

DOES POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL HAVE A MEDIATOR EFFECT IN THE RELATION BETWEEN PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE?

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and performance and to test whether positive psychological capital has a mediating effect on the case of service sector employees. The reason of the choosing the service sector scope of the research is %53 of the economic activities in service sector in Turkey and this ratio is very important (TUİK,2018). In this context, the data collected by carrying out a survey with the participation of employees of the companies in the service sector in Istanbul were analyzed using SPSS 22.0 software. First, the reliability and validity of the scales used in the study were tested. Then, for examining the relation between the valuables correlation was made and examining the effect of the independent valuable on the dependent valuable regression analysis was made. Perceived organizational support influences the employee performance positively, and the positive psychological capital has a mediating effect on this relationship.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Positive Psychological Capital, Employee Performance, Service Sector

POZİTİF PSİKOLOJİK SERMAYE, ALGILANAN ÖRGÜTSEL DESTEK VE ÇALIŞAN PERFORMANSI İLİŞKİSİNDE ARACI ETKİYE SAHİP MİDİR?

ÖZ

Araştırmanın amacı hizmet sektörü çalışanlarının algıladıkları örgütsel desteğin performanslarına etkisini ve bu ilişkide çalışanların pozitif psikolojik sermayelerinin mediatör rolünü incelemektir. Araştırma kapsamında kullanılacak veriler İstanbul'da faaliyet gösteren hizmet sektörü firmalarının çalışanlarından anket yoluyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın hizmet sektörü kapsamında yapılmasının sebebi Türkiye'deki ekonomik faaliyetlerin %53'ünün bu sektöre ait olmasının önemine istinadendir (TUİK,2018).Verilerin analizi için SPSS 22.0 paket programından faydalanılarak ilk olarak katılımcıların demografik özelliklerine ilişkin frekans analizleri, kullanılan ölçeklerin güvenilirlik ve geçerlilik analizleri, daha sonra ise değişkenlerin aralarındaki ilişkileri incelemek adına korelasyon ve bağımsız değişkenin bağımlı değişken üzerindeki etkisini incelemek için ise regresyon analizleri yapılmıştır. Çıkan sonuçlara göre algılanan örgütsel destek çalışan performansını pozitif yönde etkilemektedir ve pozitif psikolojik sermaye bu ilişkide mediatör role sahiptir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Algılanan Örgütsel Destek, Pozitif Psikolojik Sermaye, Çalışan Performansı, Hizmet Sektörü

Introduction

Organizations need to pay attention to various secondary processes as well as the basic requirements and operations for the task to leverage the employee performance in order to reach maximum performance levels of the employees. These secondary processes are the applications that can be monitored in addition to basic management policies. Because, if the employees have a better performance, it will directly reflect on the efficiency and profitability of the organization. One of the important factors at this point is the organizational support. Today, the positive emotions of employees are seen very important for organizations. Some of the positive emotions are hope, self-efficacy, psychological resilience, and optimism and these emotions generate the positive psychological capital. Positive psychological capital is seen more important than tangible capital in organizations. In the context of the psychological contract between the employees and the organization, while the organization expects higher performance from the employees, the employees expect organizational support from the organization. The research is based on the mediator effect of positive psychological capital between organizational support and employee performance.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Perceived Organizational Support

The psychological contract, which is signed voluntarily between the employees and the organization is a factor. Within the psychological contract, while high performance is expected from the employees, the organization is expected to provide support (Turnley et al., 2003). According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), the employees perform to the extent expected by the organizations. In this context, the factor of organizational support attracts attention. The organizational support is based on the theory of social change based on the discourse that Blau (2017) invests in the happiness of the employees of the organization. And, the employees become happy and sustain it as long as they ensure that they are properly perceived by the other employers (Loi et al., 2006; Eisenberger et al., 1990). Perceived organizational support was defined by Eisenberger et al. (1986) as the emotional perceptions of the employer's emphasis on the employee's involvement and the perceptions of employee's well-being and his/her willingness to engage in activities that affect the employees. According to Özdevecioğlu (2003), the organizations which provide organizational support to their employees, collect the creative ideas, suggestions, and criticisms of their employees, provide job security for them, act fairly towards them and involve their employees in decision-making processes.

