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THE EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEES PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kubilay Özyer

Gaziosmanpasa University, Tokat, Turkey
kozyer@yahoo.com

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sema Polatci

Gaziosmanpasa University, Tokat, Turkey
sema.polatci@gop.edu.tr

Abstract

This study aims to determine which type of perceived support - organizational or social - makes employees experience greater well-being. Social support may be derived from family, friends, peers, and other personal networks. It differs from organizational support, which involves bosses, managers, co-workers, and trainers or formal mentors. In this study, we determined which type of perceived support is more effective in increasing the psychological well-being of employees. The data were collected from service sector employees. Following an analysis of the collected data, the effects of perceived organizational support and perceived social support on psychological well-being were clarified. The analysis results show that organizational support and social support have no significant effects on employees' psychological well-being. This point to a result that is contrary to what is reported in the literature. Additionally, several suggestions made to increase employees' psychological well-being.

Keywords

Organizational Support, Social Support, Psychological Well-Being

1. Literature Review

1.1 Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support refers to the extent to which an organization values an employee's contributions and cares about his well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Bishop, Scott and Burroughs, 2000). A similar definition is provided by Güney, Akalın, and İlsev (2009). According to them, perceived organizational support is the belief employees have about the way their contributions to their organization are evaluated by it and also the extent to what their welfare is cared by their organization. Perceived organizational support also involves employees' interpretation of the attitudes and motives of their organization towards them (Mullen et al., 2006).

Perceived organizational support was built upon social exchange theory developed in 1964 by Blau. According to this theory, both parts in a social relationship have certain perceptions and expectations of such relationship. In this sense, this theory suggests that reciprocity prevails social relationships (Uçar and Ötken, 2010).

In the literature, the concepts of "perceived organizational support" and "organizational support perception" are used more than the concept of "organizational support". This is because what matters is not the amount of support an organization provides to its employees, but the perception of employees regarding the degree of such support. As a matter of fact, while one of the two people working in the same department of the same organization under equal conditions may perceive high organizational support, the other may find the organizational support provided to him very low and shape his performance based on it (Polatçı, 2015). Employees having a high level of perceived organizational support are very likely to have positive perceptions of their organization's attitudes and behaviors towards them. This will always have favorable results for the organization (Annamalai, Abdullah, and Alazidiyeen, 2010).

Organizational support theory (Eisenberger, et al., 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Shore, 1995) states that to meet workers' socioemotional needs and determine the organization's readiness to reward increased their work effort, employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions

and cares about their well-being. Employees tend to believe that their organizations have a general positive or negative attitude towards them encompassing both recognition of their contributions and concern for their welfare (Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993).

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) suggested three major work-experience antecedents of POS: organizational rewards and working conditions, support from supervisors, and procedural justice. Studies have shown a variety of working conditions and organizational rewards such as autonomy, employees' developmental experiences about their work, and upper-level management's recognition of workers. Another antecedent is support received from supervisors encourages employees' thoughts and beliefs about their upper-management's care towards workers and their contributions. The final antecedent POS is procedural justice. This antecedent refers to the fairness of formal organizational procedures and policies in distributing resources (Aselage and Eisenberger, 2003).

1.2 Perceived Social Support

Perceived organizational support is about a person's working life. On the other hand, perceived social support depends on the support a person gets from his social environment. People need their entire social environment to get social support. This environment covers a lot of segments such as family, colleagues, and friends outside the working life (Polatçı, 2015).

The literature includes three different classifications of social support. The first one is pragmatic and involves certain help programs. The second one is the information-sourced dimension focusing on the sources possessed. The last one puts an emphasis on the recognition of needs of an organization's members outside the working life (Demirtaş and Bingöl, 2015). Layth et al., (2017) expressed social support as the physical and emotional comfort given to an individual by his/her family, co-workers and others times of need.

Social support perception has some important effects on employees' working life and private life. As it is clear in the literature, social support perception is closely associated with many organizational and personal variables. Among the organizational variables perceived organizational support is associated with are job satisfaction, intention to quit, organizational citizenship behavior, motivation, organizational commitment, and performance (Polatçı, 2015). Some personal variables perceived organizational support is associated with are job satisfaction, burnout, depression, and psychological well-being (Kılıç and Şahan-Yılmaz, 2015; Panzarella, Alloy, and Whitehouse, 2006).

1.3 Psychological Well-Being

The concept of psychological well-being was first introduced in the 1960s by Bradburn. However, Bradburn's concept of psychological well-being is more close to the concept currently called subjective well-being. The concept of psychological well-being that is used in the current literature belongs to Ryff. Ryff departed from Bradburn's studies and introduced the concept of psychological well-being in the end (Timur, 2008; Hamurcu, 2011).

The concept of well-being is defined as happiness by some researchers (Bradburn, 1969) and as a person's capability to make maximum use of his existing potential by some others (Ryff, 1989).

There are two basic areas of research giving rise to well-being studies. The first one is subjective well-being, which started to appear in the 1950s and aims to search quality of life. Actually, subjective well-being refers to a hedonistic state and involves taking pleasure from life. The other one is psychological well-being, arising with studies in the 1980s. Psychological well-being refers to a completely psychological state and is based on former adult developmental psychology and clinical psychology theories that stress an individual's potential to realize himself when encountering a difficulty and for leading a meaningful life (Keyes, Shmotkin, and Ryff, 2002; Telef, 2013). Psychological well-being can be defined as an individual's management of certain challenges he faces in his life (Telef, 2013).

