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Toxic Behaviors in Workplace: Examining the Effects of the Demographic Factors on Faculty Members' Perceptions of Organizational Toxicity

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Abstract

This study aims at determining faculty members' level of the organizational toxicity, and to make statistical comparisons based on selected demographic variables. The research design is a relational survey. The study is conducted on 707 academic staff working in various academic units at three state universities in Turkey. The data were gathered through a questionnaire including two parts: The first part consisted of Kasalak's (2015) four factor "Perceived Organizational Toxicity Scale (POTS)" with a five-point Likert-type scale; and the second part was related to selected demographic variables. The descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied on the data. The findings show that organizational toxicity in each subscales is perceived in different levels; the highest in "toxicity based on aggressive behaviors" sub-scale while the lowest in "toxicity based on rigid and narcissist behaviors" one. Organizational toxicity is found statistically different in variables gender, title, academic fields and seniority in the current university.

Introduction

One of the organizations in which organizational toxicity is thought to be perceived most is university as well. The reasons for this could be obstructing positions for academic promotions, giving no value to scientific works or personal opinions, communication issues and attitude and behaviors out of courtesy among faculty members, disrespect for personal decisions and existence of grouping (Yaman, 2007); self-interests of faculty members' outweighing their professional ideals (Qian & Daniels, 2008; Ramaley, 2002). Also, factors like personal rivalry, being unable to accept/not accepting the colleagues' success, status and role differences, the necessity to prove the organizational strength, and an organization culture which tolerates negative behaviors could give a ground to organizational toxicity. All these toxins could lead universities to become unqualified and harm the understanding of becoming a faculty member (Celep & Konaklı, 2013). Therefore, the need for organizational toxicity to be understood at university level emerged.

Literature Review: Perceived Organizational Toxicity

The term "toxicity" which was first used in 1880 to mean "the state of being poisonous" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2014) is derived from the English and Latin word "toxic". The concept of toxic which is defined as "something that acts poisonously or has poisonous effects" (Lipman-Blumen, 2005, p.17) is assumed to be derived from the French *toxique* word and Latin *toxicum* word. *Toxicum* stems from the ancient Greek word *toksikón τοξικόν* and it is used in the meaning of "special poison put on the arrowhead" (Etymology Dictionary, 2014). Poison which is used in the Turkish origin of the term was used as a war weapon that people used in order to protect themselves and destroy their enemy in the Ancient Period. There was an official poisoner in the emperor's palace in the Ancient Roman times. One of the Ancient Greek poets, Nicander, reflected the concept of poison on his works of art with the two poems titled as *Alexipharmaca* and *Theriaca* that he had written. Poison was also used for social and political purposes in the 15th century. During that period, a number of allegations of using poison socially were raised about the Borgia Family and Machiavelli Diplomatic School administrators. The fact that the administration of the Council of Ten hired people for poisoning in Venice and set a value for these operations which were executed in exchange of money depending on the nobility of the victim and the difficulty of the incident could be seen as an indicator for the poison to be used politically. Poison and poisoning cases spread to France, the Netherlands, and England other than Italy as a profession and crime in the Renaissance Period. In the first half of the 17th century, Sicily became the trade centre for poisoners. A female poisoner named Toffano caused people's death by freely selling a posion that she named as

Aqua Toffano to the people that she trusted. After Toffano's death, many old female poisoners that continued her profession emerged (Vural, 2005).

