

# The Relationship between Work Engagement Behavior and Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Climate

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between work engagement and perceived organizational support and organizational climate. The present study, in which quantitative methods have been used, is carried out in the relational screening model. Perceived organizational support scale, organizational climate scale, and work engagement scale, which was adapted into Turkish, were used as measurement instruments. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data. The population consists of classroom and in-field teachers working in primary and secondary schools in the central districts of Dulkadiroglu and Onikisubat in the province of Kahramanmaraş in 2014-2015 academic year. 23 institutions and 433 teachers were chosen as the sample from the whole population. The results of the study suggested that there is a positive and significant relationship between work engagement behaviors of teachers and perceived organizational support and organizational climate and that organizational climate and perceived organizational support had a positive and highly significant relationship.

**Keywords:** Organization, Management, Work Engagement, Organizational Climate, Perceived Organizational Support

## 1. Introduction

Institutions are founded to accomplish some certain goals. The human factor is indispensable for organizations in order to achieve these organizational goals. Organizations can regard human beings merely as means of realizing organizational goals, but they can also see human beings as social beings who have some purposes to fulfill and who need to accomplish these goals. An organization's view of human factors depends on upon whether the goals of human factors or organizational goals is more important and is based on which one should be prioritized to what level. This view is reflected in management, thus shaping the management philosophies of organizations.

Organizations use the human factor for their purpose. Human capital is very important for them. For that reason everything is important that a person who did value for organization. It is first thing for organizations personnel's' perception of supporting of organization, engaging. These elements are also important that influences organizational climate.

### 1.1 The Concept of Work Engagement and Its Importance

It can be seen that the examination of the concept of work engagement coincides with the periods after the first definition of the concept of burnout by Freudenberg. The reason for this is that the concept of work engagement emerged at a time after the definition of burnout as a concept (in the 1990s).

Schaufeli (2012) states that the work engagement concept first emerged in the business world, that the concept, although the origin is not so clear, was used by the Gallup Organization in 1990, and that the first academician to conceptualize *work engagement*, which was a new concept both in the business world and the academic society, emerged in the 1990s, and became the topic of over 200 scientific publications, was Khan (1990), an ethnographic researcher. Khan (1990) defined work engagement as workers' having themselves being made use of for their roles in their jobs, and after they get themselves hired for the position, workers' display of physical, cognitive, emotional, and mental performances for the sake of their roles in their jobs, and regarded this as the source of the production of positive outcomes on both individual and organizational levels.

The concept of burnout, which was first defined by Ferudenberger (1974), was completed and expanded with the antithesis of work engagement that referred to a positive state as a result of the studies conducted later on (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Maslach & Leiter (1997) redefined burnout as "the erosion experienced in work engagement" and developed a model that covers work engagement, which is the exact opposite of burnout, as a result of their studies to prevent burnout; in this model, in response to emotional exhaustion, desensitization, and personal underachievement, which are the sub-dimensions of burnout, they came up with sub-dimensions of "energy" instead of emotional exhaustion, "sense of belonging" instead of desensitization, and "competence" instead of personal underachievement in work engagement (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; as cited in Ardiç & Polatçı, 2009). Chughtai & Buckley (2008), contrary to the approach adopted by Maslach and Leiter (1997) suggest that Schaufeli and his colleagues' approach to work engagement and burnout should be seen as two negatively correlated states of mind instead of two opposite ends of a process. In respect to this subject, Chirkowska (2012) states that the fact that emotional burnout and

engagement consists of different structures was found out with their research analysis. Schaufeli (2012) mentions that emotional burnout and work engagement are not opposite as Maslach & Leiter (1997) described. Consequently, it can be seen that the discussions and the research on the new concept of work engagement continue and that there is still no consensus on the concept.

Schaufeli (2012) points out that the concept of work engagement, which first emerged in the nineties, is a new concept both for the academic and the business world. Macey & Schneider (2008) state that there is still vagueness in the meaning of engagement of workers between academicians and practitioners. Harter et al. employed a practical point of view and name the concept as worker engagement. (Roozeboom & Schelvis, 2015). According to their literature review, Kular, Gatenby, Rees, Soane & Truss (2008) state that they observed engagement of workers is conceptualized in many different ways and that there is no certain definition agreed upon related to work engagement. The fact that there are many definitions and opinions for this new concept suggests that discussion on the definition of the concept still continues.

