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The Impact of Leader Power on Employee Outcomes: An Empirical Study of Information Technology Professionals in Turkey

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The Impact of Leader Power on Employee Outcomes: An Empirical Study of Information Technology Professionals in Turkey

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The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of leader power bases on information technology (IT) professionals' certain employee outcomes: Attitudinal and behavioral compliance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and intention to quit. A convenience sampling was used and the data were collected from 153 Turkish IT professionals. The results show that leader expert power, referent power, and legitimate power positively influence subordinate behavioral compliance while reward power negatively affects behavioral compliance. In addition, referent power positively affects attitudinal compliance and helping OCB whereas referent power negatively influences intention to quit. Moreover, legitimate power negatively affects attitudinal compliance, civic virtue, and sportsmanship OCB. Overall, the results support the partial influence of leader power bases on the listed employee outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Leaders' exercise of power has always been a very attractive topic for many scholars. How to maximize leaders' influence is a crucial issue for organizations. As an important force for leader effectiveness (Barrett, 2010), power is one of the most researched concepts in the literature. Leaders use different sources of power to influence followers by appealing to one or more of their needs (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2007). Some managers have only organizational bases of power to influence followers while other managers have both organizational and personal power bases (Champoux, 2011). This research focuses on studying the role of bases of leader power on IT professionals' certain employee outcomes: Attitudinal and behavioral compliance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intention to quit.

Information technology (IT) professional is "an individual who participates in the design, development, implementation, support or management of computer-based information systems, particularly software applications and computer hardware" (Marchewka, 2006 in Rose, 2009, p. 9). IT professional job functions include positions such as Information System (IS) Professional, Programmer, Developer, and Software Engineer (Maudgalya et al., 2006). Effective management of IT human capital can lead to distinctive competencies for organizations. Highly motivated IT professionals who have firm-relevant information technology knowledge and competence are key to a high performing IT unit (Ross et. al., 1995).

IT professionals are chosen as the focus of this study because they exhibit characteristics that differ from those in other professions (Armstrong et al., 2007). Firstly, IT professionals are highly skilled employees. In general, they are workers with high level of intelligence and education, and demanding very competitive wages (Maudgalya et al., 2006). In addition, IT professionals have a strong need for growth and personal development compared to those in other professions (Lee, 2000). Moreover, IT careers, more than most other professions, demand long hours, travel, and constant updating of skills (Ahuja, 2002). In such a demanding work environment, employee outcomes such as employee compliance and organizational citizenship behavior are crucially important. Qualified IT personnel are an important resource for organizations; thus, IT professionals' intentions to leave their organizations also need special attention. In addition, in Turkish context, there is very scarce research conducted on IT professionals employed in various industries. Moreover, Turkish IT market is one of the fastest growing markets in Europe. The size of Turkish IT market is forecasted to increase from US\$7.7 billion in 2011

to US\$13.8 billion by 2015 (Turkey Information Technology Report, 2011). Employment in Turkish IT industry can be expected to increase as the market size increases. Because of the reasons listed above, Turkish IT professionals are chosen as the subject of this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Leaders achieve goals and power is an instrument to facilitate this achievement (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Without power, it would not be possible for leaders to use their influence to get things done (Barrett, 2010). French and Raven (1959) defined social power as potential ability of an agent to influence a target. Other scholars also offer many different definitions of power. For instance, Thomas Hobbes ([1651], 1991, p. 62) stated that power is a man's "present means to obtain some future apparent good". Bertrand Russell (1938) indicated that power is the production of intended effects.

