

-RESEARCH ARTICLE-

THE EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM: A RESEARCH ON UNIVERSITY STAFF

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Abstract

Cynicism is a concept used to describe people who are dissatisfied, constantly critical, and full of negative thoughts. Organizational cynicism, on the other hand, is defined as harsh criticism and negative beliefs/feelings about the organization, either openly or secretly. The developing technology and competitive environment, economic crisis, mass layoffs, insufficient remuneration policy and long working hours cause employees to develop negative attitudes towards their organizations. Since it causes individuals to develop a series of unconstructive feelings towards the organizations, it can be said to be associated with low productivity and loss of income directly. Organizational cynicism is conceptualized in three dimensions as "cognitive, affective, and behavioral". Psychological empowerment in organizations can be defined as "increased intrinsic task motivation", which is the perception of helping employees decide on their job-related roles, the meaningfulness of work, and influencing important decisions. Empowerment, as a motivational construct, consists of four dimensions: "meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact". The hypotheses of the research were formed with the proposal that the dimensions of psychological empowerment affect negatively the dimensions of organizational cynicism. The sample of the research consists of administrative staff working at a university in Istanbul. According to the results obtained in this study, 8 out of 12 hypotheses were accepted and 4 were rejected. The "competence" and "impact" sub-dimensions of empowerment did not have a significant relationship with the "behavioral" dimension of cynicism, while the "competence" dimension of empowerment had a positive, not negative, relationship with "cognitive and affective dimensions" of organizational cynicism.

Keywords: *Cynicism, Organizational Cynicism, Psychological empowerment*

JEL Codes: *M10, M12.*

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PSIKOLOJİK GÜÇLENDİRMENİN ÖRGÜTSEL SINIZM ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ: ÜNİVERSİTE PERSONELİ ÜZERİNDE BİR ARAŞTIRMA²

Öz

Sinizm, tatminsiz, sürekli eleştiren ve olumsuz düşüncelerle dolu insanları tanımlamak için kullanılan bir kavramdır. Örgütsel sinizm ise örgütle ilgili açık veya gizli sert eleştiriler ve olumsuz inançlar/duygular olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Gelişen teknoloji ve artan rekabet, krizler, işten çıkarmalar, ücret yetersizliği ve yoğun çalışma şartları, çalışanların örgütlerine karşı olumsuz tutumlar geliştirmelerine yol açmaktadır. Örgütler için, sinizmin potansiyel sonuçları hiç de olumlu değildir. Bireylerde kendi örgütüne karşı bir dizi yapıcı olmayan duyguya yol açar, dolayısıyla düşük üretkenlik ve doğrudan gelir kaybı ile ilişkili olduğu söylenebilir. Örgütsel sinizm “bilişsel, duygusal ve davranışsal” olmak üzere üç boyutta kavramsallaştırılmaktadır. Örgütlerde psikolojik güçlendirme ise, çalışanların işle ilgili rollerine, işin anlamlılığına karar vermelerine yardımcı olma ve önemli kararları etkileme algısı olan “artan içsel görev motivasyonu” olarak tanımlanabilir. Motivasyonel bir yapı olarak güçlendirme, “anlam, yetkinlik, otonomi ve etki” olmak üzere dört boyutta incelenmektedir.

Araştırmanın hipotezleri, psikolojik güçlendirme boyutlarının örgütsel sinizm boyutlarını olumsuz yönde etkilediği önerisiyle oluşturulmuştur. Araştırmanın örneklemini İstanbul’da bulunan bir üniversitede görev yapan idari personel oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlara göre 12 hipotezden 8’i kabul edilmiş, 4’ü reddedilmiştir. Güçlendirmenin “yetkinlik” ve “etki” alt boyutları ile sinizmin “davranışsal” boyutu arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmazken, güçlendirmenin “ yetkinlik” boyutu ile örgütsel sinizmin “bilişsel ve duygusal boyutları” arasında negatif değil pozitif bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Bu sonuç, işini en iyi şekilde yaptığını düşünen yetkin işgörenlerin, diğer çalışanlara kıyasla, örgütün eksiklerini ve yanlışlarını daha iyi görebildiklerine ve daha mükemmeli aradıklarına işaret edebilir. Örgüt açısından olumlu bir gelişme olan işgörenin yetkinliğinin arttığı durumlarda, örgütün aleyhine olan bilişsel ve duygusal sinizmin artması şüphesiz ilgi çekici ve üzerine daha fazla araştırma yapılması gereken bir konudur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Sinizm, Örgütsel Sinizm, Psikolojik güçlendirme.*

JEL Kodları: *M10, M12.*

“Bu çalışma Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine uygun olarak hazırlanmıştır.”

² Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet, makalenin sonunda yer almaktadır.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most fundamental factors in the success of businesses is the effectiveness and efficiency of human resources, and the ever-increasing globalization and competitive environment makes this issue even more important. A management approach that values human capital is an indispensable element for sustainable success. Although the rights of employees seem to be protected on the legal ground, mobbing in business life and in response to this, distrust towards organizations (businesses), job dissatisfaction and burnout in employees are the issues that occupy the agenda more and more in business life. The Internet is also becoming a popular source for the spread of business gossip and sarcastic business messages; materialism and individualism/selfishness stand out more as the most prominent human behaviors. The new generation employees generally consist of individuals who do not want to work in the same workplace for a long time, seek more flexible working conditions, care about individual (career) goals rather than organizational goals, and want control in their own hands.