When the definitions of work engagement are taken into consideration; work engagement is individuals' commitment to their work, their satisfaction from their work and the enthusiasm they feel about their work (Robbins & Judge, 2012). Work engagement is a positive behavior or a state of mind that leads to positive results in the work. Work engagement is defined as effective and positive cognitive state, vigor, commitment, and absorption. (Roozeboom & Schelvis, 2015).

Schaufeli (2012) states that work engagement means involvement in daily life, commitment, passion, absorption, commitment, focused effort, and energy. According to Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez and Bakker (2002), work engagement is a work-related, positive, and fulfilling state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Work engagement is a persistent state that may turn into enthusiasm, passion, high levels of concentration and energy (Wildermuth, 2008).

It is possible to mention many factors in the engagement of workers to their jobs. There are numerous and a variety of factors affecting individuals' behaviors in the working environment. These factors can be classified into organizational, individual, environmental, and work-related. Work engagement behavior is affected by many factors such as organizational culture, institutional communication, management upon trust and respect, leadership, and prestige of the organization (Lockwood, N.R., SPHR, GPHR, M.A, 2007). Workers' continuing to work in the institution and their willingness to compete determine their work engagement levels.

The importance of work engagement is that there are positive results for the organization (which is the power behind work engagement). Studies conducted on work engagement shows that having a high level of work engagement leads to high level of organizational responsibility, increased job satisfaction, less absenteeism and lower workload ratios, improved health and well-being, a display of more responsible behaviors, high performance, high demands in personal attempts, behaviors that take preventive actions, and motivation in learning (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Having engaged workers can be the key to competition (Macey & Schneider, 2008) and organizational success (Lockwood, 2007)

Engagement of workers will improve the productivity and effectiveness of the organization (Ardıç & Polatçı, 2009); has positive effects on meaningful work outcomes (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002), leads to less absenteeism (Berg, 2013); with the increase in work engagement, workers' willingness to stay in their current jobs increases and workers' illnesses decrease (Schaufli, 2007) and workers feel a lot stronger sense of loyalty for their organizations (Agyemang & Ofei, 2013).

### *1.2 Definition of Perceived Organizational Support and Its Importance*

Perceived organizational support is accepted as the perception that workers are valued by the organization and their happiness is taken into account by the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). The perception of organizational support is the extent of belief of workers that their organization appreciates their contributions and that it cares about their well-being (Robbins & Judge, 2012). Hellman (2006) defines the perception of organizational support as workers' perceiving the acceptance of the contributions they make to the organization they work for as a result of their efforts by the organization and the attention the organization gives to its workers' well-being. While Martin (1995) defines organizational support as the awareness of workers' contribution by the organization and the importance that the organization gives to their well-beings, Eisenberger et al. (1986), in a different definition, described organizational support as the organizational values' taking workers' well-being into consideration and bearing the qualities that increase happiness of workers.

Organizational support theory that makes efforts to explain the relationships between the organization and workers is based on the social exchange theory (Tokgöz, 2011). The social exchange theory by Blau (1964) points out that individuals tend to have positive responses towards an individual or individuals that will provide benefits to them in certain conditions. (Bateman & Organ, 1983). According to the social exchange theory, the relationship between workers and the organization is in a way a relationship of exchange and trade (Blau, 1964). The concept of perceived organizational support is one of the main arguments of this exchange. (Akkoç, Çalıřkan, & Turunç, 2012). Organizational support, which is based on the social exchange theory by Blau and is

very important for workers, is one of the vital sources to meet emotional needs such as being respected, accepted, recognized, and valued (İplik, İplik, & Efeoğlu, 2014).

