

The Impact of Psychological Capital on Organizational Identification and Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support: A Structural Equation Modeling Study

Haluk ERDEM
Kara Harp Okulu
Yönetim ve Organizasyon
Bölümü,
Tatvan, Bitlis, Turkey
halukerdem1974@myynet.com

Yunus GÖKMEN
Kara Harp Okulu
Endüstri ve Sistem
Mühendisliği Bölümü
Isparta, Turkey
yunusgokmen@gmail.com

Ufuk TÜREN
Kara Harp Okulu
Endüstri ve Sistem
Mühendisliği Bölümü
Erzincan, Turkey
uturen2011@gmail.com

Extensive Summary

Introduction

With the impact of globalization and increasing pressure of competition, organizations have been trying some new and untraditional practices in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness in recent years. Exploring the unknowns of human factor and, thereby, utilizing them in the process of organizational behavior have been well placed in the core of these efforts. Although it is widely told and known that for any organization human resource is the most important among other resources, according to Luthans and Youssef (2004) only half of the modern managers genuinely believes the essentiality and the other half does nothing but showing a theatrical respect. Today many organizations still base their strategic decisions on financial displays and evaluations. However, the perception of human resource, as cost to be paid in order to achieve business objectives, gradually has been evolving into the understanding of it as an indispensable value and investment which can make organization highly productive if it is managed effectively.

As psychology traditionally had been dealing with the negative side of the human behavior such as failure, pathology, burnout and helplessness, nowadays, contemporary psychology school has been exploring the possibilities and opportunities to reach a happy life (Keleş, 2011). Instead of focusing the weak sides, studies aiming to reveal strong sides of the employees are considered in the discipline of positive psychology. This approach is thought to be highly contributive to improve strong sides of the individuals and thereby organizational performance. Thus, the state of psychological positive improvement of individuals is called psychological capital (PC) (Akçay, 2012). PC is simply defined as the positive and continuous developmental state of an

individual as characterized by high self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency (Luthans et al, 2010).

It is claimed that with a supportive and positive organizational climate employees may tend to improve themselves. This positive climate created by supportive organizational culture not only can canalize employees into a state of being more harmonious, reliable and helpful in their attitudes but also can yield more employees with positive feelings toward organization (Çetin, Hazır ve Basım, 2013). Perceived Organizational support (POS), which is defined as managerial effort for sustaining information flow, keeping relations in a positive frame throughout organization, making them feel valuable and dealing with their welfare and comfort, can be positively effective in employees' attitudes toward organization (Eisenberger et al, 1986; Özdevecioğlu, 2003).

Employees' ties of affection upon organization are considered to be the predecessor of many different positive organizational behaviors such as job satisfaction, job performance, reduced turnover rates, job stress and absenteeism (Efraty ve Wolfe, 1988; Carmeli, Gilat ve Waldman, 2007; Gillet at all, 2013; Shearman, 2013). Within this framework, organizational identification (OI) concept has been taken the attention of scholars recently. OI is defined as the state of employees' being in integrity and solidarity with organization, urging to support it and also seeing themselves as a part of it or even identifying themselves with it (Turunç and Çelik, 2010).

Yuksel (2006) reports that the characteristics of individuals are important factors for establishing POS. The variance in individualistic perceptions may cause the organizational support can be commented in various ways. The management may think that they have created a supportive organizational climate and it may be true. But if some of the employees suffers from lack of self-confidence, feels themselves not prepared and strong enough to achieve objectives psychologically, if they are lack of challenge to find solutions, if they feel hopeless and helpless, and if they are not optimistic about achieving business objectives, they may have some difficulties in perceiving the bona fide support provided by management. Suazo and Turnley (2010) find that more sensitive white collar employees, who are giving more importance to mutual values with positive point of view, have higher POS than the other white collars. Thus, we envision that PC of employees increases the level of their POS. So, following hypothesis is proposed;

Hypothesis -1: The level of PC of employees affects their POS positively and significantly

In the literature we cannot encounter a study exploring the association between PC and OI. It is reported that there is a positive and significant association between PC and organizational citizenship behavior (Shukia and Sing, 2013; Qadeer and Jaffery, 2014). A meta-analysis done by Erkmen and Esen'in (2012) shows that PC is the predecessor of many positive organizational behavior aspects. Thereby, we think that an increase in the level of PC of employees may cause an increase the level of their OI behavior and put forward next hypothesis.