In the period after the industrial revolution, the workforce was considered as a complement to the machines, and the emotions and many human characteristics of employees who were overwhelmed by the excessive workload were ignored. This situation has led to the emergence of many organizational problems over time. Although the history of cynicism, which is a concept attributed to people who are choosy, unhappy, dissatisfied, full of criticism and negative thoughts, dates back to ancient times, the concept of organizational cynicism has only recently started to take place among the remarkable issues in working life. Especially since the beginning of the 90s, studies on this subject have started to be seen more frequently in the literature. When these studies are examined, it is seen that the reasons for the negative attitudes of the employees are tried to be understood and it is aimed to improve them. Therefore, more detailed research on antecedents and consequences of cynicism would be beneficial for all the parties.

1.1. Cynicism and Organizational Cynicism

Linking distinctive personality traits of humans with animals has been a thing done for a long time. Many comparisons have been made, such as the vulgar and dirty ones likened to the “pig”, those who do not like to work to the “sloppy animal”, the cunnings to the “fox”, the talkative ones to the “parrot”, etc. The origin of the word cynic is based on ancient Greek and is used to mean “like a dog”. Therefore, “cynic” means a person who looks and behaves like a “dog”, and it is attributed to people who are picky, unhappy, dissatisfied, full of criticism and negative thoughts (Kalağan, 2009:32).

Cynicism is a concept used to describe people who are dissatisfied, constantly critical of events, and full of negative thoughts. Organizational cynicism, on the other hand, is defined as harsh criticism and negative beliefs/feelings about the organization, either openly or secretly, and includes negative feelings about the organization as well as feelings that tend to be humiliating and critical (Kalağan, 2009:39). While

researchers agree that organizational cynicism is a problem, there is little consensus on what it actually is. According to many researchers, organizational cynicism does not appear as a fixed and permanent personality or judgment, but as a reaction and behavioral attitude.

When the literature is examined, it is observed that the concept of cynicism in the workplace is handled in two different ways: The first of these is the concept of general (personality) cynicism, which originates from the personality of the individual and reflects his perspective on life. The other is the concept of organizational cynicism, which causes cynical attitudes in the individual and is based on organizational factors (Kabataş, 2010:5). When we look at the relationship between general (personality) cynicism and organizational cynicism; it is seen that general cynicism arises from the personality of the individual, while organizational cynicism leads to the formation of cynical attitudes in the individual (Tokgöz and Yılmaz, 2008:284). Andersson (1996:1396) defined organizational cynicism as the attitudes of employees towards their organizations and managers, which are characterized by feelings such as disappointment, hopelessness, contempt, distrust, and limitation. According to Naus (2007:13), cynicism is the protection mechanism of the members of the organization against the problems in the work environment.

In the organizational context, there have also been various debates on the nature of cynicism. Some researchers, such as Cook and Medley (1954:415), call it a personality trait. Accordingly, cynicism is thought to be an established trait among some individuals. If we accept this analogy, it will not be so easy to change this feeling of the employee. However, some other researchers (such as Becker and Geer, 1961) said that cynicism is situation-specific issue, not personality-specific (as cited in Işık, 2014:133). According to this view, it is predicted that cynicism can be controlled to a certain extent. Since organizational cynicism is a problem with employees who believe that the organization has various problems and that efforts to solve them are useless, eliminating the negativities in the business environment is a very important issue for both employees and organizations.

In 1989, Kanter and Mirvis wrote in “The Cynical Americans” that 43 percent of workers in the United States exhibit cynical characteristics and are disappointed, insecure and skeptical as a result of the unethical behaviors of managers and uncertainty in organizations (as cited in Eaton, 2000:1). According to them, cynical employees did not trust management, believed that their company took advantage of them, and felt that they were being treated unfairly in the workplace. Especially after this book, research on organizational cynicism increased a lot in the literature, and employee cynicism was associated with concepts such as corporate downsizing, overpaid managers, mismanaged change efforts, and the emergence of the team approach.

When the researches on cynicism are examined, it is seen that the developing technology and competitive environment, economic crisis, mass layoffs, insufficient remuneration policy and long working hours cause employees to develop negative

attitudes towards their organizations. It is also stated that cynicism in organizations is a reaction originating from indifference, and there are studies supporting this. Managers also play an important role in the spread or prevention of cynicism in organizations. Studies have shown that cynical employees are less productive (Mirvis and Kanter, 1989:378), have low job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Dean et al, 1998:244), less likely to cooperate in organizational change efforts (Reichers et al, 1997:49), and are less motivated (Premeaux and Mondy, 1986:15).

For organizations, the potential consequences of cynicism are not at all positive. Since it causes individuals to develop a series of unconstructive feelings towards the organizations, it can be said to be associated with low productivity and loss of income directly. Kanter and Mirvis (1991:58) stated that trust in businesses has decreased from 70% to 15% in the last 20 years. Because of cynicism, employees are hopeless, less committed and less satisfied with their jobs, and eventually, employees may make decisions that may lead to leaving the organization (Nair and Kamalanabhan, 2010:16).

However, all employees are not affected similarly by the same conditions. People with a work ethic tend to do their job right and work honestly, and also expect the boss/manager to treat them with dignity and honesty. Failure of the organization to meet these expectations leads to disappointment and may cause them to display a cynical attitude. On the other hand, people who don't care about lack of honesty or sincerity, or who learn to cope with them over time, may not display cynical traits most likely. Cynical employees are more likely to question the integrity of their organizations and inconsistencies within their practices.

Dean et al (1998:245), who conceptualized organizational cynicism as an attitude, examined organizational cynicism in three dimensions as cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Cognitive dimension refers to the attitudes that develop in the individual regarding the organization's lack of honesty, an environment of trust and a fair structure, the affective dimension refers to the anger, anxiety and tenseness of individuals and their reactions in this direction, and the behavioral dimension refers to the tendencies in the form of bad criticism and sarcastic comments about the events experienced in the organization.

