The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Turnover Intention: Testing the Mediational Role of Perceptions of Organizational Politics

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Abstract

The main aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intention and to determine the mediating role of perception of politics in this relationship. AMOS 22 was used for testing model with structural equation modeling. The results indicate that all dimensions of emotional intelligence except "Use of emotion" was negatively and significantly related to turnover intention and perception of politics. The positive relation between perception of politics and turnover intention was also significant. Besides, it was found that perception of politics mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intention.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Turnover Intention, Perception of Politics, Mediating Role.

Duygusal Zekânın İşten Ayrılma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisi: Örgütsel Politika Algısının Aracı Değişken Rolünün Test Edilmesi

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı duygusal zekâ ve işten ayrılma niyeti arasındaki ilişkinin test edilmesi ve bu ilişkide örgütsel politika algısının aracı rolünü ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmada ortaya konulan yapısal eşitlik modelinin test edilmesinde AMOS 22 kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar duygusal zekânın "duyguların kullanımı" boyutu hariç tüm boyutlarının işten ayrılma niyeti ve örgütsel politika algısı ile negatif ve anlamlı bir ilişki gösterdiği yönündedir. Bunun yanında örgütsel politika algısı ve işten ayrılma niyeti arasında pozitif ve anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Elde edilen bir başka sonuç ise örgütsel politika algısının duygusal zekâ ve işten ayrılma niyeti arasındaki ilişkide aracı rolü olduğudur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygusal Zekâ, İşten Ayrılma Niyeti, Örgütsel Politika Algısı, Aracılık Rolü.

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) of employees has been considered as an important success factor in the recent literature. EI indicates the ability to perceive and use emotions in particular. Many researchers broadened the concept to include desirable motivation, interpersonal and intrapsychic attributes that resemble personality traits more than traditional abilities (McCrae, 2000, p. 263). In this context, it can be an important capability for organizations because today a firm's success largely depends on the capabilities of its human resource. The concept also has an influence on undesirable behaviors like personnel turnover in organizations.

Human resources are increasingly regarded as a strategic resource and personnel turnover means using this strategic resource inefficiently. Replacing employees can affect a business' performance and labor cost because recruiting, selecting, hiring, orienting and training new employees is time-consuming and expensive (Cho & Lewis, 2012). One of the strongest predictors of personnel turnover is the turnover intention (TI) (Abbasi, 2015) and past researchers (e.g.Wong and Law, 2002; Carmeli, 2003; Jordan and Troth, 2011) have confirmed that EI has a negative impact on TI. EI, an ability that helps individuals to deal with emotions and to cope with

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unpleasant situations in their environment. Individuals with high EI will be able to manage organizational conditions and this causes a reduction of TI.

According to individuals in business environment, organizational politics is an inseparable part of organizational life which refers to preserving personal interests rather than organizational interests (Bodla et al., 2014). Similarly, Mintzberg (1985:133) defined an organization as a "political arena". Members of the organizations usually have influence tactics like impression management, ingratiation and forming power coalitions to protect or raise their own interests (Poon, 2003) and to avoid negative consequences as reductions in resources (Robbins and Judge, 2013).

Although politics are an integral part of the organizations, employees who perceive the political behavior will be uncomfortable. Higher employees' perception of organizational politics (POP) the lower the employees' organizational commitment and trust (Utami et al., 2014), and this will cause an increase in the TI. Moreover, individuals who have high EI perceive politic behaviors more easily because they can better perceive their environment.

The relationship between EI, TI and POP was analyzed in this study. It was also tried to find out whether POP mediates the effect of EI upon TI. Theoretical background of concepts was reviewed and hypotheses were developed based on this background before doing empirical research. It was determined that there was a surprising lack of literature on the relationship between these concepts.

2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

2.1. Emotional Intelligence

In the relevant literature, cognitive intelligence is defined as the available ability measured by intelligence quotient (IQ) to see linkages between entities, to apprehend them quickly and to establish relationships among them. However, it is obvious that some individuals who have these features might be unsuccessful in social life. In this framework, some issues are emphasized in EI concept like recognizing one's own and others' emotions and managing relationships. Similarly, according to Goleman (1995), the real criterion of human intelligence is not only cognitive intelligence but also EI. Many researchers stated that EI is as equally important as cognitive intelligence to gain success in life (Koçak & İçmenoğlu, 2012).

