

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND THEIR SELF-EFFICACY: A RESEARCH IN THE LOGISTICS SECTOR

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the relationship between organizational support perceptions and self-efficacy levels of employees, who are employed in the logistics sector, and carried out in order to determine employees' perceptions of organizational support and their self-efficacy levels.

In consequence of the research, it is determined that there is a statistical relationship between the organizational support perceived by employees in the logistics sector and their self-efficacy levels. Accordingly, it is found out that average of organizational support perceptions regarding the work structure is 3.883 and average of organizations support perceptions regarding the personal development is 3.465. Furthermore, it is determined that they have assertiveness with an average self-efficacy level of 1.742 and an average self-confidence level of 1.602. It is possible to say in other words that employees in the logistics sector have high level of effort and low level of self-confidence and assertiveness. When levels of organizational support perceived by employees increase, self-efficacy levels regarding the aspect of effort increases; when the perception of organizational support decreases, self-efficacy levels regarding assertiveness and self-confidence decrease.

Keywords: Organizational Support, Self-Efficacy, the Logistics Industry

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Introduction

It is observed that more investment has been made to the logistics sector, which has gained importance by virtue of the globalization in the world, in recent years in Turkey. Positioned at a very sensitive point of the supply chain, logistics is now mentioned with the key words speed, flexibility and technology. Employees having undertaken this key role in the sector are required to fulfill customers' expectations in a timely and effective manner. This may only be achieved by means of an active communication in the organization, teamwork and organizational support.

Organizational support is employees' way of perceiving that the organization appreciate their contribution and attach importance to their happiness and is an experience-sourced perception based on whether policies, rules and activities that concern employees are originated by the organization's own accord or external factors (Eisenberger et al., 2001).

The perceived organizational support is employees' general opinion about the value and importance that the organization attaches to them and supports the opinion that the support provided by the organization (by virtue of social change relationship) enhances organizational relationship. The perceived organizational support is employees' feeling that they are safe and the organization supports them.

In these days when we are at the beginning of the twenty first century, social structures have undergone a considerable change in our country and in the world; natural disasters, unemployment, economic problems, cultural conflicts and problems arising from the daily live bring about some issues. Problems of adaptation caused by industrialization on one hand and social and political developments in the world and problems arising from the daily life on the other hand drag people to a complexity and lead to tensions. People learn and deal with new concepts like "adapting", "solving complexities", "eliminating tensions" and "coping with problems" in their life struggle and try to subsists within a constant struggle in order to make their lives of more quality, more meaningful, more pleasant and more livable (Demirtaş, 2007). To be successful in such a process, employees are expected to have a high perception of self-efficacy.

The research examines the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational support and their self-efficacy levels and aims to determine their organizational support perceptions and self-efficacy levels.

1. Conceptual Frame of Organizational Support

In the literature, commitment of employees to the organization was named as the organizational commitment by Mowday et al. (1979), Allen and Meyer (1984); however, no concept was developed in those years about the opinions of employees about the commitment of organizations to their employees. Eisenberg (1986) pointed to this missing concept and expressed it as organizational support. In the view of Eisenberg, people develop certain beliefs that their contributions are appreciated and their happiness is regarded, when they think their organization is ready to award their effort and meet their psychosocial needs like honoring, loyalty and respect and such beliefs are referred to as “perceived organizational support”. (trans. Peker, 2008).

In another definition, Eisenberger et al. (1986) describe organizational support as “employees’ perceptions about the degree to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being and their feeling that the organization voluntarily performs the activities that concern employees”. In other words, organizational support is the case that the organization’s values pay regard to employee’s well-being and raise their happiness (qn. Turunç and Çelik, 2010a). In organizational support theory, Eisenberg et al. (1986) suggest that employees develop general beliefs about the corporation they work for depending on the degree to which the organization values employees’ contributions and cares about their well-being (trans. Çakar and Yıldız, 2009).

It is really important to distinguish between the perceived environment and real environment in order to understand the behavior within the organization. Therefore, it would not be enough to only take the current situation into consideration to understand the attitudes and behaviors of the individuals in an organization. Individual’s perception of a situation is also very significant (Kaynak et al., 2002).

