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## Political games in universities: A case study

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### Abstract

Power has a great importance in organization life, which has intense social relations. People working organizations might play various political games in order to get power or maintain the control they have over other people. The purpose of this study is to elicit political games that academicians play in universities. In this study data were collected through semi structured interview method and analysed with descriptive and content analysis. One of the results is that academicians working in universities challenge to formal authorities from time to time. Especially they react to the authorities when the problem is about their rights and duties...

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### 1. Introduction

It is generally believed that power effects many decisions in life, and it cannot be denied that power exists in workplace also. There are different definitions of power in literature. Deaconu and Lefter (2007) defined it as "the ability of an individual or groups of individuals to act on other individuals or groups and to influence the functioning and the results of an organization." Max Weber (2006) defined power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance." Power also can be defined as "the capability of one social actor to overcome resistance in achieving a desired objective or result" (Pfeffer, 1981). Power, as social term, characterizes interpersonal interactions and may differ according to people and occasion (Özkalp and Kirel, 2001).

There are different classifications about power but especially the one done by French and Raven received wide acceptance (Bayrak, 2001). They divided power into five separate and distinct forms which are: coercive power, reward power, legitimate power, referent power, expert power and informational power. Also Erçetin (1993)

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classifies power, which is used to influence people as authority, personality, concern, expertise, reward, punishment and weakness (cited in Titrek and Zafer, 2009).

Power, which is one of the main factors in every organization, is needed to maintain the effectiveness of personal relations and organizations. It cannot be perceived as good or bad on its own but it can be used both for malicious and good aims (Bayrak, 2001). When power is turned into action politics shows up. Power can be thought as the base of politics. While political behaviours enhance the power, power eases the execution of politics (Bursalı, 2008). If power is the source, politics is the act used to develop that source (Lewis, 2002).

### 1.1. Power and Politics

Politics in organizations is simply a fact of life. Personal experience, hunches, and anecdotal evidence for years have supported a general belief that behaviours in organization often political in nature (Ferris and Kacmar, 1992). Employers behave politically to get the power or maintain it. Political activity in organizations is sometimes described in terms of 'games' (Mintzberg, 1985). Many different political games are played in organizations at the same time. For this reason it is important to determine a criteria to categorize and to define the games (Samuel, 2005). In this study, political games defined by Mintzberg (1983) are taken as a basis. According to Mintzberg, reasons of playing political games can be grouped under the following headings, as: opposing to organizational authority, preventing the rebellion against authority, overcoming rivals, effecting organizational changes (cited in Samuel, 2005). Also, Mintzberg (1985) classifies the political games played at organizations, as: insurgency, disapproval of insurgency, power building, nullifying rivals and changing organization. In this respect, when the literature (Sykianakis and Bellas, 2011; Johnson, 2009; Samuel, 2005; Deaconu and Lefter, 2007) is dealt with, it is seen that these political games played at organizations are explained as follows:

1. *Insurgency*: This game aims to challenge authority or dominant ideology.
2. *Counter insurgency*: It is a game played by authorities against resisting people.
3. *Sponsorship*: It is played between the managers and younger professionals to build power base with superiors or subordinates.
4. *Alliance building*: The people who seek mutual support play this game.
5. *Empire building*: This game is played by the people who want to enhance their power by using the potentials of groups and subordinates.
6. *Budgeting*: This game is related to empire building game. Main aim of this game is to secure the resources and using them for a specific group.
7. *Expertise*: In this game experts try to secure their positions by using their specialized knowledge.
8. *Lording*: In this game people tries to get power by using their legal power on their subordinates.
9. *Line vs. Staff*: In this rivalry game both sides use legal power in illegal ways to defeat rivals.
10. *Rival camps*: This game, which has the aim of defeating rivals, is seen between professional departments or groups who have different specialized knowledge.
11. *Strategic candidates*: In this game people who have power try to gather the people they choose around them to maintain their success.
12. *Whistle blowing*: Actors of this game is generally the subordinates. They inform about the people who abuse their duty and do illegal things, to the people outside of organization or to the press. The aim of this game is to affect the strategies and internal politics of organization.
13. *Young Turks*: This game is played to make big changes in organization's strategy and culture.

All the games above may not be seen in organizations at the same time or they can be seen in different ways. Also organization's being public or private effects the types of the games played (Hoy & Miskel, 2012). Within this context, the aim of this study is to find out the views of academicians within the frame of insurgency, power building games, alliance building game, empire building, expertise, lording, rival games, rival-camps game, change games, whistle-blowing games and young Turks game played in universities.

