

Job Autonomy and Work Alienation: Organizational and Occupational Identification as a Mediator

Aziz Gökhan Özkoç

Faculty of Tourism, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, 50300, Nevşehir, Turkey

Abstract

This research was conducted to determine the direct and indirect impact of lodging enterprise employees' perception of job autonomy level on decreasing work alienation tendency. In the examination of the indirect relationships between these two concepts, employees' perceptions of organizational and occupational identification were determined as mediating variables based on the relevant literature and a structural equation model was developed based on sources of identification and tested via appropriate statistical methods. Questionnaire developed to test the interactions between the variables empirically was applied to lodging enterprise employees in Istanbul which is one of the major tourism destinations in Turkey. Based on the theoretical framework, five research hypotheses which include the direct impact of job autonomy on work alienation and sources of identification were developed. After determining the interactions between the variables, mediating role of organizational and occupational identification in the impact of job autonomy on work alienation was examined through appropriate statistical methods via AMOS 22.0 software package. Structural equation modeling was used to test research hypotheses and mediating effects. After examining model fit indices and path coefficients of variables, it was determined that employees' perception of job autonomy decreased their tendency for work alienation and organizational identification played a partial mediating role in this decrease. In addition, occupational identification was affected by employees' perception of job autonomy but did not affect their work alienation levels. Thus, four of the five research hypotheses were confirmed. Findings of this research provide the managers with detailed information on individual and organizational results of providing autonomy for employees at workplace. This study is going to be the first study that aims to analyze the concepts of job autonomy, work alienation, and identification all together with both a theoretical and a structural model. This is also to be the first study on lodging enterprises of tourism industry in this context.

Keywords: Job autonomy, Work alienation, Occupational identification, Organizational identification, Lodging enterprises, Structural equation model

1. Introduction

The concept of alienation which was emphasized by writers and researchers who criticized the new economic system which was shaped after industrial revolution is still an important issue for employees and managers in contemporary work environment and even gaining more importance. The reasons for these are that sources of employees' psycho-social problems are getting more and more complicated and that problems with psychological roots such as stress, silence, burnout, and anxiety at workplace reached to a serious level. Thus, analysis of individual and managerial factors that support or balance employees' tendency for work alienation will provide a different insight into the resolution of existing behavioral and psychological problems in organizations.

Manager-employee relations are often built on a hierarchical basis. However, some decisions made or some applications conducted in the organization could unexpectedly threaten employees' physical or mental health even in the strictest bureaucratic structures, because as much as the effectiveness of written rules and procedures, it is now important to what extent the conditions that value individuals as human beings are provided within the organization.

It is inevitable that employees who do not feel powerful and valuable in consequence of the negative climate of clash in the organization will lose their enthusiasm towards work and attach less importance to their job over time. Another inevitable result is that employees will question their sense of belonging and commitment to their organization and their occupation. This phase of questioning in which the perception of organizational and occupational identification are formed in employees may result in employees' alienation to their work if required managerial precautions are not taken. So, "By what type of decisions and applications can the managers make the employees identify with their organization and occupations and decrease the level of employees' alienation?". Many different management techniques in the management literature might be considered and evaluated while giving an answer to this question. However, in the scope of this study, the answer for the related question will be sought by examining the subject of "job autonomy". Through the structural model developed to support the research problem with quantitative data, the direct impact of giving the employees an autonomous status in the organization on their tendency for work alienation and perception of organizational and occupational identification will be analyzed and in the last phase, it will be discovered to what extent the identification sources play a mediating role in the impact of job autonomy on work alienation. Very few

quantitative studies in the relevant literature considered all these mentioned interactions so far. This study may be useful especially for the employees and managers of lodging enterprises which rely on physical and emotional labor and in which social interactions are quite frequent.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Job Autonomy

Theoretical content of job autonomy which is defined as employees' level of authority and freedom to choose how they will perform their work (Shirom et al., 2006; Park and Searcy, 2012) was formulized in 1970s. In the "job characteristics model" they developed, Hackman and Oldham (1976) suggested autonomy as one of the five job characteristics dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback) that motivate employees to achieve better work outputs. Based on Job Characteristics Model, it was concluded that job autonomy affected motivation (Naus et al., 2007; Wu et al., 2015; Whitaker, 2013), performance (Dysvik, 2012; Langfred, 2013), job satisfaction (Doğan and Can, 2009), commitment to work (Taştan, 2014; Karahan, 2008; Sisodia, 2013), employee satisfaction (Naus et al., 2007; Güntert, 2015) positively; while it affected some undesired situations such as stress (Yen Ju Lin et al., 2011; Tai and Liu, 2009), burnout (Dysvik, 2012), turnover intention (Yen Ju Lin et al., 2011) negatively. By mid-1990s, job autonomy and other applications which include employee participation began to be used by more than 90 percent of Fortune 1000 companies (Lawler et al., 1995; Langfred, 2013).