Perceived organizational support has an important role both for the institution and for workers. Perceived organizational support enables workers to feel safe and feel that the power of the organization they work for behind them (Özdevecioğlu, 2003), makes workers that feel the support of their organization right beside them all the time become more attached to their jobs in that safe working environment and gives them the idea not to leave their working places (Akkoç et al., 2012), ensures workers to have tendency to show behaviors that theoretically provide benefits to the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), makes organizational citizenship behaviors stronger and decrease behaviors of tardiness (Vandenberghe et al., 2007; as cited in Robbins & Judge, 2012), leads to less absenteeism by workers and more conscious about the tasks related to their jobs when compared to workers who have lower levels of perception of organizational support (Eisenberger et. al, 1986).

Perceived organizational support increases performance in standard work-related activities, is effective in going over the predetermined standards and increases the level of organizational identification significantly (Turunç & Çelik, 2010).

Recent studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behaviors (Chiang & Hsieh, 2011), that perceived organizational support is related to normative and emotional connection (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007), and that organizational support is effective on emotional burnout resulting from role conflicts (Jawahar et al., 2007) (Tokgöz, 2011).

### *1.3 Definition of Organizational Climate and Its Importance*

Organizational climate is a concept that reflects workers' perception of psychological situations such as support, kindness, sincerity, rewarding, guidance, etc. that are related to the organization's psychological structure (Tutar & Altınöz, 2010). Ertekin (1978), who conducted the first research on organizational climate in Turkey, defines it as a series of qualities that provides the organization with its identity, affects behaviors of workers and is perceived by them, and dominates the whole organization (Çalık ve Kurt, 2010).

Balcı & Aydın (2003) defines organizational climate as the psychological environment of the organization; Bursalioğlu (2012) described the dimension of organizational climate as a product of relationships between individuals and groups. Çelik (2012) states that organizational climate is a set of inner qualities that affects behaviors of members and that distinguishes one school from another. Çekmecelioğlu (2005) expressed that organizational climate is conceptualized as the perception of workers about the organization.

Studies indicate that organizational climate is linked to job satisfaction, resigning, commitment, and performance of workers. When workers perceive the organization as supportive and rewarding for the organizational climate, their creative behaviors increase. Besides, when the organizational climate is just as desired, it creates a positive organizational identity and also causes behaviors of workers to make efforts for the organizational goals. Positive perception of organizational climate brings about positive behaviors. Positive behaviors lead to the realization of organizational and individual goals.

The population affected by and influence the organizational climate are not only teachers, managers, and school environment. Students who are at the center of education are also active components in creating the organizational climate, and they are affected by the organizational climate. Brand et al. (2003), emphasize that the finding that the results such as students' academic performances and their adaptation to the school arise due to positive school climate that involves teacher support, participation of students in classroom activities, peer cohesion, orderliness of the school and the classroom, educational innovations, student participation in decision-making, and students' or teachers' commitment to academic success is obtained through research results (Çalık & Kurt, 2010).

It is observed that organizational climate affects organizational commitment (Korkmaz, 2011) and has a major effect on professional commitment (Uysal, 2013). The sincerity of relationships among teachers in school climate depends on teachers' intimate relationships with each other; close relationships and nice conversations among teachers affect attitudes of teachers towards students (Bayram & Aypay, 2012). Teachers cannot fulfill their duties because of unhealthy organizational climates at schools, and this situation shows that organizational climate is an effective factor on the performance of teachers (Nurharani, Samsu, & Kamalu, 2013). It is seen that there is a significant relationship between organizational climate values and job satisfaction (Castro & Martins, 2010) and between organizational climate and profitability, sustainability and engagement (Putter, 2010). There is a highly positive relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction (Adenike, 2011) and a significant relationship between organizational climate and teacher commitment (Douglas, 2010).

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of teachers working in primary and secondary schools in the central districts of Dulkadiroglu and Onikisubat in the province of Kahramanmaras. In the study, two-stage sampling was performed, and layering sampling and cluster sampling methods from among probability based sampling methods. Layering sampling is employed in cases where there are sub-layers and subunits in a bordered population (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2012). According to the layering sampling method, primary and secondary schools are two different layers. Cluster sampling is used where all the clusters in the population (with all their components) have the equal chance to be selected (Karasar, 2000). From this point of view, with reference to the assumption that the schools in the population of the study have similar properties, each school was considered to be a cluster as the sampling of the study with the cluster sampling method and 23 primary schools were chosen as the sample of the study with a cluster sampling method.

