez-Faire) Leadership

Liberal leadership style refers to an approach in which leadership is minimal or entirely avoided. In these examples of leadership, group members set their own goals and deal with their own problems. Employees express their ideas freely, and a suitable environment is created for original ideas to emerge (Örücü & Çoban, 2017:4). The role of management in this leadership style is quite passive. Employees are completely free and are expected to make purposeful plans and programs and make the most appropriate decisions by themselves.

#### 2.3.6. Autocratic Leadership

In this leadership style, leaders want their employees to follow them without questioning; control is completely in the hands of the leader, and the leader uses this authority to the fullest extent (Gerçek, 2017:82). The leader makes all the decisions and does not share much with the employees. Authoritarian leaders do not pay much attention to employees' ideas and suggestions. This style of leadership often has negative effects on employee motivation.

#### 2.3.7. Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leaders have a vision; they set an example for others and motivate their followers with excitement, enthusiasm, and drive. At the same time, charismatic leaders tend to have a great impact on employees, who follow them unconditionally (Tengilimilioğlu, 2005:6-7). Charismatic leaders have a lot of power to motivate people. Charismatic leaders also tend to lead social movements. Historical names such as Atatürk and Martin Luther King are good examples of such leaders (Güney, 2007:374).

#### 2.3.8. Transformational Leadership

Leaders, who always prioritize the interests of the organization, create organizations in which individuals constantly renew themselves, and provide the necessary conditions for transformation within the organization are considered transformative leaders (Çetin, 2009:63). Rather than encouraging employees to be blindly loyal to them, transformational leaders encourage employees to think for themselves, improve the organization with their ideas and a critical approach. Transformational leaders are reformers (Tengilimilioğlu, 2005:6). In short, transformational leaders are leaders who have a vision, can foresee the future, are open to innovation, support change, and guide and motivate their followers to make progress in this direction.

#### 2.3.9. Transactional Leadership

Transactional leaders focus on current issues. They utilize a reward system to encourage employees to be more

effective in their work (Saruhan & Yıldız, 2007:316). The basis of transactional leadership is actually an exchange between parties. In this leadership style, employees are rewarded by the leader for desired behaviors, such as following the rules and having high performance, while they are punished in cases such as low performance and disobeying the rules (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2001:220). In short, transactional leadership is based on the performance of employees. The leader aims to reinforce the success of the employees with rewards and prevent failure with punishment.

#### 2.3.10. Visionary Leadership

Visionary leadership is a leadership approach that questions traditional norms, encourages change, and transforms organizations through original innovations. Visionary leaders strive to improve existing structures and encourage their followers to participate in this change (Akyüz, 2002:114). The visionary leader creates designs for the future with a different perspective, makes decisions accordingly, and ensures that the members of the organization adopt them. They encourage and convince the members of the organization to work towards realizing this vision.

#### 2.3.11. Moral Leadership

Moral leadership is a style in which leaders set an example with moral behaviors both within the organization and as their own philosophy of life. They use communication, empowerment and active thinking techniques to achieve this (Tuna, Bircan & Yeşiltaş, 2012:144). Moral leadership is simply based on values: moral principles, honesty, justice, and empathy. Moral leaders not only embrace these values themselves but also encourage their employees to embrace them.

#### 2.3.12. Servant Leadership

Serving others is essential for the servant leadership style. The servant leader focuses mainly on meeting the needs of employees, followers, or members of society. Management and leadership are secondary for the servant leader (Durmuş, 2014:27). Servant leadership is a leadership style in which the leader prioritizes the needs and development of organizational members. The leader works for the success of the organization, understands the needs of the members of the organization, and works to meet them.

#### 2.3.13. Paternalistic Leadership

In the paternalistic leadership style, the leader goes beyond the professional relationship, establishes individual relationships with the employees, and supports them when necessary. Paternalistic leaders are concerned with the interests of their followers, act as guides for them, and protect them by sharing their responsibilities when necessary (Gürer, 2019:272). Paternalistic leadership is a leadership style in which the leader exhibits a protective, caring, compassionate, and guiding attitude. In the paternalistic leadership style, the leader embraces employees and provides them with emotional support. A paternalistic leader understands the needs of their followers, approaches them like a parental figure, and guides, motivates, and protects them. In this style of leadership, empathy, understanding, and employee well-being are at the forefront.

### *2.4. Concept, Definition and Importance of Organizational Commitment*

Organizational commitment is a psychological state in which the individual is emotionally connected to the business or organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990:1-2). Organizational commitment occurs when the individual adapts the goals and values of the organization and works not only for instrumental benefits but also due to the emotional attachment they have to the organization (Yaşbay, 2011:83). Organizational commitment refers to an individual's desire to stay at the organization and achieve organizational goals with a strong faith (Sönmez, 2023:108). Organizational commitment refers to employees' feelings of belonging to the organization and seeing themselves as a part of the organization (Şişman, 2007:89-90). In short, organizational commitment is related to employees' emotional attachment to their organizations, feelings of ownership of their work and loyalty to the organization.