Especially in the past ten years, the relation of job autonomy with the concepts closely related to organizational success and efficiency such as well-being at work (Wu et al., 2015), creativity and innovation (Joo et al., 2014; Battistelli et al., 2011), trustworthiness (Castillo, 2014), self competency-efficacy (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2014; Federici, 2013), ethical and benevolent leadership (Kalshoven et al., 2013; Wang and Cheng, 2010), job design (Volmer et al., 2012), proactive personality (Fuller et al., 2010), distributive justice (Haar and Spell, 2009), and work-family conflict and quality of life (Thompson and Prottas, 2005) was examined.

2.2. Work Alienation

The concept of alienation as defined by Karl Marx in his critique of capitalist way of production based on private property "man's alienation to himself, his labor, his social relationships, the world, and the life" (Marx, 1993) gained a more psycho-social approach rather than a structural one with Seeman (1959) and Blauner (1964). From this point of view, work alienation is the situation where the inability to provide conditions and environment that value the individual as a human being (Blauner, 1964) results in employee's unwillingness towards his/her work (Hirschfeld and Feild, 2000), attaching less importance to his/her work, and spending less energy than required for his/her work (Agarwal, 1993).

According to Seeman (1983), alienation consists of five dimensions. These are powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self estrangement. Blauner (1964) defined similar dimensions of alienation as powerlessness, sense of meaninglessness, feeling of social isolation, and self estrangement (Tolan, 1993).

2.3. Organizational and Occupational Identification

According to "Social Identity Theory" which is the basis for studies on identification (Tajfel and Turner, 1985; Ashforth and Mael, 1989), individuals split themselves and others into some social categories based on various features (such as age, occupation, education, status, religion) (Foreman and Whetten, 2002). Social identity and identification begin to be formed over time in the individuals who include themselves in a social group in response to the question "Who am I?" (Walsh and Gordon, 2008). The answer for that question will probably make the individual identify with more than one social category (Kırkbeşoğlu and Tüzün, 2009). Social identification can be related to the whole organization and a sub-group in the organization (Olkkonen and Lipponen, 2006; Van Dick et al., 2008); or it can also be regarded as a concept in terms of additional organizational groups related to work (occupations, areas of expertise, etc.) (Johnson et al., 2006). When the concept of identification is examined within the scope of organizational behavior literature, it can be seen that two different sources of identification, i.e. occupational and organizational identification, are frequently considered.

Organizational identification is the process of correspondence of organization's and individual's values (Thakor and Joshi, 2005), individual's becoming a part of the organization or developing a sense of belonging for the organization (Scott and Lane, 2000), and greater integration and correspondence of individual's and organization's goals over time (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Occupational identification is the level of importance that an employee attaches to his/her occupation (Gandhi, 1992), the employee's integration with the work he/she carries out (Witt, 1992; Grey, 1994), and the employee's definition of himself/herself with the characteristics of the work he/she carries out (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984; Wallace 1995).

2.4. Job Autonomy and Work Alienation

The examination of the effect of job autonomy provided to the employees by managers on employees' tendency for work alienation goes through some fifty years past. Powerlessness, which is one of the major causes of work alienation, is the situation where the employees lose the control over their work and have no freedom to make decisions (Blauner, 1964). When suggested reasons for powerlessness examined, dissatisfaction of two important needs, i.e. control and autonomy, draws attention (Özler ve Dirican, 2014; Banai and Raisel, 2007).

