



The Effect of Employees' Psychological Empowerment Perceptions on Their Performance: The Moderator Role of the Employer Attractiveness and the Mediator Role of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions*

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Keywords

Psychological Empowerment, Hofstede, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Job Performance, Employer Attractiveness.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine whether employer attractiveness, a developing concept in the management field and a component of employer branding and internal marketing would moderate; and as this survey was conducted in Turkey and France, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions which are Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation would mediate and to discover the effect of employees' psychological empowerment perceptions on their job performance. The research sample consists of 404 participants; 202 participants in Turkey and 202 participants in France in different sectors including pharmaceutical and health, banking and financial services, industry, education and information technologies and service. A survey used consists of 70 items. Data obtained from the survey were analysed through the SPSS 21.00 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and AMOS 21.00 (Analysis of Moment Structures) statistics package programs. According to the results, employer attractiveness has a positive and significant effect on the psychological empowerment. Moreover, job performance has a positive and significant effect on psychological empowerment. On the other hand, job performance does not have a positive and significant effect on employer attractiveness. It is concluded that employer attractiveness has a moderator role effect on the impact of psychological empowerment on job performance. ANOVA analyses were conducted for this study to search for the differences between France and Turkey participants and it is concluded that Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions does not have a mediator role on the impact of psychological empowerment on job performance.

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1. Introduction

In the 21st century, as Devanna & Tichy (2006) argued, the business environments have progressively grown competitive. Major forces, technology, the rise of the service economy, and the globalization, have fundamentally changed the nature of work in this century (Whorton et al, 2018). The power balance from employers to employees has been changing through the changes in demographics of the population (generational differences), the increases in the data processing competences, the increasing value of information and the accelerated speed of business as employees demand empowerment and expects equality with the management. These changes led to a need for the employees to be more psychologically empowered in their work and employers to be more attractive for their employees. In the field of management, amongst both practitioners and researchers, there has been an increasing attention in the concept of empowerment and related disciplines of management (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Block, 1987; Burke, 1986; Kanter, 1979; McClelland, 1975; Neilsen, 1986).

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The second part of the research contains the literature review of the Psychological Empowerment, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Job Performance and Employer Attractiveness and their definitions.

2.1. Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment can be specified as the process of increasing individuals' competitiveness expanding their spheres of influence and developing individuals through cooperation, sharing, training and teamwork (Koçel, 2001). Empowerment was described by Conger and Kanungo (1988) as the concept of motivational self-efficacy. Empowerment is not a permanent personality trait that can be generalized between state of affairs, but a series of information shaped by the working atmosphere (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). Empowerment is categorized into four dimensions as meaning, competence, self-determination and impact (Spreitzer et al., 1997; Laschinger, 2004; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990).

- **Meaning** is the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Meaning involves a fit between the requirements of a work role and beliefs, values, and behaviors. Meaning is the value for which the task given for the employee is carried out for what purpose. This value is determined entirely by the employee according to the goals, expectations, experience, ideals and standards of the employee (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).
- **Competence** is related to the degree of self-confidence of the employees towards their ability to perform their duties better (Tolay et al., 2012). Competence is analogous to agency beliefs, personal mastery, or effort-performance expectancy (Bandura & Wood, 1989).
- **Self-determination** refers to the freedom of employees to decide on how to perform their duties and to give their opinions and to have control over the task (Surgevil et al., 2013; Li, 2016). Self-determination reflects autonomy in the

initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes; examples are making decisions about work methods, pace, and effort (Bell & Staw, 1989).

- **Impact** is the belief that employees can influence strategic, managerial or functional activities and results in their workplace (Whitaker & Westerman, 2014). Impact is the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative, or operating outcomes at work. Impact is the converse of learned helplessness (Martinko & Gardner, 1982).

2.2. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

The national culture notion, to a large extent, is based on the original model developed by Professor Geert Hofstede and has long been the primary subject of international management researches. Hofstede described the culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another", as being the pioneer researcher in the inter-cultural studies and its impacts on management of business (Hofstede 1991).

The cultural dimensions stand for the independent preferences for situations over another that differentiates the countries (rather than individuals) from each other. The countries' dimensions scores are reciprocal and depend on the level of accumulation; in other words, culture can only be used in a meaningful way through comparison.

This research has been conducted in France and Turkey in order to see the differences and similarities according to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Comparison between Turkey and France can be found herein below.