The framework of EI in the literature is mostly based on Mayer and Salovey, Bar-On and Goleman's studies. Although it was not included in the Salovey and Mayer's (1990) predictions for future studies, it has been a subject that attracts researchers' attention from psychology and management for long years. Various studies have been trying to explain EI as a reason of success or failure at work or as a concept that has correlated with individual performance (Wong and Law, 2002; Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot, 2014; Law et al., 2004). In these important studies, it is pointed out that EI is related to many work outcomes.

EI approaches can be classified into two broad categories as ability models and mixed models. Ability models view EI as a traditional intelligence and is comprised of a set of skills that combines emotions with cognition (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). EI is first defined by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer in 1990 as the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990, p. 189). They considered EI as the subset of social intelligence which consistent with the social intelligence theory of Thorndike. In their theory, ability to manage one's own emotional state is the core of EI (İşmen, 2001).

The concept has been divided into four skill areas in later studies. These are (Mayer, et al., 2001; İşmen, 2001; Doğan and Şahin, 2007):

> **a.** Perceiving emotions: Making right decisions about one's own feelings and having strong understandings about own emotional state, also understanding the feelings of others are included in this ability.

b. Using emotions to facilitate thought: It is about to explain emotions' role in the cognitive process. Mood changes individual's perception. Positive emotions have a positive effect on cognitive system.

c. Understanding emotions: This ability refers to features like giving the meaning of different feelings, interpreting of complex emotions and noticing transitions between emotions.

d. Managing emotions: It is the ability to increase effects of positive emotions and reduce the effect of negative emotions on relationship with others.

In contrast, mixed models of EI incorporate both non-cognitive models (Bar-On, 1997) and competency-based models (Goleman, 1995). Bar-On (2006, p. 15) defined EI as a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands.

Similarly, Goleman (1995) views EI one of the drivers of managerial performance or technical expertise with five dimensions that are categorized into two areas: personal competence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation) and social competence (empathy and social skills). The first area is personal competence which is about knowing one's own emotions and their effects. Lack of EI causes a problem to understand and manage one's own emotions (Doğan & Şahin, 2007). Social competence, the second dimension of Goleman's classification, includes empathy and social skills. This dimension is considered as extremely important in many parts of life that require teamwork like commercial organizations (Goleman et al., 2002).

Wong and Law (2002) used the Mayer and Salovey (1997) definition of EI as a set of interrelated skills concerning "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer and Salovey, 1997, p.10). They developed WLEIS (Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale). It is based on Mayer and Salovey's ability model (Spector and Johnson, 2006,p.332) but uses self-report to measure the construct. The four-dimensioned instrument as follows: Appraisal and expression of emotion in the self, appraisal and recognition of emotion in others, regulation of emotion in the self, and use of emotion. Its strong convergence with previous EI measures and also, several researchers have utilized and validated this construct (Trivellas, et al.,2013).

2.2. Turnover Intention

The turnover of employees is considered to be a major problem, especially in the area of human resource management. Businesses don't want to lose the good workforce because investments in employees are continuing to rise as more and more companies realize its importance to gain sustainable success. In this context, businesses have to understand environmental, institutional and individual factors which have an effect on personal turnover and make provision against them (Martin, 1979).

TI serves as a trigger for employees' actual turnover behavior and it is examined in the organizational behavior field to determine causes, results, and solutions. Employees who intend to leave the organization because of various reasons are sometimes left work suddenly and sometimes give prior notice. Personnel turnover will be more serious problem when there is the loss of qualified employees in particular. The TI is just an expression of an intention however, it will be destructive when it leads to actual turnover but turnover intentions are also important because employees considering leaving an organization are likely to be detached from their work and it causes low performance.

Demographic factors like age, status, working time and work related factors like presence of alternative jobs, wages, perceived workload / difficulty, preferences of working hours, job satisfaction, issues arising from communication are basic predictors of TI (Ahuja et al., 2007; Arı et al., 2010). It is frequently related organizational issues such as trust, justice, commitment, loneliness, engagement in relevant literature.

According to past findings, emotional intelligence and turnover intention relationship has been proved to be negative (Wong and Law, 2002; Carmeli, 2003; Jordan and Troth, 2011; Balogun and Olowodunoye, 2012; Trivellas et al, 2013; Jeswani and Dave, 2012). Emotional intelligence also may significantly diminish employees' turnover intentions because emotionally intelligent individuals can regulate emotions better and cope with problems by perceiving themselves as part of the solution. Therefore, it can be argued that employees who have high levels of EI may be less likely to *have TI*.

