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The Mediating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support in the Relationship Between Organizational Ethical Climate and Turnover Intention: An Empirical Research in the Private Sector

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Abstract

Drawing on the social exchange theory, the present study firstly investigates the effect of the organizational ethical climate on a very critical work attitude as turnover intention. Furthermore, the mediating effect of perceived organizational support in this relationship is discovered. The sample group of the research consists of 161 private-sector employees from Ankara, Turkey. In the data analysis process, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used. The findings revealed that organizational ethical climate had a significant negative association with turnover intention. For the mediation analysis, two different methods were used suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) and Zhao et al. (2010). Within the scope of current research, an atypical situation that was interpreted as suppression or competitive mediation effect in the literature was encountered. However, findings indicated that perceived organizational support had a partial mediating effect on the association between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention.

Keywords: Organizational Ethical Climate, Perceived Organizational Support, Turnover Intention, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), Competitive Mediation Effect

JEL Code: M10, M12, M14

1. Introduction

With increasing competitiveness in today's business environment, the turnover intention is one of the crucial struggles that organizations deal with (Hossain et al., 2017). Turnover intention, which refers to the employee's deliberate willfulness to leave his/her present organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Cho et al., 2009) has many negative impacts on organizations such as knowledge

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loss, reduced productivity and work quality, increased recruiting, and training costs (Allen, et al., 2010; Ton & Huckman, 2008). Therefore, it is critical to identify the key factors causing turnover intention.

As a substantial issue, turnover intention is one of the most studied topics in the management literature (Allen et al., 2010; Ganji et al., 2021). Studies examining the antecedents of turnover intention focused on the factors such as organizational commitment (Hunt & Morgan, 1994; Jalonen et al. 2006), job satisfaction (Porter & Steers, 1973, Mobley, 1977; Chen & Wang, 2019), salary (Gerhart & Milkovich, 1990; Iverson & Buttigieg, 1999), autonomy (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004), ethical climate (Hart, 2005; Rubel et al., 2017) and perceived organizational support (Dawley et al., 2010; Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003; Perryer et al., 2010). Although there are studies examining the effects of organizational ethical climate and perceived organizational support on turnover intention separately, the number of research examining the effects of organizational ethical climate and perceived organizational support together on turnover intention is scarce. Accordingly, this study firstly aims at enriching the understanding of how organizational ethical climate affects turnover intention. Secondly, it focuses on the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention in line with social exchange theory.

Creating an organizational climate that encourages employees to proceed ethically facilitates carrying out organizational activities effectively and efficiently. As one of the important organizational climates, ethical climate includes the perceptions about the "constitution of right behavior" and expectations related to the standards and norms of ethical reasoning and behavior (Martin & Cullen, 2006: 177). Moreover, it provides for organizations to operate in compliance with ethical norms and values, thrive on an institutional vibe based on mutual respect and trust for all stakeholders and facilitate honest communication (Sökmen, 2016). Since an ethical climate indicates caring and fair practices (Olayiwola, 2016), it may influence employees' perceptions related to the organization. Employees with a perception of an ethical climate can develop a bond with the organization (Rubel et al., 2017). This bond may be effective in reducing the turnover intention of employees.

Bolstering perceived organizational support is one of the issues that have aroused interest recently. According to Bogler and Nir (2012: 288), perceived organizational support means the opinions of employees about the organization's recognition and evaluation of their contributions to the organization. Employees with a strong sense of organizational support tend to be more motivated and work more efficiently toward the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In fact, practices, and measures such as taking into account the organizational or individual demands, suggestions of employees, solving problems (work-related or otherwise) and improving working conditions make employees feel supported by their organizations and increase their level of perceived organizational support. In this context, an ethical climate is expected to

promote perceived organizational support by providing a caring and fair working environment. In addition, perceived organizational support is expected to decrease turnover intention. Employees who perceive organizational support develop a strong sense of belonging and loyalty to their organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In the present study, the ethical climate is expected to affect perceived organizational support, which in turn reduces turnover intention. Social exchange theory is used to build relationships among variables.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

