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THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL ON JOB SEARCH
BEHAVIOR WITH THE MEDIATOR ROLE OF PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY
AMONG FRESH GRADUATES

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The Impact of Positive Psychological Capital on Job Search Behavior with the Mediator Role
of Perceived Employability among Fresh Graduates

Yeni Mezunların Psikolojik Sermayesinin İş Arama Davranışı Üzerine Etkisinde Algılanan
İstihdam Edilebilirliğin Aracılık Rolü

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To my dear mother...

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ABSTRACT

Changing technology, negative changes in the economy and competition in the labor market make the job search process of new graduates challenging. In this competitive environment, resources such as psychological capital help new graduates to gain advantage by positively affecting their employability perceptions. The effect of psychological capital on the job search behaviors of new graduates was examined with the perceived employability mediator variable in this study. Accordingly, 168 new graduates who graduated from public or private universities in 2018 and 2019 and who are actively searching job took part in this study. Participants completed the Psychological Capital Scale, Perceived Employability Scale and Job Search Behavior Scale. This study showed that a positive effect of psychological capital on job search behavior and employability perception, and similarly positive effect of employability perception on job search behavior. In addition to all these, the mediating role of the perceived employability between psychological capital and job search behavior was found to be statistically significant. Findings of this study are considered to have a contribution both to job search literature and to practitioners working as consultants for the job search of senior university students and new graduates.

Keywords: psychological capital, job search behavior, perceived employability

ÖZET

Ekonomide yaşanan olumsuz gelişmeler, değişen teknoloji ve işgücü piyasasındaki rekabet yeni mezunların iş arama sürecini zorlayıcı hale getirmektedir. Bu rekabet ortamında psikolojik sermaye gibi kaynaklar yeni mezunların istihdam edilebilirlik algılarını olumlu yönde etkileyerek öne çıkmalarına yardımcı olmaktadır. Bu çalışmada yeni mezunların iş arama davranışlarına psikolojik sermayenin etkisi algılanan istihdam edilebilirlik aracı değişkeni ile incelenmiştir. Bu doğrultuda 2018 ve 2019 yıllarında kamu veya özel üniversitelerden mezun olmuş, aktif iş arayışında olan 168 yeni mezun kişi bu çalışma içerisinde yer almıştır. Katılımcılar ölçüm araçları olan Psikolojik Sermaye Ölçeği, Algılanan İstihdam Edilebilirlik Ölçeği ve İş Arama Davranışı Ölçeğini tamamlamışlardır. Araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre, psikolojik sermayenin iş arama davranışı ve istihdam edilebilirlik algısına, istihdam edilebilirlik algısının da iş arama davranışına olumlu etkisi olduğu görülmüştür. Tüm bunlarla birlikte, algılanan istihdam edilebilirliğin psikolojik sermaye ve iş arama davranışı arasındaki aracılık rolü istatistiki olarak anlamlı bulunmuştur. Bu çalışmanın sonucunda elde edilen bulguların hem iş arama literatürüne hem de son sınıf öğrencileri ve yeni mezunların iş arama süreçlerine danışmanlık yapan uygulamacılara katkısı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: psikolojik sermaye, iş arama davranışı, algılanan istihdam edilebilirlik

INTRODUCTION

With changing technology and global growth, it has become difficult to maintain competition especially in the labor force. Changes in the economy has created a labor market where people are becoming more ambitious and perceive each other as competitors for scarce job openings. In that vein, unpredictability of the labor market and the associated negative thoughts and feelings require psychological capital to be stable during job search. That is why, people who are searching for suitable jobs have begun to use their psychological capital to gain an advantage over their counterparts.

Unemployment rates in the world have had a peak in the 2020, which can be attributed to the fact of Covid-19 in many OECD, G-7 countries, especially in US, Spain, Canada. Due to recent economic problems in Turkey (OECD, 2021) and social devastation caused by the pandemic, many sectors such as tourism, transportation and manufacturing were negatively affected (Alnıaçık et al., 2021). Except for the sectors that produce medical equipment, hygiene products and so forth, the activities of most sectors have decreased. This situation caused a great disruption to the labor market. Turkey felt the effects of the pandemic much more according to the average rates of OECD countries. In fact, according to OECD (2021) indicators, the unemployment rate of Turkey in January 2021 is 12.2 % which is higher than OECD countries average (6,67 in February 2021) and EU-27 countries average (7,5 % in February 2021). In terms of age groups, the proportion of youth unemployment (between the ages of 15-24) in Turkey is 22,9 % and is still significantly higher than EU-27 countries (17,2 %) and OECD countries (13,67 %). In addition, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute figures, university graduates among the unemployed youth (between the ages of 15-34) is 16,6 % in 2020 and job search duration of the unemployed university graduates has risen significantly from 2019 to 2020 (TUIK, 2020; Genç İşsizler Platformu, 2020).

All of these concerns not only raised the anxiety level of the young population about the future, but also negatively affected their career expectations (Alniaçık et al, 2021). In this period of uncertainty about the future, it makes it difficult to look at the forthcoming years with hope, to keep the psychological well-being stable and to continue looking for a job. Besides, a wide range of companies are reducing their number of employees by huge layoffs and utilizing a rigorous selection process among the candidates. This, in turn, increases the competitive environment among job seekers. Individuals who are searching jobs are also trying to make a difference in this competitive environment by using different types of capital. Therefore, the use of these different types of capital has become common practice recently. Among these capitals, psychological capital has been regarded as a strong personal resource with the emerging trend of positive psychology since the 2000's.

With the reflection of positive psychology movement on the organizational environment, two separate disciplines emerged as “Positive Organizational Scholarship” and “Positive Organizational Behavior”. In the Positive Organizational Scholarship, run by the University of Michigan researchers, it is argued that the organization should focus on the positive aspects within the organization in order to continue its existence under adverse conditions (Roberts et al., 2005). In the Positive Organizational Behavior conducted by the researchers of the University of Nebraska, it is argued that weak and strong sides of the employees should be determined and the strong sides should be developed to reach organization's goals (Luthans, 2002). Luthans and his friends (2007a) stated in their study that focusing on the strengths of the employees and forming a positive approach within the organization will contribute to the development of the employees. Herewith, researchers have introduced the concept of psychological capital in order to apply positive organizational behavior within the organization. The concept of psychological capital has been explained as the development of the one's positive psychological state (Luthans et al., 2007b). Accordingly, the psychological capital comprises of self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience components. In other words, psychological capital expresses a concept that consists

of different and independent structures, but on the other hand, its effect is greater with the combination of these structures.

Due to the measurable, manageable and improvable properties of psychological capital, it is considered as a state-like construct which has a predictive value for work attitudes and behaviors. That is why, psychological capital has been investigated in the literature with many variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work performance. One of these variables studied in the context of psychological capital is job search behavior (Luthans et al., 2004). Job searching has become significantly important because of economic reasons, high unemployment rates, reorganization, and downsizing (Cote et al., 2006) and has recently gained momentum due to the health pandemic related economic crises which globally experienced by all countries in the world. With the impact of the pandemic on the economy, the competitive environment in Turkey, like many other countries, makes job search behavior more important and challenging. In this economic downturn, young people who are in transition from school-to-work need personal resources, such as psychological capital, to be successful in job search more than ever.

Besides psychological capital which acts as a buffer effect from the adverse consequences of job search process, perceived employability can also be regarded as a significant contributor of job search behavior of individuals. With the recent changes in the understanding of traditional employment (Benson, 2006), the long-term employment provision approach given by employers has come to an end (Pruijt & Derogee, 2010). Accordingly, individuals place emphasis on “being employable” to cope with the changing demanding conditions of the labor market. Employability is explained as the individual’s getting into the job that she/he desires (Rothwell and Arnold, 2007). Moreover, perceived employability is considered as a subjective evaluation of an individual whether she/he meets the expectations of the labor market (De Cuyper et al., 2011). Self-perceptions of individuals regarding employability might be an important factor and can mediate the relationship

between job search behavior and psychological capital. Employability perception of the individuals might be of importance in the link between them because self-perceptions can be more important than objective employability standards.

The aim of the current research is to understand the effect of psychological capital on job search behavior with the mediator role of perceived employability among new graduates. It is believed that the findings of this research will provide important contributions to young job seekers at the beginning of their career.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

In this section, first of all psychological capital construct within the field of positive psychology will be discussed, then the definition and sub-dimensions of the psychological capital variable will be explained.

1.1.1. Positive Psychology and Positive Organizational Psychology

Negatively oriented perspective of psychology was dominant in literature before the 21st Century. The negative bias had an impact on organizational level within the discipline of I&O Psychology. Having a focus of what is wrong might be seen as a disease model which is influential in crisis management but not effective in routine management of organizations. With the beginning of 2000s, former APA president Martin Seligman and few other psychologists had made a call to deal with the forgotten missions of psychology other than healing mental illness: “helping healthy people become happier and more productive” and “actualizing human potential” (Luthans et al., 2007).

In fact, fundamentals of positive psychology dates back to William James (1890) and Maslow (1954). Maslow argued that psychology science should not only focus on negative emotions and illnesses, but also healthy individuals must be taken into account (Maslow, 1954). Foundations of the concept of self-actualization, which is the upper step of the Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, are based on positive psychology (Compton, 2005). Researchers interested in positive psychology advocate that the science of psychology should focus on the strengths of the individual as well as focus on their problems and develop their strengths, thus believing that the individual can recover faster and be less affected in the face of adverse situations (Schaufeli, 2004; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman

et al., 2005). This concept, which was handled by Maslow, was comprehensively defined by Seligman in 1998. Seligman emphasized that individuals need positive psychology science to be healthier, happier, and more productive.

Researchers interested in positive psychology have suggested that psychology should not only be a discipline dealing with people's problems (Schaufeli, 2004), it also can contribute to individuals' lives by focusing on their strengths (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman et al., 2005). Accordingly, the positive psychology's purpose is focusing on the positive features and possibilities of life to improve one's life and career (Güler, 2009). In addition, the positive personal characteristics, experiences and positive emotions of the individual are also included under the positive psychology (Kutanis & Oruç, 2014).

Parallel to the development of positive psychology movement within the psychology field, a positive inclination under two schools of thought have emerged within industrial and organizational psychology. The first one is "positive organizational behavior" developed by Luthans (2002) which means "the study and application of positive oriented human resources strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace" (Luthans, 2002; p. 57). Positive organizational scholarship is the second school of thought which was developed by Michigan University scholars. This approach was identified by Cameron et al. (2003), as a field that is transforming organizational behavior.