In Özdevecioğlu’s view, perceived organizational support is employees’ feeling that they are safe and the organization supports them. Employees, who always feel the support of the organization, will be more committed to their work and will not think of leaving their workplace (Özdevecioğlu, 2003).

Akalın suggests that perceived organizational support is a very basic social exchange mechanism in the organizational frame. In fact, perceive organizational support is the

employee's perception about the degree to which the organization does its share within the exchange of the organization's commitment to the employee and, in return, employee's commitment to the organization (Akalin, 2006).

In Eser's view, perceived organizational support represents the individual's belief about the degree to which the organization will reward his efforts, value his contributions and care about his well-being (Eser, 2011).

Organizational support is employees' general opinion about the value and importance that the organization attaches to them and supports the opinion that the support provided by the organization enhances organizational relationship. The perceived organizational support is employees' feeling that they are safe and the organization supports them (Casper and Buffardi, 2004).

2. Conceptual Frame of Self-Efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy was suggested for the first time by Albert Bandura in 1977 in scope of "Cognitive Behavior Modification". It is determined that a strong sense of personal efficacy is related to being healthier, a higher success and a more sufficient social integration. This concept may be utilized in many areas such as school success, emotional disorders, mental and physical health, career choice and socio-political change (Otacıoğlu, 2008).

Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as "the belief of an individual about his capacity of organizing and successfully conducting the actions in order to deliver a certain performance." Zimmerman (1995) defines self-efficacy as "the individual's judgments about his skill of performing and being successful in a work" (Cantürk and Başer, 2007).

Self-efficacy is individuals' judgment and belief about to what extent they will be successful in dealing with the difficult situations that they may encounter in the future. Self-efficacy is not a function of the individuals' skills. It is the product and result of their beliefs about what they could do by using their skills. Self-efficacy is an individual's perception, belief and judgment of own about his skill and capacity of dealing with different situations and achieving certain efficiency (Senemoğlu, 2002).

Self-efficacy perceptions of individuals have an impact in every area of life. This perception of individuals direct their impacts on organizational processes, decisions about getting into action and determination about fighting against difficulties and positively influences their personal performance (Basim et al., 2008).

Self-efficacy perception is a factor that influences the general psychological standing of individuals. According to Bandura, individuals with a high perception of self-efficacy work harder to accomplish a task and they act in a persistent and patient manner and always have high motivation. Self-efficacy perception is determinative in many circumstances of life such as academic success and carrier choice in the business life and quitting smoking, tolerating pain and coping with fears in the social life. There are many external factors that shape and influence an individual's perception of self-efficacy. Furthermore, impressions gained by the individual from these external factors through direct experience also have an impact on the perception of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986).

There may be certain differences between the characteristics of individuals with high and low self-efficacy. Individuals with high self-efficacy are capable of coping with complex situations and solving all kinds of problems have a high self-confidence, respect their own interests, skills and characteristics, become successful in the house, school and profession, have developed courage and beliefs and are focused on achievement. Individuals with low self-efficacy cannot cope with circumstances, are inadequate in dealing with problems, have a weak self-confidence, are doubtful about themselves, become unsuccessful in their first trial and avoid from trying again, are in despair and misery and usually use defense mechanisms (Yenilmez and Kakmacı, 2008).

When individuals with a strong sense self-efficacy come across with a difficult task, they do not avoid of the tax, but consider it as something to deal with. Moreover, self-efficacy perception has a positive impact on the performance of task and individuals with high self-efficacy deliver a high performance (Meydan, 2011).

3. Research Method

3.1. Purpose of the Research: Main purpose of this research is to examine the relationships between employees' perceptions of organizational support and their levels of self-efficacy, in

consideration to the employees of logistics sector. To achieve this purpose, answers of the following questions will be sought:

- ✓ What is the level of organizational support perceptions of employees in the logistics sector?
- ✓ What is the level of self-efficacy perceptions of employees in the logistics sector?
- ✓ Is there a meaningful relationship between the organizational support perceptions and self-efficacy perceptions of the employees in the logistics sector that have participated in the research?

