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# PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND JOB PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK ENGAGEMENT

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to determine the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance. The data were collected from textile workers to test the research's model. The sample of the research was composed of 322 textile workers. Psychological well-being scale, work satisfaction scale and work performance scale were used as data collection tools. The research's model was tested by structural equation analysis. It was found that the level of psychological well-being, work engagement and job performance of textile workers were below the average and low. As a result, it was determined that work engagement partially mediated the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance.

**Keywords:** Work Engagement, Psychological Well-Being, Job Performance.

## Psikolojik İyi-Oluş ve İş Performansı: Çalışmaya Tutkunluğun Aracı Rolü

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**Özet:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, psikolojik iyi oluşun iş performansına etkisinde çalışmaya tutkunluğun aracı rolünü belirlemektir. Bu doğrultuda oluşturulan araştırma modelini test etmek amacıyla tekstil çalışanlarından veri toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini 322 tekstil çalışanı oluşturmuştur. Veri toplama aracı olarak, literatürde daha önce kullanılan, geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik analizleri yapılmış olan psikolojik iyi oluş ölçeği, çalışmaya tutkunluk ölçeği ve iş performansı ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırma modeli yapısal eşitlik analizi ile test edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, psikolojik iyi oluşun iş performansına etkisinde çalışmaya tutkunluğun kısmi aracı rolü olduğu belirlenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çalışmaya Tutkunluk, Psikolojik İyi Oluş, İş Performansı.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Job performance is very important in environments with fierce competition and the employees displaying high job performance is the fundamental factor to maintain the quality of service. The enterprises need the personnel displaying high job performance to reach their goals. Therefore, there have been numerous studies for determination of variables interacting with job performance (Johnson, 2003; Motowidlo, 2003, p. 92.).

Work engagement is one of the constructs that are closely associated with job performance and have attract interest of many researchers (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74; Rich, Lepine and Crawford,

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2010; Christian, Garza and Slaughter, 2011, p. 64). Work engagement emerges when the personnel cope with the work demands through their personal and organizational resources and perform with high energy (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti and Xanthopoulou, 2007, p. 280). For this reason, psychological well-being is closely associated with work engagement. Studies have revealed that while burnout is associated with negative feelings, work engagement is associated with positive feelings such as optimism, hope, enthusiasm (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti and Xanthopoulou, 2007; Bakker, Emmerik and Euwena, 2006; Hallberg, Johansson and Schaufeli, 2007, p. 135).

Starting from this, the personnel who feel well psychologically are foreseen to be engaged with work and have high job performance. Literature also involves studies indicating that psychological well-being is associated with work engagement and high job performance. However, the number of the related studies is limited and there has been no study investigating the mediator role of work engagement in this relationship. The present study will contribute to the literature by providing empirical evidences primarily for the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance. This research model will also be tested on textile workers. Such study on textile workers has not been found previously. With this aspect, it will also contribute to the literature about validity of this model in different sample.

## **2. PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING**

Well-being is defined as the state of having no anxiety, uneasiness, depression, and other psychological disorders in individual's life (Ryff, 1995, p. 99). Well-being has become the subject of researches with different variables as the indicator for satisfaction of people since the 1700s (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). The meaning of life, autonomy; competence, context which are three basic psychological needs according to the self-determination theory; satisfaction with life about different areas and overall of life; and happiness have been stated as indicators of well-being (Samman, 2007; Çankır and Yener, 2017, p. 228). Psychological well-being is generally defined as efficiency of psychological functioning of an individual (Gechman and Wiener, 1975; Jamal and Mitchell, 1980; Martin, 1984; Sekaran, 1985; Wright and Cropanzano, 2000, p. 84).

There are two perspectives concerning the well-being in the literature as subjective (hedonic) and psychological (eudaimonic) approaches. Subjective well-being is the approach focusing on descriptions of well-being concerning avoidance from aches and pain and obtaining satisfaction and on happiness occurring along with the 1950s (Telef, 2013, p. 374). Psychological well-being is the approach emerging in the 1980s. Deci and Ryan (Deci and Ryan, 2008, p. 73) defined psychological well-being as felicity in private and work life of individual and the state of optimal efficiency. Psychological well-being means that life goes on well and person feels good and carries out works impressively (Huppert, 2009; Çankır and Semiz, 2018, p. 59).