In the next section, these two school of thought, Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) and Positive Organizational Behavior (POB), which emerged with the focus of positive psychology on organizational studies, will be mentioned.

1.1.2. Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) and Positive Organizational Behavior (POB)

As above mentioned, one of the schools of thought which is Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) was proposed by Nebraska University researchers, especially Luthans (2002). Positive psychology movement was reflected in the organizational environment and the concept of POB started to be used to develop the strengths of organizations (Luthans, 2002). In his research (2002), Luthans stated that only 1000 articles in 375,000 articles in the field of psychology included positive concepts and capabilities of people (Kutanis & Oruç, 2014; Luthans, 2002). As a result of his research, Luthans indicated that POB should be a positive oriented approach that reveals the strengths of the individual. Within the organizations, they focused on exposing the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the employees, thus they emphasized the importance of a positive approach in the development of the employees (Luthans et al., 2007a). In essence, POB is the examination and application of measurable and improvable positive features within the organization (Kutanis & Oruç, 2014).

The second school of thought “Positive Organizational Scholarship” was proposed by the researchers at University of Michigan. This movement is based on the understanding that positive behavioral factors such as resilience, meaningfulness, virtuousness, and gratitude in the workplace will lead organizations to new successes (Narcıkara, 2017; Roberts et al., 2005). Accordingly, the Positive Organizational Scholarship aims to ensure that both the individual and the organization achieve their goals by focusing positive aspects of organization (Narcıkara, 2017). This discipline accepts that human nature is inclined to be positive, unlike other psychological perspectives (Keleş, 2011; Narcıkara, 2017). Therefore, the task of the organization is to reveal this positive essence in human nature and thus maximize organizational efficiency (Keleş, 2011).

1.1.3. Conceptualizing Psychological Capital

1.1.3.1. Definition of Psychological Capital

In order to define the concept of “psychological capital”, firstly, the definition of capital should be mentioned. Capital can be defined as “all of the assets owned and valued” (Bankacı, 2016). From the traditional perspective, financial and tangible assets as economic capital have been receiving attention both from the scholars and practitioners. As the first important capital of all times, financial capital which includes financial resources owned by an organization had a significant impact on the success of the organizations. Within the management of the organizations, intangible assets have been realized as resources of corporate strategy. As the second capital, human capital, that consists of the knowledge, abilities, and skills that the individual possesses, gained importance. Then resources of trust, relationships, and social networks have gained advantage over the other types of capital. The third capital has been regarded as social capital and it consists of the individual’s relationships, social network, and cultural dynamics (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Finally, the concept of psychological capital, which becomes a popular concept in positive organizational behavior, emerged as the fourth type of capital. Psychological capital, consisting of four positive psychological capacities of confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience, expresses the development of the positive psychological state of the individual who is trying to survive in a turbulent business environment (Luthans, 2002). In essence, in Luthans et al.’s (2004) terms, financial capital is about “what you have”, human capital is about “what you know”, social capital is about “who you know” and finally psychological capital is about “who you are” and makes individuals to attain positive outcomes.

According to the Luthans et al., psychological capital means “an individual’s positive psychological state of development and is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success” (Luthans et al., 2007b, p. 3). These independent components of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience form psychological capital. It is a concept that the whole of these components means more than the effect of each independent dimension (Güler, 2018; Kutanis & Oruç, 2014).

Luthans et al., stated that the employees with both high levels of self-efficacy and hope will make more effort to overcome barriers and see opportunities in the workplace, in this way, they will perform better (Luthans et al., 2007a). The authors also stated that if the employees’ self-efficacy and hope levels are together with their optimism and resilience, their self-confidence will be higher and they will work persistently to achieve their goals. In a meta-analysis study Avey et al. (2011) found that psychological capital predicts employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance. The authors argued that the construct is high correlated with desirable work outcomes, and especially with employee performance. Moreover, psychological capital was found to be negatively related with undesirable employee attitudes and behavior.

Psychological capital has been expressed as a measurable, developable, and manageable concept in the literature (Luthans et al., 2007a). When Luthans (2007) defines psychological capital, he also emphasizes on the state-trait continuum. While states are defined as feelings that can change instantly and quickly; state-like characteristics are expressed as flexible and changeable structures. Besides, traits are specified as attributes that are very difficult to change; trait-like characteristics, on the other hand, are defined as personality factors and strengths which are less

flexible and difficult to change (Luthans et al., 2007a). According to these definitions, psychological capital is considered to contain state-like characteristics.

Due to the measurable and developable characteristics of psychological capital, it has been explored in various contexts, such as employee's job satisfaction, commitment to work, stress, and performance (Luthans et al., 2005; Abbas et al., 2014; Shang Guan et al., 2017). Psychological capital has been investigated with a variety of variables such as employees' well-being (Rahimniaa et al., 2013), organizational citizenship behavior (Beal et al., 2013), and authentic leadership (Wang et al., 2014). With the result of these research studies, it was revealed that there is a positive relationship between positive work attitudes and psychological capital.

The concept of psychological capital, together with its sub-components (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience), has been examined in the literature as characteristics that can be improved and affected by environmental conditions (Güler, 2018). Self-efficacy has especially been a subject of curiosity for Bandura (1997). Hope has been researched by many researchers under the leadership of Synder (2000). Besides, Masten and Reed (2002) contributed to the literature on resilience; Seligman (2011) has made studies on optimism. Luthans and his friends utilized these studies to form the concept and scales of positive psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007b).

1.1.3.2. The Components of Psychological Capital

As we mentioned before, the concept of psychological capital has four sub-components (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience). In this section, all of these components will be examined.

1.1.3.2.1. Self-Efficacy

The component of self-efficacy, which is expressed as one of the main elements of social cognitive theory, is introduced by Bandura to the literature (Bandura, 1986, 1997). It is defined as the motivation to be able to overcome certain tasks and goals and the confidence and belief in the individual's own abilities in this process (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

Bandura (1997) investigated how much effort the individuals made in the face of difficult experiences, how long they continued to do so, and whether self-efficacy is a determinant of this process. Accordingly, Bandura argues that although the individual has sufficient ability to achieve their goals, their self-efficacy will be low if they have no faith in themselves. In this case, the individuals who have a low self-efficacy restrict their actions towards the goal and avoid fighting against obstacles, because they believe that everything will go wrong in the face of an obstacle (Koçak & Temiz, 2016; Güler, 2018). On the other hand, the individuals with a high level of self-efficacy are more attached to their goals and act in line with their goals (Ertosun et al., 2016). If the individuals have high self-efficacy to accomplish a job, they will develop a variety of ways for difficult obstacles and have the motivation to tackle complex tasks. In this case, the individual will achieve positive outcomes within the organization by making sufficient effort (Kutanis & Oruç, 2014).

Individuals with high self-efficacy differ from others in terms of five basic characteristics (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). These individuals firstly set themselves difficult goals, secondly, they strive to achieve their goals and then thirdly motivate themselves in this regard. Fourthly, they are patient in the face of difficulties and determined to overcome them. Finally, individuals with high self-efficacy develop these important characteristics independently and reflect them on their performance.

Self-efficacy may act as an enabling factor for the individuals to accomplish in identifying employment goals, performing searching behavior consistent with their goals, and overcoming the difficulties they face during their job search (Petruzzello et al., 2020). Finding a suitable employment opportunity and job search intensity may be positively affected by self-efficacious individuals' reliance on their capability to be successful during job search (Georgiou et al., 2019).

1.1.3.2.2. Hope

Snyder et al. (2002) conducted various studies on this subject because they found the definition of hope incomplete and the definition in the 1950s did not fully reflect the concept. In their studies, it is stated that the component of hope consists of three sub-structures; they expressed the first of these as the goal, the second as the pathways used to achieve a targeted goal, and the last as the motivation (agency) when using these paths.

In the literature, it has been stated that individuals with high hope can produce different alternatives in the face of an obstacle (Irving et al., 1998; Snyder et al., 1991). People who keep their hopes high set goals for themselves, design ways to reach these goals and motivate themselves in this process (Snyder et al., 2000). In other words, individuals with a high level of hope pursue their goals and make plans with high probability of success because they want to be successful in their work (Luthans et al., 2007a; Snyder et al., 2000). Therefore, there is a need for employees with high hope in today's organizations. In studies, it is seen that high levels of hope of employees has a positive effect on performance, and organizations with high hope employees make more profit (Güler, 2018).

In essence, it can be concluded that individuals with a high level of hope who are in search of suitable jobs may achieve well in the process by identifying their employment goals and performing consistent behaviors in order to reach their goals such as preparing effective resume and persisting in those behaviors even when

they face setbacks or obstacles. In a study conducted with senior university students on this subject, it was observed that hope, which is the positive motivation of the individual, contributes positively to this stage in the job-search preparation behavior (Güler & Camgöz, 2014).

1.1.3.2.3. Optimism

Optimism can be defined as an expectation that good things will happen in life (Scheier & Carver, 1985). According to this definition, optimists are individuals who have expectations for good things in the future, and pessimists, on the contrary, are individuals with bad expectations for the future. According to Luthans (2011), optimism was expressed as the positive attitude of individuals towards situations and events. In this way, optimists continue to move forward without giving up by creating a good plan under difficult conditions, and have a more positive perspective under stress (Luthans & Jensen, 2005).

Optimists explain positive events that happen to them as internal, permanent, and generalizable, while they express negative events as external, temporary, and situational (Bitmiş, 2014; Seligman, 1998). For example; an employee who is promoted at the workplace perceives this situation internally and expresses it as "I have been rewarded for working well in this way", and when she/he receives a negative feedback from her/his manager, she/he will evaluate this situation-specific and do not expect to encounter a similar situation in the future. In this respect, optimism emerges as a favorable feature in today's business life (Luthans et al., 2007b).

Optimism has been examined with many concepts in the literature and has caused both individual and organizational positive results. As an example, it was seen in the study of Seligman (2002) that optimism has caused authentic happiness, and it was found that it was positively associated with performance in the study of Luthans et al. (2005). In addition to that, Wanberg's (1997) study found a significant

relationship between optimism and health coping strategies and faster reemployment.

1.1.3.2.4. Resilience

The concept of resilience was first studied on children who were raised in a problematic family setting (Luthans et al., 2007). In the study, children who were well under high risk were given adjectives such as resilient, resistant to stress, and quick recovery (Masten & Reed, 2002). The most commonly used concept among these expressions in the literature is psychological resilience.