H₁: Employees' emotional intelligence is negatively related to their turnover intention

2.3. Perception of Politics

Organizations are naturally composed of internal coalitions of individual interests. However, personal and organizational goals or interest are not always congruent. Sharing limited resources of organization in particular drive employees to influence others and this effort of employees contributes to the formation of organizational politics (Altıntaş, 2007).

Considering organization as a political existence is not a new phenomenon. Anyone who has a relationship with any organization will be aware of political behaviors eventually (Mayes & Allen, 1977). The concept has been appeared in the relevant literature since the early 1960s (Shrestha & Mishra, 2015). In the environment which is described as political, people look out for their own interests, compete for scarce resources and rewarded according to other factors other than merit (Kane-Frieder et al., 2014).

Organizational politics can be handled from different perspectives. One approach includes acts or tactics (sanctioned or not sanctioned by the organization) and the other one includes its ends like self-serving (Lau & Scully, 2015). However, individuals' behaviors are determined by their perception of what reality is rather than reality itself (Glavas & Godwin, 2013). This inference makes more important to discriminate between real and perception of politics. POP is defined as an individual's subjective assessment of the organizational environment by considering colleagues and supervisors who serve one's own interests (Ferris et al., 2000).

Perceptions of organizational politics of employees vary according to organizational (degree of centralization, hierarchical level, etc.), work related (autonomy, feedback, relationships with others, etc.) and personal (age, sex, etc.) factors (Ferris et al., 2002).

Organizational politics can be functional (e.g. fundamental to the effective functioning of organizations, providing individuals to advance their career, increasing job involvement) or dysfunctional (e.g. causing negative behavioral outcomes) (Beugré & Liverpool, 2006). Meta-analytic examinations which were presented in (Miller et al., 2008; Chang et al., 2009; Bedi and Schat, 2013) provide a comprehensive examination of the POP's effect on some important employee attitudes as it is seen in Table 1:

Table 1. POP's Effect on Important Employee Attitudes

Positive relationship	Negative relationship
Turnover intentions	Job satisfaction
Job stress	Affective commitment
Stress	Task/job performance
Counterproductive work behavior	Organizational citizenship behavior
Burnout	Organizational commitment

2.4. Emotional Intelligence and Perception of Politics

The concept of emotional intelligence could be considered as the sum of the intrapersonal intelligence and interpersonal intelligence that in Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences defined by the nine types of intelligence (Schutte et al, 1998, p.168). Within the scope of the EI assess some factors such as to understand and evaluate one's own and others' feelings, empathy and relationship management. Perception of organizational politics of the individuals is the subjective assessment of their colleagues. Individuals having the high level of EI is a decisive factor in the direction of accurate assessment of the behaviors of their leaders and colleagues. In

this context, it could be said that to detect the political behaviors correctly related to the competence of understanding others' feelings and intentions.

Few studies have investigated the relationship between EI and POP. Two of the important studies worth to mention which was carried out by Vigoda-Gadot and Meisler, (2010,2014). They did not find any relationship between EI and POP in their first study. But they showed a positive correlation between EI and POP in their following study. Another study (Asad et al., 2014) that resembles our study in terms of sample (bank employees) identified a positive relationship between EI and POP.

Due to the relative lack of literature on the relationship between EI and POP, it is very difficult to present a hypothesis about the relationship between the variables. As defined by Prati et al., (2003). EI reflects the ability to perceive others in a social environment like organizations. In accordance with this definition, it can be asserted that emotionally intelligent individuals are aware of the organizational environment and are able to understand political behaviors better. An emotionally intelligent individual is likely to make accurate attributions to ambiguous situations such as those in which politics are involved and, therefore, react with more functional emotional responses and can handle emotionally charged situations (Liu, et al., 2006, p.178). Accordingly, we proposed:

H₂: Employees' emotional intelligence is positively related to their perception of politics.

