


Investigation of organisational support, psychological empowerment and job satisfaction in hospital employees

Hastane çalışanlarında örgütsel destek, psikolojik güçlendirme ve iş tatmininin incelenmesi

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to reveal the relationships between organisational support (OS), psychological empowerment (PE), and job satisfaction (JS) variables and to examine whether PE plays a mediating role in the effect of OS on JS. The research population consists of private hospital employees in Ankara. In the research, a non-probability sampling method was used, and data were collected from 204 participants. As a result of the correlation analysis conducted, it was revealed that the relationships between OS, PE and JS were statistically significant and positive. According to the regression analysis, it was revealed that the perception of OS explained 25% of the total variance in PE and 24% of the total variance in JS. In comparison, the perception of PE explained 40% of the total variance in JS. Moreover, the mediating role of PE in the relationship between OS and JS was statistically significant and positive.

Keywords: Organisational Support, Psychological Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Hospital

Jel Codes: M10, M12, M54

Öz

Araştırmanın amacı; örgütsel destek (ÖD), psikolojik güçlendirme (PG) ve iş tatmini (İT) değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkileri ortaya koymak ve ÖD algısının İT'ye etkisinde PG'nin aracılık rolü oynayıp oynamadığını incelemektir. Araştırmanın evrenini Ankara'da bulunan özel bir hastanenin çalışanları oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada olasılıksız örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmış ve 204 katılımcıdan veri toplanmıştır. Yapılan korelasyon analizi sonucunda ÖD, PG ve İT arasındaki ilişkilerin istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ve pozitif yönlü olduğu belirlenmiştir. Regresyon analizi sonucunda ise ÖD algısının PG üzerinde toplam varyansın %25'ini ve İT üzerinde toplam varyansın %24'ünü; PG algısının ise İT üzerinde toplam varyansın %40'ını açıkladığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca ÖD ile İT arasındaki ilişkide PG'nin aracı rolünün istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı ve olumlu yönde olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Örgütsel Destek, Psikolojik Güçlendirme, İş Tatmini, Hastane

JEL Kodları: M10, M12, M54

Introduction

Recently, organisations have been facing various challenges due to fast technological or social variances. Considering these rapid fluctuations, it is evident that employees are decisive factors in the success, effectiveness, and efficiency of any organisation. At this point, organisations that want to be competitive need highly motivated, dedicated, satisfied and innovative human capital (Mascarenhas, Galvão, & Marques, 2022). Therefore, it can be stated that it is essential for organisations to support and empower their employees to provide satisfied human resources, and this situation offers significant benefits for both employees and organisations.

In organisational settings, it is believed that employees with higher perceptions of organisational support (OS) have positive work attitudes and behaviours (Ayuningtias, Shabrina, Prasetio, & Rahayu, 2018). Studies have shown that high levels of perceived organisational support (OS) lead employees to enhance the organisational environment and job satisfaction (JS) (Appelbaum, Nathaniel, Michael, Kelley, & Brian, 2019; Mascarenhas et al., 2022), and also positively affect perceived effort (PE) (Naktiyok, 2019). It is also stated in other studies that PE makes significant contributions to the success of the organisation, affecting employee tenure by increasing employee satisfaction levels and creating better working environments (Mathew & Nair, 2022).

OS, PE and JS are important organisational variables in healthcare institutions as in other organisations. However, upon examining the studies in the literature, it becomes apparent that there are very few studies that address these three variables simultaneously among hospital employees. Additionally, there are no studies examining the mediating role of PE in the effect of OS on JS among hospital employees. Therefore, it is believed that this research will help fill this gap in the literature. In this section of the research, information is provided on the concepts of PE, OS, and JS.

Psychological empowerment (PE)

Empowerment is defined as an individual's ability to utilise existing resources and make decisions independently to achieve goals (Çınar & Kutlu, 2021). In other words, it is the act of authorising someone to make decisions and is often associated with the redistribution of responsibilities from managers to subordinates (Saif & Saleh, 2013).