2.1. The Relationship Between Ethical Climate and Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is defined as a conscious and voluntary will to leave the organization in a short period of time and "quit" is considered the last step in the process (Cho et al., 2009: 375). Said another way, turnover intention refers to the employee's thoughts or plans to leave the organization (Torun, 2016: 220) and comes before the behavior of leaving an organization (Yücel & Demirel, 2013: 162). Although turnover intention is one of the most studied concepts in the management literature (Allen et al., 2010; Ganji et al., 2021), it is still a substantial problem for organizations. Previous research revealed that external factors, organizational factors, and individual factors can be influential on the intention to quit (Mobley, 1982; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999). As one of the important organizational factors, the ethical climate includes organizational values, practices, and processes related to moral behavior and attitudes (Cullen et al., 2003: 128). According to Jaramillo and colleagues (2006: 272), the ethical climate is the perception created by employees in terms of compliance with the organization's current practices, norms and values with ethical criteria.

According to social exchange theory, individuals pursue social obligations and reciprocities in their social relationships (Blau, 1964). Individuals do a favor in the hopes of receiving something in return for their social interactions (Blau, 1964). This expectation creates social obligations- called the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). Accordingly, it can be expressed that the expectations about the returns of the favor determine and shape the attitudes and behaviors of individuals. In addition, trust is one of the major contributors to social exchange relationships (Lambe et al., 2001). By establishing a ground, it becomes a crucial source for social exchange (Molm et al., 2000). Additionally, the norm of reciprocity depends on trust (Blau, 1964). From the perspective of social exchange theory, organizational ethical climate can be expressed as a stimulus for creating trust in social exchange relationships between employees and the organization (Nedkovski et al., 2017). It creates mutual respect and trust for all the stakeholders including employees (Sökmen, 2006). Employees perceiving trust provided by organizational ethical climate are more likely to have positive attitudes (Martin & Cullen, 2006). Put differently, employees may reciprocate this trust formed by the organizational ethical climate with positive job-related attitudes. Thus, we may expect that the organizational ethical climate elevates

positive work attitudes and reduces negative ones. In addition, the ethical climate makes employees perceive their organization as caring and interested in their well-being and betterment (Simha & Pandey, 2021; Munir et al., 2018). This may help to occur a trustful relationship established between the organization and its employees. With this trust perception, employees may engage and maintain social exchange relationships with the organization by reciprocating with positive work outcomes. Therefore, we expect that employees who perceive an ethical climate may not intend to leave their organization. Thus, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1: Organizational ethical climate is negatively associated with turnover intention.

2.2. The Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support in the Relationship between Ethical Climate and Turnover Intention

Perceived organizational support refers to the beliefs and perceptions of employees about whether their organizations care and pay attention to their contributions and well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). It is one of the key concepts influencing several work-related outcomes. When employees perceive they are supported by their organization, they perform their job better (Wang & Wang, 2020). Conversely, when they lack organizational support, they may improve negative attitudes and behaviors toward their organization (Wang & Wang, 2020). Organizational support theory originated from social exchange theory posits that employees evaluate their organization in terms of its readiness to reward improved performance and meet their socio-emotional needs (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In this context, if employees perceive that their organization cares about their well-being and values their contribution, they reciprocate this favorable treatment with beneficial work outcomes (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

The previous research has presented empirical evidence that the ethical climate may result in perceived organizational support since the ethical climate facilitates a trustful work environment (Valentine et al., 2006). Moreover, organizations are perceived as more supportive when they pay attention to ethical values and encourage employees to behave with integrity (Wang & Hsieh, 2012). Thus, we expect that organizational ethical climate advances perceived organizational support.