2.5. Perception of Politics and Turnover Intention

Perception of politics can be examined with the help of George Homans' Social Exchange Theory. Employees want to receive adequate feedback about their efforts and behaviors. Also, employees will be uncomfortable when promotion, awards or payments are based on political consideration and not on merit. If employees feel that they are being treated fairly it creates such a relational environment which is necessary for sustainability and formation of social exchange relationships but if employees feel that behavior of their supervisor and organization is unfair, politicized and based on favoritism, their social exchange perceptions are disturbed which results in the reduction of their commitment and job satisfaction (Bodla et al., 2014).

TI is considered within the scope of business outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment or negligent behavior in the relevant literature. The concept viewed as a work output, which one of the reasons of both physical and psychological withdrawal (Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot, 2014; Ojedokun et al., 2015; Daskin and Tezer, 2012).

Political behavior can be defined as acting in concert with the personal interests, not with the organizational norms (İslamoğlu & Börü, 2007). Proposed model from Ferris et al. (1989) turnover is one of the dependent variable of POP. So that in the following years the relationship between TI and POP has attracted the attention of many researchers. That has been found that perception of organizational politics increases negative work outcomes like turnover intention and negligent behavior and decreases positive work outcomes like job satisfaction and organizational commitment in previous studies (Chang et al., 2009, Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot, 2014; Utami et al., 2014).

Perceptions of politics lead employees to show counterproductive (e.g. absenteeism and turnover intention, e.g.) and withdrawal behaviors. This can be explained by the fact that the political environment creates pressure and stress factors on employees (Bedi and Schat, 2013) and by arguing that anger leads one to withdraw from the organization. As indirect support for this argument, organizational injustice, often closely related to political behaviors and/or organizational politics perceptions (Liu, et al., 2006,p.168). In this context the following hypothesis was formulated as:

H₃: Employees' perception of organizational politics is positively related to their turnover intention

2.6. Perception of Politics as a Mediator

POP has become a subject frequently discussed in studies as antecedents, correlators and consequences since identified as a model by Ferris (1989). In several studies it is revealed that POP

has negative correlation with organizational citizenship behavior, commitment, performance and trust (Miller et al., 2008; Bedi and Schat, 2013; Islam et al., 2013; Utami et al., 2014) and has positive correlation with turnover intention, negative work outcomes, and antagonistic work behaviors like arguing, gossip (Cropanzano et al., 1997).

But in recent years, studies which consider POP discussed as a mediator and moderator variable have increased. For example (Harris et al., 2005) examined the mediator effect of POP on the relationship between job strains and TI. One of the results of this studies was the positive relationship between experienced job strains and TI was getting stronger while POP level was high. The mediating role of POP on the relationship between EI and work outcomes was examined in another study by Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot (2014). According to the results EI had not an impact on work outcomes however, POP played a role as a mediator of the relationship between EI and TI. Similarly, mediating effect of POP was demonstrated in other studies (Bodla et al., 2012; Saleem, 2015). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

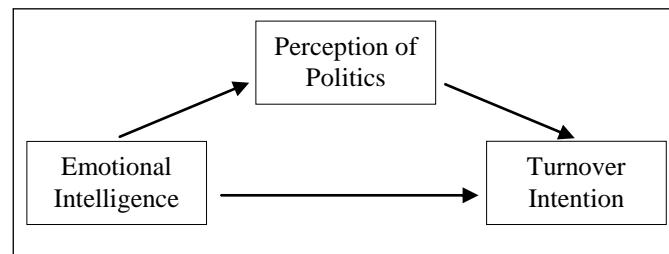**H₄:** POP will play a mediating role in the relationship between EI and TI.

Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

3. Method

3.1. Sample

The sample consists of bank employees in Ordu. The total number of bank employees participating the study is 179 which comprise 49.2% of male and 50.8% of female. The age group of 24 to 41 years old recorded the highest respondents with 88.8%. In terms of education, the majority of the respondents have Bachelor's and associate degree (82.7%), followed by high school (10.6%). Rest of respondents (6.7%) have a master degree.

3.2. Measures

EI was measured, thorough WLEIS (Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale) developed by Wong and Law (2002) based on mostly Salovey and Mayer's (1990) study. The scale consists of four dimensions as self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, and use of emotion and regulation of emotion. Sample items from this 16 items scale are "I would always encourage myself to try my best" and "I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior". The Cronbach coefficient for this scale was .902. The KMO's value is .866 and significant at .05 (sig. .000). Results indicated an acceptable model fit to the data (CMIN/DF=1.733, GFI=0.902, CFI=0.952, RMSEA=0.064).