3.2. Research Population and Sampling

Research population consists of the employees of three different logistics company with their registered office in Istanbul. In the determination of the sample size to represent this population, the following formula was used;

$$n = N t^2 p q / d^2 (N-1) + t^2 p q$$

N: Number of individuals in the target group

n: Number of individuals to be selected as samples

p: Occurrence frequency of the examined incident (probability of occurrence)

q: Nonoccurrence frequency of the examined incident (probability of nonoccurrence)

t: Theoretic value founded according to t table at a certain level of significance

d: Sampling error acceptable according to the occurrence frequency of the incident.

For this inhomogeneous population, the required sample size is calculated as $n = 96$, with a sampling error of $\pm 10\%$ at a reliability range of 95%. In this context, survey questions were asked to 150 employees randomly and 124 usable survey forms were obtained. As a result, it is possible to suggest that research findings may be generalized with a sampling error of $\pm 10\%$ at a reliability range of 95%.

3.3. Research Model: Among general screening models, the research model includes single screening model, which aims to determine the formation of variables individually or on the basis of type or quantity, and relational screening model, which aims to determine existence and/or degree of covariance between two or more variables (Karasar, 2009). It was intended to choose the model that would provide the best analysis for empirical researches.

3.4. Data Collection Method: Besides demographic information; two different scales, which are the perceived organizational support scale and the general self-efficacy scale, are used in collecting the data.

1) *Perceived Organizational Support Scale* In determining the organizational support perceptions of employees, “perceived organizational support scale” developed by Eisenberg et al. and translated into Turkish by Selçuk (2003). In this context, 15 statements in the second part of the questionnaire form measure the organizational support perceptions of the enterprise’s employees. A 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) is used. The statements 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29 in the questionnaire form are reversely coded.

2) *General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE):* “General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)” consisting of 12 items, which was developed by Sherer et al. (1982) and revised by Bosscher and Smith (1998), is used in measuring self-efficacy perceptions. The scale contains the sub-dimensions of Initiative (item 1-3), Effort (item 4-8) and Persistence (item 9-12). The scale was translated into Turkish by Tarakçı (2009). Options for questions are included in the survey of personal characteristics; options in other Scales are arranged according to five-point Likert scale and graded with a point between 1 to 5. 5 is Strongly Disagree, 4 is Agree, 3 is Neither Agree nor Disagree, 2 is Disagree and 1 is Strongly Disagree. Scale results are distribution with a range of 5.00-1.00=4.00 points.

3.5. Data Analysis: Data obtained in the research are analyzed with SPSS 17.0 program. Descriptive statistical methods (Number, Percentage, Average, and Standard Deviation) are used in evaluating the data. Kruskal Wallis H-Test and Mann Whitney U Test, which are Non-Parametric tests, are utilized hypothesis tests and correlation analyses are carried out. The findings obtained are interpreted at a significance level of 0.05 in a reliability range of 95%.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Descriptive Findings

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Samples.

| Demographic Characteristic | Value | Number |
|------------------------------|----------------|--------|
| Description of the line item | | |
| Month and year of survey | June-July 2012 | |
| Sample size | | 124 |

Gender

| | | |
|--------|-------|----|
| Female | 51.6% | 64 |
| Male | 48.4% | 60 |

Age

| | | |
|-------------|-------|----|
| 25-30 | 61.3% | 76 |
| 31-40 | 32.3% | 40 |
| 41 and over | 6.5% | 8 |

Marital Status

| | | |
|---------|-------|----|
| Married | 32.3% | 40 |
| Single | 67.7% | 84 |

Work Experience

| | | |
|-------------|-------|----|
| 1-5 years | 51.6% | 64 |
| 6-10 years | 25.8% | 32 |
| 11-15 years | 22.6% | 26 |

Education

| | | |
|----------------|-------|----|
| PreHigh School | 25.8% | 32 |
| Bachelor | 67.7% | 84 |
| Master | 6.5% | 8 |

The research was conducted in June and July in 2012. Out of a total of 124 logistics employees having participated in the research, 64 (51.6%) are female and 60 (48.4%) are male as seen in the Table 1. 76 (61.3%) of participants are in the age range of 25-30, 40 (32.3%) in the age range of 31-40 and 8 (6.5%) in the age range of 41 and over. 40 (32.3%) of participants are married and 84 (67%) are single. 64 (51.6%) of participants have a work experience of 1-5 years, 32 (25.8) have a work experience of 6-10 years and 26 (22.6%) have a work experience of 11-15 years. In consideration to the educational background, 32 (25.8%) of participants are pre-high school graduates, 84 (67.7%) have a bachelor degree and 8 (6.5%) have a master degree.