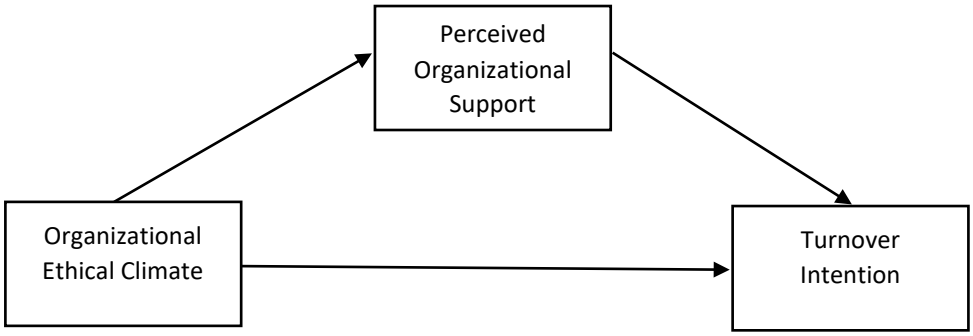
Since perceived organizational support increases the connections between employer and employees, it can be postulated that perceived organizational support is influential in reducing turnover intention, as well (Dawley et al., 2010). Employees with high levels of perceived organizational support tend to view their organization as valuable and respectful, which in turn affects their desire to contribute to the objectives of the organization (Dawley et al., 2010). In the scope of social exchange theory, employees reciprocate organizational support with retention of organizational membership, high attendance and punctuality (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). These outcomes may indicate the desire of

staying in the organization. Thus, we expect that the perception of organizational support may result in reduced turnover intention. Eventually, we infer that the organizational ethical climate may enhance perceived organizational support, leading to reduced turnover intention. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Perceived organizational support has a mediating role in the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention.

The research model based on the theoretical framework is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research model



3. Research Methodology

3.1. Sample

The sample group of the research consists of 161 employees working in different sectors in Ankara, Turkey. Data were collected anonymously. The convenience sampling method was used. Participation was voluntary and data contained no identifying information of the participants such as names, e-mail addresses, university affiliations, etc. Participants who gave consent were directed to an online questionnaire. Descriptive statistics of the sample group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Group

Demographic Features (N=161)		**Frequency(f)**	**Percent (%)**
Age	18-25	15	9.32
	26-33	87	54.04
	34-41	37	22.98
	42-49	16	9.94
	50 and above	6	3.73
Gender	Male	111	68.90
	Female	50	31.10
Marital Status	Single	60	37.30
	Married	101	62.70
Number of	0	81	50.31

children			
	1	33	20.50
	2	37	22.98
	3	9	5.59
	4 and above	1	0.62
Educational status	High school and below	9	5.59
	Associate degree	7	4.35
	Bachelor's degree	95	59.01
	Master's degree	47	29.19
	Doctorate	3	1.86
Work experience	Less than 1 year	9	5.59
	1-5 years	44	27.33
	6-10 years	56	34.78
	11-15 years	30	18.63
	16-20 years	12	7.45
	21 years and above	10	6.21
Work experience at the current workplace	Less than 1 year	34	21.12
	1-5 years	59	36.65
	6-10 years	46	28.57
	11-15 years	12	7.45
	16-20 years	5	3.11
	21 years and above	5	3.10
Net salary level	2100 TL* and below	13	8.07
	2101-4000 TL	35	21.74
	4001-6000 TL	41	25.47
	6001-8000 TL	35	21.74
	8001-10000 TL	18	11.18
	10001-12000 TL	9	5.59
	12001-14000 TL	4	2.48
	14001 TL and above	6	3.73

*TL: Turkish Lira
Source: Authors' calculations

3.2. Measurement

As for the data collection tools; Organizational Ethical Climate Scale, Perceived Organizational Support Scale and Turnover Intention Scale were used. For the Organizational Ethical Climate Scale, a 38-items scale developed by Victor and Cullen (1988) and adapted to Turkish by Elçi (2005) was used. For the Turnover Intention Scale, the 4-items scale developed by Jung and Yoon (2013) and adapted in Turkish by Akgündüz and Akdağ (2014) was used. Lastly, to measure perceived organizational support, a 36-items version of the scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and adapted to Turkish by Önderoğlu

(2010) was utilized. The scales of organizational ethical climate and turnover intention were asked with a 5-point Likert scale. The perceived organizational support scale was evaluated with a 6-point Likert scale. Necessary permissions were obtained from the authors who adapted the scales in Turkish.

3.2. Data Analysis

To test the hypotheses of the present study, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was preferred and SmartPLS 3.2.8 program was used. To report and interpret the research findings, we benefitted from the studies of Hashim (2012), Wong (2013), Hair et al. (2017), Gaskin (2017) and Doğan (2019) which instructed the accepted criteria and the processes of reporting PLS-SEM analysis.

