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The influence of ability-based emotional intelligence on discretionary workplace behaviors

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the relationship between ability-based emotional intelligence and discretionary workplace behaviors, that is organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Specifically, this study examines the relationship of four emotional abilities (self-emotion appraisal, other's emotion appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion), comprising ability-based emotional intelligence, with interpersonal and organizational forms of OCB and CWB. This study was conducted with 645 academic staff, from 50 public universities in Turkey. The data were collected through online survey questionnaires and analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analyses. The findings indicate that the ability to appraise other's emotion is a strong positive predictor of interpersonal OCB, while the regulation of emotion ability was negative predictor of interpersonal CWB. Furthermore, the ability to use emotion was a significant predictor of both organizational OCB and organizational CWB. Moreover, the ability to appraise self-emotion positively predicted both interpersonal and organizational OCB and negatively predicted both interpersonal and organizational CWB. These findings suggest that ability-based emotional intelligence assumes an important role in increasing organizational citizenship behaviors and reducing counterproductive workplace behaviors in the workplace. This study also offers practical advices for organizations to increase OCB and decrease CWB by improving employees' emotional intelligence abilities. Results, implications and limitations were discussed and directions for future research were proposed.

KEYWORDS

Emotional intelligence; organizational citizenship behavior; counterproductive work behavior; Turkey

Introduction

The workplace is a relational environment where positive or negative behaviors are exhibited with diverse effects on the organization and its members (Appelbaum, Iaconi, & Matousek, 2007). The question of “Can these behaviors be influenced by employees' emotional intelligence?” has been an attractive area of research (Miao, Humphrey, & Qian, 2017). Emotional intelligence may play an important role in employees display these behaviors because emotions are one of the leading factors forming human behaviors. Related studies have shown that emotional intelligence might enhance employees' positive discretionary behaviors (Carmeli & Josman, 2006; Turnipseed, 2018) and mitigate their

negative discretionary behaviors, in the organization (Greenidge, Devonish, & Alleyne, 2014; Jung & Yoon, 2012).

Positive discretionary behaviors are commonly described as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Bennett & Stamper, 2001; Collins & Mossholder, 2017; Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). Negative discretionary behaviors, moreover, are generally identified as counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (Bennett & Stamper, 2001; Dalal, 2005; Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006). OCB includes positive employee actions that exceeds existing role expectations and intended to promote welfare of the organization and individuals within the organization (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995). OCB may lead to organizational effectiveness and improve employee outcomes by providing organizations with increased resources (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Miao et al., 2017). In contrary to OCB, CWB includes employee actions harmful to the legitimate interests of an organization (Sackett, Berry, Wiemann, & Laczko, 2006). Previous studies have suggested CWB as a threat to an organization's success and employees' well-being including depression, anxiety, decreased productivity, job dissatisfaction, and lost work time (Barling, Dupre', & Kelloway, 2009; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin, & Glew, 1996).

To date, less research has examined the effect of emotional intelligence on positive and negative discretionary behaviors, which are OCB and CWB (Al Ghazo, Suifan, & Alnuaimi, 2019; Greenidge et al., 2014; Jung & Yoon, 2012). Particularly, little is known about the relationship between the elements of ability-based emotional intelligence and interpersonal and organizational forms of OCB and CWB. Consequently, the present study explored the influence of these elements (described in the next section) on the two forms OCB and CWB.

Theoretical background

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence defined as “the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 10). Later, Goleman (1998) defined it as “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.” (p. 317). Emotional intelligence generally divided into four dimensions with discrete abilities (Davies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998; Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Wong & Law, 2002). These dimensions are called as ability-based emotional intelligence dimensions and described as follows:

The first dimension, appraisal and expression of emotion in the self, includes individuals' ability to accurately perceive, understand and clearly express their emotions (Law et al., 2004; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This ability might enable individuals to respond more appropriately to his/her own feelings and display emotions to others more clearly (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). For instance, leaders with this ability may express their emotions more distinctly to followers and thus convey their positive feelings more effectively to them (Côté, 2014).