According to the data from the Kahramanmaras Provincial Directorate of National Education for 2014-2015 academic years, there are 226 primary schools and 122 secondary schools in the central district. 4475 teachers working in primary and secondary schools in the central district, 2215 are classroom teachers and 2260 are branch teachers. The sample consists of 433 persons. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size is enough.

### 2.2 Data Collection Tools

#### 2.2.1 Work Engagement Scale

The work engagement scale developed by Schaufeli (2001) consists of 3 dimensions and 17 items. When the item numbers in the dimensions and the reliability values of the dimensions are taken into consideration, it is seen that there are 6 items under the dimension of Vigor (Cronbach's Alpha value: 0.79), 5 items under the dimension of Dedication (Cronbach's Alpha value: 0.89), and 6 items under the dimension of Absorption (Cronbach's Alpha value: 0.72).

The work engagement scale developed by Schaufeli (2001) (UWES: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) was adapted into Turkish by Köse (2015). After the adaptation, in the first value obtained from the scale, reliability was found out to be 0.94 (Cronbach Alpha). As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, the scale was improved into a two-factor structure, and the two-factor structure of the scale was confirmed by using the structural equation modeling.

The Work Engagement Scale adapted into Turkish and confirmed to have two-dimensions as part of the doctoral study by Köse (2015) was subjected to one-dimensional analysis in this study. MPLUS 7.0 was used to confirm the one-dimensional structure of the scale to perform confirmatory factor analysis, and the model is presented in Figure 1.

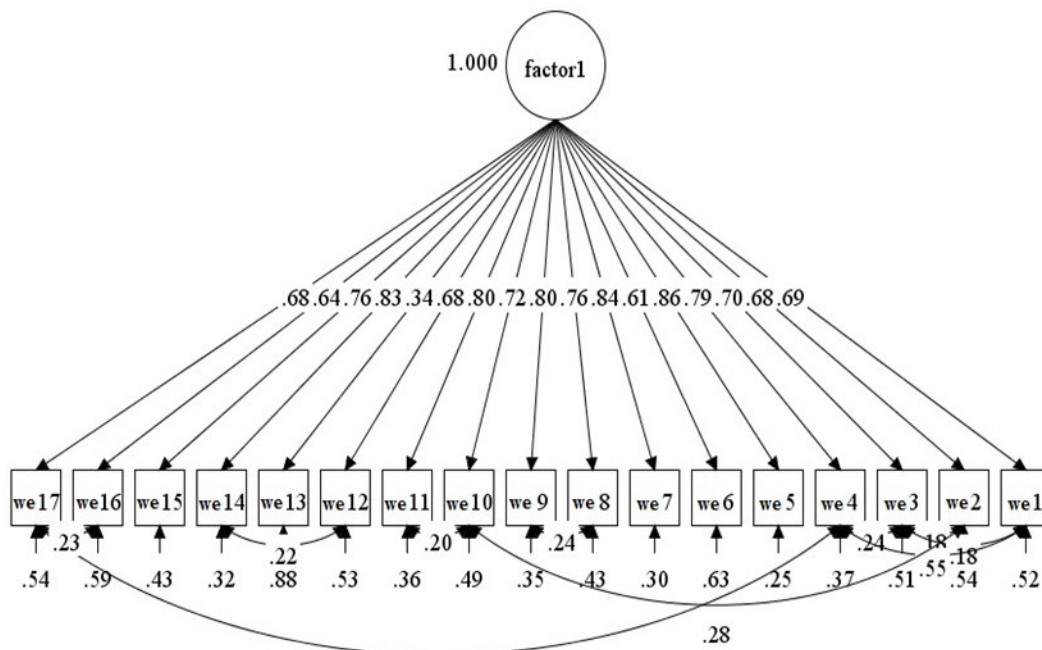


Figure 1. The structure of confirmatory factor analysis of the work engagement scale.

When the model fit indexes were examined, it was observed that CFI and TLI values are over 0.90, and RMSEA and SRMR values are below 0.08. Therefore, according to Kline (2010), it is observed that the model is acceptable. ( $\chi^2(109,602)=333.38$ ; CFI=0.95; TLI=0.96; RMSEA=0.07; SRMR=0.03).

