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The Impact of Hopelessness on Perceived Organizational Performance: The Mediating Role of Emotion Regulation

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between hopelessness and organizational performance; and if so, to evaluate the mediating effect of emotion regulation on this relationship. To test this model, hopelessness, organizational performance, and emotion regulation was measured in employees working in the banking sector. In total, 221 employees completed this study and to test research hypothesis structural equation modeling was used. The current study demonstrated that hopelessness has a significant negative relationship with both emotion regulation and organizational performance. It was also found that emotion regulation has a mediating effect on this relationship where higher emotion regulation decreases its strength. Additionally, t-test and ANOVA analyzes were used to reveal differences between demographic variables and study variables. Efforts of employees to develop their emotion regulation abilities in a variety of situations may play an important role in reducing the negative effects of hopelessness and develop the performance of individuals. The current study presents new insights on the mediating effects of emotion regulation on the relationship between hopelessness and individual perceptions of organizational performance.

Keywords: Emotion Regulation, Hopelessness, Organizational Performance, Structural Equation Modeling

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1. Introduction

Employees experience various motivational and emotional states during daily work life. Even though some people find hopeful ways to respond to challenges and opportunities of their work, others struggle to keep a positive mindset and work motivation (Peterson & Bryon, 2008). Scholars and practitioners aim to identify the differences between people who have and those who have not goal-oriented energy while overcoming work-related challenges (Peterson & Bryon, 2008; Snyder, Harris, et al., 1991; Yotsidi et al., 2018). One effort is the consideration of the impacts of hope on organizational behaviors (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Jensen, 2002). Snyder, Irving, and Anderson (1991) defined hope as "A positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-oriented energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)". Both the first component (i.e., agency thinking) and the second

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component (i.e., pathways) are related to achieving work goals for high-hope people (Woodbury, 1999; Yotsidi et al., 2018).

Although the current literature has extensively explored the effects of hope on positive job outcomes (see Yotsidi et al., 2018 for a review), the impacts of hopelessness within the workplace have yet to be adequately examined. Hopelessness is defined as a cognitive condition characterized by a pessimistic outlook on the future influenced by past experiences, a sense of purposelessness resulting from negative expectations, a reluctance to embrace optimism, and doubts about the attainability of success (Beck et al., 1974; Zhang et al., 2022). Since the impacts of hopelessness are evident in individuals' well-being (Buzzai et al., 2020; Hernandez & Overholser, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2020), there are at least two approaches to improve our understanding of hopelessness by investigating its presence in work settings and its relationship with perceived performance. The first approach is related to the perceived nature of hopelessness. Hopelessness is a subjective construct and an individual's perception, closely tied to one's perceived capabilities to identify pathways to achieve goals (Zhang et al., 2022). However, hopelessness is rarely associated with perceptual outcomes, especially in terms of perceived organizational performance. The second approach concerns the potential mediating effects on the relationship between hopelessness and performance. Even though hopelessness is linked as a negative predictor of performance (Abas & Otto, 2016; Peterson & Bryon, 2008), investigating potential mediating effects may provide a more comprehensive understanding of hopelessness in organizational settings.

This manuscript investigates the relationship between hopelessness and perceived performance and mediating effects of emotion regulation to address potential limitations of the extant literature. First, the current study investigates the impacts of hopelessness on perceived organizational performance to be consistent with the perceived component of hopelessness (e.g., Beck et al., 1974; Hernandez & Overholser, 2021). Secondly, this paper includes emotion regulation to capture the emotional components of the relationship between hopelessness and perceived organizational performance. Emotion regulation and hope have been examined in many different theoretical models regarding their relationship with performance (Chavez & Mendez, 2008; Crowne, 2009; Liu et al., 2010; Moon & Lord, 2006; Ozyilmaz, 2020; Peterson & Byron, 2008). However, they have not been investigated in the manner of the present study, as the interplay between hopelessness and performance, mediated by emotion regulation. This study sought to answer the question, are there differences among bank employees in terms of hopelessness, perceived organizational performance and emotion regulation level?

