

EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED WORKLOAD AND COWORKER LOAFING ON JOB PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Performance have positive or negative consequences for the organization and therefore scholars are widely interested in investigating the individual and organizational factors that affect it. Accordingly, this paper aims to investigate the impact of perceived workload and coworker loafing on job performance. It is proposed that the perception of workload and coworker loafing will negatively influence job performance. The results showed that perceived coworker loafing is negatively associated with job performance. Surprisingly, the results provide no empirical evidence in support of the negative relationship between perceived workload and job performance.

Keywords: Perceived Workload, Coworker Loafing, Job Performance

INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry is so vital to the national economy and world economy that it affects the revenues of every nations, the job creation, and income distribution (S. Suriya, 2013). All over the world the hotel industry is considered as the most significant part of the tourism industry. Although performance of employees is a major concern for all business organizations, it is more concern by managers of hotel organizations because the success of the hotel may depend on it. The employee performance is crucial for provision of quality services in the hotels which results in highly satisfied customers (S. Sirisanhiran, 2010; Karatepe, 2013) that keep returning and thus contributing to hotels' good performance. Organizations need highly performing individuals in order to accomplish their goals, to meet the rising need of customers and finally to achieve competitive edge (Sonntag; 2013; Shabbir and Raza Naqvi;2017). Capable employees handling their job better and faster is critic for customer satisfaction that ensure long-term success.

In the hotel and hospitality industry, one of the most challenging issues that the managers have to face is the stress of work that effect the performance of employees no matter at which level they work (Ross, 2005, 11). Besides, the major reason behind staff turnover ratio which is highest in the hotel and hospitality industry is stress and work pressure (Pulak, 2012). Employees may become exhausted and cynical because of the job stress which in turn would affect the services that are provided to the customers (Kim, 2008, 158). According to Vijayan major job stress factors affecting job performance are; workload, job security, autonomy, role conflicts, shift work, low salaries, technology change, low morale, lack of recognition (2017;21). Indeed there are many scholars who stated that workload is the major source of stress (Hellriegel, 2004; Shabbir and Raza Naqvi;2017; Gharib et al., 2016) that is moderately correlated with a number of physical illness and physiological symptoms such as headaches, strokes, fatigue, heart attacks, indigestion, blood pressure, and ulcers. A survey of more than 400,000 employees conducted by international survey research of Chicago reported that forty percent of these peoples say that their work load are excessive and they have too much pressure at work. (Shellenbarger, 1999). There have been reports in the newspaper recently of deaths due to overwork in Japan. Nearly

one-third of American employees often or over often feel overworked or overwhelmed by work. It's apparent that workload and stress issues are rising day-by-day and each employee seems to be exposing the workload problem which ultimately affect their health and performance.

Workload can be defined as “the amount of work that should be done in a certain period of time and with a certain quality”. It's an all-encompassing term that includes any variable reflecting the amount or difficulty of one's work” (Bowling & Kirkendall, 2012, p. 222). Price (2001) defined workload as “amount of effort required by a job” (p. 606). Hart and Staveland (1988) defined the concept as the cost incurred by an individual given their skills while performing a particular level of performance on a task with specific demands. It is a multidimensional concept that results many different variables such as task demands, the skills, resources etc. (Cain, 2004) and can be assessed as either a subjective perception or as an objective characteristic of one's work (Spector & Jex, 1998). Measures of workload can use an objective or perceptual measures (Bos et al., 2013). This study focused on the latter that is generally concerned with the amount of work relative to individual capabilities and time sufficiency.

Workload which affect the employees' productivity and efficiency can be a result of certain constraints like time pressure, shortage of adequate and timely help, inadequate resources to accomplish a task, inefficient co-workers, role conflicts etc. (Vijayan; 2017; 22). It is experienced when employees are expected to do over than available time, resources and their capabilities and also when they face many expectations from direct boss, subordinates, colleagues, top management, local community and so on (Ammar,2006; Gharib et al.,2016). It can be classified into two as qualitative or quantitative. First one occurs when an employee does not have sufficient abilities to do work, while the latter one occurs when an employee has huge tasks to do or too time shortage to perform them (Spector, 1997; Conley & Woosley, 2000; Trayambak et al., 2012).

