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The Relationships between Organizational Climate, Innovative Behavior and Job Performance of Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Organizational climate (OC) is important in creating the essential conditions to ensure high job performance (JP) of teachers and encourage them to show innovative behavior (IB) in both classrooms and school-wide. High JP can be observed for teachers as a result of suitable OC and IB. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationships between the OC characterized by support, cohesion, fairness and pressure, JP and IB of teachers. The study sample consisted of 398 primary and secondary school teachers working at the Adana province of Turkey. Three scales related to OC, JP and IB were used to collect data. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was performed to analyze the effects of OC on IB and JP as well as the effect of IB on JP. According to the findings; OCs characterized by support, fairness and pressure had effects on the JP of teachers. OCs characterized by support and pressure had effects on the IB of teachers and the IB of teachers had an effect on JP of teachers.

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Keywords:
Innovative Behavior, Job Performance, Organizational Climate, Teachers

Introduction

Teachers play one of the most important roles in creating and maintaining effective schools belongs to teachers. It is impossible to manage schools in line with effectiveness criteria without the efficient performance and innovativeness of teachers. However, expecting high job performance (JP) and innovative behavior (IB) from teachers requires suitable school conditions. The organizational climate (OC) of schools is especially important among these conditions since OC involves various dimensions related to school administrators, colleagues, work environment and quality of work. In addition to the factors resulting from the conditions of schools; the characteristics of teachers can also be a determinative factor regarding their JP. Especially the IB of teachers is a driving power in attaining high JP since the efforts that teachers show for being innovative and creative make them have high JP at the same time.

OC, JP and IB are concepts the mutual relationships of which are often investigated in relevant literature. There are many studies indicating the relationships between OC and JP (Abdel-Razek, 2011; Adeyemi, 2006; Chang, Chuang & Bennington, 2011; Raza, 2010; Spruill, 2008; Tutar & Altınöz, 2010); between OC and IB (Al-Saudi, 2012; Åmo, Oftedal & Bullvaag, 2006; Arif, Zubair & Manzoor, 2012; Chang & Yang, 2012; Crespell, 2007; Subramaniam, 2012; Sağnak, 2012; Scott & Bruce, 1994; Yu, Yu & Yu, 2013) and between JP and IB (Aryee, Walumbwa, Zhou & Hartnell, 2012; Cingöz & Akdoğan, 2011; Dörner, 2012). Although the dual relationships between these variables have been investigated, there are limited studies investigating their relationships using a theoretical model. In this study, relationships among OC characterized by support, cohesion, fairness and pressure, JP and IB have been examined using a conceptual

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model. It was intended to contribute to boosting the JP and IB of teachers by means of determining the characteristics of OC with effects on the IB and JP of teachers as well as the effect of the IB of teachers on their JP.

Literature Review

OC; "illustrates a common dilemma in the effort to understand and describe human behavior in organizations" and "a cognitive framework consisting of attitudes, values, behavioral norms and expectations shared by organizational members" (Sacher, 2010, p. 4). Dimensions of school climate may include; "the physical environment of the school, the social system, an orderly school environment, the expectations about teacher behavior and student outcomes" (Creemers & Reezigt, 1999, p. 35). School climate helps to distinguish schools from each other since each climate emphasizes different characteristics (Kallestad, 2010). Lichtman (2007) found that climate factors that enhance feelings of opportunities for personal growth and development seem to be the most influential. Therefore, it is expected from an influential climate to foster the IB of workers to facilitate their personal development. IB is "a multiple-stage process in which an individual recognizes a problem for which she or he generates new (novel or adopted) ideas and solutions, works to promote and build support for them, and produces an applicable prototype or model for the use and benefit of the organization or parts within it" (Carmeli, Meitar & Weisberg, 2006, p.78). Kirwan (2009, p.80) states that "being open to new ways of doing things" as well as "initiative and creativity" are necessary to create a climate of openness. Yu et al. (2013) determined a positive association between organizational innovation climate and innovative behavior.

De Jong (2007, p.30) expressed antecedents of innovative work behavior at three levels namely the "individual level, work group level, organization level" and environmental factors category. Management of the organization has an influential power on organizational characteristics and group features among these categories. Välimäki, Niskanen, Tervonen and Laurila (2004, p.96) stated that innovativeness is a "strategic, cultural, social and managerial issue." Yeung, Lai and Yee (2007) explained two different approaches in organizational management. While one emphasizes tangible aspects, the other one emphasizes intangible aspects including innovativeness. Since ensuring that workers exhibit IB in organizations is within the sphere of influence of management, management should carry this out by creating a proper OC for innovativeness.