## 2. Method

In the study phenomenological method was used as the purpose of phenomenological method is to illuminate the phenomena that we are familiar but do not have deep understanding (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008. 72). The

study group consisted of (n=16) academicians working at one of the universities located in the western part of the Black Sea region of Turkey during the fall semester of 2013-2014 academic years and during the selection of the participants maximum variation sampling was used. When the academicians were analyzed in terms of their genders, it is seen that while 37,5% (n=6) of them were female, 62,5% (n=10) of them were male. When the year of experience is concerned, it is observed that even though 12,5% (n=2) of them was working for 6-10 years and 11-15 years, 43,75% (n=7) of them were working for 21 or more years. In terms of their academic affiliations, 12,5% (n=2) of them were full professors while, 62,5% (n=10) of them were assistant professors. The qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interview forms developed and prepared by the researchers. During the development and preparation of the semi-structured interview forms, the political games defined by Mintzberg (1985) were taken as a base and followed. The researchers performed the pilot study of the interview forms. For this purpose, the interview questions were asked to subject-specialists (n=3), the questions were reviewed and were reorganized and the final form of the interview questions (20 item) were obtained and were grouped under the headings, as: insurgency, power building games, alliance building game, empire building, expertise, lording, rival games, rival-camps game, change games, whistle-blowing games and young Turks in order to elicit the political games played at university.

The interviews were either recorded or written down by the researchers lasted about 25 minutes. Later on each researcher coded the data separately in order to form the concepts. According to the descriptive and content analysis results the concepts related to each other were put together under the themes of insurgency, power building games, alliance building game, empire building, expertise, lording, rival games, rival-camps game, change games, whistle-blowing games and young Turks. Analysis was done by two researchers separately to ensure the internal validity and also providing the step by step process of the research shows the reliability of the research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008).

### 3. Findings and Discussion

The findings in relation to the views of academicians about the political games are presented under certain themes in Tables.

**Insurgency game:** The first game that people play in organizations can be defined basically as challenging to the formal authority. These kinds of behaviours may not be a problem on its own but they can be the indication of other problems in organization (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). In this game employers in organization oppose to the implementation of decisions made by their superiors. Delays in schedules, disturbances in the regular workflow, work absence, disruptions of rules and procedures are some of the tactics employed in this game (Samuel, 2005). Within the frame of insurgency game that workers play against power, the views of the participants related to their reactions they give to the injustice are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Academicians' views about reactions given when people think their superior do them wrong

	Using legal rights	1
<b>Legal procedure</b>	Writing a petition	3
	Sue	1
	Apply to academic supreme board	1
<b>Interpersonal relations</b>	Get in contact with the person who does injustice	7
<b>Mild reaction</b>	Making self-assessment first	1
	Thinking the situation will get better on its own	1
	Postponing the reaction if its harmful for the person or organization	1
	Thinking that person who does injustice had no other choice	1

The categories (see Table 1) in relation to academicians' views about reactions given when people think their superior do them wrong were grouped as: "legal procedure", "interpersonal relations" and "mild reaction". As seen in the Table 1 most of the participants preferred to solve the problem with interpersonal relations (n=7). They thought that it is more helpful to talk in person about the job given. This situation is related to the values people have. The values, which effect human behaviour, also form the organizational culture and direct the organizational movements. Therefore people expressing themselves and the self-esteem they have effect the value they give to their co-workers and their superiors (Vurgun and Öztöp, 2011). One of the participants takes into consideration that the problem could arise from other reasons. Using legal rights in the first place when

superiors do wrong may cause cold climate between people and in organization. Still some people (n= 6) thought that using legal rights in written or oral forms is the only way to solve the problem. In this context the impact of organizational climate needs to be mentioned as the climate has effects upon the behaviours of organization members (Forehead and Gilmer, 1964). Water, Roach and Batlis (1974) emphasise the importance of employer's perception while defining the organizational climate. They define the climate as the entire properties which are perceived individually by the staff and which effect their organizational behaviour. From this point of view it can be said that people behaviour can change according to their perceptions of organizational climate.

In relation to this subject, participant (p13) indicates his opinions like this: "... even though I know that there is injustice I think that there was no other things that my superior could do. I think that my superior do the injustice to me not to the other people which is because I am more close to them. So I don't get this as I'm being punished..." If the participant (p13) perceived the climate in his organization in a different way, his comments might be adverse. In this case, it can be claimed that perceiving the organizational climate in a positive way and being close to the management affect people's point of view.

Power that people have can change according to their position in organizations (Robbins and Judge, 2012). Formal personal power may arise from enforcement or awarding authority. Within the frame of insurgency game, as shown in Table 2, the reactions of academicians when they are being asked to perform a duty which is not their own duty.

**Table 2.** Academicians' reactions when they are being asked to do a job, which is not their own duty

<b>I do not do the job</b>	Everybody's job definition is restricted by law	6
	Everyone should do their own duty	2
	If it is not in my job definition it is angary.	1
<b>I do the job</b>	It depends on the job, if it's something I can do then I do it	1
	If there are rational reasons for doing the job...	2
	If it's something beneficial for the organization	1
	If it is beneficial for everyone	1
	I do not want to get up against manager so...	1
	If it is related to my expertise	1

The categories about the reactions of participants when they are being asked to do a job which is not their own duty were grouped under two categories, as: "I do not do the job" and "I do the job" categories (see Table 2). As seen in Table 2, most of the participants (n=9) indicated that they do not do the job. They considered it as an angary and they believed that it is a waste of their own time. One of the participant draw attention to constitution 18th entry that says, "*Nobody can be forced to work. Angary is forbidden*". Because everybody's job is defined beforehand so it is unacceptable to do some other people's job. Quite a few of the participants (n=7) thought that they do not turn it into a big deal, they do the job if it is beneficial for the organization. This can also be related to the person's and organization's values. In broad sense, values form the subjective, internal aspect of the culture and shows reasonable, proper ways to solve the organizational problems (Şişman, 1994). People, who are faithful to their organization, believe organization's aims and values strongly and they fulfil orders and expectations voluntarily (cited in Balay, 2000). Therefore they may do the job even if it is not their own duty. As a result it can be said that, from time to time participants challenge authorities, especially when the subject is about their own rights and duties, they do not refrain from react.