Past researchers support that one clear organizational consequences of workload is a decline in performance. Performances can be separated into organisational and employee performance. This study focus on the second one which is simply defined as the output and accomplishments of a worker (Robbins, 1996). In general scholars describe job performance as the work results based on quality and quantity attained by employees after completing a job for a given period (Schermerhorn, 1989; Kane & Lawler, 1976; Mangkunegara, 2009). Some scholars distinguishes between two types of employee performance; task performance (in-role behavior) that is generally role-prescribed and contextual performance (extra-role behavior) that tends to be more discretionary (Motowidlo and Van Scotter, 1994; Fauth et al.,2009). Task performance reflects how well an employee performs the duties that are specified in their job descriptions whereas the latter include all the support activities that are not formally included in job descriptions. Get along with others, help absent colleagues to complete the work, demonstrate respect for colleagues, sharing useful information and suggestions with others, work effectively as team members are some examples for extrarole performance (Fauth et al.,2009; Zhu;2013). The rating, the quality evaluation, the quantity standard, and the document data record are the four categories that are used to evaluate the task performance which is the focus of this study. Taking all these arguments together we hypothesize:

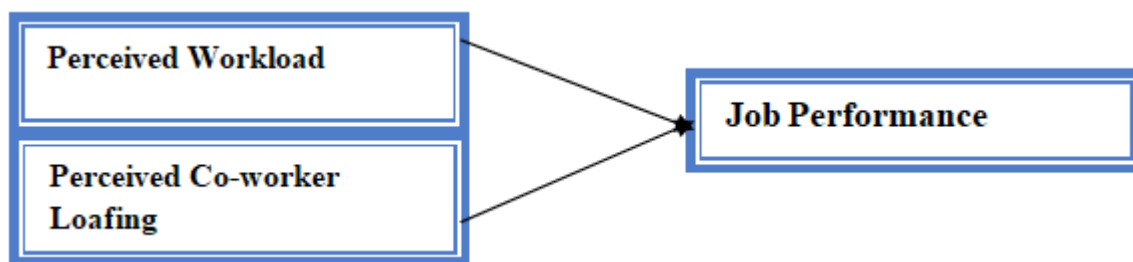
H1: There is significant negative relationship between workload and job performance.

There are various factors in work environment that influence job performance in negative way one of which is co-worker loafing. Social loafing must first be discussed in order to understand perceived co-worker loafing. Social loafing is the tendency for employees to lower their productivity when in a group (Ringlemann, 1913; Ingham et al., 1974). In other words, it is a reduction in an individual's motivation and effort when working collectively as compared to either working individually. Kerr (1983) explain this when some team members engaged in social loafing, other team members would in turn reduce their efforts in the project in order to avoid being a “sucker”. Mulvey and Klein (1998) warn that this negative impact of perceived loafing could turn into escalating cycle. Because in order not play the sucker role an individual who perceives loafing reduces his/her performance which in turn lead to greater perceptions of loafing and a further reduction in group motivation and group performance.

On the other hand, perceived co-worker loafing refers to the extent to which group members feel that one or more coworkers engage in social loafing (Comer, 1995). It differs from social loafing as it deals with the perception others have of their co-workers, regardless of the co-workers actual input (Liden et al., 2004). Literature on organizational behavior has indicated that attitudes behavior are largely based on perceptions which may or may not reflect actual conditions and therefore, the perceptions of group members are important in examining the consequences of loafing regardless of the accuracy of those perceptions (Mulvey and Klein; 1998; 64). Employees typically observe the behavior of others, which in turn influence their own behaviors (Mitchell et al., 1985; Liden et al. 2004). Adams (1965) suggests that employees compare their own contributions to those of “perceived loafers” and they reduce their own efforts to reflect their perceptions of fairness. As a result, perceived loafing among co-workers reduce the motivation and performance of the employees (Mulvey, Bowes-Sperry & Klein, 1998; Mulvey & Klein, 1998). Thus we hypothesize:

H2: There is significant negative relationship between perceived coworker loafing and job performance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH MODEL



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected from 117 employees of hotels in Kocaeli, Turkey. A majority of the respondents (53,0 %) were female. As to the educational qualification, 32,5 % had obtained a high school degree, and (29,1%) held a graduate degree. 34,2% of the participants were aged between (26-34) years and the majority of the participants (38,5%) with job tenure between (1– 5) years. Finally, the majority of the participants (20,5) work in Front Office.

Measures

To test the above hypotheses, multi-item scales adopted from prior studies for the measurement of constructs were used. All items were measured on a five point Likert-type scale where (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. First, the Workload Scale developed by Bolino & Turnley (2005) was used to measure respondents' perceptions. The three items used were: “I never seem to have enough time to get everything done at work”; “The amount of work I am expected to do is too great” and “It often seems I have too much work for one person to do”. The Alpha reliabilities of the factors were 0.84.

