

**THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
DURING COVID19 PANDEMIC AMONG EMPLOYEES
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Turkeyiauenstitu@aydin.edu.tr**ABSTRACT**

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to organizations and employees worldwide, necessitating a deeper understanding of the factors that promote employee engagement during times of crisis. This study aims to investigate the impact of psychological capital, including optimism, hope, resilience, and self-efficacy on employee engagement among employees in Istanbul, Turkey, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a cross-sectional research design, data was collected from a sample of 410 employees working in both private and public sector establishments in Istanbul. To measure the impact of psychological capital on employee engagement, a structured questionnaire was used, with responses being graded on a 5-point Likert scale to ensure clarity and consistency. Quantitative analysis techniques, including descriptive statistics and regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationships between self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, hope, and employee engagement. The findings reveal that all four dimensions of psychological capital significantly and positively influence employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among Istanbul's employees. The results demonstrate that employees with higher levels of hope, optimism, resilience, self-efficacy and exhibit greater engagement and commitment to their work, even in the face of unprecedented challenges. These psychological resources act as important determinants of employee engagement and contribute to organizational resilience and success. By uncovering the role of psychological capital in promoting employee engagement, this study provides valuable insights for organizations in Istanbul, Turkey, to develop evidence-based strategies and interventions that enhance employee well-being and productivity. Moreover, this research addresses the research gap by examining the interplay between psychological capital and employee engagement specifically in the context of a global crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, this study highlights the significance of fostering psychological capital among employees and emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope as key psychological resources that enhance employee engagement, particularly during challenging circumstances. The findings offer practical implications for organizations in Istanbul, Turkey, seeking to support their employees' well-being and engagement during the pandemic and beyond.

Keywords:

Psychological Capital, Employee Engagement, COVID-19 Pandemic, Employees

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented organizations worldwide with unparalleled challenges, disrupting the dynamics of the workplace and significantly impacting the well-being and performance of employees. As organizations grappled with the sudden shift to remote work, economic uncertainties, and personal health concerns, maintaining employee engagement emerged as a critical determinant of success and resilience. This research project aims to delve into the influence of psychological capital on employee engagement within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. By investigating the intricate interplay between individuals' psychological resources and their level of engagement, this study endeavors to unravel the underlying mechanisms that contribute to both organizational triumph and employee well-being during times of crisis. Amidst these daunting circumstances, the concept of psychological capital (PsyCap) has emerged as a potent mental asset, shaping individuals' responses to adversities and their ability to thrive. PsyCap encompasses four fundamental elements: self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience. It has garnered recognition for its potential to fortify employee engagement and cultivate organizational resilience, particularly in the face of challenging circumstances.

Psychological capital, encompassing self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism, is a transformative state that amplifies an individual's motivation (Luthans et al., 2007). It involves embracing challenges, maintaining a positive outlook, persistently pursuing goals, and effectively navigating adversity. This dynamic construct is distinct from economic, human, and social capital, as it explores the core aspects of one's being and bestows inherent value through personal experiences (Luthans B. C., 2014; Kersting, 2003). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to travel restrictions and limited social interaction, triggering social anxiety, especially among young people. The impact of the pandemic on social development, economic health, and psychological well-being is devastating. Research on psychological capital's role in predicting adolescent social anxiety has produced conflicting findings.. Young individuals who have undergone remote schooling may experience heightened social anxiety due to the sudden decline in social activities. Social connection is vital for human activity, providing a sense of safety, respect, and appreciation. Understanding the factors contributing to social anxiety is crucial for supporting the psychological well-being of young people during the COVID-19 epidemic (Hahn, 2020; Kwon SJ, Kim, & Kwak, 2018). Employee engagement, characterized by satisfaction, vigor, and a strong connection to work, is increasingly recognized as vital for organizations (Bakker et al., 2008; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Schaufeli et al., 2002). The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the need for enhanced employee engagement, as it impacts the well-being of both individuals and organizations. Companies have faced challenges such as layoffs and closures, while employees experience uncertainty about job security and performance evaluations, leading to decreased engagement levels (Puneet Kumar, Pahar Ganj & E-79 Aram Bagh Lane, 2021). Fostering employee engagement has become even more critical in these exceptional circumstances.

In India, many employers are uncertain about performance evaluations and bonus approaches for 2020. The pandemic has led to significant changes in job standards and operational practices for essential workers. Additionally, the lack of paid sick time has affected employees, resulting in an increased use of sick leave. Due to the greater unemployment rate during the epidemic, the Federal-State Jobless Insurance Program has offered temporary unemployment payments to a considerable number of qualified persons.(Puneet Kumar, Pahar Ganj & E-79 Aram Bagh Lane, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on employee engagement, with organizations shifting their focus away from it due to financial losses and job insecurity. However, investing in employee engagement is now crucial as economies recover and adjust to the "new normal." Understanding how psychological capital promotes engagement during the pandemic can help leaders and policymakers develop strategies to enhance well-being and productivity. This research aims to bridge the knowledge gap by exploring the relationship between psychological capital and employee engagement, providing evidence-based recommendations for organizations to cultivate resilient and engaged workforces (Puneet Kumar et al. 2021).

Background of study

The attention on psychological capital (PsyCap) has grown significantly in the public sector due to its negative perception in various countries (Costantini, 2017). Numerous research studies have consistently emphasized the crucial role of PsyCap in shaping employees' attitudes and behaviors, as well as its positive relationship with job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and employee satisfaction (Carter & Youssef-Morgan C. M., 2019; Luthans F. & Youssef-Morgan C. M., 2017; Tsaor, 2019; Alessandri G., Consiglio C., Luthans F., & L., 2018; Gupta, M., Shaheen, M., & Reddy, P.K., 2017; Karatepe, O. M. & Karadas, G., 2015). The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory helps explain the connection between PsyCap and employee engagement, as it highlights individuals' pursuit of valuable resources and how personal resources contribute to increasing engagement levels (Hobfoll, 2011).

Hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism are the four key components of psychological capital, which originates from Bandura's social cognitive theory.(Luthans et al., 2007). A person's positive developmental state is supported by the presence of these resources, which allow them to complete difficult tasks, keep optimistic beliefs and attitudes, work persistently toward their goals, and recover quickly from setbacks. (Avey, Wernsing T. S., & Luthans, 2008). Psychological capital focuses on who individuals are, representing a core psychological factor that goes beyond traditional economic, human, and social capital (Luthans F., Luthans K. W., & Luthans B. C., 2004).

Employee engagement is defined as a positive work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Salanova et al., 2002). It is seen as a key factor in how people think, act, perform, and affect the results of an organization. (Luthans et al., 2010). Engaged employees care about their jobs, get satisfaction from

them, and work hard because they like what they do (De Waal and Pienaar 2013). Differentiating from workaholics, who have an excessive compulsion to work, engagement is characterized by mental resilience, involvement, and concentration in work activities (Schaufeli et al., 2002; de Waal & Pienaar, 2013).

Significance of study

The study findings will enable the management in Istanbul and Turkey in establishing mechanisms for handling Employee Engagement through enhancing psychological capital in the organization. This will be possible because the study will have shown the relevance of self-psychological capital and hence this will help the organization in becoming more effective and efficient in production.

The study findings will be used by other researchers in the academia to make further studies in the area of psychological capital and Employee Engagement. Hence this will add more knowledge, information and realize more research gaps in this area.

The study will help researchers do more research on the same subject. The information gathered from the study could be used to make plans and as a starting point for more research on how self-esteem affects job performance. When the research project is done well, it is expected to spark new debates that will lead to more research and help studies on psychological capital and employee engagement.

The study will enable policy makers in designing appropriate policies sufficient to inducing employee engagement in the organizations to generate a well performing environment of the employees in the post COVID 19 era.

Objectives

This research aims to achieve several objectives related to the impact of psychological factors on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey. Firstly, it aims to investigate the effect of self-efficacy on employee engagement. To have self-efficacy is to have confidence in one's own abilities to achieve goals in a given context. Secondly, The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of optimism on employee engagement. Optimism is characterized by a positive outlook and expectancy of favorable outcomes. Thirdly, the study aims to examine the impact of resilience on employee engagement. Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back and adapt in the face of adversity. Lastly, the research aims to assess the effect of hope on employee engagement. Hope encompasses the motivation and pathways individuals identify to achieve their goals. By exploring these factors, the study aims to shed light on how self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope influence employee engagement during the challenging circumstances posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in Istanbul, Turkey.

Research Hypotheses:

The research hypotheses of this research study are:

1. Self-efficacy has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Optimism has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Resilience has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Hope has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conceptual Framework:

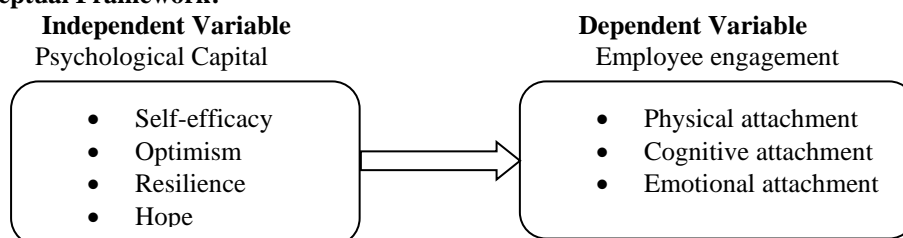


Figure 1: Source: Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2004) and Schaufeli et al., 2002

LITERATURE REVIEW**Psychological Capital**

Organizations have to deal with the challenge of helping their employees develop their psychological skills and use them well. Traditional ways of keeping people on the job, like pay and benefits, opportunities for growth, and making jobs more interesting, are no longer enough because of changes in the workplace and the need for "career resiliency." (Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio, 2007). Organizations must focus on building and managing psychological capital in order to gain a competitive edge. This includes good organizational behavior, recognizing strengths, and having psychological competencies. (Luthans, 2002).

The four components of PsyCap, namely hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism share a common theme of positive evaluation of circumstances and the belief in achieving success through effort and perseverance (Luthans et al., 2007). These components form a higher-order core construct that has been empirically supported and shown to be measurable, flexible, and manageable for better job performance (Luthans et al., 2007).

It has been discovered that PsyCap has a beneficial effect on the innovative behavior and creative output of employees. It induces positive emotional states and enhances creativity by providing the power to ascertain pathways, the willpower to perform, a belief in positive outcomes, and a never-give-up attitude (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Seligman, 2004). Studies have shown that all components of PsyCap act as antecedents to employee creativity and support positive behaviors and work solutions (Sweetman et al., 2011; Hirst et al., 2009; Lan, 2019).

The positive and motivating state known as hope is characterized by a strong desire to make plans and accomplish one's objectives. It is comprised of three essential elements, namely, goals, paths, and agencies. Agency refers to the will and determination to achieve desired goals, while pathways involve identifying alternative routes and plans to reach those goals (Snyder et al., 1991). In everyday usage, "hope" is often associated with positive expectations for the future, and it has been described as a driving force that evokes positive feelings and anticipation towards yet-to-be-achieved goals (Frank, 1968; Maclnnis & Mello, 2005). Scholars have highlighted the future-oriented, personally meaningful, and dynamic nature of hope, emphasizing its multidimensional aspects (Stephenson, 1991; Larsen, Edey, & Lemay, 2007). Within the field of Positive Psychology, Snyder and colleagues (1991) introduced hope as the ability to set valuable goals and navigate obstacles in their pursuit. It goes beyond mere desire and encompasses the determination to explore different methods and pathways to achieve desired outcomes (Çetin & Basım, 2012).