Individuals may have power on others for a variety of reasons such as gender, social class, and ethnicity. The emphasis here is on the nature of power as a social resource in organizations (Hewison, 2005). Several classifications have been made for bases of social power in organizations. However, French and Raven's (1959) power taxonomy (coercive, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent) has been widely used by scholars. French and Raven's (1959) taxonomy of power bases is detailed below:

Coercive power depends on "the ability of the power holder to take something away from the target person or to punish the target for non-compliance with a request" (Spoelstra and Pienaar, 2008, p. 114). This can be in the form of using disciplinary procedures, giving undesirable duties or responsibilities, and withholding support or privileges (Hewison, 2005). Reward power is the opposite of coercive power. Reward power depends on the ability to provide things others want or need in exchange for desired behaviors (O'Connell & Cuthbertso, 2009). Legitimate power is the authority assigned to a social position within a group (O'Connell & Cuthbertso, 2009). This power base is the ability to influence because of a position (Spoelstra & Pienaar, 2008). Expert power refers to influence a person may have as a result of expertise, special skill, or knowledge (Robbins & Judge, 2009). An individual can have expertise on different matters such as technical, administrative or personal (Spoelstra & Pienaar, 2008). Referent power is related to identification with a person who has desirable resources or personal traits (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Popularity or charisma is often used to describe referent power (O'Connell & Cuthbertso, 2009).

Compliance variable is an ideal criterion to associate with leader power bases because it is most directly linked with the outcomes of power use (Rahim & Afza, 1993). Warren (1968) differentiated between attitudinal and behavioral compliance. Attitudinal compliance is "the extent to which an employee wants to follow his or her superior's directives or wishes", while behavioral compliance is "the extent to which a subordinate actually carries out these instructions" (Rahim and Buntzman, 1988 in Rahim and Afza, 1993, p. 614).

Soranastaporn's (2001) research on 551 faculty members at a Thailand public university examined the relationship between department chairs' power bases and the empowerment, compliance, and conflict perceived by the faculty members. The study results showed that among the power bases expert power had the most influence, followed by legitimate power and referent power. The results also indicated that reward power and coercive power were not effective regarding to influence. Expert power caused both attitudinal and behavioral compliance while legitimate power caused just behavioral compliance. In addition, although referent power created attitudinal compliance, it also created conflict. Reward power did not create compliance but created empowerment while coercive power did not create compliance but created conflict.

Moreover, based on a literature review, Rahim and Buntzman (1989) concluded that expert, and referent, and to some extent, legitimate power bases generally induce compliance from subordinates. The

authors added that subordinates consider coercive and reward power bases as weak reasons for compliance. Rahim (1989) stated that the lack of consistent relationships between power bases and compliance might be partly related to the measurement and sampling deficiencies.

In light of literature review described above, in this current study, it will be hypothesized that expert and referent power bases have positive influence on subordinate behavioral and attitudinal compliance. Legitimate power base is expected to positively influence behavioral compliance. It should be noted that in this research, even though, leader, supervisor, or manager terms are used interchangeably within the text, what is investigated here is bases of leader power.

Another variable that is investigated in this study is organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). In today's ever-changing work environment, factors such as greater use of teams, flexible and networked organizations, and a global workforce (King et al., 2005) increase the importance of employees who willingly help others and go beyond their duties. OCB is defined as "individual behavior at work, that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988, p. 4). OCB is a widely studied issue. The widespread interest in OCB is likely to be related to the belief that these behaviors enhance organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997).

Organ's (1988) statement of five component behaviors that represent organizational citizenship is widely accepted. Firstly, there is altruism defined as helping fellow employees with tasks or problems relevant to the work of that organization. Second behavior is conscientiousness, which involves voluntary behavior going well beyond minimum requirements of the role. The third one is civic virtue, which is an indication of participating responsibly in the organization life. The next one is sportsmanship, defined as any behavior demonstrating tolerance of less than ideal circumstances without complaining. The final one is courtesy, which includes efforts to prevent work-related issues with others (Gouge, 2006).

About the relationship between leader power bases and OCB, Jahangir et al.'s (2006) study on 195 top and middle-level employees of a private commercial bank in Bangladesh found that employees' perception of managers' expert power has a significant influence on employees' OCB. In addition, it was found that employees with high job satisfaction will have higher OCB (Jahangir et al., 2006). Podsakoff et al. (2000) stated that when employees are not different to rewards that can be given by the organization, when employees perceive that their leaders administer rewards according to performance, OCB increases. In general, the results of field studies on social power suggest that coercive power is generally negatively related or unrelated to functional subordinate criterion variables such as subordinate performance, satisfaction with supervisor, and job satisfaction (Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985). Munduate and Dorado's (1998) study on 78 subjects from a wide range of Spanish organizations indicated that supervisors' referent power bases influence subordinates' co-operative behavior and organizational commitment. Because of the literature review given above, in this current research, it will be hypothesized that employees' perceptions of supervisory reward, expert and referent power bases positively influence IT professionals' OCB. It will also be hypothesized that supervisors' coercive power negatively influences IT professionals' OCB.