**Power building game:** This game is used to gain the power and in this game superiors impose upon peers and subordinates. They make use of sponsorship game. When forming power center. In sponsorship game subordinates associates themselves to superiors and state their commitment. Superiors be sponsor for subordinates and they fight for their benefit in organization and support them in official environment. But when the sponsor loses his power problem starts for protected subordinate (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). In Table 3, the views of the participants about their attitudes towards people who can ease their aims are presented.

**Table 3.** Academicians' views about their attitudes towards the people who can ease their advance in organization

<b>I build a relationship</b>	People who can ease my advance in organization is probably would be my superior so I do not.	3
	I do not try to build a relationship with anyone.	4
	I do not have an aim like this.	2
	I treat equal to everybody.	2
	My manners would be democratic.	1
<b>I do not build a relationship</b>	I build good relations. I make them understand my efforts.	1

If it's for my advance in organization, I do whatever it takes.

1

The academicians' views about their attitudes towards the people who can ease their advance in organization were grouped under two categories, as: "I build a relationship" and "I do not build a relationship" (see Table 3). As seen in Table 3, almost all of the participants (n=14) indicated that they do not prefer to build a relationship. They thought that they couldn't realize their aims by treating people differently. The participant (p8) explains his thoughts about this issue as follows: *"I'm not good at building relations just for my profit but I'm good at doing my own work. If people find my work useful then they somehow enter my life..."* He thinks that he would not behave differently to other people just for his own profit and believes his own works and efforts is the only way to be successful. On the other hand, participant (p2) believes that advancing in organization is only possible with playing games and people never reach their goals by deserving it. She also adds that: *"In order to come up in organization life everybody plays some games. It is so clear that being an apple polisher can change many things. It is impossible to come up by deserving it with your own efforts. Work quality is falling down, people only get the job title and nothing else and that is the big problem."*

During the interviews, when the participants were asked if the people who helps them to achieve their goals loses his authority will there be a change in their behaviours towards them or not. All of the participants stated that there would be no change in their behaviours towards them. About this participant (p1) put his views as follows: *"I get closer to them even if they lose their authority. You need to be there not only when they are successful but also they lose their power."*

In relation to this, participant (p12) expressed his thoughts in that way *"Everybody must show respect to the some specific positions in organization and I also behave according to that. Showing respect is not about the person, it's about the position he represents. Whoever comes to that position he deserves the same respect. But I do not build a closer relationship with those people. And my behaviours do not change when they lose their authority."* With his words it is understood that it is much more correct to show the respect to the position not to the person. People losing their authority should not change other people's behaviour towards them. He also emphasises that everybody who comes to some specific positions in organization deserves respectful behaviours.

**Alliance building game:** When people think that they don't have enough power to accomplish their goals they choose the way to form an alliance. It is a kind of political game, which is seen between peers. In this process people search for support and they try to form a group. They gather around an informal leader. And also they try to bring other groups into the fold and in this way group continues to expand as long as there is no rival group (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). The findings related to academicians' views about forming an alliance to realize their goals are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Academicians' views about forming an alliance in order to achieve their goals

<b>I form alliance</b>	I try to persuade them	8
<b>I do not form an alliance</b>	I do not try to form alliance with people who I do not have relations.	1
	I do not make an effort for that.	4
	I do not look for an alliance; I care for my own success.	3

The findings, academicians' views, seen in Table 4, about forming an alliance in order to achieve their goals revealed two categories, as: "I form an alliance" and "I do not form an alliance". As seen in Table 4 half of the participants said that they do not try to make an alliance. They thought that it is much better to concentrate on their own success instead of getting support from others. In relation to this, According to participant (p2), *"only legal ways are good to realize the goals not the games"* and she continued stating her beliefs as follows: *" You submit a petition to the people who are in a responsible position, whether it is accepted or not...You should do it in a legal way. I cannot behave mockish to those people to get my work done. If I do that I lose my self-respect."* Besides, as Bayrak (2001) points out using the persuasiveness successfully requires impressive communication. People who do not communicate cannot effect anybody since they do not express themselves to other people.

**Empire building game:** Empire building game can be defined as people's efforts to enhance their power by using potentials of groups or subordinates (Mintzberg, 1983 cited in Johnson, 2009). The findings related to academicians' views about taking other people to their side for gaining power are presented in Table 5.

