

Anadolu Üniversitesi  
Açıköğretim Fakültesi  
Öğrencilerinin Örgütsel  
Bağlılıkları\*

Organizational Commitment of  
Anadolu University Open  
Education Faculty Students'

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ÖZET

Uzaktan öğretim çağdaş ve yeni eğitim teknolojilerinin bir boyutudur ve uzaktan öğretim uygulamalarının bazı kavramsal dayanakları vardır. Bunlar; yeni eğitim-öğretim olanağı yaratma, iş-egitim bütünlüğünü sağlama, eğitim ve öğretimde demokratikleşme, yaşam boyu eğitim, bireysel olgulara dönüklük, kurumlardan etkili yararlanma, teknoloji-egitim bütünlüşmesi, birey ve toplum gereksinmelerine yönelme, üç boyutlu bütünlüşmeyi esas alma, büyük kitlelere ulaşma, bireysel-kitlesel öğretim bütünlüşğü, eğitim isteğı ve mali olanak dengesidir.

Türkiye'de Anadolu Üniversitesi bünyesinde 1982 yılından itibaren uzaktan öğretim yöntemiyle eğitim veren İktisat, İşletme ve Açıköğretim Fakültesi bugün 1.000.000'a yakın öğrencisi ile eğitim-öğretimi sürdürmektedir.

Çalışmada amaç; Anadolu Üniversitesi İktisat, İşletme ve Açıköğretim Fakültesi'nde öğrenim gören öğrencilerin fakültelerine olan örgütsel bağlılık düzeylerini Meyer ve Allen modelinde yer alan duygusal, devam ve normatif bağlılık kapsamında belirleyebilmektir.

Fakültelerin başarılarının artması için öğrencilerinin fakültelerine olan örgütsel bağlılıklarının üst düzeyde olması gerekmektedir. İktisat, İşletme ve Açıköğretim Fakültesi öğrencilerinin örgütsel bağlılıklarını belirleyebilmek için öğrencilere, Meyer ve Allen tarafından geliştirilen "Örgütsel Bağlılık Ölçeğı" kullanılarak anket uygulanmıştır. Çalışmada örgütsel bağlılık; duygusal bağlılık, devam bağlılığı ve normatif bağlılık olarak ele alınmıştır. İktisat-İşletme ve Açıköğretim Fakültesi öğrencilerinin örgütsel bağlılıklarını belirleyebilmek için yapılan anket Eskişehir'de ikamet eden ve rastlantsal yöntemle seçilen 500 öğrenciye yüz yüze görüşme tekniğı ile uygulanmış, anket dökümleri SPSS programı kullanılarak bilgisayara yüklenmiş, anket sonuçlarının dökümü frekans testi, t-testi ve Anova testi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçta; Açıköğretim Fakültesi öğrencilerinin fakültelerine yönelik duygusal, devam ve normatif bağlılık düzeylerine ilişkin görüşleri incelendiğinde en yüksek düzeyde devam bağlılığının yer aldığı görülmüştür. Cinsiyete göre devam bağlılığı ortalamasının kadınlarda, yaşa göre devam bağlılığının 30-40 yaş, normatif bağlılığın 17-22 yaş aralığında yüksek olduğu, duygusal bağlılık ortalamasında yaş aralıkları arasında önemli bir fark görülmediğı saptanmıştır. Medeni duruma göre ise devam bağlılığı ortalamasının evlilerde, duygusal ve normatif bağlılık ortalamasının ise bekarlarda yüksek olduğu, sınıflara göre ise duygusal ve devam bağlılığının dördüncü sınıf öğrencilerinde, normatif bağlılık ortalamasının ise üçüncü sınıf öğrencilerinde daha yüksek olduğu belirlenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Anadolu Üniversitesi, uzaktan eğitim, açıköğretim, açıköğretim öğrencileri, örgütsel bağlılık.

**Çalışmanın türü:** Araştırma

ABSTRACT

Distance education program is a dimension of contemporary and new education technologies. Concepts and applications in this field are the results of a series of educational demands and developments in various communication and education technologies. Distance education applications have some conceptual bases. These are creating new education opportunities, realizing work-education unity, getting democratic in education, lifelong education, tendency to individual matters, effective use of institutions, integration of technology and education, tendency to individual and social needs, taking three dimensional integration as the main principle (publishing, printed materials and face to face education), reaching maximum mass, individual and mass education integrity and education demand and financial matters balance.

Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculties, which have been giving education within Anadolu University since 1982 in Turkey, are carrying on education with nearly 1.000.000 students. Open education system in Anadolu University is an integration of printed course books, supporting TV-radio programs, Video conference, CD-Rom, e-learning, Voice books, Academic counseling services in which face to face teaching is carried out.

The aim of this study is to determine organizational commitment levels of students who have been studying at Anadolu University Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculties in the scope of affective, continuance and nominative commitment in Allen&Meyer model.

In the study, organizational commitment of the Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculty students, who are receiving education by means of distance education, to their faculties is dealt after introducing Anadolu University

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Distance Education system which gives higher education via distance education method in Turkey. In order to increase the success level of faculties it is required for students to have high level of organizational commitment to their faculties. A questionnaire has been applied by using "Organizational Commitment Scale", developed by Meyer&Allen to determine organizational commitments of Economics, Business Administration and Open Education students. Organizational commitment is dealt with as affective, continuance and normative commitment. The questionnaire was applied face to face to randomly chosen 500 students living in Eskişehir and the data was downloaded to the computer by using SPSS program and the results were analyzed in terms of demographic features (gender, age, marital status, years of study, work and income level) of students by using frequency test, t- test and ANOVA test. As a result of these analyses, when the comments of Open Education Faculty students on levels of affective, continuance and normative commitment to their faculties were examined, it has been revealed that continuance commitment level has the highest rate.

In this study, continuance (necessity oriented) commitment comes first, affective (desire oriented) commitment comes second and normative (obligation oriented) commitment comes last contrary to the literature. This situation is related to the students' demographic characteristics and the fact that the participants who constitute the sampling of the study are the students of a faculty, which provides education via distance education method. Industrialization, rapid increase of population and economic problems have raised the demand for education and along with the traditional ways, distance education has been also needed. Aiming at meeting the needs for education and providing equal opportunity, distance education creates an education opportunity for people who cannot receive formal education, has insufficient income, works full time, who are relatively older and married. It is quite natural for people in these conditions to be connected to an organization because they need it.

In this study, the organizational commitment of students to their faculties was analyzed in terms of affective, continuance and normative commitment. The distribution of affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of students according to their genders was analyzed and it has been seen that continuance commitment level is higher among female participants. When it comes to the commitment levels according to age, the continuance commitment is higher between 30-40 age range, normative commitment is higher in 17-22, and considering the affective commitment, there were no significant difference among the age ranges. The high continuance commitment level between the ages 30-40, which represent the middle age group, is an indicator of the need for the organization. When the continuance commitment level according to marital status was analyzed, continuance commitment is higher among married participants and affective and normative commitment average is higher among single participants. Continuance and affective commitment level is higher among fourth graders and normative commitment is higher among third graders when commitment levels were analyzed according to year of study. Students who also work have higher commitment levels of each dimension than the students who do not work. As to the income level, students who get low income have higher average commitment levels of each dimension than the students who have high income.

When the data is considered, it is obvious that Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculties, which have been giving education via distance education method since 1982, are necessary in Turkish education system and that Anadolu University meets this necessity. When the students' organizational commitment level is considered; although continuance commitment comes in the first place, affective and normative commitment averages are also notable, which indicates that students have organizational commitment to their faculties. When the statements, which best describe the students' organizational commitment to their faculties in Table II are examined, students responded as "Agree" and "Totally agree" for the questions "Right now, staying with my faculty is a matter of necessity as much as desire", "Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my faculty now" and "It would be too costly for me to leave my faculty now" which are related to continuance commitment; for the questions "I enjoy discussing my faculty with people outside it", "I do not feel like part of the family at my faculty", "I do not feel a *strong* sense of belonging to *my* faculty" and "I really feel as if this faculty's problems are my own", which are related to affective commitment; and for the question "I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one faculty" which is related to normative commitment.

**Keywords:** Anadolu University, distance education, open education, open education students, organizational commitment.

**The type of research:** Research

## INTRODUCTION

Industrialization, rapid increase of population and economic problems have raised the demand for education and along with the traditional ways, distance education has been also needed. Aiming at meeting the needs for education and providing equal opportunity, "distance education is an educational method in which the communication and interaction among educational activity planners, performers and students are provided from a certain center via various media and specially designed teaching units when there is no chance to carry out traditional in-class teaching activities due to the limitations of these traditional teaching-learning methods" (Curabay and Demiray, 2002 : 6).

Distance education is a dimension of contemporary and new education technologies. Concepts and applications in this field are the results of a series of educational demands and developments in various communication and education technologies. Distance education applications have some conceptual bases. These are creating new education opportunities, realizing work-education unity, getting democratic in education, lifelong education, tendency to individual matters, effective use of institutions, integration of technology and education, tendency to individual and social needs, taking three dimensional integration as

the main principle (publishing, printed materials and face to face education), reaching maximum mass, individual and mass education integrity and education demand and financial matters balance (Alkan,1998 : 24).

Anadolu University started higher education in a contemporary sense of distance education for the first time in 1982 with Open Education Faculty in order to disburden the higher education institutions and expand education opportunities. Academic staff of Communication Sciences Faculty and expert staff of “Education with TV” Institute started to conduct the mission that Anadolu University had undertaken (Tekin, Demiray and Barkan, 1987 : 28-29).

The aim of this study is to determine organizational commitment levels of students who have been studying at Anadolu University Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculties in the scope of affective, continuance and normative commitment in Allen&Meyer model.

### **Open Education System in Turkey**

The Open Education system, which had started with Economics-Business Management License Program, has continued to serve under the names of Faculties of Open Education, Business Administration and Economics. Faculties of Business Administration and Economics are responsible for 4-year-programs and Faculty of Open Education is responsible for 2-year degree, license completion, certificate programs and other mass education tasks. Faculty of Open Education is also responsible for providing certain services such as books, radio and TV programs, computers, academic counseling, organizations, exams and student affairs to the Faculties and Schools that are carrying out distance education and some units, which accept foreign students (Hakan and et all 1996: 1).

By 2007/2008 Education Year; 910.033 students are studying at departments and programs in Faculties that gives education with Open Education system.

Open Education Faculty includes associate degree programs which are Information Management (through the Internet), Banking and Insurance, Office Management and Secretarial Training, Foreign Trade, Home Management, Public Relations, Theology, Local Governments, Accounting, Management of Health Institutions, Social Sciences, Tourism and Hotel Management, Agriculture, Veterinary Sciences, Laboratory Assistant Training, Nursing, Retail Sales and Store Management, Vocational School of Law, Armed Forces Career Training , Naval Career Training , Air Forces Career Training , Gendarmerie Career Training , Police Career Training and Bachelors Degree Programs which are English Language Teaching (first two years, face-to-face, last two years, distance education), Preschool Teaching and degree completion program of Primary School Teaching.

Open education system in Anadolu University is an integration of printed course books, supporting TV-radio programs, Video conference, CD-Rom, e-learning, Voice books, Academic counseling services in which face to face teaching is carried out.

Academic counseling services, which many other universities in Turkey also supports and in which face to face education is provided, are conducted in 74 centers in university campuses, in the evenings and weekends, by over 700 instructors. Students reinforce the subjects that they had difficulty in with the help of instructors and have the opportunity to interact with other students.

In Open Education system, students contact with their faculties via 89 Open Education Faculty Bureaus in city centers of Turkey and Lefkosia and students who are registered to the Western European Program contact with the Bureau in Cologne. The services which Open Education Faculty Bureaus provide to the students are registration, registration renewal, registration deletion, book delivery, preparing student ID cards and documents, record of success and transcript, document update, military concerns of male students, certificate and diploma.

The Central Bureau in Eskisehir Anadolu University Yunusemre Campus is the main center of all other bureaus. Along with the responsibilities of other bureaus, it provides the coordination of Open Education Faculty Bureaus and organization of student remissions and transfers.

Besides, for Turkish citizens living in European countries, education in four-year programs of Business Administration, Economics, Public Administration and two-year programs of Foreign Trade, Tourism and Hotel Management, Public Relations and Information Management has been available since

1987 to meet their cultural and educational needs, which is called Western Europe Project (<http://www.anadolu.edu.tr>, retrieved on 17 April, 2009 )

### Organizational Commitment

An organization is a system of the conscious and coordinated activities of at least two or more individuals. According to another definition, an organization is a system of planned units that are intentionally formed to realize preset goals. Organizations have three elements; individuals who will communicate with one another, a common goal and desire to realize this goal. Organizations are systems that are founded to realize a common goal. The function of setting a goal is that it leads the behaviors of the individuals and groups in the organization and guides their efforts. It increases their efficiency and productivity. And also it affects the quality and the content of the planning process. It creates a standard which is used in assessment and supervision of organizational activities. Communication is one of the main elements of an organization. In order to realize a common goal, it is required to be known and understood by the people concerned first and this only possible with a healthy communication (<http://www.benimblog.com>, retrieved on 18 April, 2009).

Organizational commitment shows the strength of the commitment which a working person feels for the organization he or she works in. This concept has become a field of study in many countries for the last 30 years. This subject was first studied by Whyet in 1956. Later, it has been developed by many researchers such as Porter, Mowday, Steers, Allen, Meyer, and Becker (Gül, 2002: 37).

Morrow states that there are over 25 different definitions for organizational commitment (Oliver, 1990: 10). Some the definitions that are compatible with this study are;

- In its broadest sense, organizational commitment includes the idea of loyalty and commitment (Morris, Lydka and O'Creavy, 1993 : 21-42).
- Organizational commitment is an attitude or inclination that attaches individuals' identities to the organization (Sheldon, 1971 : 143-150).
- Organizational commitment is an integrity composed of the desire to stay as an organization member, the desire to work hard for the organization and the belief in the values and goals of the organization (Dubin, Champoux, and Porter, 1971 : 411-421).
- According to Celep, organizational commitment is the behaviors of individuals towards the goal and values rather than the formal and normative expectations of an organization from its members (Bayram, 2005 : 128 ).
- Organizational commitment is to become one with the goal and values of the organization as primary objective without financial concerns with a desire to stay in (Balay, 2000 : 16).

In the early studies, organizational commitment was defined as seizing the values and goals of the organization, trying to be a part of the organization and feeling like a strong member of a family (Boylu, Pelit, and Güçer, 2007 : 55-74). However, later it has been dealt with multi-dimensionally as affective, continuance and normative commitment by Meyer and Allen (Meyer and Allen, 1987: 60), (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001: 299-326). In affective commitment, individuals stay in the organization because they want to do so.

In continuance commitment they stay because they need to do so and in normative commitment, they stay because they feel responsibility or obligation. Therefore, individuals may experience these psychological situations in different levels. For example, some of them may feel strong necessity and obligation to stay in the organization but they may not do it with intrinsic desire or motivation.

On the other hand, some others may not feel any necessity and obligation, yet they still continue to stay in the organization. For this reason, commitment of the individual is a reflection of the sum of these psychological situations (Allen, and Meyer, 1990 : 1-18), (Balay, 2000 :72).

There have also been some studies revealing that there are many variables to effect organizational commitment. Mowday, Porter and Steers have come up with a classification of these variables and stated them under four headlines as personality traits, role and work attributes, work experience and workplace environment. The personality traits factor that Mowday, Porter and Steers identified as a factor to effect commitment can be studied under two sub-headings which are demographic factors and factors related

with work and work life. Demographic factors are analyzed under some titles such as gender, age, marital status, education level, income, length of service and psycho-social features. Factors related with work and work life are stated as desire for success, participant values and expediency values (Boylu, Pelit, and Güçer, 2007: 55-74).

The main element of organizations is individual. To be a member of different groups or organizations is a necessity of social life and a quality peculiar to individuals. Therefore, social life can be defined as organized life. Individuals meet many of their vital needs via organizations. Nowadays, people carry on their lives in various organizations such as schools, clubs, local social groups, companies, state institutions and political parties. An individual's being a social creature means spending most of his life in natural groups or formal organizations.

Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, which is the total field of this study, is a distance education organization. Students represent some of the members of this organization. For Open Education Faculty students who do not get formal education, commitment is very important for their own success and the institution. Open Education Faculty students all over the country maintain their connection with the organization via open education bureaus which are situated in the cities they live in.

And they study via printed course books, supporting TV-radio programs, Video conference, CD-Rom, e-learning, Voice books which are known as distance education materials. In the study; after introducing Anadolu University Distance Education system which gives higher education via distance education method in Turkey, the concepts of organizational commitment and organization are dealt.

And then in the Findings and Comments part, the organizational commitment of the students are determined by evaluating the Questionnaire questions that were asked to the Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculty students, who are receiving education by means of distance education.

## METHODOLOGY

In order to mount up the success of the faculties, organizational commitment of the students should be on the highest level. The questionnaire that was composed of relevant questions based on "Organizational Commitment Scale" developed by Meyer and Allen was applied (Allen and Meyer, 1990: 1-18). The questionnaire has 24 questions. 8 of these questions include demographic information and 16 of them aim at assessing organizational commitment. In this study, organizational commitment is discussed as affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The questionnaire to determine the organizational commitment of Economics, Business Administration and Open Education Faculty students was applied face to face to randomly chosen 500 students living in Eskisehir and the data was downloaded to the computer by using SPSS program. The results were analyzed in terms of demographic features (gender, age, marital status, and years of study, work and income level) of students and it has been revealed in a single table. The commitment of students to their faculties was analyzed and displayed in a table in terms of demographic features by using t- test and Anova test. The rates in these tables were found by taking average of the answers given to the questions related to affective, continuance and normative commitment. If any of these questions was not answered, the average point for that person could not be calculated. For this reason, different numbers of people can be seen when a statistic related to the points in different groups is made.

## FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

**Table 1.** Demographic Features of the Participants

<b>Gender</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	240	48.0
Male	260	52.0
Total	500	100
<b>Age</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
17-22	210	42.0
23-30	270	54.0

31-40	20	4.0
Total	500	100
<b>Marital status</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Married	70	14.0
Single	430	86.0
Total	500	100
<b>Grade</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
One	180	36.0
Two	190	38.0
Three	90	18.0
Four	40	8.0
Total	500	100
<b>Job condition</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Employed	420	84.0
Not employed	80	16.0
Total	500	100
<b>Monthly income</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Minimum wage	30	6.0
450-750 YTL	110	22.0
751-1000 YTL	200	40.0
1001-1500 YTL	120	24.0
1501-2000 YTL	30	6.0
2001 YTL and above	10	2.0
Total	500	100

As seen in Table 1, 48% of Open Education Faculty students, who are the sampling of the study, are female and 52% of them is male. The gender distribution of Open Education Faculty students, who are the total field of this study, is around 500.000 male and 400.000 female.

**Table 2.** Comments of Open Education Faculty Students on Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels Regarding Their Faculty

	Totally disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Totally agree		
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	
<b>AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT SCALE ITEMS</b>	Q9 I enjoy discussing my faculty with people outside it.	10	2,0%	90	18,0%	130	26,0%	220	44,0%	50	10,0%
	Q10 I really feel as if this faculty's problems are my own.	30	6,0%	150	30,0%	110	22,0%	200	40,0%	10	2,0%
	Q11 I think that I could easily become as attached to another faculty as I am to this one.	10	2,0%	40	8,2%	180	36,7%	190	38,8%	70	14,3%
	Q12 I do not feel like part of the family at my faculty	10	2,0%	60	12,0%	150	30,0%	220	44,0%	60	12,0%
	Q13 I do not feel emotionally attached to this faculty.	20	4,1%	120	24,5%	160	32,7%	130	26,5%	60	12,2%
	Q14 This faculty has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	20	4,0%	60	12,0%	170	34,0%	170	34,0%	80	16,0%
	Q15 I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my faculty	10	2,0%	80	16,3%	140	28,6%	220	44,9%	40	8,2%

CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT SCALE ITEMS	Q16 I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my faculty without having another one lined up.	50	10,0%	170	34,0%	180	36,0%	80	16,0%	20	4,0%
	Q17 It would be very hard for me to leave my faculty right now, even if I wanted to.	40	8,0%	80	16,0%	130	26,0%	190	38,0%	60	12,0%
	Q18 Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my faculty now.	20	4,0%	20	4,0%	150	30,0%	240	48,0%	70	14,0%
	Q19 It would be too costly for me to leave my faculty now.	30	6,0%	80	16,0%	100	20,0%	220	44,0%	70	14,0%
	Q20 Right now, staying with my faculty is a matter of necessity as much as desire	10	2,0%	10	2,0%	130	26,5%	240	49,0%	100	20,4%
	Q21 I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this faculty.	50	10,0%	70	14,0%	180	36,0%	150	30,0%	50	10,0%
	Q22 One of the major reasons I continue to study at this faculty is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice — another faculty may not match the overall benefits I have here	20	4,0%	70	14,0%	100	20,0%	190	38,0%	120	24,0%
NORMATIVE COMMITMENT	Q23 If I had another chance to study elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my faculty	40	8,0%	100	20,0%	210	42,0%	100	20,0%	50	10,0%
	Q24 I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one faculty.	20	4,0%	60	12,0%	190	38,0%	190	38,0%	40	8,0%

According to these figures, female and male percentages are close to each other because it was also considered that gender distribution of 500 participants that were chosen randomly should be in line with this ratio.

54% of participants is between the ages of 23-30 and 42% of them is between 17-22. Regarding their marital status, 86% of them is single and 14% of them is married. 38% of the sampling is in their second year 36% of them is in their first year, 18% of them is their third and 8% of them is in their fourth year in their departments. 84% of them stated that they are working and 16% stated that they do not work.

When the fact that Open Education system is an institution that gives education by distance education method is considered, it is a natural outcome that majority of the students has a job. Regarding the participants' income, 40% has 751-1000 YTL, 24% has 1001-1500 YTL and 22% has 450-750 YTL monthly income. This shows that majority of the students belongs to low and middle income brackets considering the income level of Turkey.

In the Table 2, when we analyze the comments of the students about their agreement with the statements that were given related to each commitment type to their faculties, we see that they mostly agree with the statements about continuance commitment and this is followed by the statements about affective and normative commitment respectively.

The mostly agreed statements about continuance commitment are “One of the major reasons I continue to study at this faculty is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice-another faculty may not match the overall benefits I have here.” with a percentage of 24%, “Right now, staying with my faculty is a matter of necessity as much as desire.” with 20.4% and “Too much in my life would

be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my faculty now.” and “It would be too costly for me to leave my faculty now” with a same percentage of 14%.

This shows that Open Education Faculty students are connected to their faculties mainly with continuance commitment, which means that students continue to their departments because they need to do so. However, in affective commitment they continue because they want to do so and in normative commitment, they stay in their departments as they feel an obligation.

**Table 3.** T-Test Results on the Comparison of the Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students According to Their Genders

	Gender	n	Mean	t	p
Affective Commitment Average Score	Female	240	3,4107	0,204	0,839
	Male	230	3,3727		
Continuance Commitment Average Score	Female	240	3,5714	2,184	0,034*
	Male	250	3,2400		
Normative Commitment Average Score	Female	240	3,2708	0,671	0,505
	Male	260	3,1154		

In Table: 3, there are t-test results on the comparison of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty students according to their genders. Since it is  $*P=0,034 < 0,05$ , there is a statistical difference in terms of continuance commitment with 95% confidence interval. Looking at the mean scores, we can see that females have higher scores.

**Table 4.** Anova Test Results on the Comparison of the Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students According to Their Ages

	Age	n	Mean	F	p
Affective Commitment Average Score	17-22	210	3,3878	0,005	0,995
	23-30	240	3,3988		
	31-40	20	3,3571		
	Total	470	3,3921		
Continuance Commitment Average Score	17-22	200	3,4429	1,873	0,165
	23-30	270	3,3228		
	31-40	20	4,0714		
	Total	490	3,4023		
Normative Commitment Average Score	17-22	210	3,3571	0,811	0,451
	23-30	270	3,0556		
	31-40	20	3,2500		
	Total	500	3,1900		

In Table: 4, there are Anova Test results on the comparison of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty students according to their ages. As seen in the table there is no considerable statistical difference in terms of age because all p values are bigger than 0,05.

**Table 5.** T-Test Results on the Comparison of the Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students According to Their Marital Status

	Marital Status	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Affective Commitment Average Score	Married	70	3,1633	,33430	,12635
	Single	400	3,4321	,66653	,10539
Continuance Commitment Average Score	Married	70	3,6735	,66350	,25078
	Single	420	3,3571	,52631	,08121
Normative Commitment Average Score	Married	70	2,7857	,75593	,28571
	Single	430	3,2558	,81191	,12381



In Table: 5, there are t-test results on the comparison of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty students according to their marital status. According to the table, affective and normative commitment levels are higher among single students; however continuance commitment level is higher among married ones.

**Table 6.** Anova Test Results on the Comparison of the Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students According to Their Grades

	Grade	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Affective Commitment Average Score	1	170	3,4538	,59384	,14403	3,1485	3,7591	2,43	4,71
	2	180	3,2778	,77082	,18169	2,8945	3,6611	1,57	4,57
	3	80	3,3571	,37409	,13226	3,0444	3,6699	2,57	3,71
	4	40	3,7143	,57143	,28571	2,8050	4,6236	3,43	4,57
	Total	470	3,3921	,63292	,09232	3,2063	3,5779	1,57	4,71
Continuance Commitment Average Score	1	180	3,3175	,33433	,07880	3,1512	3,4837	2,71	3,86
	2	190	3,3083	,64640	,14829	2,9967	3,6198	1,71	4,00
	3	80	3,5536	,65882	,23293	3,0028	4,1044	2,57	4,29
	4	40	3,9286	,42857	,21429	3,2466	4,6105	3,57	4,43
	Total	490	3,4023	,55149	,07878	3,2439	3,5607	1,71	4,43
Normative Commitment Average Score	1	180	3,2222	,66911	,15771	2,8895	3,5550	2,00	4,50
	2	190	2,9474	,95590	,21930	2,4866	3,4081	1,00	4,50
	3	90	3,5556	,80795	,26932	2,9345	4,1766	2,50	5,00
	4	40	3,3750	,47871	,23936	2,6133	4,1367	3,00	4,00
	Total	500	3,1900	,81372	,11508	2,9587	3,4213	1,00	5,00

In Table: 6, there are Anova Test results on the comparison of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty students according to their grades. According to the table, affective and continuance commitment level is higher among fourth graders while normative commitment level is higher among third graders. The commitment level of students increases in each commitment type as the students' years of study increases.

**Table 7.** T-Test Results on the Comparison of the Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students According to Their Work Status

	Work Status	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Affective Commitment Average Score	Yes	390	3,3590	,66189	,10599
	No	70	3,5918	,49093	,18555
Continuance Commitment Average Score	Yes	410	3,2718	,49673	,07758
	No	70	4,1224	,22480	,08497
Normative Commitment Average Score	Yes	420	3,1310	,84867	,13095
	No	70	3,5714	,53452	,20203

In Table: 7, there are t-test results on the comparison of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty students according to their work status. According to the table, affective and normative commitment levels are higher among the students who work than the students who do not work.

In Table: 8, there are Anova test results on the comparison of the affective, continuance and normative commitment levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty students according to their income level. According to the table, continuance and normative commitment levels are the highest among the students who have low income. However, the commitment levels of the students who have higher income are lower.

**Table 8.** Anova Test Results on The Comparison of The Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Levels of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students According to Their Income Level

	Income	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Affective Commitment Average Score	Min. Wage	30	4,1429	,51508	,29738	2,8633	5,4224	3,71	4,71
	450-750	90	3,6190	,73193	,24398	3,0564	4,1817	2,57	4,57
	751-1000	200	3,3286	,63229	,14138	3,0327	3,6245	1,57	4,57
	1001-1500	90	3,2381	,41033	,13678	2,9227	3,5535	2,71	4,00
	1501-2000	30	2,8571	,24744	,14286	2,2425	3,4718	2,71	3,14
	2001 and above	10	3,4286	.	.	.	.	3,43	3,43
	Total	450	3,3937	,62505	,09318	3,2059	3,5814	1,57	4,71
Continuance Commitment Average Score	Min. Wage	30	3,7143	,24744	,14286	3,0996	4,3290	3,43	3,86
	450-750	110	3,3506	,59715	,18005	2,9495	3,7518	2,14	4,14
	751-1000	200	3,5286	,59374	,13276	3,2507	3,8064	1,71	4,43
	1001-1500	80	3,1607	,59853	,21161	2,6603	3,6611	2,43	4,00
	1501-2000	30	3,0952	,21822	,12599	2,5532	3,6373	2,86	3,29
	2001 and above	10	3,5714	.	.	.	.	3,57	3,57
	Total	460	3,4068	,56582	,08343	3,2388	3,5749	1,71	4,43
Normative Commitment Average Score	Min. Wage	30	3,5000	,00000	,00000	3,5000	3,5000	3,50	3,50
	450-750	110	3,5455	1,23399	,37206	2,7164	4,3745	1,00	5,00
	751-1000	200	3,0250	,54952	,12288	2,7678	3,2822	1,50	4,00
	1001-1500	90	2,9444	,88192	,29397	2,2665	3,6223	1,50	4,00
	1501-2000	30	3,0000	,86603	,50000	,8487	5,1513	2,50	4,00
	2001 and above	10	3,0000	.	.	.	.	3,00	3,00
	Total	470	3,1596	,82821	,12081	2,9164	3,4027	1,00	5,00