IT professionals' intention to quit is a critical issue for organizations. Intention to quit can be defined as "one's desire or willingness to leave an organization" (Altmaier & Hansen, 2012, p. 152). Intention to quit has been found a good predictor of employee turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000). Even though a weak labor market has limited their job turnover, skilled IT personnel are still a valuable resource for organizations (Dinger et al., 2011). High job skill marketability is likely to contribute to the high job turnover culture among IT employees (Beard, 2004).

About the relationship between leader power bases and employee intention to quit, Busch's (1980) research on 477 sales people indicated that with one exception (except for reward power) sales managers' noncoercive sources of power were negatively related with intention to quit. The study also found that coercive power base was positively, although not at a statistically significant level, related to intention to leave (Busch, 1980).

Moreover, Afza's (2005) research on 353 manufacturing employees in India found that coercive power positively affected propensity to leave. In addition, reward, expert, and referent power bases negatively affected propensity to leave. It was also seen that legitimate power was unrelated to intention to leave. Afza (2005) indicated that generally former studies indicated that personal power bases (e.g. expert and referent power) negatively affected intention to leave.

Because of the literature review discussed above, in this current study, it is expected that supervisors' expert and referent power have negative influence on intention to leave. In addition, it is expected that supervisors' coercive power positively influences employee intention to leave. The following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis 1- Supervisors' legitimate power positively influences subordinate behavioral compliance (1a).

Hypothesis 2- Supervisors' expert power positively influences subordinate behavioral compliance (2a), attitudinal compliance (2b), and organizational citizenship behavior (2c), and negatively influences intention to quit (2d).

Hypothesis 3- Supervisors' referent power positively influences subordinate behavioral compliance (3a), attitudinal compliance (3b), and organizational citizenship behavior (3c), and negatively influences intention to quit (3d).

Hypothesis 4- Supervisors' reward power positively influences organizational citizenship behavior (4a).

Hypothesis 5- Supervisors' coercive positively influences subordinate intention to quit (5a), and negatively influences organizational citizenship behavior (5b).

METHODOLOGY

The target population of this study is Turkey's information technology professionals. A convenience sampling was employed to collect data. Questionnaires in Turkish distributed to collect data from IT professionals.

The questionnaire was placed in a survey web site and the survey link was sent to the participants along with an invitation text. The invitation to the survey included the purpose of the research briefly and assured the confidentiality of responses. In this study, the questionnaire was distributed online to reach IT professionals from a variety of industries and because of its convenience to the participants. It should be noted that IT professionals are considered internet users because it is related to their profession. The online distribution of the questionnaire might also have benefits in assuring the confidentiality of responses compared to distributing paper questionnaires in organizations. The survey invitation was sent to contacts working in various IT organizations in Turkey and these contacts distributed the invitation within their organizations. In addition, the invitation was posted to several Turkish online email groups that have IT professional participants. In total, 153 Turkish IT professionals participated to the survey.

To measure perceptions of subordinates regarding their supervisors' bases of power, Rahim's (1988) Rahim Leader Power Inventory (RLPI) was used. This instrument has 29 items. Rahim and Afza's (1993) research provided evidence of construct and criterion validities of the RLPI instrument. The instrument has five subscales: Coercive, reward, legitimate, expert, and referent. Representative items from the scale include: "My superior has a pleasing personality", "I approach my superior for advice on work-related problems because she (he) is usually right", "My superior's position entitles her (him) to expect support of her (his) policies from me". The translation of the questionnaire was done by the researcher. Acar's (2009) Turkish translation of the instrument was used in this translation as a resource.