There were two categories in relation to academicians' views about taking other people to their side, as: "I want to do that" and "I do not want to do that" as seen in the Table 5. The findings revealed that above more than

half of the participants (n=9) say that they do not make an effort to take other people to their side. In relation to this, participant (p8) expressed his opinion, as: *“I do not think that I would try for those things that much. I always think broadly. I never wanted to be like a fish looking through the aquarium. Temporary success stays only inside of organization. But I always think about my own success in domestic and international fields. Since I worked for another organizations I can easily look to the place where I work from an external perspective. So I do not go after this kind of small success.”*

**Table 5.** Academicians' views about taking other people to their side

<b>I want to do that</b>	As long as they are not my superior.	2
	As long as it is about academic works.	1
	In order to learn about other peoples' views.	3
	In order to work with well-adjusted people.	1
<b>I do not do that</b>	I am not in need of support.	5
	I do not behave closer to the people for that reason.	4

There are also people who want to take other people to their side and work with them but they also have criteria to take other people to their side and work with them. The analysis of the words of two participants revealed that they do not prefer to be at the same side with their superiors as this kind of relations can be misunderstood in organization. It can be said that the participants' main purpose in this game is to get different views from all people and to do good academic works. When doing this, they think it is much better to work with the people who they feel close.

Participants are asked about if they use potentials of their subordinates to enhance their power or not. The findings related to academicians' views about using potentials of their subordinates to enhance their powers are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Academicians' views about using potentials of their subordinates to enhance their powers

<b>I benefit from their potentials</b>	I do it if it is good for everyone and organization.	2
	I want to work with the people who have potentials.	1
	Success of my subordinates enhances my power too.	1
<b>I do not benefit from their potentials</b>	I never do that.	9
	I try to get power with my own effort.	1
	The only way to get power is to behave everyone equal and fair.	1

The analysis of the data (see Table 6) revealed two categories in relation to academicians' views about using potentials of their subordinates to enhance their powers, as: *“I benefit from their potentials”* and *“I do not benefit from their potentials”*. Most of the participants stated that they would not prefer to use the potentials of their subordinates to gain power. Accordingly, participant (p7) said *“When working in university we get our power from our scientific researches and work experience so there is no other power beyond these. And there is no need to get power as long as you and your colleagues do your own jobs.”* to express his thoughts. Also participant (p16) said *“The only way for me to enhance my power is to behave equal and fair to everyone. I don't want to gain power by separating people.”* and participant (p16) added *“Some administrators try to get power by guarding some people or by giving the lion's share to them. My opinion is to make people understand my attitude by behaving equal to everyone. Sometimes this can be seen as weakness. But I never do something bad against someone.”*

**Expertise game:** People can make use of their expertise from time to time. Expertise game is played by the people who has the knowledge and skills that organization needs. Those people emphasise the importance of their abilities and underline that organization needs them. And they try to keep all these skills to themselves (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). Expertise power gradually becoming more importance since it is rare, democratic and flexible (Bayrak, 2001). Participants' thoughts on people's applying them about their profession are presented below.

**Table 7.** Academicians' views about people's applying them about their profession

<b>I am pleased with that</b>	I am pleased but sometimes it can be tiring.	2
	I am satisfied academically.	3
	I love sharing my knowledge.	3
	I am okay with it but there is no advantage or disadvantage of it.	1
	I am bored when I do not work so I am pleased with this situation.	1



<b>I do not feel comfortable with that</b>	I am not pleased with it the only good side is you have good relations.	2
	This wastes my own time.	1

The data analysis (see Table 7) revealed two categories in relation to academicians' views about people's applying them about their profession, as: "I am pleased with that" and "I am not comfortable with that". As seen in Table 7, most of the participants were pleased with this situation (n=10). This can be interpreted as even though they spare their own time they don't feel bad about it. In relation to this participant (p12) expressed his thoughts as follows: *"People apply me about my profession. This does not show that I am better than the others. Everybody has their own fields of study. My students or my colleagues apply me and I try to do my best to help them and share my knowledge. This makes me happy. Actually people like us who choose teaching profession should be glad about this situation. Yes it is tiring from time to time but I do not complain about it"*.

When the participants were asked about if they think that they are irreplaceable for the organization or not. The findings indicated that most of them thought that nobody is irreplaceable (n=9). In relation to this, while 6 participants thought that they are needed in organization, only 1 participant thought that she is irreplaceable.

**Lording game:** This game is played between the superiors who has legal power and the subordinates. Superiors can dominate and impose on subordinates in illegal ways (Hoy and Miskel, 2012).

When the participants were asked about the ways they choose when they assign tasks to their subordinates. Mainly they believed that (n=11) it is better to kindly request. Also, there are other people (n=2) who preferred formal ways like sending an official writing / notice. 2 of the participants said that they do not assign task to anybody if it is not their fundamental duty. Participant (p12) expressed his thoughts with these words: *"I request kindly. If the person is available to do the job, I will be glad if not then there is nothing that I can do...."*

Even if everybody's duty is stated by law sometimes people need to work beyond this duties. When the participants were asked about the ways they chose when they assign tasks their subordinates out of their duty. Most of the participants (n=10) stated that they would not want them to do the job if it is not their own duty. But yet if they need to assign them, they preferred to behave fair (n=2), request kindly (n=2) or use formal ways (n=1). One of the participant stated that this situation depends on his intimacy with the subordinate.