The concept of resilience, which was started to be explored in the organizational environment in the following years, was defined by Luthans et al. (2006) as a developable capacity that allows individuals to achieve their goals in the face of adverse situations, to recover themselves and to adapt to events. It has been observed that it helps to increase their resilience in the face of negative situations (Luthans et al., 2008). Resilience basically relies on the individuals' orientations towards positive adaptation, resilient individuals use their skills and resources in the best manner, and aim to minimize the risk factors in the environment (Luthans et al., 2008).

The studies conducted in the working life determined that people with high resilience do not have a decrease in their performance against the obstacles (Luthans et al., 2005). However, the component of resilience in the literature has been examined with concepts such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and workplace happiness, and it has been found that there is a positive relationship between them (Youssef & Luthans, 2007; Çetin & Basım, 2011).

In the literature, studies on the link between resilience and job search behavior have shown that people with high resilience manage the job search process better (Fleig-Palmer et al., 2009). It was stated that even if individuals with high resilience face

a negative situation such as unemployment, they see this situation as an opportunity and continue to seek new job opportunities (Güler, 2018).

1.2. JOB SEARCH BEHAVIOR

In this section, first of all job search behavior construct will be defined then job search behavior models will be explained. At the end of the section, the relationship between job search behavior and youth unemployment will be discussed.

1.2.1. Definition of Job Search Behavior

Job search behavior can be generalized as the search for employment opportunities in the market (Güler, 2012). Job search behavior has been studied since the 1960s and at first, it was examined from an economic perspective (Karanfil, 2020; Stigler, 1961). Accordingly, Stigler contributed to the literature on this subject in 1961 with his work "The Economics of Information". Since the 1980s, researchers have started to investigate this issue from a psycho-social perspective (Güler, 2012; Karanfil, 2020). Thereby, it was found that job search behavior was affected by many variables such as demographic, personal, and cognitive characteristics and environmental factors (Güler, 2012).

Job search behavior has been defined in many different ways in the literature. For example, Kanfer et al. (2001) defined this term as a precondition for employment and its process is dynamic. Job search is explained by Barber et al. (1994) as the process that involves searching and creating job alternatives, evaluating these alternatives, and choosing between them. Similar to Kanfer et al. (2001), Saks (2005) mentioned that job search can be seen as a dynamic process in addition to being a targeted behavior. Thus, being a purposeful and volitional action of having an employment goal, job search can be considered as a process of information gathering about job availability, evaluating options and choosing one from them (Saks, 2005).

In the literature, there are two different concepts linked with job search, namely job search effort and intensity. Job search effort refers to the energy, time and persistence spent during all job search activities (Blau, 1993, 1994; McAbee, 2014). Job search intensity is a concept that expresses how often job seekers perform job search (Saks, 2006). The concept of job search behavior is used in the literature instead of job search intensity and frequency (Saks & Ashforth, 1999; Song et al., 2006; Wanberg et al., 2005). In a quantitative review study, Van Hooft et al. (2020)'s study findings indicate that for employment success outcomes (such as being called for an interview, receive a job offer), quality of the job search and intensity of it have an important role.

In the literature, individuals who display job search behavior are categorized into three groups as newcomers to the labor market, the unemployed, and those who are currently working but want to change jobs (Başbuğ, 2008). These groups have different job searching behaviors, motivations, and expectations. For example, finding any job for an unemployed individual may be seen as a success, but this situation may not be satisfactory for the person who works and wants to change her/his job (Güler, 2012).

Job search behavior has been investigated with many concepts such as personality structure, motivational factors, individual's emotional state and self-assessment variables (Başbuğ, 2008; Güler, 2012). For example, Wanberg et al. (1996) stated that responsibility has a positive effect on job search. In addition, it has been observed that negative personal characteristics such as neuroticism negatively affect the job search process (Kanfer et al., 2001). The economic status of the individuals and the social support from their environment are among the motivational factors (Kanfer et al., 2001). People who are not economically well exhibit more job search behavior, and also researches have conducted that people in their job seeking process who receive support from their environment continue this behavior more intensively (Kanfer et al., 2001; Wanberg et al., 1996). In

addition to these, the emotional state of the individual is among the important factors affecting the job search process. For example, Cote et al. (2006) stated in their study, university students with positive moods are clearer about job search and this situation has a positive effect on their job search behavior (Güler, 2012). Finally, there are various studies in the psychology literature exploring the variables based on self-evaluation. Among these studies, it has been observed that the variables of self-esteem and self-efficacy have important contributions in the job search process. For example, people with high self-esteem were found to perform better in recruitment interviews than those with low self-esteem (Ellis & Taylor, 1983). In addition, Wanberg (1997) stated that the perception of self-efficacy is an important determinant in the job search and finding process.

1.2.2. Job Search Behavior Models

Some of the job search models explain how job search performance has changed over time, while others focus on the job search stages. As an example, Barber et al. (1994) describe how sequence, learning and emotional response job search models have changed over time. This section will explain improved models about job search behavior.

1.2.2.1. Soelberg's Model

Soelberg (1967) stated in his study, called the generalizable decision processing model, that job search consists of four stages. These stages are described as defining the desired job, planning the job search, searching and selecting the job, and finally confirming the decision and showing commitment to the decision. The job seekers determine the ideal job at the first stage. In the second stage, they plan the job search process. In the third stage, they start looking for a job using all the resources in their formal and informal environment and choose a job as a result of their research. In the last stage, they confirm the job they chose and the decision they made and share this situation with their environment.

1.2.2.2. Barber et al.'s Model

Barber et al. (1994) focused on two variables in their job search models inspired by Soelberg and Blau's models (Başbuğ, 2008; Güler, 2012). One of these variables is the resource used such as employment agencies, friends and relatives, and the other one is the job search intensity, which is related to the effort in the job search process. Barber et al. (1994) presented three models in their study: sequential model, learning model, and emotional response model. In the sequential model, job search proceeds systematically and follows a certain order. Accordingly, job search first starts with planning and then continues with an intense search. According to the learning model, people who look for jobs find out efficient search techniques from their environment during the process. As they become more experienced, they identify the best techniques and activities that fit with their needs, and then they alter their job search behaviors (Barber et al., 1994). Emotional response model, on the other hand, focuses more on emotional reactions. According to the emotional response model, in the job search process, people live through high levels of stress. This may lead to helplessness and withdrawal from job search (Barber et al., 1994).

1.2.2.3. Wanberg et al.'s Model

In this model created by Wanberg et al. (2010), the focus is on the changing daily behavior and emotions of the individual during the job search process. According to this model, the job search process is a fluctuating process that does not progress stably, some days will be positive and some days will be quite the opposite (Güler, 2012). This situation affects the job seekers' hope and self-confidence and causes them to move away from their goals. Wanberg et al. (2010) made use of self-regulation theory to address this situation. In their research, they organize the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of job seekers towards the goal of finding a new job.

1.2.2.4. Zikic and Saks's Model

In this model, which includes the Theory of Planned Behavior, job search intention is considered as the target and job search intensity as behavior (Zikic & Saks, 2009). Accordingly, subjective values and self-efficacy of the job seekers affect their job search intention, which in turn affects the intensity of job search, in other words their behavior (Güler, 2012; Zikic & Saks, 2009).

1.2.2.5. Blau Model

Blau (1993) divided the job search behavior into two as preparation for job search and active job search, inspired by Soelberg's generalizable decision processing model. It refers to all behaviors such as preparing for job search, meeting with job search agencies, searching job postings by using tools such as newspapers, internet, and consulting the environment. Active job search behavior includes behaviors aimed at obtaining the job, such as sending a resume to the company with the appropriate position and participating in interviews. In addition to these, Blau (1993) focused on the concept of job search effort in his research. Accordingly, while the job search effort expresses the time and energy spent looking for a job, the job search behavior focuses on what the people do to find a job and how they are looking for a job. Blau (1993) examined the concepts of job searching preparation, active job search behavior and job search effort in his study among nurses and insurance managers. As a result of this study, it has been proven that these three concepts discuss different types of job search behavior.

1.2.3. Youth Unemployment and Job Search Model

Unemployment among recent graduates differs from the experience of unemployment among those who have lost a full-time paid job. In other words, first time job seeking after graduation and difficulty in job search is not the same experience as in the layoff process. When people lose their jobs, their income

reduces, new job related skills cannot be developed and their social relations change completely. That is why, losing one's job often results in depression, lack of confidence, inability to concentrate and general anxiety (Warr, 2007). With this situation, the prolongation of the job search period also affects the emotional state of the job seeker. According to the study of Winefield and Tiggemann (1990), negative effect of youth unemployment may not be as devastating as the one to older workers. Experience of unemployment is likely to be different for younger workers than for older workers, since younger people are dependent on their parents, morale and economic support will continue during their job search. It is also seen that the hope of finding a job decreases with the prolongation of unemployment. For this reason, the desire of individuals to seek a job is gradually decreasing. When this situation is considered for young people who have recently entered the labor market, unemployment both prevents the young people from gaining experience and causes them to work in lower quality and unwanted jobs (Luijkz & Wolbers, 2009). As a result, young people are more likely to experience both underemployment and unemployment in the coming years. Moreover, fresh graduates are in a weak position in the labor market due to their insufficient experience. Lack of experience and their limited social network within labor market limit their competition advantage and makes job search more difficult than experienced and tenured people. Nevertheless, in times of crisis, new recruits are dismissed more easily due to employer's logic of last in, first out (Erikli, 2021). This situation increases youth unemployment and drives those who are already looking for a job to despair.

1.3. PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY

In this section, firstly, employability and perceived employability construct will be defined then the relationship between perceived employability and youth unemployment will be explained. The link between psychological capital and job search behavior along with perceived employability will be discussed at the end of the section.

1.3.1. Definition of Employability and Perceived Employability

With the studies about organizational structures in the 1990s, emphasis has been placed on the concept of employability (Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Employability is seen as an important concept for people who are currently working and who are thinking of changing jobs, as well as those who will find a job for the first time (Açıkgöz et al., 2016). According to Hillage and Pollard (1998) employability can be defined as “*the ability of an individual to gain initial employment, maintain employment, move between roles within the same organization, obtain new employment if required, and, ideally, obtain suitable and fulfilling jobs*” (p. 2). Rothwell and Arnold (2007), as similar, define this concept as the ability of the people to find a job they want or to continue in their current job.

Rothwell et al. (2008) view employability from the perspective of individuals, and add the perception issue to their definitions as: “*the perceived ability to attain sustainable employment appropriate to one’s qualification level*”. In a similar vein, Vanhercke et al. (2015) mention the perception issue and express employability as one’s own thoughts about the possibility of finding a new job and continuing in the current job. Considering these definitions, it is stated that the concept of employability does not directly provide employment but increases the possibility of being employed (Fugate et al., 2004).