Positive Psychological Capital

The concept of positive psychological capital is based on the positive emotional theory of Fredrickson's (2001) study. Another describing the concept of positive psychological capital is the theory of positive events in the study of Weiss and Cropanzano (1996). The positive psychological capital is defined by Luthans et al. (Luthans et al., 2007a: 3) as a couple of features such as the self confidence that the individuals have to successfully complete very challenging tasks, the belief they have to be successful now and in the future, the determination they need to succeed, and the effort they spend when they face a challenge. Therefore, the positive psychological capital is a promising factor to overcome some of the problems experienced in the organizations. Being based on the research, the positive psychological capital has valid measurement techniques and its development is always clear since it is case-based (Luthans, 2002: 669). The dimensions of the positive psychological capital are the hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and psychological resilience. Hope: It is a positive thought that the individual possesses for the desired purpose (Snyder et al., 1991: 571). Self-Efficacy: Defined as the beliefs needed by the individual to complete the tasks specified according to a predetermined content, and the form of belief in the ability to apply cognitive resources and the action plans (Luthans et al., 2007a: 34). Psychological Resilience: Defined as the categorization of the events as methods with a high level of severity of distress and positive adaptation in risky situations (Masten and Redd, 2002: 75). Optimism: Optimism is the relationship between individuals' internal causes of persistent and widespread events and positive events; and it

associates the causes of external, temporal, and situational events with the negative events (Seligman, 2011).

Employee Performance

The concept of performance has been defined by Pitt and Tucker (2008) as to what quality and how the activities covering a certain period are completed or the level of effectiveness of the outputs as a result of a predetermined process of reaching an aim (Pitt and Tucker, 2008). In another definition, the task is carried out in such a way to fulfill the criteria that the designated task is fulfilled and the degree of the achievement of the objectives (Özdevecioğlu and Kanıgür, 2009). The organizational performance is generally defined as a concept that qualitatively or quantitatively determines the achievement of a target-oriented and planned activities, or the extent to which an organization can achieve its goals (Ho, 2008). According to Şehitoğlu and Zehir (2010), the individual and group performance is an indicator for the extent to which an individual or group can achieve the goals and the standards set in terms of the goal that the organization wishes to achieve. The organizational performance also describes the total performance of the system. The prior performance is the individual performance for the organizations. Because an organization can only be as good as the performance of its employees. Moreover, it is assumed that each action of the employees in the scope of their responsibilities is one of their performance behaviors (Argon and Eren, 2004).

The purpose of the research is to examine the mediating effect of the positive psychological capital, that is, perceived organizational support by the service sector employees is influenced by their performance. The importance of research in this context is the test of the mediating effect of positive psychological capital in relation to theoretically perceived organizational support and the employee performance, while practically it is a guide to the employees and the managers in the sector. The employees of a supportive organization are proud of their organization. So it is quite normal for the employees in this environment to devote their time and labor to their organizations. Therefore, the organizational support will affect the employee performance. From this perspective, Liu et al. (2013) found that the positive organizational support and the positive psychological capital have positive correlations. Fu et al. (2013) concluded that the perceived organizational support and positive psychological capital increased the job satisfaction in their research. With reference to these studies;

H1: Perceived organizational support has a positive effect on the positive psychological capital.

The subscales of the positive psychological capital, the psychological resilience, and optimism, are related to individual performance in "Positive Psychological Capital: Measurement and Relationship with Performance and Satisfaction "(Luthans et al.,2007b).

According to the correlation analysis, the positive psychological capital has been found to have a positive relationship with the performance. In the study of Luthans et al. (2010), the same positive correlation was found between positive psychological capital and the development and resulting performance impact of positive psychological capital. With reference to these studies;

H2: The positive psychological capital has a positive effect on employee performance.

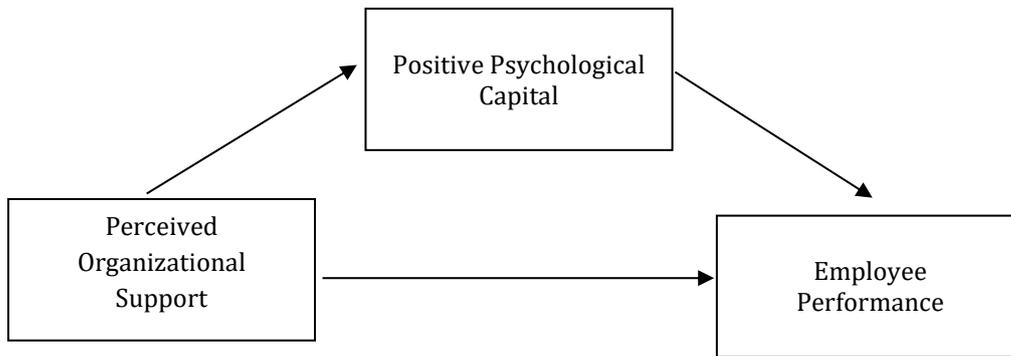
In this respect, Turgut (2014) concluded that "Organizational support made by employees and perceived organizational support in the research that examined the effects of organizational entrepreneurship activities on the organizational performance affected positively the intrapreneurship and the performance. Kurt (2013) has concluded that the perceived supervisor and the colleagues' support directly affect the performance of service sector employees in order to examine the mediating role of the organization loyalty in relation to perceived social support and job performance. The research of Karatepe (2012) titled "Perceived Organizational Support, Career Satisfaction, And Performance Outcomes: A Study of Hotel Employees in Cameroon" shows that perceived organizational support has a mediating role between career satisfaction, service development performance, and the job performance. With reference to these studies;

H3: Perceived organizational support has a positive effect on the employee performance.