### 2.2.2 Organizational Climate Scale

In order to collect the data about the organizational climate variable, the Organizational Climate Scale (OCDQ-RS: The Organizational Climate Description for Elementary Schools) developed by Hoy and Tarter (1997) and adapted into Turkish by Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2013) was employed. While the original version of OCDQ-RS scale consists of 42 items, with the Turkish adaptation by Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2013), the number of scale items was reduced to 39 and the scale was found out to have 6 dimensions. As a result of this adaptation, the reliability coefficient varies between 0.70 and 0.80 depending on the sample dimensions.

As only exploratory factor analysis was conducted in the adaptation study of organizational climate scale by Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2013), confirmatory factor analysis was also performed within the context of this study in addition to the exploratory factor analysis. After the scale was carried out, the total item correlation was checked. As a result of the findings, it was seen that the total item correlation of 12 out of 39 items was lower than 0.30, and these items were removed from the scale. In this way, the exploratory factor analysis in the next stage was done on 27 items in SPSS 23.0. As a result of this analysis, the scale was found out to have 4 factors as shown in Table 1, and item 33 was connected to the factor 3 and the factor 4. Because the connection loads were lower than 0.100, they were removed from the scale. The scale turned out to indicate 62% of the total variance of the organizational climate. The variances explained through these factors were 70%, 67%, 55%, and 50%, respectively.

Table 1. Organizational climate scale correlation values.

Scale Items	Factor 1 (Desired Principal Behaviors)	Factor 2 (Desired Teacher Behaviors)	Factor 3(Teacher Support)	Factor 4 (Bureaucracy)
oc5	.862			
oc9	.851			
oc1	.830			
oc7	.826			
oc4	.824			
oc2	.795			
oc8	.777			
oc6	.777			
oc3	.734			
oc10	.486			
oc26		.843		
oc27		.813		
oc24		.790		
oc25		.774		
oc23		.747		
oc28		.604		
oc35			.779	
oc31			.751	
oc34			.727	
oc32			.699	
oc22			.550	
oc29			.518	
oc33			.434	.413
oc36				.698
oc19				.659
oc37				.651
oc39				.614
Variance Explained	%70	%67	%55	%50
Reliability Coefficient	.94	.90	.83	.67

As a result, the scale was developed into a structure consisting of 26 items and 4 factors, and its reliability was found out to be .89. In the factor dimension, the reliability values of dimensions range from 0.67 to 0.94.

In order to confirm the result of the exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis was

performed in MPLUS 7.0, which is shown in Figure 2.

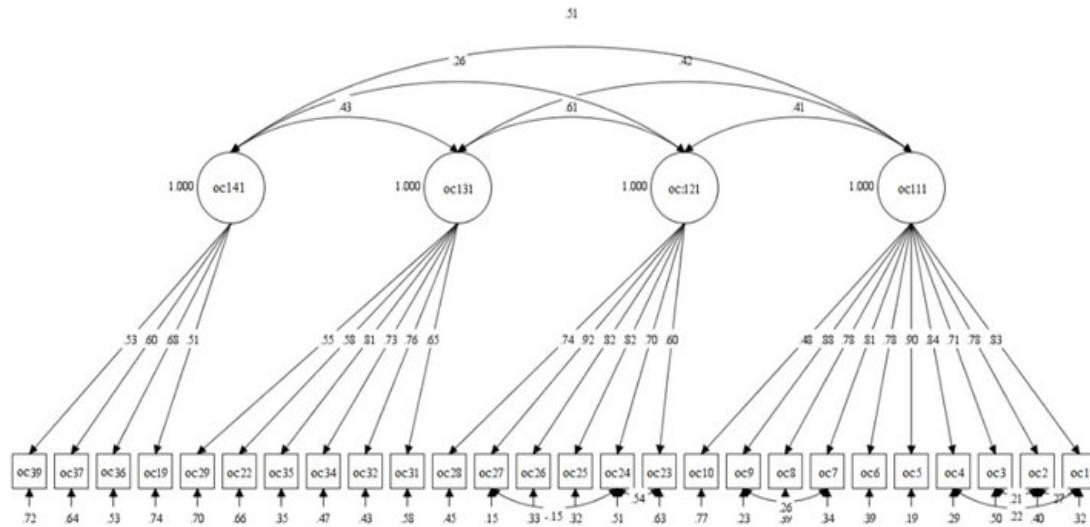


Figure 2. The confirmatory factor analysis structure on the organizational climate scale.