The concept of employability has been studied among individuals who are unemployed or who want to change their jobs as well as among new graduates in the literature. While Thomsen (2009), Koen et al. (2013) focused on the employability of the long and short-term unemployed, and Pool and Sewell (2007) investigated the employability of new graduates. Employability may combine several aspects such as skills, career management, capacity for learning, and job search (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). In addition to that, employability can be regarded as a psychosocial construct which includes an external (objective) as well

as internal (subjective) dimensions. For example, Forrier and Sels (2003) explain employability in terms of labor market conditions and highlight the objective dimension (Onyishi et al., 2015). As for Fugate et al. (2004), employability is explained with individuals' abilities and characteristics, they found that employees with high employability levels provided an advantage to the company. In this study, Fugate et al.'s perspective will be adopted and employability will be discussed emphasizing the subjective dimension as "perceived employability". While employability can be regarded as an evaluation of national and global labor market conditions or work force level, perceived employability is about people's perceptions of their chances of finding a new job (Ellis, 2013).

Recently, the perception dimension of employability has been emphasized. Perceived employability, according to De Cuyper et al. (2011), is defined as the employees' perception of the probability of finding a new job, similar to the job they do. Rothwell and Arnold (2007) defined this concept as one's thoughts about the difficulty of finding a new job, in addition to this definition, they developed the perceived employability scale in the same study. The perceived employability concept in this scale has been examined in two dimensions as internal and external employability. It is stated as the values given to the employee in the company where they have an internal employability perception and how valuable they see themselves in the place where they work. Besides, external employability is explained as the perceived demand in the labor market (Gerçek & Atay, 2017).

The concept of perceived employability includes dimensions such as perceived skills, experiences, and personal characteristics (Alkın et al., 2020). The concept of perceived skills includes many competencies such as academic achievements, general skills, and job search skills (Rothwell, Herbert & Rothwell, 2008; Harvey, 2001; Hillage & Pollard, 1998). Perceived experiences consist of all work and life experiences (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). Finally, concepts such as self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving skills constitute personal characteristics (Yorke & Knight, 2004; Pool et al., 2014). The individuals evaluate

the employability situation under these dimensions. This situation ensures that the individuals are prepared for their struggle in the labor market.

According to the perceived employability concept, while evaluating their own characteristics, job seekers focus on how much the expectations in the market they meet and evaluate themselves accordingly. For this reason, perceived employability is seen as a subjective perspective (De Cuyper et al., 2011). Therefore, this concept is also affected by factors such as a person's attitudes, tendencies, and individual characteristics (Bozkurt & Özkoç, 2019). Studies have shown that people with high perceived employability have higher self-confidence (Berntson et al., 2010). Researchers have seen that there is a positive relationship between perceived employability and well-being (De Cuyper et al., 2011). Aronsson and Göransson (1999) also stated that people with a high perception of employability also have high well-being.

Since the perceived employability is a subjective perspective, it may vary with the psychological state of the individual. Here, the role of psychological capital, which is an indicator of positive psychological state, has a significant role (Chen and Lim, 2012). As mentioned before, psychological capital contains four basic dimensions named self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism (Luthans et al., 2007). Chen and Lim (2012) stated in their study that there is a relationship between each of these dimensions and the perception of employability. For example; it has been observed that displaced people with high self-efficacy have confidence that they will find a job again (Lim & Loo, 2003). It has been also stated that those with high hope level motivate themselves to find a new job and make new plans to achieve their target (Chen & Lim, 2012). Optimistic individuals, on the other hand, do not lose their employability perception and they believe that they can find a new job again because they think that the positive events they experience are under their control and that the negative events are dependent on external factors and are temporary (Luthans, Youssef et al., 2007; Chen & Lim, 2012). Finally, Eliason and Storrie (2006) stated that people who have lost their jobs can see themselves as

incompetent and unemployable. In this case, people who are resilient will overcome this situation more easily and start looking for their target job again (Chen & Lim, 2012). Considering all these, we can think that the psychological capital of the individual will positively affect the perception of employability.

Employability perception of the individuals allows them to see their own position in the labor market and to develop themselves accordingly (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). In the study of Wittekind et al. (2010), it was seen that the perceived employability was related to the person's job-related abilities, education, and the desire to change jobs. In addition, Rothwell et al. (2008) stated that people with low perception of employability find it difficult to find a job again. Yizhong et al. (2017) researched the employability issue among senior students and it was observed that students who consider themselves highly employable have more confidence in their job search and manage this process better. Accordingly, we can predict that the perception of employability can positively affect job search behavior.

1.3.2. Youth Unemployment and Perceived Employability

Recently, the increase in the youth unemployment rate, everlasting job search activities and prolonged periods of unemployment cause young people's hope for the future to decrease. Desperate young people think that they cannot find the job they want and that they are not sufficient for the job they are looking for (Schmillen & Umkehrer, 2017). One of the important sources of motivation in the job search process is the perception of employability (Berntson et al., 2006). People with a high perception of employability think that finding a new job is easy (Berntson & Marklund, 2007). In a study conducted in Austria, it was observed that people with high employability perception had more job search activities and therefore their probability of finding a job was higher (Wanberg et al., 2010). It is very important that young people, who will look for a job for the first time after graduation, do not lose their faith in themselves during this period. Because unemployment experienced during the youth period will both negatively affect the career

development of the individual and increase the possibility of being unemployed again in the future due to the loss of skills and motivation they experienced.

1.3.3. The Relationship Between Psychological Capital and Job Search Behavior along with Perceived Employability

Although job search process might be a rewarding experience through the realization of finding a new job, it is generally considered as a very demanding and time-consuming process. During this process, job seekers may receive many discouraging replies, they may not be called for an interview and may not receive a job offer from employers. It is stated that psychological capital may act as a protective shield for the job seekers because having a high psychological capital, individuals will be more optimistic, rely on their qualifications and hence they hardly give up job search (Georgiou et al., 2019). Since the concept of psychological capital consists of hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience (Güler & Camgöz, 2014) it is seen as a useful resource for job seekers as these features can be further developed (Fernandez-Valera et al., 2020).

As previously mentioned, human and social capital have been studied for the unemployed individuals' gaining reemployment within the literature of job search but there are limited research about the impact of psychological capital. However, it is considered that psychological capital can have a positive effect on job search. In one study, Georgiou and Nikolaou (2018) found that psychological capital helps the individual to keep looking for a job. At the same time, people evaluate job search more positively thanks to their psychological capital, so they can cope more easily with the difficulties they encounter in this process (Caska, 1998; Wanberg et al., 2005). In Turkey, the relationship between these two variables was examined by Güler and Camgöz (2014) among senior students who are candidate graduates of a public university. In addition to all these, in the study of Chen and Lim (2012), a positive relationship was found among the psychological capital, perceived employability and job search. The link between job search behavior and

psychological capital is mediated by perceived employability according to their study. In a recent study which had a sample of new Italian entrants in the labor market, self-efficacy, which is one of the components of psychological capital, was found to be a significant personal resource for early job search attempts. The authors suggested that universities should support their students by enhancing job search self-efficacy (Petruzziello et al., 2020).

People who have high confidence in themselves and believe in their competence to be successful are more inclined to exert effort in what they want to achieve (Judge et al., 1998). That is why, being confident about the ability to perform job search well can be considered as a determinant for putting much effort into the process of job search (Yizhong et al., 2017). Thus, individuals who are higher on core self-evaluation are found to be engaged in job search with greater intensity and the likelihood of finding a new job is higher than the others (Wanberg et al., 2005). On the other hand, if people have low core self-evaluation, they tend to perceive themselves as unemployable which subsequently decreases their level of job search (Onyishi et al., 2015). Incorporated in the concept of human capital, psychological capital has been found to be a factor which have an impact on undergraduate self-perception of employability (Donald et al., 2019). Moreover, Ngoma et al.'s (2016) study indicates that there is a significant positive relation between psychological capital and the perceived employability of college students. Since perceived employability consists of personal view of one's abilities in finding a job, employability perception is likely to be determined by person's psychological state (Chen and Lim, 2012). Thus, it may be proper to think that psychological capital leads people to have higher perception of employability which is likely to translate into job search behavior.

The concepts of job search behavior and psychological capital have not been investigated adequately. Also, the samples in the studies were mostly composed of employees or senior university students. In this context, the present study will examine the impact of psychological capital on job search behavior with the

mediator role of perceived employability among those who have recently graduated from universities in Turkey and have been actively looking for a job for at most two years. This study will contribute to the literature in these aspects.

CHAPTER 2

THE STUDY

2.1. METHOD

2.1.1. Sampling and Participants

For the data in the current research, 2018 and 2019 graduates from any private or state universities who have actively been searching for a job for at most two years composed the sample of the present research. Convenience sampling method was used. First, this survey was shared with university alumni associations. We requested the survey to be delivered to graduate members of these associations. Second, the survey was shared with the participants via social media platforms (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook). Participation in the study was based on volunteering and informed consent was presented to the participants prior to survey.

2.1.1.1. Demographic Information of the Participants

Demographics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Table 2.1

Demographics of the Participants

Variable	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percent %
Age	21	9	5,4
	22	29	17,3
	23	54	32,1
	24	32	19,0
	25	20	11,9
	26 and older	24	14,3
	Total	168	100
Gender	Women	123	73,2

	Men	45	26,8
	Total	168	100
Graduation Year	2017	6	3,6
	2018	16	9,5
	2019	35	20,8
	2020	111	66,1
	Total	168	100
Job Search Period	0-1 year	137	81,5
	1-2 years	22	13,1
	2 years and above	9	5,4
	Total	168	100
Income level (Perceived)	Low	60	35,7
	Middle	104	61,9
	High	4	2,4
	Total	168	100
Type of university graduated from	Public	137	81,5
	Private	31	18,5
	Total	168	100

As can be seen from Table 1, the average age of fresh graduates varies between 22-25. Those who are 23 years old comprise about one third of all participants. Approximately three quarters of the fresh graduates participating in the study were found to be women. In terms of graduation year, approximately two-thirds of the fresh graduates are seen to graduate in 2020. For this reason, more than 80% of the participants declared that they have been looking for a job for 1 year. The rate of job searchers for 2 years or more is around 5%. More than two-thirds of fresh graduates declare that they have a middle income level. On the other hand, considering that all of the graduate participants (N = 168) do not work in any job, it can be interpreted that they receive financial support from their families. It has been observed that more than 80% of the participants graduated from public universities and the number of those who graduated from private universities is low.