Organizational commitment is an important factor that affects the attitudes of employees towards their job and organization. Highly engaged employees develop business strategies and solve problems effectively. In addition, commitment to the organization ensures that employees are secure and qualified employees remain in the organization. A high level of commitment indicates a strong organizational culture and facilitates the adaptation of new employees to the organization. Organizational commitment encourages employee participation in the goals and objectives of the organization and increases overall job satisfaction and performance. Individuals with a high level of organizational commitment contribute more to their organizations and tend to be highly satisfied with their jobs, which reduces turnover (Sayan, 2018:126). Employees who are committed to their organization are generally more motivated and perform well. This contributes to the business in terms of efficiency. Employees with high organizational commitment tend to stay at the organization longer due to their commitment to their jobs. In this way, businesses can benefit from talented employees at the maximum level by retaining them for longer periods of time. Organizational commitment makes employees feel more satisfied with their jobs and happier at work. Employees with strong organizational commitment adopt the values of the organization and help the organization create a strong corporate identity. Employees who are committed to their organization tend to contribute more. This increases collaboration and paves the way for innovative ideas. Consequently, organizational commitment is crucial for businesses in terms of long-term success and sustainability.

## *2.5. Basic Dimensions of Organizational Commitment*

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) consider organizational commitment as an individual's psychological attachment to the organization. According to them, commitment is related to the psychological attachment people feel towards the organization. Psychological attachment occurs when a person identifies with the values, attitudes and goals of the organization and is based on three basic principles. These are adaptation, identification and internalization (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986:492-493, Güney, 2023:343-344).

### 2.5.1. Compliance Dimension

Compliance is the first stage of commitment. The individual attempts to adapt to the organization with the desire to receive a positive reaction from the members of the organization. In this process, the individual adopts certain behaviors not because they are correct, but out of expectation of reward or fear of punishment. In other words, they act according to reward-punishment dynamics rather than true beliefs (Kelman, 1958:53). The compliance dimension of organizational commitment refers to the individual's tendency to adapt to the norms and procedures within the organization, even if it is forced.

### 2.5.2. Identification Dimension

The second dimension of organizational commitment is based on the individual's desire for permanence in the organization. Commitment occurs when the person adopts and identifies with the goals, objectives, and values of the organization. This indicates emotional commitment \in adopting and adapting the perspectives and characteristics of the organization (Soydaş, 2023:130).

### 2.5.3. Internalization Dimension

Internalization is the final stage of organizational commitment. Internalization is the process by which the individual balances personal values with organizational values by creating a balance between the two, which are then reflected in the individual's attitudes and behaviors (Balci, 2003:29).

## *2.6. Models of Organizational Commitment*

When the organizational commitment literature is examined, it is seen that there are various models suggested on the subject.

### 2.6.1. Etzioni's Model of Organizational Commitment

According to this model, the reason that a person complies with the rules and expectations of the organization comes from three types of sources. These are intimidating power, rewarding power, and symbolic power (Samadov, 2006:81). Etzioni examines organizational commitment in three dimensions: moral, calculative, and compulsory (alienative). In moral commitment, the individual adopts and internalizes the goals, values and norms of the organization and identifies with the organization (Avcı, 2008:83). In calculative commitment, the employee receives a benefit from the organization (Penley & Gould, 1988:46). In alienative commitment, even if the employee does not have a psychological connection with the organization, their membership in the organization continues on a compulsory basis (Balay, 2000:69).

### 2.6.2. Allen and Meyer's Model of Organizational Commitment

Allen and Meyer examine organizational commitment in three dimensions: affective, continuance, and normative. In affective commitment, the employee feels an emotional bond with the organization and identifies with the organization on an emotional level. In continuance commitment, the employee is committed to the organization because they want to avoid any possible material or moral loss that may arise from leaving. This type of commitment is not preferred by employers because it is based on obligation (Meyer & Allen, 1991:67). In normative commitment, employees perceive their commitment to the organization as a duty and feel an obligation to stay in the organization (Şen, 2008:44).

### 2.6.3. Kanter's Model of Organizational Commitment

In this model, the concept of commitment is seen as people's willingness to use their energy for the social structure and their ability to express their personal identities through social relations. Kanter states that there are three types of organizational commitment: continuity commitment, congruence commitment, and control commitment (Kanter, 1968:500).