It was Whicker (1996) who used the concept of toxic, whose origin was in science and health sciences, in social sciences. Frost (2003) was the first author who introduced a new term to the organization and management literature by defining the concept of organizational toxicity (Carlock, 2013; Goldman, 2008; Maitlis, 2008). The theoretical foundations of organizational toxicity were set by the Fiedler's leader-member interaction, Turner's self-classification, and Tajfel's social identity theory according to Pelletier (2009); by Freud's psychodynamic theory according to Lubit (2003); by Bandura's social learning theory according to Glew (1996), and finally by Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory according to Lipman-Blumen (2005). Organizational toxicity is defined as "a situation that causes employees to suffer and have problems, reduces interest in their jobs by negatively affecting their morale and motivation" (Frost, 2003, p.13) and "pains that destroy employees' self-confidence and dignity at workplace" (Frost, 2003, p.14). Maitlis (2008, p.1) defines organizational toxicity as "common, intense, and energy consuming negative emotions that separate individuals from their jobs, colleagues, and workplace". In summary, emotional pains experienced at workplace are considered as toxicity (Frost, 2003). The concept of pain is defined as "the feelings of discontent, suffering due to any external factors" and "offending, sad, touching, and bad" in the Turkish Language Association (TDK, 2015). According to Hançerlioğlu (2000, p.18), pain is an "unpleasant emotion". In line with all the definitions, organizational toxicity can be defined as situations which cause institutions to be worn out or hurt, harm employees, bring about troubles, are not beneficial, and are painful.

Organizational toxicity emerges as a result of the effects of organizational factors classified as organizational changes, organizational policies, traumas, crises and organizational intrusions, incompetency in ensuring adherence to institutional objectives and values, negative comments related to gender/race, verbal/physical threats, employee absenteeism, weaknesses in institutional communication, increases in gossip and rumour mechanism, personal conflicts, fights for staff position and promotion, abusive management, unhealthy organizational climate, vertical organizational structure, injustice in reward and appreciation, abuse of organizational power, excessive workload, and work-life imbalance (Appelbaum & Roy-Girard, 2007; Carlock, 2013; Friedman, 2005; Frost, 2003; Goldman, 2006; Kusy & Holloway, 2009; Musacco, 2009; Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2010). In addition to organizational factors, individual factors classified as toxic employee/leader behaviors and personality traits can also be effective (Appelbaum & Roy-Girard, 2007; Carlock, 2013; Friedman, 2005; Frost, 2003; Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Musacco, 2009; Pelletier, 2009; Pelletier, 2012).

Various classifications of individual factors are available in the relevant literature. Frost (2003) addresses organizational toxicity in the dimensions of intention, incompetence, infidelity, insensitivity, intrusion, institutional forces, and inevitability; Lipman-Blumen (2005) handles organizational toxicity in the dimensions of destructive behaviors and dysfunctional personal qualities; Schmidt (2008) explains it in the dimensions of self-promotion, abusive supervision, unpredictability, narcissism, and authoritarian leadership; Pelletier (2009) discusses it in the dimensions of attack on followers' self-esteem, social exclusion, ideology of divisiveness, abusiveness, threat to followers' security, lack of integrity, and laissez-faire leadership; Kusy & Holloway (2009) addresses it in the dimensions of shaming, passive hostility, and team sabotage; Leet (2011) discusses organizational toxicity in the dimensions of bullying, aggression, arrogance, deceit and greed; and finally Carlock (2013) handles organizational toxicity under the dimensions of political deviation, individual aggression, and toxic leadership.

According to Frost (2003) toxicity refers to the elements that could poison someone or a whole institution. These elements are called toxins that comprise four different types of behaviors which are narcissist (Frost, 2003; Lubit, 2003; Riley, Hatfield, Nicely, Keller-Glaze and Steele, 2011; Schmidt, 2008), aggressive (Carlock, 2013; Leet, 2011; Pelletier, 2009), unethical (Lubit, 2003) and rigid (Gangel, 2007; Lubit, 2003; Schmidt, 2008). Narcissistic behaviors named as the first toxin are described with the situations of being arrogant, acting presumptuously, looking down on others and considering them as worthless, lack of conscience and empathy, humiliating others, the desire to control others and dominate them, considering important for only oneself, being greatly fond of oneself, self-admiration and appraisal, pretentiousness, social status, looking beautiful, believing that they are better than others in intelligence and creativity, and being self-centered (Goldman, 2009; Lubit, 2003; Twenge & Campbell, 2010).