Employees' obtaining autonomy through managerial decisions and applications such as job enrichment, job enlargement, empowerment, and delegation of authority (Munjuri, 2011; Chenevert and Tremblay, 2009; Barutçugil, 2004; Çöl, 2008; Kanungo, 1992) will make them act with a sense of responsibility for their work (Parker and Sprigg, 1999; Volmer et al., 2012). This psychological process, followed by employees' feeling more valuable and competent in the organization (Naus et al., 2007), supports commitment to work, employees' more active role at work, and their emotional dedication to work (Bizzi and Soda, 2011; Turgut, 2013; Taştan, 2014). In this sense, job autonomy, which plays a major role in the creation of employees who feel powerful in the organization with commitment to their work and organization, is also considered as a key component of physical and psychological well-being (Langfred, 2013). Gradney, Fisk and Steiner (2005) revealed that employees with high levels of job autonomy felt less burnout and powerlessness. Similarly, according to Campbell and Dunette (1970), supportive approaches such as autonomy, respectfulness, and sincerity are the positive factors of a good organizational climate that plays a triggering role in the development of positive emotions.

Employees who are alienated to their work feel that they are useless, invaluable, and exhausted in the organization. They are also unable to embrace the organization's activities because they think they do not have the freedom of physical and mental activity (Rajaepour et al., 2012). On the other hand, job autonomy enables the employees attach positive meanings to the work they do in order to eliminate all these undesired feelings (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Through this process, autonomy decreases the tendency for alienation (Deci and Ryan, 2004; Berardi, 2010) by increasing the employee's feeling of value towards the occupation and work (Wu et al., 2015). Based on this, the first hypothesis developed in the scope of this research aims to measure the interaction between job autonomy and work alienation.

H₁: Higher levels of job autonomy perception decrease the employees' tendency for work alienation.

2.5. Job Autonomy and Identification

According to Self Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000), employee's having the freedom in timing and processes while conducting work makes him/her consider himself/herself as the source and responsibility holder of his/her activities. These processes form the basis for intrinsic motivation. Autonomy, which enhances intrinsic motivation and satisfaction, does not only increase the individual's confidence in his/her being a useful person but also makes him/her experience the feeling of his/her work's and organization's being meaningful and valuable (Turgut, 2013).

The individual's integration with his/her occupation and organization through shared meanings and values will also lead to identification. Lawler and colleagues (Lawler et al., 1995; Lawler, 1996) indicated decision making through autonomy as one of the four management practices (participative decision making, communication, training and development, evaluation and rewarding) to enable employees' identification with the organization. It was determined that variables such as trust (Brasheara et al., 2005; Turunç, 2010) and commitment (Çakınberk et al., 2011) which are also among the antecedents of organizational identification were affected by the level of employees' control over work related decisions and influence over processes. H₂ ve H₃ hypotheses developed in this sense test the impact of job autonomy on the two sources of identification.

H₂: Job Autonomy affects employees' perceptions of organizational identification positively.

H₃: Job Autonomy affects employees' perceptions of occupational identification positively.

2.6. Identification and Work Alienation

Few empirical findings on the interaction of identification with alienation were found in management literature. In addition to finding that there was a negative relationship between identification and alienation, Efraty, Sirgy and Claiborne (1991) stated that job satisfaction and job involvement played a mediating role in the impact of work alienation on identification. In his book "Escaping Alienation", Morris (2005) indicated identification as a major instrument to eliminate alienation.

Although there are few quantitative studies on that organizational or occupational identification could eliminate work alienation, cause-effect relationships between the two concepts show that more focus on that type of an interaction is needed. Dimensions of "meaninglessness" and "self estrangement" developed by Seeman (1983) while determining the sources of alienation emphasize a strong theoretically-based interaction between identification and work alienation.

The feeling of "meaninglessness" which causes work alienation occurs when the individual's values

and the society's or the organization's values do not fit (Ofluoğlu and Büyükyılmaz, 2008) and the employee cannot build common goals/objectives with his/her work and organization (Shepard, 1971). The feeling of meaninglessness is the result of discrepancy between the individual's and organization's beliefs and values. Higher levels of match are expected to result in individual's higher levels of organizational identification. In the contrary situation, it will result in non-identification with the organization (Valentine et al., 2002; Tuna and Yeşiltaş, 2014). Achieving value congruence in individual – organization interaction, thus identification, can make the mutual expectations meet and overcome alienation (Verquer et al., 2003).