### 2.6.4. Wiener's Model of Organizational Commitment

Wiener explains organizational commitment as all the internalized normative pressures to take action in the interests of the organization. According to Wiener, the degree of overlap between the values of the individual and the organization and loyalty are the determinants of organizational commitment. If the values of the organization and the individual do not coincide, the individual moves away from the organization. On the other hand, when the individual adopts the values of the organization, the commitment to the organization increases if it is based on loyalty (Wiener, 1982:418-428).

### 2.6.5. Staw and Salancik's Model of Organizational Commitment

According to Salancik's model, commitment is a person's attachment to their own behaviors, owning these behaviors, and maintaining their attitude accordingly. Attachment occurs when people have difficulty in understanding the

complex effects of control mechanisms on their behavior and are unaware of it. Commitment makes a person love whatever job they have, continue that job even if they do not know the consequences, and continue this behavior by resisting all kinds of difficulties. While a person with a developed sense of commitment pursues personal goals even in cases of uncertainty, the probability of an individual with low commitment to have this kind of attitude is quite low (Salancik, 1977:62-63).

#### 2.6.6. Penley and Gould's Model of Organizational Commitment

Based on Etzioni's model, Penley and Gould suggested three dimensions of organizational commitment: moral, self-interested, and alienating commitment. Moral commitment involves the individual's recognition, acceptance, and identification of organizational goals and objectives. In self-interested commitment, the organization is seen as a means to achieving certain rewards. Self-interested commitment is based on the individual's expectation of rewards from the organization due to their performance and contribution. Alienating commitment refers to negative emotions that include a low tendency to respond to organizational expectations and the intention to maintain organizational membership (Penley & Gould, 1988:46-47).

#### *2.7. Concept, Definition, Importance, Types and Factors of Communication*

While communication serves as a basic building block for the social structure, it also ensures the regular functioning of organizational and managerial processes. At the same time, it can be used as a tool to direct the behavior of individuals (Gürgen, 1997:31). Communication is the process of conveying certain meanings by means of symbolic messages, when people transition to social life and take on social roles. With communication, people get the chance to share common values (Telman & Ünsal, 2005:19).

Humans are social by nature, and they continue their existence by interacting with other people, their own inner world, institutions, and groups of people in their daily lives. Human societies are not merely collections of individuals but collections of interacting individuals. Due to human nature, it is not possible for humans to exist without the socializing effect of communication. One of the main features that distinguish humans from other living beings is their superior ability for communication. Without this ability, humans would be no different from other biological creatures (Tutar, 2009:13). Communication is a fundamental part of people's existence. People are inherently interactive and connect with each other through communication. Communication allows individuals to express their feelings, thoughts and needs. In an environment where there is no communication, relationships among people become weaker and social structures collapse. When people cannot communicate with each other, conflicts cannot be resolved, cooperation cannot be achieved, and social harmony cannot be possible. Therefore, communication is of great importance for healthy and productive interaction in society.

Types of communication vary depending on the circumstances under which communication occurs and what tools or methods are used. There are various ways in which people communicate. Verbal, non-verbal and written communications are among the commonly used types of communication. Oral conversations between individuals are verbal communication. In this type of communication, messages are conveyed through words (Yatkın, 2003:53). Nonverbal communication is a type of communication that occurs without words. In this type of communication, signals such as gestures, facial expressions, body language as well as tone of voice are used to convey emotions, intentions, and other messages rather than words (Arisoy, 2007:7). Written communication includes various written messages such as letters, notes, reports, articles, declarations, and texts shared in electronic media (Tutar & Yılmaz, 2010:63).

#### *2.8. Models of Communication*

In the field of communication, various models have been suggested over time, including approaches to the components of the communication process and how the process works. Aristotle's model, Lasswell's model, Shanon and Weaver's model, Wendell Johnson's model, Berlo's model, Wilbur Schramm's model, Defleur's model, and Çilenti's model are among these models.

##### 2.8.1. Aristotle's Model

In his Rhetoric, Aristotle stated that communication has three basic elements: speaker, subject, and listener (Avedisyan, 1997:46). Basically, Aristotle's communication model is a model that examines the relationships between these three elements of communication. This model treats the communication process as a triangle. Communication and interaction occur when all three elements come together.

##### 2.8.2. Lasswell's Model

Developed by Harold Lasswell, this model provides a framework for understanding mass communication and asks questions such as: "Who?", "To whom?", "What is being said?", "What channel is used?" and "What effect does it have on the recipient?" Harold Lasswell examined the communication process from a holistic perspective by systematically addressing the existing views for the first time (Telman & Ünsal, 2005:36). In short, Lasswell's communication model aims to explain the components of communication more systematically. Although it has been criticized for not fully reflecting the process of communication, it is undeniable that it has been useful in clarifying the process.