The situations of dominating and controlling other people; exhibiting jealous behaviors; forcing others to be a side between groups; creating a culture of fear within the institution; not trusting others; exhibiting cruel, merciless and tyrannical behaviors; defaming and spreading baseless rumors are described (Lubit, 2003) as the second toxin "aggressive behaviors". Unethical behaviors are associated with behaviors of expecting works

from employees apart from their duties, preventing employees from using their personal rights, increasing the burden of their works unfairly, violating the rules and the legislation, not keeping the given promises, presenting others' opinions as your own ones (Frost, 2003; Lubit, 2003). The fourth toxin forming the concept of organizational toxicity is rigid behaviors. This toxin can occur in the form of exhibiting behaviors of discourtesy, showing no respect to other people, disrespecting mischievously, saying offending words, having bursts of emotions which could give damage to the workplace, and exhibiting capricious behaviors (Frost, 2003).

Development of Hypotheses

The relation of organizational toxicity with individual variables in the literature is assisted with various research results. For example, Holloway & Kusy (2010) detected resignation in employees who perceived organizational toxicity; a decrease in situations of spending time at workplace and in their loyalty to the institution; a decline in work quality, effort and performance; and a rise in the rate of having anxiety. Also, Pelletier (2012) reached the finding that leader toxicity decreased the employees' self-esteem; caused lack of integrity; caused inequality, separatism, exploitation and the perception of social exclusion. And Jonason, Slomski & Partyka (2012) revealed that there was a relationship between rigid tactics (such as threats) and the toxic employee's qualities including Machiavellism and psychopath qualities; soft tactics (such as paying compliments) and the toxic employee's qualities including Machiavellism and narcissistic qualities. Kulik, Cregan, Metz & Brown (2009), too, revealed that individuals who struggled with toxicity at institutions lessened the emotional exhaustion of employees.

Organizational toxicity reduces the levels of employees' organizational transparency; it harms their creativity, morale and productivity (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2010; Walton, 2007). Furthermore, it harms organizational loyalty, reduces organizational trust and pleasure with the manager, raises organizational sabotage, disturbs the in-organization communication and organizational social capital (Frost, 2003; Holloway & Kusy, 2010; Lubit, 2003). Based on the theoretical opinions related to the concepts, the perception of organizational toxicity is expected to be affected by some demographic variables. What increases the importance of researching this subject is the fact that there is no encounter with any field work directly related to toxicity in Turkey (Akduman-Yetim, Koşar & Ölmez-Ceylan, 2013; Çelebi, Yıldız & Güner, 2013; Temel-Eğinli & Bitirim, 2008; Kasalak & Aksu, 2016a; Kasalak & Aksu, 2016b; Kırbaç, 2013; Kırbaç & Konan, 2011), academic studies in Turkish literature which concern the concept of toxicity in organizational life are rather new, and the studies which address the concept of toxicity in the fields of management and educational sciences are too few to consider. In the light of the literature, the following research questions were developed:

1. What are the levels of faculty members' perceived organizational toxicity?
2. Does the level of faculty members' perceived organizational toxicity differ according to some demographic (gender, title, academic title, academic fields, and seniority in the current university) variables?

Method

Research Goal

The main purpose of this study is to define the level of perceived organizational toxicity by faculty members.

Sample

Target population of the study was comprised of 3549 faculty members working at various academic units at three state universities in Western Mediterranean Region, Turkey. In order to reduce cost and guarantee for representing sub-groups in the sample and (Balci, 2009), stratified sampling technique based on academic titles was preferred as a probability sampling method. Accordingly, data of this study were collected from 750 faculty members. Because 43 uncorrected data were removed from the data set, questionnaires obtained from 707 faculty members were analyzed. Some samples did not respond some demographic questions. Therefore, the following total numbers may not be the same with the numbers of all samples. Samples include 292 female (41.3%) and 412 male (% 58.3); 60 professors (8.5%), 90 associate professors (12.7%), 139 assistant professors (19.7%), 92 teaching assistants (13%), 253 research assistants (35.8%), 52 lecturers (7.4%), 20 specialists (2.8%). In terms of their academic fields, distributions of samples are as follows: Social and humanity sciences

(347-49%), physical sciences (216-30.6%), and medical sciences (116-16.4%). Their ages range from 22 to 65 years old with the mean of 36.5. Their lengths of services change between 1-40 years with the mean of 8.