“Self estrangement”, which is another dimension of work alienation, is the state that individual do not feel any happiness of achievement because he/she is unable to connect the things that he/she wants to realize and achieve with the work he/she does (Bandrick et al., 1999; Banai and Raisel, 2007). There are studies that indicate if these incongruences which are the results of individual-work conflict are managed effectively, thus the employee's occupational identification is achieved, then work alienation will be eliminated (Gökçen, 2014; Shantz et al., 2014). It was determined that occupational identification increased happiness and occupational prestige through positive self-concept, and it played a mediating role between the two concepts (Günay, 2008), triggered many positive behavior in the organization (Hekman et al., 2009). Based on cause-effect relationships between the concepts of identification and alienation, fourth and fifth hypotheses of the research were developed as follows:

H₄: Organizational Identification decreases the employees' tendency for work alienation.

H₅: Occupational Identification decreases the employees' tendency for work alienation.

The interactions between job autonomy, identification, and work alienation indicate the possible mediating role of some emotional and cognitive processes within the organization in the relationship between job autonomy and work alienation.

Especially in recent years, the concept of identification was examined as a mediating variable in the relationships between leader-member interaction and organizational citizenship behavior (Huang et al., 2014), leader-member interaction and organizational support (Trybou et al., 2013), perceived organizational support and work outcomes (Shen et al., 2014), procedural justice and extrarole behavior (Blader and Toyler, 2009), procedural justice and work outcomes (Liu and Liu, 2014), human resource practices and turnover intention (Santhanam et al., 2014), developmental leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (Zhang and Chen, 2013), trustworthiness and organizational silence (Knoll and Van Dick, 2013), organizational climate and employee service performance (Zhang et al., 2011), ethical leadership and employee performance (Walumbwa et al., 2011), occupational prestige and happiness (Günay, 2008), proactive personality and entrepreneurial leadership (Prieto, 2010).

The extent of mediating role of identification sources in the effect of job autonomy on alienation is tested via developed structural equation model without being formulated as a research hypothesis.

The structural model developed in a way to cover five research hypotheses which were developed based on theoretical framework is illustrated in Figure 1. Measurement models of the research were defined based on this structural model.

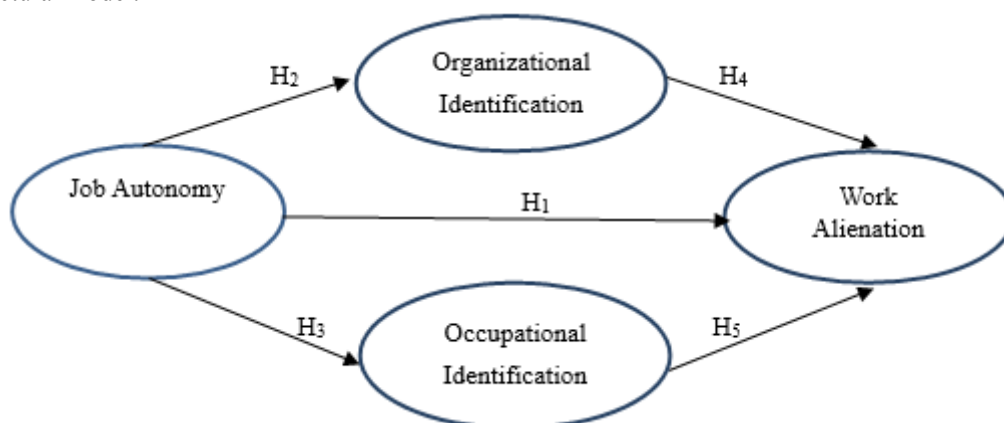


Figure 1: Research Model

3. Methodology

3.1. Instrument and Data Collection

Questionnaires were applied to lodging enterprise employees and analyzed via appropriate statistical methods to test research model fit and five research hypotheses which were developed on robust theoretical bases. In the first part of the questionnaire, closed ended questions regarding hotels the employees worked for and their departments of duty in addition to demographical and personal information such as gender, age, and level of

education were asked.

Job autonomy, organizational identification, occupational identification, and work alienation scales were added to the questionnaire to collect relevant data. All these scales are originally in English language and they have been translated into Turkish in various studies in Turkey. All measures consisted of items with response options ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

In order to measure employees' perception of job autonomy, the 3-item scale, developed in the scope of "Job Characteristics Model" by Hackman and Oldham (1975) and partially changed by Teas (1981: 11), used (example item: I am given considerable freedom and independency in how I do my work). The scale used in this research had been adapted in Turkish by Kuşluyan ve Kuşluyan (2005). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the job autonomy scale was 0,79. When the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) is 0,70 and above, the scale is assumed to be reliable (Durmuş et al., 2011).