##### 2.8.3. Shanon and Weaver's Model

Shannon and Weaver's model treats communication as a simplified and linear process. This model suggests that communication is the process of transmitting a message from the source to the receiver through a channel. It sees the

transfer of information as a technical system and does not take emotional states into account. In other words, it portrays communication as a mechanical process. According to Shannon and Weaver, communication is a one-way process, and the meaning is the content of the message. Therefore, this model focuses on solving technical problems to convey the message seamlessly (İplikçi, 2015:18). In short, while Shannon and Weaver consider communication from a mathematical perspective, they ignore the human factor, emotional and social elements.

#### 2.8.4. Wendell Johnson's Model

Wendell Johnson's model is a comprehensive model that emphasizes that communication always occurs in a certain context. The model describes the various stages of communication as an interconnected cycle. Communication begins as a result of certain external stimuli and triggers the receiver. In the second stage, the receiver is stimulated through sensory channels. In the third stage, organic responses occur, e.g. physical changes such as muscle tension. In the fourth stage, these emotional responses are translated into words. In the final stage, the selected language symbols are arranged to create a pattern and be perceived by the recipient. This process results in a communication cycle (Atasoy, 2023:77-78).

#### 2.8.5. Berlo's Model

David Berlo evaluated the place of the source in the communication process by considering various elements such as communication skills, approach, knowledge, culture, and social system. In this communication model, equal levels of skill and common values from source to receiver are emphasized for successful communication to occur. In addition, Berlo associated the interpretation of the message with both the meaning of the word and the body language of the sender in the communication process (Sanrı, 2014:96).

#### 2.8.6. Wilbur Schramm's Model

Osgood D.E. and Wilbur Schramm developed a model that focuses on the sender and the receiver in the process of communication. Today, many organizations have shaped their practical applications of communication-based on this model (Telman & Ünsal, 2005:38). According to this model; communication is the process of the sender and receiver reaching an agreement on the subject. The aim is to agree upon similar thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors between the sender and the receiver on a certain subject at the end of the process. Thus, the definition and components of communication emerge spontaneously. In the end, a linear model of Sender-Message-Receiver emerges due to the adaptation process in communication (Sanrı, 2014:95-96).

#### 2.8.7. Defleur's Model

Defleur's model is a communication model that develops and complements Shannon and Weaver's communication model. The feedback missing in Shannon and Weaver's model is included in Defleur's model. In this model, feedback plays an important role in preventing confusion that may arise during the process of communication between the sender and the receiver. Defleur's model aims to create a more effective model of communication by preventing problems in communication and ensuring that the sender and receiver agree on the meaning of the message during the communication process (Haznedar, 2019:7-8).

#### 2.8.8.Çilenti's Model

Çilenti's communication model is a model that fills the gaps in Berlo's communication model and focuses on analyzing the learning and teaching processes. In his communication model, Çilenti focuses on the source and the behavior of the source, which plays a major role in transmitting the message, and emphasizes the importance of behavior in the process of communication and learning. Çilenti discusses the message and channel among communication elements with their counterparts in the learning-teaching process, examines different aspects of the communication process, and asserts that all these elements constitute communication (Avedisyan, 1997:49).

### *2.9. The Concept, Definition, Importance and Purpose of Corporate Communication*

Corporate communication involves all communication activities carried out with different goals and methods among various stakeholders of the institution (Öksüz & Gümüş, 2010:116). Corporate communication covers all communication processes carried out by an institution to achieve its goals and maintain its long-term success. This process includes information exchange, motivation, harmony, organizational capabilities, training, and supervision within and outside the institution (Ozan & Yolcu, 2022:984). Corporate communication is the process of managing and implementing an organization's internal and external communication strategies. A good corporate communication strategy helps an organization to achieve goals, strengthen its reputation, establish healthy relationships with stakeholders, and manage any crisis effectively. It is also important to strengthen the image and reputation of the institution, manage relationships, and ensure effective communication. Corporate communication contributes to the success of the institution by accurately communicating the institution's values, culture, and goals to stakeholders.

Corporate communication is crucial for an organization's survival and growth. Businesses carry out their activities through communication with internal and external elements. A good corporate communication strategy manages this communication effectively and helps the organization achieve its goals. A communication policy created in accordance with the objectives of the institution helps the business establish a strong relationship between internal and external stakeholders (Akhüseyinoğlu, 2010:44). Consequently, corporate communication is of great importance for the business to be successful and gain a competitive advantage in the market. Since businesses constantly interact with internal and

external stakeholders, they can achieve corporate success with effective communication strategies in complex environments.