By investigating the relationship among hopelessness, perceived organizational performance, and emotion regulation, this manuscript contributes to the extant literature in at least two ways. First, the results of this study explain the main effects of hopelessness on perceived organizational performance, which is positively correlated with firm performance (Dollinger & Golden, 1992; Powell, 1992). Even though usually micro scholars focus on hopelessness in organizational settings, the current results may offer future avenues for macro scholars. Secondly, emotions play an essential role in the interaction between agency thinking and pathways (Yotsidi et al., 2018). Our examination of the mediating effect of emotion regulation further contributes to the literature by offering between-individual explanations of emotional components of hopelessness. Lastly, our thorough supplemental analyses of demographic variables can lead to future research questions.

The paper comprises the following sections: Section 2 reviews the related literature; Section 3 covers the methodology, including the sample and data collection tools; Section 4 presents the findings; Section 5 discusses the findings; and Section 6 mentions limitations and future directions.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Hopelessness and Organizational Performance

As stated in the introduction, hope has been established as a combination of possession of the energy for goal attainment and the ability to see the path to achieve it (Snyder, Harris, et al., 1991; Snyder, Irving, et

al., 1991). Conversely, hopelessness is conceptualized as both a way of feeling and acting when depleted of goal attainment energy and/or the perceived ability to achieve goals. One of the reasons that hopelessness is so dangerous in the workplace is its many sources and contagious nature. Prior research has established that one's levels of hopelessness can be influenced by the levels of hopelessness of others with whom one is contact, depletion of energy, isolation, concurrent losses, lack of information, and/or feelings of devaluation (Farran et al., 1995; Zhang et al., 2022). Hopelessness has the ability to influence feelings of discouragement, despair, and trapped with no ability to form plans and realize goals, which then perpetuates the cycle of feeling of hopelessness. Characteristics of an individual experiencing hopelessness include social withdrawal; psychological discomfort, feelings of incompetence, and feelings of overwhelm (Farran et al., 1995). Hopelessness has been shown to have a number of deleterious mental health outcomes, including: mental illness, depression, suicidal ideation (Beck et al., 1975; Fromm, 1968), and physical health problems (Grossart-Maticek et al., 1983; Richter, 1957), all of which can additionally contribute to an inability to achieve goals, again perpetuating a hopelessness cycle. Hopelessness is closely related to individuals' demographic characteristics such as age, gender, race, occupational characteristics, cognitive factors and socioeconomic variables (Ghasemi, 2022; Nekanda-Trepka et al., 1983).

One recent development in many workplaces has been the rise of importance in customer service and many employees now interact directly with customers or clients as a large portion of their employment (Paoli, 1997; Zeithaml & Bitner, 2000). Although individuals in these jobs may self-select into them due to a proclivity toward social interactions and may find their work rewarding in that capacity (Judge & Bretz, 1992; Zeithaml & Bitner, 2000), difficult situations are also an inevitable part of customer service work and an influential source of social stress (Ben-zur & Yagil, 2005; Grandey et al., 2004). In fact, studies have shown that a single negative interaction in a call center simulation had a significant impact on anger, emotional exhaustion, fatigue, and negative affect (Rupp & Spencer, 2006; Goldberg, & Grandey, 2007). No study yet exists examining the specific relationship between customer service delivery and hopelessness, but it is reasonable to assume that the difficulties that cause negative emotions and burnout, would likely also result in feelings of hopelessness, given that fatigue and emotional exhaustion will deplete the supply of energy needed for goal attainment and the negative affect will cloud the ability to see the path to realizing goals. Within the realm of customer-service oriented industries, the banking sector tends to be plagued by issues of nepotism, cronyism, and favoritism (Arasli & Tumer, 2008). Given that when these issues are present, the perception that goal attainment is out of one's control is not merely a perception, but a reality, feelings of hopelessness are likely compounded in this specific industry.

Perhaps the most troubling outcome of hopelessness is that found in the literature of organizational psychology which posits hopeful individuals are committed to fully engaging with their jobs physically, cognitively, and emotionally, under the belief that they can attain their goals (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Snyder, 2002; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Conversely, hopelessness makes employees redirect their energy and resources away from tasks and allocate it to attending to negative thoughts (Snyder, 2002). These findings are in alignment with the Resource Allocation Theory, which suggests that rumination lowers cognitive functioning by reducing the amount of cognitive resources that can be put toward a task, through assigning those resources to the rumination (Watkins & Brown, 2002; Levens et al. 2009).