Ryan and Deci (2001) claimed that the meaning of life can be determined by three basic needs of individuals according to the self-determination theory. These three basic psychological needs called as competence, autonomy, and context (relatedness) have been suggested to improve well-being of individuals by increasing their power to give the meaning to life. Ryan and Deci (2001) provides intercultural measurement indirectly in evaluation of well-being by attributing the meaning of life to the self-determination theory. Because, three basic psychological needs indicated by self-determination theory are considered as general need of all populations (Çankır and Yener, 2017).

## **3. WORK ENGAGEMENT**

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Work engagement is described as a mental state in which the personnel works vividly, focused, and with feelings of commitment (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003; Çankır, 2016). Work engagement is the indicator for the fact that the personnel feel themselves happy, healthy, good, and peaceful (Poon, 2013). The personnel engaged to work participates individually for their organizations to reach their goals. Individual participation signifies that each individual contributes the organization (Altunel, Koçak and Çankır, 2015).

Work engagement has three dimensions including vigor, dedication, and absorption as stated in the description. Vigor is defined as having high energy level, mental comfort during working, being disposed to show effort, and being resistant to difficulties (Schaufeli, et al., 2002). Individual feels satisfied and works with pleasure when carrying out jobs in this dimension. The dimension of dedication means that individual works gladly with the feeling to challenge difficulties and show high level of participation in the work (Jenaro, et al., 2011). Every employee faces difficulties when working. However, a person dedicated to work never hesitates to show patience and to make extra effort to overcome difficulties according to this dimension. The dimension of absorption signifies that individual pays attention to work completely, is glad to engage in the work, and has difficulty in leaving job (Çankır, 2016, p. 14). According to another definition, employee is dedicated to work, does not recognize how the time passes while working, and works gladly and selflessly (Bakker, 2011). This dimension does not involve bad sides of workaholism - especially such as the balance between work and private lives- on the other hand, it reflects the satisfaction with work life to family life.

Recent studies conducted on psychological well-being and work engagement have shown that burnout, work engagement, workaholism, and job satisfaction are involved among the indicators of psychological well-being (Bakker and Oerlemans, 2011; Mäkikangas, et al., 2015). In their study, Shimazu et al., (2009, 2012) investigated the relationship between psychological well-being and work engagement and found a significant and positive correlation between both variables. In another study, psychological well-being and work engagement were examined and psychological well-being was determined to have a significant and positive effect on work engagement (Brunetto, et al., 2012). Accordingly, the first hypothesis of the study;

H1: Psychological well-being has a positive and significant impact on work engagement.

#### **4. JOB PERFORMANCE**

Job performance is defined as individual behaviors that contribute to achieve organizational goals (Van Scotter and Motowidlo, 1996, p. 525). According to another definition, it is the set of behaviors displayed by employee to contribute directly or indirectly to organization in accordance with goals of the organization (Rich, Lepine and Crawford, 2010, p. 619).

Job performance is very important for the organizations. Additionally, high job performance is also important for employees because it provides positive benefits such as higher income, a better carrier, and a better social reputation (Sonnentag and Freese, 2002, p. 4). Therefore, many studies have been conducted for determination of variables interacting with job performance (Johnson, 2003; Motowidlo, 2003).

There are also studies explaining the correlation between psychological well-being and performance. In a study on 347 employees of service industry, it was determined that there was a significant and positive correlation between psychological well-being and performance (Holman, Chissick, and Totterdell, 2002). As a result of a study on 109 managers, the effect of psychological well-being on performance was examined and it was reported that psychological well-being had a

significant and positive effect on performance (Wright, Cropanzano, and Bonett, 2007). Starting from this, the second hypothesis of the study is as follows;

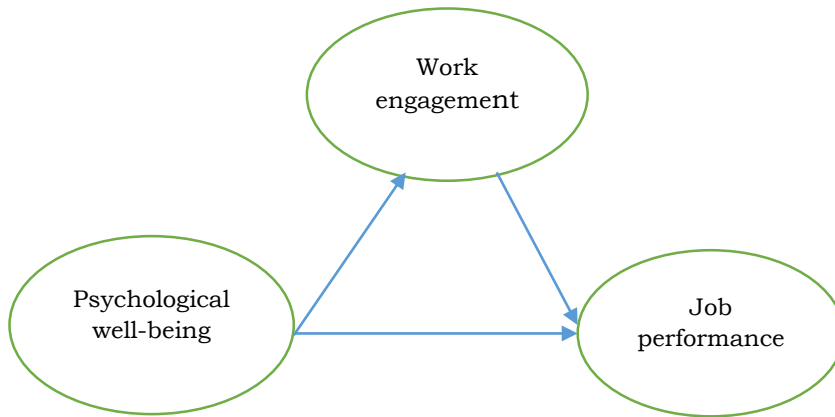
H2: Psychological well-being has a positive and significant impact on job performance.

