

The Mediating Affect of Supervisory Support Between P-O Fit, P-Job Fit, Stress, Surface Acting and Emotional Exhaustion in Service Sector: Evidence From Turkey

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the relationships between person-organization fit, person-job fit, emotional exhaustion, surface acting, stress and supervisory support strategies. Data were collected from 3 different companies (n=244) in telecommunication service sector in Turkey. To define mediating effect, Sobel test was administered. Results revealed that supervisory support has a mediating effect between Person-Organization (P-O) fit and surface acting but not emotional exhaustion and stress. On the other hand, supervisory support has a mediating effect between Person-Job fit and surface acting, emotional exhaustion and stress. This results mean that when P-O unfit and P-Job unfit occur, responsible manager can diminish this undesired situation.

Key Words: Person-Organization Fit, Person-Job Fit, Surface Acting, Emotional Exhaustion, Stress, Supervisory Support, Mediating effect, Sobel Test.

1. Introduction

In the global market, customers want organizations to innovate different service and new things to satisfy their needs and wants. On the other hand, satisfying customer needs and wants, innovating new things, having and sustaining competitive advantage depend on high quality employee (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). Human resource department deals with all kinds of problem related to finding high quality employee to hire. And also department manager knows how hard to find a high quality employee. But they also have to consider whether employee fits the organization or not. Finding an employee who fits to organization is important because previous research studies suggest that Person Environment (P-E) fit has a positive relationship with job satisfaction, career involvement, organizational commitment and a negative relationship with turnover intention (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; Hollenbeck, 1989). There is another problem in front of the human resource department manager other than finding a high quality

employee. According to environment change, organization has to change. This means that the time employee is hired to organization, he/she might fit to organization. After organization changing occurs, they may not fit to organization anymore. There could be some instrument to make employee fit to organization and keep this high quality and required workforce in the organization. This study aims to figure out important mediating variables to make employee fit to organization. On the other hand researchers have tried to find relationship between P-E fit, job satisfaction, turnover intention, and organizational commitment but not surface acting, emotional exhaustion and stress which are important in service sector. This study aims to find impact of two most common fit concepts P-O fit and P-J fit on employee surface acting, stress and emotional exhaustion while considering supervisory support as a mediating variable. There is limited literature that shows the relationship between these variables in the context of Turkey in telecommunication service sector. This study will help in adding knowledge to the existing body of literature by examining the impact of these variables in this sector. It will guide managers of the organizations to understand the phenomena of P-O fit and P-J fit that will help adjusting employees in the organization's environment by using supervisory support.

2.Theoretical background, review of literature, and hypotheses development

P-E fit theory is defined as congruence or match between person and environment (Judge and Kristof-Brown, 2004; Dawis, 1992). The concept of P-E fit includes Person-Vocation (P-V) fit, Person-Organization P-O fit, Person-Job P-J fit and Person-Group (P-G) fit (Judge & Ferris, 1992; Werbel & Gilliland, 1999). Main philosophy behind this theory is that working environment shapes and governs the employee behavior. Because of that human resource department manager cares about employee fitting to organization. P-O fit is accepted as measure of fit among workers and the organizations (Silverthorne, 2004). There are two important issue exist to make this fit occurred. First one is that P-O fit takes place when the organization fulfils employee's needs, second one, when the employee possesses and demonstrates the abilities to meet organizational demands (Kristof, 1996). The Person-organization fit actually focus on that people are attracted to and selected by organizations that match their values, and they leave organizations that are not compatible with their personalities (Robbins and Judge, 2009).

Another important issue is Person-Job fit. P-J fit is defined as matching between an individual personal attributes and the job characteristics. There are two types of requirement to attain P-J fit. One is Demand-Abilities fit and the other is Need-Supply fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Demand abilities fit occur when employees knowledge, skills and abilities match with job requirements. On the other hand need-supply fit occurs in which employees needs, aspirations and preferences are fulfilled by the jobs (Cable & DeRue, 2002). The only time a good fit reaches when an individual have right skills and abilities to perform his job or the job can fulfill the individual's need (Edwards, 1991).