Optimism is the belief that the present or future will yield positive outcomes and success (Scheier & Carver, 1985). It is regarded as a "structure of strength" and has associations with happiness, health, and success (Peterson, 2006; Boniwell & Heffron, 2014). Optimism is often characterized by a tendency to focus on the brighter side of life, with optimists maintaining a belief in the occurrence of favorable events. Conversely, pessimists tend to dwell on negative aspects and attribute unfavorable events to their own faults (Seligman, 1998). Realistic optimism, as advocated by Seligman (1990), emphasizes the importance of grounded positivity and learning from past mistakes. Optimistic individuals possess self-awareness regarding their strengths and weaknesses. Their optimistic outlook fuels motivation and perseverance, as they anticipate positive outcomes and strive for success. Developing optimism involves accepting past negativity, finding pleasure in the present, and seeking opportunities for a better future (Schneider, 2001; Luthans & Youssef, 2004). In the workplace, optimism translates to higher levels of motivation, morale, job satisfaction, and productivity. It serves as a significant criterion for managers when selecting employees, reflecting their enjoyment of life and enthusiasm for work (Luthans, 2002).

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to successfully perform tasks within a specific context, drawing upon motivation, cognitive resources, and strategic actions. Self-efficacy is an essential component of psychological capital. (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Bandura, 1997). This concept, rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory, emphasizes the significant influence of self-efficacy on decision-making, goal pursuit, and anxiety levels. Symbolizing, forethought, observation, self-regulation, and self-reflection are the five cognitive processes encompassed by this theory, enabling individuals to construct mental frameworks, strategize their actions, learn from others, set performance standards, and evaluate their progress (Luthans et al., 2007). Numerous studies

have confirmed the relationship between self-efficacy and performance, highlighting its impact on job crafting, onboarding experiences, team cohesion, and organizational citizenship behavior (Tresi & Miheli, 2018). Understanding and enhancing self-efficacy is essential in unlocking individual potential and fostering success.

Resilience, a quality that predicts favorable outcomes in various domains, encompasses cognitive abilities, positive self-perceptions, faith, an optimistic worldview, emotional stability, self-control, humor, and attractiveness (Masten & Reed, 2002). It involves effectively navigating setbacks and challenges with a positive approach, and can be cultivated through practice (Luthans, 2002; Avey et al., 2008). Resilient individuals share common characteristics: facing reality, maintaining a positive outlook, and generating creative solutions despite limited resources (Coutu, 2002). Resilience is influenced by assets (e.g., cognitive abilities, faith, interpersonal connections), risks (e.g., disruptive experiences), and values, which guide emotions, actions, and a positive future outlook (Luthans, 2002). Nurturing resilience entails acknowledging risk factors and leveraging strengths to overcome difficulties and maximize one's potential.

In summary, PsyCap is a valuable construct in organizations as it contributes to employee engagement, creativity, and overall well-being. Its components of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience play a significant role in fostering positive attitudes, behaviors, and performance among employees. By recognizing and developing psychological capital, organizations can create a competitive advantage in today's challenging work environment (Luthans et al., 2007).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement refers to the level of involvement employees have in their work physically, mentally, and emotionally (Kahn, 1990). It encompasses vigor, dedication, and absorption, which represent the drive, importance, and immersion in work, respectively (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Psychological contract and psychological empowerment have been identified as significant drivers of employee engagement (Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2020), with psychological empowerment mediating the correlation between the work environment and job engagement (Fan et al., 2016). Job-crafting interventions and perceived organizational support have also been found to positively influence employee engagement (Thomas et al., 2020; Khodakarami & Dirani, 2020). Conversely, negative associations have been observed between abusive supervision, employee silence, and employee engagement (Yan et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020).

Ethical leadership has been recognized as a strong contributor to work engagement, with studies highlighting its importance in various sectors such as the Egyptian banking sector and public hospitals (Mostafa A. M. S. & Shen J., 2019; Mostafa. and Abed, 2020). Supervisor support, including benevolence and encouragement, has been found to positively impact employee involvement and engagement (Chandra Pattnaik H. & Panda N., 2020). Individual capabilities of employees, such as critical thinking and assertiveness, have a significant influence on employee engagement (Lappalainen et al., 2019), while job resources such as autonomy and coworker support foster engagement among different age groups (Ning W. & Alikaj A., 2019). These findings collectively emphasize the multifaceted nature of employee engagement and the importance of various factors in promoting its positive outcomes.

PsyCap on Employee Engagement

Psychological capital, which encompasses things like optimism, hope, resilience, and self-efficacy has been proved again and time again to play an important impact in raising employee engagement. Alessandri et al. (2018) and Karatepe O. M. and Avci T. (2017) found that employees with higher levels of Psychological Capital demonstrated greater engagement and improved performance over time. Developing these qualities empowers employees to pursue their goals, leading to dedication, energy, and absorption in their work (du Plessis & Boshoff, 2018; Datu & Valdez, 2016). However, There was no correlation between psychological capital and dedication to work, according to research by De Waal and Pienaar (2013).

A theoretical framework constructed by Nikhil S. and Arthi J. (2018) looked into the correlation between psychological capital, work engagement, and how much organizational support people felt they got. Their study concluded that psychological capital serves as an inner strength that drives deep-rooted engagement,

independent of organizational support. Employees with elevated psychological capital exhibit greater resilience, self-efficacy, confidence, hope, and optimism, leading to long-lasting commitment (Nikhil & Arthi, 2018). Similarly, Gupta M. et al. (2019) discovered a significant correlation between psychological capital and work engagement, emphasizing the importance of recruiting and retaining employees with high levels of psychological capital for enhanced emotional well-being.

In summary, Psychological Capital plays a crucial role in promoting employee engagement. The development of optimism, self-efficacy, resilience and hope empowers employees to actively pursue their goals and exhibit dedication in their work. While organizational support is valuable, employees with elevated psychological capital demonstrate a more profound and lasting commitment. These findings underscore the significance of psychological interventions and the recruitment of employees with high levels of psychological capital to foster engagement and well-being in the workplace.