It is necessary for OC to encourage and reward employees to show IB. There may be different types of climates supporting innovativeness. Motivating and rewarding employees for maintaining their innovativeness is important to enable and sustain a climate of innovation. Providing different learning opportunities to be productive and developing new ideas and tolerance for the failures of employees and empowering them are important and useful administrative practices in organizations in order to create an OC suitable for fostering IBs (Solomon, Winslow & Tarabishy, 1998). Crespell (2007, p.58) concluded that innovativeness can be fostered through a climate supporting innovation by managers. In order to foster innovation through climate, OC should have some characteristics such as "team cohesion (alignment), supervisor encouragement, and autonomy." Çekmecelioğlu (2006) determined that variables of OC which are organizational encouragement, support of management, support of the team and challenge of work have positive effects on creativity.

Teachers are being asked to change their educational methods, the way their professional role is served, their opinions and beliefs about educational purposes and contribute to the social and economic growth in line with changing conditions (Sachs, 1997). Teachers can address the different needs and characteristics of students using new strategies thus helping them to reveal their creativity in learning processes with innovative teaching. Teachers also determine the content of lessons which can stimulate the learning interests of students through innovative teaching (Zhu, Wang, Cai & Engels, 2013). Eaude (2011) stated that teacher innovation is necessary for improved student learning and that the teaching profession requires pedagogy including innovation. The school climate and work environment supporting teachers in this way should also be provided in order to ensure the innovativeness of teachers in line with these new requirements. Sağnak (2012) put forth that there is a significant relationship between an innovative climate and the IB of teachers.

Work environment is sometimes used equally with work climate. Perceptions towards factors of work environment may affect the innovativeness and creativity of employees. In order to boost the creativity of employees, a climate with supportive characteristics and a reward system should be created (Eren & Gündüz, 2002). Chang, Chuang and Bennington (2011) expressed that creative teaching is in place at schools if their atmosphere supports innovation. Creative teaching is associated with working conditions and work environment. Providing a good working environment and opportunities for study and treating them in a good manner enables teachers to try out different teaching methods thus creating new challenges in the education process for their students. Zhu et al. (2013) determined that a supportive school environment, especially a supportive relationship with colleagues, encourages the innovative teaching performance of teachers.

OC perceived positively by teachers can also foster the JP of teachers, along with their IB. JP is "proficiency, that is, how well an incumbent can do the job", "not how well the incumbent does do the job" (Wigdor & Green, 1991, p. 5-6). Creative (Chang and et al., 2011) and innovative (Zhu and et al., 2013) teaching performance are discussed together with school climate and environment. Meglino (1976) stated that evaluative characteristics of OC and competence in tasks are ingredients of JP. Abdel-Razek (2011) determined a significant relation between the JP effectiveness and the OC dimensions, as well as between the total degree of both performance and climate. Studies also point out the relationship between OC and the concepts related to JP, such as work efficacy (Zhang & Liu, 2010) and productivity (Putter, 2010). This close relationship between OC and JP can be observed in school settings as well. Adeyemi (2006) determined a significant relationship between OC and teachers' JP. Raza (2010) determined that an open climate is positively correlated to teacher performance, while a closed climate is negatively correlated to teacher performance.

Whereas on the one hand, OC is conducive to increasing the IB and JP of teachers; the IB of teachers plays a facilitator role in increasing the JP of teachers. Being innovative may help to show better performance at the workplace depending on the willingness to put new ideas into practice. Xerri and Brunetto (2011) stated that IB can be considered as a performance indicator. In order to know in which ways teachers generate new ideas, it is important to examine their IB and professional performance (Messmann, Mulder & Gruber, 2010). Dörner (2012) determined that innovative work behavior positively influences task performance. It was determined in the study by Rhee, Park and Lee (2010) that innovativeness exerts a positive influence on performance. Messmann et al. (2010) examined the characteristics of professionalism under professional knowledge, performance and development and determined that there is a positive relationship between characteristics of professionalism and innovative work behavior of teachers.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationships among OC characterized by support, cohesion, fairness and pressure, JP and IB of teachers. With this aim, a structural equation model was developed in line with the hypothesis given below:

H1. A positive OC characterized by support has a positive effect on the JP of teachers.

H2. A positive OC characterized by cohesion has a positive effect on the JP of teachers.