Behavioral and Attitudinal Compliance with Superior's Wishes Scale (CSWS) developed by Rahim (1988) was used in this study. The scale has satisfactory construct and criterion validities (Rahim & Buntzman, 1989). Representative items include: "I like to do what my superior suggests", "I follow the work-procedures set up by my superior". The scale has 10 items. Five items form a subscale for attitudinal compliance while the other five items form a subscale behavioral compliance. The translation of the scale was done by the researcher.

Researchers have used various scales to measure organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). In this research, the scale developed by Podsakoff, Ahearne, and MacKenzie (1997) was used. Organizational citizenship behaviors were measured by three widely recognized dimensions: Helping behavior, civic virtue, and sportsmanship (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). Podsakoff, Ahearne, and MacKenzie (1997) measured the self-reported behavior related ratings of respondents with this OCB scale. In that study, as a result of the analyses, it was seen that Cronbach's alpha values for OCB subscales were ranged between 0.88 and 0.96. Sample items from the instrument are "I help out others who fall behind in their work", "I willingly share my expertise with others", "I try to act like a peacemaker when others have disagreements". Imer's (2009) Turkish translation of the instrument was used in this study as a resource. Some changes were made on the Imer's (2009) Turkish translation by the researcher.

Various scales have been used by researchers to measure intention to quit construct. Colarelli's (1984) scale was used in this research. The scale items are "I frequently think of quitting my job", "If I have my own way, I will be working in my current employer one year from now", "I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months". The translation of the instrument was done by the researcher.

All scales were translated from English to Turkish. The translations of the scales were examined by 2 bilingual academicians and the items were reverse translated to compare English and Turkish versions. Corrections were then made to make the questionnaire more understandable. The responses were anchored on a 6-item Likert scale (completely disagree = 1, completely agree = 6).

The respondents were also asked to provide information about themselves and the organization they work. Demographic questions that were asked: Gender, age, highest level of education obtained, marital status, organization industry category, level in the organizational hierarchy (top management, middle management, nonsupervisory employees), tenure in the company (in years), and job experience (in years).

ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Descriptive statistics of the sample is given in Table 1. Data analysis indicated that the participants' mean age was 29.97. 20.9% of the respondents were female, and 79.1% of the respondents were male. 52.9% respondents were single, while 47.1% of respondents were married. Most of the participants had a university degree (66.7%). The mean of tenure at work was 3.26 years. The mean of total job experience was 7.76 years. Most of the respondents were nonsupervisory employees (69.3%).

TABLE 1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE STUDY

Variable	N	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Gender					
Male	121	79.1			
Female	32	20.9			
Age			29.97	5.84	21-60 years
Marital Status					
Married	72	47.1			
Single	81	52.9			
Education Level					
High School	8	5.2			
University	102	66.7			
Graduate	38	24.8			
Ph.D.	5	3.3			
Tenure			3.26	3.17	1-18 years
Total Experience			7.76	6.26	1-40 years
Position					
Top management	5	3.3			
Middle management	42	27.5			
Nonsupervisory employees	106	69.3			

In order to find the factor structure of bases of leader power scale, factor analysis using principal components solution with varimax rotation was used. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was found as .865, showing homogenous structure of variables. Bartlett Test values (significance: .000, *df*: 325; Chi-square: 2178.570) indicated that variables were suitable for factor analysis. The analyses resulted in five factors: Expert, reward, referent, coercive, and legitimate power. These factors explained 63.483 % of the total variance.

The reliability of the bases of leader power factors was checked. During the data analysis, the sixth factor failed to be reliable (Cronbach's alpha= .473). Thus, this factor was discarded from further analysis. After this, the Cronbach's alpha value of the whole scale is .898. The reliabilities of the factors were found as satisfactory. During the analysis, the fifth factor's Cronbach's alpha value was found as .682. This value is below the minimum accepted value of .70 as suggested by Nunnally (1978). However, when the factor items were read, it was seen that the questions were quite relevant and created a meaningful factor. In addition, Hair et al. (2006) suggested that the lowest acceptable limit for Cronbach's alpha is .60. Thus, the items belong to the fifth factor were not dropped from the study.