4. Test Results

4.1. Reliability and Validity of the Research Model

In the PLS-SEM method, the measurement model is used for confirmatory factor analysis (Afthanorhan, 2013). It is obtained by using the research data to test the reliability and validity of the measurement model outer loadings, item reliability values, rho_A, composite reliability (CR), convergent validity, discriminant validity and statistical significance values.

In the first stage, it was checked whether the values of the variables met the necessary conditions in the measurement model. The outer loadings, composite reliability (CR) values, AVE values and Fornell-Larcker criterion values were analyzed. Since some of the outer loadings, the AVE and Fornell-Larcker Criterion values were not at the acceptable level, the indicators with outer loadings below 0.60 were removed from the measurement model to ensure the reliability and validity of the research as suggested by Hulland (1999). The revised measurement model consisted of 13 indicators under 4 dimensions for the organizational ethical climate (OEC), 17 indicators for the perceived organizational support (POS) and 4 indicators for the turnover intention (TI) variable. The outer loadings and reliability validity results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability and Validity Values of Measurement Model

Latent Variables	Indicators	Outer Loadings	Item Reliability	Rho_a	Composite Reliability (CR)	Convergent Validity (AVE)
Perceived Organizational Support (POS)	POS_1	0.809	0.64	0.963	0.963	0.606
	POS_10	0.763	0.58			
	POS_13	0.719	0.52			
	POS_14	0.800	0.64			
	POS_16	0.674	0.49			
	POS_17	0.772	0.59			
	POS_18	0.645	0.41			
	POS_2	0.831	0.69			

	POS_20	0.653	0.42			
	POS_24	0.633	0.40			
	POS_3	0.800	0.64			
	POS_4	0.853	0.72			
	POS_5	0.877	0.75			
	POS_6	0.862	0.74			
	POS_7	0.882	0.77			
	POS_8	0.804	0.64			
	POS_9	0.782	0.601			
Organizational Ethical Climate (OEC) Efficiency Social Responsibility Company Rules and Procedures Law and Professional Codes	OEC_13	0.601	0.36	0.916	0.925	0.488
	OEC_20	0.653	0.40			
	OEC_21	0.736	0.53			
	OEC_22	0.678	0.45			
	OEC_23	0.721	0.52			
	OEC_28	0.713	0.50			
	OEC_30	0.703	0.49			
	OEC_32	0.713	0.50			
	OEC_33	0.691	0.47			
	OEC_34	0.688	0.46			
	OEC_35	0.751	0.56			
	OEC_36	0.721	0.52			
	OEC_37	0.700	0.49			
Turnover Intention (TI)	TI_1	0.847	0.70	0.881	0.915	0.729
	TI_2	0.875	0.75			
	TI_3	0.846	0.71			
	TI_4	0.847	0.72			

Source: Authors' calculations

In the measurement model, firstly, the reliability and validity analyses were performed. The outer loadings range of the latent variables of the research varied between 0.601 and 0.882, so all of them were above 0.60. In addition, indicator reliability values varied between 0.36 and 0.75. According to Hulland (1999), indicator reliability values calculated above 0.40 indicate an acceptable confidence interval. In this case, the indicator reliability value of the OEC_13 didn't meet this condition. However, before making any decision to remove this indicator, it should be considered that the only prerequisite for the reliability of the measurement model is not the indicator reliability values. Therefore, at this stage, rho_A and composite reliability (CR) values were checked (Cronbach's Alpha is not preferred in the PLS-SEM model). According to Bagozzi and Yi (1988), the composite reliability values of any measurement model, 0.60 and above are sufficient for reliability. From this point of view, all the composite reliability values of the measurement model in the present research are over 0.60. In addition, rho_A values, another reliability criterion, were found between 0.881

and 0.963. Consequently, since rho_A values in the model also met the requirements accepted in the literature, the reliability condition was provided.