Table 1. Comparison Between Turkey and France According to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Country	Power Distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long Term Orientation
France	68	71	43	86	63
Turkey	66	37	45	85	46

Source: Adapted from Power Distance Index (PDI) Values for 78 Countries and Regions. Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede and Michael Minkov (2010), "Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind", third edition. (<https://www.hofstedeinsights.com/product/compare-countries/>)

- **Power Distance** has been described as the degree among the members of the organizations and institutions who have less power, approbate and suppose that power is disseminated unevenly (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and it is associated to the distinctive clarifications to the essential dispute of inequality between humans (Hofstede, 2011). **Turkey** (score of 66) and **France** (with a score of 68), are both scores high on this dimension.
- **Individualism versus Collectivism** is the most studied cultural differentiation in both empirical and theoretical organizational studies (Triandis, 1995). This cultural dimension concerns with the individuals' inclusion into the groups. It defines the relationship among the individuals and their relation with the primary groups. In individualist communities, "people prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups". However, in collectivistic communities "people from birth onwards are integrated into

strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede, 2001). **Turkey**, with a score of 37 is a collectivistic society and **France**, with a score of 71, is shown to be an individualist society.

- **Masculinity versus Femininity** concerned with the separation of sentimental roles among women and men (Hofstede, 2011). The aggressive, self-assured and self-confident roles have been identified as 'masculine' and the moderate, humble, affectionate roles as 'feminine'. In the feminine countries, the women possess the humble, moderate, affectionate values whereas in the masculine countries the men are rather aggressive, assertive and competing, herewith these countries make a difference between values of women and men. In most cases, in the masculine cultures there is a taboo around Masculinity and Femininity dimension (Hofstede et al., 1998). **Turkey** scores 45 and is on the Feminine side of the scale and **France**, with a score of 43, has a somewhat Feminine culture.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance** related with a community's endurance for uncertainty and vagueness. It shows how a culture has programmed its members to feel comfortable or uncomfortable in unorganized conditions. The cultures which has the high scores in this dimension, usually tend to diminish the situations which contains ambiguity by using the laws and orders, rigid codes of behaviour, objection to twisted ideas and supporting the notion of having one and only truth. Uncertainty Avoidance dimension has a connection with the stress level in a society against to an obscure future (Hofstede, 2011). **Turkey** (scores 85) and **France** (scores 86), are both very high on this dimension.
- **Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation** is related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past (Hofstede, 2011). **Turkey's** intermediate score of 46 is in the middle of the scale so no dominant cultural preference can be inferred. **France** scores high (63) in this dimension.

2.3. Job Performance

Job performance can be defined as visible actions that employees execute to attain the goals of which their organization set (Campbell, 1990). It is the level of achievement of a job or the behaviour of the employee in accordance with the determined requirements. In general, job performance is the most important element of all employees' behaviours in the organization. The level of individual and team performance of employees directly affects the organizational the success (Schermerhorn et. al, 2002). Job performance is the component that evaluates behaviour in organizational productivity (Motowidlo et al, 1997). Job performance measurement techniques vary according to the participants. Among the measurement techniques which include multi-dimensional evaluation methods, there are different job performance scales developed by researchers such as Smith, Organ & Near (1983); Goodman & Syvanteck (1999); Kirkman & Rosen (1999). The researchers measured the job performance by combining different scales according to their study on the applied group.

2.4. Employer Attractiveness

Employer attractiveness can be described as the anticipated advantages that an employee believes an employer (organization) has (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005; Sivertzen, Nilsen & Olafsen, 2013). It is an important concept in the information driven contexts in which attracting and retaining employees with talents, high potentials, and knowledge is a fundamental of the competitive advantage (Tüzüner & Yüksel, 2009). When an employer is perceived as attractive by the potential employees, its value of the brand becomes stronger (Berthon, Ewing & Hah, 2005). It can be explained as an aspect towards conceiving an employer (organization) “as a desirable entity with which to initiate some relationship” (Aiman-Smith, Bauer & Cable, 2001).

Employer attractiveness is quite significant for the organizations as its criterions and assessments are used to anticipate organizational quest (Highhouse et al., 2003). Berthon et al. (2005) identify employer attractiveness five dimensions from the potential employees' viewpoint.