Empowerment is considered in two ways: structural and psychological empowerment. Accordingly, structural empowerment is defined as a practice or set of practices that provide access to information, resources and support opportunities for development and growth (Saif & Saleh, 2013). PE, on the other hand, refers to a cultural, social, or psychological process in which individuals have control, fulfil their needs, or make their own decisions (Fan, Zheng, Liu, & Li, 2016). That is to say, PE is considered an essential driving force in supporting employees' ability to adapt to the environment, helping them effectively face work-related challenges that jeopardise reactivity and productivity, and ultimately achieving sustainable corporate competitive advantage (Joo, Bozer, & Ready, 2019).

PE is a concept that reflects a state of increased intrinsic task motivation, with its structure comprising four cognitive components: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). Hereunder, *meaning* is the evaluated value of a work goal or objective about an individual's ideals or standards. In other words, it represents a dimension that includes the individual's genuine interest in a particular work (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). This dimension indicates that the work goal must not conflict with the employee's values and beliefs for the employee to feel empowered in their work roles. *Competence* is defined as the degree to which an employee believes that they have the capability and skill to perform the job well. Accordingly, the confidence of employees in their ability to perform their jobs effectively enables them to perform better and feel empowered (Mathew & Nair, 2022). *Self-determination* refers to an individual's sense of choice in initiating and regulating actions. It is also a dimension that reflects autonomy in initiating and maintaining work behaviours and processes (e.g., making decisions about working methods, pace and effort). Ultimately, *impact* refers to the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative, or operational outcomes in the workplace (Spreitzer, 1995).

The determinants of PE include individual variables and social-structural variables (Fuller, Morrison, Jones, Bridger, & Brown, 1999). Studies in the literature also show that PE is associated with various organisational variables, such as work engagement, quality of service, organisational citizenship behaviour, proactive behaviours, innovative behaviour, proactivity, and job-crafting (Ochoa Pacheco, Coello-Montecel, & Tello, 2023).

Organisational support (OS)

Perceived OS refers to employees' perceptions of how much their organisations value their contributions and care about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). OS perceived in this way reveals the obligation that employees feel to help the organisation achieve its goals. Employees can fulfil this obligation by demonstrating a greater emotional commitment to the organisation and making a greater effort to support it (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). Therefore, employees' perception of OS is considered an antecedent for increasing organisational commitment and demonstrating organisational goal behaviour (Peng, Xu, Zheng, & He, 2023).

Perceived OS is conceptualised as the quality of social exchange between the employee and his/her organisation and provides employees with information about their relationship with their workplace. According to another definition, perceived OS reflects employees' most sincere feelings about the care and importance of the organisation. Employees who perceive OS feel that the organisation is helpful, respectful, caring, and cooperative and appreciates employees' contributions (Singh & Malhotra, 2015).

Perceived OS is believed to satisfy both economic needs through rewards and benefits and socio-emotional needs such as approval, respect and gaining social identity (Conway, 2015). In addition, indicators of OS include providing a supportive work environment, access to training and development, and fair pay and rewards (Zheng et al., 2024). Studies in the literature also indicate that rewards, development, growth opportunities, and promotions have positive relationships with perceived organisational support (Singh & Malhotra, 2015).

Job satisfaction (JS)

JS is defined as the primary determinant of an organisation's health in terms of human resources (Mathew & Nair, 2022). This concept relates to the general evaluation of a person's job, either positively or negatively, and encompasses emotional, cognitive, and behavioural tendencies that reflect the person's attitude towards their job (Meier & Spector, 2015). In other words, this concept is "the pleasurable or positive emotional state that emerges as a result of the evaluation of one's job or work experiences" (Clark, 1996). According to another definition, JS is related to people's feelings about the rewards they receive from work (Chen & Silverthorne, 2008). That is to say, the degree of satisfaction is based on the importance given to the reward or benefit, and it is stated that if a specific reward is significant to the person and the job provides this reward, the person is more satisfied with the job (Flanagan, 2006).