Factor analysis was conducted for the organizational citizenship behavior scale. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was found as .705, and Bartlett Test values were found as as: .000, *df*: 55; Chi-square: 409.974, indicating that variables were suitable for factor analysis. The analyses resulted in three factors: Helping, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. These factors explained 58.109 % of the total variance. When the reliability of the factors was checked, the third factor's Cronbach's alpha value was found as .612. However, it was seen that the questions were quite relevant and created a meaningful factor. Thus, the items belong to the third factor were not dropped from the study. During the data analysis, the fourth factor was found to be unreliable (Cronbach's alpha= .468). Thus, items 4 and 6, belong to the fourth factor, were omitted from the study. After this, the Cronbach's alpha value of the whole scale is .712.

Factor analysis was done for compliance with supervisor's wishes scale. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was found as .789, and Bartlett Test values were found as: .000, *df*: 45; Chi-square: 723.716,

indicating that variables were suitable for factor analysis. The analysis yielded two factors: Attitudinal compliance and behavioral compliance. The two factors explained 59.574 % of the total variance. The Cronbach's alpha value of the whole scale is .798. The second factor's Cronbach's alpha value was found as .547. However, the items were quite relevant and created a meaningful factor. Therefore, the items belong to the second factor were not taken out of further analyses.

Factor analysis was not conducted for the intention to quit scale because the scale consists of only three items. The Cronbach's alpha value of the whole scale is .712. The scale was found to be reliable.

In order to test the study's hypotheses, multiple regression analyses were conducted. Multicollinearity was also tested and the results pointed that multicollinearity was not a problem among independent variables.

Regression analyses were conducted between the independent variables and the dependent variables. The results are shown in Table 2, 3, and 4.

TABLE 2: REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN LEADER POWER BASES AND COMPLIANCE WITH SUPERVISOR'S WISHES

Dependent Variable: Behavioral Compliance (Factor 1)

Independent Variables:	Beta	t value	p value
Expert Power (Factor 1)	.250	2.810	.003
Reward Power(Factor 2)	-.190	-2.122	.018
Referent Power (Factor 3)	.192	1.996	.024
Coercive Power (Factor 4)	.074	1.031	.152
Legitimate Power (Factor 5)	.356	4.782	.000

R= .563; Adjusted R² = .293; F value= 13.621; p value= .000

Dependent Variable: Attitudinal Compliance (Factor 2)

Independent Variables:	Beta	t value	p value
Expert Power (Factor 1)	.121	1.190	.118
Reward Power(Factor 2)	-.002	-.021	.492
Referent Power (Factor 3)	.238	2.156	.016
Coercive Power (Factor 4)	.024	.292	.385
Legitimate Power (Factor 5)	-.223	-2.624	.005

R= .329; Adjusted R² = .078; F value= 3.558; p value= .005

As can be seen from Table 2, the data analyses indicated that leader expert power, referent power, and legitimate power positively influence subordinate "behavioral compliance" as hypothesized (hypotheses 1a, 2a, 3a). These findings underline the importance of these power bases to get behavioral compliance of IT professionals. In addition, reward power negatively influences behavioral compliance. Among these significant power base dimensions, legitimate power explains the greatest variance in behavioral compliance (beta= .356). The results also indicated that referent power positively influences "attitudinal compliance" as hypothesized (hypothesis 3b). On the other hand, legitimate power negatively affects attitudinal compliance.

TABLE 3: REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN LEADER POWER BASES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR**Dependent Variable: Helping (Factor 1)**

Independent Variables:	Beta	t value	p value
Expert Power (Factor 1)	-.156	-1.572	.059
Reward Power(Factor 2)	-.032	-.319	.375
Referent Power (Factor 3)	.474	4.400	.000
Coercive Power (Factor 4)	.081	1.014	.156
Legitimate Power (Factor 5)	-.070	-.837	.202

R= .384; Adjusted R² = .119; F value= 5.096; p value= .000

Dependent Variable: Civic Virtue (Factor 2)

Independent Variables:	Beta	t value	p value
Expert Power (Factor 1)	.147	1.440	.076
Reward Power(Factor 2)	.131	1.273	.102
Referent Power (Factor 3)	.084	.760	.224
Coercive Power (Factor 4)	.049	.594	.276
Legitimate Power (Factor 5)	-.186	-2.175	.015