The correlation between work engagement and performance was also examined by numerous researchers. A study revealed a significant and positive correlation between work engagement and performance (Bakker, 2011, p. 267). In a study conducted in Turkey, it was concluded that there was a significant and positive correlation between work engagement and performance (Caymaz, Erenel, and Güner, 2013, 139). In another study, the correlation among worker performance and financial performance and work engagement was investigated and a positive and significant correlation was found between both variables (Çankır and Semiz, 2018, p. 62). Accordingly, the third hypothesis of the study is as follows;

H3: Work engagement has a positive and significant impact on work job performance.

It is assumed in this study that psychological well-being will improve work engagement and will increase job performance through work engagement. Figure 1 shows the model of the study. Upon the literature review, there is no study on the mediator role of work engagement in the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance. According to result of a similar study, a significant and negative correlation was found among psychological ill-being (state of disorder-health) and work engagement and performance (Jenaro, et al., 2011). Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis of the study is as follows;

H4: Work engagement has a mediator role in the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance.



**Figure 1.** Study's Model

## **5. METHODS**

### **5.1. Sample and Procedure**

We collected data with an online survey in 2016. We sent survey link to participants with an e-mail. The sample of the study consisted of 322 employees and managers working in textile sector in Istanbul, who agreed to take part in this research. We present socio-demographic and job characteristics of sample in Table 1. Of the respondents, 51.6% were female and 58.7% were single. 38.5% completed bachelor's degree and 44.7% completed high school degree. The age of the respondents varied between 18-60 years. Of the respondents, 14.9% had lower than 5 months' organizational tenure and 11.8% had higher than 10 years' organizational tenure.

**Table 1:** Socio-Demographic and Job Characteristics of Sample

Socio-demographic and job characteristics				Socio-demographic and job characteristics			
		N	%		N	%	
Gender	Male	156	48.4	Age	18-24	124	38.5
	Female	166	51.6		25-31	91	28.3
	Total	322	100.0		32-38	58	18.0
Marital Status	Married	143	44.4		39-45	38	11.8
	Single	179	55.6		> 46	11	3.4
	Total	322	100.0		Total	322	100.0
Education	Primary school	54	16.8	Tenure	<5 months	48	14.9
	High school	144	44.7		6 months-1 year	47	14.6
	Bachelor's degree	124	38.5		1-2 years	63	19.6
	Total	322	100.0		3-4 years	61	18.9
Position	Senior manager	38	11.8		5-7 years	44	13.7
	Mid-level manager	65	20.2		8-10 years	21	6.5
	Staff	219	68.0		>10 years	38	11.8
	Total	322	100.0		Total	322	100.0

**5.2. Measures:**

Respondents rated their psychological well-being using an 8-item scale which was developed by Diener, Wirtz, Biswas-Diener, Tov, Kim-Prieto, Choi, and Oishi (2009) with a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). A sample item was "I lead a purposeful and meaningful life" ( $\alpha = .86$ ). This scale was adopted to Turkish by Telef (2013) ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ).

Then, we used very short form of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-3) to measure respondents' level of work engagement (Schaufeli, et al., 2017). We asked participants to rate their answers by choosing 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Sample item included: "At my work, I feel bursting with energy". We adopted to Turkish UWES-3 in the scope of this study. Finally, to measure job performance, we used performance scale four items by Kirkman and Rosen, (1999) and Sigler and Pearson, (2000) adapted by Turkish by Çöl (2011).

