Social and Organizational Support as Determinants of Psychological Resilience and Happiness of Academicians

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Extended Summary

Introduction

Many events in social life and work life affect the psychological state of employees either positively or negatively. These effects also play a role in employees' happiness levels. The support that employees get from their surroundings is particularly important in dealing with adverse situations. In terms of psychological resilience, the support received from the organization and the social environment can be considered as elements that empower the workforce, facilitate their success, and ultimately help them to be happy. In this context, firstly the social and organizational support levels, psychological resilience and happiness levels of the academicians were tried to be measured. The study also attempted to determine the effects of social and organizational support on psychological resilience and happiness. Finally, the study also examined how psychological resilience affects academicians' happiness levels.

Method

The universe of the study is the academicians who work at universities. As a sample, academicians who are working at Süleyman Demirel University and Mehmet Akif Ersoy University were selected. Using the convenience sampling method, the electronically prepared questionnaire link was sent to the mail addresses of the academicians and they were asked to participate. The study was conducted between January 8 and January 19, 2018 and a total of 271 people participated in the survey.

40.2% of the participants are women, and 59.8% are men. 65.6% of the participants are married, 9.1% have a bachelor's degree, 40.6 have a master's degree and 50.4% have a Ph.D. When we look at the distribution of participants by title, 5.8% are professors, 6.9% are associate professors, 27.5% are assistant professors, 22.1% are research assistants, and 26.4% are lecturer. The average tenure in the organization in which participants were a part of was 9.8 ± 7.49 years and the average age was 36.02 ± 7.65.

In the research, data were collected through questionnaire technique. The questionnaire consists of 4 scales and the information about the scales is presented below.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS): Perceived social support scale was developed by Zimet et al. (1988). The adaptation of the scale to Turkish was performed by Eker et al. (2001). The scale consists of 3 dimensions and 12 items as family support, friend support and special person support. As a result of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) carried out in this study, no element was removed from the scale and the goodness of fit values are at an acceptable level (RMSEA:0.057/df:89.88/48, NFI:0.98, NNFI:0.98, CFI:0.99, GFI:0.95, AGFI:0.91). The reliability values (family support $\alpha = .826$, friend support $\alpha = .908$, special person support $\alpha = .966$) of the dimensions also indicate that the reliability of the scale is high.

Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POS): When the perceived organizational support was being measured, the scale developed by Nayır (2011) consisting of 65 items and the short form created by Nayır in 2011 were used. It consists of organizational justice and three subscales management support, organizational awards and business conditions and has 28 items. Participants answered these items in a 5-point likert style. As a result of the DFA conducted in this research, 4 items of organizational justice dimension, 1 item of management support dimension, 1 item of organizational awards and business conditions dimension are not functional. It was understood that the goodness of fit values are at an acceptable level according to the DFA result.(RMSEA:0.052, x^2/df:311.68/179, NFI:0.98, NNFI:0.99, CFI:0.99, GFI:0.90, AGFI:0.87). The reliability values (organizational justice $\alpha = .934$, management support $\alpha = .916$, organizational awards and business conditions $\alpha = .897$) indicate that the reliability of the scale is high.

Brief Psychological Resilience Scale (BPWS): When measuring the psychological resilience, the one-dimensional scale developed by Smith et al. (2008) and of which the validity and reliability were checked by Doğan (2015) in Turkey, and consists of 6 items, was used. Participants gave answers according to the five-point Likert scale. In this study, 2 items of this scale did not work. The goodness of fit values of the BPWS were found to be at the compliance level. (RMSEA: 0.033, x^2/df:1.29/1, NFI: 1.00, NNFI: 1.00, CFI: 1.00, GFI: 1.00, AGFI: 0.98). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale is $\alpha = .845$, which indicates that the reliability of the scale is high.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ): The scale which was developed by Hills and Argyle in 2002 to measure happiness and of which the validity and reliability studies were carried out by Doğan and Çötok in 2011 was used. OHQ is one-dimensional and consists of 7 items. The questions on the scale were answered according to the 5 point likert scale. It was determined that 1 item did not work according to the DFA result. The goodness of fit values of the OHQ were found to be at

the compliance level. (RMSEA: 0.044, x^2/df: 10.65/7, NFI: 0.99, NNFI: 0.99, CFI: 1.00, GFI: 0.99, AGFI: 0.96). In this study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the Oxford happiness scale was taken as α = .817, which proved it to be a very reliable scale.

In the context of goodness of fit and Cronbach's alpha coefficients, all scales were tested for structural validity and reliability, and as a result, all of the scales were found to be valid and reliable scales.

In line with the research model, the following hypotheses were tried to be tested:

H₁: Social support is a significant predictor of psychological resilience.

H₂: Organizational support is a significant predictor of psychological resilience.

H₃: Social support is a significant predictor of happiness.

H₄: Organizational support is a significant predictor of happiness.

H₅: Psychological resilience is a significant predictor of happiness.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the effects of social support and organizational support on psychological resilience and happiness were investigated. As a result of the analysis, both social support and organizational support were found to have positive effects on psychological resilience and happiness. The same can be said in the case of the effect of the psychological resilience on happiness.

It was determined that family support and friend support from the social support dimension and organizational justice from the dimension of organizational support had a positive and significant effect on the psychological resilience. It has been shown in this study that the psychological resilience levels of academicians can be increased with the support from the family and friends and at the same time organizational justice can have a significant effect on psychological resilience. In the studies conducted by Güngörmüş et al. (2015), Meredith et al. (2011) and Wilks and Spivey (2010) similar results were obtained.

In this study, it was found that the determinants of the happiness of the academicians are friend support, organizational justice and psychological resilience. It is the variable "psychological resilience" which has the highest effect on the happiness of the academicians. The fact that individuals who feel psychologically resilience are able to deal with their difficulties and overcome them, makes them stronger and creates a positive impact on their happiness levels. In their study, Lu et al (2014) found that psychological resilience affected happiness positively. Another finding is that in the case of the absence of the family support, the friend support affects the happiness significantly. One of the factors that makes people happy and ensures the continuity of their happiness is of course friend support. It is not surprising that the friend support is more significant than the family support is more than enough to explain the happiness of the academicians who have flexible working hours, need teamwork and spend a considerable amount of time with their friends at work. In Frey's study conducted in 2008, he found that the happiness is affected by both the friend support and the family support.

Due to the time and material limitations of the research, it is an important limit for it to be carried out in two state universities. Repeated studies with samples different in

number and quality will provide a chance to reach more reliable and generalizable results. In addition, the fact that the self-evaluations of the people were taken as the basis and the fact that the existence of social desirability effect was not taken into consideration should also be considered as a limitation.