The result of the literature review showed that there was no study examining the effect of positive psychological capital on the perceived organizational support and the performance. With reference to the literature;

H4: Positive psychological capital has a mediating effect on the relationship between the perceived organizational support and the employee performance.

Figure 1. Research Model



Research Method

Sample and Data Collection

The questionnaire prepared within the scope of the research was delivered to 321 employees of a firm operating in the service sector in Istanbul and we had 269 returns. 250 of those forms were found to be eligible for data analysis. The reason of the choosing the servis sector scope of the research is %53 of the economic activities in servis sector in Turkey. And this ratio makes service sector important. Since it is not possible to reach all individuals in the service sector, sampling is deemed necessary. The sampling method was preferred as a convenience sampling method.

The scales that can be used for the research were designed by the foreign researchers. Thus, the first assumption of the research was that these scales were suitable for the Turkish culture. Another assumption was that the expressions used were correctly perceived by all the participants and that the responses by the participants were not under any pressure. And finally, the internally given assumption represented the universe.

A short version of the perceived organizational support scale, which had been originally developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), was used in the research. The scale which has 8 items was calculated by Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient of 0.97 and translated into Turkish by Erdaş (2010). As described in the previous section, the Positive Psychological Capital has been studied under four dimensions: 'Hope', 'Self-Efficacy', 'Optimism' and 'Psychological Resilience'. The Positive Psychological Capital scale was designed by Luthans (2007b). The Turkish version which was prepared by Çetin and Basım (2012) and Erkuş and Afacan-Fındıklı (2013:309-310) was used. Minor modifications were made in the questions of the survey to avoid semantic shifts. The "Perceived Employee Performance Scale" developed by Fuentes et al. (2004) and Rahman-Bullock (2005) and adapted to Turkish by Göktaş (2004) and applied to commercial organizations by Şehitoğlu and Zehir (2010) was used as the performance scale. The scale consists of two parts. The first part measures the employee performance and the other measures the qualitative performance. The first part of the scale, employee performance, was used in this research.

Considering the demographic characteristics of the participants, it was seen that 182 participants were male and 68 participants were female. Considering the ages of the total 250 participants, it was found that 54.4% were at the age of between 20-30, 24.4% were between 41-50, 18.4% were between 31-40 and 2.4% were between 51-60. While 230 (92.0%) of the participants had a blue-collar position and a

non-executive position, 12 (4.8%) had a white collar-position, and 8 (3.2%) had an executive position. The distribution of the participants' education levels was as follows; 192 participants (76.8%) had graduated from a high school and 25 participants (10%) graduated from a university and a post-graduate school, 22 participants (8.8%) graduated from primary school and 11 participants (4.4%) graduated from vocational school. Generally, the participants of the research are young, blue-collar, newly-hired people. So this can say that they may full of positive emotions such as the four dimensions of positive psychological capital.

Findings

Factor Analysis

Within the scope of the research, factor analysis was used to test the validity of the scales used in the study. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test for Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were used to test the eligibility of the data set for the factor analysis. The result of the analysis revealed that the KMO values were 0.826 for the perceived organizational support scale, 0.713 for the positive psychological capital scale, and 0.814 for the employee performance scale. All values were over 0.50. The tail probability of Bartlett's Test was also found to be significant at 0.000 significance level for all three scales. Moreover, in order to measure the eligibility of each variable for the factor analysis, the value at the diagonal of the anti-image correlation matrix was measured and the values at the diagonal were found to be greater than 0.50 for all variables. Therefore, it has been determined that the data set was suitable for the factor analysis (Field, 2009). The factor components' total variances explained were 67.9% for the organizational support, 68.6% for the positive psychological capital, and 70.9% for the employee performance.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were used to calculate the internal consistency of the factors. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient indicates the total reliability levels of the questions under the factor. Cronbach's Alpha values of the perceived organizational support, positive psychological capital, and the employee performance scales were found to be approximately 0.876, 0.806, and 0.886, respectively. Since all these values were above 70%, each factor seemed to be well-reliable (Field, 2009).