The second dimension, appraisal and recognition of emotion in others, refers to how accurately individuals can perceive and understand the emotions and feelings of the people around them (Côté, 2014; Law et al., 2004). It is also referred to as empathic accuracy, which is “the accurate identification of the emotions that others feel” (Côté et al., 2011). A person with this ability might possess empathic skills and predict others’ emotions from their facial expression, body movement, posture and vocal tone (Côté, 2014). Therefore, by understanding others’ emotional states and needs, they may show a high sensitivity to upset or sad people. These individuals are also perceived as friendly and authentic by others but individuals who lack this ability appear to be insensitive and rude (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The third dimension, the use of emotion to facilitate performance, includes individuals’ ability to direct their emotions to constructive activities and personal performance and employing them in a better and productive way (Law et al., 2004). This ability concerns effectively generating emotions on demand to adapt cognitive activities to a particular situation (Côté, 2014; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It also helps to facilitate cognitive activities including sense-making, problem-solving, interpersonal communication and decision making (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011). People with this ability may encourage themselves to do better continuously (Law et al., 2004) and may turn stressful situations into an advantage. Such people, for instance, can canalize anxiety caused by performance evaluations into perseverance to meet job requirements (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The fourth dimension, regulation of emotion in the self, concerns how well individuals regulate their emotions, pleasant or unpleasant, without exaggerating or minimizing their importance (Greenidge et al., 2014; Wong & Law, 2002). This ability might enable individuals to return quickly to normal psychological states by mitigating negative and increasing positive emotions (Law et al., 2004). Individuals with this ability may have better control on their emotions and recover more easily from psychological distress (Law et al., 2004).

Emotional intelligence and OCB

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined as ‘not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate, promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization’ (Organ, 1988, p. 4). McNeely and Meglino (1994) have identified two types of OCB; those targeted at the individuals and those targeted at the organization. Individual OCB includes behaviors that benefit other members of the organization (e.g., helping others who have been absent, being courtesy toward coworkers). Organizational OCB includes behaviors that benefit the organization in general (e.g., attending optional organizational functions, concerning about organizational image) (Lee & Allen, 2002; Williams & Anderson, 1991).

Emotional intelligence (EI) may encourage employees to perform OCB because emotionally intelligent employees can understand others’ needs and emotions (Miao et al., 2017). Therefore, they are more likely to offer empathic responses to those who are needed for help or support at work (Carmeli & Josman, 2006). For instance, these employees may be more willing to help new employees to ease their adaptation to the organization (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). Furthermore, high EI employees are likely to be empathetic toward their organization. For that reason, they may be more sensitive to informal behavioral

expectations that the organization needs to attain organizational goals (Day & Carrol, 2004; Carmeli & Josman, 2006). In addition, they tend to display compliant behaviors benefiting the organization because of their sensitivity to organizational norms and rules (Carmeli & Josman, 2006).

Emotional intelligence is also closely associated with positive mood (Schutte, Malouff, Simunek, McKenley, & Hollander, 2002). According to George and Brief (1992), good feelings may lead to doing good because they make people perceive something in a more positive light and encourage them to feel positive toward others. Furthermore, individuals in a positive mood are more inclined to care about others, which increases the likelihood of helping behaviors. In consequence, employees with high EI are more likely to be in positive moods and display OCB.

Furthermore, Spector and Fox (2002) have suggested that employees in positive moods tend to exhibit behaviors that support their moods. Such employees, therefore, are more likely to engage in favorable behaviors that will maintain their moods. Emotional intelligence may also help these employees to better identify their emotions and thus better know how a situation will make them feel. Thus, they may become more aware of situations that aid them in contributing to their positive state of mind, which would, in turn, encourage them to display OCB.

Moreover, employees who use their emotions positively and beneficially can employ the power of their emotions to increase personal performance. Accordingly, they may also act in a manner that will contribute to the organizational performance by directing their emotions to constructive activities to benefit the organization. For instance, such employees may attend functions to promote the organizational image (Lee & Allen, 2002).

Based on the foregoing arguments, this study anticipated that employees' emotional intelligence abilities affect positively both interpersonal and organizational OCB.

Emotional intelligence and CWB

Robinson and Bennett (1995) defined counterproductive work behavior (CWB) as "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and, in so doing, threatens the well-being of the organization or its members, or both" (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). They identified two dimensions using the target-based model of CWB: interpersonal and organizational. The interpersonal CWB comprises harmful behaviors directed toward others within the organization. The organizational CWB comprises behaviors directed toward the organization with the intention of harming it. Examples of CWB include treating rudely or ridiculing in front of others (interpersonal CWB); taking long breaks or intentionally working slowly (organizational CWB) (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Spector, Fox, & Domagalski, 2006).