It is stated that JS contributes significantly to the provision of high-quality healthcare services and is a critical factor in reducing both physical and mental health problems among healthcare employees (Hoxha, Simeli, Theocharis, Vasileiou, & Tsekouropoulos, 2024). According to studies in the literature, JS in healthcare professionals impacts the quality of care, patient satisfaction, and turnover intention (Abate & Mekonnen, 2021). Moreover, it is stated that JS is influenced by a wide range of factors, including a good working environment, opportunities for personal and professional development, a reasonable workload, recognition, positive relationships with colleagues, autonomy at work, job security, and career development (Khamlub et al., 2013).

Methodology

Purpose and hypotheses of the research

The purpose of this research is to reveal the relationships between OS, PE and JS variables. Another objective of the research is to investigate whether physical education (PE) serves as a mediating factor in the relationship between occupational stress (OS) and job satisfaction (JS). According to these purposes, the hypotheses of the research are as follows:

H₁: Participants' perceptions of OS have a statistically significant effect on their perceptions of PE.

H₂: Participants' perceptions of OS have a statistically significant effect on their perceptions of JS.

H₃: Participants' perceptions of PE have a statistically significant effect on their perceptions of JS.

H₄: PE plays a mediating role in the effect of participants' perceptions of OS on JS.

Sampling

The research population consists of private hospital employees (physicians, nurses, administrative personnel, etc.) in Ankara (N = 450). In the research, a non-probability sampling method was used, and data were collected from 204 participants. Thus, the participation rate was determined to be 45%.

Data collection

The data were collected between December 16, 2024, and January 10, 2025, using a face-to-face questionnaire method. The first section of the questionnaire consists of four sections, including the "PE Scale" developed by Spreitzer (1995), which was adapted into Turkish by Sürgevil, Tolay, and Topoyan (2013). Consisting of 12 items, the measurement tool has four sub-dimensions (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact). The statements in the scale are evaluated with a 5-point Likert scale in the range of "1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree". High values indicate a high perception of PE (Sürgevil et al., 2013). There are no reverse-coded items in the scale. In the second section, to determine the level of perceived organisational support (OS) by employees, the "Perceived OS Scale" developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and later shortened by Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009), whose Turkish validity and reliability in nursing were investigated by Türe and Yıldırım (2018), was used. Consisting of 9 items and one dimension, the scale items are scored by the 5-point Likert system in the range of 1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree. Two items on the scale are reverse-coded. As the score obtained from the scale increases towards 5, the level of perceived OS is considered high, and as the score decreases towards 1, the level of perceived OS is considered low (Türe & Yıldırım, 2018). In the third section, the "JS Scale", which was developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) as an 18-item scale and subsequently converted into a 5-item short form by Judge et al. (1998), was used. The scale was tested for validity and reliability in Turkish by Başol and Çömlekçi (2020). The scale is evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree-5= Strongly Agree). There are no reverse-coded items in the scale. A decrease in the mean score of the participants indicates a reduction in JS evaluation, while an increase in the mean score indicates an increase in JS evaluation (Başol & Çömlekçi, 2020). In the last section, there are seven questions to reveal descriptive characteristics of the participants (age, gender, educational level, duty in the hospital, marital status, total working time in the healthcare sector and the present hospital).

Validity and reliability analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was examined to test the validity and reliability of the scales used in the research, and Cronbach alpha coefficients were analysed. According to the reliability analysis, the alpha value for the overall PE scale was calculated as 0.913. Sürgevil et al. (2013) found that the alpha value for the sub-dimensions of the scale was above 0.80. While Türe and Yıldırım (2018) found the alpha value for the whole OS scale to be 0.88, the alpha value for the entire scale in this research was calculated as 0.917. Başol and Çömlekçi (2020) found the alpha value for the whole JS scale to be 0.93, while the alpha value for the overall scale in this research was 0.871. According to the literature, scales with alpha coefficients ranging from 0.80 to 1.00 are considered to have high reliability (Alpar, 2011). Therefore, it can be stated that the scales used have a high level of reliability.