Self-efficacy and employee engagement's effect

Research has shown that there is a strong link between self-efficacy and how engaged an employee is at work (Hayuningtyas & Helmi, 2016). People with high self-efficacy are more likely to be motivated and stick with their tasks than those with low self-efficacy. (Waaktaar & Torgersen, 2013). Conversely, low self-efficacy can lead to learned helplessness, where individuals believe their efforts are futile (Graham, 2016). Self-efficacy also has a good relationship with how well you do at work (work-related performance), although this relationship is influenced by task complexity and environmental context (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2018). Real-world work environments with performance constraints and limited feedback can weaken the self-efficacy-performance relationship (Ball et al., 2017).

Additionally, self-esteem is closely related to self-efficacy, as individuals with low self-esteem may exhibit negative characteristics such as distorted perception, fear of new experiences, and social anxiety (Nasreen et al., 2012). However, team efficacy has been found to have a positive association with objective performance, suggesting that higher team efficacy leads to better performance outcomes (Gully et al., 2002).

In summary, individuals with high self-efficacy demonstrate perseverance, ambition, and resilience in achieving their goals (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Internal motivation plays a crucial role in employee work engagement, particularly in the context of fulfilling the responsibilities of higher education (Hayuningtyas & Helmi, 2016). The complexity of tasks and the work environment can influence the strength of the self-efficacy-performance relationship (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2018; Ball et al., 2017). Finally, self-esteem and team efficacy also impact individual and team performance, respectively (Nasreen et al., 2012; Gully et al., 2002).

Effect of Optimism on employee engagement

Research has shown that optimism has significant positive outcomes in the workplace. Optimistic employees outperform pessimistic ones and experience lower turnover rates. In terms of leadership, optimistic leaders are more effective at initiating and driving organizational change, and their optimism influences the optimism levels of their employees as a whole (Luthans and Church, 2002).

Employee engagement is positively influenced by workplace optimism, which in turn enhances individual performance (Medlin & Green, 2019). Enhancing employee engagement requires genuine interest from organizational leaders and clear visibility for career growth (Meiyani & Putra, 2019). Personal resources, including optimism, self-efficacy, and organizational-based self-esteem, are negatively correlated with turnover intention and positively correlated with job performance (Kim, 2017).

The relationship between optimism and task performance is mixed, with state optimism showing a positive correlation but trait optimism having a weak or insignificant association (Kluemper et al., 2009). Optimism is considered a personal resource that promotes goal attainment, protects individuals from negative effects, and drives personal growth (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009; Youssef et al., 2007).

Impact of Resilience and Employee Engagement

Resilience plays a critical role in enhancing the well-being of professionals and fostering personal growth (Brolese et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence (EI) is important in managing the emotional demands of stressful circumstances, and a supportive work environment is vital for positive outcomes (Salovey et al., 1999; Kapoulitsas & Corcoran, 2015). When compared to neuroticism, resilience is positively associated with extroversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, and negatively associated with neuroticism (Palma-García & Hombrados-Mendieta, 2017). Teenagers with higher levels of self-realization demonstrate greater resilience and adaptability (De Caroli & Sagone, 2016). Workplace resilience allows individuals to create opportunities for growth, and personal resources such as resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy influence work engagement and performance (Luthans & Youssef, 2007; Bakker et al., 2006; Luthans et al., 2008).

Workplace engagement is linked to positive emotions, positive self-perception, social support, and resilience (Cárdenas & Jaik, 2014). Emotional intelligence plays a role in developing skills for adaptation and achieving objectives (Magnano et al., 2016). Resilience is associated with emotional control, impulse control, and emotional competencies (Sánchez & Robles, 2014; Kapoulitsas & Corcoran, 2015). Positive emotions contribute to resilience, and higher resilience is associated with improved job performance (Luthans et al., 2007, 2005). Resilience influences employee engagement, and factors like supervisor-staff relationship and work design can enhance engagement (Amir & Mangundjaya, 2021). Resilience is important for managers, as it predicts motivation, performance, and the ability to manage stressful situations (Avey et al., 2011; Cooke et al., 2019). Resilience training can improve personal resilience, mental health, well-being, and job performance (Robertson et al., 2015).

Effect of Hope on employee engagement

Researchers have shown that having hope, which they describe as "the idea that one has the ability to find pathways to desired objectives and the willingness to pursue them," improves mental health, academic performance, and resilience in the face of adversity (Snyder C. R., 2000; Luthans and Church, 2002). People with a lot of hope have good traits like a sense of purpose, the ability to change, and less anxiety, which is good for organizations (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Church, 2002). To nurture and manage hope, strategies such as setting ambitious goals, involving employees in goal-setting, breaking down complex strategies, and promoting adaptability can be effective (Luthans & Church, 2002).

Hope plays a vital role in empowering individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. It includes both the belief that one has the power to start and keep doing things and the belief that there are different ways to reach a goal (Nel & Boshoff, 2014; Luthans & Jensen, 2002). The absence of hope can have detrimental consequences within organizations, highlighting the need for leaders to actively promote hope among employees (Luthans et al., 2004). Research has established positive correlations between hope and factors such as job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, profitability, and job retention (Nel & Boshoff, 2014; Peterson & Luthans, 2003).

Hope, with its elements of agency, pathways, and goals, is related to engagement, which involves dedicating oneself wholeheartedly to a task (Snyder, 2000; Thompson et al., 2015). Positive psychological interventions focusing on enhancing psychological and subjective well-being have been shown to improve well-being, with longer interventions yielding greater advantages (Koydemir et al., 2021).

Hope and Psychological Capital (PsyCap) have significant implications in different contexts. In advertising agencies, PsyCap has a positive association with team performance, with leadership behavior moderating this relationship (Ayed et al., 2020). In healthcare settings, fostering PsyCap and organizational citizenship behavior among nurses can lead to improved quality of healthcare services (Chamisa et al., 2020). The influence of hope and PsyCap in the workplace extends to areas such as performance, work attitudes, profitability, employee engagement, and well-being (Youssef & Luthans, 2007; Peterson & Luthans, 2003; Othman & Nasurdin, 2011).