**Rivalry games:** In this kind of games rivals aim to defeat each other (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). Rivalry comes up when one group try to accomplish their own demands by damaging other group. In that situation rivals is away from negotiation and assertive. They see the conflict as a game, which needs to be win. Losing means failure and weakness, rivals thinks that there must be a winner and loser. (Can et all. 2006:216 cited in Aslankutlu, Temel & Dirlik, 2010).

When participants were asked about facing opposition of their friends to gain power, many of them (n=11) stated that they do not do that. This shows that participants do not prefer to establish competition environment in organization and want to gain power by conflicting with other staff. Some of the participants (n=4) said that they can face the oppositions of their friends and colleagues even though they think that they are right, they do not give harm to anyone and their success is prevented. This shows that sometimes people can create competitive environment in organization. This might stem from desire for success and power. Because desire for power and desire for rivalry is associated. According to the McClelland's "Need for Achievement" theory people who needs significant achievements have a specific desire for being successful in rivalry environments and meeting high standards of achievement (Burger, 2010). So it is clear that desire for success may lead to create competitive environment. In relation to the subject, participant (p15) said the followings, as: *"I do not think that somebody's success is related to some other person's failure. This is not the success if I oppose someone. There is no need for that to have success."* With these words it is seen that he emphasises that it cannot be a success if it is gained by giving harm to others. In sum, it can be said that participants do not prefer to play rivalry games in which there is a winner and a loser.

**Rival camps game:** In this game two sides face each other. Game can be played between two people or two groups (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). Each group try to overcome the other about a specific issue (Samuel, 2005). Real aim of the game is to decrease the opponent's power rather than enhancing their own power (Deaconu and Lefter, 2007). When asked about if their relations with their friends would change in case of being successor and predecessor to each other, many of the participants (n=11) indicated that their relations would not change. This may be because that they do not want to create conflict in the organization as many organizational factors are related to organizational climate. Excessive socialising, having the ability of solving problems on time, insufficient communication, excessive control created by strict organization and other factors may affect the

problem solving methods. Also, not having the ability to solve the problems on time may prevent the organizational growth, innovative movements and the development of the organization (Balay, 2010: 59). Even though in the present study participants stated that they prefer not to reflect the problems in organization in order to maintain power of organization, some of the participants (n=5) indicated that they do not prefer to remain unresponsive. Concerning this, they said that they would be effected by the situation and their relations with their friends would change. As Özdem (2010) pointed out having trouble with someone in organization and maintaining the relations with this person may lead to worse outcomes and this can effect the organizational climate and performance. On the other hand, if there are many uncontrollable conflicts in organization this may lead to chaos (Hampton, Summer & Webber, 1982: 634 cited in: Akkirman, 1998). These conflicts may cause not being able to make a decision on time, disappearing of collaboration and faith between departments or groups and setback of communication (Akkirman, 1998).

In relation to this, participant (p16) expressed his thoughts by saying: *“I do whatever it takes to maintain my relations with my friends. I never want people to hurt each other. If I change as a result of being hurt by others of course I defend myself. I do whatever is needed. Administrative function is temporary but being an academic member is a fundamental duty. Organization should change itself to refresh. If changing is carried out by normal ways I do not take offence, but if someone slanders to me I do whatever I must do.”* From these words, it can be seen that the participant tries to maintain his relations with other in the same manner in order not to create a negative climate. But when there is a personal offensive, he implies that he will develop a defence mechanism accordingly. Defence mechanism is an unconscious process, as denial, that protects an individual from unacceptable or painful ideas or impulses (Dictionary.com). In this study, it can be said that participants develop different defence mechanisms like severance, aloofness and reacting in order not to get harm.

**Change games:** Change games have the aim of renovating organization and administration. People who can start a successful period of change may have a great power (Hoy and Miskel, 2012). When the findings of the present study are concerned, it is observed that participants’ preferences about renewing and changing the organizational procedures were different. Many of them (n=8) used academic and legal ways when they wanted to change or renew something in organization. Choosing formal ways may be the results of people giving importance to ethical values. *“Occupational ethics can be defined as the behaviour rules that people need to obey especially in human related jobs”* (Aydın, 1998, p.85). In management process ethics include some behavioural patterns, which aim to reach the good, the pleasant, and the true. Ethics rules that learned and internalized by workers may lead them to use same behavioural patterns for different cases (Gül and Gökçe, 2008). As seen in the study, participants behave in accordance with the ethical rules they internalize and use legal ways when they want to change things. Some of the participants (n=5) prefer telling the reasons for renewal and change to other people working in organization. This shows that they prefer using interpersonal relations to change the things they want in organization. One of the participant stated that if he cannot get a result from his own efforts, he might look for support from others. Another participant stated that he prefers to put someone who has the best ideas about change in charge. And he added that *“I am reformist and I want everything to be good. If I cannot make good things happen, I leave my position. Because there is no need for me. I want to put someone who have the best ideas about change in charge.”* In sum, it can be said that participants have different thoughts about changes in organization but generally they tend to realize them in legal ways.