In service sector, emotional labor is important to satisfy customer. This phenomena is defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" for a wage (Hochschild, 1983: 7). In the literature, surface and deep acting are two emotional labor strategies. Surface acting is defined as employee behaves organizationally required emotions by fake behavior. Whereas, deep acting involves changing one's feelings in order to display organizationally required emotions. It can be said that deep acting is more likely to be perceived more sincere than surface acting so in terms of service quality and positive customers' reactions, deep acting is more effective and effortful than surface acting (Grandey, 2000; 2003; Morris and Feldman 1996). It would be said that both deep and surface acting are organizationally desired behavior. But surface acting is more like employee uses fake emotion while she/he treats to customer. When this happens customers realize these fake emotions and customer doesn't want to have

another service in the same organization. Therefore, it destroys the company reputation. Company prefers deep acting rather than surface acting. It is obvious that emotional labor is directly shaped by organization and working environment.

In service sector employee tries to satisfy different types of customers. Even if employee does as best as he/she can, she/he cannot satisfy customer's needs and wants every time. When customer is unsatisfied and complains about the service, employee may become frustrated and stressed.

Stress is defined as the emotional and physiological reactions to demand, situation or anything in job environment that unbalance person's equilibrium (Zastrow, 1984). Stress builds up on human beings because of so many reasons. The reasons behind stress might be job demands and lack of job resources (Brooks and Piquero 1998; Pienaar and Rothmann 2003), role ambiguity, role conflict (Yang et al, 2008), the quality of the working and social environment (Sparks and Cooper, 1999), task uncertainty and task content (Nelson and Burke, 2000), productivity pressures, job uncertainty, amount of workload and complexity (Noblet and Rodwell, 2008).

Information's about P-O fit, P-J fit and stress suggest that undesired working environment directly effects employee stress level negatively.

In service sector, if employee suffers from too much stress and they may face burnout syndrome. In the literature, burnout phenomenon is caused by chronic stress and this phenomenon can impair human service effectiveness and performance (Collings and Murray, 1996). Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) define burnout as "a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in 'normal' individuals that is primarily characterised by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work." Today, Maslach's development of a process model is the most commonly accepted definition and used to specify the developmental sequence of the burnout phenomenon (Boles et al., 2000). The first of these, emotional exhaustion, is characterised by a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources are used up (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). And also this dimension is accepted as a core of burnout syndrome. This situation brings tension and frustration as workers are unable to carry out their occupational tasks and gradually lose their usual sense of responsibility towards clients and customers.

The second dimension, depersonalisation, is characterised by negative and inappropriate attitudes towards customers, frustration, loss of idealism, and withdrawal. A distinctive feature of depersonalisation is a perception of customers as objects, rather than persons.

The third dimension, reduced personal accomplishment, is characterised by a loss of efficiency and capability, low morale, and inability to cope with job requirement (Maslach and Leiter, 2005). Such reduced personal accomplishment is accompanied by a decline in feelings of competence and a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively with respect to one's work and other people (Schutte et al., 2000). This information defines that burnout syndrome is caused by job and organization related issue.

Employee really cares about how much supervisor cares their wellbeing and values their contribution to the organization. Because supervisor is accepted as an agent of the organization. And also employee knows that when supervisor evaluates employee performance, he/she will mention about employee performance to upper level manager (Malatesta, 1995; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Yoon, Han, & Seo, 1996). If supervisor is really effective to change and shape of the upper level managers decision. He/she will appear to be highly valued and well treated by the organization would be highly identified with the organization's basic character and would be accepted as real agent and powerful actor for P-O support. Thus we can propose these hypotheses:

H₁. Supervisory support has a mediating effect between P-O fit and surface acting, emotional exhaustion and stress.

H₂. Supervisory support has a mediating effect between P-J fit and surface acting, emotional exhaustion, and stress.