2.1.2. Procedure

2.1.2.1. Data Collection

Data collection was started after Istanbul Bilgi University Human Participant Research Ethics Committee approval. The approval was given on July 3, 2020. The approval form is found in Appendix G. The survey was prepared with Survey Monkey which is an online data collection tool. The survey links were sent via email and social media platforms (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook) with brief information about the current research. Informed consent form was presented at the first page of the online form. In the informed consent form, it was indicated that this survey is voluntary and they can stop answering whenever they want. It was also stated that the data was coded anonymously. If the participants agreed to participate, they clicked yes and filled out the survey.

2.1.2.2. Data Analysis

In descriptive statistics, the SPSS 23 program was used. Normality test and lost value analysis were performed to make the data ready for analysis. Percentage, frequency and standard deviation were used in descriptive statistics. Correlation, path analysis and mediator variable analyzes were performed by using SPSS AMOS program, respectively, in order to determine the linear relationships between scales of psychological capital, perceived employability and job search behavior.

It was observed that there were no missing values in the scales and the data were distributed normally. While performing CFA analyzes, it was checked that the skewness and kurtosis values were in the range of ± 2 in order to control whether each item fulfilled the assumption of normality. It is important for the normal distribution that skewness and kurtosis values are within the limits of ± 1.96 for the

1% confidence interval and ± 2.58 for the 5% confidence interval (Trochim & Donnelly, 2001).

2.1.3. Instruments

2.1.3.1. Positive Psychological Capital Scale

The positive psychological capital of the new graduates will be measured using the version originally developed by Luthans, Youssef and Avolio (2007b) for employees and adapted by Chen & Lim (2012) for jobseekers. This scale was adapted to Turkish by Çetin and Basım (2012). The Cronbach alpha coefficients of the sub-dimensions of the scale were calculated as 0.67 for optimism, 0.81 for hope, 0.68 for resilience and 0.85 for self-efficacy. In addition to that, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale was 0.91 which indicates a high reliability of the scale for Turkish sample.

There are 24 questions in the scale to be used to measure psychological capital, each sub-dimension is represented by 6 items. Participants state their answers using a 6-point Likert scale covering “strongly disagree to strongly agree”. Higher scores remark higher levels of optimism, psychological resilience, hope and self-efficacy. Items numbers 13, 20, and 23 were reverse coded.

2.1.3.2. Job Search Behavior Scale

Job search intensity and job search effort came together to form job search behavior. To measure job search intensity, five active job search behavior items were used. Participants are questioned about the frequency of five of their behaviors in the past six months. The response options consisted of 1 means “Never”, 2 means “Rarely” mapping 1 to 2 times, 3 means “Occasionally” mapping 3 to 5 times, 4 means “Frequently” mapping 6 to 9 times, and lastly 5 means “Very Frequently” mapping at least 10 times. To measure job search effort, only one item was used for this

study. The item was “In the past month, for how long have you searched job postings?”. The response options were 1 means “for less than half an hour”, 2 means “for half an hour”, 3 means “for one hour”, 4 means “for one to two hours”, and finally 5 means “for more than two hours”. The internal consistency reliability of the scale was .79 in this study. Job search behavior was created by Blau (1994) and adopted to Turkish by Açıkgöz (2016).

2.1.3.3. Perceived Employability Scale

The original scale of Rothwell and Arnold (2007) was created to measure the perceived employability levels of college students. Chen and Lim (2012) used only 6 items in their study. These questions are based on one's abilities and expectations from the market. Following Chen and Lim (2012), we will also use these six items. This whole scale was adopted to Turkish by Gerçek and Atay (2017). All items were scored between 1 (strongly disagree) and 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores mark a higher level of perceived employability. The Cronbach alpha of the Turkish version is .88.

2.1.3.4. Socio-Demographic Questions

This questionnaire also includes some socio-demographic questions such as gender, age, university, undergraduate department and faculty, perceived income level, and working status (The demographic information of the participants are shown in Table 1)

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

3.1. RESULTS

3.1.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Scales

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to ensure the validity of the data obtained from the Turkish version of the scales. For the fit of the CFA model, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the division of the chi-square by the degrees of freedom (χ^2/SD), the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), the goodness of fit index (GFI), the incremental fit index (IFI), and the comparative fit index (CFI) values were taken as benchmarks (Kline, 2011; Çelik & Yılmaz, 2013; Çokluk, Şekercioğlu & Büyüköztürk, 2014). In CFA analyzes, theoretically supported modifications were made between variables in order to improve the fit index values for the relevant model.

3.1.1.1. Factor Analysis of Psychological Capital Scale

The four-dimensional structure found by Çetin and Basım (2012) was tested by applying CFA to the psychological capital scale. As a result of the CFA analyzes, an item from the optimism sub-dimension was removed from the scale because the factor coefficient remained below .32. Repeated CFA results with the remaining 23 items gave results consistent with the results obtained by Çetin and Basım (2012) and fit indices were at the desired levels ($\chi^2 = 357,698$, $SD = 219$, $p < 0.01$, $\chi^2 / df = 1.633$, $RMSEA = .06$, $AGFI = .85$, $GFI = .90$, $IFI = .92$, $CFI = .92$). The values of the fit indices applied to determine the adequacy of the theoretical model in line with the data obtained with CFA analysis and the fit values of the CFA model are given in Table 2.

Table 3.1

Fit Values of the Fit Indices and Fit Values of the Model for Psychological Capital Scale

Fit Indexes	Perfect Correspondence Criteria	Acceptable Correspondence Criteria	Model's Fit Indexes	
				Fit Situations
χ^2/SD	$0 \leq \chi^2/SD \leq 2$	$2 \leq \chi^2/SD \leq 5$	1,633	Perfect
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$	.06	Acceptable
CFI	$.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq CFI \leq .95$	.92	Acceptable
GFI	$.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq GFI \leq .95$	.90	Acceptable
AGFI	$.95 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$.85 \leq AGFI \leq .90$	.85	Acceptable
IFI	$.95 \leq IFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq IFI \leq .95$	.92	Acceptable

As can be seen in Table 2, the tested theoretical model has a structure compatible with the data set and the model fit indexes are at an acceptable level. A value of χ^2 between 0 and 2 is the first parameter to show that the model is perfectly compatible with the data (Kline, 2011). The RMSEA value, which is another fit criterion, is below .08, indicating an acceptable level of compliance of the model with the data set. The fact that the other fit criteria were at an acceptable level showed that the model tested generally fit well with the data.

Besides validity studies, reliability analyzes were also performed. In the present study, alpha reliability coefficients of the scale were calculated as .73 for optimism dimension, .81 for resilience dimension, .79 for hope dimension and .89 for self-efficacy dimension. These rates can be interpreted as that each sub-dimension of the scale is highly reliable.

3.1.1.2. Factor Analysis of Job Search Behavior Scale

The one-dimensional structure found by Açıkgöz (2016) was tested by applying CFA to the job search behavior scale. The obtained CFA results were consistent with the results obtained by Açıkgöz (2016) and the fit indices were at excellent levels ($\chi^2 = 6.823$, $SD = 6$, $p < 0.01$, $\chi^2 / df = 1.137$, RMSEA = .03, AGFI = .95, GFI = .98, IFI = .99, CFI = .99). The values of the fit indices applied to determine the adequacy of the theoretical model in line with the data obtained with CFA analysis and the fit values of the CFA model are given in Table 3.

Table 3.2

Fit Values of the Fit Indices and Fit Values of the Model for Job Search Behavior Scale

Fit Indexes	Perfect Correspondence Criteria	Acceptable Correspondence Criteria	Model's Fit Indexes	
			Fit	Fit Situations
χ^2/SD	$0 \leq \chi^2/SD \leq 2$	$2 \leq \chi^2/SD \leq 5$	1,137	Perfect
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$	.03	Perfect
CFI	$.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq CFI \leq .95$	.99	Perfect
GFI	$.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq GFI \leq .95$	.98	Perfect
AGFI	$.95 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$.85 \leq AGFI \leq .90$	.95	Perfect
IFI	$.95 \leq IFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq IFI \leq .95$	.99	Perfect

As can be seen in Table 3, the tested theoretical model has a structure compatible with the data set and the model fit indexes are at an acceptable level. A value of χ^2 between 0 and 2 is the first parameter to show that the model is perfectly compatible with the data (Kline, 2011). The fact that the RMSEA value, which is another fit criterion, is below .05 shows that the model is perfectly compatible with the data set. The excellent level of other fit criteria showed that the model tested in general fit well with the data.

3.1.1.3. Factor Analysis of Perceived Employability Scale

The one-dimensional structure found by Chen and Lim (2012) was tested by applying CFA to the perceived employability scale. The obtained CFA results were consistent with the results obtained by Chen and Lim (2012) and the fit indices were at excellent levels ($\chi^2 = 6.662$, $df = 6$, $p < 0.01$, $\chi^2 / df = 1.110$, RMSEA = .02, AGFI = .95, GFI = .99, IFI = .99, CFI = .99). The values of the fit indices applied to determine the adequacy of the theoretical model in line with the data obtained with CFA analysis and the fit values of the CFA model are given in Table 4.

Table 3.3

Fit Values of the Fit Indices and Fit Values of the Model for Perceived Employability Scale

Fit Indexes	Perfect	Acceptable	Model's	
	Correspondence	Correspondence	Fit	Fit Situations
	Criteria	Criteria	Indexes	
χ^2/SD	$0 \leq \chi^2/SD \leq 2$	$2 \leq \chi^2/SD \leq 5$	1,110	Perfect
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$	$.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .08$	.02	Perfect
CFI	$.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq CFI \leq .95$	.99	Perfect
GFI	$.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq GFI \leq .95$	.99	Perfect
AGFI	$.95 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$.85 \leq AGFI \leq .90$	.95	Perfect
IFI	$.95 \leq IFI \leq 1.00$	$.90 \leq IFI \leq .95$	.99	Perfect

As can be seen in Table 4, the tested theoretical model has a structure compatible with the data set and the model fit indexes are at an acceptable level. A value of χ^2 between 0 and 2 is the first parameter to show that the model is perfectly compatible with the data (Kline, 2011). The fact that the RMSEA value, which is another fit criterion, is below .05 shows that the model is perfectly compatible with the data

set. The excellent level of other fit criteria showed that the model tested in general fit well with the data.

3.1.2. Correlations, Descriptive Findings and Normality Testing

Correlation coefficient values for sub-dimensions of psychological capital, perceived employability and job searching behavior scales are given in Table 5.

