

# **THE EFFECT OF THE LOCUS OF CONTROL ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR THE MEDIATING EFFECT PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT: CASE STUDY OF A UNIVERSITY**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to examine the effects of locus of control on organizational citizenship behaviors and the mediating effect of the perceived organizational support. For this aim, firstly, the locus of control, then organizational citizenship behaviors and, finally, the mediating effect of the perceived organizational support are explained. In the application part, a questionnaire including the measures of the locus of control, organizational support and organizational citizenship behaviors is distributed to employees of one of the leading private universities in Turkey and the data were assessed by statistical analysis methods. Finally, it is found that there is a positive relationship among locus of control, organizational citizenship behaviors and the mediating effect of the perceived organizational support.

**Key Words:** *Locus of control 1, organizational citizenship behaviors 2, perceived organizational support 3.*

**Jel Code :** D23 - Organizational Behavior; Transaction Costs; Property Rights

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In a rapidly changing world, organizations need to continually identify new opportunities beyond existing competencies if they are to survive

(Hamel,1989:133). Organizations need to be designed to make human capital a source of competitive advantage. Organizations are social institutional, which make for goals with their methods, values and beliefs. An organizations capabilities and competencies are its mead of creating value. High-performance human resource practices consist of a set of coherent practices that enhance locus of control, organizational citizenship behavior, perceived organizational support, employee skills, participation in decision making and motivation to forth discretionary effort. Successful organizations need employees who will do more than their usual job duties and provide performance that is beyond expectations.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Locus of control**

Locus of control (LOC) is a term in psychology which refers to a person's belief about what causes the good or bad results in his or her life, either in general or in a specific area such as health or academics (Rossier,2005:227). The relationship between the reinforcers and the patterns of behaviors are also analyzed with respect to how rewards and punishments are perceived. LOC, according to Rotter's approach, can be divided into two separate sources of control: internal and external. People with an internal locus of control (ILOC) believe that they control their own destiny. On the other hand, people who tend to have an external locus of control (ELOC) tend to attribute their experiences to fate, chance, or luck.

### **2.2. Organizational citizenship behavior**

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has rapidly become one of the most extensively studied topics in applied psychology and organizational behavior. OCB, which was defined as role/extra role behavior (Kaufmann,2001:436), prosocial behavior (Brief,1986:710), spontaneous behavior and good soldier syndrome (Moorman,1995:127), was first illustrated in the work of Organ and his associates. Organ et al., (2006:17), highlights the building on the conceptual work of Organ and Rossier (2005:227) define the following five major categories of OCB which include civic virtue, conscientiousness, altruism, courtesy, and sportsmanship. These are discussed more in briefly in the following works:

Civic virtue (staying up on company policies) is defined as subordinate participation in organizational political life and supporting the administrative function of the organization (Deluga,1995: 1652). It is referring to the responsibility of the subordinates to participate in the life of the firm such as attending meetings which are not required by the firm and keeping up with the changes in the organization (Organ,1988:4).

Conscientiousness (doing an exceptional job in one's role) is used to indicate that a particular individual is organized, accountable and hardworking (Witt, 2002:164). Organ (1988:4) defined it as dedication to the job which exceed formal requirements such as working long hours, and volunteer to perform jobs besides duties.

Smith, Organ, and Near defined altruism (helping out coworkers) as voluntary behaviors where an employee provides assistance to an individual with a particular problem to complete his or her task under unusual circumstances (Smith, 1983:653). Altruism refers to a member helping other members of the organization in their work. Podsakoff (2000:514) has demonstrated that altruism was significantly related to performance evaluations and, correspondingly, positive affectivity.

Courtesy (being kind to coworkers) includes behaviors, which focus on the prevention of problems and taking the necessary step so as to lessen the effects of the problem in the future. In other words, courtesy means a member encouraging other workers when they are demoralized and feel discouraged about their professional development.

Organ (1988:4) defines sportsmanship as the behavior of warmly tolerating the irritations that are an unavoidable part of nearly every organizational setting. Podsakoff (1997:262) revealed that good sportsmanship would enhance the morale of the work group and subsequently reduce employee turnover.

### **2.3. Perceived organizational support**

The attention on perceived organizational support has increased since 1980s. Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Eisenberger et al. (1986:501) propose that in order to assess the willingness of the organization to reward their efforts employees generate perceptions as to the extent to which the organization cares about their well-being and values their contribution, which they label as POS. POS is based on organizational support theory which involves the organization's propensity to meet employees' socio-emotional needs (Eisenberger, 1986:51).

The hypotheses to be tested are listed below:

*H<sub>1</sub>: LOC affects OCB positively and significantly*

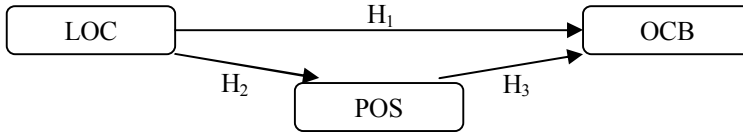
*H<sub>2</sub>: LOC affects POS positively and significantly*

*H<sub>3</sub>: POS affects OCB positively and significantly*

*H<sub>4</sub>: Upon the relationship between LOC and OCB, POS has a positive and significant intermediary effect.*

The research model designed is seen in Fig 1.