1.2. Psychological Empowerment Concept

Empowerment is called the process of harmonizing the behavior of individuals with their own desires to achieve organizational goals (Gershon, 2006:2). Koçel (2010), on the other hand, defines empowerment as the process that aims to make the employee the owner of the job and that the right to make a choice about the job belongs to the employee. According to Yukl and Becker (2006:211), psychological empowerment in organizations can be defined as “increased intrinsic task motivation”, which is the perception of helping employees decide on their job-related roles, the meaningfulness of work, and influencing important decisions. Therefore, we can define psychological empowerment as “equipping the employee with the authority and flexibility that he/she will need to fully fulfill his/her job-related responsibilities”. Psychologically

empowered employees do not expect guidance from the environment in organizations, on the contrary, they adopt a proactive approach themselves (Spreitzer, et al. 1999:513). Since the early 1980s, many of the international organizations competing on a global scale in the USA care about empowerment programs and have their employees adopt it (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013:492).

Today, it is accepted that the essential element that provides a competitive advantage to businesses is human capital, and the participation of employees is critical for organizations to achieve their goals (Çavuş, 2008:1288). For this reason, the support and morale elements given to employees can strengthen them. Employees in organizations where psychological empowerment is implemented can act in harmony and solve problems together. “The top management's efforts to improve working conditions so that employees can work more efficiently in a workplace” is the *behavioral dimension* of strengthening. However, how employees perceive these conditions is considered as the *psychological dimension* of empowerment.

Spreitzer (1995:1445) defined empowerment as a motivational construct consisting of four dimensions: “meaning, competence, self-determination (autonomy), and impact”.

- **Meaning:** It is an indicator of the harmony between the requirements of the job role undertaken by the employee and the employee's own beliefs and values. As the requirements of the job and the employee's beliefs and values get closer to each other, the job he/she does is perceived as more important and meaningful for the employee.
- **Competence:** It is the belief and confidence of the employee in his/her own competencies and job-related competence that he/she can do his/her job in the best way. Employees who do not trust their own abilities give up quickly in the face of difficulties, while those who are self-confident tend to struggle with difficulties and obstacles.
- **Self-determination (Autonomy):** It is the individual's ability to take initiative in business-related activities and to act freely within certain limits and make decisions independently of the top management.
- **Impact:** The degree to which the employee has the authority to influence the method and results of the work. *Autonomy* refers to the employee's state of control over his or her job, while *impact* refers to the state of control over organizational outcomes. *Autonomy* refers to participation in work, and *impact* refers to organizational participation (Çöl, 2008:37).

The above four dimensions express an active orientation of the individual to work-related activities, that is, the desire to shape the issues related to his work and his ability to do so. The absence of any of these dimensions reduces the degree of perceived empowerment.

The desire to increase customer satisfaction by responding quickly to customers' requests and expectations has brought the concept of empowerment to a more important position for businesses. Empowerment provides productivity increase and efficiency in decision-making processes in organizations and helps to adapt to changing environmental conditions more easily (Çöl et al., 2004:3). Therefore, empowerment is an important management approach that both supports job satisfaction and productivity of employees and provides competitive advantage to businesses. When people are psychologically empowered, in addition to a positive change in their attitudes, perceptions and behaviors, the individual's self-esteem and individual awareness also develop.

1.3. The Relationship Between Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Cynicism

Organizational cynicism, which is briefly defined as "the individual's negative attitude towards the organization in which he is employed" by Dean et al. (1998:242), consists of negative beliefs, influences and behavioral tendencies towards the organization. Since the beginning of this century, researchers have begun to accept that cynicism has the power to deeply affect organizations and is becoming increasingly common (James, 2005:23). To date, a limited number of studies have been encountered regarding the antecedents of organizational cynicism. For example, little research has been done on situational factors that are under the direct control of the organization and management. Organizational cynicism has been discussed in the literature in the context of its causes and consequences, and its causes have been examined under two headings, generally those originating from "personality" and "environment". The most notable studies have identified factors such as layoffs, workforce reduction, organizational performance, and high executive salaries as primary causes of organizational cynicism (Andersson and Bateman, 1997:451). The effect of personality traits on organizational cynicism has received less attention. Reichers et al. (1997:49) evaluated negative emotionality and the need for achievement as the antecedents of cynicism. Personality traits were used as a control variable in some studies and as a mediator variable in some others.

It can be said that the first comprehensive study on cynicism in Turkey was done by Erdost et al. (2007:514). With this study, the concept was tried to be introduced to the Turkish literature and the organizational cynicism scale was tested for the first time. Kalağan (2009:178) found a strong and significant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism, in her study on 214 research assistants at Akdeniz University. Kutaniş and Çetinel (2010:186) conducted their research on 20 academicians working at a state university and concluded that the perception of injustice causes organizational cynicism. In their study on 220 hotel employees, Altınöz et al. (2011:310) revealed that there is a significant and highly negative relationship between organizational commitment and organizational cynicism. In the study conducted by Efeoğlu and İplik (2011:356), it was determined that there is an inverse relationship between the organizational justice perceptions of medical representatives and their organizational cynicism attitudes; as employees'

perceptions of organizational justice decrease, their cynical behaviors towards their organizations increase.