H3. A positive OC characterized by fairness has a positive effect on the JP of teachers.

H4. A positive OC characterized by pressure has a positive effect on the JP of teachers.

H5. A positive OC characterized by support has a positive effect on the IB of teachers.

H6. A positive OC characterized by cohesion has a positive effect on the IB of teachers.

H7. A positive OC characterized by fairness has a positive effect on the IB of teachers.

H8. A positive OC characterized by pressure has a positive effect on the IB of teachers.

H9. The IB of teachers has a positive effect on the JP of teachers.

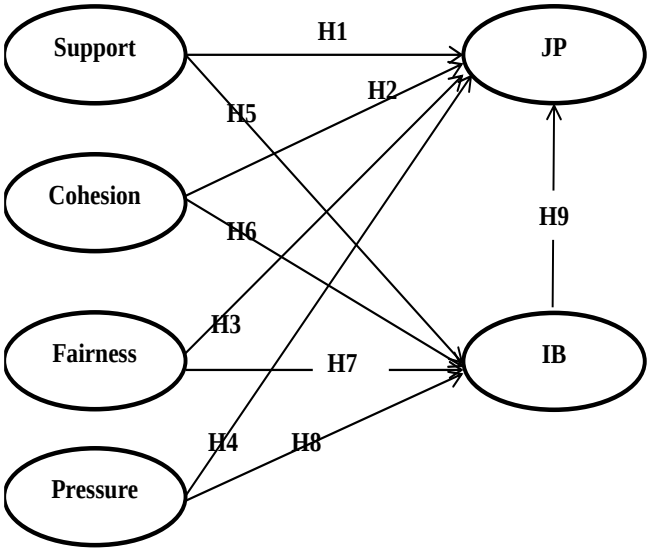


Figure 1. Conceptual model with hypotheses

The Importance of the Study

There is no doubt that teachers play the most important role in enhancing academic and social success of schools. Performances of teachers both in processes of education and social processes are crucial to provide school development. Enhancing teacher performance can be ensured through their IBs after being appointed. Teachers who have an innovative understanding and therefore behave innovatively can ensure sustainability of their professional development and continuous development of their JP. Therefore revealing how IB of teachers affects their JP is of capital importance in terms of enhancing school success. Enhancing both JP and IB of teachers is surely affected by various institutional factors. Dimensions of OC related to the institutional characteristics are among these factors. Analyzing how OC related to school characteristics affects JP and IB can contribute to the enhancement of JP and IB of teachers. Results of this study can characterize a climate for enhancing JP of teachers thus enabling them to exhibit IB by setting light to the way of structuring school climate dimensions related to the institutional characteristics.

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations of the study. OC was examined as a concept related to only institutional characteristics shaped by administrators, colleagues and the nature of work. Climate dimensions arising individual expectations regarding appreciation were not examined in the scope of the study. The study was conducted with teachers working at primary and secondary schools. Different results may be obtained in the case of conducting the study only at primary schools or secondary schools. Another limitation of the study is assuming the objectivity of teacher perceptions on their own JP and IB.

Method

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of primary and secondary school teachers working at the Adana province of Turkey. The study sample was chosen by cluster and random sampling methods and consisted of 398 primary and secondary school teachers working at central districts of Adana province of Turkey. Out of 398 teachers, 214 of them (53.77 %) are female and 184 of them (46.23 %) male. 201 of them (50.5 %) are primary school teachers and 197 of them (49.5 %) are secondary school teachers. 118 of them (29.65 %) have a length of service between 1 and 10 years; 193 of them (48.49 %) have a length of service between 11 and 20 years and 87 of them (21.86 %) have a length of service of over 21 years.

Data Collection Tools

Employee performance scale (EPS). EPS was used to determine self-perceptions of teachers regarding their JP. The four-item EPS was developed by Kirkman and Rosen (1999) and Sigler and Pearson (2000) used the scale afterwards. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Çöl (2008) and the Turkish form of the EPS has been used in different studies conducted in Turkey (Yılmaz & Karahan 2010; Tutar & Altınöz 2010). Examples of the scale items include: "I complete my tasks on time" and "I respond quickly when problems come up."

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to confirm the structure of EPS in the present study. Fit indices regarding EPS are as follows: $X^2/df = 1.02$, RMSEA= .01, NFI= 1.00, NNFI= 1.00, CFI=1.00, IFI= 1.00, SRMR= .01, GFI= 1.00. Results from the CFA demonstrated that EPS has satisfactory fit indices exceeding standards on acceptable fit indices. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was used to test the reliability of the scale and it was found to be .90.