R= .312; Adjusted R² = .066; F value=3.165; p value= .010

Dependent Variable: Sportsmanship (Factor 3)

Independent Variables:	Beta	t value	p value
Expert Power (Factor 1)	.021	.201	.420
Reward Power(Factor 2)	-.044	-.422	.336
Referent Power (Factor 3)	.101	.889	.187
Coercive Power (Factor 4)	-.136	-1.616	.054
Legitimate Power (Factor 5)	-.165	-1.889	.030

R= .237; Adjusted R² = .024; F value= 1.743; p value= .128

TABLE 4: REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN LEADER POWER BASES AND INTENTION TO QUIT**Dependent Variable:
Intention to Quit**

Independent Variables:	Beta	t value	p value
Expert Power (Factor 1)	.144	1.463	.073
Reward Power(Factor 2)	-.052	-.525	.300
Referent Power (Factor 3)	-.449	-4.215	.000
Coercive Power (Factor 4)	.070	.882	.189
Legitimate Power (Factor 5)	.011	.137	.445

R= .409; Adjusted R² = .139; F value=5.904 ; p value= .000

Moreover, regression analysis was done between bases of leader power and subordinate organizational citizenship behavior. As listed in Table 3, the findings pointed that leader referent power positively influences employee helping OCB (beta= .474). In addition, it was found that leader legitimate power negatively influences subordinate civic virtue and sportsmanship OCB.

Furthermore, regression analysis was conducted between leader power bases and employee intention to quit. As given in Table 4, the results indicated that referent power negatively influences subordinate intention to quit. Such negative relationship was expected as indicated in hypothesis (3d) (beta= -.449).

The findings particularly underline the importance of leader referent power on the listed IT employee outcomes. Referent power is based on personality characteristics that direct followers' attention, respect, and admiration so that they want to emulate the leader (Daft, 2008). When people feel deep friendship or loyalty toward someone, they are usually willing to do special favors for that person (Lewis et al., 2007). Referent power positively affects employee attitudes (Carson et al., 1997). As stated above, IT professionals are workers with high level of intelligence and education, and demanding very competitive wages (Maudgalya et al., 2006). Their such characteristics might be influential in the impact of referent power on the listed outcomes.

Moreover, although it was not hypothesized, it was found that leader legitimate power negatively influences subordinate attitudinal compliance, civic virtue and sportsmanship OCB. Today's IT work environment requires flexible work schedules and environments (Richard, 2009). Although IT work environments change from industry to industry, some IT industries such as software industry have laid-back, flexible work environment (Careers in Information Technology 2009). IT professionals "look forward to autonomy, challenging tasks, immediate and frequent feedback and rewards, ownership of ideas and enterprise, commitment to profession more than organization, teamwork/community of practices, de-bureaucratized work environment, and an open, consultative, fun-loving organizational culture" (Thite, 2006, p. 77). It should also be noted that the lines of legitimate power are less distinct in more organic type of organizations such as software firms. In such organizations, an employee may work for more than one boss at the same time. Moreover, the leaders and subordinates may have almost equal organizational standing (Griffin & Moorhead, 2012). Since IT environments require flexibility and have less distinct legitimate power structure, supervisors' legitimate power use and overemphasizing of authority can create negative influence on IT professionals' attitudinal compliance, civic virtue and sportsmanship OCB.

In addition, even though it was not hypothesized, it was found that reward power negatively influences behavioral compliance. This finding can be examined with further studies. Rahim and Buntzman (1989) stated that subordinates consider coercive and reward power bases as weak reasons for compliance. Moreover, Soranastaporn's (2001) research on 551 faculty members at a Thailand public university investigated the relationship between the power of department chairs and the empowerment, compliance, and conflict felt by the faculty members. The results indicated that reward power did not lead to compliance but led to empowerment while coercive power did not lead to compliance but led to conflict. Soranastaporn's (2001) study, as in this current research, points that leader reward power was ineffective in terms of getting employee compliance.