Employee perceptions of organizational politics were measured by using the Kacmar and Carlson (1997) perception of organizational politics scale (POPs) with 15 items. Sample items from this scale are "People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down" and "There has always been an influential group in this department that no one ever crosses." Variables with loadings lower than 0.5 are considered to have a nonsignificant impact on a factor so two items were ignored. Rest of items were divided into two dimensions called "Political behavior for going along to get ahead" and "Pay and promotion policies." The Cronbach coefficient for this 13 items scale was .938. The KMO's value is .892 and significant at .05 (sig.

.000). Results indicated an acceptable model fit to the data (CMIN/DF=1.832, GFI=0.914, CFI=0.975, RMSEA=0.068).

The TI was measured by the three-item scale given by Mobley et al. (1978) and adapted from Ghosh et al. (2015). The items were "I think a lot about leaving the bank", "I am actively searching for an alternative to the bank", and "As soon as possible, I will leave the bank". The Cronbach coefficient for this 3 item scale was .942. A five-point response scale was used in all measurement instruments, ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree.

3.3 Limitations of the Study

This paper is based on an empirical study covers only banking employees in Ordu province. Thus, a given sample may not represent the entire population completely. Employees may hesitate to answer questions about POP because they may attempt to avoid negative consequences. Another potential limitation is using self-report EI measure designed to assess EI. Employees might be subjective while assessing their own EI.

4. Analysis and Results

The results in Table 2 indicated that all dimensions of EI have a significant positive relationship with each other. Similarly, two dimensions of POP have a significant positive relationship with each other. However, the dimensions of EI have a significant negative relationship with dimensions of POP. TI has a significant negative relationship with dimensions of EI and significant negative relationship with dimensions of POP.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Values and Correlations of Variables

Factor	Means	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-emotion appraisal	4.42	.58	(.854)						
Others' emotion appraisal	3.67	.78	.330**	(.852)					
Use of emotion	4.06	.61	.482**	.454**	(.822)				
Regulation of emotion	4.19	.62	.528**	.517**	.577**	(.821)			
Political behavior for going along to	3.01	.70	-.517**	-.429**	-.487**	-.481**	(.897)		
Pay and promotion policies	2.57	.95	-.625**	-.587**	-.612**	-.682**	.666**	(.941)	
Turnover intention	2.61	1.04	-.605**	-.589**	-.580**	-.657**	.611**	.851**	(.942)

4.1. Model Testing

The stepwise method suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used. According to this method, a mediation model should be tested using three regression models. (1) The mediator should be regressed on the independent variable, (2) the dependent variable should be regressed on the independent variable and, (3), and the dependent variable should be regressed upon both mediator and independent variable. Two models have been created to examine the mentioned effects.
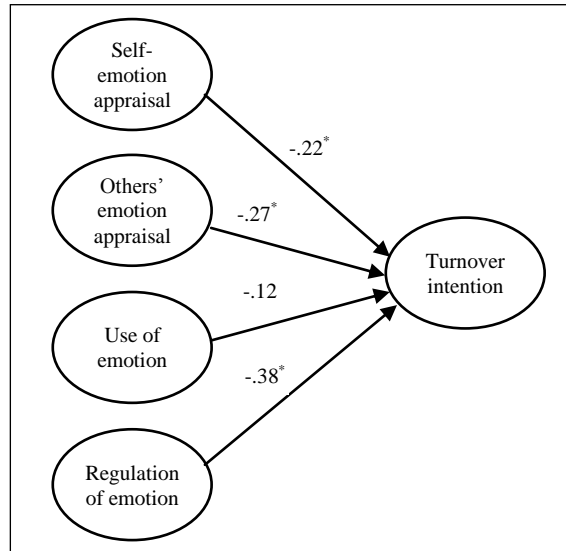
Figure 2: Test Results of Model-I

TI was considered as depended variable and dimensions of EI were considered as independent variables in Model-I to accomplish the first step of the Baron and Kenny's method. The model was tested through Amos 22. Results indicated an acceptable model fit to the data (CMIN/DF=1.731, GFI=0.877, CFI=0.952, IFI=0.953, RMSEA=0.064).

Upon examining the modification indices suggested by the AMOS output, covariances were added between the error terms for Model 1.