When the model fit indexes were examined, it was observed that CFI and TLI values are over 0.90, and RMSEA and SRMR values are below 0.08. Therefore, according to Kline (2010), it was seen that the model is acceptable. ( $\chi^2(287,602)=667.09$ ; CFI=0.94; TLI=0.94; RMSEA=0.05; SRMR=0.05).

### 2.2.3 Perceived Organizational Support Scale

In order to collect data about the perceived organizational support variable, the scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1992) and cited from Kaplan (2010) was employed. The scale is one-dimensional and consists of 10 items. As a result of the study by Kaplan, the reliability coefficient of the scale was found out to be 0.79.

As a result of the application of the scale within the scope of this study, the reliability value obtained was (Cronbach Alpha) 0.89. Therefore, the reliability of the scale turned out to be high level. Factor analysis was performed on this scale, and the reliability of the scale was intended to be measured. Firstly, the total item correlation was examined, and it was observed that each item had a correlation higher than 0.30. In this following stage, AFA was performed using SPSS 23.0. The scale was found out to have two factors, to explain 62% of perceived organizational support, to include 8 items under each factor, and to explain 51% of total variance explained. It was discovered that the remaining two items gathered under the factor 2 and that the total variance that this factor explained was 11%. When it is taken into consideration that the total variance explained by factor 1 was approximately five times more than that of factor 2, it can be said that the accumulation of this model under a single factor as in the literature is acceptable (Williams, Browns & Onsmann, 2012). MPLUS 7.0 was again used to do confirmatory factor analysis. The model is given in Figure 3.

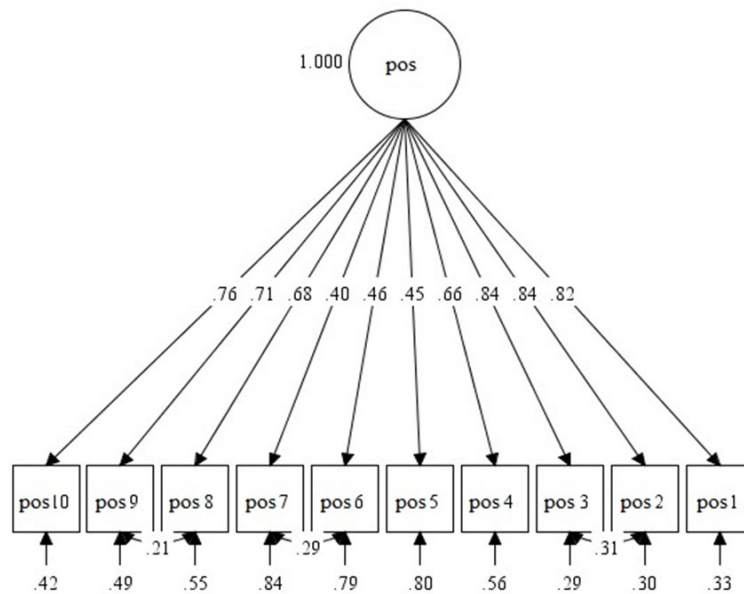


Figure 3: The structure of confirmatory factor analysis regarding perceived organizational support.

When the model fit indexes were examined, it was noticed that CFI and TLI values are over 0.90, and RMSEA and SRMR values are below 0.08, and, therefore, according to Kline (2010), it was observed that the model is acceptable. ( $\chi^2(1294,602)=2588.35$ ; CFI=0.91; TLI=0.91; RMSEA=0.05; SRMR=0.07).

### 2.3 Procedure

The relationship between work engagement, perceived organizational support, and organizational climate was examined in this study. For this reason, a structural equation model was formed in MPLUS 7.0. The reason for using structural equation modeling is that it enables researchers to find the relationship between latent variables (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004).