**Figure 1: Research Model**



### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Sampling

The samples of the study were 451 administrative and faculty staff at a university in Ankara. The online questionnaire designed for data collection was sent to 451 participants via e-mail and 142 participants responded by filling it out. Upon checking the responses it was found that 17 items were detected to be incomplete and were considered void. The remaining 125 responses were evaluated. A brief look at the demographic figures of the participants reveals that 46% (N=58) of the respondents were female and 67% (N=67) were male. It was observed that 41,6% (N=52) were either 40 years old or younger; 24% (N=30) had undergraduate degrees, 17,6% (N=22) had graduate degrees; 23,2% (N=29) had MA/MS and 35,2% (N=44) had Ph.D. degrees. A survey of academic status of the respondents shows that 69,6% were faculty staff [N=87 (5 Professors, 13 Associated Professors, 22 Assistant Professors, 77 Lecturers)], and over 30,4% (N=38) were administrative staff.

#### 3.2. Research Scales

**3.2.1. Locus of Control Scale (LOCS):** Rotter's (1966) Internal- External Locus of Control Scale was employed to measure the LOC of individuals. The scale, translated to Turkish by Dağ (1991), was designed to assess the position of generalized control expectations of individuals with respect to their internal or external dimensions. High scores in the 29-item scale show the increase in the reliance on the locus of external control. Each item is composed of two options such as "a" and "b" and the participants are asked to provide the option of their choice. 6 of the 29 items were not evaluated for they were filler items while all the others received either 0 or 1 based on respondent's answer. Thus, a total score between 0 and 23 was obtained. The reliability and validity of the scale had already been done (Şahin,2009).

**3.2.2. Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS):** The scale, which was developed by Eisenberger and his colleagues (1986) and abridged by Stassen and Ursel (2009), was designed to measure the organizational support perceived by those who were accustomed and translated to Turkish by Turunç and Çelik (2010). 10 phrases were used to determine the POS by employees.

**3.2.3. Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (OCBS):** Used by Altınbaş (2008) in another study, the scale employed in the study to measure the OCB of employees was developed by Dyne and his colleagues and translated to Turkish by Kamber (2001). The scale used in the study was seen to yield four factors: “Courtesy-Based Notification & Peculiarity (11 phrases)”, “Conscientiousness & Gentlemanliness & Voluntariness (9 phrases)”, “Civil Virtue & Conscientiousness (4 phrases)” and “Effective Use of Company Resources & Civil Virtue (2 phrases)” (a total of 26 phrases).

While using POSS and OCBS the participants were asked to rate the items to show how much they agreed on the phrases used, based on their perceptions of the companies they worked for. The 5 Likert-type scale used in the study consisted of options ranging from “I do not agree at all” to “I certainly agree” (I do not agree at all=1 and I certainly agree=5).

An explanatory factor analysis was made to determine the structural validity and cronbach alpha values were investigated to assess the reliability of POSS and OCBS. The factor analysis placed POS under one factor while it placed OCB under four separate factors: Courtesy-Based Notification & Peculiarity, Conscientiousness & Gentlemanliness & Voluntariness, Civil Virtue & Conscientiousness, and Using Company Resources Effectively & Civil Virtue. After the factor analysis, the resulting factors and factor loads along with cronbach alpha coefficients are exhibited in Table 1. It can be said that these findings and the scales used are valid and reliable.

In this study, the intermediary effect of POS upon the relationship between LOC and OCB has been observed; therefore, the mean of the scores attained from factor analysis was calculated in order to make a general assessment of the relevant concepts. Thus, LOC, OCB, and POS values were obtained for each participant and used in the cause-effect relationship analyses in the following section of the study.

**Table.1 Factors Obtained and Factor Loads**

Scale	Factors	Factor Loads	Cronbach alpha
LOCS	LOC	-	0,78
POSS	POS	0,369-0,894	0,87
OCB	Court.-Based Not.&Peculiarity	0,523-0,695	0,83
	Consci&Gentle.& Volunt.	0,349-0,719	0,88
	Civil virtue&Consci.	0,475-0,758	0,81
	Effec. Use of Comp. Resour./Civil virt.	0,431-0,745	0,78

#### 4. FINDINGS AND HYPOTHESIS TESTS

As seen in Table 2, the findings from regression analyses conducted to test the first three hypotheses prove these hypotheses statistically.