Those five dimensions are meant to demonstrate the level of which an employer is attracted to the employer (organization). The model consists of Social Value, Economic Value, Interest Value, Development Value, and Application Value dimensions and has been extensively practiced in the employer attractiveness researches and has been defined by numerous authors as followed (Sivertzen et al., 2013; Biswas & Suar, 2013; Alnaçık et al., 2014).

- **Social Value** the extent to which an individual value an employee providing a fun working environment and good relationships to colleagues.
- **Economic Value** concerns salary, economic benefits and job security.
- **Interest Value** concerns the innovation and interest to the products or services provided by an employer.
- **Development Value** concerns the extent to which an employer can offer career opportunities and confidence.
- **Application Value** concerns the extent to which an employee feels appealed to an employer which rises opportunities for employees to apply and use what they have learn others (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005; Sivertzen, Nilsen & Olafsen, 2013).

3. Research Method

The next part of the study proceeds to outline the methodology and research model, together with the details of the sample and data collection information and with the analyses.

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The online questionnaire is conducted among employees in Turkey and France via random sampling method. The research is carried out in 6 sectors and 404 participants. 185 of the participants (45,8%) are employed in the banking and financial services sector, 90 participants (22,3%) are employed in the service sector, 45 participants (11,1 %) are employed in the pharmaceutical and health sector, 34 participants (8,4%) are employed in information technologies sector

and 31 participants (7,7%) are industry sector employees and 19 participants (4,7%) are education sector employees.

The percentage distributions of the demographic of the participants partaking to the survey are as follows. It appears that 222 (55%) of the employees participated in the survey are female and 182 participants (45%) are male. 17 people (4,2%) are in the age range of 18-24 years, 78 employees (19,3%) are in the age range of 25-29 years, 184 employees (45,5%) are in the age range of 30-39 years, 88 employees (21,8%) are 40-49 years and older and 37 employees (9,2%) are over 50 years. 229 (56,7%) of the employees are married and 175 (43,3%) of the employees are single.

With respect to education, 7 (1,7%) of the participants held at least a high school's degree, 27 (6,7%) of the participants held a vocational school degree, 139 (34,4%) of the participants held a bachelor's degree, 212 (52,5%) of the participants held master's degree and 19 (4,7%) of the participants held PhD degree.

The average tenure with the current organization was 1-3 years for the 166 participants (41,1%), 4-7 years for the 95 (23,5%) participants, 8-11 years for the 45 participants (11,1%) and 12 years or more for the 98 (24,3%) of the participants respectively.

The total average tenure was 1-3 years for the 45 participants (11,1%), 4-7 years for the 77 (19,1%) participants, 8-11 years for the 83 participants (20,5%) and 12 years or more for the 199 (49,3%) of the participants respectively.

41,8% of the participants (169 employees) had supervisory, managerial or professional job titles and 58,2% of the participants (235 employees) had an expert job titles in their organizations.

3.2. Analyses

The questionnaire consists of 70 items including 10 demographical questions and 4 scales, measuring Employer Attractiveness Scale (Berthon, Ewing & Hah, 2005) with 22 items, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Scale (Wu, 2006) with 22 items, Psychological Empowerment Scale (Spreitzer, 1995) with 12 items and Job Performance Scale (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999) with 4 items, is applied. The Cronbach's Alpha values for each question exceed 0.60, proving the high reliability of scales used in that survey (Akgül & Çevik, 2003).

Correlation analysis was applied to determine whether the principal variables were related to each other and to the dependent variable and to determine the direction and strength of the relationship. In our research the two-step structural equation model implementation proposed by Anderson & Gerbing (1988) was adopted. The purpose of testing the measurement model is to perform a Confirmatory Factor Analysis which includes all variables in the structural model.

In order to use the model in the analysis, it is necessary to meet the conditions. Degree of Freedom of a Model defined as 85 and it is suitable as it is greater than 0. Other significance tests of the model and parameters are defined below.

Table 2. Significance Tests and Parameters of the Model

Fit Index	Criterion	Identified Fit Value	Result
χ^2 / df	$1 < \chi^2 / df \leq 5$	2,997	Good
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,09$	0,07	Good
CFI	$0 \leq CFI < 1$	0,903	Good
GFI	$0 \leq GFI \leq 1$	0,905	Good

Relative Chi Square Index (CMIN/DF) defined as 2,997 – Suitable as the value must be between 1 and 5.

Root Mean Square Residual (RMSEA) defined as 0,070 – Suitable as the value must be smaller than 0,09.