To determine the validity of the measurement model of the research, firstly, convergent validity and discriminant validity values were examined. For convergent validity, outer loadings and AVE values were examined. The outer loadings were at an acceptable level since they were over 0.60. AVE values of the measurement model varied between 0.488 and 0.729. The AVE value is commonly suggested to be above 0.5 in practice, but if the AVE value is below 0.5, it is considered sufficient if the composite reliability (CR) value is higher than 0.6 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Hair and colleagues (2017: 138) argue that AVE values above 0.40 are acceptable. Since the AVE values were calculated at 0.40 and above and CR values above 0.90, the measurement model provided the convergent validity condition. Lastly, the discriminant validity was examined for the validity of the measurement model. According to Doğan (2019), for discriminant validity; we need to check the Fornell-Larcker values, cross-loadings and HTMT values. The values to be examined for the Fornell-Larcker criterion are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Criterion Values

Scales	POS	OEC	TI
POS	0.778		
OEC	0.586	0.698	
TI	-0.566	-0.265	0.854

Source: Authors' calculations

As seen in Table 3, the diagonal values (in bold style) to be examined for the Fornell-Larcker criterion varied between 0.698 and 0.854. Fornell-Larcker correlation values varied between -0.265 and 0.586. Here, according to Wong (2013), Fornell Larcker values are provided to be higher than correlation values in rows and columns of latent variables. Secondly, cross-loadings were examined for discriminant validity. Cross loadings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Cross Loadings

	POS	OEC	TI
POS_1	**0.809**	0.447	-0.494
POS_10	**0.763**	0.398	-0.441
POS_13	**0.719**	0.452	-0.428
POS_14	**0.800**	0.577	-0.468
POS_16	**0.674**	0.413	-0.366
POS_17	**0.772**	0.480	-0.496
POS_18	**0.645**	0.290	-0.386
POS_2	**0.831**	0.477	-0.475
POS_20	**0.653**	0.375	-0.342

POS_24	**0.633**	0.306	-0.292
POS_3	**0.800**	0.493	-0.452
POS_4	**0.853**	0.491	-0.414
POS_5	**0.877**	0.525	-0.484
POS_6	**0.862**	0.556	-0.475
POS_7	**0.882**	0.508	-0.485
POS_8	**0.804**	0.456	-0.437
POS_9	**0.782**	0.393	-0.491
OEC_13	0.280	**0.601**	-0.031
OEC_20	0.469	**0.653**	-0.228
OEC_21	0.440	**0.736**	-0.167
OEC_22	0.428	**0.678**	-0.147
OEC_23	0.414	**0.721**	-0.202
OEC_28	0.494	**0.713**	-0.311
OEC_30	0.397	**0.703**	-0.177
OEC_32	0.403	**0.713**	-0.117
OEC_33	0.389	**0.691**	-0.229
OEC_34	0.373	**0.688**	-0.246
OEC_35	0.411	**0.751**	-0.199
OEC_36	0.369	**0.721**	-0.124
OEC_37	0.362	**0.700**	-0.100
TI_1	-0.514	-0.212	**0.847**
TI_2	-0.522	-0.257	**0.875**
TI_3	-0.454	-0.167	**0.846**
TI_4	-0.436	-0.263	**0.847**

Source: Authors' calculations

As seen in Table 4, in terms of cross loadings, each indicator was found to have the highest correlation with the variable to which it relates, thus providing the cross loadings condition. The final criterion for discriminant validity is HTMT values. According to Doğan (2019: 85), HTMT values must be below 0.90 in order to ensure discriminant validity. All HTMT values (0.610, 0.612, 0.286) satisfied this condition. As a result of these tests, discriminant validity was provided. The last step of reliability and validity analyses was the bootstrapping step for indicators. In accordance with the measurement model of the present research, the structural measurement model obtained via the SmartPLS program was created. Consistent PLS bootstrapping analysis was performed first for confirmatory factor analysis on the research model. Beta (β) coefficients, T statistics and p values for the indicators in the structural model are presented in Table 5 with a 5% error margin.

Table 5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	Beta (β) coefficients	**T statistics**	**p values**
POS_1 <- POS	0.809	65.054	0.000
POS_10 <- POS	0.763	34.232	0.000
POS_13 <- POS	0.719	34.127	0.000
POS_14 <- POS	0.800	54.558	0.000
POS_16 <- POS	0.674	27.961	0.000
POS_17 <- POS	0.772	52.050	0.000
POS_18 <- POS	0.645	28.364	0.000
POS_2 <- POS	0.831	68.230	0.000
POS_20 <- POS	0.653	28.663	0.000
POS_24 <- POS	0.633	26.073	0.000
POS_3 <- POS	0.800	60.346	0.000
POS_4 <- POS	0.853	85.736	0.000
POS_5 <- POS	0.877	111.238	0.000
POS_6 <- POS	0.862	85.916	0.000
POS_7 <- POS	0.882	126.116	0.000
POS_8 <- POS	0.804	64.797	0.000
POS_9 <- POS	0.782	37.089	0.000
EC_13 <- EC	0.600	20.030	0.000
EC_20 <- EC	0.653	27.210	0.000
EC_21 <- EC	0.736	46.718	0.000
EC_22 <- EC	0.678	30.756	0.000
EC_23 <- EC	0.721	40.199	0.000
EC_28 <- EC	0.713	43.482	0.000
EC_30 <- EC	0.703	39.909	0.000
EC_32 <- EC	0.713	42.856	0.000
EC_33 <- EC	0.691	33.322	0.000
EC_34 <- EC	0.688	28.863	0.000
EC_35 <- EC	0.751	47.230	0.000
EC_36 <- EC	0.721	42.850	0.000
EC_37 <- EC	0.700	34.512	0.000
TI_1 <- TI	0.847	83.856	0.000
TI_2 <- TI	0.875	100.763	0.000
TI_3 <- TI	0.846	82.070	0.000
TI_4 <- TI	0.847	70.421	0.000

Source: Authors' calculations

As seen in Table 5, the structural model was significant at the level of 95% since all the indicators were in a statistically significant relationship with the variables they were related to. Finally, although the goodness of fit values is not required in the PLS-SEM method (Olya, 2017; Henseler, 2018), Henseler and colleagues (2014) suggested that the value of SRMR (Standardized Root Mean

Square Residual) can be used to determine the model-data fit in PLS-SEM method. The SRMR value in the SmartPLS resampling output was found to be 0.065 for both the saturated model and the estimated model. Accordingly, the model-data fit was sufficient because the SRMR value was lower than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

As a result of these analyses, the reliability, validity, and structural validity of the model were provided. After all the variables in the measurement model provided all conditions for reliability and validity, we conducted the hypotheses test.

4.2. Hypotheses Test

In the structural model stage, we carried out linearity test, path analysis and Q-square predictive relevance test. The first point in path analysis is linearity. Linearity means that the correlation between variables is very high (bigger than 0.90) (Hair et al., 2017). The presence of linearity affects the results of the analysis in two ways. First, it causes standard error to be great and secondly, the wrong calculation of outer loadings or path coefficients (Hair et al., 2017). For the linearity test bootstrapping method was applied for path analysis. Preacher et al. (2007) and Hayes (2018) argue that the bootstrapping method yields more reliable results than the traditional method of Baron and Kenny (1986). After the bootstrapping analysis, it is possible to reach both the outer model VIF values (outer VIF values) of the indicators and the inner VIF values (inner VIF values) of the variables. Since the variables are reflective, the internal model VIF values of the variables were taken into account (Doğan, 2019: 90). All internal model VIF values are less than 5 (1; 1.523; 1.523) indicating that there is no linearity between the variables according to Doğan (2019: 90). Since there is no linearity problem in the model, the path coefficients were examined in the second step.

When the path coefficients are analyzed, a negative relationship between OEC and TI was found (β = -0.320, p=0.000). Based on this result, the first hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

In the structural model, at the last stage before mediation analysis, the Q-square predictive relevance test was carried out. As a result, the predictive relevance of OEC is low (0.005) and the predictive relevance of POS is medium (0.225). Therefore, it is concluded that the independent variable and the mediator variable in the research model have the power to predict the dependent variable.

After all these processes, we proceeded to the mediation analysis stage. For mediation analysis, we used two different methods. The first one is Baron and Kenny's (1986) method and the second is the method recommended by Zhao et al. (2010). According to Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach, firstly, the model created by subtracting the mediator variable (POS) from the model was tested with a consistent path algorithm. After that, the mediator variable was included in the model and consistent PLS bootstrapping was performed.