Table 2. Average of Organizational Support Levels Perceived by the Employees in Logistics Sector

| | N | Ort. | S.s | Min. | Max. |
|----------------------|----------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Personal development | 124 | 3.465 | 0.900 | 1.800 | 5.000 |
| Work structure | 124 | 3.883 | 0.765 | 2.500 | 5.000 |

As seen in the table 2, “average of personal development” is found as 3.465 ± 0.900 and “average of work structure” is found as 3.883 ± 0.765 when the organizational support levels perceived by the employees in logistics sector are examined.

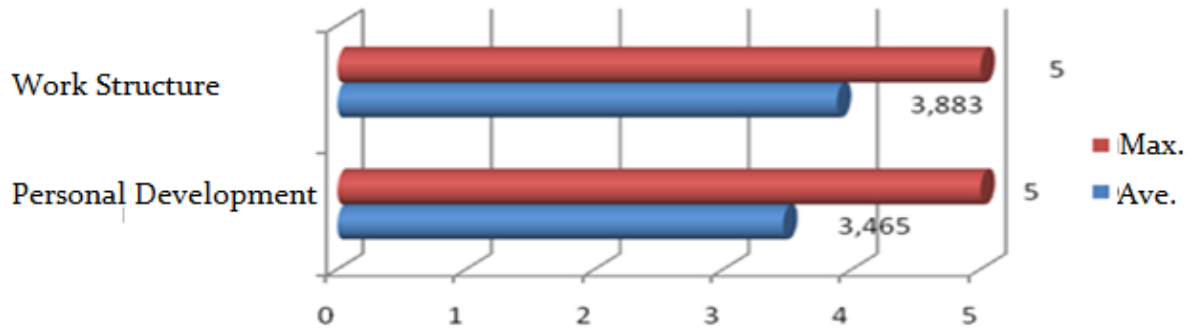


Figure 1. Average of Organizational Support Levels Perceived by the Employees in Logistics Sector Having Participated in the Research

Table 3. Average of Self-Efficacy Levels of the Employees in Logistics Sector

| | N | Ort. | S.s | Min. | Max. |
|-----------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Self-confidence | 124 | 1.742 | 0.630 | 1.000 | 3.750 |
| Effort | 124 | 3.800 | 0.669 | 1.600 | 4.800 |
| Assertiveness | 124 | 1.602 | 0.672 | 1.000 | 4.000 |

As seen in the table 3, average of self-confidence is found as 1.742 ± 0.630 , average of effort is found as 3.800 ± 0.669 and average of assertiveness is found as 1.602 ± 0.672 when self-efficacy levels perceived by the employees in logistics sector are examined.

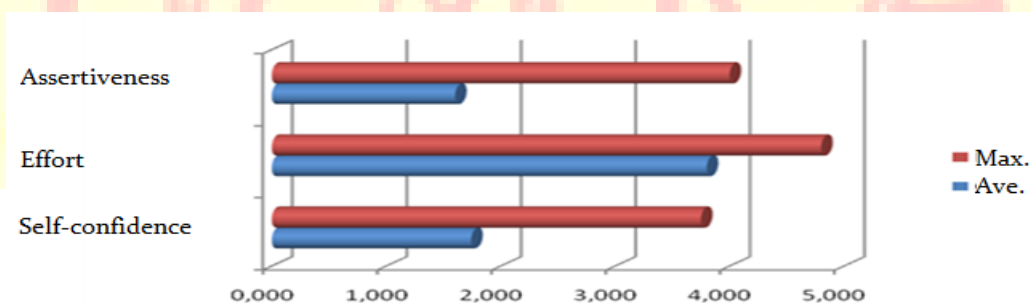


Figure 2. Average of Self-Efficacy Levels of the Employees in Logistics Sector

Table 4. Examination of the Relationship between Organizational Support Perceived by Employees of Logistics Sector and Their Self-Efficacy Levels through Correlation Analysis