Organizational performance is described as the efficiency with which individuals perform actions that contribute to the organization's success through the organization's technical core and that are included in their job role (Borman & Motowidlo, 2014). Research has supported the relationship between hopelessness and reduced performance by demonstrating that hopeful employees from sales, mortgage, and management all had higher job performance longitudinally after controlling for self-efficacy and cognitive ability; and that hopefulness negatively impacts employees' problem-solving skills (Peterson, & Byron, 2008). Given what we know about the role of hope in organizational performance, it is critical to address the issue of supporting employees who lack hope in order for them to achieve the same levels of job performance as their hopeful counterparts.

Furthermore, the relationship between hopelessness and perceived performance has been rigorously explored and substantiated within various educational contexts (e.g., learning language Shao et

al., 2022; students' achievement goals (Pekrun et al., 2014), school performance Phan, 2010; Shek et al., 2016). Given the established significance of this relationship, it is imperative to extend these inquiries into organizational and occupational settings. To illustrate this relationship, the banking sector offers a promising dataset for such investigations. In the inherently high-stress domain of banking (Dhankar, 2015; Manjunatha, & Renukamurthy 2017), where employees contend with continual pressures, probing the potential ramifications of hopelessness on perceived performance stands as a pertinent inquiry.

 H_1 : There is a negative relationship between hopelessness and organizational performance.

2.2. Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation may provide a solution to the hopelessness-performance dilemma. Emotion regulation was defined by Gross (1998) as "the processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions." In customer serviceoriented jobs, there are often implicit and explicit expectations about employees' emotions, such as which can be expressed, which should not, and when expression is appropriate. These expectations are referred to as "display rules" (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Ekman, 1973). This is because employee emotional expressed effects how effective their interactions are with customers, which ultimately effects the bottom line for the organization through purchases, loyalty, and recommendations (e.g., Pugh, 2001; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Tsai, 2001). However, the directive from management to behave according to a firm's display rules is not the only reason that an employee may engage in emotion regulation. Von Gilsa and colleagues (2014) found that in addition to the instrumental and pecuniary motives, pleasure and prevention are also powerful influencers of emotion regulation. Emotion regulation for pleasure includes motives such as desiring to build positive and authentic relationships with those with whom one works, such as customers and co-workers, while prevention involves the avoidance of escalation of a negative situation. Another motive for emotion regulation is a response to chronic stress. Previous studies have demonstrated that when individuals are faced with negative emotions from chronic stressors, that they rely on methods of coping including emotion regulation (Ford & Feinberg, 2020). One common and effective strategy is cognitive reappraisal, in which individuals reframe situations in a way that affects their emotional influence. Cognitive reappraisal strategies include rationalization of the status quo (Laurin & Jettinghoff, 2019), creating deeper meaning of the situation (Park, 2010), or distancing themselves from the situation (Ayduk & Kross, 2010).

Emotion regulation presents as a practical and feasible opportunity to balance the relationship between hopelessness and performance, given that it can be effectively trained. Research suggests that hope is a significant predictor of emotion regulation (Doorley et al., 2022) and there is direct linkage between emotion regulation and hopelessness (Vatan et al., 2014). If emotion regulation is found to raise the job performance of individuals with high levels of hopelessness, it would very likely have positive individual outcomes as well as the benefits to the organization. Effective and adaptive emotion regulation has been shown to be positively related to psychological well-being, optimism, and self-esteem (Akfirat, 2020; Augusto-Landa et al., 2011), emotion regulation is a skill that can be learned and even those that use it innately can be taught to use adaptive rather than potentially maladaptive techniques. One such training tool, the Affect Regulation Training (ART; Berking 2010; Berking & Schwarz, 2014; Berking & Whitley, 2014) seeks to improve the Adaptive Coping With Emotions (ACE) model's (Berking, 2007) regulation abilities of awareness; identifying and labeling; understanding; modification; acceptance and tolerance; readiness to confront; and effective self-support through a standardized curriculum that includes cognitive-behavioralstress relaxation, and mindfulness strategies. The ART has been shown to improve the emotion regulation skills of a wide variety of individuals including those with mental and medical disorders (Berking et al., 2013; Gottschalk & Rief, 2012), and high-risk groups such as police officers (Berking et al., 2010). Not only do these emotion regulation skills improve at the time of training, but the evidence suggests that they continue to be improved after training, as individuals are able to practice them more (Buruck et al., 2016). Another promising possibility in emotion regulation is the early success seen in delivering the training through webbased and mobile platforms, which is significantly more cost-effective for organizations and individuals than traditional face-to-face training (Heber et al., 2013).