People live in a state of constant communication in their daily lives, and these communication processes lead them in certain directions. Similarly, institutions always attempt to direct their employees towards achieving certain goals through communication tools. Institutions aim to encourage their staff to achieve corporate goals by establishing an effective communication network and using communication channels effectively. Corporate communication is of great importance for institutions operating in different fields simultaneously and aiming for organizational success. Effective use of corporate communication helps achieve corporate success, which provides great benefits for institutions (Vural, 2016:146). The main purpose of corporate communication is to support the goals of an organization by establishing effective communication between its internal and external stakeholders. Communicating the organization's values, mission, and goals to stakeholders, strengthening its corporate identity and image, increasing employee motivation, and managing relationships to ensure the sustainability of the organization are among the purposes of corporate communication.

### *2.10. Forms of Corporate Communication*

Corporate communication can take a variety of forms, including communications with an organization's internal and external stakeholders. Some of these are formal communication, horizontal communication, vertical communication, and diagonal communication.

#### 2.10.1. Formal Communication

Formal communication is a type of communication in which the structure is planned and carried out formally within the framework of the structure and hierarchy of the organization. In this type of communication, communication channels, parties, and styles are predetermined. It refers to the process of communication that takes place between certain units in certain situations and under certain conditions to achieve the goals of the organization. In formal communication, the roles and authorities of the people involved in communication are specific and the communication process has a certain order. Formal communication tools include predetermined and formal communication activities such as daily routines, phone calls, e-mails, corporate bulletins, meetings, seminars, and performance evaluations (Kayasandık, 2019:16).

#### 2.10.2. Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication refers to the type of communication between departments or people at the same hierarchical level in an organization. This type of communication is important to ensure collaboration and coordination between different departments and teams. Similarly, horizontal communication is necessary between managers of different departments in order to carry out certain functions and share necessary information (Hekimoğlu, 2020:5). Such interactions encourage collaboration, ensure a healthy flow of information, and strengthen coordination between different departments, which increases the effectiveness and performance of the organization.

#### 2.10.3. Vertical Communication

Vertical communication refers to the communication that takes place between managers and subordinates within an organization. This communication is generally based on a hierarchical structure and occurs from upper management to lower-level employees or from lower-level employees to upper management and managers. Vertical communication may include instructions, information, feedback, and decision-making (Akhüseyinoğlu, 2010:46). In summary, vertical communication depends on the hierarchical structure of the institution and helps the organizational activities to continue in a healthy and orderly manner.

#### 2.10.4. Diagonal Communication

Diagonal communication refers to the type of communication between different departments or functional units. This type of communication takes place directly or indirectly between employees at different levels, bypassing the steps of the hierarchical structure (Kaya, 2006:96). Diagonal communication plays an important role in the successful running of an organization. At the same time, it can have a positive effect on factors such as information sharing and cooperation, fast decision-making, harmony between departments, teamwork, and motivation.

### *2.11. Tools of Corporate Communication*

Corporate communication tools are used to manage and improve an organization's internal and external communications. While these tools help the organization achieve its goals and objectives, they also strengthen the communication process between employees and increase interaction with stakeholders. Written communication tools, verbal and nonverbal communication tools, and visual and audio communication tools are the types of communication tools used in corporate communication.

#### 2.11.1. Written Communication Tools

Written communication tools are tools in which written texts are used to establish effective communication and share information, and messages are transferred in a certain format. Institutional newspapers and magazines, brochures, bulletins and handbooks, posters and banners, billboards, letters and annual reports are among the examples of written communication tools that institutions use most frequently (Solmaz, 2018:17-18). Written communication tools are



powerful in establishing effective and efficient communication when used correctly. Therefore, they play a crucial role in any corporate organization.

#### 2.11.2. Verbal Communication Tools

Verbal communication is a form of communication that occurs with words. It refers to direct oral communication between parties. It can be face-to-face or carried out through any means that allows sending voice messages, such as telephone, radio, television, or video conferencing. Conferences, seminars, interviews, and meetings are examples of verbal communication tools used in organizations (Tikici, 2005:238). This type of communication helps to quickly exchange information and increase mutual understanding.

#### 2.11.3. Non-verbal Communication Tools

Nonverbal communication is a form of communication that does not rely on the use of words or language. It occurs through factors such as facial expressions, eye contact, body language, gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, physical distance, clothing style and body movements. People express their feelings, thoughts and intentions through visual and physical elements (Önal, 2016:33). In non-verbal communication, the interaction goes beyond words. Nonverbal communication complements the meaning of words and increases the depth of communication.

#### 2.11.4. Visual and Auditory Communication Tools

Visual and auditory communication is a type of communication that targets both visual and auditory senses. This makes visual and auditory communication tools more effective and permanent. Visual communication tools include sound, images, and computer technologies. These tools can be used in education, communication, arts and other fields. Auditory communication tools, on the other hand, include tools in which sound is the basis. Devices such as radio, music players (turntables), and tape recorders fall into this category (Eyidoğan, 2013:67-68). In short, these tools are widely used in communication, education, art and other fields and have the ability to stimulate both the auditory and visual senses of people at the same time.