**Whistle - blowing game:** Whistle-blowing game, which is common in organizations, means informing the outer authorities when employers or managers break a rule or a norm. Because of the fact that whistle blowers skip over the legal channels and they can be exposed to retaliation the game players conduct this attempt secretly. (Hoy and Miskel, 2012).

**Table 8.** Academicians’ views about their reactions of when faced with an undesirable situation in organization

<b>I report to higher authorities</b>	I don't avoid reporting.	1
	I explain my reaction to higher authorities.	3
	I use verbal and written ways to report.	2
<b>I do not report to higher authorities</b>	First, I talk to people who I have a problem. If I cannot solve, I go to higher authorities.	7
	First, I talk to head of department. If I cannot solve with him/her, I apply to higher authorities.	1
	I share with my friends. If I cannot find another solution, I go to higher authorities.	1

When academicians’ views about their reactions of when faced with an undesirable situation in organization is concerned, there are two categories as: *“I report to higher authorities”* and *“I do not report to higher*



authorities” as seen in Table 8. Most of the participants (n=7) stated that when they are faced with an undesirable situation, first, they prefer to talk to the people causing the undesirable situation or the people related to this situation; if they cannot take the expected results from their efforts, they will report the situation to higher authorities (Table 8). These preferences of the participants showed that firstly, they try to solve the problem by talking. Confidences in problem-solving skills are in the same direction with person’s interest, curiosity and positive efficacy; and in the opposite direction with his/her anger, concern and depression (Çetin, Basım and Karataş, 2011). And this shows that personal characteristics of individuals can effect their reactions in negative cases and situations. Right along with this, trying to solve all the problems by legal ways may have negative effects on organizational climate. And this thought may lead people to be moderate and be wiser in these situations. Because the individuals’ beliefs regarding the state of his/her organization highly influences his/her attitudes towards the organisation. (Alparslan, 2010) On the other hand, some of the participants (n=6) stated that they prefer to report immediately to higher authority when they are faced with an undesirable situation. Reasons of this may be the fact that they believe it would be faster to solve the problem by this way or they believe legal ways are the only way to solve the problems.

In relation to this, participant (p13) expressed his belief about the subject like this: *"First, I do not react too much, I think about 'Is it for the benefit of faculty?' I try to be patient thinking that this is not done intentionally by the person. I do not report the situation at first or second time but if these problems come together too much, first I negotiate the situation personally and generally solve it. But still if I cannot solve it and if I am close to higher authority, I do it. I don't report my superiors to higher authorities directly. This is not suitable to my own character. Even if the situation is not related with me, I still talk to people about the thing bothering organization. And again the situation is insolvable and getting worse, I talk to higher authority."* It can be understood from the statements of the participant (p13) that he prefers solving problems through personal relations before applying to legal ways.

It is seen that all of the participants look for a solution when there is a problem in organization. However; the means they solve the problems are different. In this respect, while some of them prefer to solve the problem through interpersonal relations, others prefer the legal ways directly.

When participants were asked if they inform the press about organizational problems or not, it is seen that most of the participants (n=12) pointed out that they do not do it. They generally (n=10) stated that problems in organization should remain inside of it and use the idiom ‘a broken arm should remain inside the sleeve.’ Participants’ preferring not to inform the press about problems may be because they think organization can get harm because of this. One of the participants that prefer not to inform the press thinks that press cannot solve the problem and another participant stated that problems can be solved with managers. Some of the participants (n=3) said that according to the importance of the problem they might inform the press.

Reporting the ethical problem to the manager in organization and all the other disclosure in organization is “inner” and revealing the ethical problem seen in organization to the non-organizational agencies is “exterior” classification. When inner statement is not enough, exterior statement should be used (Mansbach and Bachner, 2010). Participants’ choosing this way may be because not being able to solve the problem inside organization. Accordingly, participant (p8) said, *"If your professional honour is effected in a bad way and if whistle blowing can provide benefit then you do it. I know that in organization you do not let things go any further. But if your rights are exploited all the time and there is no other way and you believe that you are right I prefer struggling... Maybe you would seem like a loser at first but when the same problems happen then you become the actor. You need to know how to defend yourself. If you stay cowed and weak people always try to overwhelm you."*

It can be said that the number of academicians who think that problems should be solved inside organization is more than the number of academicians who think that releasing the problems to press is a solution.

When the participants were asked about if they prefer reporting the manager to higher authorities. The findings indicated that half of them would report their manager (n=8). This shows that people demand justice. If it is needed they do not step back from reporting even if the person is their manager. Some of the participants (n=3) preferred using only verbal ways while reporting. One of the participant stated that he reports his manager only if the problem would be solved. Ethical aspect of this behaviour is controversial. But a person who has work ethics is thought to be sensitive for the misapplications and corruptions and that he reports the manager to higher authorities if needed (Çiğdem, 2013).

Some of the participants (n=5) stated that they would try to solve the problem with manager first. If they cannot solve it than they would report. Two of the participants said that they would be really patient about the

problems stemmed from manager but if they cannot take it anymore they would report the manager. Here we can see that some participants do not prefer reporting immediately. This might be because they do not want to effect the organizational climate badly.