Work Alienation Scale was developed by Hirschfeld and Field (2000) and translated and applied in Turkish by Özbek (2011). The scale consists of 10 items in total (example item: most of the work life is wasted with meaningless activities). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the work alienation scale was 0,82.

Organizational and Occupational Identification Scale was developed by Mael ve Ashforth (1992) and consisted of 6 items in total (3 for organizational identification and 3 for occupational identification). The scale used in this research had been translated into Turkish by Tüzün and Kırkbeşoğlu (2009) (example item: I like others praising my organization/occupation). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the organizational identification scale was 0,88 and the occupational identification scale was 0,91.

Questionnaires were applied to lodging enterprise employees in Istanbul which is one of the most developed and largest cities in Turkey. The questionnaires were applied to employees of three, four, and five-star lodging enterprises based on 'star' system of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism used for the classification of lodging enterprises in Turkey. According to the data provided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey in December 2014, there are 78 five-star, 99 four-star, and 111 three-star lodging enterprises in Istanbul. Due to time and financial constraints, the questionnaire forms were sent to the 60 lodging enterprises with the greatest number of rooms (20 five-star, 20 four-star, and 20 three-star). The questionnaire forms were delivered to the lodging enterprises via the managers' and other employees' who had received tourism education previously. Those managers and employees collected the filled questionnaire forms from the responder employees after a few days and mailed them back to the researcher.

No data on the total number of employees of lodging enterprises in Istanbul could be found in Turkey tourism statistics. Because the size of the universe is unclear, acceptable sample size was determined as 384 at 95 percent confidence interval (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2014). As the sampling method, "convenience sampling" was used. Thus, every member of the population who responded the questionnaire was included in the sample. The most convenient to access subject is the ideal one. Attempts to access the subjects continue till the desired sample size is attained (Altunışık et al., 2007). Research data was collected in September through October 2015 and 509 useable questionnaire forms were collected from employees in various departments of lodging enterprises.

Among 509 responders participated in the research, 106 (20.8 percent) were the employees of three-star lodging enterprises, 119 (23.4 percent) of four-star lodging enterprises, and 284 (55.8 percent) of five-star lodging enterprises. The distribution of responders by department is as follows: 154 (30.3 percent) were front office, 164 (32.2 percent) food&beverage and service, 80 (15.7 percent) kitchen, 58 (11.4 percent) housekeeping employees; 53 (10.5 percent) were the employees in other departments of lodging enterprises. Demographic features of the employees were as follows: 311 employees (61.1 percent) were male, 198 (38.9 percent) were female. Majority of employees were 21-30 (n=215; 42.2 percent) and 31-40 (n=130; 25.5 percent) years old. The educational level of employees was as follows: Vocational school graduates (n=130; 25.5 percent), college (n=167; 32.8 percent), high school (n=197; 38.7 percent), and junior high school graduates (2.9 percent).

3.2. Data Analysis

Data collected via questionnaires were analyzed in "IBM SPSS Statistics 22" and "IBM SPSS AMOS 22" software. In addition, a two-step approach was utilized to analyze the data as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first step, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the validity of the measurement scales. The second step involved assessing the causal model using structural equation modelling (SEM).

4. Findings

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Four-factor confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in order to test the validity of the scales used. Results of first order confirmatory factor analysis, related to four factors in the research model which were measured through the questionnaire, met the acceptable fit. Factor loads and goodness of fit results were illustrated in

Table 1.

Table 1: Factor Loads and Goodness of Fit Results

| Variable | Factor Loading | S. E. | P | Variable | Factor Loading | S.E. | P |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|------|------------|----------------|------|------|
| ja1 <- ja | 0.59 | 0.36 | *** | wa1 <- wa | 0.71 | 0.75 | *** |
| ja2 <- ja | 0.79 | 0.32 | *** | wa2 <- wa | 0.71 | 0.79 | *** |
| ja3 <- ja | 0.84 | 0.32 | *** | wa3 <- wa | 0.78 | 0.58 | *** |
| oi1 <- oi | 0.94 | 0.64 | *** | wa4 <- wa | 0.76 | 0.55 | *** |
| oi2 <- oi | 0.93 | 0.65 | *** | wa5 <- wa | 0.78 | 0.50 | *** |
| oi3 <- oi | 0.91 | 0.59 | *** | wa6 <- wa | 0.81 | 0.56 | *** |
| oci1 <- oci | 0.88 | 0.35 | *** | wa7 <- wa | 0.75 | 0.58 | *** |
| oci2 <- oci | 0.89 | 0.34 | *** | wa8 <- wa | 0.72 | 0.63 | *** |
| oci3 <- oci | 0.87 | 0.36 | *** | wa9 <- wa | 0.71 | 0.69 | *** |
| | | | | wa10 <- wa | 0.71 | 0.77 | *** |
| | Fit Indices | χ^2/df | GFI | AGFI | RMSEA | IFI | CFI |
| | | 3.86 | 0.89 | 0.86 | 0.07 | 0.94 | 0.94 |

* ja= Job Autonomy; wa= Work Alienation; oi= Organizational Identification; oci= Occupational Identification
 *** p < 0,000

When the goodness of fit results of factors which were used to test research model and hypotheses examined, the value calculated through dividing Chi-square values by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was less than 5 which is the limit for acceptability. In line with that, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), derived from Chi-square test and used to measure the model's level of fit to data considering model size and sample size, was less than the critical value 0,08 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

In addition to these, it was calculated that Jöreskog-Sörbom's Goodness of Fit Index (*GFI*) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (*AGFI*), which may range from 0 - 1, were greater than 0,85 which is the limit for acceptability (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). In Comparative Fit Index (*CFI*) and Incremental Fit Index (*IFI*), 0,95 and above values indicate perfect and 0,90 and above indicate good fit (Meydan and Şeşen, 2011). When the results of these two comparative indices were added, it can be observed that model showed 'good fit' in terms of the goodness of fit criteria and could be accepted as it is.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

The arithmetic means of research variables were as follows; job autonomy ($x=3,6$), organizational identification ($x=3,4$), and occupational identification ($x=3,9$) which were greater than the mid-point of the scale, i.e. 3 (I am neutral). Arithmetic means of work alienation were less than the mid-point of the scale and closer to 'disagree' (2). As can be seen in Table 2, employees' perceptions of job autonomy were high and their work alienation levels were low. Their occupational identification levels were higher than their organizational identification levels.

Table 2: Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlation Coefficients

| Variable | Mean | s.d. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|--------|--------|-------|---|
| Job Autonomy (1) | 3.6 | 1.07 | 1 | | | |
| Work Alienation (2) | 2.3 | 1.11 | -.36** | 1 | | |
| Organizational Identification (3) | 3.4 | 1.29 | .58** | -.59** | 1 | |
| Occupational Identification (4) | 3.9 | 1.18 | .55** | -.33** | .54** | 1 |

** p < 0.01 N= 509

When the correlation coefficients between the variables (*r*) were examined, positive and negative relationships between all variables at 0,01 significance level were determined.

4.3. Model Fit Criteria and Hypothesis Testing

Statistical values of model fit and standardized path coefficients (Fig.2) of the structural equation model, which was developed to measure the impact of job autonomy on identification sources and employees' tendency for work alienation, the impact of identification sources on work alienation, and the mediating role of identification sources on autonomy-alienation interaction, were examined. As illustrated in Table 3, the developed structural model showed acceptable values of fit ($\chi^2/df=4,23$; *GFI*=.88; *NFI*=.91; *IFI*=.93; *RMSEA*=.08).

Table 3: Selected Statistical Values of Model Fit

| | χ^2/df | GFI | AGFI | RMSEA | NFI | IFI |
|--|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|
| Fit Indices | 4.23 | 0.88 | 0.85 | 0.08 | 0.91 | 0.93 |
| Sobel Test (z): -7.111 *** (S.E= 0.04 / p< 0.0001) | | | | | | |

¹ N= 509

When the standardized beta coefficients of the impact of job autonomy on work alienation were examined, it was observed that employees' perceptions of job autonomy negatively affected their tendency for work alienation at 0,05 significance level ($\beta = -0.14$; $p < 0.05$) (Fig. 2). In the light of obtained statistical data, H_1 hypothesis was confirmed.

Standardized path coefficients obtained from structural equation model showed that job autonomy had a positive and strong impact on both organizational identification ($\beta = 0.59$; $p < 0.001$) and occupational identification ($\beta = 0.68$; $p < 0.001$). The obtained quantitative data indicated that H_2 and H_3 research hypotheses were confirmed. In the impact of identification sources on work alienation, different results from interaction between autonomy and organizational-occupational identification were reached. Standardized regression coefficients showed that organizational identification reduced the employees' tendency for work alienation ($\beta = -0.53$; $p < 0.001$). However, similar results could not be reached for the impact of occupational identification on work alienation ($\beta = -0.01$; $p > 0.001$). As can be inferred from the statistical data, H_4 hypothesis was confirmed while H_5 hypothesis was rejected.