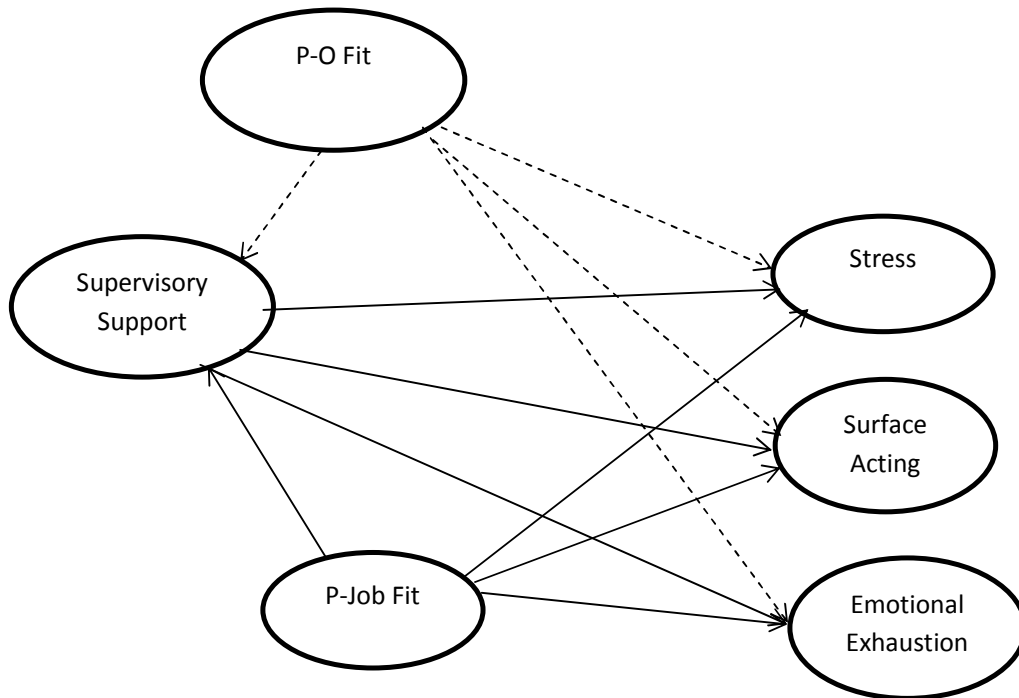


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

3. Method

3.1. Mediation effects

To understand whether supervisory support has a mediating effect or not, Sobel test was used. Purpose of Sobel test: A variable may be considered as a mediator to the extent to which it carries the influence of a given independent variable (IV) to a given dependent variable (DV). Generally speaking, Mediation can be said to occur when;

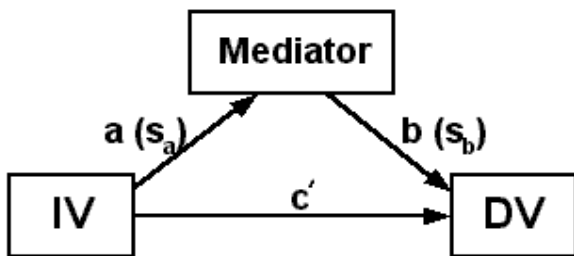


Figure 1. Sobel Test diagram

- (1) the IV significantly affects the mediator,
- (2) the IV significantly affects the DV in the absence of the mediator,
- (3) the mediator has a significant unique effect on the DV, and
- (4) the effect of the IV on the DV shrinks upon the addition of the mediator to the model (MacKinnon & Dwyer, 1993; MacKinnon, Warsi, & Dwyer, 1995; Sobel, 1982).

Sobel test equation: $z\text{-value} = a*b/\text{SQRT}(b^2*sa^2 + a^2*sb^2)$

a = raw (unstandardized) regression coefficient for the association between IV and mediator.

sa = standard error of a.

b = raw coefficient for the association between the mediator and the DV (when the IV is also a predictor of the DV).

sb = standard error of b.

3.2. Subjects and Procedures

Data were collected from telecommunication service sector in Turkey. A questionnaire survey was conducted. The questionnaire that includes demographic information, person-organization fit, person-job fit, emotional exhaustion, stress, supervisory support and surface acting items were delivered to 550 randomly selected service workers in 3 different companies. 250 surveys came back from companies and 244 were accepted to analyze. The sample included female 48.4% and male 51.6%. The majority of the respondents were married 60.1%. The range of workers old was 26 thru 42 years and the average occupational tenure of respondents was about 8.02 years. 21 percent of participants have college degree and .01 percent has MBA degree and 78.9 percent of participants have other educational diploma.

3.3. Measures

3.3.1. P-O fit

Person-Organization fit was measured by Cable and Judge (1996) scale. The scale has 3 items scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The factor analysis showed that the items loaded on only one factor. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .833.

3.3.2. Person-job fit

Person-job fit was measured by Brkich, Jeffs and Carless (2002) scale. The scale has 6 items scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The factor analysis showed that the items loaded on only one factor. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .854.