In a study by O'Connor and Morrison (2001) relation between organizational climate and organizational perception of organizational politics is researched. It is found that organizational climate is a very strong determiner in terms of political perceptions and there is negative relation between them. It is confirmed that when the participants evaluate the climate negatively, they tend to perceive workplace more politically. From this point of view, it can be concluded that the participants who do not prefer reporting manager and who show mild reaction tend to evaluate organizational climate positively and perceive the organization less political. In relation to this, participant (p12) stated his thoughts as: *"At first I try to solve the problem with manager but if I cannot, I report this with verbal and written ways. In the past I have seen that even though verbal reports are not that much more effective, written reports are much more effective as they lead to a solution. So from now on I prefer written reports."*

In conclusion it can be said that, people have different preferences to solve the problems they encounter. While most of them use all the legal and alternative ways in order to solve the problems, some of them prefer to report problems out of organization, some prefer to keep it inside of the organization and try to solve it with interpersonal relations.

**Young Turks game:** Young Turks game is the hardest and the most dangerous game of all games. The aim of this game is changing organization and management wholly. Actors of this game call themselves reformist and call their ideas innovatory (Samuel, 2005).

**Table 9.** Academicians' views about their preferences on taking action about undesirable things right after they become executive

	I make changes according to common ideas	6
	I eliminate inequality and I regard rights and justice.	1
<b>I do right away</b>	I do the changes according to order of importance	2
	I make changes about the difficulties	3
	I do not wait if it's important for organization	1
<b>I do not do right away</b>	I collect data and discuss lengthy and largely	1
	I do not change traditions and culture, I do the changes gradually	1

The data analysed (see Table 9) revealed two categories in relation to academicians' views about their preferences on taking action about undesirable things right after they become executive, as: "I do it right away" and "I do not do right away". When the participants were asked about if they become executive in organization, they choose to change the things immediately or not, it is seen in Table 9 that most of the participants (n=13) stated that they change undesirable things in organization right after they become executive. Six of them choose to do that according to the common ideas of other people working in organization. Other participants expressed different opinions (see Table 9). In general it can be said that participants who obtain position power tend to use this power for changes immediately. Privileged state of position power is defined as legal power (Sezgin and Koşar, 2010) and legitimate power is defined as official authority (Hill et al, 2005 cited in Sezgin and Koşar, 2010). If the people who have the required position don't use the legitimate power and authority, the power they have will have no value and other people in organization would like to use it (Aytürk, 2007). For this reason participants may want to use their power immediately and become effective. Power cannot be ignored because incentive of using power can be seen at every level in organization (Bayrak, 2001).

Some of the participants stated that (n=2) they would not do the changes right away after they become executive. One of them preferred to do a research before taking action and the other just wanted to do the things gradually and slowly. As seen in Table 9, people paid attention to different kind of things before making changes but they gave importance to one thing in common which is making changes for the sake of organization. It can be said that there is no political approach hereunder. If a person uses the influence tools approved by organization while doing something and wants to obtain the results that organization wants at the end of this, his/her behaviour cannot be accepted as political (Mayes and Allen, 1977). Also as in here, it can be said that most of the participants want to make changes about the things that organization approves.

Participant (p8) expressed his thoughts with these words, as: *"Yes, I want to do the changes immediately but this is not a disruptive swiftness. I try to act positive. I be patient and active. If you combine them all, sooner or later you will be successful and you can convince the other people."* Here it is seen that the participant emphasises to be patient while making changes. And about the changes he added, *"I believe that quality of*

academicians should be higher. I wish there was a rotation. People working in the same place for a long time should go to different universities or countries. People coming from small universities try to advance here immediately and try to manage this university. I think this is wrong. Those people should go to some big universities and should try to survive there. Then they should try to come back and work for organization's benefit." In short, it can be said participants are tend to change the things they want when they get the authority but they should consider this changes in many aspects and then they should take action.

**Table 10.** Academicians' views about the efforts they would make to secure their position

<b>I do not make an effort</b>	I do not have a thought like this.	3
	People stay in their position as long as they work well.	1
	I do whatever the job needed.	2
	I do not do anything illegal.	1
<b>I make effort</b>	I do whatever it takes to be a good executive.	2
	Every behaviour, which makes academicians and student happy, secure my position.	1
	I want to show my works, I want people say that I do good things for organization.	1
	I act fair.	2
	I give importance to people's problems and try to solve them.	1
	I try to enhance productivity.	1

The data about the academicians' views about the efforts they would make to secure their position indicated two categories, as "I do not make an effort" and "I make effort" as indicated in Table 10. When the participants were asked about the efforts they would make when they get a higher position, most of the participants (n=8) said that they make an effort to secure their positions. When people get a good position in organizations they tend to strive for securing their positions. And they may play political games for that because for their own profits those people try to impress other people by using their power and this leads a political ambiance (Bursalı, 2008). Some of the participants (n=6) indicated that they would not do anything to secure their position. This might be because of their values (see Table 10). Values effect human behaviour and when it comes to organization it effects organizational behaviour (Vurgu-Öztop, 2011). There is a direct relationship between people's values and their organizational behaviours (Yılmaz, 2010). So, they may not want to make an effort that can lead controversial circumstances about their legal power. People who have different values may have different attitudes for the same situation (Doğan et al., 2007:23 cited in Vurgun and Öztop, 2011). And this leads employers' react differently to the same situation.