CWB is characterized as a direct or indirect behavioral response to work experiences (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Neuman & Baron, 2005; Yang & Diefendorff, 2009). Fox and Spector (2006) stressor-emotion model has suggested that negative work experiences (i.e., constraints, conflicts, and injustices) trigger negative emotions like anger, outrage, and resentment. Therefore, employees experiencing negative emotions are more likely to engage in CWB to reduce negative feelings and satisfy the desire for retribution (Fox et al., 2001; Yang & Diefendorff, 2009).

Emotional intelligence may reduce CWB because it helps employees control better negative emotions, while leveraging positive emotions (De Clercq, Bouckennooghe, Raja, & Matsyborska, 2014; Jain, 2012). Employees with the ability to manage their emotions, for instance, might have better coping skills and produce positive coping behaviors (Côté, 2014; Turnipseed, 2018). Therefore, they can respond to unpleasant work-related happenings more appropriately and exhibit suitable behaviors even the most adverse situations (Greenidge et al., 2014).

Moreover, the ability to regulate emotions can perform a significant role in building and maintaining good social relationships, which are very important for employee well-being. This ability may prevent employees from exhibiting CWB and enable them to better deal with stressful situations. It is because those employees with this ability may have higher levels of control over their emotions and sense the undesirable effects of such behaviors on themselves, others and the organization (De Clercq et al., 2014). Employees with low levels of this ability, however, tend to display CWB. This is because such employees may find it hard to constrain negative emotions and thus may behave in aggressive and inappropriate ways (Greenidge et al., 2014; Jung & Yoon, 2012).

Additionally, emotionally intelligent employees can use their emotions and work-related energies for constructive activities that will benefit their organization (De Clercq et al., 2014; Law et al., 2004). Such employees, probably, are more aware of favorable work behaviors which they should try to display (De Clercq et al., 2014). Therefore, they tend to avoid behaviors that may damage their organization.

Based on these rationales, we propose that employees' emotional intelligence abilities will negatively affect both interpersonal and organizational CWB.

Method

Sample and procedure

Data were collected from the academic staff of 50 public universities in Turkey. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were assured of the anonymity of their responses. Surveys were sent via e-mail, and 680 responses were received. After eliminating incomplete and invalid responses, 645 surveys were used for analysis. The sample included 54.0 percent males. Most of the respondents were older than 31 years, and 51.2 percent were 1–10 years tenures. In terms of academic positions, the respondents consist of 27.9% assistant professors, 25.9% research assistants, 16.6% lecturers, 15.0% professors, and 14.6% associate professors.

Measures

Survey items were translated from English to Turkish by following Brislin's (1980) translation–back translation procedure to ensure the quality of the translation.

Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence was measured using Wong and Law's (2002) 16-item WLEIS scale. This scale consists of four dimensions with four items in each dimension; self-emotion appraisal (SEA), other's emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), regulation of emotion (ROE). Example items are as follows: (a) SEA, "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time"; (b) OEA, "I am sensitive to

the feelings and emotions of others”; (c) UOE, “I would always encourage myself to try my best”; and (d) ROE, “I have good control of my own emotions”. Respondents completed the measures using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for SEA (.76), OEA (.77), UOE (.77) and ROE (.84).

Organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) was measured with a 16-item scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). The scale has two dimensions: interpersonal and organizational. Interpersonal OCB consists of 8 items that assess citizenship behaviors directed toward individuals. A sample item is “Assist others with their duties”. Organizational OCB consists of 8 items that assess citizenship behaviors directed toward the organization. A sample item is “Express loyalty toward the organization.”. Respondents completed the measures using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “never” to 5 = “always”). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for OCB-I (.78) and OCB-O (.85).

Counterproductive work behavior. Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) was measured using Bennett and Robinson’s (2000) two dimensions scale (interpersonal CWB and organizational CWB). The scale consists of 19 items, but one of the items was discarded from the organizational CWB scale because it was inappropriate for our sample group (e.g., “Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses”). Interpersonal CWB was measured with 7 items (e.g., “Cursed at someone at work”) and organizational CWB was measured with 11 items (e.g., “Come in late to work without permission”). Respondents completed the measures using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “never” to 5 = “always”). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for CWB-I (.69) and CWB-O (.70).

Common method variance assessment

Since the data of this study were collected from a single source, the findings might be subject to common method variance (CMV) (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). We assessed the influence of CMV with Harman’s one-factor test by including all scale items into a principal component analysis (PCA). The results of PCA produced eight factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, which accounted for 54.6% of the variance. The first factor did not account for most of the variance (17.9%). Furthermore, we established a CFA model in which all measurement items loaded on a one factor. