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The Role of Psychological Resilience in Maintaining Work-Family Balance: An Application for Tourism Employees

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ABSTRACT

People spend most of their life in work and family environments, where they play different roles. This study aims to reveal the effect level of psychological resilience in maintaining the balance between work and family life of employees working in the tourism sector. In line with the determined purpose, a questionnaire study was applied to the tourism employees working in the Cappadocia Region. Based on the interactional suggestions obtained from the literature, a structural equation model was established in which resilience is the predictor and work and family balance is the predicted variable. When the fit values of the model and the path coefficients between the variables were examined, it was concluded that psychological resilience was effective in maintaining both work- and family-life balance in employees. These results underline the need for employees to have a psychologically resilient mood to maintain work-life and family-life balances. However, due to some unique structural features of the tourism sector, both the psychological resilience levels of the employees and the work-family balance averages yielded results below the desired level. For this reason, in the conclusion part of the study, practical suggestions that can be carried out both personally and administratively to increase the psychological resilience and work-family life balance of the employees are included.

Keywords: Psychological resilience, work-life balance, family-life balance, tourism

İş-Aile Dengesinin Korunmasında Psikolojik Dayanıklılığın Rolü: Turizm Çalışanlarına Yönelik Bir Uygulama

ÖZ

İnsanlar yaşam sürelerinin büyük bölümünü farklı roller üstlendikleri iş ve aile ortamlarında geçirirler. Bu çalışma, turizm sektöründe görev yapan çalışanların iş ve aile yaşamları arasındaki dengeyi korumalarında psikolojik dayanıklılığın etki düzeyini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Belirlenen amaç doğrultusunda Kapadokya Bölgesi'nde görev yapan turizm çalışanlarına bir anket çalışması uygulanmıştır. Literatürden elde edilen etkileşimsel önerilerden yola çıkarak, psikolojik dayanıklılığın yordayan, iş ve aile dengesinin ise yordanan değişken olduğu bir yapısal eşitlik modeli kurulmuştur. Oluşturulan modele ilişkin uyum değerleri ve değişkenler arası yol katsayıları incelendiğinde, psikolojik dayanıklılığın çalışanlarda hem iş- hem de aile yaşamı dengesinin korunmasında etkili olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bu sonuçlar, çalışanların iş-yaşam ve aile-yaşam dengelerini sürdürmelerinde psikolojik olarak dayanıklı bir ruh haline sahip olmaları gerektiğinin altını çizmektedir. Ancak turizm sektörünün kendine has birtakım yapısal özellikleri nedeniyle, çalışanların hem psikolojik dayanıklılık düzeyleri hem de iş-aile dengesi ortalamaları beklenen seviyenin altında sonuçlar vermiştir. Bu nedenle çalışmanın sonuç bölümünde çalışanların, psikolojik dayanıklılığını ve iş-aile yaşamı dengelerini arttırabilmek için hem kişisel hem de yönetsel olarak gerçekleştirilebilecek pratik önerilere yer verilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikolojik dayanıklılık, iş-yaşam dengesi, aile-yaşam dengesi, turizm

1 Introduction

As well as fulfilling the duties assigned to them in the workplaces, employees also have a social life they have to lead. Over time, with the difficulty of business life, technological advances and socioeconomic and demographic changes that come with globalization, these two life styles have intersected and started to violate each other's fields (Akin, Ulukök & Arar, 2017: 115). Today, employees working under speed, efficiency and performance pressure seek flexibility to balance their personal lives with employers' demands (Messmer, 1999). Employees who can balance work life and family life may experience fewer work accidents, have higher job satisfaction levels, and show high levels of resilience (Sünkür, 2014).

According to the role conflict theory of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), the role assumed in work and family life does not lead to conflict by itself. It is the incompatible demands on the person created by the responsibilities should be done as a requirement of these roles that lead to conflict (Efeoğlu, 2006). "Private life" or in other words, "non-work life" is defined as the part of individuals' lives that they do not work. In order to avoid conflict, it is necessary to maintain a balance between these two (Guest, 2002: 260). Work-life balance is the individual's preoccupation with work and family roles equally, and providing equal satisfaction from them (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003: 55).

Individuals pay attention to a good balance between work and life while looking for a job. According to the results of the online consumer trust survey conducted by AC Nielsen with 25,408 internet users in 46 countries in Europe, Asia Pacific, North America, the Baltic States, and the Middle East, 65% of the resolutions taken by Turks in the New Year, "business and private life are more important". balancing was found to be in the first place. The same research shows that the first goal of people with a rate of 51% worldwide is the effort to achieve this balance (Gür, 2016: 128). Similarly, Michael Page's market confidence research results confirm this view. According to the research; While less than 30% of those who want to change jobs in Turkey show salary as a reason, 36% stated that they want to change jobs to improve their work-life balance. In addition, Turkish professionals stated that they would prefer a better work-life balance to a higher salary (Michael Page, 2018). Therefore,

professionals are aware that as long as they can balance their vital responsibilities, they can reach psychological comfort and increase productivity with psychological well-being. As individuals' psychological resilience increases, the level of meaning they attribute to life also increases (Yıldırım, 2018).

Having a psychologically strong body, especially in labor-intensive sectors such as tourism, education, and banking, is seen as one of the main factors in ensuring work-life balance (Ülker Tümlü & Recepoğlu, 2013; Alkan, 2014; Miyoung & Carol, 2015). Within the scope of this study, the tourism sector as a service-intensive sector with intense work tempo was discussed and the interaction between the psychological resilience of hotel employees and work-life balances was examined. In the relevant literature, it has been observed that there are a number of studies that examine and limitedly test work-life balance from a psychological perspective for hotel employees. In addition, it is aimed to raise awareness about how negative psychological disorders that may be experienced in the workplace such as workaholism, burnout, and stress can be reflected in every aspect of employees' lives. For this purpose, firstly, a literature review of the variables was made and the theoretical background between the variables was revealed. Then, necessary analyzes were made to empirically test the hypotheses developed within the research and the results were interpreted in detail.

2 Literature Review

It is the balance of the work-life areas of the individual, allocating equal time and attention to their roles in both areas, and making equal commitments. This balance can be positive or negative. A positive balance expresses a high level of equal interest, concern, and time; a negative balance also indicates a low level of equal interest, relevance, and time. The balance that an individual perceives between work and life is subjective (Erben & Öteken, 2014: 107). Individuals who provide this balance, in the organizations they work; can survive in the face of unexpected situations and increase their resilience with their talents and resources that reveal the ability to adapt by becoming better than before (Gerçek & Börekçi, 2017). The satisfaction of employees in their personal and work lives also positively affects businesses. Employees' having time to train themselves increases their quality and skills, which in turn increases productivity (Doğrul & Tekeli, 2010).

Ensuring and maintaining psychological balance is accepted as an important indicator in achieving work-life balance, which is so important for employees and businesses. Psychological Resilience; It is an organizational perspective that focuses on the strengths of employees rather than their weaknesses, and focuses on their improvable features (Seligman, 2002). It is achieved by the acquisition of competencies that enable employees who have been exposed to or experienced a traumatic event to return to their jobs fully and in a short time, and to cope better with traumatic events and similar difficulties in the work environment (Freeman & Carson, 2006).

From the employee's perspective, work-life balance is the dilemma created by the effort to manage the obligations and personal responsibilities of the job. From the employer's point of view, work-life balance is the struggle of employees to create a corporate culture that supports their home-related work while at work (Kirchmeyer, 2000). Revealing the strengths of the members of the organization, supporting their psychological capacities, increases the capacity of individuals to struggle with events (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). According to the positive organizational behavior approach, the strengths and psychological capacities of the members of the organization should be supported. It was stated that instead of focusing on the negative characteristics of those working in the field of organizational behavior, it would be more effective to glorify positive and positive behaviors and to emphasize the strengths of individuals (Luthans, 2002). Providing flexible working programs, providing the time needed by employees for their family life and social hobbies are seen as important policies in establishing work-life balance (Akın, Ulukök, & Arar, 2017).

Psychological resilience, the capacity of individuals to struggle with events, can make them stronger instead of being discouraged. Because individuals with strong psychology contribute positively to their own development and these individuals become more resistant. Increasing the level of

psychological resilience of employees makes it easier for them to cope with stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion (Sezgin, 2012). In this case, resilient individuals with a high capacity to combat events will be able to maintain balance in family life (Asarkaya & Erdoğan 2014; Kurtoğlu 2017). Based on these propositions, two hypotheses developed within the scope of the research aim to test the effect of psychological resilience level on work-family and family-work balance in organizations.

H1: The level of psychological resilience of employees is effective in maintaining a work-life balance.

H2: The level of psychological resilience of the employees is effective in maintaining the family life balance.

The research model, which was created based on two research hypotheses, is given in Figure 1. The research model created in this context will be analyzed with the help of quantitative research techniques.

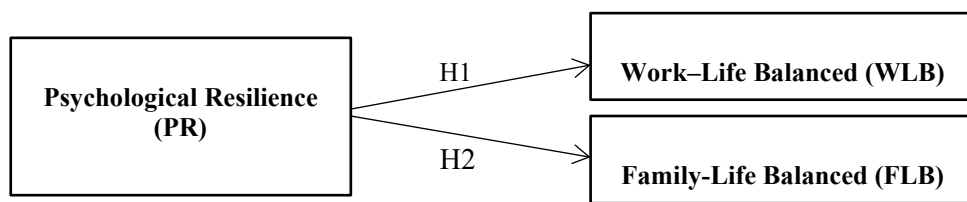


Figure 1: Research Model

3 Method

3.1 Sample and Procedure

To test the hypotheses developed within the scope of the research, an empirical study was carried out using the questionnaire technique. The study was carried out in 4 and 5-star accommodation establishments operating in Nevşehir Province, one of the important tourist destinations of Turkey, Cappadocia Region. The population of the research consists of employees working in the accommodation establishments of Nevşehir province. According to the 2019 data of Nevşehir Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, there are six five-star hotels and 16 four-star hotels in the region.

The high staff turnover rate in the accommodation establishments in the region and the seasonal feature of tourism prevent reaching the full number of personnel working in the establishments. For this reason, in determining the sample size to which the questionnaires will be applied, the population was accepted as unlimited and 384 people determined for the unlimited populations were determined as the maximum sample size (Altunışık, Coşkun, Bayraktaroğlu & Yıldırım, 2005: 169).

To reduce common method bias (CMB), the procedural remedies recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003) were used. In this respect, it was explained to all employees that participate in the study was based on voluntariness, there were no right or wrong answers, and the answers would be used anonymously for academic research.

The questionnaire form was left to the four and five-star hotel businesses in Nevşehir province in August 2019, and the data collection process continued until September 2019. In order to reach the sample size, 600 questionnaires were left to the hotel businesses, but 400 questionnaires were returned. However, 36 of the questionnaires were removed from use due to missing data. As a result of the examination of the questionnaires the number of usable questionnaires was determined as 365.

47.7% of the are female and 52.3% are male employees. Most of the participants are between the ages of 21 and 40 (75.4%). Considering the marital status of the participants based on the content of the research, it is seen that 51.8% are single and 48.2% are married. 281 employees (77%) received high school or higher education. However, the income levels of the participants vary between 200 and 400 Euros per month. The majority of the employees (n: 241; 66%) state that they also work out of working hours and stay in overtime for 60 hours a week.

3.2 Measures

Two scales were used in the creation of the questionnaire. The first is work-family balance and the second is psychological resilience scales. For the work-life balance scale, "work-family-family-work conflict" scales developed by Netemeyer Boles and Murrian (1996) were used. In the scale created, there are 5 items for work life and family life, a total of 10 items. In the work-family and family-work conflict scales, reverse coding was used and it was determined that as the scale average value approached 5, work-family or family-work balance could be achieved.