Table 3. Model Fit Statistics of the Amos of Model 1

Index	Initial Model	Improved Model	Acceptable Value[*]
CMIN/DF	1.930	1.731	$\leq$4-5
GFI	0.861	0.877	>0.85
CFI	0.938	0.952	>0.95
IFI	0.939	0.953	>0.90
RMSEA	0.072	0.064	<0,08

Acceptable values are based on Meydan and Şeşen, 2011, p.37

Table 4 illustrates the standardized parameter estimates and other outcome measures. According to the results, three dimensions of EI have a significant effect on TI. The third dimension of EI (Use of emotion) has no effect on TI.

Table 4: Path Coefficients of Model I

Path	Standardized β	Standard Error	P
Self-emotion appraisal→ Turnover intention	-.27	.19	.000
Others' emotion appraisal → Turnover intention	-.22	.09	.003
Use of emotion → Turnover intention	-.12	.18	.111
Regulation of emotion → Turnover intention	-.38	.21	.000

p<.05

TI was considered as dependent and dimensions of EI were considered as independent variables, also POP was considered as a mediator in the second model. Thus, the existence of second and third effects was examined. Results of tests of Model-II that is illustrated in Figure 2 indicated an acceptable model fit to the data (CMIN/DF=1.424; GFI=0.835; CFI=0.958; IFI=0.959;

RMSEA=0.049). Besides, it was revealed that Model II makes additional contributions to explain the variance of the dependent variable (R^2=.635 of Model-I; R^2=.824 of Model-II).
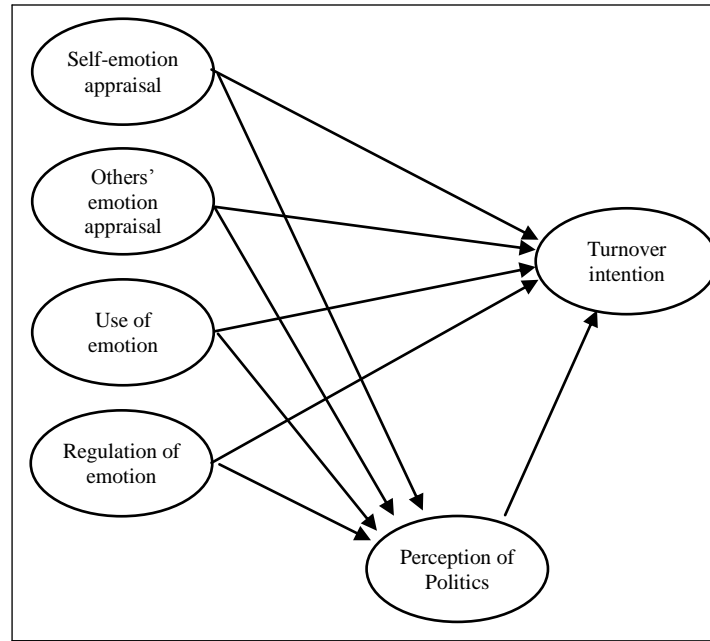

Figure 3: Test Results of Model-II

Similarly, upon examining the modification indices suggested by the AMOS output, covariances were added between the error terms for Model 2.

Table 5. Model Fit Statistics of the Amos of Model 2

Index	Initial Model	Improved Model	Acceptable Value
CMIN/DF	1.966	1.424	≤4-5
GFI	0.759	0.835	>0.85
CFI	0.903	0.958	>0.95
IFI	0.895	0.959	>0.90
RMSEA	0.074	0.049	<0,08

Table 6 shows the standardized parameter estimates and other outcome measures of Model-II.

Table 6: Path Coefficients of Model I

Path	Standardized β	Standard Error	P
Self-emotion appraisal → Turnover intention	-.03	.20	.757
Others' emotion appraisal → Turnover intention	-.03	.09	.629
Use of emotion → Turnover intention	.04	.16	.586
Regulation of emotion → Turnover intention	-.09	.19	.360
Self-emotion appraisal → Perception of politics	-.36	.41	.000
Others' emotion appraisal → Perception of politics	-.21	.18	.003
Use of emotion → Perception of politics	-.14	.35	.062
Regulation of emotion → Perception of politics	-.32	.40	.003
Perception of politics → Turnover intention	.82	.07	.000

p<.05

According to the results, three dimensions of EI (Self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, regulation of emotion) have a significant effect on POP. Also, POP has a significant effect on TI (β=.82; p<.001). By adding POP in the model effects of all dimensions of EI on TI were no longer significant. Accordingly POP mediates the relationship between EI and TI.