3.3.3. Stress

Stress was measured by using the scale developed by House and Rizzo (1972). The scale has 7 factors. Participants were asked to respond to stress scale by indicating the degree to which the condition applied to them on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In this sample, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .851.

3.3.4. Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion subscale was taken from Maslach's (1981) burnout scale. The subscale has 7 items scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Emotional Exhaustion Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .861.

3.2.5. Surface Acting

To measure surface acting, we used emotional labour's surface acting subscale developed by Brotheridge and Lee (1998). The subscale consists of 6 items measuring the surface acting. Participants were requested to evaluate each item in terms of the frequency of their feelings ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) of surface acting sub-scale was .844.

3.2.6. Supervisory Support

To measure supervisory support, we used the Peeters, Buunk ve Schaufeli'nin (1995) developed and Dierendonck, Schaufeli ve Buunk (1998) used supervisory support scale. The scale consists of 8 items measuring the supervisory support. Participants were requested to evaluate each item in terms of the frequency of their feelings ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) of surface acting sub-scale was .954.

4. Results

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Stress	1					
2. P-Job Fit	-,385**	1				
3. Supervisory support	-,563**	,225*	1			
4. P-O Fit	-,359**	,481**	,524**	1		
5. Emotion Exhaustion	,728**	-,487**	-	-,398**	1	
6. Surface Acting	,456**	-,374**	-	-,381**	,434**	1

This study conceptual framework shows the relationships between person-organization-fit, person-job-fit, surface acting, stress and emotional exhaustion. To test this relationship correlation analysis is performed. Table 1 shows the correlation matrix for the key variables of this study. The matrix shows that there is significant negative correlation between stress and P-O fit, supervisory support and P-J fit. And also there is negative relationship found between emotion exhaustion and P-J fit, supervisory support and P-O fit. Lastly, there is negative relation found between surface action and P-J fit, supervisory support and P-O fit. Positive relation is found between P-J fit and supervisory support and P-O fit. Also there is positive relationship found between emotion exhaustion, surface acting and stress.

After correlation analysis, Sobel test criteria was tested to understand whether supervisory support has a mediating effect or not (Sobel, 1982).

4.1. The IV significantly affects the mediator,

Table 1. P-O fit and Supervisory Support Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
Supervisory Support	.274	42.691	46.147	6.793	.099	.671	.000

a. Independent Variable: P-O Fit

Table 2. P-Job fit and Supervisory Support Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
Supervisory Support	.051	15.908	13.284	3.645	.082	.297	.000

a. Independent Variable: P-Job Fit

Results from Table 1 show that P-O Fit (IV) has significant effect on Supervisory Support (Mediator) and first criteria is supported.

4.2. The IV significantly affects the DV in the absence of the mediator,

Table 3 . P-O Fit and Surface Acting, Stress and Emotional Exhaustion Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
Surface Acting	.145	10,118	20,698	-4,550	.072	-.327	.000
Stress	.129	13.416	18.094	-4.254	.088	-.376	.000
Emotional Exhaustion	.151	11.605	22.910	-4.786	.073	-.350	.000

a. Independent Variable: P-O Fit

Table 4 . P-Job Fit and Surface Acting, Stress and Emotional Exhaustion Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
Surface Acting	.142	32.380	41.012	-6.404	.066	-.424	.000
Stress	.147	30.914	42.801	-6.542	.063	-.415	.000
Emotional Exhaustion	.221	35.888	70.530	-8.398	.053	-.447	.000

a. Independent Variable: P-Job Fit

Table 3 and 4 results show that P-O fit (IV) has significant effect on Surface Acting, Stress and Emotional Exhaustion (DV). Second criteria is also supported.

4.3. The mediator has a significant unique effect on the DV, and

Table 5. Supervisory support and Surface Acting, Stress and Emotional Exhaustion Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
Surface Acting	.274	19.136	46.123	-6.791	.052	-.351	.000
Stress	.317	32.888	56.524	-7.518	.061	-.460	.000
Emotional Exhaustion	.291	21.391	50.177	-7.084	.052	-.371	.000

a. Independent Variable: Supervisory Support

Supervisory support (Mediator) has unique and significant effect on surface acting , Stress and Emotional Exhaustion (DV). Third criteria is also supported.