Data Collection and Analyses

The data in this study were collected through a questionnaire comprising two sections: (1) demographic questions, (2) the Perceived Organizational Toxicity (POT) Scale.

Perceived Organizational Toxicity (POT) Scale. In order to determine the level of faculty members' perceived organizational toxicity, the Perceived Organizational Toxicity (POT) Scale developed by the researcher was used (Kasalak, 2015). Developing research instruments was carried out in three phases including i) creating the item pool, ii) structuring data collection tool iii) testing data collection tool in terms of validity and reliability (DeVellis, 2003; Hinkin, 1995; Schwab, 1980). In the first phase, both induction and deduction techniques were used. Qualitative data obtained 40 faculty members through snowball/chain sampling in a state university were used for induction, and relate literature (Carrington, 2012; Carlock, 2013; Doriane & Manon, 2013; Frost, 2003; Frost, 2004; Kiefer & Barclay, 2012; King, 2010; Kusy & Holloway, 2009; Lubit, 2003; Leet, 2011; Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Martens, Gagne & Brown, 2003; Pelletier, 2009; Riley et al., 2011; Schmidt, 2008; Sember & Sember, 2009) was used for deduction. In the second phase, items within the pool were submitted to nine experts, four of whom work in the field of educational sciences, two of whom work in the field of organizational psychology, two of whom work in the field of psychology, one of whom works in the field of statistics in order to determine the tools' content validity (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989). In addition, a pilot study was conducted with a sample consisting of 85 faculty members working in the same state university dated November 1-30, 2014. Through this pilot study, samples are asked to examine all the statements in the pool in terms of meaning, phrase, concept and experience whether they are suitable or not. After having expert's opinions and the results of pilot study, three draft research instruments were formed. The first draft instrument called perceived organizational toxicity comprises 40 items. The second draft instrument called perceived effects of organizational toxicity comprises 25 items. The scale was marked on a five-point Likert-type scale [Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Frequently (4), and Always (5)].

To get evidence for the construct validity of the instrument, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was applied. The scale was composed of 16 items and 4 sub-scales with 4 items. Naming of these sub-scales was used Lubit's (2003) classification. Name of the sub-scales and their factor loadings are as follows: (1) Toxicity based on narcissist behaviors (TBNB) with the factor loadings in the range of 0.723-0.785, (2) Toxicity based on aggressive behaviors (TBAB) with the factor loadings in the range of 0.662-0.836, (3) Toxicity based on unethical behaviors (TBUB) with the factor loadings in the range of 0.627-0.816, and (4) Toxicity based on rigid behaviors (TBRB) with the factor loadings in the range of 0.645-0.829. The scale explained 70.451% of total variance as a result of factor analysis, and the percentage of variance explained by each sub-scale was 47.836 (eigenvalue=7.654), 8.566 (eigenvalue=1.371), 7.444 (eigenvalue=1.191), and 6.604 (eigenvalue=1.057), respectively. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale was .927, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for four sub-scales were 0.880; 0.845; 0.834 and 0.854, respectively (Table 1). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was calculated in order to verify a four factor structure conforming to the data. Fit indexes were calculated [$\chi^2=432.91$, $df=98$, $p=0.0000$, (χ^2/df)= 4.42, RMSEA=0.070, GFI=0.93, AGFI=0.90, NFI=0.94, CFI=0.95 and SRMR=0.044]. Because the value of χ^2/df was seen too close to 5, modification was applied between item 10 and item 11 in order to improve the model. After the modification, the fit indexes were calculated [$\chi^2=346.43$, $df=97$, $p=0.0000$, (χ^2/df)= 3.57, RMSEA=0.060, GFI=0.94, AGFI=0.92, NFI=0.95, CFI=0.96 and SRMR=0.037]. These values are acceptable (Hair, Anderson, Tahtam & Black, 1998). Construct reliability and variance extracted within composite reliability were calculated in order to provide convergent validity. For the first sub-scale, construct reliability is 0.88 and variance extracted is 0.65; for the second sub-scale, construct reliability is 0.83 and variance extracted is 0.55; for the third sub-scale, construct reliability is 0.84 and variance extracted is 0.56, and for the fourth sub-scale, construct reliability is 0.86 variance extracted is 0.60. As evident from these figures, construct reliability for the all sub-scales is above .70, and variance extracted is above .50, which indicates that while the internal consistency of the sub-scales constituting the POT Scale is strong, their explanatory power is limited (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 1. Factor loads of Perceived Organizational Toxicity (POT) Scale's items