Four items developed by Mulvey and Clein (1998) was used to assess employees perceptions of co-worker loafing. Sample items are “Members of my group are trying as hard as they can”, Members of my group are contributing less than I anticipated. The Alpha reliabilities of the factors were 0.86. Job performance was measured using the five-item scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). Sample items are ‘I can competently complete assigned work’, ‘I can perform the duties of my job description’, and ‘I never neglect my job responsibilities’. The Alpha reliabilities of the factors were 0.84.

Data Analysis and Results

In order to identify the underlying structure of various measures exploratory factor analysis using principle components of factor extraction and varimax rotation techniques was performed. As a

cut-off loading was used 0.40. Most factor loadings were above 0.50 which can be assumed a high level of significance. The results from our factor analysis of the measurement items for each of the subscales (Table 1) imply that measures used in this study have construct validity (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 1: Factor Loading of Scale Items

Perceived Workload	Perceived Loafing	Task Performance
,862	,935	,963
,851	,911	,958
,849	,716	,926
,782	,823	,914
		,909

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations and correlations for all of the variables in this study. The results indicate that there is a negative correlation among employees' perception of workload, loafing and job performance.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistic and correlations of the measures

Variables		Mean	Std D.	1	2	3
<i>1. Perceived Workload</i>	1	2.68	1.83	-	.329	-.224**
<i>2. Perceived Co-Worker Loafing</i>	2	3.20	0.99	-	-	-.878**
<i>3. Job Performance</i>	3	2.78	1.79	-	-	-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Model Testing Results

A regression analysis was performed to examine the effects of perception of workload and loafing on job performance (Table 3). The results revealed that perceived co-worker loafing has a significant negative effect on job performance and therefore the second hypothesis of the study is supported ($\beta = -.682^*$). The results did not show any significant relationship between perceived workload and job performance and therefore the first hypothesis of the study is rejected.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results

VARIABLES				
Independents	Dependent	β	t	p
Workload	Job Performance	-,001	-,009	,993
Co-Worker Loafing	Job Performance	-,682**	-9,954	,000

**Significant at 0,01 (one tailed)

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Past researches on workload indicate that it is such a negative phenomenon that impacts employees' psychological well-being which, in turn, can reduce job performance (Brüggen, 2015; Eggemeier, 2004; Endsley and Kaber, 1999; Mehler et al., 2009; Yang et al., 2004; Shabbir and Raza Naqvi, 2017). However, the results of the current study carried on hospitality employees did not support the expectation perceived workload affects performance. This result may be attributed to the main characteristics of the hotel sector. As known, hospitality employees are accustomed to work hard in unusual times such as in summer months, at weekend and night that results in insufficiency of work-life balance and indefinite working hours. Moreover, the seasonal nature of tourism means that jobs in the industry are not secure. This is particularly intensify by short term contracts by which hotels create a flexible workforce. This result is understandable because perceived job insecurity seemed to be more

problematic than workload to the respondents of the study and thus their workload perception may be diminished by the threat of dismissal. Although the workload of the hotel employees is high, to ensure that their jobs are secure with a steady income to support them and their families, the employees may perform well.

On the other hand, the findings of the study support the negative relationship between perceived co-worker loafing and job performance. This result is consistent with the past studies that found employees may diminish their performance if they perceive others to be loafing and still receiving the same rewards as them (Abele and Diehl, 2008; Skarlicki and Folger, 1997). Social loafing of some employees in the group may cause unrest in the group. As the social impact theory suggests, more employees who achieve the same gains by working less will lead to a decrease in the motivation and performance of other employees which will affect customer satisfaction. For that reason, the managers should focus on recognizing the contributions and accomplishments of group members to minimize social loafing.

Overall, these results indicate that the relationship between perceived workload, co-worker loafing and job performance is still not clear and is in the need for further research. We hope future researchers to do more studies about additional variables that related to job performance such as job characteristics, role conflicts, empowerment, supportive management, organizational climate etc. The findings are limited to hotels located in Kocaeli, Turkey and therefore for the further study using large sample size to attained better results will be beneficial. All variables were measured through self-report which is an other limitation of the study. Since perception of workload and co-worker loafing could only be obtained through self-report, the future researches may duplicate the study with an independent observer (e.g. supervisor, team workers) responding to job performance.

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