According to Spreitzer (1995:1461), psychologically empowered employees value organizational structures that help them fulfill the requirements of the job. These structures help employees to feel satisfied with doing a job well, to be motivated for success, and to be more committed to their work and organization. From this point of view, psychological empowerment is expected to reduce organizational cynicism. As a matter of fact, in the study conducted by Polat et al. (2010:18) on employees of a state university in Ankara, a negative and statistically significant relationship was found between the psychological empowerment of the personnel and their organizational cynicism. However, in a study conducted by Bayram and Ergan (2018:94) among academicians, it is stated that there is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational cynicism. In these studies, the sub-dimensions of both empowerment and cynicism were not examined separately. In the study conducted by Yilmaz (2018:140) on academicians working at four different universities, it was found that psychological empowerment has a negative effect on all three dimensions of organizational cynicism, but the effects of the sub-dimensions of empowerment were not examined separately in this study. Yıldırım and Kayapalı (2016:5748), on the other hand, examined the sub-dimensions of the variables, but they investigated the effect of cynicism on empowerment, not the effect of empowerment on cynicism. In the results, they concluded that the *affective* dimension of cynicism affects the “meaning” dimension of empowerment, and the *behavioral* dimension affects the “meaning and self-determination” dimensions negatively and significantly. As can be seen here, continuing research by considering the sub-dimensions of the variables and the relationships between them will be beneficial in terms of better understanding the causes and consequences of organizational cynicism.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Model of the Research

As mentioned in the previous section, since only a limited number of studies have examined the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the variables, this study aimed to reveal the relationship between the sub-dimensions of both psychological empowerment and organizational cynicism. The model of the research was designed based on the variables used in the research as a result of the literature review. The model, in accordance with the purpose of the research, is shown in Figure 1.

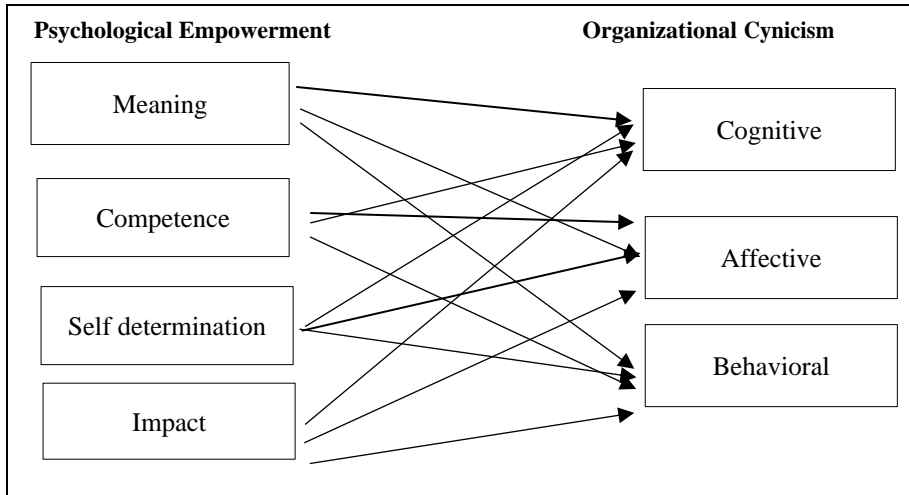


Figure-1: The Model of the Research

2.2. The Hypotheses of the Research

As seen in the model, the independent variables of the research are "the sub-dimensions of psychological empowerment ", and the dependent variables are " the sub-dimensions of organizational cynicism". From this point of view, the hypotheses of the research were formed as follows:

- H1: Meaning affects cognitive cynicism negatively.
- H2: Meaning affects affective cynicism negatively.
- H3: Meaning affects behavioral cynicism negatively.
- H4: Competence affects cognitive cynicism negatively.
- H5: Competence affects affective cynicism negatively.
- H6: Competence affects behavioral cynicism negatively.
- H7: Self-determination affects cognitive cynicism negatively.
- H8: Self-determination affects affective cynicism negatively.
- H9: Self-determination affects behavioral cynicism negatively.
- H10: Impact affects cognitive cynicism negatively.
- H11: Impact affects affective cynicism negatively.
- H12: Impact affects behavioral cynicism negatively.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Psychological Empowerment Scale: The Psychological Empowerment Instrument (PEI) developed by Spreitzer (1995:1458) was used to measure psychological empowerment. Spreitzer's scale is the most frequently used scale in the literature regarding the level of psychological empowerment. The scale, which was translated into Turkish and whose validity and reliability analyzes were performed by Çöl (2004:90), was used with his permission. The scale, which consists of a total of 12

statements, has four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact, and each dimension includes 3 statements.

Organizational Cynicism Scale: The “Organizational Cynicism Scale” developed by Brandes et al. (1999:152) consists of 13 items. There are three dimensions in the organizational cynicism scale: cognitive (5 statements), affective (4 statements), and behavioral (4 statements). The Turkish version of the scale, whose validity and reliability studies were carried out by Kalağan (2009:121), was used with her permission. Karacaoğlu and İnce (2012) also carried out the validity and reliability study of the scale. According to the results of the study conducted on a sample group of 300 people, it was determined that the scale exhibited a three-dimensional structure as cognitive, affective and behavioral as in its original form, and these dimensions were confirmed by the data obtained from the Turkish sample.

2.4. Data Collection Method, Population and Sampling

In the research, the survey method with closed-ended expressions was preferred as the data collection method. In addition to 25 statements to measure the variables of the research, there are also demographic questions in the questionnaire. Participants marked their answers on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree).

The population of the research consists of the administrative staff (permanent civil servants) working at a public (state) university in Istanbul. There were 3741 employees working in this category, at the time the research was conducted. After obtaining the necessary ethics committee permissions, the survey form was sent to all employees as an online Google form. 217 forms that were answered completely were evaluated. Of these responses; 127 are men and 90 are women, 165 are married and 52 are single, 15 are under the age of 30, 144 are between the ages of 30-50, and 58 are over the age of 50.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Validity and Reliability Analysis of Scales

First, the validity and reliability tests of the scales were conducted. For this purpose, convergent validity, discriminant validity and internal consistency were evaluated. The convergent validity was tested with AVE (Average Variance Extracted) coefficients, explained by factor loadings of the expressions. Internal consistency reliability was investigated with Cronbach's Alpha and CR=Composite Reliability coefficients. Threshold values were accepted as ≥ 0.70 for factor loads, ≥ 0.50 for AVE coefficient, and ≥ 0.70 for Cronbach's Alpha and CR (Cohen, 1988:78; Hair et al., 2006; Hair et al., 2017:15).

