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MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION**

**SUBMISSIVE BEHAVIOR IN MORTALITY-SALIENT ORGANIZATIONS**

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**MASTER'S THESIS**

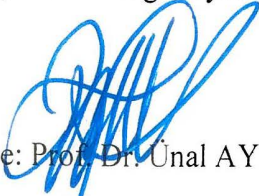
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N'eylersin ölüm herkesin başında  
Uyudun uyanamadın olacak  
Kimbilir nerde, nasıl, kaç yaşında?  
Bir namazlık saltanatın olacak  
Taht misali o musalla taşında

Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı



to my immortalities;  
my daughter Göksu & my son Gökdeniz...

## **ABSTRACT**

### **SUBMISSIVE BEHAVIOR IN MORTALITY-SALIENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Human intelligence is so much developed that human can be aware of his own mortality. This awareness creates extreme anxiety and fear, which is called terror. Terror management theory posits that people cling to the cultural worldview much more to cope with the terror of death. Because, what human needs to cope with his mortality had been imbedded smartly in the culture such as meaning, security, and self-esteem. This helps people comply with the group norms in a greater extent and thus they can enhance their self-esteem.

The submissiveness level of the individuals to organizational authority was investigated in this thesis, in accord with the terror management theory. Primarily, the organizations were classified according to the normal observation frequency of death-related issues in their routine activities and organizational environment. The organizations, where death can be observed or faced with, such as emergency, oncology, intensive healthcare services, or military units were named as “mortality-salient organizations” and the others where death is not a component of the daily organizational life were named as “mortality-nonsalient organizations.” The main assumption of this submissiveness research is that submissiveness is one of the main components in the organizational culture of mortality-salient organizations. The data was gathered with a survey study among the workers in the emergency, oncology, child healthcare services of governmental and private hospitals, a private school, a social solidarity agency in Adana and Adıyaman provinces. Both organizations were divided into two groups. One group were asked to declare their opinions and feelings about “death” (MS manipulation), and the other group were asked to declare their opinions and feelings about “coffee.” After a brief talking session to create “delay effect” the participants filled Submissiveness to Organizational Authority Scale. According to the independent samples t-test, it was evidenced that those work in the mortality-salient organizations are more submissive under MS manipulation than those in the nonmortality-salient organizations, while other conditions showed no significant

difference. Gender difference has not been detected under MS manipulation among the groups.

**Key words:** Organizational authority, fear of death, obedience, organizational behavior, terror management theory.



## ÖZET

### ÖLÜM-BELİRGİN ORGANİZASYONLARDA İTAAT DAVRANIŞI

İnsan zekası ölümlü olduğunu fark edebilecek kadar çok gelişmiştir. Bu farkındalık insanda şiddetli bir kaygı ve korku, yani terör yaratmaktadır. Terör yönetim kuramı, insanların ölüm korkusu ile başa çıkabilmek için kültürel dünya görüşüne daha fazla bağlandıklarını ileri sürmektedir. Çünkü, insanoğlunun fanilik karşısında ihtiyaç duyduğu anlam, güvenlik ve öz değer kültürün içine ustaca yerleştirilmiştir. Bu da bireylerin grup normlarına daha fazla uymalarını ve böylece kendilerine olan güvenlerini arttırmalarını sağlamaktadır.

Bu yüksek lisans tezinde terör yönetim kuramından hareketle, ölüm korkusu altında bireylerin örgüt otoritesine itaat düzeylerinde farklılık olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Öncelikle yürüttükleri faaliyetler nedeniyle ölümün daha fazla yaşandığı, gözlemlendiği veya hatırlandığı örgüt tipleri ile ölümün örgütsel faaliyetler içinde sıklıkla görülmediği örgütler belirlenmiştir. Araştırmada ölüm gerçeğinin daha çok hatırlandığı hastanelerin acil bölümleri, onkoloji, yoğun bakım servisleri veya askeri birimler gibi örgütler "ölüm-belirgin organizasyonlar", diğerleri ise "ölüm-belirgin olmayan organizasyon" şeklinde adlandırılmıştır. Bu itaat düzeyleri araştırmasının temel varsayımı, itaatın ölüm-belirgin organizasyonlarda kültürün temel bileşenlerinden biri olduğu düşüncesidir. Adana ve Adıyaman illerinde bulunan acil servis ve onkoloji bölümü çalışanları ile bir devlet üniversitesi, çocuk bakım servisi, özel okul, sosyal dayanışma vakfı çalışanlarından anket yöntemi ile veri elde edilmiştir. Her iki örgüt tipinde çalışan katılımcılar iki gruba ayrılarak bir gruptan ölüm, diğer gruptan kahve ile ilgili duygu ve düşüncelerini yazmaları istenmiş ve gecikme etkisi için kısa bir konuşma bölümünün ardından her iki gruba da Örgüt Otoritesine İtaat Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Bağımsız örneklem t-testinde ölüm belirgin organizasyonlarda çalışanların ölüm manipülasyonu altında, ölüm belirgin olmayan organizasyonlarda çalışanlara kıyasla daha fazla itaatkar olduğu ancak diğer gruplar arasında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığı bulgulanmıştır. Ölüm manipülasyonu altında cinsiyet açısından gruplar arasında farklılık görülmemiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Örgüt otoritesi, ölüm korkusu, itaat, örgütsel davranış, terör yönetim kuramı.





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"Ölenler ölümü bilmez, ölüm kalanlar içindir."

Şükrü Erbaş

I have always been fond of watching life from different windows. Yet, how many different windows could I have without any assistance of my instructors, my fellows, my colleagues, and my family? Because, I believe that every human being around us contributes to the development of our ideas, and this contribution has always been unique to me. I wish this paper is accepted as a unique contribution and a modest attempt of mine for the development of management and organization science by attracting attention to the "human nature", as well.

Solemnly, I submit my appreciations to the thesis committee for their efforts to make this paper a mature scientific work. I have to express my gratitude to my advisor for her efforts to make me believe that this work will be completed one day. Actually, every professor in the graduate school of social sciences in ASTU individually deserves bouquets for their attractive lectures and humanely professional guidance to the students. However, I have to present my special gratitude to the professors who lectured me for their additional reinforcements in my world of ideas and for their precious personal intimacy. Certainly, my fellows in the graduate school deserve the best credit. I will always remember and enunciate their extraordinary support in those busy days.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In a monthly briefing, the regiment commander of Gendarmerie Blue Berets wanted high motivation from his soldiers for the future missions and he asked a question to concentrate his soldiers' attention: "Tell me guys, when you are under heavy enemy fire, should you help your wounded battle buddy or move forward to kill the enemy?" Certainly, nobody could have reached any satisfactory explanation to such a paradoxical question. Because, the real situation would be susceptible to several factors and decisions could always change. However, the desired answer for a trained soldier was the assaultive one to ensure that he will rather accomplish the mission without distraction than worry about the soul of a soldier -including his own.

In this context, the crucial point is "mission." Because, the military organizations have a goal to exist: to protect. However, mission is crucial not only for military or gendarmerie, but also for other organizations. Because, every organization is anticipated to undertake a series of missions to meet their goals and social expectations. In another way, members of the organizations undertake different missions to do their jobs. For example, soldiers fight, postmen deliver, journalists write, professors teach. All of these people are supposed to do their jobs in the frame of the organizational goals and policies. These goals and policies are defined by *the organizational authority*, a mechanism that has a power to make people do what is desired.

Actually, the organizational authority, which involves individuals with leadership abilities, should watch for maintaining effective and efficient production process to help the organization do its best. Nevertheless, these individuals possess all pros and cons of *human nature*. Therefore, management and organization studies cannot be thought without organizational behavior, which provides beneficial knowledge to organization theory by consulting sociology, psychology, social psychology, anthropology, and science of politics (Langton, Robbins, & Judge, 2013) in order to provide solution for different problems in the organizations. Also, understanding organizational culture - which discloses personal assumptions, societal norms and values, communication, motivation, leadership, and political competitions in the organizations (Luthans & Doh, 2012; Ott & Shafritz, 2001)- is important. This knowledge will provide a better insight

about both organizational behavior and organizational culture for the discipline of management and organization.

For a functional analysis, organizations should be classified. Because, like personality in human, organizations differ in certain characteristics (Grant-Wade & Benzoni, 2009). So, some of the organizations like military, gendarmerie, firefighters, emergency medical service, etc. should place mission -and thus obedience to orders- in the first place in their cultures. Because, these organizations work *for* and *with* human life. Either the people taking service need help of these organizations, or the members of these organizations sometimes work in fatal conditions.

However, people naturally fear from death and this fear creates a great anxiety, which shapes their almost every behavior (Becker, 1973). Considering the fatality in these organizations a question should be asked: although the thought of death leads people to a great anxiety, how the members of these organizations work at any price? As people are bombarded with reminders of death by the media and the life itself, several theories in psychology and social psychology tried to explain human nature from different points of view. In 1970s, cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker proposed a comprehensive analysis about death anxiety:

The idea of death, the fear of it, haunts the human animal like nothing else; it is a mainspring of human activity—activity designed largely to avoid the fatality of death, to overcome it by denying in some way that it is the final destiny for man.

(Becker, 1973, p. ix)

Almost similar ideas had been suggested by William James and Sigmund Freud before him, Becker's proposition created more clear perspective about human nature (Greenberg, Pyszczynski & Solomon, 1986). Before Becker, Freud has explained two life instincts in human psychology: *eros* (ἔρως) and *thanatos* (θάνατος), which means (sexual) love and (fear of) death. These terms were the basis for psychoanalysis. Although Freud gave way to *eros* for most of his psychopathological analysis, Becker proposed that the fear of inevitable death, *thanatos*, drove human to seek immortality,

and manages almost every behavior of man (Becker, 1973; Webb, 1998). Becker posited that human seek immortality in three ways: by means of heroic, which was granted him as a divinely awarded afterlife; by means of memories of his heroic acts; and by means of identification via death transcending group identifications. The instinct of *self-preservation* directed human to seek an immortal life, according to Becker. This pursuit made human animal deeply and inherently narcissistic and the narcissism led him to require high *self-esteem* for healthy psychological functioning. Thus, human animal invented culture in order to be blessed with symbolic immortality (Becker, 1973, 1975).

Becker's propositions about human nature with an emphasis on thanatos, together with *need for self-esteem* and *cultural rationalizations*. This point of view influenced three social psychology researchers to formulate a theory of social psychology about the unconscious fear from death in relation to almost everything humans do (Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski, and Sheldon Solomon; Greenberg & Arndt, 2011, p.400): *terror management theory* (TMT). This theory principally posited that human animal is tended to bolster self-esteem via defending and/or adhering to his cultural worldview or acting in different ways when mortality becomes observable, salient (Greenberg et al., 1986, p.198; Arndt, Solomon, Kasser & Sheldon, 2004). TMT asserted that the cognitive capacity of human brain to keep him alive creates a great potential for intense anxiety, or terror, which must be managed incessantly. The terror is managed by keeping faith for a worldview denies the uncertain and ephemeral nature of one's own existence (e.g., Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2004).

The researchers provided evidence from the research before TMT, which clarified that self-esteem was needed for a healthy psychology. For example, alcoholism, anxiety, depression, neuroticism, and schizophrenia were believed as a consequence of low self-esteem (Greenberg et al., 1986). Moreover, TMT posited that people embrace cultural worldview and/or ingroup values, when they are reminded death-related thoughts (for detail see: Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski & Lyon, 1989; Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 1991; Castano & Dechesne, 2005; Çetiner, 2014). Besides, engaging cultural and ingroup values functions to bolster self-esteem

(Greenberg et al., 1990; Yücel, 2015). The anxiety-buffering function of cultural worldviews, ingroup values, similar ideas, support of an acquaintance were demonstrated as evidence in the past research<sup>1</sup> (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1995; Harmon-Jones, Greenberg, Solomon & Simon, 1996; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Dalda, 2011).

However, commentaries about TMT should not be ignored. The theory was criticized for that it contradicted with the cognitive dissonance, self-presentation, and self-awareness theories (Wicklund, 1997); for that its logical connection with self-preservation was too broad and long-term viability of anxiety-buffering role was ignored (Leary & Schreindorfer, 1997); for that it should have been thought as a control theory (Snyder, 1997); for that the genuine self-esteem was based on continuous fulfillment of needs for "competence, autonomy, and relatedness" (Ryan & Deci, 2004); and finally for that it was attached in "obsolete *evolutionary biology*" that emphasized survival, but it omitted "*reproduction*" and it was not *adaptive* (Buss, 1997). The TMT theoreticians and other TMT researchers provided evident basis for all these conflicting ideas.

As the core of this study, human nature has been also enlightened by the obedience to authority (OAT; Milgram, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1974) and the *right-wing authoritarianism* (RWA; Altemeyer, 1981, 1996) theories. These theories explained human behavior in the relationship with perceived authority. As Stanley Milgram (1974, p.1) announced, people are tended to obey the orders of an authority figure. Dependent on these theories a critical question has been asked: "what makes one person an independent thinker and the other one a radical follower?" (Van Aken, 2015, p.7). A detailed answer for this question can be found in the *Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), an earlier inspiration about human nature. The scholars had introduced the term *authoritarian* for the people who follows legitimate authorities strictly and show aggression towards people who do not accept the authority. Moreover, the authoritarian personality adheres to imposed social norms and conventions firmly. It is obvious that in the organizations having an authoritarian

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<sup>1</sup> "Death helps people live". For the most updated review of TMT application please see Aljezeera's interactive website, "What death means to me"(access: June 20, 2018): <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2017/what-death-means-to-me/index.html>



personality could influence the behaviors of all of the members of the organizations, as a result of the leader-follower dynamic (Van Aken, 2015, p.7).

Based on Adorno et al. (1950), Milgram (1974), Altemeyer (1996) and many other social scientists have been fascinated by the idea of evaluating individual personality in terms of attitudes towards the existence of authority. The *authoritarianism* paradigm has been used in several studies to measure a variety of personality dimensions. In probably the most extensive study of authoritarianism (DeZoort and Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1997), Altemeyer (1981, 1996) established that authoritarianism played a role in prejudice and stereotyping, in complexity of moral reasoning, in punitiveness (especially toward minority and deviant groups), in acceptance of illegal behaviors by government officials, in rejection of outgroups, and in aggression.

As such, the past research about obedience provided knowledge about *the blind or unquestioned obedience* and *the repertoire of resistance* (Milgram, 1974; Miller, Gillen, Schenker & Radlove, 1974; Hamilton & Biggart, 1985; Hollander, 2015). In order to explain behaviors inside the organizational settings, organizational studies examined submissive behavior and the authoritative relationship inside different organizations (Gal, 1985; Liebels & Blum-Kulka, 1994; Moskowitz, 2005; Burger, 2009; e Cunha, Rego & Clegg, 2010; Güldü, 2011; Aydemir & Şentürk, 2016; Topalhan, Gökçe & Kayıpmaz, 2017).

Despite such numerous valuable studies in the literature, some deficiencies still remain in explaining human nature with an authoritative relationship in the salience of mortality. Although the awareness of death is prevalent in organizations and it involves serious effects with employees' experiences and/or behaviors, modern scholars' attention for death issue in organizations is scarce (Chen, 2016). Though theory posits emphasis on the relationship between mortality salience (MS) and authoritarianism, empirical studies addressing the problem remain limited for several aspects.

First of all, few studies reviewed authority and death-related thoughts at the same time in organizational research (e.g., Reedy & Learmonth, 2008; Grant & Wade-Benzoni, 2009; Chen, 2016), especially in the Turkish literature. TMT hypotheses are

tested limitedly in Turkey and mostly they are dissertations, especially for master's degree (Bulut, 2015). Secondly, submissiveness or obedience to authority has been interpreted almost only to the normal, standard wishes of the superiors, rather than inappropriate or unreasonable wishes of the authority figures (DeZoort & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1997). Thirdly, while examining authoritarian or submissive behavior, the majority of the studies worked with college students, rather than with real employees and bosses (e.g., Nicol, 2009; Lavine, Lodge, & Freitas, 2005). Finally, cultural characteristics were not emphasized enough in the studies related with organizational obedience (e.g., Yıldırım, 2004).

Because the authoritarianism and obedience phenomena shed light on human nature and organizational behavior, they are especially important in some organizations that usually face death-related issues, such as military, gendarmerie, firefighter brigades, and certain medical branches (intensive medical care services, oncology, emergency medical healthcare). These organizations are distinct in four characteristics:

- (1) their existence is important for human life in the society,
- (2) members of these organizations can observe human life and death conspicuously (Grant & Wade-Benzoni, 2009, p.601),
- (3) obedience to orders and to the procedures are important vitally in these organizations, and
- (4) members of these organizations sometimes work under dangerous conditions (Grant & Wade-Benzoni, 2009, p.600).

These four characteristics make these organizations unique by structure, by organizational culture, by politics and procedures, and by their importance in the public life. Therefore, such organizations should be examined with a terror management perspective, firstly in this research. Investigating organizational authority in such kind of organizations under the condition of MS is especially significant for theory and practice. Once the motivational procedures in obeying the orders are understood in mentioned organizations; scholars, employees and leaders of such organizations will be able to benefit from the knowledge about communication, motivation, management of organizational culture and cultural change management. Because no study did propose

as a special type of organization, an original typology is suggested with this paper for the organizations related with human life and death. Throughout this study, the death-related organizations will be named as *mortality-salient organizations (MSOs)*, and others will be referred as *mortality-nonsalient organizations (nonMSOs)*<sup>2</sup>.

However, the main curiosity of the current research is the communication with organizational authority and employees, from the submissiveness window in MSOs. As in the study of Salgado, Pues & De Calvo (2015), this study is focused on the authority-submissiveness relationship in TMT concept. It is hypothesized that one of the principles in the organizational culture should be submissive behavior in MSOs. Besides, nonMSOs' obedience motivation should be different and even more flexible than those of the MSOs'. Because, if questioning the orders occur in an MSO, either the lives of employees or the public service of the organization is jeopardized. That is why strict obedience to the orders and the procedures in MSOs is expected.

In sum, this research was designed to build a bridge between TMT and OAT (with reference to RWA) within the organizational behavior context in order to make a better explanation to how MSOs work. These unique organizations will be examined by submissiveness to the inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority with control conditions. Because, it is assumed that if the employees obey the inappropriate wishes, or the orders they think unreasonable, they obey every kind of orders or wishes of their superiors -or the organizational authority.

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<sup>2</sup> Although the literally correct term is mortality non-salient organization, "nonMSO" was proposed due to writing and pronunciation simplicity.

## 1.1. Problem and Purpose

Organizational scholars seem reluctant to study on the role of the awareness of death and obedience involve with organizational life (Sievers, 1993; Reedy & Learmonth, 2008; Chen, 2016; Bulut, 2015). Thus, a number of questions still remain unanswered in organizational theory, especially on the side of MSOs.

How will people behave when they are in danger due to the responsibility of mission? Will they help other people, or will they escape their responsibilities? Everything considered, the members of the MSOs have to move despite the danger of their own lives. This is related with organizational routine and procedures in the MSOs. The plan is drafted, the order is given and the mission is done: this is how they should work.

Additionally, what if a superior in an MSO gives an inappropriate order to his subordinates in a real dangerous situation? This inappropriateness can change from naïve personal wishes to lethal sadistic desires, as seen in wars -the Nazi examples as in the OAT literature. The inappropriate wishes of superiors may affect the usual performance of the organization in its routine and the behaviors of all the other members. This problem is related with either ethics or general procedures.

Most probably, *strict obedience* should be important in MSOs, because they are related in working for human life which is important for the survival of the society and the social cohesion. For example, it cannot be accepted that a firefighter hesitates to rescue an old man from a house in fire. As such, nobody can imagine a paramedic unwilling to make first aid to a survivor of a traffic accident. Therefore, strict obedience is essential in MSOs. Nevertheless, what is the level and limit of the obedience and submissive behavior?

After all, this perspective should be overviewed with TMT approach. Because, as TMT trio suggested, TMT is useful because:

(1) It is parsimonious and requires only one commonly accepted and rather noncontroversial a priori assumption: specifically, that living organisms are oriented toward self-preservation.

(2) It provides a conceptual account of the nature and function of culture and self-esteem, and thus explains what other social psychological theories presume as the starting point for their analyses.

(3) It can account for a great deal of existing empirical evidence on social psychological phenomena such as self-esteem maintenance, prejudice, attraction, interpersonal relationships, conformity, obedience, aggression, and altruism.

(4) It can be used to derive a wide range of novel hypotheses, many of which have been supported by empirical findings that cannot be readily explained by existing alternative theoretical perspectives.

(Pyszczynski, Greenberg & Solomon, 1997, p. 2)

Therefore, this study explains how the members of MSOs react to the inappropriate wishes of their superiors and wholly to the organizational authority, by considering that the employees do everything if they carry out the inappropriateness. The scenario was applied in MSO and nonMSO, with MS and control conditions.

## 1.2. Research Plan

This study is composed of five chapters. Firstly, an overview of the research is provided in order to prepare the reader to the theoretical background as an introduction. Because, however those who study organizational behavior are familiar with interdisciplinary approach, social psychological explanations may seem unfamiliar and sophisticated for management and organization scholars. So, the introduction chapter maintains a mind-opening session for the study (Creswell, 2009).

The second chapter is a review of the literature, which provides comprehensive report of the past research about TMT, OAT, and RWA with explanations about the position of the theories in social psychology and organizational behavior. This helps the researchers understand the purpose and the implications of the current study easier. Well-known methods of the theories were also provided to attract attention to the procedure in this paper.

The third chapter presents methodology of the study. After giving demographic information about participants, the chapter mentions measurement instruments and procedure of the study. This chapter also comprise data collection procedure, and hypotheses of the study.

The fourth chapter delivers data analyses and the results of the research with explanations of dataset and analysis procedures. Albeit the typical analysis technique used in the TMT literature is one of the methods from the ANOVA family, this study consults independent-samples *t*-test because it can also provide the desired analyses. Besides, only one hypothesis was accepted at the end of the statistical calculations.

Finally, conclusion and discussion chapter argues the results and its relationship with the past research and future implications. Despite the rejections of the hypotheses, the initial arguments was discussed on the cultural, national, institutional, and individual points of view.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

As the national and international literature has been produced several precious studies about TMT and OAT, several books, articles, dissertations from ProQuest Global Dissertations archive, and from Turkish Council of Higher Education Thesis Center have been investigated for a beneficial compilation of the theories and related findings.

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

This study investigates the obedience paradigm empirically with a manipulative scenario of TMT. Considering Milgram's (1974) suggestion about the individual tendency for obedience to perceived authority, obedience under MS and control conditions was examined in the organizations, both in MSOs and in nonMSOs. The theoretical borders of the study is constructed of TMT, OAT and RWA within the organizational behavior and the organization theory concepts.

### **2.2. Terror Management Theory**

Although Socrates labeled death fear as foolish, in his Apologies, Becker (1973) has announced that almost every motivation of man derived from death thought. With this premise, he has created a comprehensive synthesis of the ideas about "depth psychology" of the "terror of death". He created a genealogy of human fear from death by scrutinizing the ideas of different social scientists and philosophers, such as Alfred Adler, Sigmund Freud, Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Erich Fromm, Otto Rank, Norman O. Brown, Peter Berger, Thomas Ludemann, Charles Cooley, Erving Goffman, Karen Horney, George Herbert Mead, Gregory Zilboorg, and Harry Stack (Becker, 1962, 1973, 1975; Greenberg, Pyszczynski & Solomon, 1986, p.196). His contribution to the social psychology was an ingenious argument about terror of death with a "merger of psychology and mythico-religious perspective" (Becker, 1973, p. xi).

Becker structured his "melancholic existentialist" (Carveth, 2004) theme upon a Freudian approach: "death is the basic instinct." He reinterpreted Freud's ideal constructs of thanatos, because he disagreed with Freud about his emphasis on eros more than thanatos (Kramer, 2007; Martin, 2016; Becker, 1973). He asserted that man

fears from death extremely, and this fear shapes almost all of his behaviors and attitudes. This is important, because Becker's analysis with psychoanalytic terminology in existential domain provided several functional hints about human nature. Becker believed that the terror of death can be understood comprehensively only by digging up this truly amazing psychoanalytic theory, where the meaning of several behaviors lies (Becker, 1973, p. 23). That is why he explored the meaning of anality, Oedipal project, penis envy and sibling rivalry with an emphasis on thanatos with reference to revisionist Otto Rank and religionist Kierkegaard. This multidisciplinary approach made his work original and comprehensive.

According to Becker (1973), the brain of human animal is so highly developed that it can perceive the corporeality of self and the consequences of death. This perception biologically creates the need for survival -"self-preservation"- and all of the behaviors and attitudes of human is shaped according to this instinct. Because, man wants to surrender to death, and to live forever like Gods. Becker makes a connection with narcissism and human's fear from death by referring to Freud's analogy of "Gods with anuses": the claim about the human desire to live forever a limitless power despite all his incapacities. Becker states that human feels himself as a "primary value" and in "cosmic significance", because of his predestined need for "self-preservation." Human fears from being annihilated so greatly that he relates almost every situation to the danger of his destruction. Becker provides several examples for this tendency with psychoanalytic point of view (Becker, 1973, pp. 11-46).

One of the examples for human selfishness, need for feeling of primary value and cosmic significance is "sibling rivalry". Children want to have the best care and protection from their parents without any cost. Yet, the parental care has to be shared with siblings, which is indeed an intolerable situation for both children. None of them can easily accept that they are not the only one who takes all the care, who uses all the resources at home: every shared thing, a toy, a piece of bread, a play, or a kiss is a reason for crisis. Becker argued that this selfishness did not mean that the kids were raised incorrectly or were bad-tempered. All the problem with these kids was the *human nature*, which is related with strong desire to live as primary value and cosmic significance (Becker, 1973).



Reaching psychological terminology from this analysis, Becker indicated the term self-esteem: the human need to feel himself important and valuable. Man thinks that he should be primarily valuable, because he unconsciously relates his survival with having the protection in maximum level, necessary for psychological and social health. Having its resources from the death fear -the terror- and the need for self-preservation (therefore being selfish, narcissistic, cosmically significant and primarily valuable), human needs "self-esteem" (Greenberg et al., 1986).

Becker (1973) also argued that communities invented cultural rules to rationalize and feed the need for self-esteem. He emphasized "heroic" perspective, which exists universally and includes several forms of symbols and norms to make human feel himself significant. This significance makes life meaningful. From primitive to modern life, the cultures impose heroic to create *symbolic immortality*. Because, heroes never die. The monuments, treatises and inventions will make their creators immortal, because man will die one day but their works will live forever.

Having been inspired from Becker's compilations, the three social psychologists, Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski, and Sheldon Solomon developed terror management theory (TMT) in social psychological concept theoretically and empirically. When they were making research for the reasons of bias and prejudice in human nature and in social relationships in 1984, they decided to reidentify the premises of Becker's syntheses (Greenberg & Arndt, 2004). After years, the theory has captured attention with more than 500 empirical studies, including organizational scholars among others (EBF, 2018; Missouri, 2018).

TMT includes two basic paradigms: self-esteem and cultural worldview. By demonstrating evidence from the past research about the need for self-esteem for psychological well-being, the theoreticians initially proposed that any reminder about human mortality lowers the current self-esteem level and people cling to their cultural worldview increasingly when they think about death in order to enhance their self-esteem (Greenberg et al., 1986). Because, cultural worldview buffers the anxiety by providing meaning and value for the group members. Research validated this with the experiments by threatening self-esteem, public image, and group values with MS and control conditions. The research has demonstrated that people defend personal and

group values more under the MS induction (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1986; Solomon, Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1991).

The researchers also provided enough evidence for their premise about that self-esteem works as an anxiety-buffer mechanism by reducing anxiety and defensive behavior related with anxiety (for detail see: Solomon, et al., 1991; Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Solomon, Arndt & Schimel, 2004). The research showed that the reminders of one's mortality increase self-esteem striving and defense of self-esteem against threats, high levels of self-esteem remove the effects of mortality reminders, and persuading people about the existence of an afterlife removes the MS effects on self-esteem striving (Pyszczynski et al., 2004).

The second component of TMT is cultural worldview. As based on Becker's ideas, TMT proposed that cultural worldview stands for enhancing one's self-esteem with its all symbolic rationalizations, with a focus on *value* and *meaning* (Becker, 1973; Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski & Lyon, 1989; Greenberg et al., 1990). In TMT, culture was conceptualized as a collection of shared meanings and cultural knowledge that was assumed to be shared within the group (Kashima, 2010). Therefore, organizational culture is accepted inside the definition of culture in the current study.

Because the theory is very broad and is about a wide variety of psychological phenomena, it is obvious that all aspects of TMT cannot be examined by any single study (Greenberg et al., 1992, p.921). According to the past research, TMT has "five distinct but interrelated" fundamental hypotheses, which were written in the most mature period of the theory in the famous social psychology encyclopedia of Fiske, Gilbert & Lindzey (2010):

(1) increasing self-esteem decreases anxiety in response to threats (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1992),

(2) subtle reminders of death (mortality salience; MS) increase positive reactions to those who support one's worldview and negative reactions to those who threaten it (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1990), self-esteem striving (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1992), and preference for information that is well-structured or fits specific templates for meaning (relative to numerous control conditions; e.g., Landau et al., 2004a),

(3) increasing self-esteem or validating one's worldview eliminates MS effects on self-esteem striving and worldview defense (e.g., Harmon-Jones et al., 1997)

(4) threats to self-esteem or one's worldview increase the accessibility of death-related thoughts, and boosts to self-esteem or worldview reduce the accessibility of death-related thoughts (e.g., Harmon-Jones et al., 1997), and

(5) evidence ostensibly supporting the existence of an afterlife eliminates the effect of MS on self-esteem striving and worldview defense (e.g., Dechesne et al., 2003).

(Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Koole & Solomon, 2010, pp. 726-727)

These hypotheses were accepted as a guide and the related research was classified in this review of the literature accordingly, together with its implications to organizational life and organizational behavior.

*2.2.1. Increasing self-esteem decreases anxiety in response to threats.* As Greenberg et al. (1992) referred Scheff (1990) for his note about that there were more than 10,000 papers about self-esteem and its ties, in TMT literature a remarkable number of experiments and research was focused on finding evidence about the necessity of self-esteem and its reduction under MS conditions (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1986; Solomon et al., 1991; Pyszczynski et al., 2004; Pyszczynski et al., 2010). Because, this hypothesis is the most basic indication of TMT: the anxiety-buffering mechanism of self-esteem. According to this, self-esteem is very important for psychological health and serves to buffer the anxiety caused by existential concerns. Because, consistent with the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1980; Hart, Shaver & Goldenberg, 2005), a threat to the attachment system diminishes the integrity of the entire security system and therefore it should elicit compensatory responses on the part of the other components of the human security system (i.e., the worldview). Also, the relationship between self-serving attributions, locus of control, and cognitive dissonance with the need for self-esteem was demonstrated with an experimental research by Greenberg et al. (1986). They posited that self-esteem is a basic human need and its scarcity causes psychological problems, because it originates in the human awareness of mortality. Testing the public image and self image under threat, they proved that people are tended to develop protection to enhance their self-esteem (Greenberg et al. 1986).

Additionally, Greenberg et al. (1992) designed three experiments in order to show why people need self-esteem, with male undergraduate students. The experimental design was enhanced, neutral, or threatened self-esteem groups attended in a video session for psychological measurement or skin resistance test for physical measurement. After these sessions, their self-esteem was measured. The video was about an autopsy and an electrocution for the treatment group (MS group) and about a different subject for the control group, and the two footages were nearly 7 minutes. Only male participants were selected for these studies, because female participants had revealed great discomfort with the death video during pilot sessions.

In Study 1, the participants were given feedback with their names on the top of the page. This feedback either bolstered their self-esteem with the expressions "While you may feel that you have some personality weaknesses, your personality is fundamentally strong" and "Most of your aspirations tend to be pretty realistic", or creating a neutral feeling about their self-esteem with the expressions "While you have some personality weaknesses, you are generally able to compensate for them" and "Some of your aspirations may be a bit unrealistic." After this, the experimenter asked participants several questions to measure their self-esteem before they watched video. Later, they watched video, and after the video session they filled two inventories about anxiety. According to the results of this experiment, the positive expressions about self-esteem created a positive change and the increased-self-esteem group did not show higher anxiety after the death video, while an increase was observed in the neutral group. The researchers also measured the protection from anxiety due to self-esteem as a reaction to other types of threat with Study 2 and Study 3 by measuring the self-esteem level in the condition of physical damage anticipation with increased or neutral self-esteem groups that were told to be applied (so-called) electric shock to measure their skin resistance. Less arousal to electric shock was observed in the increased-self-esteem group than the control group.

Consistent with these results, Pyszczynski et al. (1997) discussed the anxiety-buffering role of self-esteem and terror management concerns in a variety of important symbolic social motives, such as prejudice, attraction, interpersonal relationships,

conformity, obedience, aggression, and altruism. According to the researchers, related with several social motives to the basic existential concerns of the human species, TMT provides an interconnection between the psychological and biological features of man. The researchers also suggested self-esteem was a basic psychological need such as consistency, justice, or public image -which are important constructs to the individual's psychological well-being. They suggested that they are all basic needs that ultimately serve the same "superordinate psychological function" just as food, water, and shelter are "different but essential" needs for physical health; consistency, justice, self-esteem, and approval are also different but essential ways of controlling the fear in connection with the inevitable mortality and sustain psychological well-being.

In fact, this TMT hypothesis about self-esteem is compatible with Freudian analysis of death anxiety, which defines vigilant coping techniques such as defenses and fantasies (the self-esteem boosters) to protect the human organism against overwhelming terror of death (Piven, 2000). However, Guerrero (2011) reported contradictory results from research. According to Guerrero, some studies put forward high self-esteem group's reaction as increased defensive response to death reminders while other studies showed low self-esteem group as increased defensive reactions to death reminders. He proposed a clarification by estimating implicit and explicit self-esteem with MS manipulation scenario. He applied related scales to 101 college students (28 male and 73 female). He also applied an essay evaluation to the participants in order to assess the participants' reactions to the essay and to the author, as a means of cultural worldview and self-esteem. The results in his study indicated that despite the anxiety-buffering of self-esteem, not were all forms equal. High explicit and implicit self-esteem with secure levels obtained the benefits of the anxiety-buffering function of high self-esteem. Besides, the participants with defensive levels -high explicit and low implicit- reacted with increased defensiveness (Guerrero, 2011, p. 30-34).

However, these findings about the relationship between self-esteem and subjective well-being were not validated in Turkish culture, which is notably collectivistic (Şimşek, 2005). Şimşek (2005) tested the self-esteem hypothesis with college students from different schools of Ankara University by applying seven scales and counseling

sessions. He used eight different scales in accordance with the past research. Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis in this study showed different findings from the past research about the anxiety-buffering function of self-esteem, and he argued this difference was due to the cultural differences of the participants, individualistic American and collectivistic Turkish cultures.

Şimşek also referred Aslıtürk (2001)'s findings about that collective self-esteem and private self-esteem, which was assessed irrelevant with anxiety-buffer mechanism of the fear of death in Turkish culture. Aslıtürk posited that collective self-esteem was not found to be protective against MS effects for high collectivist participants and the findings of his study showed that fear of death seemed to depend on certain cultural characteristics.

Finally, Bellavia (2002) evidenced a relationship between the anxiety-buffering hypothesis of self-esteem and the romantic relationship processes. Accepting the romantic partner as an attachment figure, Bellavia hypothesized that romantic partners could serve as a death-anxiety buffer, particularly for people whose romantic relationships were an important source of self-esteem. She applied a questionnaire package to psychology students, which contained background, MS manipulation, affect, and cultural evaluation questionnaires. The participants were the ones, who had a romantic relationship for at least four months. In MS group, people whose relationships were more important to their self-esteem explained their partners as self and cultural validation, they expressed less likelihood of cultural differences between their partners and themselves. Subsequently, the participants were primed with death or a control topic and with a photo of their romantic partner in treatment group. Contrary to the predictions, death thoughts were found exacerbated by the partner's photo in the MS condition for the participants whose partners were less important to their self-esteem, and priming the partner led to less negative reactions to transgressions committed by their partners.

2.2.2. *MS increase positive reactions to those who support one's (cultural) worldview and negative reactions to those who threaten it, self-esteem striving, and preference for information that is well-structured or fits specific templates for meaning.* This hypothesis clarifies what the MS condition creates on people. It is briefly the *MS effect* hypothesis. It means that people (1) react positive for their supporters and negative for their opposers -by self-esteem and cultural worldview, (2) try to enhance their self-esteem, and (3) prefer information that contains meaning more than normal when the mortality is salient. In order to be understood clearly by the management and organization scholars this hypothesis was conveyed in three subtitles.

2.2.2.1. *MS affects the reaction to the cultural worldviews.* This hypothesis is the core of the current study, which proposes that people react with defensive mechanisms when they are confronted with a life threat that evokes fear of death, so that they can reestablish a *homeostatic sense of calm* (Greenberg et al., 1986; Klass, 2004). Research evidenced that people tend to conform to cultural standards or values to manage this fear of mortality. Because, cultural worldview, as well as religion -basic component of culture, can provide people a sense of eternity: the symbolic immortality (Greenberg et al., 1997).

Rosenblatt et al. (1989) applied a number of experiments to test this hypothesis. Besides several inventory and survey questionnaires, municipal court judges were asked to fulfill the MS or control manipulation survey. Afterwards, the participants were asked to punish an accused sex worker by a bond assessment form (to test the reaction to cultural value-violators, the reaction to the outgroup). Judges in the MS group assigned the violator a much higher bond than the judges in the control condition did (MS=\$455 ; Other=\$50). Mainly, this experiment showed that, as predicted, reminding the participants of their mortality led them to recommend higher bonds for an offender.

According to TMT, moral principles are part of the cultural anxiety-buffer that protects individuals from anxiety concerning their vulnerability and mortality. A misdemeanor against these standards tacitly threatens the integrity of the anxiety-buffer and thus engenders negative reactions toward the offender. As the researchers explain the result, "inducing subjects to think about their mortality presumably increased their

need for faith in their values, and thus increased their desire to punish the moral transgressor" (Rosenblatt et al., 1989, p. 682). This study was mostly replicated with introductory psychology students later and the findings were not different (Greenberg, Simon, Harmon-Jones, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1995; Çetiner, 2014).

Greenberg et al. (1990) verified this hypothesis with another research. In Study 1, 26 female and 20 male Christian introductory psychology students were asked their evaluations about two different *Who am I?* questionnaires under MS and control conditions. One of these questionnaires appeared to be completed by a Jew participant and the other by a Christian participant from the answers about family information. This evaluation was expressing their mood after reading the two questionnaires separately, on a nine-point scale: happy, calm, irritated, secure, angry, disturbed, hostile, and frustrated. Later, their impressions about the questionnaire were asked to show the target's mental and emotional capacity insight for the participants. (Greenberg et al., 1990, p. 310).

Consequently, MS increased favor for the Christian participant and decreased favor for the Jew participant. This finding demonstrated that MS increases positive reactions with the similar others and negative reactions with the dissimilar others. Whereas Study 1 used the religious background as a worldview and similar-dissimilar phenomenon, similarly-designed Study 2 used *authoritarianism paradigm* of Adorno et al. (1950), which was deemed as a common worldview among people. This is a related example with the current study. The overall experimental design of Greenberg et al. (1990) evidenced that MS increases attraction of similar people and repulsion for dissimilar people. Nevertheless, the result is valid only by high authoritarians and it is not relevant among lows.

Another study suggested that MS leads people to increase intolerance among conservatives and decrease among liberals, because the value of tolerance is highly accessible among liberals but conservatives (Greenberg, Simon, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Chatel, 1992). Researchers in this study used political orientation as the construct of cultural worldview. Selected with a mass screening of political attitudes survey early in the semester, the participants were chosen among the introductory psychology students



and they completed a package of surveys and questionnaires. First two questionnaires were filler personality questionnaires. After them, a scale to assess authoritarian tendencies, MS manipulation survey, and Positive and Negative Affects Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) were filled and two articles with Interpersonal Judgment Scale (US; Byrne, 1971) were read by the participants.

The data analysis in this study evidenced that MS leads liberals and conservatives to different responses. In the MS groups, conservative participants became more complimentary for the similar and more uncomplimentary for the dissimilar, while the control groups both conservative and liberal participants usually preferred similar over dissimilar. In contrast, liberals in MS group were more favorable toward the similar target and less unfavorable toward the dissimilar one. Thus, while MS conditioning encouraged the intolerance of a dissimilar other among conservatives, it did not do so for the liberal participants and it seemed to increase their tolerance for a dissimilar other.

Additionally, McGregor et al. (1998) tested the hypothesis with American introductory psychology students by evaluating their decisions about how much hot sauce do the target (the author of the article they assessed) should consume. MS group in this study allotted particularly large amount of hot sauce to the worldview-threatening target (26.31g for threatening; 11.86g for consistent).

Another research of a comparison between Italian and German values among Italian participants under MS and control manipulation supports the current hypothesis with the finding that MS participants displayed stronger ingroup identification, perceived greater ingroup entitativity, and scored higher on ingroup bias measures. Also, in this research, perceived ingroup entitativity as well as ingroup identification mediated the effect of the MS manipulation on ingroup bias (Castano, Yzerbyt, Paladino, & Sacchi, 2002).

Certainly, the cultural worldview can create a strong defense mechanism only when the ingroup identity is respectively high. Parallel with this proposition, Dunkel (2002) applied two experiments related with group identity and 9/11 terrorism salience, in the

TMT concept. According to this, the high exploration participants with MS had greater exploration scores than the high exploration non-MS group. This showed that identity exploration is, at least in part, the search for a meaningful worldview and reminders of death increases the exploration for a worldview.

Moreover, Castano (2004) searched whether the enhanced significance for the ingroup was an unconscious defense mechanism, as an MS effect. 30 Scottish participants (15 male, 15 female) were subliminally and supraliminally primed with a word association task, as MS or control manipulation. Subsequently, picture-categorization tasks were applied by asking to classify pictures as English or Scottish. As a result, the MS group was more probable to exclude targets that looked more like the outgroup. The observed categorization-latency also evidenced that the death-prime participants were more careful in classifying the pictures. The MS group also conveyed more negative and stereotypical judgments of the English in an attitude assessment task.

Similarly, another precious study among bicultural Aboriginal Australian participants and Anglo-Australian students also verified this approach by means of the values related to the identities. The thought of death led participants to validate ingroup and reject outgroup values depending on the social identity that had been made observable, when the identity was primed (Halloran & Kashima, 2004).

Almost in similar aspect, to provide evidence for worldview defense on behalf of nationalism aspects, the MS effect on support for martyrdom attacks among Iranian college students and on support for extreme military interventions by American forces that could kill thousands of civilians among American college students was investigated. The study with Iranian participants was applied in Farsi language. Both supporting pro-martyrdom attacks and willingness to consider joining the pro-martyrdom cause were greater in MS group than the control group. Supporting results were provided also in the study with the American participants. MS and 9/11 salience conditions enhanced both the support for the use of extreme military force and support for the Patriot Act (Pyszczynski et al., 2006).

Recently, in order to explain the generalizability of TMT and the individual difference variables work in the TMT process, Shatil (2012) suggested *the overall worldview* approach. Consistent with the previous procedures and findings, Shatil's research with 367 college students evidenced that humanists defend humanism more in MS condition than in the control condition. This study also suggested, at least for humanists, that TMT generalize beyond specific cultural worldviews to overall worldviews. It also indicated that the individual difference variables of being humanist/non-humanist and normative/non-normative did not affect the ability of MS to prime death-thoughts. Instead, being humanist or non-humanist affects worldview defense after the death-thoughts have been primed and before distal defenses were activated. Tam, Chiu, & Lau (2007) replicated this research among Chinese with also similar results, stronger ingroup bias in person evaluation and resource allocation in MS groups rather than control groups.

As such, Ma-Kellams & Blascovich (2011) provided cultural differences in response to death primes by means of cultural worldview defense towards the value-violators. Keeping fundamental East-West differences for self-construal (i.e., the independent vs. interdependent self) in mind, they tested the prediction that members of Eastern cultural groups would affirm other people, rather than defend and affirm the self in MS condition. In their factorial design with European Americans and Asian Americans on attitudes about a person who violates cultural norms (Study 1) and on attributions about the plight of an innocent victim (Study 2), MS promoted culturally divergent responses. The European American participants defended *the self* and Asian Americans defended *other* people. Obviously, cultural worldview was the key in the defending value, as seen in the previous humanist or liberal participant experiments.

An example from national research was conducted by Kökdemir & Yeniçeri (2010). They replaced the state university and private university superiority with ingroup cultural worldview defense in their experimental design. The result they obtained also supported the hypothesis.

2.2.2.2. *MS increases self-esteem striving behavior.* As mentioned above, enhanced self-esteem created a positive change and not higher anxiety after the death related thought was observed (Greenberg, Simon et al., 1992). This hypothesis was found useful in marketing and consumer behavior analysis. For example, Mandel & Heine (1999) hypothesized that MS participants would be interested in purchasing products of high-status more than the control group participants, with reference to Pollay's (1985) suggestion about the impact of material possession to the feeling of well-being and happiness. By the purchase of products such as a luxury car an individual might feel the cosmic significance. The researchers demonstrated that high-status artifacts were assessed more favorably by MS group participants than by control group. In contrast, low-status and non-status artifacts were rated as a little less favorable after MS induction than by their control counterparts. This behavior is just because the tendency of relieving anxiety in response to threats to life. TMT trio supported this idea by stating that the possession of expensive objects like jewelry or automobile might give a person the evidence of value (Solomon et al., 1991).

In support of this idea, Kasser & Sheldon (2000) referred theory about that feelings of insecurity produce materialistic behavior (e.g., Fromm, 1976; Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1964; Kasser, Ryan, Zax, & Sameroff, 1995; Abramson & Inglehart, 1995). The MS participants of college students in their Study 1 exhibited better monetary expectations for themselves after 15 years. Study 2 verified these findings by showing MS group's more greed and more consumption of resources in a forest-management game.

Actually, according to the cultural worldview perspective, mortality reminders should intensify the desire to imply culturally prescribed prosocial attitudes like donating charity, which is a favorable behavior in American culture. Jonas, Schimel, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski (2002) interviewed with people, 17 male and 14 female pedestrians encountered as they were walking down to street, in close proximity to a funeral home or several blocks away for MS manipulation and control conditioning in a different way. The researchers asked people to indicate their attitudes toward two charities they thought important. The participants interviewed just outdoor of the funeral house (the MS group) reported more favorability toward these charities than those in the control group. However, it was evidenced with Study 2 that the amount of

money was affected not by MS, but by the subject of the donation. People tended to give more money to a charity supporting an American cause than people who were offered to donate for another topic other than cultural, religious, or national topic for control condition.

Intentions to engage in health-oriented behavior can also function as a terror management defense (Arndt, Schimel, & Goldenberg, 2003). The researchers investigated this as both a direct and indirect defense against death concerns among individuals for whom fitness is important to their self-esteem. In Study 1, both high and low fitness-esteem participants responded to MS with "immediate exaggerated fitness intentions," in relation with controls. In Study 2, with a replication of this effect, it was found that a similar increase in fitness intentions emerged only following a delay (distal functioning) if fitness was important to the individuals' self-esteem. The most interesting point in this study was that MS-high fitness self-esteem participants had the highest fitness intentions.

Additionally, according to the dual defense model of TMT, proximal and distal defenses were described as an MS impact aimed at motivating individuals maintaining self-esteem. Routledge, Arndt, & Goldenberg (2004) assessed women's intentions to engage in tanning-related behavior. In Study 1, in order to create distal defense a puzzle delay task, derived from Greenberg et al. (2000), involved having participants spend 3 minutes searching for television-related words (e.g., channel, program) embedded in two standard letter matrices. Thus, when death concerns (relative to a control condition) were in focal attention (proximal defense) half of the 45 female participants showed an increase in their intentions to protect themselves from dangerous sun exposure. However, in distal defense group the participants showed decreased interest about sun protection. In Study 2, among the 75 participants the distal defense group participants primed to associate tanned skin with an attractive appearance responded with increased interest in tanning products and services.

Paratore (2007) suggested a different approach for an evidence of this hypothesis. According to the researcher, performance tasks provide opportunities for self-enhancement. Therefore, people should be highly motivated to maximize their

performance on tasks that are related to their self-esteem in MS conditions. In study 1, 80 participants worked on an anagram task (which included an unsolvable item) for as long as they wanted, with MS and control condition. In study 2, they worked as long as they wanted on an idea generation (brainstorming) task, again with MS and control conditioning. In support of the hypothesis, participants in both studies spent more time on task after MS. The results held in control by mood differences between conditions and it was evidenced that the MS condition increased the confidence of the participants in how they would perform on the upcoming task.

2.2.2.3. *MS increases search for meaning.* This component of MS effect should be interpreted as the need for seeking satisfaction for one of the Big Five existential concerns: death, meaning, uncertainty, identity, and freedom (Pyszczynski et al., 2010, p. 725). In this context, cultural worldview also functions as a buffer for anxiety by providing a *meaningful* explanation of reality that permeates people's lives with "order, permanence, and stability". Worldview also authorizes standards of worth, and a meaningful account of reality. The two main MS effects, self-esteem and worldview, work collaboratively for enabling people to maintain protection against terror (Landau et al., 2004): they create a "world of meaning" that replaces the natural world and upgrades human to a "higher plane of existence than all other living things" (Greenberg et al., 1997, p.65).

Exploiting clinical opportunities, the research suggested that mildly depressed individuals might have had weak faith in both their cultural worldview and their sense of self-worth. Therefore, TMT researchers conducted two studies to assess this possibility that depressed individuals would exhibit especially strong worldview defense after MS conditions (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski, 1991; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1992). In the first study, the researchers asked nondepressed and subclinically depressed American college students to evaluate two foreign students, one praised US and the other criticized US under MS or control conditions (i.e., national motive for cultural worldview). The results indicated that depressed participants in MS group responded with stronger worldview defense than nondepressed participants. They showed greater pro-US preference in response to MS manipulation than did nondepressed subjects (Simon, 1995; Simon, Harmon-Jones, Greenberg, Solomon, and

Pyszczynski, 1996). These results are found consistent with the existential psychotherapeutic perspective proposed by Irvin D. Yalom (1980; 2011; Greenberg, Solomon, & Pyszczynski, 1997).

2.2.3. *Increasing self-esteem or validating one's worldview eliminates MS effects on self-esteem striving and worldview defense.* It is obviously understood from this statement that validating one's worldview is equal to enhancing one's self-esteem. In order to test this hypothesis, Harmon-Jones et al. (1997; Experiment 1) conducted an empirical study with 49 introductory psychology students (34 women and 15 men). The researchers manipulated the participants' self-esteem with positive or neutral feedback on a bogus personality test. Then, they completed MS or neutral topic manipulation survey and evaluated a person who supported an aspect of their worldview by nationalistic approach and a person who threatened it. This research was designed with neutral and positive personality feedback manipulation. After the participants were informed about their personality profiles in order to create the self-esteem manipulation, they completed personality measures questionnaire. Then, a questionnaire packet with a self-esteem manipulation check, a filler questionnaire, the MS manipulation, and the Positive and Negative Affect Scales-Expanded Form (PANAS-X; Watson & Clark, 1991) was completed. Afterwards, the participants read and evaluated essays about the US with foreigners' views of the US and Americans' reactions to these views.

According to the findings in this study, the positive-assessment participants reported they felt better about themselves than the neutral group. Furthermore, MS effect demonstrated worse feelings than the control group. The accuracy of the personality assessments also indicated that despite increased pro-US preference among neutral-personality-feedback group via MS, it did not create the similar effect on positive-personality-feedback participants. Alternatively, for the control-positive group did not differ from neutrals in favor of the pro-US author, whereas positive group exhibited less favor for the pro-US author than did the neutral-MS group.

Correspondingly, it was considered necessary to test if enhancing self-esteem eliminates MS effects when a target was threatened the dimension on which boost of self-esteem was affirmed. The participants who received positive personality feedback

by emphasizing likelihood of success -after MS or control manipulation- assessed the targets threatening beliefs about the US and the participant's major. Though this research replicated earlier findings, it is important to note that neutral feedback participants of MS group disparaged the anti-US target, whereas positive feedback MS participants did not. However, if the feedback was about the participants' major, MS led to belittling of the opposed target, even if the feedback was positive. These findings indicate that when a self-esteem-boosted dimension was threatened, such a boost does not deter derogation, following MS (Arndt & Greenberg, 1999).

Also, Mikulincer & Florian (2002) examined this hypothesis with 100 participants. The participants were reminded of their mortality vs. watching TV and then received failure feedback on a concept formation task. Participants then were given the opportunity to make self-serving attributions about their performance after completing a word fragment completion task. MS led to more self-serving attributions than a control condition and these attributions were related to better emotional state and task performance. In addition, the opportunity to report causal attributions reduced death-thought accessibility following MS.

Another interesting study about this hypothesis was of Greenberg et al. (2003). The experimenter introduced himself as a graduate student and he was working on herbal drugs and was interested in two highly effective drugs: one blocks anxiety and the other enhances memory. The participant psychology students consumed this acclaimed placebo, and then they assessed pro- and anti-American essays as a measure of worldview defense under MS or control manipulation. Although MS intensified worldview defense in the memory-enhancer condition, this effect was completely eliminated in the anxiety-blocker condition. The findings suggested that certain psychological defenses serve to prevent the experience of anxiety rather than to boost actually experienced one.

Still another study is interesting by its research design. Schmeichel et al. (2009) had ninety-two undergraduate students completed the manipulation of implicit self-esteem after MS or control manipulation surveys. For implicit self-esteem reaction, participants completed a word-decision task on the computer, adapted from Dijksterhuis (2004). For



the boost condition group, the word “I” preceded all positive words. Then, after rating the pro-US and anti-US essays, the participants proceeded to complete the letter-rating task to be assessed the effectiveness of the implicit self-esteem manipulation. Implicit self-esteem appeared to serve as a buffer against the death threat, as a result of weakening defensiveness. However, continuing with explicit self-esteem measurement, the study evidenced that MS increased the approval of positive personality descriptions but only among mixed group of low implicit and high explicit self-esteem. These findings indicated that high implicit self-esteem provides recovery for the psychological death threat.

*2.2.4. Threats to self-esteem or one’s worldview increase the accessibility of death-related thoughts, and boosts to self-esteem or worldview reduce the accessibility of death-related thoughts.* According to Harmon-Jones et al. (1997), TMT research suggested that "when death is highly accessible but just outside of focal consciousness, increased worldview defense occurs" (p.31). Accordingly, with low accessibility of death variable, high self-esteem should eliminate the need for intensified worldview defense after MS. Harmon-Jones et al. (1997) tested this hypothesis by observing bolstered self-esteem on the accessibility of death construct right after the MS treatment and with a delay and interference in MS with college students. The self-esteem manipulation and other questionnaires, the MS manipulation included, were used in the study. After these questionnaires the participants were asked to complete a word puzzle, included twenty-six words to be completed. These words were related to death (treatment), related to television (control), and eighteen words were provided as fillers. The task was designed so that the related words could be completed as either its group or as neutral words (i.e., D E \_ \_ could be DEAD or DEEP). A second word-fragment completion task, which followed the reading passage (by nationalistic worldview support or threat approach).

The researchers achieved to provide evidence to the hypothesis with this paper-and-pencil experiment. The findings supported the idea that increasing self-esteem makes the continuous repression of death constructs easier. When neutral personality feedback was received and then reminded of mortality, the participants exhibited increased death-

construct accessibility after a delay and interference with MS. Contradictorily, positive personality feedback and mortality reminding did not increase the death accessibility.

This suggested that the initial response to conscious mortality thoughts would be to actively suppressing the thoughts of death. According to this, high cognitive load should lead to immediate increase in death thought accessibility and cultural worldview defense. To provide evidence for this the delayed increase in death accessibility after MS among low cognitive load group of college students, but demonstrated a reversed pattern among high cognitive load group. However, unlike low cognitive load participants, 56 introductory psychology students, high cognitive load group demonstrated instant increases in pro-American bias after MS. Likewise, following study with 39 introductory psychology students demonstrated that worldview defense in response to MS reduces the delayed increase in death accessibility (Arndt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Simon, 1997).

Also, Wall (2000) applied a research with undergraduate students. In his research, the cultural anxiety-buffer was threatened through MS manipulation. Initially, after completing MS and control manipulation survey and filler questionnaires, each participant's motivation to self-handicap under self-protective and self-enhancing circumstances were tested with proper surveys. In line with expectations, MS increased interest in self-protection. In Study 2, the simultaneous impact of two threats (MS and self-esteem) was examined. Both threats moderated esteem orientations, although the combination of high MS and high self-esteem led to a surprisingly high level of tendency in self protection.

As such, Schimel and his colleagues compared the threatening Canadian participants' cultural values with those of another culture. The research used MS survey with control, PANAS-X for delay, filler questionnaires, and pro- and anti-nationalistic essays. The research evidenced that the death-thought accessibility remains low when participants achieved to dismiss the threat. When death-thought accessibility was measured using a lexical decision task, response latencies to death, negative, and neutral content, worldview threat increased death-thought accessibility relative to accessibility for negative and neutral content. Another finding was that the death-thought

accessibility effect emerged independently of the arousal of anger or anxiety. Last finding was that the participants with a pro-creation (vs. pro-evolution) worldview had higher death-thought accessibility after reading an anti-creation article (Schimmel, Hayes, Williams, & Jahrig, 2007).

*2.2.5. Evidence ostensibly supporting the existence of an afterlife eliminates the effect of MS on self-esteem striving and worldview defense.* This hypothesis was evidenced by Dechesne et al. (2003) in an experimental study with college students by using MS manipulation survey, PANAS, several personality questionnaires, and articles supporting and denying existence of an afterlife by using the controversy about the "near-death experience." As evidenced in the past research, MS effects were observed in the denying-afterlife group of the study, an increase in the self-esteem striving tendency. However, in the supporting-afterlife (the treatment) group not such an effect was observed. Thus, TMT posited that belief in an afterlife and positive self-worth are functionally similar to help people cope with existential anxiety.

Xu (2006) conducted experimental studies for his dissertation, with which he suggested that creation-oriented consumption was not the most effective pacifier in the short term existential anxiety though it soothes the anxiety. In his research, Study 1 estimated the intention to engage in creation-oriented consumption against inaction. According to the results, MS increased interest in consumption oriented from the creation; and that weakened the belief of afterlife increased tendency in creation-oriented consumption under MS. Study 2 examined durable creation-oriented consumption's appeal relative to other activities. The MS effect was observed only when individuals possessed a low level of *chronic* afterlife belief. Surprisingly, the tendency for creative consumption was reduced in MS.

*2.2.6. Commentary on TMT.* Although it is a well established theory and is able to explain almost every human behavior today (Pyszczynski et al., 2010), it has been a target for many comments in the past literature. Initially, theoreticians hardly found any listener or publisher when they aimed to describe the theory, because it was too immature to deliver and it was not evidenced with empirical data (Greenberg & Arndt,

2004). Later, it was proposed that TMT included several unresolved issues. For example, Leary & Schreindorfer (1997) claimed logical problems with TMT, and critically evaluated the empirical evidence of the theory. They suggested skepticism about self-preservation, one of the basic assumptions of TMT. The researchers suggested that a terror-management mechanism that ostensibly reduces an organism's concerns about death would likely decrease its long-term viability. Because, simply, the self-preservation instinct derives from the fear of death, and if people decrease their anxiety of death when they confront with death, then the chance to stay alive is reduced. Another commentary Leary & Schreindorfer attracted attention to the empirical inadequacy, which was related with the anxiety-buffering function of self-esteem. They claimed that the evidence was not clear and the relation between self-esteem and death-related fears was not as straightforward as the theory predicted.

However, Leary & Schreindorfer was good at seeing the positive side. They do not ignore that the TMT highlights the neglected role that death plays in human relations. They supposed that the worth of a theory must be judged partly by the degree to which it draws connections among previously unconnected concepts, stimulates research, and promotes discussion. On these counts, TMT ranked highly, and thus it has provided a service to the field (1997, p. 28).

By identifying TMT as a provocative view, Ryan and Deci (2004) criticized that people's search for meaning and significance cannot be wholly reduced to defensive processes. Because, this mainly existential search reflected intrinsic developmental processes, as well. They also suggested that self-esteem resulting from defenses against anxiety is akin to contingent self-esteem. However, true self-esteem is based in ongoing satisfaction of needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Briefly, Ryan and Deci suggested that TMT was not a distinct theory which examines self-esteem, significance, and defenses broadly. They provided example of sociometer and self-determination theories that investigated self-esteem against different anxieties to help understand human nature better

2.2.7. *TMT in Organizations*. Despite several empirical studies applied TMT to management research, management scholars have been slow to produce in this territory (Chen, 2016). Because, people [continuously] encounter life danger or mortality reminders due to environmental conditions at work or their professional obligations (Yeniçeri, 2016). Especially the employees of the MSOs feel themselves near death, some of them live the danger while others only observe human mortality (e.g., soldiers vs. nurses). That is to say, MS and terror management ought to be taken into consideration for the organizational behavior evaluations, because socialization dynamics is valid in the organizational life (Ashforth ve Mael, 1989).

For the sake of the nature, reasons and results of death awareness at work, Grant & Wade-Benzoni (2009) developed a theoretical model. They differentiated death anxiety and reflection as discrete states strengthen self-protective motivations in contrast to prosocial motivations. The researchers examined how mortality cues and aging processes trigger these states. This is the first theoretical study on work-related behavioral outcomes of MS, suggesting that it depends on the mortality cues (Chen, 2016) whether behaviors are generative (i.e., prosocial) or diminutive (i.e., stress-related withdrawal).

According to Grant and Wade-Benzoni (2009), many employees -such as police officers, soldiers, firefighters, miners, and nuclear power plant employees- work in dangerous conditions that put their lives on the first line. As the researchers refer to past studies, dangerous work leads to death anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and absenteeism (Chisholm, Kasl, & Eskenazi, 1983; Jermier, Gaines, & McIntosh, 1989), while exposure to death in dangerous work was also motivational in bonding and helping between coworkers (Elder & Clipp, 1988). Still other employees, such as doctors, nurses, rescue workers, funeral employees, paramedics, and grief counselors, expose vicariously to death (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). More generally, employees in all jobs are susceptible to illnesses and accidents, which can be deemed as mortality reminders (e.g., Dutton, Worline, Frost, & Lilius, 2006; Kivimäki, Vahtera, Elovaino, Lill- rank, & Kevin, 2002; Worrell, Davidson, Chandy, & Garrison, 1986).

While seeking answers about the nature, reasons and results of death and death awareness, Grant and Wade-Benzoni (2009) submitted nine propositions about death at workplace. They explained different motivational results of death anxiety and death reflection, the difference between internal and external mortality cues, personal and vicarious mortality cues, relationship between death anxiety and stress, and other useful prescription about the MS interaction in workplace. This is one of the major works on the relationship between TMT and organizational life.

In relation with these propositions, MS effects were explained with an incubator in combination with several workplace phenomena -potentially dysfunctional attitudes and behaviors- including workplace aggression, prejudicial attitudes toward others, and harsh retribution following counter normative action (Stein & Cropanzano, 2011).

Furthermore, a research to test the impact of MS on conformity showed that people have a greater preference to conform to the opinions of others in MS conditions. In the first study the researchers asked psychology students to rate 30 abstract drawings with some details of the drawing were listed, as well as a fictitious “population likeability rating” that was either high or low. MS manipulation increased the degree to which judgments of abstract drawings were influenced by the majority’s opinion. In the second study, in order to demonstrate that people would also conform to the public opinion on "real life" topics, participants were asked the questions about immigration and asylum seeking to answer on their own and what public might think, in MS and control conditions. Accordingly, MS group conformed to what they assumed the general public would think. In the third study, a replication of the first study, yet replaced the "general population rating" with ratings by Dutch, German, or Japanese people. This study repeated the findings of the first study and additionally showed that people do not conform to the attitude of outgroup members (Rankema, Stapel, & van Yperen, 2008).

With another experimental design, Salgado, Poes, & de Calvo (2015) examined the interaction between TMT, organizational identity, and various measures of organizational outcome. They argued that TMT and industrial-organizational psychology intersect by the investigation topics, such as the motivation, social identity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. In their study, participants were

assessed on levels of organizational identity, job satisfactions, motivation, and commitment toward their academic institutions, with MS and control conditions. They used the university of the participants as the organization phenomenon. According to the results, MS increased individuals' satisfaction and motivation levels regarding their organization, but only if participants already possessed a strong self-identification with their organization. Further, organizational identity can serve as a crucial component of one's worldview. Specifically, the findings suggested that if one's identification with their institution is high, that person might support the institution more strongly when reminded of his\her mortality.

Similarly, researchers argued that for many employees, corporate culture was not only connected to earning a salary, but also to a sense of security and even personal transcendence. Used MS manipulation, PANAS-X, and essays related with organizational commitment, the study provided evidence that judgments that support the company serve as psychological defenses under existential threat. MS group employees gave more favorable evaluations for the company-praising essay and more negative evaluations for the critical one. Additionally, the employees and students at a German university were observed more likely to support the characteristics of organizational culture in MS (Jonas, Kauffeld, Sullivan, & Fritsche, 2011).

Chen (2016) examined MS effects on job attitudes in organizational behavior context. He studied specifically organizational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intentions as job attitudes. This study is interesting because none of the hypotheses about the relationship between MS and organizational variables were supported, whereas some interesting results were detected in supplementary analyses. Considering the inconsistent results he reached, the researcher argued that any conclusion about the irrelevance of MS to organizational behavior would be hasty. Because, supplementary analyses about MS found that there were conditional indirect effects when individuals are highly neurotic and have low needs-supplies fit in high MS and low job satisfaction. Accordingly, he suggested further research for the application of TMT on organizational behavior.

Related with MSO construct, another study examined military personnel's attitudes toward international cooperation expressed under threatening (missions in Afghanistan) or nonthreatening (missions in Europe) circumstances, in order to directly examine the role of death threats in international relations and collaboration. TMT was argued in this study with prediction that "mortality threat undermines international collaboration" and with the assumption that it should be of interest not only to social science theorists but also to policy makers. Findings indicated that concerns about death were obviously more salient in Afghanistan in respect to Europe. The concerns about death in Afghanistan were found to be negatively correlated with willingness to collaborate internationally. The findings provided support for terror management processes in daily life, and its applications for international policy (Dechesne, Van Den Berg, & Soeters, 2007).

Moreover, Soeters, van den Berg, Varoğlu, & Sığrı (2007) conducted a research among Turkish and Dutch military cadets and mid-career officers to observe MS in decision-making on whether or not to initiate and continue military actions. They argued that the so-called casualty factor seemed to play an increasing role in decision-making on whether or not to initiate and continue military actions. Their basic implication on the area was the comparison of highly individualist Netherlands society, in which martial history and armed forces reputation is not well-known, and more collectivistic Turkish society, in which armed forces are especially proud of their martial history, tradition and reputation. Survey data was collected among cadets and mid-career officers in military academies and staff colleges of the two countries in accord with TMT procedure. The findings confirmed these "images" to a large degree. The two national samples displayed significant and substantial differences in accepting the risk of dying in the expected direction. Additionally, they examined the impact of these differences on the "willingness and ability" to collaborate internationally. The results confirmed TMT to a large degree.

Related with the variables in this study, other researchers examined the gender differences in risk-taking activities, by the effects of MS inductions on males' and females' willingness to engage in risk-taking behaviors with two studies. In the first study, American college students rated their willingness to engage in a variety of risk-



taking activities, in MS and control conditions. In the second study, Israeli high-school students completed a self-esteem measure and then rated their willingness to use various psychoactive substances that were offered in three different hypothetical scenarios, again with MS and control inductions. In both studies, findings indicated that MS led to higher willingness to engage in risky behaviors in men but not in women. The second study also displayed that self-esteem moderated the MS effect on the willingness to use psychoactive substances but only when they were offered by a friend (Hirschberger, Florian, Mikulincer, Goldenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2002).

Peck (2008) examined the death anxiety in another MSO -oncology- by means of the social workers' personal advance directives and their communication with patients. 114 participants among the members of the Association of Oncology Social Work completed death anxiety and advance directive communication practices survey instruments. MS manipulation was created with one of these instruments. According to the findings, respondents having more years of work experience reported higher death anxiety scores. Additionally, the death anxiety scores increased and the communication scores decreased, related to declaration of information about advance directives and values in life. The respondents of this study indicated a high level of collaboration among physicians, nurses, and other social workers, because they were working in a mortality-salient environment. Collaboration impacts not only the practice but also the policy.

In the Turkish literature, Aktürk (2014) investigated whether the frequency of encountering death in the workplace affects the death anxiety and the hopelessness levels of the members of different professions, especially adult intensive care and oncology (MSO) nurses in the existential theory perspective. She gathered data from nurses in adult intensive care and oncology, teachers, bank employees and faculty members. The findings showed that the death anxiety scores of MSO nurses were lower than of the control group professionals. The hopelessness scores of the control group were lower than that of MSO nurses, whereas there were not significant differences between the compared groups in their trait anxiety levels.

Also, Ertufan (2008) studied the effect of physicians' exposition to death on their death anxiety, in his dissertation. His survey study with 144 physicians from different hospitals in İstanbul and İzmir included scales about fear of death, religious commitment, and locus of control. His treatment group comprised the (MSO) physicians, who were practicing on patients close to death. He hypothesized that physicians who were practicing on patients close to death should get significantly lower scores on the scales about death and higher scores in internal control. Findings did not support main hypothesis. However, women scored higher in death fear and death anxiety than men. Also, the physicians who were practicing on patients close to death got lower scores about death if they had spent more years in their jobs. According to the self-reports of the participants; men utilized more rationalization mechanism, while women preferred to talk others. Also, men reported that they cope with dehumanizing, while women reported that they apply repression. Only men reported that they use humor against occupational stress. No relation was found between religious belief and any other scale. Consequently, Ertufan concluded that the contradictory data regarding death anxiety might indicate that death anxiety was a personal issue, rather than a generalizable organizational variable.

From a different point of view, Winter (2007) prepared his dissertation about the relationship between MS and workplace violence, specifically sexual harassment. His research attempted to determine whether MS enhances hostile sexism (stereotypes associated with an antipathy toward women) and benevolent sexism (stereotypes associated with protectionist attitudes toward woman), potential worldviews that influence decision-makers' sexual harassment evaluations. The participants in three studies, the undergraduates, viewed two sexual harassment films and evaluated the complainants' sexual harassment claims. Hostile and benevolent sexist attitudes were measured using a sexism inventory. He argued that the findings about the relationship and MS were contradictory and standard, while MS conditions had little impact though hostile sexism had predicted lower harassment ratings.

Another experiment was conducted to evaluate the MS effect with subtle death reminder on voting intentions, related with leadership paradigm. It was hypothesized that MS induction would increase support for President George W. Bush and decrease

support for Senator John Kerry for the 2004 US presidential election. In late September 2004, following the previously told TMT procedure for MS and control induction, registered voters were asked the candidate they intended to vote for. Likewise in the past research, this study used PANAS-X for delay after MS inductions and a filler questionnaire to cover the manipulation. As predicted, votes to Senator John Kerry was declared substantially more than George Bush in the control condition, but Bush was favored over Kerry following a reminder of death, suggesting that President Bush's re-election may have been facilitated by nonconscious concerns about mortality in the aftermath of 9/11. The researchers argued that the results were consistent with the possibility that frequent government-issued terror warnings for evidence that there was a "consistent, positive relationship between terror warnings and presidential approval" and relentless reference to 9/11 by the Bush administration during the campaign (Cohen, Ogilvie, Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2005; for detail please see: Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; Cohen, Solomon, Maxfield, Pyszczynski, & Greenberg, 2004).

Following the international existential threats, Routledge and Arndt (2008) drove attention to the increasing occurrence of suicide bombing attacks, which highlighted a question: "why are people willing to sacrifice their lives to advance an ideological agenda?" Their research suggested that willingness to self-sacrifice was a reflection of efforts to manage death awareness by investing in a symbolic identity that opens the doors of immortality. The researchers argued that if willingness to self-sacrifice was a response to death awareness, then increasing MS should lead to an increase in willingness to self-sacrifice for a death-transcending symbolic identity, such as one's nation. MS increased willingness of the participants from a large British college to self-sacrifice for England, but only when an alternative route to symbolic immortality was not provided. The study demonstrated that enhanced awareness of mortality enhances willingness to make self-sacrifices for one's nation. Moreover, such willingness reflects strivings for symbolic immortality as self-sacrificial willingness was not increased after MS if an alternative way to symbolically transcend death was imagined.

More realistically, Chatard et al. (2011) studied the psychological factors in conflict escalation to investigate the role of death awareness in an African civil war context, in 2006, toward the end of the civil war in Ivory Coast. The researchers investigated MS

effect of self-esteem striving with students from a university located in the pro-governmental area of Ivory Coast by using measures of MS manipulation, self-esteem and government/army support. The study showed that reminding participants of their possible death during the ongoing conflict enhanced their self-esteem, as well as their tendency to support for the actions of the government and its army. Researchers argued that mortality is chronically salient in a civil war, these effects can lead to conflict intensification by increasing not only each side's support for their leaders, but also the value that members of confronted sides attribute to themselves. This study facilitated understanding of how factors related with the mortality awareness might contribute to the self-perpetuation of violent conflicts in times of war.

In addition to the empirical and theoretical studies throughout the world, TMT has been found attractive by the Turkish scholars, as well. For example, Mert (2010) explained TMT for security researchers from the perspective of courage. Bulut (2015) organized a survey research among employees from communication sector to assess the MS effects on perceived organizational support scores of employees. The results of her study showed that MS did not affect perceived organizational support scores of employees. She argued the role of collectivistic culture in Turkey with reference to Hofstede (1980). More recently, Yeniçeri (2016) published a literature review with discussion chapter for MS effects on business life, as support for organizational identity, job satisfaction, organizational loyalty and motivation at work. Finally, 23 dissertations are available in the website of the Turkish Council of Higher Education Thesis Center, three of which is for Doctorate and 20 is for Master's Degree.

### **2.3. Obedience to Authority (Submissive Behavior)**

One of the foremost social scientific studies intended to clarify the human nature was denominated *the obedience research* of Milgram (1961), which incited the current study. Milgram tested obedience to destructive authority by a series of experiments in a Yale University laboratory, beginning in 1961 (Milgram, 1961, 1965, 1974; Elms, 1995). His experiments are still among the most inspired contributions to social science, especially into social psychology (Rusell, 2011).

The main idea of the Milgram experiments was the situation in which one agent commands another to hurt the third (Milgram, 1965). Following the first design, he tested his theory with many changes in the procedure, with nearly one thousand subjects in less than a year (Elms, 1995). This procedure, fundamentally, consists of ordering a naïve subject to administer electric shock, by using a simulated shock generator with 30 clearly marked voltage levels that range from 15 to 450 volts -labelled clearly from Slight Shock level to Danger: Severe Shock level- to a victim, who is a trained associate of the experimenter. The participants were 40 males for each experiment session between the ages of 20 and 50 from New Haven, Connecticut, who were postal clerks, high school teachers, salesmen, engineers, and laborers, with diverse education levels. The orders to administer shocks were given to the naïve participant by the experimenter, who wore a laboratory uniform, in the context of a "learning experiment" apparently set up to study the effects of punishment on memory (Milgram, 1974). This experiment was the first scientific research about obedience to destructive authority (Elms, 1995).

The results were surprising and disturbing, even for Milgram himself (Milgram, 1963). In the first experiment, 26 (out of 40) participants obeyed the orders of the experimenter to the end, proceeding to punish the victim until they reached the most powerful shock available on the shock generator (The maximum shock, 450 volts, was two steps beyond the label 'Danger: Severe Shock' and was labeled 'XXX'). Although the obedient participants often exhibited extreme stress behavior, they continued to administer shocks (Milgram, 1963, pp.371-372).

Milgram could publish all about his research in detail in 1974, after separate articles by the years. Although he conducted more than 20 experimental variations, his most (in)famous result was this first official test with the 65% completion rate (Russell, 2011). Milgram's experiments can be described as an *experimentum crucis*, because the experiments were designed to respond to a question of major importance: the way blind obedience leads people to inflict severe pain on the innocent others (Benjamin & Simpson, 2009).

In addition to the criticisms, this experiment attracted attention of the social scientists and is still an interesting paradigm in psychology, sociology, social psychology, and political science. Obviously it is in the range of organizational behavior, for two

reasons. Firstly, it is currently the evidence of the "obedient tendencies" (Milgram, 1974) inherent to human beings, which potentially provides different perspectives by means of organizational authority studies. Secondly, this experiment showed that the human nature cannot be trusted (Milgram, 1974) to protect the members of the society from brutality and inhumane treatment at the directions of malevolent authority inside the organization. These approaches can work for cultural change management, as well.

In the light of Milgram, social psychologists wanted to reinterpret the findings. For example, Orne & Holland (1968) replicated his experiment with a non-human victim. They differentiated their study from Milgram's, by using a fluffy puppy as a victim and female participants in addition to males. They aimed to interpret gender differences in obedience. The researchers hypothesized that the female participants would show reluctance to hurt a cute puppy and they would confront the authority figures better than male participants. Findings contradicted with the hypotheses. The female participants were completely submissive without exception. However, levels of obedience acquired from male participants (54% were fully obedient) were quite close to those obtained by Milgram. The difference between obedience levels of female and male participants found statistically reliable.

After almost a decade, another replication of the experiment was conducted in Australia by Kilham & Mann (1974) to test the hypothesis that the individual in a transmitter role in the Milgram obedience paradigm is more obedient to destructive commands than the individual in an executant role. Their hypothesis was that the person in the transmitter role would feel lower responsibility than the person in the executant role for the consequences of his deeds. Findings in this experiment supported the hypothesis. Contrary to the findings of Orne & Holland (1968), females in this study were observed less obedient than male participants. In the executant condition and the general level of obedience in the executant condition was lower than that found by Milgram.

Likewise, Burger (2009) from Santa Clara University has conducted a partial replication of Milgram that maintained useful comparisons. Burger predicted that any differences in obedience between the 1961–1962 participants and the 2006 participants would be minimal (Burger, 2009). Even though changes in social attitudes could have

an impact on obedience, he argued that the question about changes over time might have represented another example of the fundamental attribution error. The findings indicated that the same situational factors that affected obedience in Milgram's participants were still in operation. Although changes in societal attitudes can affect behavior, the similarity between these and Milgram's results is also noteworthy.

Milgram's obedience research was explained in the attributional perspective to provide for a better understanding of the research in the psychological context (Miller, Gillen, Schenker, & Radlove, 1974), whereas another explanatory attempt was an analogical study in the concepts of "culture of obedience" (e Cunha, Rego, & Clegg, 2010). e Cunha et al. established an analogy between Milgram's experiments and 1970s' Cambodia, in the meaning of gradual increase in demands and making wrongdoing (or violence) banal, control of access to information (institutional control), and collective responsibility as the common dimensions of "unquestioned obedience". Subsequently, Gibson (2013) explained it in the rhetorical perspective, Russell (2014) shed light on the "relationship condition" (a variable, explained superficially by Milgram) of the study, and Hollander (2015) represented the other side of the coin -the repertoire of resistance- in his study and showed how Milgram's participants defied the orders of the experimenter.

The most recently, researchers formed a transdisciplinary project to interrogate the aspects of Milgram's obedience studies to explore the possibility of using a new methodology – Immersive Digital Realism (IDR) – to restage the controversial research in a way that is both impactful and ethical (Haslam, Reicher, & Millard, 2015). Just like Milgram (1974) himself saw his studies as a combination of science and art, this project was designed with disparate film and social psychology studies in completion one another. As a result, even though Ingram (1979) and many others had criticized and are continuing to argue the ethicality of Milgram's procedures by claiming deception and injury or abuse of the participants' self-esteem, this modern IDR study did not confute his findings. On the contrary, this IDR study clearly strengthened the assertion that Milgram's obedience experiment is an *experimentum crucis* (Benjamin & Simpson, 2009, p.17) even today.

## 2.4. Authoritarianism and Obedience in Organization

A question was asked by a graduate in 2015: "What makes one person an independent thinker and the other one a radical follower?" (Van Aken, 2015, p.7). A detailed answer can be found in Berkeley Public Opinion Study, which is the first inspiration on the subject and of which report has been published as a comprehensive book, the *Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). This book described authoritarians, as followers of legitimate authority, exhibitors of a level of hostility toward people who don't accept authority and adherents to imposed social norms and conventions. In organizations, as a result of the leader-follower dynamic, having an authoritarian personality may influence the behaviors of the members of the organizations (Van Aken, 2015, p.7). So, authoritarianism phenomenon should not be ignored in obedience studies.

The *Authoritarian Personality* was about social discrimination with full of empirical data and philosophical analyses. This book was actually written to explain human nature by identifying prejudice. However, the researchers created a "relatively" (then) new human typology: "the authoritarian type of man," as in the name of the book, *the authoritarian personality*. The researchers either provided different scales to measure attitudes and political tendencies, or clinical psychiatric interviews to supply qualitative data and analyses as evidence for scale development procedures in addition to reliability and validity calculations required. Fascism (F) Scale was the instrument and paradigm, which is the most related with the current review of literature. Because, authoritarianism was identified as an umbrella theory for obedience. It also included issues referring cultural worldview and ingroup-outgroup tension, as mentioned in TMT.

According to Adorno et al., the dimensions used to explain authoritarian personality, or F type personality in reference to Fascism Scale, were suggested as interrelated and correlational. This combination of too many dimensions seemed Altemeyer (1996) too sophisticated to identify an attitude, "a single syndrome" (Adorno et al., 1950) of personality. So, Altemeyer explained right-wing authoritarian (RWA) personality with only first three dimensions of F type in a different explanation. The Berkeley researchers suggested 9 dimensions for F type personality: conventionalism,



authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, anti-intraception, superstition and stereotypy, power and toughness, destructiveness and cynicism, projectivity, sex.

Having considered the authoritarian attitude from receptive to antidemocratic, all these variables were suggested to form and measure a potentially antidemocratic personality. For example, it was hypothesized that those who conform the most to culture should be the most prejudiced, related with aggression and streotypy. Data confirmed the correlation between conventional values and prejudice (Adorno et al., 1950).

However, the Berkeley researchers identified submission to authority dimension as a very general attitude with the main components of desire for a strong leader, subservience of the individual to a variety of authority figures -parents, older people, leaders, supernatural power, etc. They reported links for submission with Nazi creed and anti-Semitism attitudes. At this point, the research was criticized by Altemeyer, due to subjectivity and unsafe inductions (Altemeyer, 1996).

Moreover, the authoritarianism definition of Adorno et al. provided Freudian outlook by analyzing the hatred towards a Jew by a Christian was a mere replacement of a detested father or teacher -an authority figure from the individual's childhood. Although this Freudian approach has been criticized because it cannot be observed empirically, it was deemed as the most comprehensive work about authoritarian personality until 1950s (Altemeyer, 1996; DeZoort & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1997). After all, Altemeyer explained the authoritarian personality construct in a more sound, scientific, and clear way almost four decades later by having been inspired mainly by Bandura's (1977) social learning theory and other social psychological explanations (DeZoort & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1997; Güldü, 2011). Accordingly, Altemeyer (1996) identified three clusters in a person by his right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) theory: Authoritarian submission, Authoritarian aggression, and Conventionalism (Altemeyer, 1996).

Actually, RWA is a personality trait, based on the hypothesis that some people need less pressure to submit or obey to authority and (thus) attack others, while others require more. However, Altemeyer posited that the authoritarians in this definition do not submit "absolutely, automatically, or blindly" to the usual authority. Conflict about orders from above or questioning orders seemed normal for Altemeyer's right-wingers,

yet their acceptance of the orders were still expected more often than of others'. As such, not all officials do deserve equal degrees of respect and submission for RWAs. They deem "good judges" and "bad governments," "good popes" and "poor presidents." Nevertheless, they would obey to established authorities they like, and to those they do not like, more readily than nonauthoritarians would (Altemeyer, 1996).

What implications does the authoritarian outlook create inside organizations? Fundamentally, organizations are institutions whose primary purpose is to accomplish established goals. Both the systems school and the modern structural school of organization theory claimed that organizations are rational institutions and their goals are set by the formal authority figures. These two schools asserted the primary problem for organizations was achieving their declared purposes effectively and efficiently. Therefore, personal preferences of their members should be constricted by systems of formal rules, authority and norms of rational behavior (Ott & Shafritz, 2001).

In addition to this assertion, the contributions of Elton Mayo and Chester Barnard helped Durkheimian views enlighten the organizational analysis, and of Talcott Parson influenced the literature with structural functionalism and Weber's bureaucracy. As in sociology, it is impossible to evaluate obedience distinct from power and authority, proposed by Weberian bureaucracy, Durkheimian functionalism, and Marxian utilitarianism. Because, authority is a structural concept which is related with system variables, and power is an interactional concept which belongs with decision-making variables. More clearly, the earlier refers positions and formal rules and the latter implies the actions of individuals in group settings (Hamilton & Biggart, 1985).

Nevertheless, "Why should individuals be committed to the values of (and be obedient to) an organization to which they have only a fleeting attachment?" (e.g.; Courpasson & Dany, 2003; Grey & Garsten, 2001). Because, obedience in the organization is partly the outcome of an asymmetrical relationship in which personal behavior is shaped by the lack of alternatives between obedience and resistance given to organizational members (Courpasson & Dany, 2003). The spectrum for management of interpersonal interaction requirements in the organization extents from *internalized self-discipline* (Jermier, 1998; Courpasson & Dany, 2003) to *panopticon* (Foucault, 1979;

Courpasson & Dany, 2003). This variation is related with the type of the organization and the sector it runs in.

Accordingly, among the limited number of studies about organizational authority, Özcan (2014) discussed employees' reaction to authority in-between obedience and self-determination in order to investigate employees' general attitude towards authority. He interviewed with 46 employees from 5 different organizations, in which the results showed that employees working in public sector obey to the authority significantly more than those in private sector. Besides, high-skilled employees demonstrated more autonomy than the low-skilled employees did. In a different approach, Bölelli (2012) indicated management-employee interactions in his research on the relationship between power sources and compliance behavior in healthcare professionals. His study provided the results that leaders use persuasive and expert power sources most frequently while they use corrective power source the least frequently. Besides, all the subordinate-level participants demonstrated only compliance (obedience) to authority among resistance, compliance (obedience) and commitment.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHOD**

### **3.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

In order to investigate submissive behavior under MS conditions in organizations with superior-subordinate interaction (especially with a scenario based on inappropriate wishes) and demonstrate the need for a typology of MSO-nonMSO, these questions should be asked:

1. What is the relationship between death anxiety and submissive behavior inside the organization?
2. Since death anxiety is a naturally inherent terror for all human-beings, how people work in the MSOs and obey orders despite the obvious danger of their own lives?
3. Does MS increase submissiveness toward the inappropriate wishes of the superiors in MSOs?

These questions generated three hypotheses:

H1: The members of MSOs should be generally more submissive to inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority than those in nonMSOs.

H2: The members of MSOs should be more submissive to inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority under MS condition in respect to the members of nonMSOs.

H3: The members of MSOs should be more submissive to inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority under control condition in respect to the members of nonMSOs.

### 3.2. Research Design

A survey study was implemented in order to identify the predicted difference between the groups in a 2 (organizational type; MSO vs. nonMSO) X 2 (manipulation; MS vs. coffee) factorial design. This design was investigated with independent-samples *t*-tests in combination with the groups related the organizational type and manipulation type, searching the relationship with gender, as well.

For the investigation of the submission level in different scenarios, MS manipulation was assigned as treatment, while coffee manipulation was assigned as control condition (MS='1'; coffee='0'). Thus, initially, it was decided to shape the groups as treatment-treatment (1-1), treatment-control (1-0), control-treatment (0-1), control-control (0-0) groups. The data file columns were coded according to these notation to prevent disorder. More clearly, the groups were defined as MSO-treatment, MSO-control, nonMSO-treatment, nonMSO-control. Therefore, in every organizational group, half of the participants were delivered the surveys with MS manipulation, and the others were delivered the surveys with control manipulation.

The survey was composed of four sections: (1) the informed-consent statement, (2) manipulation survey, (3) the main scale, and (4) demographic questions. Death manipulation was applied to the treatment groups. After completing manipulation survey the participants were asked to declare their opinion about education system in Turkey, so that a delay can be created between death manipulation and scale, as the past research suggest (e.g., Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Simon, & Breus, 1994).

According to this, however, the accessibility of death-thought is low right after an explicit MS induction, while it increases after a delay. Furthermore, as represented in the literature review, many studies applied PANAS or its variations (i.e., PANAS-X) to either create a delay needed, or to measure affect alterations (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1992; Arndt et al., 1997; Yavuz Güzel, 2012; İncirliiler, 2014). Because new findings were urgent for the current study rather than verifying past research, PANAS were replaced with a brief talking session.

Subsequently, the Submissiveness to Organizational Authority Scale Turkish form (DeZoort & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1997; Türköz, Aksay & Güğerçin, 2018) were applied

in order to measure the reactions of the participants to the inappropriate wishes of their superiors given that they consider their organizational dynamics. In this concept, submissive behavior (or obedience) was appraised as a cultural worldview in the organization and it was assigned as *the dependent variable*. This variable was measured with MS, *the independent variable*, and coffee image, *the control variable* with the help of manipulation surveys.

### **3.3. Sample and Data Collection**

The survey was applied in mainly two groups of organizations (N=381). The first group was chosen as MSOs, the organizations working with and near the death primes or death danger. The second group was nonMSOs, respectively distant and unrelated from death primes or death danger.

The MSOs participated in the study (treatment; n=205):

- (1) Emergency Healthcare Service of Adiyaman University Research Hospital (Adiyaman)
- (2) 112 Emergency Medical Help Unit (Adiyaman)
- (3) National Medical Help and Rescue Unit (UMKE; Adiyaman)
- (4) Oncology Intensive Care Service of a Private Hospital (Adana)

The nonMSOs participated in the study (control; n=176):

- (1) Adana Science and Technology University (ABTÜ; Adana)
- (2) Child Health Care Service of a Private Hospital (Adana)
- (3) Maternity Healthcare Service of a Private Hospital (Adana)
- (4) A Private School - Elementary, Secondary and High Schools (Adana)
- (5) A Private Social Solidarity Agency (Adana)

A senior employee in the organizations were consulted as a coordinator and he/she was asked to gather the volunteer members of his/her organization in a room and scatter

the survey papers after briefly telling the aim of the survey. The participants and the coordinator were not told the real purpose of the study until they complete the survey, because the manipulation must have been kept secret to maintain the verity of the study. Instead, they were told that the study is about a master's thesis about organizational theory. After they completed the survey forms, the coordinator collected all the papers and returned them to the researcher.

The participants were chosen among those who had for at least three months of professional experience; among volunteer healthcare workers, sanitation workers, nurses and physicians in the hospitals (n=139); among these participants 18 people were from a nonMSO service); ambulance drivers, nurses, healthcare technicians, and physicians in emergency and rescue units (n=84); teachers, instructors, lecturers, professors, college and graduate students in school and university, and the volunteer social solidarity workers (n=158). Thus, among these 381 participants, 205 people were chosen from the MSOs and 176 people were from nonMSOs.

Because the survey data was gathered mostly from the workplaces and the participants were not paid for their participation in the study, they in part seemed reluctant to reply the demographic questions completely. For example, only 359 of them declared their gender, 164 female (46%) and 195 male (54%); 341 of them declared their ages (M=31.38, Median=30, SD=9.1); 321 of them declared their professional experience in years (M=9, SD=7.6); finally among the 360 participants who declared their education level are scattered as 85 high school (24%), 78 college (22%), 145 bachelor's and undergraduate (40%), 41 master's degree (11%), and 9 PhD and more (3%).

### **3.4. Instrumentation**

#### **3.4.1. "Mortality" Manipulation Survey**

At the very beginning developmental stages of the theory, the founders of TMT wanted to prove that their findings in the literature were empirically true, and so they devised several experimental research designs (Greenberg & Arndt, 2011). The theoreticians also developed several measurement instruments in order to measure MS effects. Because, the most basic implications of the theory can be observed only when the participants are focusing on death-related thoughts. For example, MS manipulation survey (Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski & Lyon, 1989; Greenberg et al., 1995; Arndt, Greenberg & Cook, 2002; Çetiner, 2014), word search puzzles (Arndt, Greenberg & Cook, 2002; Güler, 2014), etc.

Although several methods for manipulation were used in the TMT literature, the easiest method to create MS effect is the manipulation survey used in the first empirical research of TMT (Rosenblatt et al., 1989). The researchers used a questionnaire composed of two open-ended questions. This survey was applied only to treatment groups and was not included in the statistical measurement. The participants were supposed to answer initially this section.

Though the original title of the survey was "Mortality Attitudes Personality Survey" (Rosenblatt et al, 1989, p.682), it was changed as "Organizational Behavior Research" in order to maintain the confidentiality of the manipulation purpose (English form in Appendix A; Turkish form in Appendix B). However many researchers has translated this survey almost verbatim (e.g., Güler, 2014; Çetiner, 2014), in this study the two questions were simplified and abridged so that the participants can answer without linguistic distraction and fatigue. Because, it was observed in the previous pilot applications of the current study that the target audience felt distress when they are asked a question about death, or about their personal attitudes. After tribunal advisory, it was decided to make the items simple, short, and clear enough not to bother the participants.



Besides, mentioned studies declared with the title that they are making this survey in order to discover the personal attitudes and personality characteristics. This approach disturbs the participants of this study more than concealing the research intent. Because, the population in Adiyaman province is quite introvert and employees do not feel employment security, according to the interview made before this study and personal observation. This insecure and closed way of life makes people rather reticent: they are not eager to disclose their personal characteristics and beliefs. Therefore, the title of the survey was changed and the items were simplified.

In the original 1989 study of TMT, the theoreticians asked these questions:

- (1) What will happen to you as you physically die?
- (2) What are the emotions that the thought of your own death arouses in you?

(Rosenblatt et al, 1989, p.682)

However, when this questions are asked in Turkish with the expressions "physically die" and "arouse emotions," it creates ambivalence and distraction for many readers. This ambivalence increases in the southwestern or western anatolian provinces, due to the low development and intellectual literacy rates. And the general population in this region is bilingual and most of them learn Turkish as a second native language. Therefore, the researchers should design their research accordingly: simple and clear. All these factors were considered in this research and the researcher modified the questions as below:

- (1) What do you "feel" when death comes to your mind ?
- (2) What do you "think" when death comes to your mind ?

(Appendices A and B)

### **3.4.2. "Coffee" Manipulation Survey**

This survey involves the same items with the death manipulation survey, and the same restrictions with it. The only difference is that the word "coffee" was replaced with the word "death." This survey was applied to the control groups in both organizational groups in order to create a manipulation other than *death*. This survey was applied so that the completion of the surveys in the two groups -*treatment and control*- could be the same amount of time with same number of items. Otherwise, applying a *non-death manipulation* and not applying manipulation to the control group makes no difference.

### **3.4.3. Submissiveness to Organizational Authority Scale (SOAS)**

Although the authoritarianism has been used in several contexts to measure a variety of personality dimensions, measurement of worker attitudes toward inappropriate instructions from superiors within the workplace was firstly developed by DeZoort & Roskos-Ewoldsen (1997): the Submissiveness to Organizational Authority Scale (SOAS) that was designed to evaluate attitudes toward submission to the inappropriate wishes of the authority in the workplace and was based on RWA dimensions.

As mentioned above, Altemeyer (1996) defined three dimensions for RWA: authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism. Based on the first dimension of RWA, the authoritarian submission, DeZoort & Roskos-Ewoldsen has developed SOAS, which was different from the other instruments by its emphasis on the inappropriateness. This inappropriateness implies the orders or wishes that are incongruous with institutional policies, institutional procedures, institutional conventions, security measures, professional ethics, moral values, legal norms, professionalism, principles of the specialty of the employee, and principles for efficiency and effectiveness for all means. Therefore, the researchers claimed that the subordinate members can exhibit hesitancy against such kind of inappropriate instruction. Because, in the most of the workplaces -more generally in almost every social settings in reference to Milgram- obeying the organizational authority is a normal behavior. Actually not many people do think disobeying.

However, as Altemeyer posited, the authoritarianism will show up differently from blind obedience in the organizations: the subordinates evaluate the risks of obeying or disobeying. Because, such an inappropriate instruction from the authority figures at workplace creates ethical and moral dilemma in addition to the hesitancy for the employees. Because, while every member of an organization normally tends to behave according to the generally-accepted rules, any action against these rules creates antipathy and discomfort (e.g., *cognitive dissonance theory*; Festinger, 1957). Because, besides cognitive dissonance, any violation of the rules might result legal and conscientious responsibility. On the other hand, disobeying the orders might result mobbing, maltreatment, bullying, or disregard -depending on the power of the superior.

In the development procedure of the scale three general methods were used to assess the psychometric properties of the SOAS. Firstly, the use of item means, standard deviations, and item-total correlations were applied to evaluate the responses and individual items in the scale. The scale has been developed with 18 items at the beginning, and after the pilot test it was organized as 10 items, in one dimension according to exploratory factor analysis. Second, they applied confirmatory maximum likelihood factor analysis to fit the factor model and provide additional statistical evidence about the validity of the 10-items scale. Finally, the scale was retested and compared with other four scales to assess test-retest reliability, convergent and discriminant validity, and social desirability response bias.

It is important to mark that the researchers paid particular attention to identifying and removing acquiescent and careless respondents. For this purpose 5 items has been reversely coded and the responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The researchers focused on construct validity after they have maintained linguistic validity, internal consistency and one-dimensionality. They used four different scales for construct validity: (1) General Attitudes Toward Institutional Authority Scale (16 items; Rigby, 1982), (2) The Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (28 items; Rahim, 1983), (3) The Compliance with Supervisor's Wishes Scale (10 items; Rahim,1988), (4) Social Desirability Scale (33 items; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

Subsequently, the researchers launched a second survey application with 456 college students to maintain the validity and reliability of the scale. They have reached almost a quarter of these participants (108) three months later and they applied the same survey package again for the test-retest reliability. Accordingly, they gained .79 and .83 Cronbach's alpha levels, which demonstrated that the scale was highly reliable and consistent.

This scale was adapted into Turkish language and culture by Türköz et al. (2018). The researchers applied the adaptation in two steps, as the developers did. However, the adaptation sample was not from the university, it was from the white collar workers from different sectors, public and private from Adana and Adıyaman provinces. The first step was applied to white collars (N= 119) to enable the linguistic validity, to provide a linguistically and culturally understandable text of the items. Nevertheless, the researchers observed the scale text was not understood enough by 84% (n=45) of the participants, who were asked about the clarity of the items.

The second step was the real administration of the adaptation procedure. The researchers used two scales for convergent validity, and one scale for discriminant validity, in accord with the suggestions of International Test Commission (ITC, 2017) in translating and adapting the scales. The scales for convergent validity should be related with the parameters and/or the variables targeted to be measured, and the scales for discriminant validity should be chosen a different topic in order to clarify that the adapted or developed scale measures the desired variable (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Hambleton & Lee, 2013; ITC, 2017). The Belief of an Unjust World subscale of the Locus of Control Scale (Dağ, 2002) and the Obliging subscale of the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (Rahim, 1983; Gümüşeli, 1994) was used for convergent validity, while the Normlessness subscale of the Dean's Alienation Scale (Dean, 1961; Güğercin & Aksay, 2017) was used for discriminant validity.

The researchers gathered data from 257 white collars for the second step of their study, and they analyzed their data further after they have observed .77 Cronbach's alpha, which maintained enough reliability. In order to show the dimensionality of the items in Turkish they have applied exploratory factor analysis by calculating also Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO=.803) coefficient and Barlett's sphericity test (=statistically meaningful).

After component analysis with varimax rotation, two factors detected and item 9 of the original scale was omitted due to low factor loading. The researchers referred Hambleton & Lee (2013) and ITC (2017) to explain that the reason of two-dimensionality was the cultural differences, in addition to the linguistic details. Thus, the scale was shaped as 9-items and 2-dimensions (Appendix-F).

Türköz et al. applied the second order confirmatory factor analysis in order to better explain and evidence the convergent and discriminant validity of the scale. They provided expected cross validation index (ECVI), was observed the same for two distinct dimensions (.276) to measure how good the model would predict for the future sample covariances, which maintains  $\chi^2/df$ , RMSEA, TLI, CMIN, AIC ve RMSEA values with reference to Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller (2003).

After all, SOAS Turkish Form was suggested with two dimensions, which are (1) *submission to superior* and (2) *submission to organizational authority*, with .73 and .75 Cronbach's alpha levels respectively. Because, Turkish culture is a large power distance and collectivist culture and these cultural characteristics influence language and perception of the Turkish people in a greater extent, according to the researchers in reference to Hofstede (1980) and Giles & Smith (1979). According to this, large power distance creates paternalistic superiors and submissive subordinates, while collectivism creates belonging, loyalty, dependence, particularism and “we” consciousness. These two cultural dimensions found in accordance with *superior-authority insight* for the subordinate members of an organization in the mentioned paper.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The current study resembles by the research design to many studies in TMT literature. However, research suggests different analysis techniques. For example, as mentioned in the literature review chapter, Rosenblatt et al. (1989) applied a one-way ANOVA on the participants' bond assessments (the punishing behavior), which they assigned as the dependent variable while the manipulation was assigned as the independent variable. They thought that it was enough to apply ANOVA when MS and control condition was in comparison. However, because the researchers wanted to measure the bond assessment in interaction with the participants' attitudes toward prostitution (ATP) in Experiment 2, they decided to apply ANOVAs in 2 X 2 analysis model. They also conducted initial ANOVAs including gender as an independent variable for Studies 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the same research on the main dependent variables, where the analyses evidenced no main effects or interactions involving gender.

Likewise, Greenberg et al. (1990) also used 2 (MS vs. control) X 2 (Christian first vs. Jew first) between participants X 2 (Christian vs. Jew target) within participants ANOVAs. In three studies, they also conducted initial analyses including gender as a factor, but gender did not interact with MS on any of the primary dependent measures in any of the studies. Reviewing the national literature, not a difference can be detected in analysis models. For example, Uğurlar (2011) and Çetiner (2014) applied *t* tests and ANOVAs, Güler (2014) applied only *t* tests. İncirliler (2014) applied multivariate ANOVA, and Yücel (2015) applied multivariate ANCOVA. Despite the nuances, the major analysis technique to compare the differences within and in-between the groups is ANOVA or *t* test in TMT literature (e.g., Harmon-Jones et al., 1996; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Chatard et al. 2011; Cuillier, 2012; Shatil, 2012).

Because the *t*-test is a simple way of examining the difference between two groups (Berkman & Reise, 2011), independent samples *t*-test was applied in the current study. However, *t*-test requires three main assumptions: (1) independent observations, which was provided by the research, (2) normally distributed residuals, and (3) the equality of variance across groups, which was tested by Levene's test.

*H1: The members of MSOs should be generally more submissive to inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority than those in nonMSOs.* Independent-samples *t*-test was applied for the comparison of submission to inappropriate organizational authority in MSOs and non MSOs. A significant difference was not detected (Table-1) in relation with MSOs ( $M = 24.29$ ,  $SD = 5.71$ ) and nonMSOs ( $M = 25.57$ ,  $SD = 5.52$ ) organization types;  $t(377) = -0.47$ ,  $p = 0.6$ . These results claim that organization type does not really create an effect on submissive behavior of the members in the organizations. Specifically, these results suggest that people obey the organizational authority equally in the two types of organizations, within the Turkish culture.

Table 1: Statistical Analysis for Submission by Overall Organization Types

|                  | Organization Types |      |     |        |      |     | 95% CI for Mean Difference | t      | df  |
|------------------|--------------------|------|-----|--------|------|-----|----------------------------|--------|-----|
|                  | MSO                |      |     | nonMSO |      |     |                            |        |     |
|                  | M                  | SD   | n   | M      | SD   | n   |                            |        |     |
| Submission Level | 24.29              | 5.71 | 181 | 25.57  | 5.53 | 198 | -1.41, 0.86                | -0.47* | 377 |

\*  $p > .05$ .

*H2: The members of MSOs should be more submissive to inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority under MS condition in respect to the members of nonMSOs.* Independent-samples *t*-test was used for the comparison of submission to inappropriate organizational authority for MS manipulation in MSOs and nonMSOs. Submission levels with MS manipulation for MSOs ( $M = 24.31$ ,  $SD = 5.93$ ) and nonMSOs ( $M = 26.25$ ,  $SD = 5.36$ ) found significantly different (Table-2);  $t(179) = -2.31$ ,  $p = 0.02$ . According to the results MS manipulation does really create an effect on submission level in relation with the organization types. Actually, the members of MSOs react more submissively to the organizational authority than their counterparts do in nonMSOs.

Table 2: Statistical Analysis for Submission by Manipulation

|                  | MS manipulation in Different Types of Organization |      |    |        |      |    | 95% CI for Mean Difference |        |     |
|------------------|--|------|----|--------|------|----|----------------------------|--------|-----|
|                  | MSO  |      |    | nonMSO |      |    | t                          | df     |     |
|                  | M  | SD   | n  | M      | SD   | n  |                            |        |     |
| Submission Level | 24.31  | 5.93 | 89 | 26.25  | 5.36 | 92 | 3.6, -0.28                 | -2.31* | 179 |

\*  $p < .05$ .

*H3: The members of MSOs should be more submissive to inappropriate wishes of the organizational authority under control condition in respect to the members of nonMSOs.* Independent-samples *t*-test (Table-3) was in practice for the comparison of submission to inappropriate organizational authority for coffee manipulation in MSOs and nonMSOs. The submission levels with coffee manipulation for MSOs ( $M = 4.2$ ,  $SD = 1.3$ ) and nonMSOs ( $M = 2.2$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ );  $t(8) = 2.89$ ,  $p = 0.20$  were not observed any significant difference. These results demonstrated that people behave almost similar when mortality is not salient in both types of organization.

Table 3: Statistical Analysis for Submission by Control Condition

|                  | MS manipulation in Different Types of Organization |     |    |        |     |     | 95% CI for Mean Difference |        |       |
|------------------|--|-----|----|--------|-----|-----|----------------------------|--------|-------|
|                  | MSO  |     |    | nonMSO |     |     | t                          | df     |       |
|                  | M  | SD  | n  | M      | SD  | n   |                            |        |       |
| Submission Level | 25.37  | 6.6 | 87 | 25.71  | 4.6 | 111 | -1.98, 1.29                | -0.42* | 148.2 |

\*  $p > .05$ .

Although two hypotheses were rejected, the most important hypothesis was accepted, which is enough to report that MSOs and nonMSO are different on the submission insight of the members toward the authority of their organizations. Because, the members of the MSOs work under dangerous conditions and the expected strict obedience is necessary in dangerous conditions more than the normal times.



Finally, another sets of *t*-tests were applied for gender variable and it did not exhibit any significant difference under MS and control conditions in the two types of organizations (Table - 4). This finding is also in agreement with the past research (.e.g., Rosenblatt et al., 1989; Jonas et al., 2011).

Table 4: Statistical Analysis for Submission by Gender Differences in the Groups

|                  | Submission Levels in the Groups |     |    |        |     |    | 95% CI for<br>Mean<br>Difference | t      | df   |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-----|----|--------|-----|----|----------------------------------|--------|------|
|                  | Male                            |     |    | Female |     |    |                                  |        |      |
|                  | M                               | SD  | n  | M      | SD  | n  |                                  |        |      |
| MSO-treatment    | 23.77                           | 4.7 | 46 | 25.06  | 6.7 | 38 | -0.48, 0.16                      | -0.99* | 76.5 |
| MSO-control      | 24.59                           | 6.1 | 54 | 26.38  | 7.3 | 48 | -0.53, -0.05                     | -2.43* | 99.9 |
| nonMSO-treatment | 25.88                           | 5.5 | 46 | 26.29  | 5.6 | 36 | -0.42, 0.25                      | -0.49* | 66.4 |
| nonMSO-control   | 24.98                           | 4.6 | 46 | 26.25  | 4.6 | 32 | -0.25, 0.43                      | 0.54*  | 71.1 |

\*  $p > .05$ .

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Discussion**

At the very beginning of the research design, it was hypothesized that MSOs' organizational culture should have been arranged with a paramount importance to strict obedience. Because, dangerous and uncertain conditions require rules that are clearly arranged and personnel who are well-trained and obedient. However, the data analysis showed that MSOs differ in the submission to organizational authority only when mortality becomes observable. In other conditions, MSOs and nonMSOs did not show significant difference in obedience to the authority.

Actually, the findings, which is compatible with the literature (Jonas et al., 2011; Chen, 2016), can be interpreted with several considerations. First of all, the cultural characteristics should be reviewed. According to Hofstede (1980), Turkey stands in large power distance and collectivist area of his cultural diagram. These cultural qualities are valid for the organizational cultures as well. Large power distance, for example, enables hierarchy in organizations, and inaccessibility and privileges for superiors. This makes people normally submissive to the authority. However, it became obvious with the statistical evidence that the members of the MSOs behave more submissive when the mortality becomes salient, in comparison with the nonMSO members.

Secondly, Islamic culture provides Turkish people more familiarity with death thought, by the belief of other world in the six pillars of faith. This can be a reason for the high conservative nature of the believers, equal degree in this study. Moreover, Islamic idea creates an obedience culture in family, public and governmental institutions. Because, obedience and respect for the authority is related with respect for Allah and the prophet Muhammad (al-Nisa, 59). This should not be ignored in the interpretation of the analysis, because religion is determined as one of the major components of a cultural worldview (Arndt, Routledge, Cox, & Goldenberg, 2005). That is why, submission level did not differ by the overall organization type (H1) and control condition (H3), though the members of the MSOs were expected to be more obedient because they live face to face with death in reference to TMT.

Additionally, highly submissive reaction of the MSO participants under MS condition in respect to the nonMSO participants (H2) provided enough evidence to the novel idea for typology. Because, as Grant & Wade-Benzoni (2009) implied, the members of MSOs are the nearest observers of death in the society, and they help social cohesion sometimes by finding solution to the human mortality, at least partially. So, the mission of an oncologist is not less important than of a soldier in the frontline. By living the danger and observing the death, they should obey the rules and orders more strictly than the members of the other organizations, because of the MSOs' indispensability for social life.

Besides all the powerful sides, the study has a few limitations. Firstly, although the people's sensibility about reciprocity and time became much more prevalent today than it was in the past years, the participants' free contribution to the survey study might have created a subtle unwillingness and apathy, because they were not paid. Certainly, this was one of the ethical restraints to launch a survey study at the beginning. However, to minimize such an effect, minimum numbers of items in the survey text were aimed.

Secondly, according to the interview made with some of the participants (20%) after survey completion, remarkably, people answered the survey with precaution for that their bosses see the answers somehow. According to the general overview of the participants, high unemployment rate and low employment security is a reality of today's world. This observation is of course at the country level. These issues limit not only this study, but also will influence the future studies, as well. Future researchers should consider these points more carefully in their research design.

After all, in the future studies, the researchers had better examine MSOs with organizational behavior and other theoretical perspectives, to contribute to the organization theory. Because, this type of organizations play a crucial role for social life. If management science is supposed to bring a development to the society, firstly organizations should be examined deeply, with micro, meso, and macro levels. Because, the developing the organizations increase their contribution to the social solidarity and national development. Moreover, as mentioned above, society needs meaning for cohesion, as the individuals need it for their psychological security (e.g., Greenberg et

al., 1997). This study opened a door ajar and it is the work of future scholars to open it wider by improving the phenomena.

As a special aspect, military organizations need to be examined in this context. Because, it is respectively easier to initiate a research in the other MSOs, but in the organizations like an infantry task force or gendarmerie special operations batallion, taking administrative permission for a research is almost impossible. Because, the administration has to consider carefully and enforce the counter intelligence precautions strictly, for security reasons. However, the scientific methodology does not compel researchers to publish the findings immediately. These organizations may help the accredited researchers follow confidential scientific activities to learn more about the organizational strengths and weaknesses. Only then, the military organizations go beyond of just being training centers for (apparently) killing or surviving.

Alternatively, this study can be used as a companion to management research for obedience or submissive behavior in the leadership training programs, as well as future studies. As a matter of fact, this study was aimed to encourage the scholars to be curious about obedience phenomenon. Because, for every kind of organizations, MSO or nonMSO, leaders are key players to create and show the directions. Therefore, it is quite important that leaders be motivated, insightful, intelligent, and aware of the realities of the organization, to be able to create change when necessary. Obedience may provide an initial standpoint to understand human nature, which is the primary element of the organizations.

Ultimately, the functionality of death primes should be investigated to create motivational and more generally behavioral change in the organizations, especially in the MSOs. Because, TMT posited anxiety-buffering, self-esteem striving, culture binding, and ingroup affiliating effect of mortality thought in the individual behaviors. So, these functions can be used to increase individual and organizational performance. However, the researchers and scholars have to keep in mind that cultural differences and situational dynamics may require different arrangements. Therefore, a comprehensive and challenging mindset can be more useful in the management of organizational culture.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

As one of the seldom attempts in the management and organizational research, this study investigated the individual motivation behind the behavior in a dangerous situation in relation with the social and organizational responsibilities. Therefore, the study contributes to the organizational behavior with its extraordinary originality. Because, it did not only search for the answer to the submissive behavior, but also gave a deep look in the human nature including the man's existential concerns. Thus, putting a tiny stone on the scientific edifice, this study is expected to encourage the future students of organizational behavior and to help the scientific knowledge grow cumulatively.

Analysis of the data revealed that the initial predictions were not absolutely correct, yet in accord with the past research. This study rejected the gender differences on submission with death thought or control conditions. However, it is a novice discovery of a management scholar that the classification of the organizations according to their encountering frequency with death primes. It is again a very familiar finding that the members of the MSOs reacted differently from the nonMSO members toward the organizational authority. This finding itself is even enough to accept the MSO-nonMSO typology.

As a mere result, it is now more obvious that people working in MSOs, like a soldier or an emergency nurse, behave absolutely submissive to the organizational authority. This observation is the evidence of the situations that these people do not think their lives first, instead they throw their souls in danger for the souls of other people. This is for obedience to organizational authority and faith in the social solidarity, social cohesion, and culture.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### "MORTALITY" MANIPULATION SURVEY (ENGLISH)

##### Organizational Behavior Research

Dear Participant,

This research is being applied for a master's thesis. Replying this survey will mean that you are participating this research on your own consent. The data to be gathered with this form will be evaluated for only scientific purposes, and will not be assessed individually, but as a whole. PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE IDEAL, BUT THE REAL SITUATION OF YOURSELF.

**Researcher** : Gökhan TÜRKÖZ, Adana STU GSSS 166001004@ogr.adanabtu.edu.tr

**Advisor** : Asst.Prof.Dr.Bilge AKSAY, Adana STU MIS baksay@adanabtu.edu.tr

#### 1. What do you “feel” when death comes to your mind ?

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#### 2. What do you “think” when death comes to your mind ?

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## APPENDIX B

### "MORTALITY" MANIPULATION SURVEY (TURKISH)

#### Örgütsel Davranış Araştırması

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında gerçekleştirilmektedir. Bu anketi cevaplamanız araştırmaya kendi isteğinizle katıldığınız anlamına gelmektedir. Bu formlardan elde edilecek bilgiler kişisel değerlendirilmeyecek; tamamen bilimsel amaçla kullanılacak ve toplu şekilde değerlendirilecektir. LÜTFEN OLMASI GEREKENİ DEĞİL, GERÇEK DURUMUNUZU BELİRTİNİZ.

**Araştırmacı** : Gökhan TÜRKÖZ, Adana BTÜ SBE 166001004@ogr.adanabtu.edu.tr

**Tez Danışmanı** : Dr.Öğr.Üyesi Bilge AKSAY, Adana BTÜ YBS baksay@adanabtu.edu.tr

#### 1. Aklınıza ölüm geldiğinde neler hissediyorsunuz?

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#### 2. Aklınıza ölüm geldiğinde neler düşünüyorsunuz?

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APPENDIX C

"COFFEE" MANIPULATION SURVEY (ENGLISH)

**Organizational Behavior Research**

Dear Participant,

This research is being applied for a master's thesis. Replying this survey will mean that you are participating this research on your own consent. The data to be gathered with this form will be evaluated for only scientific purposes, and will not be assessed individually, but as a whole. PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE IDEAL, BUT THE REAL SITUATION OF YOURSELF.

**Researcher** : Gökhan TÜRKÖZ, Adana STU GSSS 166001004@ogr.adanabtu.edu.tr

**Advisor** : Asst.Prof.Dr.Bilge AKSAY, Adana STU MIS baksay@adanabtu.edu.tr

**3. What do you “feel” when coffee comes to your mind ?**

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**4. What do you “think” when coffee comes to your mind ?**

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## APPENDIX D

### "COFFEE" MANIPULATION SURVEY (TURKISH)

#### Örgütsel Davranış Araştırması

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında gerçekleştirilmektedir. Bu anketi cevaplamanız araştırmaya kendi isteğinizle katıldığınız anlamına gelmektedir. Bu formlardan elde edilecek bilgiler kişisel değerlendirilmeyecek; tamamen bilimsel amaçla kullanılacak ve toplu şekilde değerlendirilecektir. LÜTFEN OLMASI GEREKENİ DEĞİL, GERÇEK DURUMUNUZU BELİRTİNİZ.

**Araştırmacı** : Gökhan TÜRKÖZ, Adana BTÜ SBE 166001004@ogr.adanabtu.edu.tr

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#### 5. Aklınıza kahve geldiğinde neler hissediyorsunuz?

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#### 6. Aklınıza kahve geldiğinde neler düşünüyorsunuz?

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## APPENDIX E

### SUBMISSIVENESS TO ORGANIZATIONAL AUTHORITY SCALE

#### (ENGLISH - ORIGINAL)

##### **Organizational Culture**

1. Employees should do what the boss tells them, even when they can't see the reason for it.
- 2\*. An employee should not follow those directions at work that seem unreasonable.
3. At work, an employee has a duty to go with the wishes of the boss.
- 4\*. Going against a boss's wishes at work can be justified.
5. There is no place for rebellion against the wishes of superiors in a work organization.
- 6\*. Workers should not worry about being disciplined for failing to follow orders.
7. Obedience to superiors at work is desirable.
8. If the boss tells you to do something, you'd better do it.
- 9\*. In many cases, employees are better off not following their bosses wishes.
- 10\*. The threat of getting in trouble at work for going against a superior is often worth it.

\* Reverse coded items.

## APPENDIX F

### SUBMISSIVENESS TO ORGANIZATIONAL AUTHORITY SCALE

#### (TURKISH - ADAPTED)

#### Örgüt Kültürü

1. Verilen emir mantıklı olmasa da yapılır.
- 2\*. Mantıksız emre uyulmaz.
3. Amirin istekleri önemsenmeli ve davranışlar onun isteklerine göre düzenlenmelidir.
- 4\*. Herkes amirinin isteklerini önemsemek zorunda değildir.
5. İş yerinde üstlerin isteklerine karşı gelmek yanlıştır.
6. Çalışanlar verilen emri yapmadıklarında ceza alma korkusu yaşamalıdır.
7. Her iş yerinde üstlere itaat edilmelidir.
8. Amirin isteklerini yerine getirmek çalışanın menfaatinedir.
- 9\*. İş yerinde sıkıntıya sebep olsa da amirin isteklerine karşı gelinebilir.

\* Reverse coded items.