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Overall, hope and related constructs have a profound impact on individuals' well-being, engagement, and performance in various domains, highlighting the importance of nurturing hope within organizations

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study will utilize a cross-sectional research design, which involves gathering data on multiple variables at a specific point in time. In this case, the study will collect cross-sectional data on the impact of psychological capital on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey. This design is appropriate for analyzing data from a population or representative subset at a specific time and will allow the researcher to describe the distribution of scores or measurements using various statistical techniques. The research approach employed in this study will be quantitative. Quantitative research uses numbers to figure out how big something is in relation to other things. It involves counting, measuring, and doing statistical analysis on numbers. By using a quantitative approach, the researcher will be able to get information about the thing being studied that isn't just numbers, find patterns, trends, and relationships, and talk to the people being studied in their own words. This method will give us important information about how psychological capital affects employee engagement during the chaos.

Target Population

The term "target population" refers to the complete set of individuals or objects that the study aims to investigate (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In this particular study, the focus will be on employees employed in both private and public sector establishments located in Istanbul, Turkey. The objective is to gather data from a comprehensive sample size of 5,362,000 employees (as reported by Birgun in 2021), representing both sectors. This specific population is chosen due to the widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all individuals within it. By examining this group, the study seeks to gain insights into the effects of the pandemic on employees in various sectors and organizations in Istanbul.

Sample Size

The researcher will use Taro Yamane's formula for calculating sample size to figure out the right sample size for this study. This formula is selected for its user-friendly nature and its capacity to yield a minimal margin of error, thereby ensuring a more precise and statistically robust sample size for the study. By employing this formula, the researcher intends to obtain a representative sample of the population that adequately reflects the characteristics and dynamics under investigation. This approach enhances the reliability and validity of the study's findings (Yamane, 1967).

$$S = \frac{P}{1 + P[e]^2}$$

P = Number of populations [5,362,000]

S = number of sample size.

E= margin error [0.05]

$$s = \frac{5,362,000}{1 + 5,362,000[0.05]^2} = 410$$

S = 410 responders

Data Collection Instrument (Questionnaire)

A questionnaire was the main way that information was gathered for the study. The questionnaire had short, related questions that were meant to get information from the people who filled it out. A 5-point Likert scale was used to minimize misinterpretation of the questions. The questionnaire was organized into sections, emphasizing background information and assessing the impact of psychological capital on employee engagement. The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) was used. It was made by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio in 2007, and

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it has 24 questions divided into four subscales: resilience, self-efficacy, hope, and optimism. Participants rated each item on a 6-point Likert scale. Item analysis was conducted to evaluate the questionnaire's effectiveness. The Utrecht's Employee Engagement Scale designed by Schaufeli (2017), a comprehensive tool, was also utilized, consisting of three subscales: vigor, dedication, and absorption, capturing different aspects of employee engagement. The questionnaire included 9 items for a detailed analysis of engagement dimensions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in the study involved the examination of collected data leading to deductions and inferences. Coding was used to summarize and analyze respondents' information. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed, using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27, to comprehensively analyze the quantitative data. Frequencies, percentages, and regression analysis were calculated to understand the data and assess the effect of psychological capital on employee engagement. Correlation analysis and hypothesis testing at a significance level of 0.05 were conducted to explore associations and reinforce conclusions. These robust analytical techniques supported a thorough exploration of the research questions and findings (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Response Rate

Here the researcher targeted 410 respondents and managed to attain a response rate of 98.7% from 405 respondents who filled and returned the questionnaires from the field. The information attained was presented in the Tabulations anchored on the results provided in Table 1

Table 1 : Response Rate for Respondents

Sample Population	Response	Percentage
410	405	98.7

Demographic Traits of respondents

Table 2: Respondents' demographic information

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	291	71.9
Female	114	28.1
Age		
18-27 Years	112	27.7
28-37 Years	247	61.0
38-47 Years	46	11.4
Education		
Bachelors	179	44.2
Masters	202	49.9
Ph.D.	24	5.9
Time of stay in Istanbul		
1-5 Yrs.	234	57.8
6-9 Yrs.	68	16.8
10-14 Yrs.	69	17.0
15 Years above	34	8.4
Total	405	100.0

The study's analysis of Table 2 reveals that the sample included a diverse representation of both males (71.9%) and females (28.1%) . This gender distribution demonstrates the study's effort to gather information from

individuals of various genders, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the effect of psychological capital on employee engagement in Istanbul, Turkey, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, the age distribution of the respondents shows that the study included participants across different age groups. The majority fell within the 28-37 age range (61%), while 27.7% were between 18-27 years old and 11.4% were aged between 38-47 years. This wide range of ages gives a more complete picture of how psychological capital and employee engagement are related during the pandemic.

Regarding education levels, a significant majority of participants held a master's degree (49.9%), followed by bachelor's degree holders (44.4%), and a smaller percentage possessed a Ph.D. degree (5.9%). This shows that people with more education took part in the study, which suggests a better understanding of psychological capital and how it affects employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lastly, the analysis of respondents' duration of residence in Istanbul reveals that the majority had been living in the city for 1-5 years (57.8%). Furthermore, participants with residence durations of 6-9 years (16.8%), 10-14 years (17%), and 15 years or more (8.4%) were also included. These findings highlight the considerable experience and familiarity of a significant portion of respondents with Istanbul, potentially influencing their perception of psychological capital and employee engagement during the pandemic.

In summary, the analysis of Table 2 provides valuable demographic insights into the respondents' gender, age, education levels, and duration of residence in Istanbul, Turkey. These findings underscore the inclusive nature of the study, incorporating participants from diverse backgrounds and facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the impact of psychological capital on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey.