## CONCLUSION

After evaluating the findings of the questionnaire for the study named as “Organizational Commitment of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty Students”, the results have arisen as follows. The comments of the Anadolu University Economics, Business Administration and Open Education Faculty students about their agreement with the statements related to affective, continuance, normative commitments for their faculties were analyzed, and it has been revealed that they mostly agree with the statements about continuance commitment and this is followed by the statements about affective and normative commitment, respectively. These findings contradict with the research results done before. In the relevant literature the mostly desired situation about the importance of organizational commitment dimensions is that the members of an organization should have high affective commitment first and then normative commitment and lastly continuance commitment (Boylu, Pelit, and Güçer, 2007 : 55-74). In this study, continuance (necessity oriented) commitment comes first, affective (desire oriented) commitment comes second and normative (obligation oriented) commitment comes last contrary to the literature. This situation is related to the students’ demographic characteristics and the fact that the participants who constitute the sampling of the study are the students of a faculty, which provides education via distance education method. Industrialization, rapid increase of population and economic problems have raised the demand for education and along with the traditional ways, distance education has been also needed. Aiming at meeting the needs for education and providing equal opportunity, distance education creates an education opportunity for people who cannot receive formal education, has insufficient income, works full time, who are relatively older and married. It is quite natural for people in these conditions to be connected to an organization because they need it.

In this study, the organizational commitment of students to their faculties was analyzed in terms of affective, continuance and normative commitment. The distribution of affective, continuance and

normative commitment levels of students according to their genders was analyzed and it has been seen that continuance commitment level is higher among female participants. When it comes to the commitment levels according to age, the continuance commitment is higher between 30-40 age range, normative commitment is higher in 17-22, and considering the affective commitment, there were no significant difference among the age ranges. The high continuance commitment level between the ages 30-40, which represent the middle age group, is an indicator of the need for the organization. When the continuance commitment level according to marital status was analyzed, continuance commitment is higher among married participants and affective and normative commitment average is higher among single participants.

Continuance and affective commitment level is higher among fourth graders and normative commitment is higher among third graders when commitment levels were analyzed according to year of study. Students who also work have higher commitment levels of each dimension than the students who do not work. As to the income level, students who get low income have higher average commitment levels of each dimension than the students who have high income.

When the data is considered, it is obvious that Economics, Business Administration and Open Education faculties, which have been giving education via distance education method since 1982, are necessary in Turkish education system and that Anadolu University meets this necessity. When the students' organizational commitment level is considered; although continuance commitment comes in the first place, affective and normative commitment averages are also notable, which indicates that students have organizational commitment to their faculties. When the statements, which best describe the students' organizational commitment to their faculties in Table: 2 are examined, students responded as "Agree" and "Totally agree" for the questions "Right now, staying with my faculty is a matter of necessity as much as desire", "Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my faculty now" and "It would be too costly for me to leave my faculty now" which are related to continuance commitment; for the questions "I enjoy discussing my faculty with people outside it", "I do not feel like part of the family at my faculty", "I do not feel a *strong* sense of belonging to *my* faculty" and "I really feel as if this faculty's problems are my own", which are related to affective commitment; and for the question "I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one faculty" which is related to normative commitment.

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