Table 1. Reliability Analysis

<i>Scales</i>	<i>Item Quantity</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
Perceived Organizational Support	8	0.876
Positive Psychological Capital	24	0.806
Employee Performance	10	0.886

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis was applied to examine the relationships between the research variables with each other. Pearson correlation coefficients belonging to the corresponding variable are given in the following table.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

	<i>Employee Performance</i>	<i>Perceived Organizational Support</i>	<i>Positive Psychological Capital</i>
<i>Employee Performance</i>	1		
<i>Perceived Organizational Support</i>	.145*	1	
<i>Positive Psychological Capital</i>	.571**	.392**	1
* . The correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed).			
** . The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 (2-tailed).			

Hypothesis Tests

SPSS 22.0 software package was used to test the research hypotheses. At this stage, whether the variable of perceived organizational support, which was the independent variable of the research, directly affected the positive psychological capital, which was the mediating variable. The perceived organizational support was found to have a directly positive effect on the positive psychological capital ($\beta = 0.392$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H1, which was the first hypothesis of the study, was confirmed. Then the researcher looked at whether the interim change affected the employee performance, which was the dependent variable of the research. According to the results, the positive psychological capital had a directly positive effect on the employee performance ($\beta = 0.571$, $p < 0.001$). According to this result, H2, the second hypothesis, was confirmed. Then, the effect of the perceived organizational support on the employee performance was tested. The perceived organizational support had a directly positive effect on the employee performance ($\beta = 0.145$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, the third hypothesis of the research, H3, was confirmed. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), three regression relationships need to be established to consider their mediating role. The first step of the inter-variable relationship was provided by the three regression models above. In the second step, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable need to either increase or decrease (Baron and Kenny, 1986), while the mediator variable and the moderator variable both need to have an influence on the dependent variable in the regression. According to the regression analysis made, the effect on the employee performance, which was the dependent variable of the perceived organizational support, which was the independent variable, was eliminated ($p > 0,05$). However, the effect of the positive psychological capital variable on the employee performance continues. Therefore, the positive psychological capital's instrumental variable effect is mentioned. In other words, the positive psychological capital has a mediating effect on the perceived organizational support and the employee performance. Therefore, H4 was confirmed.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

Hypotheses	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Std. β	t	p
H1	Perceived Org. Support	Positive Psychological Capital	0,392***	6,708	,000
			$R^2 = 0,15$ $F=45,002$ $p < 0,001$		
H2	Positive Psychological Capital	Employee Performance	0,571***	10,951	,000
			$R^2 = 0,32$ $F=119,930$ $p < 0,001$		
H3	Perceived Org. Support	Employee Performance	0,145*	2,303	,022
			$R^2 = 0,17$ $F=5,303$ $p < 0,001$		
H4	Positive Psychological Capital	Employee Performance	0,608***	10,759	,000
	Perceived Org. Support		-,093	-1,654	,099
(* $p < 0,05$; ** $p < 0,01$; *** $p < 0,001$) $R^2 = 0,32$ $F=61,753$ $p < 0,001$ (Model 4)					

Conclusion and Discussions

In order to achieve a higher market value and a sustainable growth pattern, the organizations have an obligation to support their employees through systems and schemas beyond wage & regulations respecting the employee's personal rights. The employees who perceive this organizational support properly are more successful in their professional lives. On the other hand, the positive psychological capital, which is another important factor that employees have, is important because of the positive psychological factors that refine both the employees and the organization, especially during the period of the crisis.

Within the scope of the research, it was investigated whether the mediating effect of the positive psychological capital of the employees, who worked for the service sector in Istanbul and were influenced by perceived the organizational support, on their performance. According to the results, the correctly

perceived organizational support increases their performance. This finding of the research supports the studies of Turgut (2014), Kurt (2013), and Karatepe (2012). So, organizational support increases employee performance. Considering the role of positive psychological capital in terms of perceived organizational support and the employee performance, which is another object of the research, it seems that the perceived organizational support and positive psychological capital have an effect on the perceived organizational support. It can be said that the positive phenomenon theory of Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) is the basis for the role of positive psychological capital as a mediator. According to this theory, employees are able to give emotional reactions within the context of their psychological situation (psychological capital within the context of the events they experience around the business environment and internal dynamics of the business environment), and as a result they develop business attitudes (such as job satisfaction, organizational learning, performance) (Weiss ve Cropanzano, 1996: 12). In this context, the emotional reactions provided by the positive psychological capital at the point of organizational innovation have left the end of the transformational leadership sense to the positive psychological capital. This finding supports no other results in the literature. Therefore, the mediating effect is an original contribution to the literature by this research. Based on these results, it is suggested that future research should be carried out on different samples and that important demographic factors such as age, gender, experience, education status, and related mediating role between these variables should be investigated.

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