Table 3.4

Correlation Coefficients (N: 168)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
JSB	1	,361**	,476**	,507**	,341**	,269**
PE		1	,363**	,291**	,236**	,114
Self-Efficacy			1	,529**	,313**	,226**
Hope				1	,524**	,427**
Resilience					1	,580**
Optimism						1

** $p < .01$ JSB= Job Search Behavior, PE= Perceived Employability

When Table 5 is analyzed, a low level of positive significant relationships were found between fresh graduates' job search behavior and perceived employability ($r = .361$), resilience ($r = .341$) and optimism ($r = .269$). Moderately positive significant relationships were found between job searching behaviors and the variables of self-efficacy ($r = .476$) and hope ($r = .507$). A low level of positive significant relationships were found between perceived employability and the variables of self-efficacy ($r = .363$) and hope ($r = .291$). A low level of positive significant relationships were found between the variables of perceived employability and resilience ($r = .236$). The relationship between perceived employability and optimism was not found to be significant. Moderately positive significant relationships were found between self-efficacy and hope variable ($r = .529$). A low level of positive significant relationships were found between the

variables of self-efficacy and resilience ($r = .313$) and optimism ($r = .226$). Moderately positive significant relationships were found between the variable of hope and resilience ($r = .524$) and optimism ($r = .427$). Moderately positive significant relationships were found between resilience and optimism ($r = .580$).

Descriptive statistics for sub-dimensions of psychological capital, perceived employability and job searching behavior scales are given in Table 6.

Table 3.5

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
JSB	3,36	.84	1,20	5	-0,223	-,498
PE	4,27	.88	1,17	6	-0,541	0,192
Self-Efficacy	5,10	.71	1	6	-1,575	0,948
Hope	4,35	.84	1	5,83	-,740	1,039
Resilience	3,90	.95	1,83	6	,073	,373
Optimism	3,82	.92	1,40	6	,021	-,331

JSB= Job Search Behavior, PE= Perceived Employability

When Table 6 is examined, the skewness and kurtosis values of the mean scores of psychological capital, perceived employability and job search behavior are in the range of -2 to +2. According to these findings, it can be said that the average scores obtained from the sub-dimensions show a normal distribution.

3.1.3. Path Analysis and Mediation Analysis

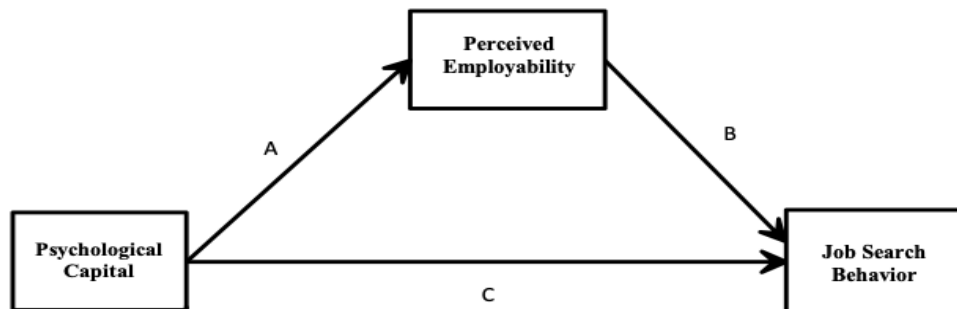


Figure 3.1 The Relationships between Perceived Employability, Psychological Capital and Job search Behavior

In line with the hypothetical model in Figure 1, the answer to the research question which is “What are the relationships between psychological capital, perceived employability and job search behavior of fresh graduates?” was searched. Thereafter, the hypotheses given below were tested:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Psychological capital is expected to affect job search behavior positively (path of C).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Psychological capital is expected to affect perceived employability positively (path of A).

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Perceived employability is expected to affect job search behavior positively (path of B).

Hypothesis 4 (H4): It is hypothesized that the relationship between psychological capital and job search behavior will be mediated by perceived employability.

In order to find the answer to the research question, the mediating effect of perceived employability variable between the independent variable (psychological capital) and the dependent variable (job searching behaviors) was examined. In order to conduct a mediation analysis, the following three conditions must be fulfilled (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007):

- The independent variable should directly and meaningfully foresee the dependent variable.
- The independent variable should be an important determinant of the mediator variable. There should be a linear regression relationship between the independent variable and the mediator variable.
- The mediator variable must be an important predictor of the dependent variable. There should be a significant relationship between the mediator variable and the dependent variable.

The mediator variable can show all or only part of the relationship observed between the independent and the dependent variable. It is expressed as full mediation when it shows all of the relationship, and as partial mediation when it shows some of it. In full mediation, when the mediator variable (perceived employability) is included in the analysis, the relationship between the independent variable (psychological capital) and the dependent variable (job search behavior) is expected to be quite weak and statistically insignificant. If it is in partial mediation, the intermediary variable cannot explain all of the relationship between independent and dependent variable. Although the significance of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable continues, the impact coefficient and significance level decrease (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Yılmaz & İlhan-Dalbudak, 2018).

In order to test the statistical significance of the mediating role of perceived employability in indirect relationship between psychological capital and job search behavior, hierarchical regression analysis and the bias-corrected bootstrapping

procedure proposed by Preacher and Hayes (2008) were used. The sample number was increased to 10000 and a 95% confidence interval was obtained. In order that the mediation effect to be significant, there should not be a zero value between the confidence intervals indicating the lower and upper limits (Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004; Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

A three-step hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to test the mediating effect of the perceived employability variable in the relationship between psychological capital and job search behavior. In the first stage, the dependent variable (job search behavior) was predicted by the independent variable (psychological capital). In the second stage, the mediator variable (perceived employability) was predicted by the independent variable (psychological capital). In the third stage, the dependent variable (job search behavior) was predicted by both the independent variable and the mediator variable. Three-stage hierarchical regression analysis results are given in Table 7.

Table 3.6

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Job Search Behavior

Regression Models	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	r^2	Δr^2	ΔF
1	JSB	Psychological Capital	,406	,315	4,250***	.326	.106	6,503
		Gender	,135	,071	,938			
		SES (Low-Middle)	,034	,019	,255			
2	PE	Psychological Capital	,690	,512	7,627***	.516	.267	19,873
		Sex	,096	,048	,708			
		SES (Low-Middle)	,110	,060	,878			
3	JSB	Psychological Capital	.231	.179	2,134**	.397	.158	7,640
		PE	.254	.265	3,160**			

Sex	.110	.058	.787
SES (Low-Middle)	.006	.003	.045

***= $p < .001$, **= $p < .05$, JSB= Job Search Behavior, PE=Perceived Employability, SES= Socioeconomic Status

Table 7 shows, in the first stage (Regression Model 1), a direct path has been established between psychological capital and job search behavior as the first condition (Baron & Kenny, 1986) to be able to perform the mediation analysis (H1) and the independent variable (psychological capital) predicted dependent variable (job search behavior) significantly and positively ($\beta = .31$, $t = 4.250$, $p < .001$). According to these findings, H1 was confirmed and 10.6% of the change in job search behavior was represented by psychological capital. In the second stage (Regression Model 2), psychological capital predicted perceived employability positively and significantly and H2 was accepted ($\beta = .51$, $t = 7.627$, $p < .001$). Accordingly, 26.7% of the change in perceived employability is explained by psychological capital. In the third stage (Regression Model 3), after the mediation variable (perceived employability) was included in the model, although psychological capital significantly predicted job search behavior in a positive way, the impact coefficient of psychological capital decreased ($\beta = .18$, $t = 2.134$, $p < .05$). According to these findings, perceived employability partially mediated the relationship between psychological capital and job search behavior. Mediator variable analysis has been visualized in Figure 2.

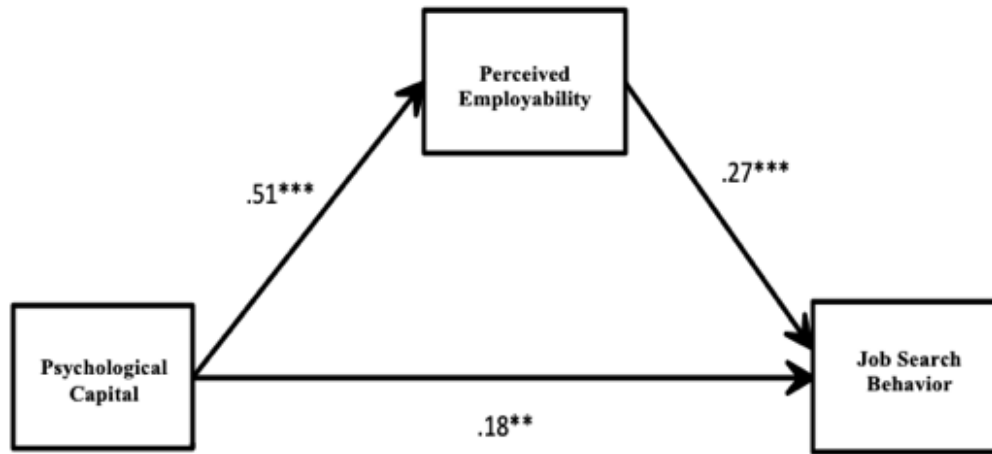


Figure 3.2 Standardized Beta Coefficients for the Mediating Effect of Perceived Employability in the Relationship between Psychological Capital and Job Search Behavior, $N = 168$, ***= $p < .001$, **= $p < .05$

According to Figure 2 the indirect effect of psychological capital on job search behavior through perceived employability ($0.51 \times 0.27 = 0.14$) corresponds to 43.75% ($0.14 / 0.32 = 0.43$) of the total effect ($0.18 + 0.14 = 0.32$). With the addition of the mediator variable to the model, there was an increase of .05 in the variance explained in the dependent variable. In addition, 16% of the variance in job search behavior (dependent variable) is explained together by psychological capital (independent variable), perceived employability (mediator variable) and control variables (sex and SES). When the mediator variable (perceived employability) is not included in the model, this ratio decreases to 11%. It was observed that the control variables (sex and SES) did not have a significant effect on the dependent and mediator variables.

In order to test the significance of the mediating effect of perceived employability, the "bias-corrected bootstrapping" method with the "SPSS Process Macro" plug-in proposed by Hayes (2018) was applied. Direct and indirect impact coefficients and 95% confidence intervals are given in Table 8.