According to Hair et al (2017:15), factor loadings should be ≥ 0.70 . The authors stated that the expression with a factor load below 0.40 should be removed from the model, and an expression with a factor load between 0.40 and 0.70 should be checked for the

AVE and CR coefficients, and if the threshold value is reached, the expression should remain in the model, and if the threshold value is not reached, it should be removed from the model. Accordingly, the third expression of the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism, whose factor load is between 0.40 and 0.70, was left in the model since the coefficients of AVE and CR were well above the threshold values.

As seen in Table 1, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scales used in the study ranged between 0.801 and 0.976, and the CR coefficients between 0.849 and 0.982. It is understood from these results that the internal consistency reliability of the scales used is provided. Since the factor loads of the expressions in the scales are between 0.596 and 0.975 and the AVE values are between 0.589 and 0.932, we can say that convergent validity is also achieved.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Results

Scale/ Dimension	Statement Code	Statement Factor Load.	Cronbach's Alfa	CR	AVE	
Psychological Empowerment	Meaning	MEAN1	0,921	0,907	0,941	0,842
		MEAN2	0,919			
		MEAN3	0,913			
	Competence	COMP4	0,887	0,880	0,923	0,800
		COMP5	0,880			
		COMP6	0,916			
	Self Determination	S.DET7	0,870	0,853	0,909	0,769
		S.DET8	0,864			
		S.DET9	0,897			
	Impact	IMP10	0,850	0,904	0,939	0,838
		IMP11	0,943			
		IMP12	0,950			
Organizational Cynicism	Cognitive	COG1	0,872	0,916	0,937	0,749
		COG2	0,777			
		COG3	0,879			
		COG4	0,895			
		COG5	0,900			
	Affective	AFF6	0,975	0,976	0,982	0,932
		AFF7	0,975			
		AFF8	0,970			
		AFF9	0,942			
	Behavioral	BEH10	0,875	0,801	0,849	0,589
		BEH11	0,846			
		BEH12	0,596			
		BEH13	0,721			

The discriminant validity of the scales used was tested according to the method suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981:45). The values in parentheses in Table 2 are the AVE square root values of the scales. Since the AVE square root values are higher

than the correlation coefficients in its own row and column, it can be said that the scales have discriminant validity.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meaning	(0,918)						
Cognitive	-0,270	(0,866)					
Behavioral	-0,289	0,644	(0,768)				
Affective	-0,337	0,734	0,730	(0,966)			
Impact	0,328	-0,384	-0,268	-0,418	(0,915)		
Competence	0,287	0,114	-0,014	0,112	0,173	(0,895)	
Self Determ.	0,425	-0,313	-0,299	-0,360	0,502	0,316	(0,877)

3.2. Testing the Structural Equation Model and Findings

The structural equation model in which the research hypotheses are tested is shown in Figure 2.

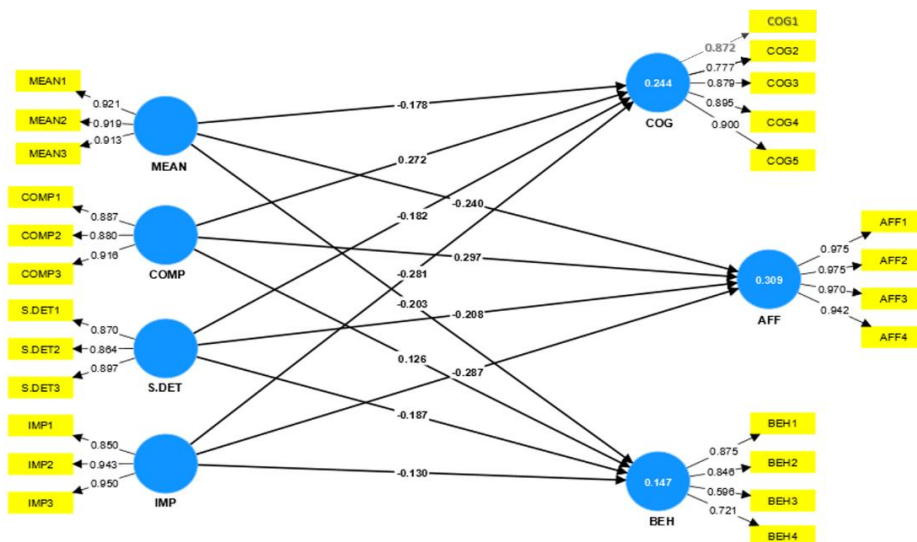


Figure 2. Structural Model Used for Hypothesis Testing

Model testing was performed by using the SmartPLS.4 program. Partial least squares path analysis (PLS-SEM) was preferred as a method. VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) and R2 coefficients were calculated by using the PLS algorithm of the SmartPLS program (Ringle et al., 2015; Yıldız, 2021:23) and are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Research Model Coefficients

Variables		VIF	R ²
Meaning		1,288	
Competence	Cognitive	1,147	
Self Determination	Cynicism	1,155	0,244
Impact		1,365	
Meaning		1,288	
Competence	Behavioral	1,147	
Self Determination	Cynicism	1,155	0,147
Impact		1,365	
Meaning		1,288	
Competence	Affective	1,147	
Self Determination	Cynicism	1,155	0,309
Impact		1,365	

According to Hair et al (2017), if the VIF coefficients are below 5, there is no linearity problem between the scales used. Accordingly, since all of the VIF coefficients in Table 3 are below 5, there is no linearity problem between the scales used.