| Dimensions | Dimension | N | r | p |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----|--------|--------------|
| Self-confidence | Personal development | 124 | -0.510 | 0.000 |
| Effort | Personal development | 124 | 0.296 | 0.001 |
| Assertiveness | Personal development | 124 | -0.380 | 0.000 |
| Self-confidence | Work structure | 124 | -0.462 | 0.000 |
| Effort | Work structure | 124 | 0.191 | 0.034 |
| Assertiveness | Work structure | 124 | -0.553 | 0.000 |

As seen in the Table 4, a negative meaningful relationship at the level of 51.0% is found between points in consequence of the correlation analysis carried out with the purpose of determining the relationship between self-confidence and personal development. ($r=-0.510$; $p=0.000<0.05$). Accordingly, as self-confidence point increases, personal development point decreases. A positive meaningful relationship at the level of 29.6% is found between points in consequence of the correlation analysis carried out with the purpose of determining the relationship between effort and personal development. ($r=0.296$; $p=0.001<0.05$). Accordingly, as effort point increases, personal development point increases, too. A negative meaningful relationship at the level of 38.0% is found between points in consequence of the correlation analysis carried out with the purpose of determining the relationship between assertiveness and personal development. ($r=-0.380$; $p=0.000<0.05$). Accordingly, as assertiveness point increases, personal development point decreases. A negative meaningful relationship at the level of 46.2% is found between points in consequence of the correlation analysis carried out with the purpose of determining the relationship between self-confidence and work structure. ($r=-0.462$; $p=0.000<0.05$). Accordingly, as self-confidence point increases, work structure point decreases. A positive meaningful relationship at the level of 19.1% is found between points in consequence of the correlation analysis carried out with the purpose of determining the relationship between effort and work structure. ($r=0.191$; $p=0.034<0.05$). Accordingly, as effort point increases, work structure point increases, too. A negative meaningful relationship at the level of 55.3% is found between points in consequence of the correlation analysis carried out with the purpose of determining the relationship between assertiveness and work structure.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

Organizational support levels perceived by the employees in logistics sector, who have participated in the research, are reviewed under 2 factors: “personal development” and “work structure. In an evaluation over 5, it is concluded that organizational support perceptions of

logistics employees for work structure is 3.883 and their organizational support perceptions for personal development is 3.465 on the average. In other words, it is possible to claim that logistics employees have a high level of organizational support perception.

Self-efficacy levels of the employees in logistics sector are examined in 3 different dimensions, which are self-confidence, effort and assertiveness. Again according to an evaluation over 5, it is determined that employees have a self-efficacy of effort with an average of 3.800, a self-efficacy of self-confidence with an average of 1.742 and a self-efficacy of assertiveness with an average of 1.602. It is possible to say in other words that employees in the logistics sector have high level of effort and low level of self-confidence and assertiveness.

In the research, relationships between the organizational support levels perceived by the employees in logistics sector and their self-efficacy levels are examined by means of correlation analysis. In consequence of the analysis, it is determined that there is a statistically positive relationship between the organizational support perceived by logistics employees and their self-efficacy levels of effort. Furthermore, it is found out that there is a negative meaningful relationship between the organizational support perceived by logistics employees and their self-efficacy levels of self-confidence and assertiveness. In this regard, effort levels of employees increase when their perceived organizational support increases. When the perceived organizational support decreases, their level of self-confidence and assertiveness also decreases. A number of suggestions are specified below on the basis of results of the research. Accordingly;

- ✓ Employees in logistics sector are required to have a high level of self-efficacy to be more productive. However, considering the relationship between self-efficacy levels and perceived organizational support, employees should be provided with more support. Thus both their self-efficacy levels will increase and this increase will reveal itself in their productivity.
- ✓ Sampling scope may be extended to obtain more clear and concrete results.
- ✓ The research may be applied in other sectors in order to obtain different results and make comparisons. Thus, it would be possible to determine whether perceived organizational support and self-efficacy levels differ by sectors.

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