Considering all, we posit following hypotheses:

 H_2 : There is a negative relationship between hopelessness and emotion regulation abilities.

 H_3 : Emotion regulation will have a mediating effect on the relationship of hopelessness and performance.

Hopelessness

Perceived Organizational Performance

Emotion Regulation

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

In the scope of this conceptual model, the main objective of the study is to determine the hopelessness, emotion regulation capacity, and organizational performance of employees at all levels in the banking sector, to find whether a relationship exists with these variables and to determine the mediating effect of emotion regulation. In addition, demographic and organizational variables will be assessed to explore any potential relationships with study variables.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample and Data

The research was conducted in Diyarbakir, the largest city located in the southeastern part of Turkey. Three different banks operate in the Turkish banking system. These are: Deposit/Commercial banks, Participation banks (banks operating on the principle of interest-free banking) and Development and investment banks (Acar et al., 2015). There is no branch of the investment and development bank in the place where the research was conducted. Therefore, in this research, data were collected from Deposit / Commercial banks and Participation banks.

Stratified random sampling method was used to collect the sample. From the banks operating in the center of the city, six government deposit, six private deposit, and six participation banks were selected by lot. 180 forms to the government banks, 180 forms to the private banks, and 180 forms to the free-interest banks were delivered randomly according to their number of employees. Some of the visited banks allowed random distribution of the forms to the bank employees, while others requested that the forms be left at the information desk, after which the banks took responsibility of randomly distributing the surveys to their employees on their own. As a result, a total of 221 surveys suitable for analysis were collected. These employees were working for participation banks, (21.7%), private deposit banks, (44.3%), and public deposit banks (33.9%) banks. The study was approved by the internal review board of Dicle University's Ethics Committee (IRB ID: 2014/346). Measures in this study are administered in Turkish. Scale items are translated to Turkish and back translated to English to avoid any meaning inconsistencies.

3.2. Measures

In addition to demographic variables, a 30-question survey consisting of three different scales such as organizational performance, emotional regulation, and hopelessness was used.

Organizational Performance Scale: To measure the perceived performance, the survey items were originally designed by Brewer and Selden (2000) and modified by Park et al. (2001). The items have been used by several researchers (Kim, 2005: Sahin, 2010; Bakiev 2011). In this study organizational performance was measured with 6 items, in which respondents were asked to indicate agreement to several statements

regarding performance such as internal efficiency, internal effectiveness, internal fairness, external efficiency, external effectiveness, and external fairness. A sample item is "Everyone is busy in my section; there is little idle time." The definitions of the available points on the scale are: (1) never/almost never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) always. As a result of the reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha for this study was .85, skewness and kurtosis values were between -/+1 and the distribution was normal. Even though perceived performance data has limitations regarding measurement error and monomethod bias, the construct has been used by management scholars (Delaney & Huselid, 1996) and has been shown its positive correlation with objective measures of firm performance (Dollinger & Golden, 1992; Powell, 1992)

Emotion Regulation Scale: Emotion regulation was measured by the 4-item scale developed by Wong and Law (2002) as a subdimension of emotional intelligence scale, and the scale has been used in the literate over decades (e.g., Mulki et al., 2014; Walker et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2004; Wong, et al., 2007). Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement to several statements regarding emotional regulation. A sample item is "I am able to control my temper so that I can handle difficulties rationally." The definitions of the available points on the scale are: (1) never/almost never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) always. As a result of the reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha for this study was 0.90, skewness and kurtosis values were between -/+1 and the distribution was normal.