Factor and Reliability Scales Analysis

Table 3: Validity and Reliability

Items code	Items	Item Loading
Self-Efficacy		
Cronbach's α : 0.810		
Explained Variance: %19.78		
SE1	"I am confident when analyzing long term problems to device solutions"	.628
SE2	"I feel confident representing my department in the meetings of the organization"	.767
SE3	"I am confident providing discussions about the organization strategy"	.624
SE4	"I am confident aiding in setting targets in my department of work"	.758
SE5	"I feel confident in contracting people outside this organization to discuss the organization problems"	.609
SE6	"I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues"	.786
Hope		
Cronbach's α : 0.769		
Explained Variance: %16.43		
H1	"In case of jam at work, I think of many ways of getting out of it"	.714
H2	"I am always energetic in pursuing my work goals"	.698

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H3	“There are lot of ways in solving my problem”	.474
H4	“I see myself being successful in my work”	.801
H5	“I always think of many ways of reaching my current work goals”	.806
H6	“I am always meeting my work goals that I have set for myself”	.836
Resilience		
Cronbach’s α : 0.820		
Explained Variance: %15.12		
R1	“When I have a setback at work, I have difficulty recovering from it and moving on”	.689
R2	“I usually manage difficulties one way or another at work”	.716
R3	“I can be on my own so to speak at work if I have to”	.690
R5	“I can get through difficult times at work because I've experienced difficulty before.”	.757
R6	“I feel I can handle many things at a time at this job.”	.689
Optimism		
Cronbach’s α : 0.871		
Explained Variance: %11.14		
Op1	“When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best”	.797
Op2	“If something can go wrong for me work-wise it will.”	.666
Op3	“I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job”	.729
Op4	“I’m optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.”	.732
Op5	“In this job, things never work out the way I want them to”	.715
Op6	“I approach this job as if "every cloud has a silver lining”	.769
Employee Engagement		
Cronbach’s α : 0.720		
Explained Variance: %19.45		
E1	“When I am doing work, I feel working with energy”	.701
E2	“I am energetic and capable of doing my work in this period”	.824
E3	“Immediately I wake up, I feel like going to work”	.792
E4	“I am enthusiastic about my daily work”	.711
E5	“I am inspired by my work”	.767
E6	“I am proud of my work”	.584
E7	“I feel happy when doing my work intensively”	.741
E8	“I am immersed in my work”	.700
E9	“I get carried away when doing my work”	.719
	P-value	0.002

Factor and reliability analyses are used to reduce data and assess the accuracy and precision of a measurement instrument (Amin M. E., 2005). In this study, confirmatory factor and reliability analyses were conducted to validate the scales used for measuring psychological capital, including resilience, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy, as well as employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey. The validity and reliability of the items were assessed based on the KMO measure and explained variance percentages presented in Table 3. The findings indicate that the scales had satisfactory validity and reliability, with most factor load values exceeding 0.5, except for one item in the resilience scale that was removed due to a lower factor load value. Overall, the variance that could be explained was 81.92, which shows that psychological capital and employee engagement are common among the organization's workers. The constructs also demonstrated high Cronbach's α factor loads, indicating the reliability of the research instrument.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Variables

Table 4: Descriptive statistics on psychological capital among employees in Istanbul, Turkey

Descriptive statistics	Mean	Std. Dev	Interpretation
"I am confident when analyzing long term problems to device solutions"	4.227	.627	Very High
"I feel confident representing my department in the meetings of the organization"	4.145	.630	High
"I am confident providing discussions about the organization strategy"	4.002	.665	High
"I am confident aiding in setting targets in my department of work"	4.096	.794	High
"I feel confident in contracting people outside this organization to discuss the organization problems"	3.901	.990	High
"I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues"	4.012	.880	High
Self-efficacy	4.064	.513	High
"In case of jam at work, I think of many ways of getting out of it"	3.903	.843	High
"I am always energetic in pursuing my work goals"	4.113	.839	High
"There are lot of ways in solving my problem"	4.284	.690	Very High
"I see myself being successful in my work"	4.281	.799	Very High
"I always think of many ways of reaching my current work goals"	4.234	.784	Very High
"I am always meeting my work goals that I have set for myself"	4.012	.815	Very High
Hope	4.138	.579	High
"When I have a setback at work, I have difficulty recovering from it and moving on"	3.555	1.071	High
"I usually manage difficulties one way or another at work"	3.916	.837	High
"I can be on my own so to speak at work if I have to"	3.888	.777	High
"I usually take stressful things at work in stride"	3.703	.876	High

“I can get through difficult times at work because I've experienced difficulty before.”	3.842	.979	High
“I feel I can handle many things at a time at this job.”	4.113	.694	High
Resilience	3.836	.574	High
“When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best”	3.953	.909	High
“If something can go wrong for me work-wise it will.”	3.624	.950	High
“I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job”	4.177	.863	High
“I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.”	4.118	.870	High
“In this job, things never work out the way I want them to”	3.365	.949	High
“I approach this job as if "every cloud has a silver lining”	3.728	.898	High
Optimism	3.828	.666	High
psychological capital (Overall Mean)	3.966	.581	High

The purpose of this study was to examine psychological capital factors such as optimism, resilience, hope, and self-efficacy, and their impact on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey. The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4 revealed that overall, the levels of psychological capital among employees in Istanbul were considered high, as indicated by a mean score of 3.966 and a standard deviation of 0.581. Specifically, self-efficacy was found to be high (mean = 0.513, SD = 0.513), indicating a strong belief in one's abilities. The state of hope among employees was generally good (mean = 4.138, SD = 0.579), while resilience was moderate (mean = 3.836, SD = 0.574), suggesting a satisfactory level of employee resilience. Moreover, the employees exhibited a generally high level of optimism (mean = 3.828, SD = 0.666) during the pandemic in Istanbul, Turkey.