The psychological resilience scale is; Smith et al. (2008) is a 6-item scale. All items in the scales were translated into the vernacular language using the back-translation method (Brislin, 1976) and were measured via a five-point Likert scale with anchors from "1 = strongly agree" to "5 = strongly disagree.". Sociodemographic variables (i.e. gender, age, educational level, and tenure) were also included as control variables to minimize potential confounding effects. Before the final research, a pilot study was conducted with 45 people to avoid possible design and expression errors in the data collection instrument.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedure

The data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) software programs. Before performing the statistical analyzes, Skewness and Kurtosis values were checked for univariate normal distribution assumption, and Mardia's coefficient was calculated for multivariate normal distribution. As a result of the examination, it was observed that the skewness and kurtosis values were within the recommended range of plus-minus 2 (Kline, 2011) and the critical ratio value ($cr = -1.151$) related to Mardia's coefficient was in the range of plus-minus 1.96 (Mardia, 1970). So, the assumptions of univariate and multivariate normality were met concerning this study. The present study followed Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach to test the proposed model in Figure 1. Firstly, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out to evaluate the measurement model. Secondly, the proposed structural model and hypotheses developed based on literature review were tested with structural equation modeling (SEM).

4 Results

4.1 Measurement Model: Validity And Reliability of Scales

Table 1 shows the results of the measurement model. The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analyze (CFA) using a maximum likelihood (ML) estimation method indicate that three-factor model with 19 items fits the data ($\chi^2 = 178.489$; $\chi^2/df = 1.8$; RMSEA= 0.05, GFI= 0.94, CFI=0.98, TLI=0.97, SRMR=0.06). Therefore, it can be stated that the factor constructs proposed in the measurement model are supported by the data.

Table 1: *Result of measurement model*

Dimensions	Items	Factor Loading	t-value	α
Psychological Resilience (PR)	PR1	0.609	-a	0,88
	PR2	0.779	15.790**	
	PR3	0.717	14.224**	
	PR4	0.736	14.709**	
	PR5	0.770	15.564**	
	PR6	0.818	11.673**	
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	WLB1	0.714	-a	0,90
	WLB2	0.872	20.320**	
	WLB3	0.844	19.328**	
	WLB4	0.765	16.646**	
	WLB5	0.847	15.099**	
Family-Life Balance (FLB)	FLB1	0.746	-a	0,89
	FLB2	0.832	15.558**	
	FLB3	0.790	14.725**	
	FLB4	0.858	16.059**	
	FLB5	0.766	14.236**	
Note: ** $p \leq 0.001$; n: 365				

After testing the fitting of the measurement model, convergent validity of all factors was examined, and then construct reliability was determined. Convergent validity was assessed with the significance of the factor loadings. All factor loadings in the measurement model are statistically significant at the level of 0.01, range between 0.61 and 0.87, and higher than the “0.50” criterion (Hair et al., 2013, p. 115). This shows that each item adequately measures the construct to which it relates, and that convergent validity is achieved (Table 1).

The reliability of the scales was controlled with Cronbach's values. As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.88–0.90, are greater than the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Therefore, these results indicate that the construct reliability of each factor is satisfactory.

4.2 Structural Model: Hypothesis Testing

After verifying the measurement model, the structural model was tested using the path coefficients method for direct effects. When the path coefficients for the constructed structural model were examined, it was concluded that the numerical values obtained showed a perfect fit ($\chi^2 = 228,988$; $\chi^2/df = 2.25$; RMSEA= 0.06, GFI= 0.93, CFI= 0.96, TLI= 0.95, AGFI= 0.90). Therefore, the structural model based on the effect of psychological resilience on work-family and family-work balance in employees has been accepted with a level of compatibility to test the hypotheses.