Comparative Fit Index (CFI) defined as 0,903 – Suitable as the value must be between 0 and 1.

Goodness-Of-Fit Index defined as 0,905 – Suitable for greater than 0,90.

Descriptive statistics are used to determine the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis values of the data. Statistics are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis	CR
Social Value	-2,772	13,463	55,238
Economic Value	-1,26	4,534	18,601
Development Value	-1,496	4,815	19,757
Interest Value	-0,96	2,074	8,51
Application Value	-0,898	1,946	7,986
Long Term-Short Term Orientation	-0,088	-0,02	-0,083
Individualism-Collectivism	-0,362	0,354	1,453
Job Performance Scale	-0,314	0,105	0,432
Masculinity-Femininity	0,832	0,166	0,68
Power Distance	0,811	1,937	7,947
Uncertainty Avoidance	-0,49	0,832	3,414
Impact	-0,32	-0,373	-1,532
Self-Determination	-0,715	0,547	2,246
Competence	-0,518	0,842	3,453
Meaning	-0,957	1,889	7,749
Multivariate			10,314

All variables of the study are considered normal because the coefficient of skewness is between +2 and -2. The kurtosis coefficient of all the variables of the study is considered normal as it is between 2 and -2 or +3 and -3 according to the recommended criteria. It is also considered normal because the kurtosis coefficient is between 2 and -2 or +3 to -3 according to the recommended criteria.

On the other hand, Multivariate values should be at least 10 in order to determine that they are suitable for multiple normal distributions. The model is suitable for multiple normal distributions as the Multivariate value in the table is 10,314.

The higher the factor loads of the dimensions under the scales, the greater the scale is effective within the scale.

Table 4. Factor Loads of Sub-Dimensions

Sub-Dimensions	Factor Load
<i>Employer Attractiveness Scale</i>	
Application Value	0,772
Interest Value	0,764
Development Value	0,774
Economic Value	0,755
Social Value	0,6
<i>Psychological Empowerment Scale</i>	
Meaning	0,472
Competence	0,761
Self-Determination	0,396
Impact	0,464
<i>Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions</i>	
Uncertainty Avoidance	0,498
Power Distance	0,36
Masculinity-Femininity	0,316
Individualism-Collectivism	0,387
Long Term-Short Term Orientation	0,789

After the measurement model was tested, a second phase of the approach proposed by Anderson & Gerbing (1988) was started to test the structural model (path analysis). Path analysis was performed by using Maximum Likelihood method.

The Structural equation modelling (SEM) is used to test the structural relations and a technique of multivariate statistical analysis that has been used frequently in recent years, was first mentioned by Sewall Wrigt (1934). In epitome, SEM is the consolidation of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, and it is used to test the structural relationship amongst the measured variables and latent constructs. The result of the analysis is to evaluate the suitability of the model as a whole. SEM is generally described as a validating technique rather than being explanatory. In this context, SEM focuses on the question of whether this model is valid rather than seeking a suitable model (Sümer, 2000).

4. Findings and Discussion

When the validity of the established model is examined, it is observed that it complies with the specified criteria. Accepted hypotheses are:

- The employer attractiveness scale has a positive and significant effect on the Psychological Empowerment Scale, Ho supported.
- Job Performance Scale did not have positive and significant effect on Employer Attractiveness Scale, Ho rejected.
- Job Performance Scale has a positive and significant effect on Psychological Empowerment Scale, Ho supported.
- It is concluded that employer attractiveness has a moderator effect on the impact of psychological empowerment on work performance ($p = 0.031 < 0.001$).

ANOVA analyses were conducted for this study in order to discover the differences between France and Turkey participants and the following hypotheses were tested.

Ho Regarding the perception of psychological empowerment of the employees, there is a significant difference between France and Turkey participants.

Ho Regarding the perception of the employer attractiveness of the employees, there is a significant difference between France and Turkey participants.

Ho Regarding the perception of Hofstede's Cultural Dimension of the employees, there is a significant difference between France and Turkey participants.

Ho Regarding the perception of the job performance of the employees, there is a significant difference between France and Turkey participants.

As shown in the Table 5 the 5% significance level of p value <0.05, there is no significant difference in any scale, between France and Turkey participants.