Organizational climate scale (OCS). OCS was used to determine perceptions of teachers regarding the climate of their schools. OCS was first developed by Koys and DeCotiis (1991) and was modified by Montes, Moreno and Fernandez (2004). The modified version of OCS was adapted into Turkish by İşcan and Karabey (2007). It consists of 15 items under the five factors of support (4 items), fairness (2 items), cohesion (4 items), recognition (2 items) and pressure (3 items). However, recognition factor was excluded in the present study. Since the effects of OC on JP and IBs of teachers have been examined completely in the context of institutional qualities shaped by administrators, colleagues and the nature of work, it was not intended that individual expectations were reflected when examining these effects. The factor of recognition includes expectations of employees for internal recognition and special praise to each individual. Examples of the scale items include: "I can count on my boss to help me when I need it", "I have too much work and too little time to do it in", "There is a lot of "team spirit" among people" and "If my boss terminates someone, the person probably deserved it."

CFA was used to confirm the structure of OCS in the present study. Fit indices regarding OCS are as follows: $X^2/df = 1.7$, RMSEA= .04, NFI= .97, NNFI= .98, CFI=.99, IFI= .99, SRMR= .04, GFI= .97. Results from the CFA demonstrated that OCS has satisfactory fit indices exceeding standards on acceptable fit indices.

Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was used to test the reliability of each factor. It was found to be .92 for the factor of support; .81 for the factor of fairness; .87 for the factor of cohesion and .90 for the factor of pressure.

Innovative work behavior scale (IWBS). The IWBS was used to determine the extent to which teachers display IB in schools. The six-item IWBS was developed by Scott and Bruce (1994) and was adapted into Turkish by Akkoç (2012). The Turkish form of the IWBS has been used by different researchers in Turkey as well (e.g. Çalışkan, Akkoç & Turunç 2011; Çelik 2012). Examples of the scale items include: "I seek out new technologies, processes, techniques, and/or product ideas at work" and "I develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementations of new ideas."

CFA was used to confirm the structure of IWBS in the present study. Fit indices regarding IWBS are as follows: $X^2/df = 1.5$, RMSEA= .04, NFI= .99, NNFI= .99, CFI=1.00, IFI= 1.00, SRMR= .03, GFI= 1.00. Results from the CFA demonstrated that IWBS has satisfactory fit indices exceeding standards on acceptable fit indices. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was used to test the reliability of the scale and it was found to be .93.

Analyzing of Data

LISREL modelling software with maximum-likelihood estimation was used in all Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analyses. Through SEM analyses, firstly the measurement models regarding OC, JP and IB and then the developed structural model were evaluated. After it was seen that the measurement models had satisfactory fit, the structural model was estimated.

A set of fit indices was used in order to evaluate the overall fit of the measurement models and developed structural model. The determined values for these indices in analyses were compared with the acceptable standards regarding fit indices. Standards taken into consideration and accepted in the analyses

are (Bentler & Bonett 1980; Brown 2006; Hoe 2008; Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen 2008; Hu & Bentler 1999; Kline 1998; Marsh, Hau, Artelt, Baumert & Peschar 2006; Schreiber, Stage, King, Nora & Barlow 2006): The $\chi 2$ (chi-square)/df (degree of freedom): 3 or less; Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI): 0.90 or greater; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA): less than .06; Standardized Root Mean Squared Residuals (SRMR): less than .08

Findings

Findings on Measurement Models

The measurement models of the study were evaluated through CFA. The first model, OC, involves four factors which are support, fairness, cohesion and pressure. The second model represents IB and the last model represents JP. Results from the CFAs put forth that the measurement models have satisfactory fit indices exceeding standards on acceptable fit indices and that they are good-fitting models. Fit indices regarding the measurement models have been shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Fit indices of the measurement models

	X^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	NNFI	NFI	IFI	SRMR
OC (second order CFA)	1.68	0.04	0.97	0.99	0.98	0.97	0.99	0.04
IB	1.49	0.04	1.00	1.00	0.99	0.99	1.00	0.03
JP	1.02	0.01	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.01

Findings on Structural Equation Modelling

Structural relations in the structural model as well as the overall structural model were tested following the confirmation that measurement models exhibit a good level of model fit. The structural model showed a good fit as can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Goodness-of-fit statistics for the structural model