| | | Factor loadings | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| In my organization/work environment/ institution | | Factor 1: TBNB | Factor 2: TBAB | Factor 3: TBUB | Factor 4: TBRB |
| I 1 | Disdainful manners are performed. | 0.723 | | | |
| I 2 | Insulting messages are given. | 0.785 | | | |
| I 3 | Sarcastic statements are used. | 0.748 | | | |
| I 4 | The works that are done are despised. | 0.758 | | | |
| I 5 | Individuals are forced to be a si among groups. | | 0.662 | | |
| I 6 | Groundless rumours spread. | | 0.836 | | |
| I 7 | Jealous behaviors are performed. | | 0.664 | | |
| I 8 | Individuals are slandered. | | 0.794 | | |
| I 9 | Rules and regulations are violated. | | | 0.627 | |
| I 10 | Individuals are supposed to do works beyond their duties. | | | 0.816 | |
| I 11 | The use of personal rights is prevented. | | | 0.755 | |
| I 12 | The workload is unfairly increased. | | | 0.763 | |
| I 13 | Rude behaviors are displayed. | | | | 0.829 |
| I 14 | Disrespectful behaviors are performed mischievously. | | | | 0.716 |
| I 15 | Uncourteous attitudes are displayed. | | | | 0.806 |
| I 16 | Offensive words are expressed. | | | | 0.645 |
| Eigenvalue | | 7.654 | 1.371 | 1.191 | 1.057 |
| Percent variance explained (%) | | 47.836% | 8.566% | 7.444% | 6.604 % |
| Cronbach Alpha | | 0.880 | 0.845 | 0.834 | 0.854 |

The data were collected from the faculty members working in three state universities by the researcher herself between December 2014-March 2015 with the thought that the researcher's control would increase, and important savings would be provided in terms of time and cost (Büyüköztürk, 2005). The package programs of SPSS 22.0 and LISREL 9.2 were used for all the analysis. Parametric hypothesis tests are applied based on homogeneity of variances between and among groups.

Results and Discussion

Sub-scales of perceived organizational toxicity are taken as dependent variable in this study. One type of procedures was applied using this variable: Two new categories of this metric variable were obtained using cluster analysis. The findings of the cluster analysis are given in Table 1. The first cluster represents the faculty members who perceived the organizational toxicity and the second cluster represents those who do not. As illustrated in Table 2, dependent variable has a discriminative feature since there is a statistically meaningful difference between Cluster 1 and Cluster 2.

Faculty members have the highest point in the item "The workload is unfairly increased. (I12)." (M= 3.02; SD= 1.12) while the lowest in the item "The use of personal rights is prevented." (M= 2.19; SD= 1.16). As illustrated in Table 3, total mean for organizational toxicity is 2.56. Organizational toxicity is the strongest in the sub-scale "toxicity based on aggressive behaviors" (M= 2.68; SD= 0.99) while the weakest in the sub-scale "toxicity based on rigid behaviors" (M= 2.50; SD= 0.79) and "toxicity based on narcissist behaviors" (M= 2.47; SD= 0.92). Organizational toxicity was measured by a five-point Likert-type scale. All the mean values are, however, below the midpoint of the five-point scale (Table 3).