From the explanation rates (R2) in the table, it is understood that the cognitive dimension of organizational cynicism is explained by approximately 24%, the behavioral dimension by 15%, and the affective dimension by 31% by the independent variables. For hypothesis testing, t values were calculated by resampling with 5000 sub-samples in the SmartPLS program and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Path Test Coefficients

Variables		β	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
Meaning		-0,178	0,059	3,019	0,003
Competence	Cognitive Cynicism	0,272	0,064	4,272	0,000
Self Determination		-0,182	0,083	2,207	0,027
Impact		-0,281	0,078	3,603	0,000
Meaning		-0,203	0,070	2,891	0,004
Competence	Behavioral Cynicism	0,126	0,072	1,745	0,081
Self Determination		-0,187	0,094	1,983	0,047
Impact		-0,130	0,086	1,513	0,130
Meaning		-0,240	0,058	4,130	0,000
Competence	Affective Cynicism	0,297	0,066	4,526	0,000
Self Determination		-0,208	0,077	2,690	0,007
Impact		-0,287	0,075	3,835	0,000

When the results in Table 4 are examined, it is seen that the competence and impact dimensions of psychological empowerment do not have a significant effect on the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism ($p > 0.05$). While other relationships between the dimensions are significant, it has been determined that the competence dimension affects cognitive cynicism ($\beta = 0.272$, $p < 0.01$) and affective cynicism ($\beta = 0.297$, $p < 0.01$) dimensions positively, not negatively.

According to these findings, the results of the hypotheses of the research are presented in Table-5. In the literature, Polat et al (2010:18), İşçi et al (2013:252) and Yılmaz (2018:140) stated that there is a negative and significant relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational cynicism. Boz (2020:43) also found that psychological empowerment has a reducing effect on organizational cynicism. Gupta et al. (2021:373) made a research on Indian IT sector and the analysis of their model showed that empowerment of employees alleviated the negative spiral of organizational cynicism. On the other hand, Bayram and Ergan (2018:94) and Avey et al (2008:110) stated that there is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational cynicism. According to the results obtained in this study, 8 out of 12 hypotheses were accepted and 4 were rejected. It was observed that the "competence" and "impact" sub-dimensions of empowerment did not have a significant relationship with the "behavioral" dimension of cynicism, while the "competence" dimension of empowerment had a positive, not negative, relationship with "cognitive and affective dimensions" of organizational cynicism.

Table 5. Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Meaning affects cognitive cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H2: Meaning affects affective cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H3: Meaning affects behavioral cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H4: Competence affects cognitive cynicism negatively.	Rejected
H5: Competence affects affective cynicism negatively.	Rejected
H6: Competence affects behavioral cynicism negatively.	Rejected
H7: Self-determination affects cognitive cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H8: Self-determination affects affective cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H9: Self-determination affects behavioral cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H10: Impact affects cognitive cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H11: Impact affects affective cynicism negatively.	Accepted
H12: Impact affects behavioral cynicism negatively.	Rejected

4. DISCUSSION

In this study, the effects of psychological empowerment perceptions of administrative staff on organizational cynicism were investigated, at a university in Istanbul. For this purpose, employees' perceptions of psychological empowerment dimensions and the dimensions of organizational cynicism were correlated one by one.

Two dimensions of psychological empowerment, whose effects on the behavioral dimension were identified, are meaning and self-determination. Accordingly, if the purpose of the job is important for the worker and if the worker has more control over his job, the level of behavioral cynicism decreases. On the other hand, it was determined that competence and impact did not have any significant effect on the behavioral cynicism dimension. That is, behavioral cynicism is not affected positively or negatively, although the individual has a high belief in his own abilities that he can do his job in the best way and has a high power to affect organizational results. This situation brings to mind that university personnel are afraid to transform their feelings about cynicism into behaviors.

Just like the cognitive dimension, the affective dimension is negatively affected by the impact, meaning and self-determination dimensions of psychological empowerment. In other words, the affective cynicism levels of the employees who think that they can affect the organizational results to a certain extent, find the work they do meaningful and believe that they have more control over the work they do, decrease.

The surprising result of this research is that the perception of competence positively affects both cognitive and affective cynicism, contrary to what was expected. While the level of competence (which expresses the belief in one's own abilities that the individual can do his/her job in the best way) increases, cognitive and affective cynicism is expected to decrease, but an increase has been obtained. This result may indicate that competent employees, who think that they are doing their job in the best way, can see the deficiencies and mistakes of the organization better and seek more perfection compared to other employees. Every organization tries to hire the most competent employees but, when the competence of the employee increases, the increase in cognitive and affective cynicism against the organization is undoubtedly an interesting subject and requires further research. For this reason, re-examining the effects of empowerment perceptions on the dimensions of organizational cynicism for different samples will contribute to a better explanation of the subject.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the analysis, the impact, meaning and self-determination dimensions of psychological empowerment negatively affect the cognitive dimension of organizational cynicism. In other words, the cognitive cynicism perceptions of the employees who think that they can affect the organizational results, who find their work meaningful and who can make decisions independently of the top management, decrease.

As a result of the study, it can be said that every organization should try to minimize organizational cynicism, which means negative feelings, thoughts and behaviors that employees develop against their organizations. Because organizational cynicism brings many negative consequences such as absenteeism, low performance, decreased productivity and leaving the job. According to the results of this research, one of the

ways to reduce organizational cynicism is to empower employees psychologically. If organizations want to reduce the cynicism of employees towards the organization, the meaning of the job for the individual should be increased by increasing the harmony between the requirements of the job and the beliefs, values and behaviors of the employee. At the same time, the employee should be given the opportunity to take initiative in matters such as starting, maintaining and correcting the activity. In addition, conditions must be established that enable the employee to have influence over the strategy, method or results of the work.

PSİKOLOJİK GÜÇLENDİRMENİN ÖRGÜTSEL SİNİZM ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ: ÜNİVERSİTE PERSONELİ ÜZERİNDE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

1. GİRİŞ

Sinizizm; memnuniyetsiz, olaylara sürekli eleştirel yaklaşan ve olumsuz düşüncelerle dolu kişileri tanımlamakta kullanılan bir kavramdır. Örgütsel sinizm ise örgüte ilişkin açık ya da gizli bir şekilde yapılan sert eleştiriler, olumsuz inançlar ve duygular olarak tarif edilmekte olup, örgüte ilişkin olumsuz duygu yanında küçük düşürücü ve eleştirici davranışta bulunma eğilimindeki duyguları da kapsamaktadır (Kalağan, 2009). Pek çok araştırmacıya göre örgütsel sinizm sabit ve kalıcı bir kişilik ya da hüküm olarak değil, bir tepki ve davranışsal tutum olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Sinizm ile ilgili yapılan araştırmalar incelendiğinde; gelişen teknoloji ve beraberinde getirdiği rekabet ortamı, ekonomik kriz, toplu işten çıkarmalar, ücretlendirme politikasının yetersiz olması ve uzun çalışma saatleri gibi olumsuzlukların, çalışanların örgütlerine karşı olumsuz tutumlar geliştirmesine neden olduğu görülmektedir. Örgütsel sinizmi bir tutum olarak kavramsallaştıran Dean vd. (1998), örgütsel sinizmi bilişsel, duygusal ve davranışsal olarak üç boyutta incelemiştir.

Güçlendirme, örgütsel hedeflerin gerçekleşebilmesi için bireylerin kendi arzularıyla davranışlarını uyumlaştırması süreci olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla personel güçlendirmeyi “çalışanın işiyle ilgili sorumluluklarını tam anlamıyla yerine getirebilmesi için ihtiyaç duyacağı otorite ve esneklikle donatılması” olarak da tanımlayabiliriz. Örgütlerde psikolojik güçlendirme, çalışanların işle ilgili rollerine karar vermekte yardımcı olabilmeye, işlerin anlamlı olması ve önemli kararları etkilemeye yönelik algılar olup, “artmış içsel görev motivasyonu” olarak tanımlanabilir. Psikolojik olarak güçlendirilmiş çalışanlar örgütlerde çevreden gelecek yönlendirmeyi beklemezler, aksine kendileri proaktif bir yaklaşım benimserler. Spreitzer (1995) güçlendirmeyi, “anlam, yetkinlik, otonomi ve etki” olmak üzere dört boyuttan oluşan motivasyonel bir yapı olarak tanımlamıştır.

Psikolojik güçlendirilmiş çalışanlar, işin gerekliliklerini yerine getirmelerine yardımcı olan örgüt yapılarına değer verirler. Bu yapılar, çalışanların bir işi iyi yapmaktan dolayı tatmin duymalarına ve başarı için motive olmalarına, işlerine ve örgütlerine daha çok bağlanmalarına yardımcı olmaktadır. Buradan hareketle, psikolojik güçlendirmenin örgütsel sinizmi azaltıcı etki yapması beklenir.

2. YÖNTEM

Literatürde sadece kısıtlı sayıda çalışmada değişkenlerin alt boyutları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmiş olması sebebiyle bu çalışmada hem psikolojik güçlendirme hem de örgütsel sinizmin alt boyutları arasındaki ilişkinin ortaya konması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın hipotezleri, bağımsız değişkenler olan “psikolojik güçlendirme alt boyutlarının”, bağımlı değişkenler olan “örgütsel sinizm alt boyutlarını” negatif yönde etkilediği varsayımı ile oluşturulmuştur.

Araştırmada veri toplama yöntemi olarak, kapalı uçlu ifadelerin yer aldığı anket yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Psikolojik güçlendirmeyi ölçmek için Spreitzer (1995) tarafından geliştirilen ölçek anlam, yetkinlik, otonomi ve etki olarak dört boyuta sahiptir ve her boyut 3 ifade içermektedir. Brandes vd. (1999) tarafından geliştirilmiş olan “Örgütsel Sinizm Ölçeğinde” ise bilişsel (5 ifade), duygusal (4 ifade) ve davranışsal (4 ifade) olmak üzere üç boyut yer almaktadır. Katılımcılar cevaplarını 5’li Likert ölçeği şeklindeki forma işaretlemişlerdir. Araştırmanın evrenini, İstanbul’daki bir devlet üniversitesinde kadrolu memur statüsünde çalışan idari personel oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın yapıldığı tarihte bu statüde toplam 3741 çalışan vardı. Anket formu online olarak tüm çalışanlara gönderilmiş ve eksiksiz olarak doldurularak cevaplanan 217 tanesi değerlendirilmeye alınmıştır. Model testi SmartPLS.4 programı kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Yöntem olarak, kısmi en küçük kareler yol analizi (PLS-SEM) tercih edilmiştir.

3. BULGULAR

Elde edilen sonuçlara göre ise 12 hipotezin 8 tanesi kabul edilmiş, 4’ü reddedilmiştir. Özellikle, güçlendirmenin “yetkinlik” ve “etki” alt boyutlarının, sinizm “davranışsal” boyutu ile anlamlı bir ilişkisi olmadığı; güçlendirmenin “yetkinlik” boyutunun ise diğer sinizm boyutları ile negatif değil pozitif bir ilişkisi olduğu görülmüştür.

Davranışsal boyut üzerinde etkisi tespit edilebilen psikolojik güçlendirmenin iki boyutu “anlam ve otonomidir”. Buna göre işin yapılış amacı işgören açısından önemliyse ve işgören işi üzerinde daha fazla kontrole sahipse davranışsal sinizm düzeyi azalmaktadır. Öte yandan “yetkinlik ve etkinin” davranışsal boyut üzerinde anlamlı herhangi bir etkisinin olmadığı belirlenmiştir.