Ryff (1989) addressed well-being from a psychological perspective and emphasized that this concept should not be taken as happiness. According to the author, it is better to regard it as an individual's self-realization than deeming it as happiness. Ryff defined psychological well-being as positive psychological functioning and took it in six dimensions: *positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, and self-acceptance* (Kuyumcu, 2012; Akdoğan and Polatçı, 2013). These six domains postulate that individuals attempt to form and retain relationships (Positive relations with others), individuals try to feel good about themselves in face adversities and their own limitations (Self-acceptance), human beings also tend to modify their surroundings to achieve their needs and desires (Environmental Mastery). Along with that individuals seek autonomy and self-determination (Autonomy) with an effort to find meaning in life (purpose in life). Last of all, individuals make an effort to use their talents and abilities to the maximum level they can, and all these together point towards the true essence of psychological well-being. The subdomains of PWB converge to explore the

degree to which people combine these characteristics and their relationship with factors like age, gender, socioeconomic class, race and education (Dehraj et al., 2017).

1.4 Support and Well-Being

The literature contains some studies dealing with the relationship between the support perceived by employees and their well-being. However, they mostly investigate the effect of organizational support on well-being or the effect of social support on well-being. There is not much research taking these two types of support together and exploring their influence on employees' psychological well-being. Cicognani's research (2011) is an example of the studies focusing on social support and well-being. It was concluded in that study that social support coming from family and friends has a positive influence on psychological well-being. On the other hand, Armeli et al. (1998) report that perceived organizational support influences employees' psychological well-being.

2. Method

2.1. Sample and Procedure

The study sample consisted of service sector employees in an urban area in Turkey. A questionnaire including the scales was administered to a sample of 145 service sector employees. Following the examination of questionnaires collected in terms of data losses and extreme values, 35 were excluded from the analysis. Thus, the study sample consisted of 110 employees. Participant ages ranged from 18 to 47 years, with an average of 25 years. 67 (61%) were male and 95 (86%) were single.

2.2. Measures

Original measures were translated from English to Turkish. All the questionnaire items were on a 5-point Likert response scale ranging 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The current study uses an organizational support scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and shortened by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002). The scale has 8 items, and 4 of these items are reversed. Perceived social support was assessed by social support scale developed by Zimet et al. (1988). This scale has 3 subscales (significant other, family and friends), and each subscale has 4 items. Psychological well-being was measured by shortened version of the Ryff (1989)'s psychological well-being scale (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). This scale assesses psychological well-being with 6 subscales and 3 items in each subscale.

3. Results

Descriptive statistics for the variables, and inter correlations among the variables, are presented in Table 1. Perceived organizational support, perceived social support and psychological well-being averages of participants were found to be 3.49 (sd=0.88), 3.78 (sd=0.99), and 3.74 (sd=0.74) respectively. Sub-dimensions of psychological well-being were 3.48 (sd=1.13), 4.08 (sd=0.93), and 3.66 (sd=1.06), respectively. The results indicate that the majority of participant had a tendency to obtain support both from their organization and from external social relationships such as significant others, family, and friends. They tended to be psychologically well.

According to the correlation analysis (as seen in Table 1), perceived organizational support, perceived social support, and psychological well-being were not significantly inter correlated. The coefficient alpha reliability for scales displayed good reliability (0.61-0.82).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Inter-Correlation Matrix and Reliabilities

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Perceived Organizational Support	3.49	.88	(0.61)					
2. Perceived Social Support	3.78	.99	.060	(0.82)				
3. Significant Others	3.48	1.13	.026	.751**	(0.71)			
4. Family	4.08	.93	-.099	.428**	.122	(0.71)		
5. Friends	3.66	1.06	-.024	.822**	.591**	.252**	(0.74)	
6. Psychological Well-Being	3.71	.74	.027	-.021	-.008	.168	.066	(0.63)

Cronbach Alpha shown in brackets

**p<0.01, n=110

In variance analysis, a difference was found between male and female employees' perceived organizational support. The results of the t-test are provided in Table 2. According to the independent sample t-test result females present more perceived organizational support than males (t=2.526; p<0.05). Additionally, a difference was determined between ages in terms of perceived social support, significant others and friends (F=3.804, p<0.01; F=2.824, p<0.05; F=5.752, p<0.01). According to the Scheffe post hoc analysis, employees between 18 and 23

perceive higher social support and higher sub-dimension of perceived social support-friends than employees older than 30.

Regression analysis could not be conducted because of insignificant correlation analysis results. Thus, perceived organizational and social support do not appear to have an effect on employees' psychological well-being.

4. Conclusion

The main purpose of the present study has been to analyze whether organizational support and social support have any effect on employees' psychological well-being. To this end, a questionnaire has been administered to employees from service sector, and the obtained data have been analyzed. However, to the contrary of what is expected, the analysis results show that organizational support and social support have no significant effects on employees' psychological well-being. These points to a result that is contrary to what is reported in the literature. As a matter of fact, it is generally believed that organizational support and social support are influential on psychological well-being. Thus, this finding of the study can be considered important.

This finding may have some possible reasons. Firstly, the sample of the study may not be suitable. Different results may be obtained if participants are taken from a different sector than service sector. Secondly, because of their business, service sector employees may not have adequately understood the questions contained in the questionnaire. This is possible even if reliability analyses have been made on the questionnaire.

5. Research limitations and Implications for Future Research

This research will be continued on different samples from different sectors. Improving the research by adding some different organizational behavior variables is considered important.

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