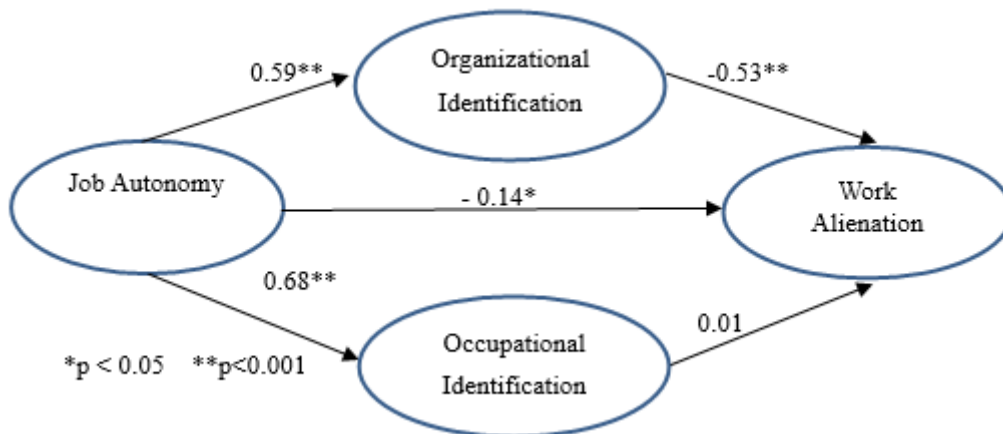


Figure 2: Standardized Path Coefficients of the Structural Equation Model

Structural equation model developed in the scope of this research also aimed to measure the mediating role of identification sources (organizational and occupational identification) in the impact of job autonomy on alienation. Baron and Kenny's (1986) method was used to analyze the mediating role. Baron and Kenny stated four preconditions for mediating role: First, predictor variable (job autonomy) must have a significant impact on predicted variable (work alienation). Second, predictor variable (job autonomy) must have a significant impact on mediating variable (organizational/occupational identification). Third, mediating variable (organizational/occupational identification) must have a significant impact on predicted variable (work alienation). Fourth, the effects of both predictor variable (job autonomy) and mediating variable (organizational/occupational identification), each as an independent variable, on predicted variable (work alienation) are calculated. Mediating role is the case if the effect of predictor variable on predicted variable decreases (partial mediation) or becomes insignificant (full mediation) in this case.

Standardized beta values of the mediating role of organizational identification indicated that direct significant effect of job autonomy on work alienation ($\beta = -0.44$; $p < 0.001$) decreased when organizational identification was included in the model ($\beta = -0.14$; $p < 0.01$). Thus, it could be stated that organizational identification played a partial mediating role in the impact of job autonomy on work alienation. In the last phase, Sobel Test was made to reveal the significance level of mediating role. Sobel Test is a method to measure the significance of the decrease in the variance explained by independent variable in partial or full mediation (Sobel, 1982). According to the results of Sobel Test ($z = -6.85$; $p < 0.0001$), partial mediating role of organizational identification was determined to be at a significant level.

Beta coefficients obtained to measure the mediating role of occupational identification indicated that job autonomy had no direct significant impact on the tendency for work alienation ($\beta = -0.01$; $p > 0.001$), so the third condition for mediating role was not fulfilled. For this reason, although direct significant impact of job autonomy on work alienation ($\beta = -0.44$; $p < 0.001$) decreased when occupational identification was included in the model, no mediating role of occupational identification could be mentioned.

6. Conclusion

Employees, who focus on satisfaction and maximum efficiency in work life, desire to feel responsibility for work they perform, have the initiative and freedom of making major decisions at the workplace, and be in harmony with the work; which all together means job autonomy. The contrary case transforms employees into creatures which only perform the decisions made through a routine process, obey in every case, and become

powerless by time. The feeling of powerlessness of this sort is one of the major factors that initiate the process of employees' alienation to work.