Yapılan analiz sonuçlarına göre psikolojik güçlendirmenin “etki, anlam ve otonomi” boyutları, örgütsel sinizmin bilişsel boyutunu negatif yönde etkilemektedir. Duygusal sinizm boyutu da, tıpkı bilişsel boyut gibi psikolojik güçlendirmenin “etki, anlam ve otonomi” boyutlarından negatif olarak etkilenmektedir.

4. TARTIŞMA

Bu çalışmada İstanbul’daki bir kamu üniversitesi çalışanlarının psikolojik güçlendirme algıları ile örgütsel sinizm boyutları tek tek ilişkilendirilmiştir.

Psikolojik güçlendirmenin etki, anlam ve otonomi boyutları, örgütsel sinizmin bilişsel boyutunu negatif yönde etkilemektedir. Diğer bir deyişle örgütsel sonuçları etkileyebildiğini düşünen, yaptığı işi anlamlı bulan ve işle ilgili atılacak adımların, sarf edilecek eforun ve kullanılacak yöntemlerin belirlenmesinde üst yönetimden bağımsız karar alabilen işgörenlerin bilişsel sinizm algıları azalmaktadır.

Duygusal sinizm boyutunun da, bilişsel boyut gibi psikolojik güçlendirmenin etki, anlam ve özerklik boyutlarından negatif olarak etkilenmesi; örgütsel sonuçları belli ölçüde etkileyebileceğini düşünen, yaptığı işi anlamlı bulan ve yaptığı iş üzerinde daha fazla kontrole sahip olduğuna inanan işgörenlerin duygusal sinizm düzeylerinin azaldığını göstermektedir.

“Yetkinlik ve etkinin” davranışsal boyut üzerinde anlamlı herhangi bir etkisinin olmadığını belirlenmiş olması; bireyin işini en iyi şekilde yapabileceği yönünde kendi yeteneklerine olan inancı ve örgütsel sonuçları etkileyebilecek gücü yüksek olsa da davranışsal sinizmin bu durumdan olumlu ya da olumsuz etkilenmediğini göstermektedir. Bu durum üniversite personelinin sinizme ilişkin hissettiği duyguları davranışlara dönüştürmekten çekindiklerini akla getirmektedir.

Bu araştırmanın sürpriz sonucu, yetkinlik algısının hem bilişsel hem de duygusal sinizmi pozitif yönde etkilemesidir. Bireyin işini en iyi şekilde yapabileceği yönünde kendi yeteneklerine olan inancını ifade eden yetkinlik düzeyi arttıkça bilişsel ve duygusal sinizmin azalması beklenirken, artış yönünde bir sonuç elde edilmiştir. Bu sonuç, işini en iyi şekilde yaptığını düşünen yetkin işgörenlerin, diğer çalışanlara kıyasla, örgütün eksiklerini ve yanlışlarını daha iyi görebildiklerine ve daha mükemmeli aradıklarına işaret edebilir.

SONUÇ

Her örgüt, çalışanların örgütlerine karşı geliştirdikleri olumsuz duygu, düşünce ve davranış anlamına gelen örgütsel sinizmi en aza indirmeye çalışmak zorundadır. Çünkü örgütsel sinizm çalışanlarda işe devamsızlık, düşük performans ve işten ayrılma gibi pek çok olumsuz sonucu beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre örgütsel sinizmi azaltma yollarından biri de çalışanların psikolojik yönden güçlendirilmesidir. Şayet örgütler çalışanlarda örgüte karşı oluşan sinizmi azaltmak istiyorlarsa yürütülen işin gerekleri ile çalışanın inançları, değerleri ve davranışları arasındaki uyumu artırarak, işin birey için taşıdığı anlam artırılmalıdır. Aynı zamanda çalışanın faaliyeti başlatma, sürdürme ve düzeltme gibi konularda inisiyatif kullanabilmesine zemin hazırlanmalıdır. Ayrıca çalışanın işin stratejisi, yöntemi veya sonuçları üzerinde tesir yetkisine sahip olmasını mümkün kılan şartlar oluşturulmalıdır.

Örgüt açısından olumlu bir gelişme olan işgörenin yetkinliğinin arttığı durumlarda, örgütün aleyhine olan bilişsel ve duygusal sinizmin artması ise şüphesiz ilgi çekici ve üzerine daha fazla araştırma yapılması gereken bir konudur. Bu nedenle izleyen araştırmacıların güçlendirme algılarının örgütsel sinizmin boyutları üzerindeki

etkilerini farklı örneklemeler için yeniden test etmeleri daha isabetli sonuçların elde edilmesine katkı sağlayacaktır.

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KATKI ORANI / CONTRIBUTION RATE	AÇIKLAMA / EXPLANATION	KATKIDA BULUNANLAR / CONTRIBUTORS
Fikir veya Kavram / <i>Idea or Notion</i>	Araştırma hipotezini veya fikrini oluşturmak / <i>Form the research hypothesis or idea</i>	Ali KUZU
Tasarım / <i>Design</i>	Yöntemi, ölçeği ve deseni tasarlamak / <i>Designing method, scale and pattern</i>	Ali KUZU
Veri Toplama ve İşleme / <i>Data Collecting and Processing</i>	Verileri toplamak, düzenlenmek ve raporlamak / <i>Collecting, organizing and reporting data</i>	Ali KUZU
Tartışma ve Yorum / <i>Discussion and Interpretation</i>	Bulguların değerlendirilmesinde ve sonuçlandırılmasında sorumluluk almak / <i>Taking responsibility in evaluating and finalizing the findings</i>	Ali KUZU
Literatür Taraması / <i>Literature Review</i>	Çalışma için gerekli literatürü taramak / <i>Review the literature required for the study</i>	Ali KUZU