Based on the results, there is a statistically significant relationship between the independent variable (OEC) and the dependent variable (TI). Therefore, in the second stage of the analysis, the mediator variable was added to the model and proceed to the path analysis again. The indirect effect statistics after the consistent PLS bootstrapping procedure, which is performed by including the mediator variable in the POS model are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Indirect Effect Statistics for the Structural Model

Indirect Effect	β	T	p
OEC -> POS -> TI	-0.442	15.564	0.002

Source: Authors' calculations

According to the indirect effect values, it can be said that there is a negative and statistically significant relationship between the OEC and the TI through POS. Other issues to be tested here are the second and third stages of the Baron and Kenny (1986) method. Accordingly, direct effect path coefficients were examined. Statistics on direct effect path coefficients are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Direct Effect Statistics for the Structural Model

Direct Effect	β	T	p
POS -> TI	-0.709	21.156	0.000
OEC -> POS	0.624	28.347	0.000
OEC -> TI	0.150	3.604	0.000

Source: Authors' calculations

According to the statistics in Table 7; there exists a positive and statistically significant (β = 0.150, p = 0.000) relationship between OEC and TI. There exists a positive and statistically significant (β = 0.624, p = 0.000) relationship between OEC and POS. Moreover, there exists a negative and statistically significant (β = -0.709, p = 0.000) relationship between POS and TI. As can be seen, the coefficient of the independent variable is 0.150 in the model in which all the variables are included. In the model without the mediator variable, the coefficient of the independent variable was found as -0.320. The absolute value of -0.320 is greater than 0.150. Therefore, according to Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, POS has a mediator effect on the relationship between OEC and TI. However, to be sure about the existence of the mediation effect, it is necessary to determine whether this mediation is partial mediation or full mediation. In addition to the direct effect coefficients, total effect statistics were also evaluated to calculate the VAF (variance account for) values. Total effect statistics are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Total Effect Statistics for the Structural Model

Paths	β	T	p
POS -> TI	-0.709	21.156	0.000
OEC -> POS	0.624	28.347	0.000
OEC -> TI	-0.292	8.539	0.000

Source: Authors' calculations

In line with the information presented in Table 7 and Table 8, the VAF value for the OEC was calculated below.

$$\text{VAF} = \frac{0.150}{-0.292}$$

$$\text{VAF} = -0.51$$

In the method of Baron and Kenny (1986), inferences are made according to the situations in which the VAF value is positive. According to the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, although the OEC has an intermediary role in its relationship with TI, it was not possible to reach a partial or full mediation decision since the VAF value was negative. As the VAF value was negative, it was not possible to decide on partial or full mediation. Therefore, the method proposed by Zhao et al. (2010) that does not require a VAF value was used as an alternative method.

According to Zhao et al. (2010)'s method, in order to talk about the mediation effect, firstly, indirect effect values between the independent variable and the dependent variable must be statistically significant. In addition, if the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is significant in terms of both direct effect and indirect effect values, partial mediation exists; if it is not statistically significant in terms of direct effect but statistically significant in terms of indirect effect, full mediation exists. In light of this information, when the indirect effect values are examined, it was seen that the relationship established through the POS between OEC and TI is negative and statistically significant (β = -0.442, p = 0.002). In addition, when direct effect values are analyzed, there exists a positive and statistically significant relationship (β = 0.150, p = 0.000) between OEC and TI. The fact that the indirect effect values and the direct effect values reveal statistically significant relationships between the variables proves that POS has a partial mediating effect in the relationship between OEC and TI according to the method proposed by Zhao et al. (2010: 205). Based on the results, the second hypothesis of the present study is supported.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study firstly aimed at rejuvenating the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention. The results indicated that there is a negative relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention. Thus, the first hypothesis is confirmed. This result is consistent with previous studies related to turnover literature (Hart, 2005; Jaramillo et al., 2006; Schwepker, 2001; Mulki et al., 2006; DeConinck, 2010; Çetin et al., 2015; Bıyık et al., 2016). Our finding implies that when the organizational ethical climate improves, the turnover intentions of employees decrease. Accordingly, it

is crucial for organizations to foster an organizational ethical climate to deal with high turnover rates.