Table 2. Cluster descriptors: Differences in mean values for faculty members' perceived organizational toxicity

| Sub-scales | Cluster 1. Those who perceived the organizational toxicity | | Cluster 2. Those who don't | | F |
|------------|--|------|-------------------------------|------|-------------|
| | Mean (M) | N | M | N | |
| | Narcissist | 3.40 | 282 | 1.85 | |
| Aggressive | 3.63 | 300 | 1.97 | 407 | 1570.815*** |
| Unethical | 3.60 | 280 | 1.96 | 427 | 1508.337*** |
| Rigid | 3.23 | 308 | 1.94 | 399 | 1301.684*** |
| Total | 3.27 | 309 | 2.02 | 398 | 1368.008*** |

***p<.001

Table 3. Comparisons for the sub-scales in organizational toxicity of the faculty members (n=707)

| Sub-scales | SS | t | Pt | r | Pr | Sub-scales | M | SD |
|--------------------|--------|-------|----------|-------|----------|------------|------|------|
| Narcissist | - 0.84 | - | 0.000*** | 0.618 | 0,000*** | Narcissist | 2.46 | 0.91 |
| Aggressive | | 6.598 | | | | | | |
| Narcissist | - 0.87 | - | 0.000*** | 0.579 | 0,000*** | Aggressive | 2.67 | 0.98 |
| Unethical | | 4.291 | | | | | | |
| Narcissist – Rigid | 0.75 | 1.234 | 0.218 | 0.625 | 0,000*** | Unethical | 2.61 | 0.97 |
| Aggressive | - 0.90 | 1.970 | 0.049* | 0.578 | 0,000*** | Rigid | 2.50 | 0.97 |
| Unethical | | | | | | | | |
| Aggressive – Rigid | 0.85 | - | 0.000*** | 0.561 | 0,000*** | Total | 2.56 | 0.76 |
| | | 5.389 | | | | | | |
| Unethical – Rigid | 0.88 | - | 0.002*** | 0.518 | 0,000*** | | | |
| | | 3.187 | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Table 4 shows the findings on comparisons for faculty members' perceived organizational toxicity in terms of independent variables. In this context, three different tests (t and F) were applied based on meeting criteria of the related tests. As seen in the table, t test was applied for the variable of gender; ANOVA was applied for the variables of academic title, academic fields, and seniority in the current university.

No significant differences are found in the three subscales (TBNB, TBAB and TBUB) of organizational toxicity in the variables gender while significant differences are found in the subscale of TBRB. Although means of the female faculty members participating in the study are higher than the male participants in all the sub-scales, only the sub-scale "TBRB" is found statistically different at the alpha level 0.05. Academic title is another demographic variable related to organizational toxicity.

According to Scheffe test, academic title is found a significant variable at the alpha level 0.001 for only the subscale "TBUB". Professors and associate professors get higher mean than assistant professors in TBUB. In addition, research assistants get higher mean than assistant professors. According to the ANOVA test results, means of academic fields are statistically different in all the sub-scales.

Participants whose fields are at social and humanity sciences get higher mean than the group of physical sciences at the alpha level 0.001 in all the subscales. Seniority in the current university is the last demographic variable related to organizational toxicity. Seniority in the current university is found a significant variable at the alpha level 0.05 for only the subscale "TBNB". Participants having length of service 6-10 years get higher mean than the length of service 2 years and above in TBNB.

Conclusion

One other matter is that all the means of organizational toxicity sub-scales were found to be very low with the highest mean value being 2.47 on a five point scale. Organizational toxicity is the strongest in the sub-scale "toxicity based on aggressive behaviors" while the lowest in the sub-scales "toxicity based on rigid and narcissist behaviors". It can be stated that the reasons why toxicity based on aggressive behavior is perceived at the highest level are that the working environment at higher education institutions is based on competition rather than cooperation, communication channels between instructors are not open, and thus instructors have trouble

expressing themselves. This finding of the study supports the findings of Mete (2013) who indicates that instructors start unsubstantiated rumors, gossip by conforming to the group psychology, and make a big deal about problems that emerge or distort them.