Hopelessness Scale: The 20-item Beck Hopelessness Scale (Beck et al., 1974) was translated into Turkish and validated by Seber (1991). Respondents were asked about their emotions and thoughts regarding their futures by marking "yes" or 'no" to several statements. The points range from 0-20 with higher scores designating higher levels of hopelessness. Cronbach's alpha for this study was 0.90, and normal distribution was not necessary since it is measured with a yes/no response.

4. Results

IBM SPSS 22 was used to analyze the descriptive variables and to utilize an ANOVA, and AMOS Graphics v. 18 (Arbuckle, 2007) was used to perform Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM was chosen to analyze the relationship of many variables at one (Wan, 2002), while taking measurement errors into account (Byrne, 2013).

The final sample consisted of 221 participants. As seen in Table 1, 51.6% (n=114) of participants were male, and 48.4% (n=107) were female. The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to over 50, with 20-30 being the most commonly reported age. Years of experience ranged from 1 to over 20, and respondents held titles including manager (18.1%), specialist (27.6%), officer (25.8%), chief (17.2%), and others (10.9%) from departments of marketing (52.5%), operation (34.3%), and others (cleaning workers) (12.7%). Additionally, most employees had a bachelor's degree (73.8%; n=163), 9% (n=20) had a master's degree, 16.3% (n=36) had a high school diploma, and 0.9% (n= 2) had a primary education only.

Variables		Frequency	%
Gender	Female	107	(48.4)
Gender	Male	114	(51.6)
	20-30	101	(45.7)
A	31-40	88	(39.8)
Age	41-50	29	(13.1)
	50 +	3	(1.4)
	Primary	2	(0.9)
Education	High School	36	(16.3)
Education	Bachelor	163	(73.8)
	Master degree	20	(9)
Marital Status	Married	152	(68.8)
iviaritai Status	Single	68	(30.8)

Table 1. Demographic Variables

Table 1. Demographic Variables (Continue)

Variables		Frequency	%
	Marketing	116	(52.5)
Departments	Operation	76	(34.4)
	Other	28	(12.7)
	1-5	87	(39.4)
	6-10	73	(33)
Experince (Year)	11-15	31	(14)
	16-20	17	(7.8)
	20 +	10	(4.5)
	Participation	48	(21.7)
Bank Type	Private deposit	98	(44.3)
	Public deposit	75	(33.9)
	Manager	40	(18.1)
	Specialist	61	(27.6)
Title	Officer	57	(25.8)
	Chief	38	(17.2)
	Others	24	(10.9)

n=221

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables are reported in Table 2. As it is seen in the table, mean of hopelessness is 4.2 and standard deviation is 4.8 (4.8; \pm 3.9). Mean of organizational Performance is about 25.4 and standard deviation is 4.2 (25.4; \pm 4.2). Mean of emotion regulation is about 16 and standard deviation is 3.3 (16; \pm 3.3).

To test study hypotheses and to reveal relationship between the study variables, we used Spearman correlation test. According to the result of the correlation analysis, there is a negative correlation between hopelessness, organizational performance and emotion regulation (r: -0.384, p: <0.001; (r: -0.227, p: <0.001). There is a positive correlation between organizational performance and emotion regulation (r: 0.338, p: <0.001).

Table 2. Hopelessness, Perceived Organizational Performance and Emotion Regulation Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Results

Variables	Hopelessness	Organizational Performance	Emotion Regulation	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Hopelessness	1	-0.384**	-0.277**	1	17	4.21	3.9
Organizational Performance		1	0.338**	10	30	25.35	4.25
Emotion Regulation			1	6	20	16.1	3.31

^{**} Spearman correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

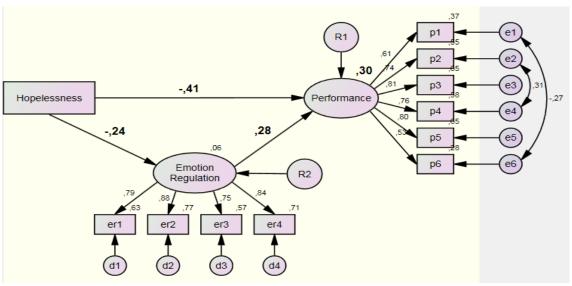
The model was revised because sufficient values for fit were not provided in the measurement (generic) model. Goodness-of-fit values (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Schreiber et al., 2006) of the measurement and revised model are as shown in the table below:

Table 3. The Goodness-of-fit Statistical Scores for	or a Generic and Revised Mod	lel
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Index	Cut-off Criteria	Measurement Model	Revised Model
Chi-square (CMIN) or (χ²)	Smaller the best	89.6	63.6
Chi-square Associated p Value (p)	Value > 0.05	0	0
Chi-square/Degree of Freedom (χ²/df)	Value < 4	2.13	1.6
Root Mean Square Error of	0.05 < Value < 0.08; acceptable	0.072	0.052
Approximation (RMSEA)	<0.05; good		
RMSEA Associated p Value (PCLOSE)	<0.05; good	0.42	0.42
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.90 < value < 0.95; acceptable	0.95	0.97
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	≥ 0.95; good		
Goodness-of-Fit index (GFI)	0.90 < value < 0.95; acceptable	0.94	0.95
doodness-of-Fit fildex (GFI)	≥ 0.95; good		
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.95≤ Value ≤1.00	0.97	0.98
Hooltor's Critical N (HOELTER Index)	75 < value < 200; acceptable	143	193
Hoelter's Critical N (HOELTER Index)	≥ 200; good		

To test the model, structural equation model was used as seen in Figure 2. In the revised SEM model, all of the indicators showed significant effect with the connected latent variables (p<0.05). A negative significant relationship was found between hopelessness and performance (p<0.05) and between hopelessness and emotion regulation (p<0.05). Partially mediating effect of emotion regulation on the relationship between performance and hopelessness was also determined (p<0.05) According to these results, all hypotheses of the research (H_1 , H_2 and H_3) were supported.

Figure 2. SEM for the Relationship among Hopelessness, Emotion Regulation and Perceived Performance



CMIN/DF: 1.6, TLI: 0.97, GFI: 0.95, CFI:0.98, RMSEA: 0.52, HOLTER: 193

According to the SEM results, the standardized regression weight of the effect between hopelessness and performance was found to be -0.41. The standardized regression weight of the relationship between hopelessness and emotion regulation was found to be -0.24. The standardized regression weight of effect between emotion regulation and performance was found as 0.28.

Initially, the coefficient/weight of the relationship between hopeless and performance was determined as 0.48. Then, in order to reveal the mediating effect, when the emotion regulation was put in the model as mediator, the effect between hopelessness and performance decreased to 0.41 (Standardized

Indirect Effects= -0.067), and emotion regulation was observed to have a partial mediating effect. Consequently, hopeless and emotion regulation variables explained 30% of the change (variance) on organizational performance. Therefore, the unexplained value (Z_1) is 70%.

In addition to hypothesis testing, we conducted t-test and ANOVA as supplemental analyzes to further investigate the relationship between demographic variables and emotion regulation. Results can be summarized as: The employees at the age of 20-30 years old reported a lower emotion regulation capacity than older groups (p<0.05, F: 6.12). Managers reported a higher emotion regulation capacity and performance than officers (p<0.001, F: 5.62; p<0.05, F: 3.57). The employees working in the marketing department reported a higher emotion regulation capacity and performance than operation department (p<0.001, F: 8.12; p<0.05, F: 3.46). Men reported a higher emotion regulation capacity than women (p<0.001, t: 4.27). Married employees reported a higher emotion regulation capacity than single employees (p<0.005, t: 3.42). Employees working for public deposit banks reported a lower emotion regulation capacity and performance than the employees working for private deposit or participation banks (p<0.005, F: 3.96; p<0.0001, F: 13.8).

5. Discussion

This study was designed to address the gap in the extant literature concerning the relationship between hopelessness and performance as mediated by emotion regulation. To that end, three hypotheses were proposed: (H_1) There is a negative relationship between hopelessness and organizational performance, (H_2) there is a negative relationship between hopelessness and emotion regulation abilities, and (H_3) emotion regulation has a mediating effect on the relationship of hopelessness and performance. All three of these hypotheses were fully supported. According to these results, as levels of hopelessness increase, performance decreases; but this negative relationship can be reduced by the proper regulation of emotions.