### **3. Research**

#### *3.1. Purpose of the Research*

The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of leadership styles of managers on the organizational commitment of employees and to investigate the mediating role of corporate (organizational) communication in this relationship. The aim is to both contribute to the literature and guide managers as a result of the research.

#### *3.2. Population and Sample of the Research*

The population of the research is the public employees working in municipalities in Istanbul. Within the scope of the research, a survey was sent to 800 people working in municipalities on the European Side of Istanbul, and a response was received from 620 people. After receiving the responses, 523 participants were included in the research, and the rest were excluded due to incorrect selections in the survey. As a result, 523 participants constitute the sample of the research.

#### *3.3. Data Collection Method*

In the study, data was collected using a survey method, which is one of the primary data collection methods. Surveys were distributed via e-mail. In the research, "Management (Leadership) Scale," "Organizational Commitment," and "Institutional (Organizational) Communication" scales are used as well as a personal information form containing demographic characteristics.

#### *3.4. Hypotheses*

- H<sub>1</sub>: Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment.
- H<sub>2</sub>: Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on corporate communication.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Corporate communication has a mediating role in the effect of leadership style on organizational commitment.

#### *3.5. Data Analysis*

All data were analyzed using the SPSS 22.0 package program. The representation of continuous data (mean, standard deviation) was given. The compliance of the data with normal distribution was tested with the skewness and kurtosis coefficient. T-test and ANOVA were used to compare the means, and the Pearson Correlation test was used to examine the relationship between variables. Regression analysis was used to examine the effect between dependent and independent variables. The statistical significance level was determined as 0.05.

#### *3.6. Findings*

In the survey, 6 questions were asked to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants. An analysis of demographic information is given in the table below.

### 3.6.1. Analysis of Demographic Information

Variable	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	188	35.9
Male	335	64.1
Total	523	100
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	40	7.6
26-35	188	35.9
36-45	236	45.1
46-55	51	9.8
56 and above	8	1.5
Total	523	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	296	56.6
Single	227	43.4
Total	523	100
<b>Education Level</b>		
Elementary School	26	5.0
High School	226	43.2
Associate's Degree	98	18.7
Bachelor's Degree	145	27.7
Master's Degree	28	5.4
Total	523	100
<b>Employment Duration at the Current Organization</b>		
0-1 years	99	18.9
1-5 years	208	39.8
6-10 years	101	19.3
11 years and above	115	22.0
Total	523	100
<b>Title</b>		
Civil servant	46	8.8
Sub-contractual	175	33.5
Contractual	132	25.2
Permanent worker	99	18.9
Other	71	13.6
Total	523	100

Table 1: Analysis of Demographic Information

When the table of descriptive statistics of the participants is examined, it is seen that:

- 188 (35.9%) participants are female, and 335 (64.1%) are male.
- 40 (7.6%) participants are 18-25 years old, 188 (35.9%) are 26-35 years old, 236 (45.1%) are 36-45 years old, 51 (9.8%) are 46-55 years old, and 8 (1.5%) are 56 years old or over.
- 296 (56.6%) participants are married, and 227 (43.4%) are single.
- 26 (5.0%) participants have an education level of primary education, 226 (43.2%) have a high school education, 98 (18.7%) have an associate's degree, 145 (27.7%) have a bachelor's degree, and 28 (5.4%) have master's degree.
- 99 (18.9%) participants have been employed at the current organization for 0-1 years, 208 (39.8%) for 1-5 years, 101 (19.3%) for 6-10 years, and 115 (22.0%) for 11 years or more.
- 46 (8.8%) participants are civil servants, 175 (33.5%) are sub-contractual employees, 132 (25.2%) are contractual employees, 99 (18.9%) are permanent workers, and 71 (13.6%) have other titles.

### 3.6.2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Scores from Organizational Commitment, Corporate Communication and Leadership Style Scales

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Affective	-----												
Continuance	.616**	-----											
Normative	.575**	.598**	-----										
Organizational Commitment	.858**	.872**	.834**	-----									
Formal	.625**	.509**	.494**	.636**	-----								
Non-Formal	.588**	.480**	.465**	.598**	.749**	-----							
Horizontal	.623**	.387**	.352**	.534**	.666**	.690**	-----						
Vertical	.624**	.424**	.430**	.577**	.816**	.772**	.713**	-----					
Communication	.684**	.499**	.485**	.652**	.895**	.902**	.844**	.935**	-----				
Transformative	.596**	.463**	.475**	.598**	.760**	.731**	.631**	.822**	.829**	-----			
Traditional	.340**	.362**	.394**	.426**	.497**	.526**	.322**	.473**	.512**	.679**	-----		
Liberal	-	-	0.053	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.334**	-----	
	.229**	0.037		.088*	.252**	.146**	.362**	.339**	.306**	.188**			
Leadership Style	.498**	.449**	.486**	.557**	.665**	.676**	.490**	.684**	.709**	.913**	.900**	.180**	-----

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Scores from Organizational Commitment, Corporate Communication and Leadership Style Scales

When the statistically significant relationships in the table are examined, it is seen that moderate positive relationships were found between leadership style scores and organizational commitment scores. It was observed that as the leadership style scores increase, the organizational commitment scores also increase.