The second aim of the present study was to discover the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention. The results demonstrated that perceived organizational support has a partial mediation role. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is also confirmed. Since research investigating the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention is limited, we could only compare our results with the study of Filipova (2007). Although we found that perceived organizational support has a mediation role as Filipova (2007), the signs of the values differ from previous research.

In the mediation model designed in the present research, two different arguments were raised about the direct effect value between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention, and the indirect effect value with opposite signs. The first is the interpretation of the suppression effect defined by MacKinnon et al. (2000), which is since the mediator (perceived organizational support), is due to the suppression of the variance explained by the independent variable (organizational ethical climate). Accordingly, the fact that the direct effect and indirect effect values have opposite signs causes the model to display an appearance that is incompatible with the mediation model. The second one suggested by Zhao et al. (2010) is the interpretation that perceived organizational support, which is a mediator variable, causes a competitive mediation effect. According to this interpretation, the presence of the competitive mediation effect is compatible with the mediation model and is defined as a type of partial mediation. Consequently, perceived organizational support has a partial mediating effect on the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention. The existence of a partial mediating effect is an indication that the mediator cannot measure the entire relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable (Yılmaz & İlhan Dalbudak, 2018: 531). This situation is remarkable in that it shows that another variable may have a mediating effect between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention.

Within the scope of the research, an atypical situation identified in the literature by names such as suppression effect or competitive mediation effect was encountered. It should be kept in mind that the results obtained in mediation analysis may differ according to the method (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). In such studies, it is possible to encounter unexpected results as well as to find the usual and expected results. It should be remembered that such unexpected results are also scientifically valuable and can guide further studies. In this research, designing the perceived organizational support variable as a mediator variable may be the reason for this atypical situation. Therefore, in similar research models, designing and testing the mediator variable (perceived organizational support) as an independent variable or moderator variable can be stimulating for researchers in this field.

The present study has several managerial implications for organizations. Based on the research findings, the level of turnover intention decreases in organizations with an ethical climate since it provides organizations to have honesty, trust and cooperation. Organizations with an ethical climate give importance to ethical values, obey the laws and professional ethical rules, provide justice among their employees and are free of nepotism and mobbing. Accordingly, employees don't intend to leave such organizations. In addition, organizations with an ethical climate consider the organizational or individual demands and suggestions of their employees, value their employees, solve the problems of their employees and improve the working conditions of their employees as much as possible, in short, keep their employees' perceived organizational support levels high. By doing so, employees who perceive organizational support don't desire to leave their organization. Thus, organizations and managers who are perceived as representatives of organizations should establish a working environment that increases and supports the ethical climate and organizational support perceptions of employees. Employees who are recruited and trained by spending resources leave the job or feel insecure and work inefficiently, which will return a serious cost to the organization. Therefore, factors such as ethical climate and perceived organizational support, which are related to turnover intention, can be counted among the factors that should be considered in determining management strategies that will reduce or prevent employees' turnover intention in organizations.

The present study has some limitations. The results of the research were limited to a total of 161 private sector employees within the borders of Ankara province in Turkey. However, since the online survey data used in the research process were collected with a convenience sampling method, the study does not show a generalizable feature in its current form. However, if similar studies are conducted at different time intervals or in different cultural contexts, it will be possible to generalize the results according to the findings to be obtained. In addition, in the mediation analysis, an atypical situation was encountered in the literature, which is defined as the suppression effect or competitive mediation. It should be kept in mind that the results obtained may differ according to the method used in mediation analysis (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). In studies within this scope, it is possible to encounter unexpected results as well as the detection of ordinary and expected results. It should not be forgotten that such unexpected results are scientifically valuable and can guide future studies (Zhao, 2010). As future research direction, we suggest that researchers could investigate the mediating role of perceived supervisor support in the relationship between organizational ethical climate and turnover intention by utilizing the leader-member exchange approach since supervisors are perceived as the agents of the organization. Lastly, a similar research design could be used to examine the effects of organizational ethical climate and perceived organizational support on other negative work attitudes such as disengagement or dissatisfaction.

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