Findings of this research which was conducted on lodging enterprise employees indicated that employees' tendency for work alienation was decreased by the autonomy provided for them in terms of their job. The negative impact of job autonomy on work alienation was in accordance with the other theoretical and empirical studies on the subject (Kanungo, 1982; Deci and Ryan, 2004; Berardi, 2010; Ambrose et al., 2002) while confirming the first hypothesis of this research. However, when the means were examined, it was observed that employees' perceptions of autonomy were not high. For this reason, employees' autonomy should be increased through managerial decisions and applications and possible changes in their tendency for work alienation should be monitored and measured periodically. The future researchers who want to examine the interaction between autonomy and alienation could focus on which applications that provide autonomy for the employees are more effective in reducing alienation.

Findings of the research indicated that job autonomy did not only affect work alienation but also organizational and occupational identification which were among the factors that might reduce work alienation. Thus, managerial applications and decisions made to give autonomous status to the employees at workplace increase their sense of responsibility and commitment to their organization and occupation. This confirms the studies which concluded that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between job autonomy and occupational and/or organizational identification. (Brown, 1969; Russo, 1998; Bamber and Iyer, 2002; Meydan et al., 2010; Frenkel and Yu, 2011; Gillet et al., 2013; Prati and Zani, 2013). Thus, research hypotheses H₂ and H₃ were confirmed too.

Another issue which the developed structural equation model aimed to analyse was the extent of identification sources, which are strongly affected by the level of job autonomy, reducing work alienation. While there were few empirical studies on this subject, the statistical findings did not partly refute theoretical justifications made on identification-alienation interaction. It was determined that the level of lodging enterprise employees' organizational identification reduced their tendency for work alienation. However, the level of employees' occupational identification did not affect their tendency for work alienation in the same way. These results confirmed the research hypothesis H₄ but rejected H₅ hypothesis. That employees' tendency for work alienation is reduced by their identification with their organization rather than their occupation emphasizes the necessity for the coherence between the work and organization.

Although the determined interaction between job autonomy and work alienation had not been a topic of quantitative studies on lodging enterprises, it was frequently considered theoretically. One of the major contribution of this study to the literature is the reply for the question how effective a role any mediating variable played in the impact of job autonomy on work alienation. In this context, two mediating variables, namely organizational and occupational identification, were included in the research model. The developed model also tests the mediating role of identification, which is the result of coherence of the individual's view and values with the organization he/she works for or his/her occupation, in the relationship between job autonomy and work alienation. Path coefficients and fit indices obtained through analyses made in accordance with the developed structural equation models confirmed the significance of organizational identification's mediating role but no mediating role of occupational identification could be determined. Thus, job autonomy might not only directly but also through organizational identification reduce employees' tendency for work alienation. These results show the effectiveness of and necessity for managerial applications, such as job enrichment, employee empowerment, and delegation of authority, that enable autonomous status for employees. These sorts of applications which make the individual feel the work he/she does meaningful and himself/herself valuable may be the strategic decisions in providing intrinsic motivation that increases organizational efficiency. Research results emphasize that individual-organization fit is an important factor to be considered in order to reduce the feeling of alienation which is pointed as the cause of undesired psycho-social status, such as stress, anxiety, and burnout, in employees.

The most significant theoretical contribution of this research to management literature is the determination of organizational identification's mediating role in the relationship between work alienation and job autonomy which is one of the sub-dimensions and triggering factors of alienation. Thus, it was emphasized that alienation phenomenon could be evaluated in a structural integrity together with different managerial strategies and individual perceptions. The developed structural model had not been built previously and new empirical findings in relation to the interactions in the model were added to the few in the literature.

Findings indicate the multi-facet strategic significance of managers' giving the employees an autonomous status. Managers' provision of a work environment that enable employees to perform their tasks independently will make the employees attach much positive meaning to their work. First, through job autonomy, some psychologically rooted problems might be prevented through the elimination of the feeling of alienation caused by the feelings of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and insignificance. In addition, employees who gain autonomous status at workplace will be able to perform their tasks free of negative judgements and feelings, by

identifying with their organizations, in a corporate atmosphere where individual-organization fit achieved.

Limitations based on location and industry were made in this study by considering time and cost constraints. Measuring the relationships between these research variables in different time periods, geographical locations, and industries will enable much broader evaluations while enhancing the validity of the research model. Not only the identification sources but also some mediating variables might play a role in the impact of job autonomy on work alienation. Thus, revealing these mediating variables through different structural models could be suggested for future research.

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