Statistics	
χ^2 /df	1.85
RMSEA	.05
NFI	.94
NNFI	.96
CFI	.97
IFI	.97
GFI	.93
SRMR	.06

The relationships between OC characterized by support and JP; OC characterized by fairness and JP; OC characterized by pressure and JP were significant as has been shown in Figure 2. However the relationship between OC characterized by cohesion and JP was not found to be significant. Thus, H1, H3 and H4 were all supported. However, H2 was not supported. The effect sizes of support, fairness and pressure on JP were 0.22. According to Chin (1998), standardized paths regarded as meaningful should be at least 0.20. Kline (1998) stated that with regard to the effect size of the standardized path coefficients, the effect sizes below .10 point out small effects; around .30 point out medium effects and .50 and above point out large effects. These effect sizes show that the effects of support, fairness and pressure on JP were at a level that should be paid attention to.

The relationships between OC characterized by support and IB and between OC characterized by pressure and IB were significant as shown in Figure 2. Thus, H5 and H8 were accepted. The effect sizes of support and pressure on IB were found to be .27 and this effect size showed that the effects of support and pressure on IB should be taken into consideration in examining the IB of teachers. However, the relationships between OC characterized by cohesion and IB and between OC characterized by fairness and IB were not significant. Therefore, H6 and H7 were not supported.

The relationship between IB and JP was significant as shown in Figure 2. With regard to the effect of IB on JP, the standardized path coefficient was found to be 0.40 and the t-value was found to be 2.81. These results confirmed H9, indicating that IB has a significant effect on JP and that the effect of IB on JP was of a size between medium and large.

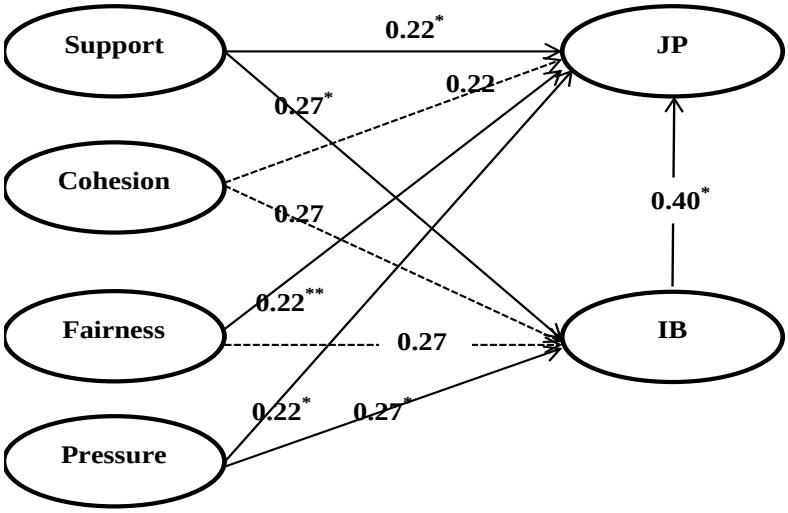


Figure 2. Results of SEM with standardized path coefficients (an asterisk indicates a significant path coefficient at *p <.01 and **p<.05).

Results, Discussion and Suggestions

It was revealed in the relationship structure among OC characterized by support, cohesion, fairness and pressure, IB and JP that teachers showing IB had an effect on JP development of teachers and out of the dimensions of OC, while support and pressure affect the IB of teachers; support, pressure and fairness affect the JP of teachers. The relationship between OC and IB pointed out by the relationships among OC dimensions and IB in the present study has been investigated in different studies. Similarly Imran, Saeed, Anis-ul-Haq and Fatima (2010) determined that 50% variance is explained by OC in innovative work behavior. Al-Saudi (2012) found that the dimensions of OC have a strong relationship with the dimensions of the IB.

It was determined in the present study that the pressure dimension of OC has a positive effect on the IB of teachers. This finding is really interesting, since pressure may be thought to cause mostly unwanted results in workplaces. However, the stimulating effect of pressure enabling teachers to concentrate on their work in a more disciplined manner may be the reason for this. Normative and control structures of an organization can also be perceived to be related to the pressure dimension. In parallel with the study's finding Åmo and et al. (2006) found that the normative dimension has a strong, positive and significant influence on employee's IB. However, Türker and İnel (2012) determined that perceived individual innovativeness decreases with a higher external locus of control.