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. PR	3,62	1,00	1					
2. WLB	3,36	1,16	0.40**	1				
3. FLB	3,03	1,32	0.35**	0.48**	1			
4. Gender	-	-	0.07	0.02	0.01	1		
5. Age	-	-	0.04	0.01	0.08	-0.12**	1	
6. Education	-	-	0.06	0,15**	0.02	0.12**	-0.01	1

Note: ** $p \leq 0.001$; n: 365

As shown in Table 2, the PR levels of the employees gave results above the average value of the scale (M: 3.62; $p \leq 0.001$). Similarly, when looking at the levels of employees maintaining their work-family balance, the scale results above the average value (M: 3.36; $p \leq 0.001$). It is seen that the employees participating in the study have more difficulty in establishing a family-work balance than in establishing a work-family balance. The average of the employees on the family-work balance gave results very close to the average value of the scale (M: 3.03; SD: 1.32; $p \leq 0.001$). A strong positive relationship arises between PR and WLB ($r: 0.40$; $p \leq 0.001$) and PR and FLB ($r: 0.35$; $p \leq 0.001$) when Inter-variable correlation coefficients are examined.

Table 3: Result of structural model

Hypothesis	Relation	Path coefficients	t-statistics	Decision
H ₁	PR \longrightarrow WLB	0.455	7.739**	Supported
H ₂	PR \longrightarrow FLB	0,410	6.716**	Supported

Note: ** $p \leq 0.001$; n: 365 (PR: Psychological Resilience; WLB: Work-Life Balanced; FLB: Family-Life Balance)

The path coefficients and hypothesis test results related to the effect of psychological resilience, which is the predictive variable of the research, on work-family balance and family-work balance, which are the predictive variables, are included in Table 3. The results from SEM for direct effects illustrate that perceptions of PR have a positive and significant impact on WLB ($\beta = 0.455$, $p \leq 0.001$) and FLB ($\beta = 0.410$, $p \leq 0.001$). Therefore, H₁ and H₂ hypotheses developed within the scope of research were supported.

5 Discussion

Based on the data obtained from the empirical study of employees working in the hospitality industry, it was seen that the psychological resilience levels of the employees had a significant effect on their work-life and family-life balance. However, when the general averages of the variables subject to the study were analyzed, it was found that high-level averages were not obtained in terms of both independent and dependent variables. This situation contains some risks that may adversely affect the psycho-social welfare level of the sector employees.

The tourism sector is a labor-intensive sector with long working hours and intense physical work conditions. For this reason, the working conditions of the sector require that the employees in the hotel enterprises be both physically and psychologically resilient. According to the results of a field study conducted within the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of the Republic of Turkey in 2015, it was determined that 54% of the employees in the tourism sector in Turkey had sleep problems, 75.4%

were physically worn out, and 72% were emotionally worn out (Serter, 2015: 78). These parameters, which directly affect employee psychology, are almost in parallel with the average values obtained as a result of this study. Therefore, a work-family balance close to the middle value, together with a psychological resilience level above 3, which is the medium value of the scale, are not desirable numbers for both employees and businesses.

The theoretical background obtained as a result of the literature review shows that psychologically resilient employees are less affected by negativities and can overcome distressing and stressful situations in their work and family lives. As a result of this research, a positive and significant relationship was determined between the psychological resilience of the employees of the hotel businesses and their work-life and family-life balances. No study in the literature applies a structural equation model for the interactions between resilience and work-life/family-life balance. But previous research; shows that there is a relationship between life satisfaction, well-being, adding meaning to life, and psychological resilience (Ülker, Tümlü & Receptoğlu, 2013; Alkan, 2014; Kaba & Keklik, 2016). Studies on the relationship between resilience and work-life balance have found studies that reveal a significant relationship between these two variables (Küçükusta, 2007; Riley, 2012; Miyoung & Carol, 2015; Asarkaya & Erdoğan 2014; Kurtoğlu 2017).