In the research, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to confirm whether the construct validity of the scales was supported. Considering the theoretical facts stated in the literature and the corrections suggested by the model, the model was recalculated by connecting the items with the highest contribution to the model (items with the highest error score) from the items under the same dimension by two-way arrows (\leftrightarrow) called covariance. In this context, item 8 (If the organisation I work for closes down or changes its field of activity, it would prefer to lay me off rather than transfer me to a new job) and item 5 (The organisation I work for pays little attention to its employees) of the one-dimensional OS scale were excluded from the analysis because of low factor loading ($<.30$). In the PE scale, as a result of the first level CFA analysis, item 7 (I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job) in the "self-determination" sub-dimension was excluded from the analysis to show a cross/overlapping load and to make a higher contribution to the model. As a consequence of the CFA, it is evident that the goodness-of-fit index values produced by the model and the model created by the researchers are compatible with the data, and the goodness-of-fit values exceed the threshold values specified in the literature (Table 1).

Table 1: Goodness of Fit Values for CFA Models

Acceptable Values	X ²	df	p p≥.05	X ² /df 3≤χ ² /sd≤5	GFI ≥.90	CFI ≥.90	NFI	TLI ≥.90	SRMR ≤.08	RMSEA ≤.08
^a PE	71.003	38	.001	1.869	.940	.981	.960	.972	.029	.065
^b PE	90.312	40	.000	2.258	.926	.971	.949	.971	.054	.079
^c OS	28.445	13	.008	2.188	.961	.983	.970	.973	.028	.077
^c JS	524.625	3	.000	1.593	.991	.997	.991	.988	.015	.054

^a: First Level Multifactor CFA^b: Second Level Multifactor CFA^c: Single Factor

Data analysis

The analyses in the research were carried out using SPSS and the Process Macro add-on to SPSS, as well as the AMOS package program. Descriptive statistics were evaluated, and validity, reliability, correlation and regression analysis were performed to analyse the data.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval was obtained from a university, with the decision number GO2024/770 dated December 3, 2024.

Results

The mean age of the participants in the research was 35.53 years. 66.7% of the employees were female, 31.9% were undergraduate, and 55.4% were married. While 22.1% of the participants were nurses, 37.7% were other health personnel. The mean total working time of the employees in the healthcare sector was 11.74, while the mean total working time in the present hospital was 4.36 (Table 2).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Participant Demographics

Variables	Feature	N	%
Age	Mean= 35.53; Min=20; Max=70	204	100
Gender	Female	136	66.7
	Male	68	33.3
Educational level	High school and below	36	17.6
	Associate degree	47	23.0
	Undergraduate	65	31.9
	Postgraduate	56	27.5
Duty in hospital	Physician	41	20.1
	Nurse	45	22.1
	Other health personnel	77	37.7
	Administrative personnel	41	20.1
Marital status	Married	113	55.4
	Single	91	44.6
Total working time in the healthcare sector (year)	Mean= 11.74; Min=1; Max=47	204	100
Total working time in the present hospital (year)	Mean= 4.36; Min=1; Max=20	204	100

In the correlation analysis conducted in this research, statistically significant and positive relationships were found between OS and JS ($r = 0.487$), PE and JS ($r = 0.633$), and PE and OS ($r = 0.498$) (Table 3).

Table 3: Descriptive Findings and Correlation Values of Research Variables

Variables	OS	PE	JS	X	SD
OS	1			3.67	0.90
PE	.498**	1		4.25	0.61
JS	.487**	.633**	1	4.03	0.72

**p<0.01, SD, standard deviation

In the regression analysis, it was found that, firstly, OS explained 25% of the total variance on PE and as the participants' perceptions of OS increased, their perceptions of PE also increased ($b = .340$, $t = 8.168$, $p < 0.001$); secondly, OS explained 24% of the total variance on JS and OS increased JS ($b = .389$, $t = 7.923$, $p < 0.001$); and thirdly, PE explained 40% of the total variance on JS and PE increased JS ($b = .741$, $t = 11.612$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 4). According to these results, the H₁, H₂ and H₃ hypotheses of the research are accepted.