Table 3.7*Bootstrap Test Results for Partial Mediation Model (N = 168)*

				%95 Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Standardized Direct	PC→PE	.51***	.07	.36	.64
	PE→JSB	.26***	.07	.11	.42
	PC→JSB	.18**	.08	.01	.35
Standardized Indirect	PS→AİE→İAD	.14***	.05	.05	.25

PC =Psychological Capital, JSB= Job Search Behavior, PE= Perceived Employability, *SC*= Standardized Coefficient, *SE* = Standard Error, ***= $p < .01$, **= $p < .05$

According to Table 8, all of the direct path coefficients are significant. After 10,000 bootstrap operations, the indirect path coefficient is also significant and there is no zero between the confidence intervals (bootstrap coefficient = .14, 95% Confidence Interval = .05, .25). According to these findings H4, which suggests that perceived employability partially mediates the relationship between psychological capital and job search behavior, is accepted.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

4.1. DISCUSSION

The shrinkage in the world economy, the increasing number of unemployment and the deep impact of the pandemic on economic and social life make it difficult for young people to find a place in the labor market. In this challenging period, young people who have completed their university education try to keep their psychological well-being stable and to continue looking for a job. In this case, it becomes an important problem how young people can use their resources in the most efficient way in the job search process. There are not many studies in the literature that examine the psychological capital issue together with job search behavior among these resources. This study aims to explain the effect of new graduates' psychological capital on job search behaviors through perceived employability.

In the present study, the results indicate that psychological capital affects job search behavior positively for fresh graduates. These results support the literature which indicates that people with high psychological capital evaluate job search process positively, which makes them to overcome difficulties readily (Caska, 1998; Wanberg et al., 2005; Van Hooft, 2016). The present study also suggests that there is a relationship between job search behavior and the dimensions of psychological capital for newly graduates. Especially, self-efficacy, one of the dimensions of psychological capital has been found to be an important factor in the job search process (Wanberg, 1999). Likewise, as the youth unemployment rate increases, the stress and anxiety levels of young people who try to find a job increase, causing their hopes for the future to decline. In the line with the hypothesis of current study, job search behaviors of people whose hopes for the future diminished, also decreased.

The present study also pointed out that psychological capital affects perceived employability positively for newly graduates. In other words, young people with high level of psychological capital have a high perception of employability. Since the new graduates do not have any previous work experience, it will be the psychological capital they have that will put forward them into this competition. In line with this consideration, Fernández-Valera, et al. (2020)'s study findings indicate similarity with the current results. Their findings reveal that psychological capital is a strong antecedent factor for perceived employability. The authors claim that as a global-level motivating factor, psychological capital is more useful construct than context-specific perceived employability. In addition, the authors assert that for the young people who have recently graduated, work related issues are irrelevant for them since they have no work experience and as a global and positive mindset, psychological capital is found to be a more important factor for job search. In a recent study with a sample of senior university students, Ayala-Calvo and Manzano-Garicia (2021) also found that psychological capital has a considerable positive impact on employability skills of team work, self-knowledge and self-management. Moreover, they found that psychological capital positively influences perceived employability. In addition, Chen and Lim (2012) also stated that there is a relationship between each dimension of psychological capital and perceived employability. Similarly, people with high self-efficacy rely on their abilities to find employment (Lim & Loo, 2003). On the other hand, the current study failed to account for the relationship between perceived employability and optimism. Contrary to Chen and Lim (2012), this study did not find a significant relationship between perceived employability and optimism. The reason for this can be seen as the effect of the recent economic contraction and pandemic on their optimistic perspectives towards the future, even though the employability perceptions of new graduates are high. Apart from that, the present study demonstrates a relationship between perceived employability and resilience. In line with these results, Chen and Lim (2012) found that resilient people try to find their target job by overcoming all difficulties in the job search process.

In addition to all these, it was found in this study that the perception of employability among young people positively affected their job search behavior. This result is consistent with the findings of the research by Berntson and Marklund (2007). According to their study, people with a high perception of employability think that their job search process will go on smoothly without obstacles. Similarly, in a study of graduate employability, Yizhong et al. (2017) found that university graduates' perceived employability predicts job search intention, attitude and intensity. Parallel with these findings, in a study conducted in Austria, it was seen that people with high employability perception engage in job search activities and thus have a higher probability of finding a job (Wanberg et al., 2010). Moreover, Onyishi et al. (2015) found that perceived employability mediates the link between core self-evaluation and preparatory job search, but not active job search. The authors clarify this finding as unemployed people who have higher core self-evaluation engage in the preparatory job search strategies more than the unemployed ones whose core self-evaluations are low. On the other hand, Ellis (2013) found no impact of core self-evaluations on job search behavior. Although employability was found to be a significant predictor of job search, there was no significant interaction effect of core self-evaluations and perceived employability on search behaviors. According to this finding, she asserts that more than self-evaluations, perception of the job market is a more significant factor for the prediction of engaging job search. Taken together, the high confidence of newly graduated young people in their own qualifications and their perception and belief that they can find a job, enables them to manage the job search process better.

In essence, current study supported the relationship between job search behavior and psychological capital. In the meantime, it has been observed that there is a positive relationship between both variables and the perception of employability, similar to the results found by Chen and Lim (2012). As a conclusion of all these findings, it was supported that the relationship between psychological capital and job search behavior was mediated by perceived employability. Since new graduates do not have sufficient work experience, it is obvious that they need a positive

perspective and need to strengthen their psychological capital in order to manage the job search process more effectively. In addition to that, their confidence in their own abilities with positive perspective will bring them to the forefront in this job search competition.

4.1.1. Implications

This study showed that young people with high psychological capital see themselves more employable in the labor market. In other words, findings of the current study indicate that psychological capital can be considered as a crucial factor to explain graduates' perceived employability. For this purpose, various intervention studies can be conducted in universities including psychological capital enhancement in order to increase the employability of new graduates. In order to increase the perceived employability of undergraduate students, Ayala Calvo & Manzano García (2021) who found that psychological capital is a crucial factor to explain the perceived employability of graduates, also offer interventions including psychological capital. Studies focusing on enhancing individuals' psychological capital in the process of job search are found to be beneficial. For example, in a study by Hulshof et al. (2020) 3-day-training intervention of PsyCap was found to have a significant and positive impact on job search behavior among the unemployed people. In addition, in a quasi-experimental study for determining the impact of psychological capital training in job search, Georgiou et al. (2019) found that participants who received psychological capital training demonstrated higher levels of job search behavior and also found a job at a higher rate than the control group.

In essence, we can suggest that, since the main objective of university placement services is to provide support to their students in career planning, under the name of Psycap 101 for instance, lectures explaining what psychological capital is and how it can be developed can be taught to senior students, specifically designed for job search and career development. Career counselors may help students to develop

their career insight by providing them to understand their strengths, to develop realistic expectations, to train on job search and other related skills, to cultivate networks and work relationships for job opportunities by considering the main predictors of effective job search (Saks, 2005). In addition, universities may collaborate with industry to provide internship opportunities especially for senior students to have an employment experience while they are still studying (Onyishi et al., 2015). Last of all, careers advisers at universities are suggested to make tailored career advices according to the students' background and degree subjects. For instance, for AHSS (arts, humanities, and social sciences) graduates, since the labor market is highly ambiguous, it may not be straightforward to locate opportunities in the labor market and that is why, students will need focused strategies with clear job search goals. On the other hand, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) graduates who are considered as having less career management skills and not socialized into exploring labor market may need extra encouragement and persuasion during their job search process (Okay-Somerville & Scholarios, 2021).

4.1.2. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

There are many limitations in this study. One of the limitations is that a limited number of participants participated in the study. There is not an equal gender distribution; the number of men in the sample is also low. In future studies, it should be tried to make the number of men and women equal and reach more people in total. In addition to that, considering the technological differences of job search processes, the contribution of social media tools such as LinkedIn to job search processes can be investigated in future studies. Along with this, qualitative, especially phenomenological studies can be conducted in which psychological capital, job search behavior and perceived employability concepts are discussed as experiences of job seekers.

CONCLUSION

According to TUIK February 2021 data, unemployment rate (26.9%) has recently increased in the young population (15-24 years). Together with these data, it is seen that the number of graduate unemployed young people is increasing. According to TUIK report in September 2020, the number of university students excluded from the workforce has reached 1 million 277 thousand. This situation causes feelings of unemployment anxiety, disappointment and hopelessness for the future, both among young people who continue their university education and new graduates. Studies on youth unemployment have shown that unemployment has negative effects on mental health (Rathmann et al., 2016). Accordingly, it has been observed that the increase in youth unemployment rate increases the level of anxiety and stress for the future in youth. The expectation of not being able to find a job causes young people to feel more hopeless and desperate (Önocağ, 2008). Besides, with the prolongation of unemployment, the hope of finding a job decreases and even the person loses their hope for the future (Winefield & Tiggemann, 1990).

Regarding the field of positive work psychology, this study tries to explain the roles of psychological capital and perceived employability on the job search process of recent university graduates. As proposed by Luthans (2002a, 2002b) within the field of Positive Organizational Behavior, psychological capital (consisting of resilience, hope, optimism, and self-efficacy components) has been considered as an antecedent and motivating factor for individuals' job search process.

There are few studies in the literature that examine the relationship between the psychological capital of new graduates and their job search behavior. Moreover, although the perceived employability variable is not a new concept, it has not been studied much apart from the context of economy. Findings of this study extend our understanding such that both as personal resources, psychological capital and students' perception of employability are influential determinants of job search behavior. This study contributes to the job search literature by explaining the

relation between psychological capital and job search behavior, and also by demonstrating the mediating role of perceived employability of this relation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

The current research is carried out by Işık Yelok, a student at Istanbul Bilgi University Organizational Psychology Master Program, under the supervision of Burcu Kümbül Güler, İzmir Katip Çelebi University Psychology Department. The purpose of this study is to investigate the job search process of recently graduated students from a psychological perspective. For this purpose, you will be asked to answer some questions. It takes about 15 minutes to answer these questions. Participation to the study is completely voluntary.

This study will include only university graduates who are seeking a job for up to two years after graduation. Therefore, if you are not in this group, please do not complete this survey. When filling the questionnaire, please carefully read the explanations at the beginning of each question group and mark the most appropriate answer for you. There is no right or wrong answer to the questions in the survey. Accordingly, what is important to us is your point of view.

During the study, you will not be asked for your credentials. Your responses will be combined with those of other participants and put to statistical analysis as a whole. The file containing the answers of all participants will be stored digitally for 5 years and then safely destroyed. This data will be examined by the researcher on a password protected computer. The data of the study will only be reachable by the researcher and the supervisor. The results of this study can be presented in scientific journals or meetings.

The study generally does not contain questions that will disturb you. However, if you feel uncomfortable due to questions or any other reason during participation, you are free to quit the questionnaire. You can contact Işık Yelok (isyelok@gmail.com) if you have any questions or to get information about the research results.

Thank you for participating.

I have read and understood the notice that stated the purpose and content of the study. I agree to participate in the research.