**Table 2: Summary of Regression Analyses**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	$\beta$	t	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F	p	Hyp.	Result
LOC	OCB	0,537	3,863*	0,654	0,409	0,398	26,628	0,000	H <sub>1</sub>	Accept
LOC	POS	1,098	6,093**	0,729	0,531	0,518	41,356	0,000	H <sub>2</sub>	Accept
POS	OCB	1,213	7,851**	0,783	0,613	0,596	47,389	0,000	H <sub>3</sub>	Accept

\* p<0,05, \*\* p<0,01

A three-step regression analysis suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used to test the intermediary effect POS, LOC, and OCB relationships. According to this method, to be able mention an intermediary effect, the following conditions are expected to be seen: (1)Independent variable (LOC) must have an effect on dependent variable(OCB),(2)Independent variable(LOC)must have an effect on intermediary variable(POS),(3)When intermediary variable (POS) is involved in a regression analysis with independent variable (OCB), intermediary variable (POS) must have an effect on dependent variable (OCB) as the regression coefficient of independent variable (LOC) upon dependent variable (OCB) drops.

The drop in the coefficient of independent variable means partial intermediation while complete disappearance of this relationship – in other words, if significance is not statistically detected – is said to demonstrate complete intermediation. In addition, the decrease in or complete loss of the relationship between dependent and independent variables is to be tested statistically. For this purpose, Sobel test is used and the z value obtained must be looked at (Kenny,1998).

H<sub>1</sub> for condition one and H<sub>2</sub> for condition two have been analyzed. The analyses made for condition three are seen in Table 3.

**Table 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results**

Model	Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	R	R2	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	t	F	p
1	OB	OCB	0,654	0,409	0,398	0,537	3,863*	26,628	0,000
Model including intermediary variable	OB POS	OCB	0,879	0,772	0,759	0,413** 0,795**	3,231 7,247	148,436	0,000

\* p<0,05, \*\* p<0,01

When Table 3 is explored, it is observed that LOC regression coefficient decreases and its effect becomes significant in the model upon the inclusion of POS. According to these results, as the third condition for the intermediary effect has been achieved, a partial intermediation can be mentioned for POS upon LOC and OCB. Sobel test was conducted for statistical verification of this result and the scores are displayed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Intermediary Effect of POS - Sobel Test Results**

<b>Sobel Test</b>	Test Statistics (z)	4,2541
	S.E.	0,2312
	p-value	0,0000*

(\*) at  $\alpha=0,05$  level test value is significant.

z value (3.25) is found to be statistically significant ( $p<0.05$ ) in Sobel test results. Therefore, it can be said that POS has a partial intermediary effect on the relationship between LOC and OCB. In this respect, the hypotheses in the study and the analysis results are exhibited in Table 5.

**Table 5 Hypotheses and Results**

Hypothesis	Result
1. LOC affects OCB positively and significantly	YES
2. LOC affects POS positively and significantly	YES
3. POS affects OCB positively and significantly	YES
4. Upon the relationship between LOC and OCB, POS has a positive and significant intermediary effect	YES

## 5. CONCLUSION

In accordance with the results obtained in the study; it is observed that LOC has positive and significant affect on OCB and POS where POS does have the same effect on OCB. (Eisenberger,1986:500, Eisenberger,1990:51, Moorman,1995:351,

Randall,1999:159, Wayne,1997:82).

As a matter of fact, the positive relationship between POS and OCB has received strong empirical support. Earlier researchers proved the notion that the higher the level of POS is, the more likely it is that the individual will perform voluntary behaviors that are beneficial to the organization (Eisenberger,1990:51, Wayne,1997:82). Shore and Wayne (1997:774) also maintained that POS was a better predictor of OCB than the foregone organizational commitment concepts. Furthermore, Eisenberger and colleagues found that employees with higher level of POS felt more obligated to help the organization to reach its objectives, committed themselves more to the organization, and engaged more in spontaneous behaviors as well as in-role performance.

With regard to the effect of LOC on POS, Eisenberger and colleagues suggested that “POS would be influenced by various aspects of an employee’s treatment by the organization and would, in turn, influence the employee’s interpretation of organizational motives underlying that treatment”(Eisenberger,1986:501) and that “positive discretionary actions by the organization that benefited the employee would be taken as evidence that the organization cared about one’s well-being and therefore could be counted on for subsequent rewards” (Eisenberger,1990:51).

In the analyses which has been conducted to learn the level of mediating role of POS, it was realized that POS had partial mediating role between LOC and OCB. Therefore, if the organizations develop necessary implementations and processes which increase the perception of the employee then the effect of the LOC on POS would be increased as well. The result of this study supports the theory that the more suitable and supportive environment in the organizational climate for employees, the more tendency shown by the employees on LOC and OCB. Thus it is evaluated that this study has provided considerable contributions to the literature in terms of the relations among LOC, POS and OCB. This study has been conducted in a definite university in Ankara and covers academic and administrative person. The interpretation of this study’s findings has to take into account at least some limitations. These are a definite university, employees’ perceptions of the work environment characteristics and their intentions to stay were self-reported. It is thought that it would be more appropriate to make more researches in different sectors and samples before making any generalization on the subject. We suggest to future researchers to make research in different sectors by using more samples and including organizational commitment and job performance variables to the model.



We hope that this study provides a springboard for future research examining the complex effects of both organizational and personality variables on individuals' job change decisions. This study also opens some avenues for future research.

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