Table 5: Interpretation of Mean Values

Scale	Mean Range	Response	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly agree	Very Good
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Good
3	2.61-3.40	Not sure	Fairly Good
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Poor
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly disagree	Very Poor

Table 6: Descriptive statistics on employee engagement during covid19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey

Descriptive statistics on employee engagement	Mean	SD.	Interpretation
“When I am doing work, I feel working with energy”	4.424	.719	Very High
“I am energetic and capable of doing my work in this period”	4.281	.605	Very High
“Immediately I wake up, I feel like going to work”	3.681	.969	High
“I am enthusiastic about my daily work”	3.898	.772	High
“I am inspired by my work”	4.088	.755	High

“I am proud of my work”	4.172	.724	High
“I feel happy when doing my work intensively”	4.088	.679	High
“I am immersed in my work”	3.842	.767	High
“I get carried away when doing my work”	3.901	.990	High
Employee Engagement (Average Mean)	4.042	.566	High

Table 6 findings indicate the descriptive statistics on employee engagement during covid19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey, the findings show that the Employee Engagement is on average with the mean of 4.042, the standard deviation was .566 interpreted as high meaning that the state of the employee engagement among the employees is generally high meaning that there was employee engagement during the COVID-19 occurrence in Istanbul Turkey. The findings from the study indicate that there was employee engagement even though occurrence is significant for their operations.

Correlation Analysis

Table 7: Correlation Analysis between the variables

Correlations						
Variables		Self-efficacy	Hope	Resilience	Optimism	Employee Engagement
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.562**	.572**	.628**	.629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Hope	Pearson Correlation	.562**	1	.580**	.676**	.820**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	.572**	.580**	1	.806**	.526**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Optimism	Pearson Correlation	.628**	.676**	.806**	1	.537**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	405	405	405	405	405
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.629**	.820**	.526**	.537**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	405	405	405	405	405

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

The purpose of correlation analysis is to quantify the degree of linear relationship between two or more variables and evaluate the degree of their linkage (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). In this study, a correlation analysis, specifically Pearson's correlation, was conducted to examine the relationship between psychological capital factors (self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism) and employee engagement among employees in Istanbul, Turkey. The results, presented in Table 7, indicate significant positive correlations between self-efficacy (P-value = 0.000, $r = .629$), hope (P-value = 0.000, $r = .820$), resilience (P-value = 0.000, $r = .580$), optimism (P-value = 0.000, $r = .537$), and employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results imply that employees are more invested in their work when they have higher levels of optimism, hope, resilience, and self-efficacy.

Regression analysis

Table 8: Regression analysis on effect of Self efficacy and employee engagement during covid19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey

Review of the Model				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.629 ^a	.396	.394	.44056

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.279	1	51.279	264.196	.000 ^b
	Residual	78.220	403	.194		
	Total	129.499	404			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.224	.175		7.006	.000
	Self-efficacy	.693	.043	.629	16.254	.000

a. DV: Employee Engagement

In this study, the researcher conducted a simple regression analysis to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey. Table 8 displays the results, which showed that self-efficacy significantly affected employee engagement with a $r = .629$. This indicates that self-efficacy explains 62.9% of the variation in employee engagement, while 37.1% can be attributed to other factors. The ANOVA results further backed up this connection, revealing that self-efficacy had a substantial effect on employee engagement ($p = .001$, $F = 264.196$). The T-values of 16.254 for self-efficacy and 7.006 for employee engagement suggest a substantial impact of self-efficacy on employee

engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, it was determined that there is a positive and substantial association between self-efficacy and employee engagement among workers in Istanbul, Turkey, and the null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Table 9: Regression analysis on effect of optimism and employee engagement during covid19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey

Review of the Model				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.537 ^a	.289	.287	.47813

a. Predictors: (Constant), Optimism

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	37.372	1	37.372	163.477	.000 ^b
	Residual	92.128	403	.229		
	Total	129.499	404			

a. DV: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Optimism

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.295	.139		16.544	.000
	Optimism	.456	.036	.537	12.786	.000

a. DV: Employee Engagement

During the COVID-19 outbreak in Istanbul, Turkey, the researcher ran a basic regression study to see if optimism and employee engagement were related, as part of the second hypothesis. Table 9 displays the results, which demonstrated a .537 coefficient of determination between optimism and employee engagement. This indicates that optimism explains 53.7% of the variation in employee engagement, while 46.3% can be attributed to other factors. The ANOVA analysis supported this relationship, demonstrating a statistically significant effect of optimism on employee engagement ($p < .001$, $F = 163.477$). The T-values of 12.786 for optimism and 16.544 for employee engagement further indicated a significant impact of optimism on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the researchers determined that there is a positive and substantial association between optimism and employee engagement among workers in Istanbul, Turkey, and thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 10: Regression analysis on effect of resilience and employee engagement during covid19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey

Review of the Model				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.526 ^a	.277	.275	.48195

a. Predictors: (Constant), Resilience

ANOVA ^a Table						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.893	1	35.893	154.531	.000 ^b
	Residual	93.606	403	.232		
	Total	129.499	404			

a. DV: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Resilience

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.053	.162		12.686	.000
	Resilience	.519	.042	.526	12.431	.000

a. DV: Employee Engagement

To test the third hypothesis, a simple regression analysis was performed on a sample of Istanbul, Turkey, employees who were working at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 10 displays the results, which showed that the coefficient of determination (r) between resilience and employee engagement was .526. This indicates that resilience explains 52.6% of the variation in employee engagement, while 47.4% can be attributed to other factors. The ANOVA analysis supported this relationship, demonstrating a statistically significant effect of resilience on employee engagement ($p < .001$, $F = 154.531$). The T-values of 12.431 for resilience and 12.686 for employee engagement further indicated a significant impact of resilience on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it was determined that there is a positive and statistically significant association between resilience and employee engagement among workers in Istanbul, Turkey during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 11: Regression analysis on effect of hope and employee engagement during covid-19 pandemic among employees in Istanbul, Turkey