OC characterized by cohesion was found to have no effect on the IB of teachers in the present study. The dimension of cohesion emphasizes the collaboration, teamwork, relationships and supportive communication among teachers in schools. As opposed to this finding Arif and et al. (2012) found that a supportive communication climate is positively correlated with innovative work behavior. Prajak and

Pongpun (2013) determined that teamwork is among the most important competencies of an innovator. Meirink, Imants, Meijer and Verloop (2010, p.177) stated that "the temporary, voluntary, and task-oriented character of the teams" are effective characteristics to ensure innovative teacher learning.

The effect of OC characterized by support on the IB of teachers was another finding of this study. A school environment encouraging high performances can be created through an OC characterized by support. Since school administrators play a part in providing support within the scope of an OC characterized by support, they can give the message that he/she expects high performance from teachers as well as supporting teachers in the areas in which teachers need help and in career development. Similar to this finding of the study, Cingöz and Akdoğan (2011) determined that expected positive performance outcomes are related to IB and expectations for performance positively affect the innovativeness of employees.

When it comes to the effect of OC on the JP of teachers, OCs characterized by support, fairness and pressure were found to have effects on the JP of teachers in the present study. Spruill (2008) determined that OC is correlated to employee performance in accordance with the finding pointing out the relationship between OC and JP. Similarly, Tutar and Altınöz (2010) determined that there is a relationship between perceptions of OC and the work performance of employees. OC is also important in terms of increasing the overall performance of schools through increasing the JP of every teacher. Griffith (2006) determined that organizational performance increases with perceptions of positive OC in public elementary schools.

Although OC characterized by pressure was found to have a positive effect on the JP of teachers in the present study, there are different studies indicating a negative relation between JP and factors related to pressure such as not having autonomy. Parker (2007) determined that JP can be boosted when employees see their roles in different ways and those with highest performance have high autonomy. Bakker and Bal (2010) put forth that autonomy is a significant predictor of performance among teachers. However, in parallel with the study's finding indicating a positive effect of OC characterized by support, a resourceful work environment's positive effect on the JP of teachers (Bakker & Bal, 2010) was also found in different studies. In other respects Jing, Avery and Bergsteiner (2011) determined that climate with a supportive characteristic is related to the organizational performance and provides enhanced satisfaction of the organization's staff as well. These results show that supporting teachers by providing essential resources and environments while creating a supportive climate can increase their performance since the working conditions they need psychologically and physically will have been presented in this manner.

OC characterized by cohesion with an emphasis on relationships among colleagues did not have any effect on the JP of teachers according to the findings of the present study. On the contrary, Gabriel (2005) stated that in order to ensure the productivity of teachers, enabling a teacher community where connections among teachers are available is essential. Bozkurt Bostancı and Kayaalp (2011) determined that the colleagues of teachers contribute to the performance development of teachers. The reason for this converse finding may be that teachers consider their performance from an individual perspective and not depending on the efforts of others for their benefit.

There are various indicators regarding whether teachers show desired performance in schools or not. While some of these indicators are related to instructional subjects such as student achievement and classroom management, some of them are more large-scale, such as taking part in activities contributing to school development. However, there are also some subjects which are indicators of JP, as well as affecting performance in both these areas. In this point, being innovative is regarded as a behavior that is an indicator of performance and increases JP concurrently. The positive effect of the IB of teachers on the JP of teachers was also revealed in this study. It can be concluded that teachers showing IB in schools foster their performance in schools and classrooms. As a similar finding; Aryee and et al. (2012) found that work engagement is positively related to IB and IB is positively related to task performance.

Displaying IB in schools can strengthen the JP of teachers by forming teachers' perceptions toward the definition of their roles. Kessel, Hannemann-Weber and Kratzer (2012) determined that it is helpful to encourage employees to have flexible role orientation if they are encouraged to show innovative work behavior. That is, employees who are willing to undertake the roles out of their standard roles are more inclined to display innovative work behavior. Another way for improving JP by showing IB is explained using the productivity of employees. Chang and Liu (2008) found that IB has an influence on job

productivity. In the present study, the JP of teachers was also explained with the situations such as finding solutions and reaching job objectives which are related to being productive. These findings shed light on how the IB of teachers can improve the JP of teachers through being productive.

Based on the results, it is suggested that necessary flexibility for generating and implementing new ideas in schools should be provided to teachers in order to be able to show more effective performance. It may be helpful to develop the expectation of teachers so that a positive pressure on teachers with regard to generating new ideas can be created in order to encourage teachers to be innovative in schools. School administrators should conduct studies on investigating the professional needs of teachers in order to provide necessary support in terms of developing their JP.

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