Moderate and high levels of positive relationships were found between leadership style scores and corporate communication scores. It was observed that as the leadership style scores increase, corporate communication scores also increase.

Moderate positive relationships were found between corporate communication scores and organizational commitment scores. It was observed that as corporate communication scores increase, organizational commitment also increases.

### 3.6.3. Means, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Test Results of Organizational Commitment, Corporate Communication and Leadership Style Scores by Demographic Characteristics

It was found that the means of organizational commitment, corporate communication, and leadership style scores differ by gender ( $p < 0.05$ ). Men's organizational commitment, corporate communication, and leadership style mean scores were found to be statistically and significantly higher than those of women.

It was found that the means of transformational leadership and leadership style score differed by age groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). The means of transformational leadership and leadership style scores of employees in the 26-35 age group were found to be statistically and significantly higher than those in the 36-45 age group.

It was observed that the mean scores of emotional commitment, Liberal (laissez-faire) leadership and leadership style differed by marital status ( $p < 0.05$ ). The mean emotional commitment score of married people was found to be statistically and significantly higher than that of single people. The means of laissez-faire leadership and leadership style scores of single people were found to be statistically and significantly higher than those of married ones.

It was observed that the means of emotional commitment and its sub-dimensions, formal and informal communication and corporate communication scores differed by educational status ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was found that the mean scores of high school graduates on emotional commitment and its sub-dimensions, formal and informal communication and corporate communication, were statistically and significantly higher than those with an education level of bachelor's degree.

It was observed that the means of organizational commitment, corporate communication, and leadership style scores did not differ by employment duration at the current organization ( $p > 0.05$ ). It was found that those who had the highest organizational commitment were those who had been working for 1-5 years, those who had the highest corporate communication were those who had been working for 1-5 and 6-10 years, and those who had the highest leadership style score were those who had been working for 6-10 years.

It was observed that the means of laissez-faire leadership style scores differed by status. ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was found that the means of laissez-faire leadership scores of civil servants were statistically and significantly higher than those of sub-contractual employees, contractual employees, permanent workers, and other positions.

### 3.6.4. The Mediating Role of Corporate Communication in the Effect of Leadership Style on Organizational Commitment

		$\beta$	
		CC	OC
LS	<b>Test1</b>		
	LS		<b>0.68***</b>
	R <sup>2</sup>		0.31
	F		234.95***
	<b>Test2</b>		
	LS	<b>0.82***</b>	
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.50	
	F	525.66***	
	<b>Test3</b>		
	LS		<b>0.23***</b>
	CC		<b>0.54***</b>
	R <sup>2</sup>		0.44
	F		206.90***
	Sobel Test (z)		<b>3.9***</b>

\* $p \leq .05$  \*\*  $p \leq .01$  \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

Table 3: The Mediating Role of Corporate Communication in the Effect of Leadership Style on Organizational Commitment

Regression analyses were performed to reveal the direct relationships between variables, i.e. the explanatory power of independent variables on dependent variables. In the regression analyses, organizational commitment was accepted as the dependent variable, and leadership style and corporate communication, which were considered the mediating variable, were accepted as independent variables to examine their effects on the dependent variable.

In the first stage of the mediation test, the relationships between the independent variables of leadership style and organizational commitment were examined. In the first step of this stage, it was observed that LS significantly affected OC ( $\beta = .68, p < .01$ ). In the second step, the effect of LS on CC, which was considered a mediator, was examined. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that LS significantly affected CC ( $\beta = .82, p < .01$ ). In the last step of this stage, LS and CC, whose mediation effect was investigated, were analyzed together, and their effects on OC were examined. As a result of this analysis, when LS was included in the analysis together with CC, its effect on OC continued and decreased ( $\beta = .23, p < .01$ ), and the effect of CC on OC continued. ( $\beta = .54, p < .01$ ) After these conditions were met, the Sobel test was performed to confirm the mediation effect and Sobel (z) was found to be significant ( $z = 3.9, p < .01$ ). This finding shows that CC plays a partial mediating role in the effect of LS on OC. As a result of this section analysis, it is seen that H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub> and the mediation hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> are supported.