Furthermore, the fifth hypothesis, supervisors' coercive positively influences subordinate intention to quit, and negatively influences organizational citizenship behavior, is not accepted. Such finding can be explained as follows: Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) research on understanding cultural diversity among 38 nations pointed that "Turkey to have the steepest hierarchy in its organizations, indicating the subordination of employees to their leaders" (in Paşa et al., 2001, p. 568-569). According to Paşa et al.'s (2001) research on 92 Turkish participants, hierarchical-autocratic behavior is the most frequently perceived leader behavior. Moreover, Yahyagil and Ötken's (2011) and Yahyagil's (2011, p.

1033) studies on societal/cultural values of Turkish society pointed that “hierarchy was ranked as the second most important polar dimension” (hierarchy versus egalitarianism). Yahyagil and Ötken (2011, p. 1033) stated that such result indicates “a cultural emphasis on the legitimacy of unequal distribution of power, roles, and resources”. Because of these listed cultural characteristics, Turkish IT professionals might tolerate their supervisors’ use of coercive power. Such toleration may be influential on the study result that supervisors’ coercive power does not affect subordinate intention to quit or OCB.

As stated above, IT professionals exhibit characteristics that differ from those in other professions (Armstrong et al., 2007). IT careers, more than most other professions, demand long hours, travel and constant updating of skills (Ahuja, 2002). Such different characteristics of IT employees might be the influential in why some of the hypothesized relationships were not supported according to the data analysis results. In addition, the differences in results between former studies conducted in Western countries and this current research may be related with the fact that this study was done in Turkish context. Cultural differences might be influential in such differing outcomes. These results need to be examined with further studies.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated the impact of bases of leader power on the listed employee outcomes: Attitudinal and behavioral compliance and organizational citizenship behavior, and intention to quit. The results partially supported the influence of leader power bases on the listed employee outcomes.

The findings suggest that leaders’ use of expert power, referent power, and legitimate power can be influential in behavioral compliance of IT professionals. In addition, referent power can be useful in increasing IT professionals’ attitudinal compliance and OCB and decreasing their intention to quit. Utilizing on their expert power, IT managers can make their expertise easily accessible by subordinates when needed. Making use of referent power base at work, organizations can hire IT supervisors who have charisma and who can get admiration and respect from IT employees. However, leaders should use legitimate power with caution since this power base can also decrease employee attitudinal compliance, civic virtue, and sportsmanship OCB.

The results of this study have several implications. The findings can be beneficial for organizational leaders and human resource practitioners to understand the influence of bases of leader power on IT professionals’ organizational citizenship behavior, compliance, and intention to quit. Such understanding can be useful for organizations in efforts to increase leadership effectiveness and good management of IT human capital.

In today’s world, the effective management of human resources is crucially important for organizations to stay competitive. This is especially true for the management of IT professionals since they are highly skilled employees who work in a demanding environment. As indicated before, even though a weak labor market has limited their job turnover, skilled IT personnel are still a valuable resource for organizations (Dinger et al., 2011). Beard (2004) indicated that there is a high job turnover culture among IT employees. The findings of this current study can be beneficial for organizations in decreasing IT professionals’ intention to quit. In addition, along with monetary benefits, organizations can offer non-monetary benefits to IT professionals to effectively utilize their IT human capital and to decrease IT professionals’ intention to quit. These non-monetary benefits can be such as in the form of personal growth and development opportunities, trainings that allow constant updating of skills, and employee mentoring.

This research has some limitations. The data were collected through questionnaires from IT professionals with self-reported measures. The answers represented the perceptions of employees, such as their perceptions about supervisors’ use of power bases. Both independent and dependent variables

were gathered from the same source, which may lead to common method variance due to single-source bias. Moreover, the data were collected from respondents agreeing to participate to the survey, which might limit the generalizability of the survey results. In addition, it is common for IT professionals to split their time to work on two or more projects (Schwalbe, 2011). If a respondent has more than one supervisor, the IT professional may hesitate about which one of the supervisors he/she should consider while answering the questionnaire.

Some aspects of this study needs to be investigated with further studies. Future studies can test alternative models with additional variables such as organizational climate or leadership style (transactional or transformational). In addition, future studies on this subject especially in non-western settings can be fruitful.

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