Date
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Signature

Appendix B

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Mevcut araştırma İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Örgütsel Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Işık Yelok tarafından Burcu Kümbül Güler, İzmir Katip Çelebi Üniversitesi Psikoloji Departmanı, danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, üniversiteden yeni mezun olan kişilerin iş arama süreçlerini psikolojik bir açıdan ele almaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda sizlerden bazı soruları yanıtlamanız istenecektir. Soruları yanıtlamanız yaklaşık 15 dakika sürmektedir. Çalışmaya katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır.

Bu çalışmaya yalnızca üniversite mezunu ve mezun olduktan itibaren en fazla iki senedir iş arayan katılımcılar dahil edilecektir. Dolayısıyla eğer bu grupta değilseniz lütfen bu anketi doldurmayınız. Anketi doldururken soru başlarındaki açıklamaları dikkatlice okuyarak size en uygun cevabı işaretleyiniz. Ankette yer alan soruların doğru veya yanlış bir cevabı yoktur. Dolayısıyla bizim için önemli olan sizin görüşlerinizdir.

Çalışma esnasında sizden kimlik bilgileriniz istenmeyecektir. Sizin yanıtlarınız diğer katılımcılarınkilerle birleştirilecek ve bir bütün olarak istatistiksel analizlere tabi tutulacaktır. Bütün katılımcıların sağlamış olduğu cevapları içeren dosya, dijital bir biçimde 5 yıl boyunca saklanıp, sonra da güvenli bir biçimde imha edilecektir. Bu veriler, şifreyle korunmuş bir bilgisayarda araştırmacı tarafından incelenecek; ayrıca sadece araştırmacı ve danışmanı tarafından erişilebilir olacaktır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları bilimsel dergi veya toplantılarda sunulabilir.

Çalışma genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmayı yarıda kesip çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Araştırmaya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir sorunuz olduğu takdirde ya da araştırma sonuçları hakkında bilgi almak için Işık Yelok (isyelok@gmail.com) ile irtibata geçebilirsiniz.

Çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Yukarıdaki çalışmanın amacını ve içeriğini belirten bildiriye okudum, anladım ve araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Tarih
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İmza

Appendix C

Job Search Behavior/İş arama davranışı (Blau, 1994; translated by Açıköz, 2016)

Job search intensity How often did you do the following behaviors in the past six months? 1 = Never (0 times) 2 = Rarely (1 to 2 times) 3 = Occasionally (3 to 5 times) 4 = Frequently (6 to 9 times) 5 = Very Frequently (at least 10 times) a. I sent my resume to potential employers. b. I telephoned a prospective employer. c. I filled out a job application. d. I personally visited an organization to inquire about a job opening. e. I had a job interview with a prospective employer.	İş arama sıklığı Geçtiğimiz altı ay içerisinde aşağıdaki davranışları ne sıklıkta yaptınız? 1 = Hiç yapmadım (0 defa) 2 = Nadiren yaptım (1-2 defa) 3 = Ara sıra yaptım (3-5 defa) 4 = Sık sık yaptım (6-9 defa) 5 = Çok sık yaptım (en az 10 defa) a. Bir şirkete özgeçmişimi gönderdim. b. Olası bir işveren ile telefon görüşmesi yaptım. c. Bir iş için başvuru formu doldurdum. d. Bir şirkete giderek uygun iş olup olmadığını sordum. f. Olası bir işverenle iş görüşmesine girdim.
Job search effort In the past month, for how long have you searched job postings? 1 = For less than half an hour 2 = For half an hour 3 = For one hour 4 = For one to two hours 5 = For more than two hours	İş arama çabası Geçtiğimiz ay ne kadar süreyle iş aradınız? 1 = Yarım saatten az 2 = Yarım saat 3 = Bir saat 4 = Bir ila iki saat arasında 5 = İki saatten fazla

Appendix D

Perceived Employability/Algılanan İstihdam Edilebilirlik (Rothwell et al., 2008;
translated by Gerçek & Atay, 2017)

1. There is generally a strong demand in the job market for people like me at the present time. 2. There are plenty of vacancies in the area where I am looking for a job. 3. I can easily find out about opportunities in my chosen area of work. 4. The skills and abilities I possess are what employers are looking for. 5. I am generally confident of success in the job interview and selection process. 6. I feel I could get any job as long as my skills and experiences are reasonably relevant.	1. İş piyasasında benim gibi çalışan insanlar gerçekten talep görür. 2. İş aradığım alanda pek çok kariyer fırsatı vardır. 3. İş alanımla ilgili fırsatlar hakkında kolaylıkla bilgi sahibi olabilirim. 4. Sahip olduğum vasıf ve yetenekler işverenler tarafından aranılan özelliklerdir. 5. İş görüşmesi ve işe seçilme sürecinde başarılı olacağım konusunda genel olarak kendime güveniyorum. 6. Becerilerim ve deneyimlerimle ilgili olan her işe kabul edilebilirim.
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Appendix E

Psychological Capital/Psikolojik Sermaye (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, & Norman, 2007; translated by Çetin & Basım, 2012).

Self-efficacy 1. I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution. 2. In my future job, I feel confident in representing my area of work in meetings with management. 3. In my future job, I feel confident that I am able to contribute to discussions about the company's strategy. 4. In my future job, I feel confident about helping to set targets/goals in my area of work. 5. In my future job, I feel confident contacting people outside the company (e.g., suppliers, customers) to discuss problems. 6. I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues in the future.	Öz-yeterlilik 1. Uzun dönemli bir probleme çözüm bulmaya çalışırken kendime güvenirim. 2. Gelecekteki işimde yönetimin katıldığı toplantılarda kendi çalışma alanımı açıklarken kendime güvenirim. 3. Gelecekte çalışacağım organizasyonun stratejisi konusundaki tartışmalara katkıda bulunmada kendime güvenirim. 4. Çalışma alanımda, hedefler/amaçlar belirlemede kendime güvenirim. 5. Gelecekteki işimde organizasyon dışındaki kişilerle (tedarikçiler, tüketiciler vb.) problemleri tartışmak için temas kurarken kendime güvenirim. 6. Gelecek işimdeki iş arkadaşlarıma bir bilgi sunarken kendime güvenirim.
Hope 1. If I should find myself facing a problem in my job search, I could think of many ways to get out of it. 2. At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my job search goals.	Umut 1. Eğer iş ararken kendimi bir tıkanıklık içinde bulursam, bundan kurtulmak için birçok yol düşünebilirim. 2. Şu anda iş arama amaçlarımı sıkı bir şekilde takip ediyorum. 3. Herhangi bir problemin çözümü için birçok yol vardır.

3. There are lots of ways around my job search problem. 4. Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful in my job search. 5. I can think of many ways to reach my current job search goals. 6. At this time, I am meeting the job search goals that I have set for myself.	4. Şu anda, kendimi iş arama konusunda çok başarılı görüyorum. 5. İş arama amaçlarıma ulaşmak için birçok yol düşünebilirim. 6. Bu aralar kendim için belirlediğim iş arama amaçlarımı yerine getiriyorum.
Resilience 1. When I have a setback in my job search, I have trouble recovering from it. (R) 2. In my job search, I usually manage difficulties one way or another. 3. I can be "on my own", in my job search, if I have to. 4. I usually take stressful things in my job search in stride. 5. I can get through difficult times in my job search because I've experienced difficulty before. 6. I feel I can handle many things at a time in my job search.	Psikolojik Dayanıklılık 1. İş arama sürecimde bir terslikle karşılaştığımda, onu atlatma konusunda sıkıntı yaşarım. (R) 2. İş aramadaki zorlukları genellikle bir şekilde hallederim. 3. Eğer zorunda kalırsam, iş ararken kendi kendime yeterim. 4. Genellikle, iş ararken karşılaştığım stresli şeyleri sakın bir şekilde hallederim. 5. Daha önce farklı zorluklar yaşadığım için, iş ararken geçirdiğim zor zamanların üstesinden gelebilirim. 6. İş arama sürecimde birçok şeyi halledebileceğimi hissediyorum.
Optimism 1. When things are uncertain for me in my job search, I usually expect the best. 2. If something can go wrong for me during my job search, it will.	İyimserlik 1. İş arama sürecimde benim için belirsizlikler olduğunda, her zaman sonucun iyi olmasını isterim. 2. Eğer iş arama sürecimde bir şeyler benim için yanlış

(R) 3. I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job search. 4. I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in my job search. 5. During job search, things never work out the way I want them to. (R) 6. I approach job search with the attitude that something positive will always turn out no matter how difficult it might be.	gidecekse, o şekilde devam eder. (R) 3. İş arama sürecimle ilgili şeylerin daima iyi tarafını görürüm. 4. İş arama sürecimde başıma ne geleceği konusunda iyimserimdir. 5. İş arama sürecimde işler asla benim istediğim şekilde yürümez. (R) 6. İş ararken “her şerde bir hayır vardır” şeklinde yaklaşıyorum.
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Appendix F

Sociodemographic Questions

Sex ▪ Female ▪ Male ▪ Other
Age: _____
University Name: _____
University Type: ▪ State ▪ Private
Educational status: ▪ Associate Degree ▪ Bachelor's Degree ▪ Master's Degree ▪ Other
Your Faculty Name: _____
What is your perception about the income group you belong compared to the wider society members? ▪ Low ▪ Medium ▪ High
Are you a full-time worker? ▪ Yes ▪ No
Are you actively looking for a job? ▪ Yes ▪ No
How long have you been looking for a job? (After your graduation from university) ▪ 0-1 year ▪ 1-2 years ▪ 2+ years

Sosyo-demografik Sorular

Cinsiyetiniz ▪ Kadın ▪ Erkek ▪ Diğer
Yaş: _____
Eğitim aldığınız üniversitenin ismi: _____
Eğitim aldığınız üniversite ▪ Kamu ▪ Özel
Eğitim durumunuz: ▪ Ön lisans ▪ Lisans ▪ Y. lisans / Doktora ▪ Diğer
Eğitim aldığınız Fakülte / Yüksekokul: _____
Toplumun geneline kıyasla kendinizi hangi gelir grubuna ait görüyorsunuz? ▪ Düşük ▪ Orta ▪ Yüksek
Aktif olarak tam zamanlı bir işte çalışıyor musunuz? ▪ Evet ▪ Hayır
Şu anda aktif olarak iş arıyor musunuz? ▪ Evet ▪ Hayır
Ne kadar zamandır iş aramaktasınız? (Üniversiteden mezun olduktan sonra) ▪ 0-1 yıl ▪ 1-2 yıl ▪ 2+ yıl

Appendix G

ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.