In the research, regression analysis based on the Bootstrap method was performed to reveal the mediating role of PE in the effect of OS on JS. When the lower and upper values of the Bootstrap indirect effect confidence interval do not include the value 0, the effect is significant (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004; Hayes, 2022). According to the results of the regression analysis conducted in this direction, the effect of OS on JS through PE was found to be significant and positive ($b=.207$ 95% BCA CI [.1326 .2791]) (Table 4). The fully standardised effect size of the mediation effect is $K^2.258$, which means that this value is a high effect size. Accordingly, hypothesis H_4 is accepted.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Results

Forecast Variables	Outcome Variables			
	PE		JS	
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>
$H_1(OS \rightarrow PE)$.340**	.042	-	-
R^2	.25	-	-	-
$F=66.711, t=8.168, \text{Durbin-Watson}=1.952$				
$H_2(OS \rightarrow JS)$	-	-	.389**	.049
R^2	-	-	.24	-
$F=62.776, t=7.923, \text{Durbin-Watson}=1.828$				
$H_3(PE \rightarrow JS)$	-	-	.741**	.064
R^2	-	-	.40	-
$F=134.829, t=11.612, \text{Durbin-Watson}=2.033$				
$H_4 \text{ Indirect effect } (OS \rightarrow PE \rightarrow JS)$	-	-	.207, (CI=.1326 2791)	
R^2			.44	

** $p<0.01$; SE= Standard Error, CI =Confidence Interval

Figure 1 shows that OS has a statistically significant effect on JS through PE in the mediating effect model. Path a represents the effect of OS on PE; path b represents the effect of OS and PE together on JS; path c represents the effect of OS on JS.

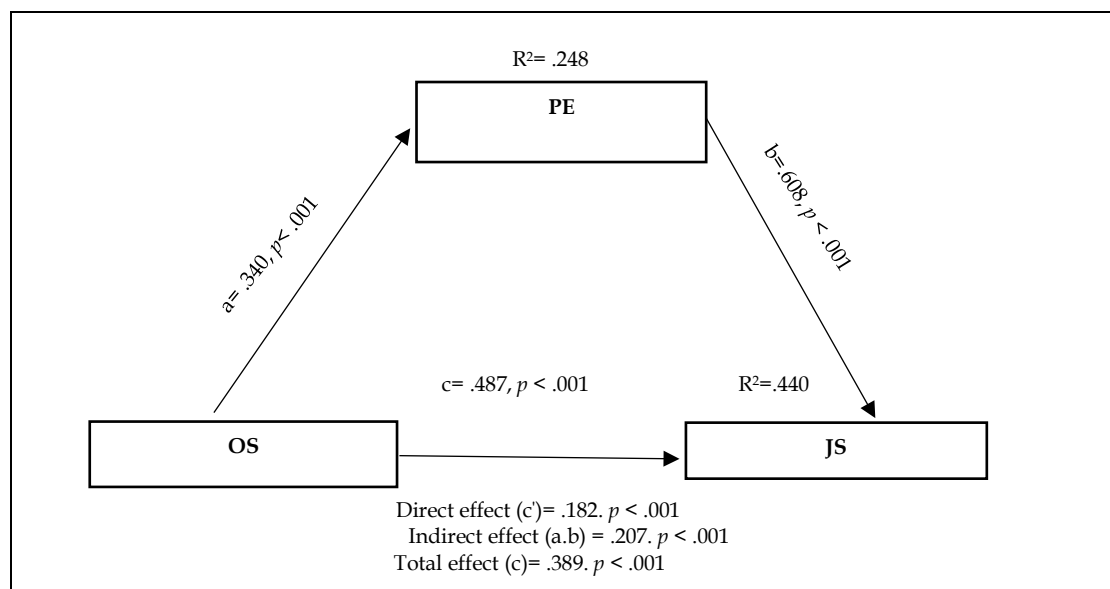


Figure 1: Model for the Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

Note: Values represent standardised coefficients; ** $p<0.001$

Discussion

The purpose of this research is to reveal the relationships between OS, PE and JS and to examine whether PE plays a mediating role in the effect of OS on JS. In the literature, studies investigating these variables together in a sample of hospital employees are pretty limited. This situation serves as the primary starting point for this research.