In addition to formal hypothesis testing, several additional analyses were performed to investigate the impact of organizational and demographic variables on the present study variables. Interestingly, marketing employees were shown to have the lowest levels of hopelessness and the highest levels of emotion regulation and performance. This is consistent with the job duties of marketers, as the employees who have the highest rate of face-to-face contact with customers, which will inherently call for higher emotion regulation skills. Given that they have high influence on the image and reputation of the bank, they are likely given formal emotion regulation training, which is having the indirect effect of improving their performance through lowered levels of hopelessness. Similarly, the managers, who have a higher place on the career ladder than other employees, reported higher emotion regulation capacity and performance than officers. This result is meaningful as managers are expected to manage their own emotions as well as influence the emotional states of others (Fisk & Friesen, 2012). Hence, a good manager should be selected from employees that demonstrate a high level of emotion regulation capacity.

Employees working in public deposit banks reported lower emotion regulation capacity and lower performance when compared to private deposit and participation bank employees. To fully examine this finding, one must consider the nature of the three types of banks. Due to the job security provided at public deposit banks, these employees likely work under a less competitive condition than employees of both private deposit banks and participation banks, which would likely lead to less need for emotion regulation and highest levels of performance.

The related literature claims higher career level, job experience and indirectly age has a positive effect on performance and emotion regulation (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006; Wu, 2011; Yozgat et al., 2013). The results of our study are consistent with this literature, since the employees at the age of 20-30, reported lower emotion regulation capacity compared to older employees. This might be due to the improvement of emotion regulation capacity by the increasing number and diversity of facts that stimulate the emotions as years pass, which is the case for all other general coping processes (Lazarus, 2006).

Our supplemental analyses results showed that men demonstrated higher emotion regulation levels than women. Previous studies have offered contradicting views for the relationship between sex and

emotion regulation (e.g., Cherry & Wilcox, 2020; Nolen-Hoeksema & Aldao, 2011; Zhao et al., 2019). This discrepancy can be explained by the findings of Hatfield et al. (2009), claiming that women usually show what they really feel directly, while on the other hand men choose to manage their emotions, so they might have higher emotion regulation capacity. Married participants reported higher emotion regulation capacity than those who were single. Although studies about emotion regulation capacity in relation to marital status is lacking in the literature, there are reports showing that couples who use positive emotion regulation skills were better able to cope with and solve their marital conflicts (Bryan, 2015). Hence, one may think that married participants in the present study might be among them who might be using emotion regulation skills successfully in their marriages, as well.

In sum, the demonstrated relationships between the examined concepts and the detected differences due to demographic and organizational variables may have practical implications. This study contributes to our understanding about hopelessness levels of employees at banking sector and the effects of it on the performances of employees. With this awareness, professionals in the field can better focus on how to reduce the negative effects of hopelessness by using emotion regulation strategies. Bank managers can also use these findings, as it shows hopelessness is not only a personal problem, but it also has results at organizational level. Therefore, for good management practices, the managers are not only responsible to regulate their own emotions or influence the emotional states of others but also help their employees to improve their capacity to regulate their emotions. They may review and organize their employee training programs accordingly to achieve better performance of their organizations. Finally, managers can increase the organizational happiness levels of their employees by taking into account their employees' personal characteristics.

6. Limitations and Future Directions

In addition to the strengths of the study, it has some important limitations as well. Firstly, conducting the study in only one city of Turkey limits generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is caused by the subjective perceptions of employees about the questions regarding their organizational performance; however, the survey method is still one of the common methods for measuring subjective variables like hopelessness, performance, or emotion regulation capacity.

Future studies may focus more on the theoretical foundations of the study variables. Finally, the results of this study are important to provide an insight for future research examining the effects of different emotion regulation strategies (i.e., surface vs. deep acting). This is an important next step in the research process in order to determine which strategy is the most effective one for reducing the negative effects of hopelessness of performance. This study may also be repeated for different cities in Turkey and internationally to increase generalizability.

Declarations and Disclosures

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