Table 7: Hypothesis and Results

Hypothesis	Test Results
H₁: Employees' emotional intelligence is negatively related to their turnover intention	Partially accepted
H₂: Employees' emotional intelligence is positively related to their perception of politics.	Rejected
H₃: Employees' perception of organizational politics is positively related to their turnover intention	Accepted
H₄: POP will play a mediating role in the relationship between EI and TI.	Accepted

Hypothesis 1 indicates that "Employees' EI is negatively related to their turnover intention" has been partially accepted. Three of four dimensions (Self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, regulation of emotion) has a significantly negative effect on TI. The dimension of EI called "Use of emotion" has no effect on TI. Hypothesis 2 which stated a positive effect of EI on POP has not been supported. All of the dimensions of EI except "Use of emotion" have a positive impact on POP. Hypothesis 3 is supported therefore, an increase in POP increases TI. By adding POP in the model, the effects of all dimensions of EI on TI were no longer significant so it can be argued that POP plays a role as a mediator in the relationship between EI and TI. Accordingly, hypothesis 4 is confirmed.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper examines the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on turnover intention (TI) and whether the perception of politics (POP) plays a mediating role on the relationship between EI and TI. For this purpose, bank employees are considered to be suitable for the research and data have been gathered from them. Bank employees are familiar with this kind of questions because recruitment and selection tests consist of similar questions in the banking industry. They are also qualified and have an opportunity to observe all behaviors in the banks due to working closely with other employees.

According to the findings of research revealed the partially negative correlation between EI and TI. Therefore, H₁ hypothesis is partially accepted. It can be concluded that high levels of EI of employees will be lead to the decrease of their TI. This result of study is consistent with other findings in literature (Jordan & Troth, 2011; Meisler, 2013; Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot, 2014). Turnover intentions may be destructive to organizational performance because of the loss of intellectual capital and replacement costs incurred.

In this context, it can be argued that efforts for improving EI may cause increases in performances and decrease in undesirable behavior like turnover intention (Meisler & Vigoda-Gadot, 2014).

The impact of EI on POP was another relationship to be curious about. As mentioned earlier, there's a lack of literature on the relationship between these two variables. Our hypothesis (H₂) which was based on few studies was rejected. We developed H₂ initially based on the assumption that emotional intelligent individuals may better understand what is going around them, but according to findings there is a negative relationship between EI and POP. The reason of this result may be emotionally intelligent individuals spend less time thinking about organizational politics as stated by Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot (2014).

As expected, H₃ supported the statement that the relationship between POP and TI were significant and positive. The political working environment plays a role a stress factor on

employees and creates disturbing work place (Bedi & Schat, 2013). Also political behavior in organizations can damage perception of organizational justice as confirmed in a study by Andrews and Kacmar (2001). In this context, it can be stated that POP is one of the predecessors of TI. These results are consistent with similar studies in the literature (Daskin and Tezer, 2012; Bedi and Schat, 2013; Huang et al., 2003; Bodla et al., 2012; Jam et al., 2012; Saleem, 2015).

This study also examines whether POP mediate the relationship between EI and TI. The model created for this purpose was tested. The goodness-of-fit indices for this accepted model were considered to be good and the hypothesis was tested. POP's mediating effect on the relationship EI and TI was confirmed by using a series of regression models designed to test the criteria for mediation outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). Thus, H_4 was accepted.

This study could not confirm the predicted positive relationship between EI and POP. According to this finding emotionally intelligent individuals' perception of organizational politics is low. Managers in organizations therefore, need to pay attention to hire individuals with high EI because they will lead to less of a problem. Also, it has additional advantage because employees who have high emotional intelligence is expected to show lower levels of turnover intention

This study makes significant contributions to relevant literature. First the relationship between EI, POP and TI were determined. The second contribution of the study to the literature about explaining EI and POP is valuable due to the lack of relevant studies. And finally, this is the first study applied to the banking sector in Turkey in the context of these three variables within a model.

There are naturally some limitations in this study. Because of the limited literature about POP we had some difficulties in the development stage of hypothesis. The most obvious limitation of the study was the relatively small sample size due to time and cost constraints. The replication of the study in different regions and industry would enable better generalizability of the findings of the study.

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