Table 4. Descriptive and inferential statistics on faculty members' perceived organizational toxicity in terms of independent variables (n=707)

| Variable | Level of variable | n | M | t / F | p | Significant Difference | M | t / F | p | Significant Difference | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|------------------------|------------|-------|--------|------------------------|-----|
| Toxicity based on narcissist behaviors | Gender (t) | Female (n=292) | 29 | 2.49 | 0.417 | .677 | - | 2.70 | 0.611 | .542 | - |
| | | Male (n=412) | 41 | 2.46 | | | | 2.66 | | | |
| | Title (F) | A.Professors and associate professors | 152 | 2.60 | 2.069 | 0.103 | - | 2.86 | 2.386 | 0.068 | - |
| | | B.Assistant professors | 139 | 2.36 | | | | 2.63 | | | |
| | | C.Teaching assistants | 162 | 2.50 | | | | 2.66 | | | |
| | | D.Research assistants | 253 | 2.42 | | | | 2.68 | | | |
| | Academic Fields (F) | A.Social and humanity sciences | 347 | 2.59 | 5.099 | .006* | A-B | 2.84 | 8.230 | .000*** | A-B |
| | | B.Physical sciences | 216 | 2.35 | | | | 2.50 | | | |
| | | C.Medical sciences | 116 | 2.41 | | | | 2.62 | | | |
| | Seniority in the current university (F) | A. 2 years and above | 180 | 2.29 | 3.388 | 0.018* | C-A | 2.50 | 3.081 | 0.027 | - |
| | | B. 3-5 years | 177 | 2.53 | | | | 2.67 | | | |
| | | C. 6-10 years | 126 | 2.59 | | | | 2.78 | | | |
| D. 11 years and more | | 193 | 2.49 | 2.79 | | | | | | | |
| Toxicity based on unethical behaviors | Gender (t) | Female | 29 | 2.64 | 0.642 | .521 | - | 2.58 | 2.178 | .030* | A-B |
| | | Male | 41 | 2.59 | | | | 2.45 | | | |
| | Title (F) | A.Professors and associate professors | 152 | 2.66 | 6.357 | .000*** | A-B B-D | 2.53 | 1.770 | 0.151 | - |
| | | B.Assistant professors | 139 | 2.34 | | | | 2.36 | | | |
| | | C.Teaching assistants | 162 | 2.55 | | | | 2.55 | | | |
| | | D.Research assistants | 253 | 2.77 | | | | 2.53 | | | |
| | Academic Fields (F) | A.Social and humanity sciences | 347 | 2.73 | 4.146 | .016* | A-B | 2.63 | 11.647 | 0.000*** | A-B |
| | | B.Physical sciences | 216 | 2.50 | | | | 2.31 | | | |
| | | C.Medical sciences | 116 | 2.55 | | | | 2.53 | | | |
| | Seniority in the current university (F) | A. 2 years and above | 180 | 2.58 | 1.255 | 0.289 | - | 2.38 | 2.466 | 0.061 | - |
| | | B. 3-5 years | 177 | 2.53 | | | | 2.48 | | | |
| | | C. 6-10 years | 126 | 2.74 | | | | 2.59 | | | |
| D. 11 years and more | | 193 | 2.64 | 2.56 | | | | | | | |

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Gender is found a significant variable in the sub-scale “toxicity based on rigid behaviors” in organizational toxicity of the faculty members. The female faculty members are higher than the male faculty members in the sub-scale “toxicity based on rigid behaviors”. Male and female employees perceive and evaluate their work environments differently due to differences in gender-role socialization (Pelit & Pelit, 2014). While women’s perspective on working life is relationship-oriented, men’s is work-oriented (Lambert, 1991). Therefore, women who prefer more gentle expressions and give importance to details may have the perception that organizational toxicity results from strict behaviors more than men.