#### 4. Hypotheses

- H<sub>1</sub>: Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment.
- H<sub>2</sub>: Leadership style has a positive and significant effect on corporate communication.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Corporate communication has a mediating role in the effect of leadership style on organizational commitment.

#### 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Organizational commitment, corporate communication, and leadership style are important elements that directly affect the performance and continuity of businesses. Effective management of these factors increases employee motivation and commitment, improving organizational processes and performance. Identifying effective leadership styles and understanding how these styles affect employee commitment allows businesses to create and adopt better strategies to increase employee commitment. This increases overall job satisfaction and employee commitment to the company. Creating a strong internal structure by ensuring continuous development in these areas plays a critical role in gaining a competitive advantage and achieving long-term success for businesses. Therefore, this study can help businesses structure their leadership and communication strategies more consciously. It can provide strategic advantages to businesses in the short and long term.

In the research, a survey was conducted with 523 participants who work in municipalities on the European Side of Istanbul to examine the mediating role of corporate communication in the effect of leadership styles of managers on the organizational commitment of employees. Surveys were distributed via e-mail. All data were analyzed in the SPSS 22.0 package program. The representation of continuous data is given through mean and standard deviation. The compliance of the data with normal distribution was tested with the skewness and kurtosis coefficient. T-test and ANOVA were used to

compare the means, and the Pearson Correlation test was used to examine the relationship between variables. Regression analysis was used to examine the effect between dependent and independent variables.

In the study, the demographic characteristics (gender, age, education level, marital status, working time in the institution, and working status) of the participants were analyzed first. When the characteristics of public employees were evaluated, it was observed that the majority of the participants were male, between the ages of 36-45, with an education level of high school, working as civil servants. It was found that most of the participants were married and had a duration of employment at the current institution between 1 and 5 years.

In the research, according to organizational commitment, corporate communication, and leadership style score means, standard deviations, Anova and T-test results, a significant difference was found between organizational commitment, corporate communication, and leadership styles of managers by the gender of public employees. There was a significant difference between transformational leadership and leadership style and the ages of public employees. There was also a significant difference between emotional commitment and laissez-faire leadership and leadership style by the marital status of public employees. There was a significant difference between emotional commitment and its sub-dimensions, formal and informal communication and corporate communication, and the educational status of public employees. No significant difference was observed between organizational commitment, corporate communication, leadership style and the duration of employment at the current institution. A significant difference was found between laissez-faire leadership and the title of public employees.

Other findings related to the research were obtained through correlation analysis. When statistically significant relationships were examined in this context, moderate positive relationships were found between leadership style scores and organizational commitment scores. It was observed that as the leadership style scores increased, the commitment of the employees to the institution also increased. Effective leadership styles can increase the organizational commitment of employees to the organization. A good leader increases the motivation of employees, supports them, and contributes to their development. This strengthens employee commitment to the organization and a sense of belonging. When employees feel valued and important, they become more committed to the organization.

Moderate and high levels of positive relationships were found between leadership style and corporate communication. It has been observed that as leadership style scores increase, corporate communication also increases. Successful leaders create open and effective communication channels, encourage a culture of feedback, and ensure employees have their voices heard. This makes it easier for employees to access and communicate information. Thus, the quality of corporate communication increases. Effective leadership promotes transparency and regular briefing. This allows employees to know more about the organization and communicate better.

Moderate positive relationships were found between corporate communication and organizational commitment. It has been observed that as corporate communication scores increase, organizational commitment scores also increase. Good corporate communication ensures that employees are informed of developments within the organization while increasing employees' participation and feeling of involvement in corporate decision-making processes. This can help employees feel more connected to their organization. Good communication manages conflicts effectively and finds solutions. This can increase the trust and loyalty of the employees to the organization.

These findings show that the positive relationships between leadership style, corporate communication, and organizational commitment are critical in increasing the performance of organizations and employee satisfaction. In line with these results, organizations can organize training programs to improve leadership skills, create open, honest and effective communication channels within the organization, encourage greater participation of employees in decision-making processes and develop a feedback culture. These strategies can further strengthen the positive relationships between leadership style, corporate communication, and organizational commitment and increase the success of the organization.

In conclusion, the role of corporate (organizational) communication in the effect of leadership styles of managers on the organizational commitment of employees was examined in this research. As a result of the responses of the public employees who participated in the research, it has been found that the leadership styles of managers have an effect on organizational commitment and that corporate (organizational) communication has a mediating role in this effect. It should be stated that there is a further need for large-scale research covering more public enterprises across Turkey to reveal the mediating role of corporate (organizational) communication in the effect of managers' leadership styles on the organizational commitment of public employees in more detail. The research can be extended by increasing the sample or adding other variables to the research.

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