Participant (p13) expressed his thoughts in that way "*When I came to a higher position in organization. I would not have good relations just with the people supporting me. My attitude would be same for everyone even to the people dissenting me as long as they are not backbiting or slandering. Even if I have bad relations with some people I do not break with them... People may have different political views but I still talk to them and take their opinion... If there is someone else who would be more useful to organization than me, I want this person to take the lead.*" Here it is seen that the participant would not play any games and would not behave any different from his own.

In short it can be said that when participants come to a higher position in organization, they may use different kinds of methods in order not to lose their positions and the power it brings.

**Table 11.** Academicians' views about their preferences on collaborating with other people in order to make big changes and ways to do this

<b>I collaborate</b>	I collaborate only with people I am close.	1
	I collaborate with experts and I do whatever I believe even if it bothers other people.	1
	I tell the reasons to other people and try to convince them.	4
	I bring changes up for discussion with other people.	3
	I give responsibility to the person who can do best for organization.	1
<b>I do not collaborate</b>	I do not collaborate because everybody has his or her own ideas.	2
	I do not think that my aim should be this.	1
	I do not collaborate to change the management but I do want to keep the person who does their job good in their place.	1

There were two categories in relation to academicians' preferences on collaborating with other people in order to make big changes, as: "I collaborate" and "I do not collaborate" as seen in the Table 11. The findings

revealed that above more than half of the participants (n=10) choose to collaborate. While, one of them preferred to collaborate with the people they are close, other preferred to collaborate with all the people who would be effected by the situation. It is seen that when participants want to make big changes in organization, they want to include other people in this process. It can be said that these people know there is politics inside of organizational decision-making. Because they are tend to be more sensitive about taking political environment into consideration in order to enhance the effectiveness of decisions (Demirel and Seçkin 2009). Moreover by taking the other people in organization into change process they might want to minimise the negative ideas of them. Because attitudes and applications that encourage participating in decision making, is considered as a method, which passivates avoidant perceptions in decision making (Yang, 2003).

Participants who do not prefer collaborating (n=4) think that everyone in organization has their own personal ideas or they said that they do not have an aim to change the things in organization. It can be said that those people choose to keep silent in the presence of different situations and problems. These kinds of attitudes in organizations are labelled as organizational silence, which is a topic inside of organizational behaviour. There may be many different reasons under remaining silent. Especially in public institutes, ideas are restricted to authority ideas (Clapham and Cooper, 2005). So people do not participate to change process ideationally, they prefer staying passive. People thinking that their ideas are not regarded, they cannot make any difference, their feeling insufficient personally, their forming their own behaviours according to the decisions and norms and accepting all of these is defined as careless and submissive silence behaviours (Alparslan and Kayalar, 2012). For this reason, the behaviours of participants who prefer to remain away from collaborating can be associated with careless and submissive silence behaviours.

In relation to this, participant (p8) expressed his opinion, as: *"I do not like ideological collaborations. I prefer occupational collaborations. We need to reach our goals and try to achieve more creative and great things together."* As can be seen here, the participant prefers occupational collaborations to reach the objectives.

As seen in Tables 9, 10 and 11, the academicians prefer to take action right away when they get the power, they use different kinds of methods to secure their positions and they collaborate with other people when they want to make big changes in organization.

#### 4. Concluded Remarks

Regarding these, the dynamic nature of power in all human relations and communication activities in general but in managerial and administrative dimensions and levels in particular needs to be taken into account (Bayrak, 2001). As seen in every organization, power effects the relations among the academicians. Based on this, it can be stated that the effects of the games are closely related to the levels of the games played at the organizations. In this study it is found that academicians play the insurgency game especially when their rights and duties are concerned. They do not prefer playing power building games. They generally want to be successful with their own efforts. From time to time they want make an alliance to provide the support they need for the things they want to achieve. Also, they play empire building games generally not for their own profit but for the sake of organization. They do not use their specialized knowledge against other people on the contrary they like sharing what they know. When giving tasks to their subordinates they generally prefer to do it by kindly requesting. Academicians do not think that rivalry is needed in organization. They stated that one people's success should not be related to the failure of others and they do their best to keep their relations good with their friends even if they become successor and predecessor to each other. They do not want to ruin the organizational climate. Generally they try to solve their problems inside of the organization and with interpersonal relations. But from time to time if needed they use legal ways and they may play whistle-blowing games. When they get the executive power, they generally choose to change the problematic things right away. But about the changes they don't forget to take the opinions of their colleagues. Additionally, they believe that to secure the position they have in organization best way is making their job right and fair. When there are really big problems happening in organization and when they want to make big changes, people do not avoid collaborating with other academicians.

#### Suggestions

- This study may be applied to a larger group
- Managers should create an environment, which they can use the positive effects of political games in organizations.

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