As a result of the path analysis made with the structural equation model established within the scope of the research, it was determined that the psychological resilience of the employees has a significant effect in maintaining their work-life balance. Work-life balance is the trend of the individual to show a balanced emotion and behavior in the workplace without affecting the quality of work-life, by not reflecting the negativities and conflicts encountered in the social life of the individual. To achieve this balance, individuals have to continue their lives with a dynamic, energetic and concentrated psychology away from stress. This may be possible in positive psychology. Positive psychology, also known as the science of happiness, is a scientific field that focuses on the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the individual, the solution power rather than the problem, and contributes to the individual's attachment to life (Demir & Türk, 2020: 110). Thanks to positive psychology, employees can lay the foundations of a healthier life by looking for ways to be happy both at work and in their family life.

Psychologically resilient workers need to maintain a balanced attitude not only in their workplace but also in their family life. With the confirmation of the second hypothesis of the study, it was determined that resilience played an effective role in maintaining family balance in terms of employees. Family-life balance is the tendency of employees to have a balanced emotion and behavior towards family members without reflecting the problems or conflicts they experience in the workplace into the family. At the same time, it is the sum of the efforts and efforts of the employees to protect the family-life quality. Individuals who live their family life with positive and resilient psychology free from conflict and stress will not disappoint both their family members and their work team.

6 Conclusion

The importance of psychological resilience for tourism workers in terms of maintaining the desired balance in both work and family life is clearly seen as a result of this study. However, accepting the average values obtained as specific to the characteristics of the tourism sector and not taking any preventive steps may result in the worsening of the problem. Therefore, as a result, it will be necessary to talk about some personal, managerial, and social measures that should be applied in practice to increase the level of psychological resilience of the sector employees and to ensure that they maintain their work-family balance.

Psychological resilience refers to being able to react flexibly to changing conditions and to recover from negative experiences (Tugade, Fredrickson & Feldman, 2004: 1170). Psychological resilience is affected by individual factors such as humor, intelligence, sociability, familial factors including family relationships, and environmental factors including peer relationships and social support (Haase, 2004: 292). To increase the psychological resilience levels of individuals, it is necessary to put forward some

individual efforts such as showing a tendency to socialize, strengthening emotional intelligence, and strengthening family relationships. Supporting these individual efforts by the social environment can strengthen positive psychology.

The fact that employees are more resistant to problems increases their ability to gain experience in the face of each new problem. Therefore, to increase productivity, efficiency, and performance in the workplace, managers need to help balance work-life balance and create resilience (Riley, 2012: 55). For this, the organizational support mechanism must be functional in the workplace, a healthy organizational climate, and corporate culture. Managers should make decisions that can empower their employees both functionally and psychologically. For example, they can contribute to increasing the resilience of their employees by giving them autonomy in the workplace, implementing rehabilitation programs, increasing the days and hours of leave, making additional payments at regular intervals, or rewarding the employees.

To have a balance in the family (Serap, 2007: 12), which is a living system, and to maintain this balance, it is necessary to meet the love, labor, and time expectations of the individuals in this system (Kemer, 2018: 240). Therefore, organizational psychological resilience, which positively affects work-life balance, is also of great importance for social welfare. In this regard, various alternative topics and interactions that can be dealt with in a scientific framework can be suggested. Other factors that make up positive psychology and the relationships between these factors can be discussed. However, a detailed examination of the work-family-life balance with the help of qualitative techniques and comparisons of these balances between various sectors can be made. From a psycho-social perspective, many issues and interactions can be handled and analyzed in the employee-work-life triangle. At the same time, it would be beneficial to evaluate the theoretical and empirical studies on employee psychology in terms of public and private sector employees working in various other countries.

7 Declaration

7.1 Limits of the Study

The research was carried out in hotel businesses affiliated to the tourism sector. Geographically, the research universe is limited to a certain region.

7.2 Conflict of Interests

I declare whether there are any potential conflicts of interest in this publication.

7.3 Author Contribution

Corresponding Author Melisa ÇELENK: All contributions within the scope of the research belong to the responsible author.

7.4 Ethics Approval Form


Since the data collection process of the study was completed in 2019, there is no ethical approval form.

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