Hypothesis -2: The level of PC of employees affects their OI behavior positively and significantly

POS is a phenomenon based on the employees' perception of support provided by organization towards them. POS is considered the degree to which employees believe that their organization appreciates their contributions and is concerned about their well-being and satisfies social and emotional requirement. On the other hand OI is defined as an alignment of employee and organization values supported by employee's perception of oneness and belongingness to the organization. It also covers employee's emotional attachment, feeling of pride, affection and other positive emotions upon respective organization (Rousseau, 1998). Thus, POS would increase employees' felt obligation to support the organization reach its objectives, increase their identification with the organization, and contribute to their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded. Previous research finding supports this association between POS and OI (Turunç and Çelik, 2010; Cheung and Law, 2008). Accordingly we proposed the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis -3: The level of POS of employees affects their OI behavior positively and significantly

As it can be understood from its definition PC is a long term and challenging effort focusing specifically on the individual improvement of employee. Through improvement in PC, employee's individual mastery level and self-confidence are expected to be increased. This situation can provide a state of feeling that the relationship with organization means more than a mutual exchange based on a legal agreement it is decorated with the awareness of being a member of a perfect team accomplishing amazing and admitted things and believing the affection submitted by organization. The level of OI can be sensitive to PC, and if there is relatively enough POS in the organization, it can play an increasing mediating role in the association between PC and OI. Thence, we propose the next hypothesis and research framework in Figure 1.

Hypothesis -4: The level of POS plays a significant and positive mediating role in the association between PC and OI behavior.

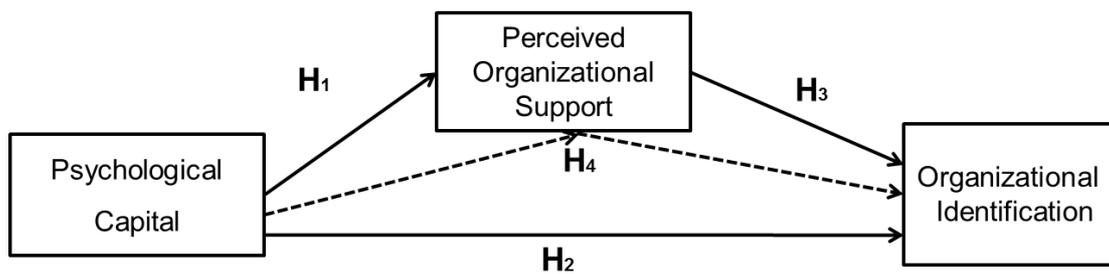


Figure-1 Research Framework

Method

In order to reveal causality associations among the research variables we basically prefer to conduct this research to government employees in Bitlis Province since the number of the studies conducted in Eastern Part of Turkey is smaller than the other regions. We randomly send our research questionnaires to more than 5000 governmental

employees by the way of e-mails. After filtering the returned questionnaire forms, we have 478 accurately filled questionnaires for statistical analyses. Since the total number of government employees is reported as 12,756 (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 2014) and sampling adequacy limit is calculated according to Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan's (2004, s. 50) as $n \cong 375$ with ± 0.05 sampling error, we decide our sample large enough ($478 > 375$) to represent the sample space. The effects of demographics are not explored in this study; the effort is focused on the causality associations. We use Psychological Capital Scale developed by Luthans et al (2007), Perceived Organizational Support Scale developed by Eisenberger et al (1986) and Organizational Identification developed by Mael ve Ashforth (1992) in order to measure and quantify research variables. All three scales are translated in to Turkish and validity and reliability concerns are secured by previous studies.

In order to secure structural validity of the data collected, we perform Exploratory Factor Analysis and we decide that all three scales are fit for forward analysis. Then we conduct Confirmatory Factor Analysis and see that the structure and the data of our research are good enough to exploit causality analyses. We also peruse Cronbach's Alpha test for each scale and construct and find that there is no internal consistency problem with our measurement instruments. We used tree step multiple regression analyses (Baron and Kenny, 1986) and Sobel test (Kenny, Kashy ve Bolger, 1998) in order to explore causality issues among the variables and also mediation effect.

Result

We find that PC has a significant and positive impact both on POS and OI, POS has a significant and positive impact on OI, and POS has a significant partial mediation role in the association between PC and OI.

Conclusion

Today employees' loyalty towards organization has been decreasing gradually. This situation has some undesired impact on the dimensions of organizational behavior. In this study we explore organizational identification of employees and the importance of positive managerial attitudes and practices and supportive organizational policies as predecessors of organizational identification behavior. We see that PC increases both POS and OI. In terms of PC and POS our findings are supported by Özdevecioğlu (2003) and Çetin, Hazır and Basım (2013). We also find that there is a significant and positive association between PC and OI and POS has a significant and positive mediation role in the association between PC and OI. These two findings have the quality of originality to fill the gap in the literature.