**5.3. Data Analysis**

We used SPSS 23 and AMOS 23 programs in the analysis of the research data. The AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) program is a Structural Equation Model (SEM) program (Arbuckle, 1997). We used as fit indices root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), root mean square residual (RMR), comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) to represent

model fit (46). Values for RMSEA and RMR below 0.08 and for other indices above 0.90 were considered to indicate a good fit (46). We followed Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach to test the mediation model. In order to validate measures, we performed Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

## 6. FINDINGS

First, in order to examine the distinctiveness of the study variables, we conducted CFA's to compare the fit of our hypothesized measurement model to alternative models. The hypothesized three-factor measurement model (psychological well-being, work engagement and job performance) as three distinct factors, for which we loaded each item onto its respective higher order factor. We compared the hypothesized three-factor measurement model with the two-factor measurement model (work engagement and job performance as a single factor and psychological well-being) and a single-factor measurement model (all items of psychological well-being, work engagement and job performance loaded on a single factor). We showed the results in Table 2. Chi-square difference tests indicated that the hypothesized three-factor measurement model fit the data well than the alternative models. These results provided support for psychological well-being, work engagement and job performance as distinct constructs in the present study.

**Table 2.** Fit indices of alternative factor models (N=322)

Model	X <sup>2</sup>	df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	RMR	Comparison	ΔX <sup>2</sup>	Δdf
M1: Three-factor model	281	87	0.08	0.93	0.91	0.05	-	-	-
M2: Two-factor model	392	89	0.10	0.89	0.87	0.06	M2-M1	111**	2
M3: Single-factor model	698	90	0.14	0.79	0.74	0.07	M3-M1	417**	3

\*\*  $p < .01$

We present the descriptive statistics, including the means, standard deviations, internal consistency reliabilities, and correlations among all study variables in Table 3. As seen in the table 3, the mean of psychological well-being was  $2.09 \pm 0.7$ , the mean of work engagement was  $2.26 \pm 0.88$  and the mean of job performance was  $2.05 \pm 0.75$ . Psychological well-being was significantly correlated with work engagement ( $r = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and job performance ( $r = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There was also significant correlation between work engagement and job performance ( $r = 0.63$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

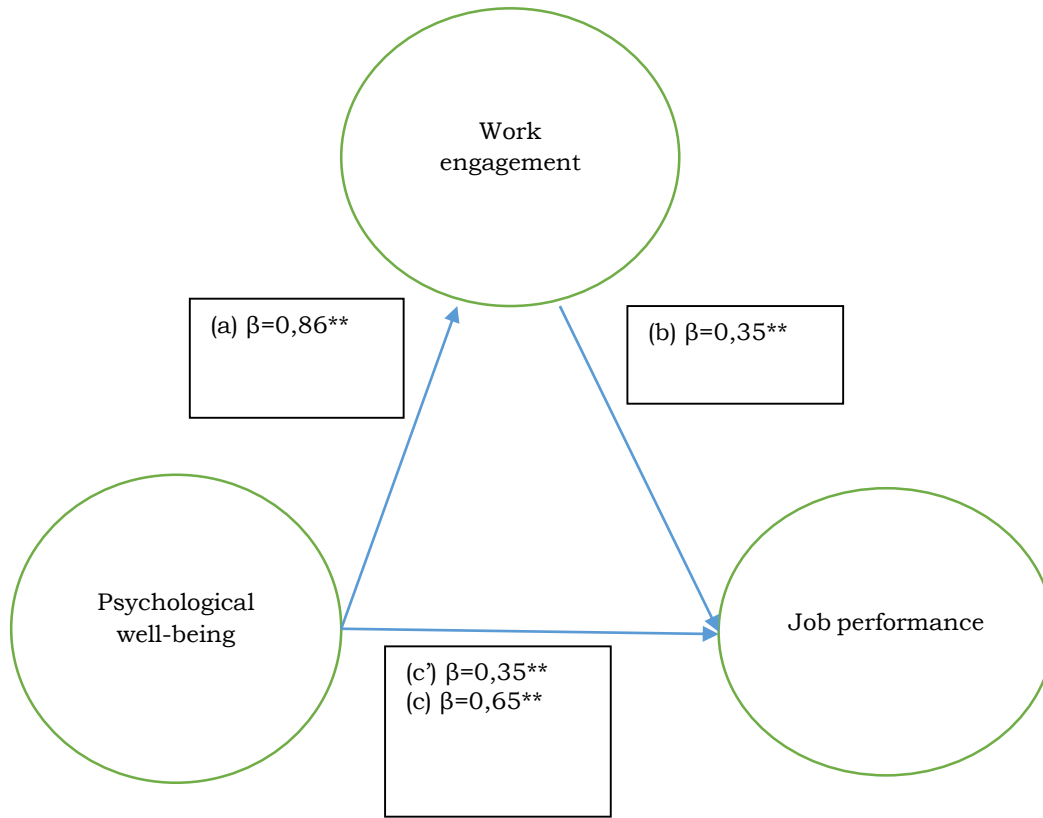
**Table 3.** Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations between Study Variables

Variable	N	M	SS	1	2	3
1 Psychological well-being	322	2.09	0.70	(0.89)		
2 Work engagement	322	2.26	0.88	0.614**	(0.82)	
3 Job performance	322	2.05	0.75	0.624**	0.634**	(0.85)

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . Coefficients alpha for psychological well-being, work engagement and job performance are along the diagonal in the parenthesis.