According to the analysis results, a positive relationship was revealed between OS and PE. It was also found that the perception of OS explains 25% of the total variance in PE and that an increase in the perception of OS statistically increases PE. In Arslan's (2023) research on healthcare professionals, a significant positive relationship was found between perceived effectiveness (PE) and perceived overall satisfaction (OS), indicating that an increase in the perception of PE among healthcare professionals also

increases their perception of OS. In the research conducted by El Banan (2017) on nurses, statistically significant relationships were determined between OS and PE. In Naktiyok's (2019) research, a positive relationship was found between OS and PE, revealing that OS increases PE. Maan et al. (2020) and Caesens et al. (2020) also found that perceived OS has a positive and significant relationship with PE. According to these results, it can be inferred that people working in organisations that provide support to their employees evaluate and reward their contributions will also be positively affected by their perceptions of PE.

In the present research, a positive and significant relationship was revealed between OS and JS. It was also found that the perception of OS explains 24% of the total variance in JS and that an increase in the perception of OS statistically increases JS. In Amri and Putra's (2020) research, conducted in a hospital setting, it was found that perceived OS has a positive and significant effect on JS. Again, Maurits et al. (2015) researched nurses and found that top management support has a positive impact on job satisfaction (JS). In a study conducted by Mascarenhas et al. (2022), it was found that OS, as perceived by both female and male employees, had a positive effect on their job satisfaction (JS). Maan et al. (2020), Lun et al. (2024), Li et al. (2020), and Sharif et al. (2021) also found that perceived OS has a positive effect on JS. According to these results, it can be stated that the more positive employees' perceptions of their institutions' organisational support are, the higher their job satisfaction (JS) will be.

In this research, a positive relationship was found between PE and JS, with PE explaining 40% of the total variance in JS. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that an increase in the perception of PE statistically increased JS. In Kıran Morkoç's (2024) research on healthcare employees, a positive relationship was found between PE and JS, and it was determined that PE has a significant effect on JS. In Erdem and Deniz's (2016) research on public employees working in health institutions, significant relationships were found between job satisfaction (JS) and perceived organisational effectiveness (PE), and it was observed that PE has a positive effect on both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. In the studies by Ouyang et al. (2015), Orlowska and Laguna (2023), Ding and Wu (2023), Dahinten et al. (2016), and Jaradat et al. (2024) on nurses, it was found that PE has a positive relationship with JS. According to research by Ertem et al. (2021), the professional satisfaction of nurses is significantly influenced by their physical exercise (PE) levels. In line with these results, it can be stated that psychologically empowered employees will have high job satisfaction (JS).

In this research, the mediating role of PE in the effect of OS perception on JS was demonstrated. In the research conducted by Maan et al. (2020), it was determined that PE functions as a mediator between perceived OS and JS. Lun et al. (2024) also found that PE is an essential mediator in strengthening the link between perceived OS and JS. Aziz et al. (2024) found that PE mediates the relationship between perceived OS and career satisfaction. In line with these results, it can be stated that individuals who perceive that their organisations appreciate their contributions will have a greater sense of PE, which in turn is associated with high JS (Maan et al., 2020).

Conclusion

As a result of the research, it was determined that OS and PE have a positive effect on JS, OS positively affects PE, and PE plays a mediating role in the impact of OS on JS. Accordingly, these results show that it is essential for organisations to provide OS by prioritising the contributions and welfare of their employees to increase their job satisfaction (JS). In this context, organisations can support employees by providing a supportive working environment, offering performance-based feedback, and creating effective reward systems. Additionally, JS can be increased by ensuring employees' participation in decision-making processes and sharing relevant information with them. Additionally, by assigning tasks and responsibilities to employees, areas where they can implement their own decisions can be created, thereby ensuring personal empowerment (PE). Moreover, to increase employees' perceptions of OS and JS, senior management can hold regular motivational meetings for employees and offer training and development opportunities. To improve the generalizability of the research results, the relationships between these three variables can be investigated in various healthcare institutions (such as public hospitals and university hospitals) and across different samples (including nurses). In future research, the relationships between OS, PE and JS can be examined longitudinally to address the development of the issue over time.

Limitation

Since this research was conducted in a hospital in a province of Turkey, the results cannot be generalised to all hospital employees. Additionally, the data obtained in this research are based on the personal statements of the participants. Additionally, this research is limited to the period during which it was conducted.

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The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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Author Contributions:

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