4.4. the effect of the IV on the DV shrinks upon the addition of the mediator to the model.

As it is seen in Table 6, 7, 8 results, When supervisory support (Mediator) added to the analysis, significant relationship between P-O fit and surface acting, stress and emotional exhaustion were shrunk and become insignificant. Also Table 9, 10, 11 results show that the something occurred for P-J fit. And the fourth criteria is also supported.

Table 6. P-O fit, Surface Acting Regression Analysis Result (Addition of Supervisory Support)

Independent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
P-O Fit	.290	10.113	24.706	-1.632	.077	-.126	.105
Supervisory Support				-4.969	.060	-.299	.000

a. Dependent Variable: surface acting

Table 7. P-O fit, Stress Regression Analysis Result (Addition of Supervisory Support)

Independent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
P-O Fit	.322	16.743	28.782	-1.014	.092	-.093	.313
Supervisory Support				-5.874	.072	-.422	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Stress

Table 8. P-O fit, Emotional Exhaustion Regression Analysis Result (Addition of Supervisory Support)

Independent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
P-O Fit	.310	11.362	27.130	-1.784	.078	.077	.077
Supervisory Support				-5.153	.061	-.314	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 9. P-Job fit, Surface Acting Regression Analysis Result (Addition of Supervisory Support)

Independent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
P-Job Fit	.374	42.634	73.684	-5.132	.058	-.299	.000
Supervisory Support					.044	-.422	.000

a. Dependent Variable: surface acting

Table 10. P-Job fit, Stress Regression Analysis Result (Addition of Supervisory Support)

Independent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
P-Job Fit	.389	40.887	78.737	-5.285	.055	-.270	.000
Supervisory Support				-9.897	.042	-.505	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Stress

Table 11. P-Job fit, Emotional Exhaustion Regression Analysis Result (Addition of Supervisory Support)

Independent Variable	R Square	Mean Square	F	T	Std. Error	B	Sig.
P-Job Fit	.420	34.039	89.441	-7.387	.047	-.349	.000
Supervisory Support				-9.197	.036	-.329	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Stress

Table 12. Supervisory support, P-O Fit and Surface Acting, Stress, Emotional Exhaustion Sobel Test Results

	a	b	Sa	Sb	Test Statistics	Std.Error	p-Value
Surface Acting	.671	-.351	.099	.052	-4.78276145	0.04924373	0.00000173
Stress	.671	-.460	.099	.061	-5.04090863	0.06123102	4.6e-7
Emotional Exhaustion	.671	-.371	.099	.052	-4.91392179	0.05066035	8.9e-7

P ≤ .005

Table 13. Supervisory support, P-Job Fit and Surface Acting, Stress, Emotional Exhaustion Sobel Test Results

	a	b	Sa	Sb	Test Statistics	Std.Error	p-Value
Surface Acting	.297	-.424	.082	.066	-3.15505765	0.03991306	0.00160466
Stress	.297	-.415	.082	.063	-3.17382786	0.03883481	0.00150443
Emotional Exhaustion	.297	-.447	.082	.053	-3.32804087	0.03989104	0.00087459

$P \leq .005$

According to Table's 12 results, it would be said that the supervisory support has full mediating affect only between P-O fit and Surface acting variables. On the other hand, according to results in Table 13, Supervisory support has full mediating effect between P-Job fit and Surface acting, stress, and emotional exhaustion. This results mean that H_1 is partially supported. But H_2 is fully supported as it was hypothesized.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to figure out supervisory support mediating effect between P-O fit, P-J fit and surface acting, stress and emotional exhaustion. Results show that supervisory support is an important factor to make employee fit to organization.

Human resource department managers try to find the best and highly qualified employee. It is really hard to find desired skilled and educated employee today's labor market. Finding desired type of employee is not enough. And also organization has to keep this employee. Even if organization found the type of employee they desire to have, employee might not fit to organization. If employee fits, he/she might not fit when organization changes to adapt itself to changing environment. These problems make human resource department manager jobs much more difficult. But it doesn't mean we don't have any solution. If human resource department managers put in to effect training programme to teach supervisor in all position how to be a supportive manager. All problems might be solved.

Like this study, researchers may focus on to find a solution to help organization. So many studies have investigated to understand different variables relationship. But literature is lack of researches studies related to mediating and moderating variables.

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