### 3. Findings

The structural equation model among work engagement, perceived organizational support, and organizational climate was shown in Figure 4.

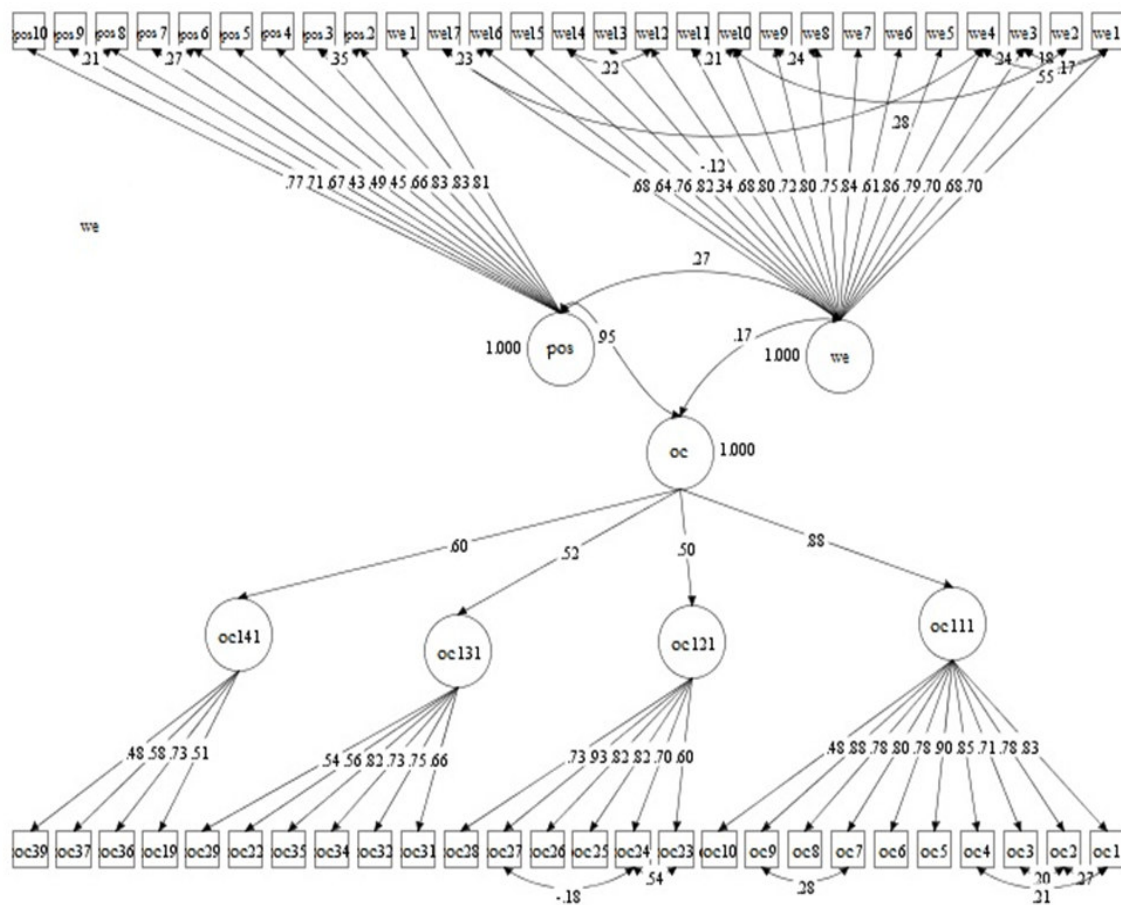


Figure 4: The structural equation model showing the relationship among work engagement, perceived organizational support and organizational climate.

When the model fit indexes were examined, it was observed that CFI and TLI values are over 0.90, and RMSEA and SRMR values are below 0.08. Therefore, according to Kline (2010), it was identified that the model was acceptable. ( $\chi^2(1299,602)=2644.88$ ; CFI=0.91; TLI=0.91; RMSEA=0.05; SRMR=0.07).

According to the findings, statistically significant relationships among work engagement (we), perceived organizational support (pos) and organizational climate (oc) was found ( $\beta_{we-pos}=.27, p<0.01$ ;  $\beta_{we-oc}=.17, p<0.01$ ;  $\beta_{oc-we}=.95, p<0.01$ ).