Academic title is found a significant variable in the sub-scale “toxicity based on unethical behaviors” in organizational toxicity of the faculty members. Professors and associate professors, and research assistants get higher mean than assistant professors in TBUB. This dimension explains the intoxication of universities with unethical behaviors by expecting works from instructors apart from their duties, preventing the use of personal rights, increasing the workload unfairly, and violating the rules and the legislation. Hence, the fact that the job definitions of research assistants are not clear, they are expected to do the tasks given by faculty members and administrators, and they are placed at the lowest level of the academic hierarchy may result in perceiving toxicity arising from unethical behavior more than assistant professors. This finding supports the findings of Tamer (1995) who states that research assistants act as a secretary and deal with the personal affairs of the faculty members, and also the findings of Korkut, Yalçinkaya & Mustan (1999) who point out that research assistants complain about the uncertainty of their job definition. In addition, this finding also supports the view of EğitimSen (2005) which indicates that faculty members have started to regard research assistants as temporary staff who supervise exams and counsel students, prepare syllabi and exam schedules, read exam papers, and teach applied courses and laboratory courses. The findings of a study conducted with military personnel show that perception of toxic leadership is higher in people at subordinate level (Reed and Bullies, 2009). By strengthening and protecting the personal rights of research assistants, and by eliminating the ambiguity in their job definition, a decrease in their level of perception of toxicity stemming from unethical behaviors can be achieved.

This study indicates that academic fields are found a significant variable in all sub-scales of organizational toxicity of the faculty members. Participants whose fields are at social and humanity sciences get higher mean than the group of physical sciences in the all sub-scales of organizational toxicity. The fact that study fields and issues of instructors who work in the area of social sciences and humanities focus on human and human relationships can be the reason why they perceive organizational toxicity more. This finding holds similarities with the findings of Tanoğlu, Arıcıoğlu & Kocabaş (2007) who state that instructors who work in social sciences are exposed to intimidation behaviors more.

Seniority in the current university is found a significant variable in the sub-scale “toxicity based on narcissist behaviors” in organizational toxicity of the faculty members. Faculty members having length of service 6-10 years get higher mean than the length of service 2 years and above in TBNB. It can be stated that employees who are new in their job or at the beginning of their career must identify with the organization, have the idea of being idealistic intensely, and focus on positive organizational behaviors in order to make progress in their career (Eren, 2004). However, with the increase in instructors’ professional experience it is possible that they can get to know the corporate culture better, and thus realize the intoxication cases caused by narcissistic behaviors in the organization.

As a result of these, it is believed that both the measurement tools would contribute to the relevant literature. When the studies consisting of the toxicity concept at the workplace are examined, it is seen that the scales that are indigenous to the continents of America and the Europe more are developed (Kiefer & Barclay, 2012; Kusy & Holloway, 2009; Leet, 2011; Martens, Gagne & Brown, 2003; Pelletier, 2012; Schmidt, 2008). Along with the fact that the scale which belong to different cultures are adapted to Turkish, especially in the fields of Turkish management and organization sciences, there is criticism for the inability to make realistic observations which are specific to the social context of the concept and for detaining the understanding of the facts. Thus, it could be considered as useful with regard to the development of measuring tool which is indigenous to the society, and to the understanding of the organizational behavior patterns. In addition, repeating these kinds of researches at institutions which have different qualities is regarded as significant in terms of generalizing the findings. Moreover, using data collecting tools which are developed for this research by the researcher in further studies is expected to be tested for validity and reliability. In addition, the fact that the research was conducted especially in higher education level could be regarded as an important contribution to literature because when the literature is examined, it is understood that the toxicity in workplace is examined in the healthcare field (Roter, 2011); in the education field (Bolton, 2005; Buehler, 2009; Parish-Duehn, 2008); in the army field (Aubrey, 2013; Black, 2015; Mueller, 2012; Schmidt, 2008; Steele, 2011) and at the non-profit institutions

(Hitchcock, 2015). Hence, this research could present clues intended for understanding the social dynamics in higher education institutions.

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