Review of the Model				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.820 ^a	.673	.672	.32424

a. Predictors: (Constant), Hope

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	87.132	1	87.132	828.805	.000 ^b
	Residual	42.367	403	.105		
	Total	129.499	404			

a. DV: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Hope

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.724	.116		6.223	.000
	Hope	.802	.028	.820	28.789	.000

a. DV: Employee Engagement

The study looked at the correlation between optimism and participation in the workplace among workers in Istanbul, Turkey, during the 2009 COVID-19 pandemic, as part of the fourth hypothesis. Table 11 displays the results, which showed a 0.820 coefficient of determination between hope and employee involvement. This indicates that hope explains 82% of the variation in employee engagement, while 18% can be attributed to other factors. The ANOVA analysis supported this relationship, demonstrating a statistically significant effect of hope on employee engagement ($p < .001$, $F = 828.805$). The T-values of 28.789 for hope and 6.223 for employee engagement further indicated a significant impact of hope on employee engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the hope/engagement hypothesis was supported, and it was found that employees in Istanbul, Turkey were more engaged when they had hope during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypotheses Results:**Table 12: Hypothesis testing**

Hypothesis	P-values	Decision
Self-efficacy has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.	P .000 <0.05, Beta .629	Accepted
Optimism has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.	P .000 <0.05, Beta .537	Accepted

Resilience has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.	P .000 <0.05, Beta.526	Accepted
Hope has a substantial positive impact on employee engagement among Istanbul, Turkey's employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.	P .000 <0.05, Beta=.820	Accepted

All four hypotheses on the impact of psychological factors on employee engagement in Istanbul, Turkey during the COVID-19 epidemic were supported by the results of the hypothesis testing. First, a p-value of .000 (less than the .05 threshold for statistical significance) indicates that the hypothesis claiming a positive influence of self-efficacy on employee engagement is validated. Self-efficacy has been shown to positively correlate with employee engagement, and the beta value of 0.629 provides further evidence of this. Similarly, With a p-value of .000 and a beta coefficient of 0.537, the positive effect of optimism on employee engagement is also supported. This indicates that optimism plays a significant role in influencing employee engagement during the pandemic. Furthermore, the hypothesis related to the impact of resilience on employee engagement is accepted, with a p-value of .000 and a beta coefficient of 0.526. These findings suggest that resilience is a significant factor contributing to employee engagement during the COVID-19 crisis. Lastly, the p-value of .000 and the beta coefficient of 0.820 support the hypothesis that hope has a positive effect on employee engagement. This implies that hope significantly influences employee engagement during the pandemic. Overall, the analysis reveals that self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope all have significant positive effects on employee engagement among employees at Istanbul, Turkey, during the 2009 epidemic of the COVID-19 virus. These findings highlight the importance of these psychological factors in maintaining and enhancing employee engagement in challenging times.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the article presents a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the research findings, aiming to uncover patterns, trends, and relationships within the data. The discussion critically examines the results in light of the research objectives and relevant literature, providing a deeper understanding of their significance and implications for theory, practice, or policy. Through a systematic analysis, this chapter contributes to existing knowledge, synthesizing the findings and laying the foundation for meaningful conclusions and recommendations.

During the COVID-19 epidemic in Istanbul, Turkey, the study demonstrated a moderate influence of self-efficacy on employee engagement. These findings are consistent with the findings of study conducted by Waaktaar and Torgersen (2013), Schwarzer and Hallum (2018), and Vancouver and Yoder (2015), all of which emphasize the positive association that exists between “self-efficacy” and “employee engagement”. However, they disagree with the findings of Graham (2016) regarding the negative impact of low self-efficacy on engagement.

With regard to the impact that optimism has on the level of employee engagement throughout the epidemic, the study conducted in Istanbul, Turkey, revealed a significant impact. These results support the previous research by Luthans and Church (2002) and Medlin and Green (2019) that emphasized the positive outcomes of optimism and goal setting on engagement and individual performance. The findings highlight the importance of optimism in fostering employee engagement, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study also investigated the effect of resilience on employee engagement during the pandemic in Istanbul, Turkey. The findings indicated a statistically significant moderate effect of resilience on engagement, aligning with the research by Brolese and co-authors (2017), Magnano et al. (2016), and Kapoulitsas and Corcoran (2015) that emphasize the role of resilience in promoting well-being, personal growth, and stress management. These consistent findings highlight the significance of resilience in enhancing employee engagement.

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Regarding the effect of hope on employee engagement during the pandemic, the study in Istanbul, Turkey, revealed a strong positive impact. These results are consistent with the meta-analysis conducted by Koydemiretal (2021), which emphasized the positive effects of positive psychological interventions on well-being. The findings also align with the research by Ayed et al. (2020) on Psychological Capital (PsyCap) and team performance, as well as the study by Luthans and Church (2002) on hope levels among managers and organizational outcomes. These findings emphasize the crucial role of hope in fostering engagement and well-being.

The findings of this study, taken as a whole, offer important new perspectives on the ways in which, hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy influenced employee engagement during the COVID-19 epidemic in Istanbul, Turkey. They make a contribution to the current body of knowledge and give practical implications for businesses that want to improve the levels of employee engagement and well-being they experience during difficult times.

CONCLUSION

Self-efficacy was found to have a moderate effect on employee engagement, according to a study done in Istanbul, Turkey during the COVID-19 epidemic. The findings suggest that self-efficacy contributes to employee engagement among individuals in Istanbul. The presence of moderate self-efficacy was found to be key in enabling employee engagement during the pandemic. The study also found that optimism moderately affected employee engagement in Istanbul during the COVID-19 epidemic. The findings indicate that employees with high levels of optimism were generally more engaged in their work. Optimism was crucial in keeping workers motivated through this difficult time. Furthermore, the research revealed that resilience had a statistically significant moderate effect on employee engagement in Istanbul during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study concluded that employee engagement was influenced by resilience among individuals in the city. The presence of resilience was found to contribute to the well-being of employees and the overall welfare of the community. The study found that during the COVID-19 epidemic in Istanbul, a considerable effect of hope on employee engagement was seen. The findings indicate that hope greatly contributed to employee engagement and motivated individuals in their work activities. The presence of hope generated coherence and cooperation among employees in Istanbul.

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