Table 5. Significance Level of p Value

Scales	F	p
Employer Attractiveness Scale	1,309	0,134
Hofstede Cultural Dimensions Scale	0,827	0,751
Job Performance Scale	0,503	0,9
Psychological Empowerment Scale	1,133	0,301

- It has been concluded that Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions have no Mediator effect on the impact of psychological empowerment on job performance ($\beta = 0.0259$; SE = 0.116; $t = 0.2219$; $p = 0.8245 > 0.001$).

As far as the level of analysis is concerned, it is incorrect to say that the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions findings presented at the country level are valid for individual level measurement, since today's societies are often not homogeneous. The cultural trends of individuals in the same country may differ (Triandis, 1995); in this case, as in developing country that hosts various immigrants living rapid changes, such as Turkey (Farh, Hackett & Liang, 2007; İmamoğlu & Aygün, 2004). Indeed, the study of Göregenli (1995) shows that it is not possible to classify the Turks as individualist or collectivist. Therefore, it is important to measure the cultural values at the individual level in order to understand the social-psychological processes at the individual level (Wasti & Erdil, 2007). Similarly, it is also incorrect to assume that the values remain constant over time (Oyserman, & Kemmelmeier, 2002).

In this survey it has been concluded that Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions does not have a mediator effect on the impact of psychological empowerment on job performance whereas in the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Index, in the Individualism versus Collectivism dimension the difference was obvious between the two countries. Turkey (score 37) is a collectivistic society. Reciprocally "We" is important; people belong to in-groups who take care of each other in return for faithfulness, and dependability. In collectivist cultures the identity is interdependent, which means that people sense related to the other people in their society. Accordingly, collectivists believe that they should preserve their

relationship and modify their behaviours and actions to adapt and be approved by the others; or else, they danger be humiliated and come to be less highly respected. (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). France, (score 71), has an individualist culture in which one is only presumed to look after oneself and one's family. The combination of a high score on Individualism and a high score on Power Distance in France is unique and also creates a conflict.

Another point regarding social rights in France and its welfare system and the quality of life arises; In 2015 the total annual working hours for an employee in France it was 1509 hours whereas in Turkey it was 1832 hours in Turkey according to The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2019) comparison. In Turkey employees work nearly %20 more than France during the year in terms of working hours. This has many reasons;

In France the legal working hours is fixed at 35 hours per week. France is often considered one of the most generous countries for annual leave entitlement. In France on top of the annual leave, of 25 days employees are also entitled to 'Reduction of working time' or Reduction du temps de travail (RTT) were brought in by the French government in 1998 in a bid to reduce rising unemployment and encourage people back into work by making conditions more favourable. With these days being additional to France's existing annual leave, a formula was agreed to work out the different RTT days each year, the average RTT days are calculated as 9 or 11 days. Comparing the working days and hours in Turkey and France there is a big difference in two countries and that should be taken into account when analysing the job performance of the employees, employer attractiveness and Psychological Empowerment.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this research provide compelling evidence of the existence and importance of the effect of employees' psychological empowerment perceptions on their job performance and the moderator role of the employer attractiveness. This relationship has various implications for the managers and the HR professionals. They can manage the intersectional activities to support the employees job performances and to influence their psychological empowerment perceptions with the new management approaches to stimulate transversal working culture within the teams, holistic thinking approach for all the employees, and building an organization with the formal and non-formal learning and development activities for each and every employee which are in return can boost the employer attractiveness of the organization. Hence those desiderated outcomes can strongly support the HR strategy of the organization wishes to maintain their sustainability for the competitive advantage within their markets and to promote an efficient use of the human capital in a holistic way in their organizations. From the human resources management perspective, the impact of this approach can create a positive effect on attracting and retaining top talents, as it bears a profound importance in the war of talents with the changes in population levels and the generational differences between Baby Boomers, Generation Y, X and with the latest Generation Z in the organizations (Toruntay, 2011). In addition to that giving

feedback to the employees and quality of their experiences, to share the goals and thus to promote overall productivity and harmony are important.

For the further researches it should be considered that, this research was conducted in two countries and in specific sectors, other countries and sectors can be included into the studies. Even though Turkey and France in our sample differ from each other in important ways, we also recognize that they are similar to each other on Power Distance, Masculinity, Uncertainty Avoidance Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Index (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Last but not the least, as the survey language will be different in different cultures, the understanding and the response outcomes would change accordingly. This limitation may cause new research topics for the future researchers in the field of intercultural studies.

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