We tested the mediating role of work engagement in the effect of psychological well-being on job performance. As a result of testing research's model, psychological well-being affected job performance directly and indirectly via the work engagement (partial mediating) Fit indices indicated that the research's model showed a good fit with data ( $\chi^2 = 281.29$ ,  $df = 87$ ,  $p = 0.0001$ ,  $RMR = 0.05$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.08$ ,  $TLI = 0.91$ ,  $CFI = 0.93$ ).

According to Figure 2, psychological well-being predicted work engagement (unstandardized  $\beta = 0.86$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and job performance (unstandardized  $\beta = 0.35$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) significantly. Similarly, work engagement predicted job performance significantly (unstandardized  $\beta = 0.35$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). So, H1, H2 and H3 were supported.



\*\* $p < 0.01$

**Figure 2.** Path Coefficients of Research's Model

We showed Sobel test results, direct, indirect and total effect of psychological well-being on job performance through work engagement in Table 4. According to these results, work engagement partially mediated the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance. So, H4 was supported.



**Table 4.** Sobel Test Results and Direct, Indirect, Total Effects of Psychological Well-Being on Job Performance

	<b>Job Performance</b>
<b>Sobel Z value</b>	5.05356429
<b>p</b>	0.00000043
<b>Direct effect</b>	0.35
<b>Indirect effect</b>	0.30
<b>Total effect</b>	0.65

## 7. DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to determine the mediator role of work engagement in the effect of psychological well-being of textile workers on their job performance. According to the results of the study, it was determined that work engagement had a partial mediator role in the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance. It is foreseen that workers who feel well and happy psychologically will display high job performance. The present study empirically proves that psychological well-being affects job performance. According to the result of the present study, psychological well-being is closely associated with work engagement and increases job performance through work engagement.

It was determined from the results of the study that psychological well-being, work engagement, and job performance levels of textile workers were below the average and low. In the study conducted by Siu (2002) on textile workers in China, a 6-point Likert type psychological well-being scale with 12 items was used (Siu, 2002). We converted the total score of textile workers from psychological well-being scale used in the study by Siu (2002) to a 5-point Likert scale. Psychological well-being of textile workers in China was moderate with  $3.24 \pm 0.6$ .

In parallel to the results of present study, Brunetto et al., (2012) found a positive significant correlation between psychological well-being and work engagement ( $r = 0.69$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) (Brunetto, et al., 2012). A similar correlation was found between psychological well-being and work engagement in the present study as well ( $r = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Based on these results, it can be asserted that there is a strong correlation between psychological well-being and work engagement. Likewise, there is also a significant correlation between psychological well-being and job performance (Holman, Chissick, and Totterdell, 2002; Wright, Cropanzano, and Bonett, 2007). There are a great number of studies proving that there is a positive and significant correlation between work engagement and job performance (Rich, Lepine and Crawford, 2010, p. 617; Christian, Garza and Slaughter, 2011). Therefore, psychological well-being of the personnel is closely associated with their work engagement and displaying high job performance. For this reason, it is important for managers to create an organization environment that will ensure employees to feel psychologically well.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In today's rapidly changing and competitive working conditions, organizations are required to play important roles in ensuring work engagement. Because, work engagement constitutes many desired results such as psychological well-being and showing positive attitudes towards employees' work, performing above expectations, identifying with the organization and contributing to the improvement of organizational efficiency. In order for organizations to compete effectively, it is not enough to provide only high qualified employees. At the same time, it is

necessary to ensure that qualified employees are given the necessary opportunities to use all their skills and they are engaged at work. Work engagement provides various positive results at the individual and organizational level. When evaluated on an individual basis, work engagement creates positive feelings such as self-employment. These positive emotions affect the employee's quality of work, the ability to use their skills and creativity, and also these individual results reflect on the organizational results. In other words, the individual results of the work engagement affect the organizational results indirectly.

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