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the confirmatory factor analysis of “Work Engagement Scale” developed by Schaufeli (2001) and adapted into Turkish by Köse (2015) was carried out and the one-dimensional structure of the scale was confirmed.

Within the scope of the study, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were performed for the Organizational Climate Scale developed by Hoy and Tarter (1997) and adapted into Turkish by Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2013). As a result of these analyses, the scale was found out to have a structure with 4 dimensions. Exploratory and confirmatory analyses of Perceived Organizational Support Scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1992) and Lynch et al. (1999) and used by Kaplan (2010) in his study was performed, and its structure that consists a single factor was confirmed.

As a result of the study, it was found out that there was a significant relationship among work engagement, organizational climate, and perceived organizational support. The findings of the study suggested that there was a positive and significant relationship between work engagement of teachers and their perception of organizational support at a level of 0.27 ( $p<0.01$ ) and between work engagement of teachers and organizational climate at a level of 0.17. According to the findings, another result was that there was a positive and significant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational climate at a level of 0.95 ( $p<0.01$ ).

It was observed that the finding of the significant relationship between work engagement, and organizational climate and perceived organizational support was also found in the results of various studies.

When the results of the study showing the relationship between work engagement and perceived



organizational support are studied, it was revealed that, in the study by Lockwood et al. (2007), it was emphasized that the most important factor for workers to commit to their jobs was managers. Besides, a relationship between work engagement, and performance of workers and the tendency to keep working in the organization. The same study also suggested that organizations that have highly engaged workforce have workers who work with an effort and commitment that is ten times more than the ones working at organizations that have low levels of work engagement. According to the study conducted by Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli (2001), it was shown that perceived organizational support has a key role in the work commitment process. Moreover, in the study by Berg (2013), it was suggested that there were high performances, high levels of work engagement, and high workmanship quality in teams who have high levels of perception of supervisor support. In the study carried out by İplik et al. (2014) and Kahya and Kesen (2014), it was suggested that it was found out that there was a relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship in the study conducted by Chen, Eisenberger, Johnson, Sucharski, and Aselage (2008), it was suggested that perceived organizational support led to unexpected role behaviors. As a result of the study by Ince (2016), it was observed that organizational support is an effective factor in work commitment and management support, and it was found out that management support plays a vital intervention role in the effect of organizational support on work commitment.

When the studies suggesting the relationship between work engagement behaviors and organizational climate, the study by Salminen, Mäkikangas, and Feldt (2014) pointed out that organizational climate has a positive effect on work engagement. Studies indicate that there may be a link between work engagement levels and organizational performance (Kular et al., 2008). As a result of the study by (Uysal, 2013), it was found out that 50% of the change in the professional commitment was explained by the variable of organizational climate and 20% by perceived work support. The finding that "there is a high correlation between organizational climate and perceived organizational support" from the study by Putter (2010) shows parallelism with the result of this study.

Not only local but also foreign studies related to work engagement, which can be considered as a new concept, are limited in number. In this sense, it is considered that this study can contribute to the field on the topic of work engagement behaviors of workers. The confirmatory analysis of the work engagement scale adapted into Turkish by Köse (2015) turned it into a form that will be available to future studies in Turkey. Furthermore, the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational climate related to work engagement behaviors was presented. The researchers hope that the findings of this study will offer an insight for future studies. Moreover, the high level of positive relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational climate as a result of this study may be beneficial for both field researchers and practitioners.

The results of this study are limited to the sample of the study and the variety of the demographic properties of the participants. The fact that the scales developed in the data collection process (Work Engagement Scale - Perceived Organizational Scale - Organizational Climate Scale) were in the same order for all participants constitutes another limitation for the study. The study conducted with the participation of teachers can also be carried out with the participation of managers. In addition, in future studies, samples and managers with various demographic properties can be used and the order of the scales can be rearranged to compare the results with the results of this study.

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## Notes

Note 1. This study is produced from the author's doctoral dissertation named " The Relationship Between Job Engagement, Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Climate (Sample of Kahramanmaraş)".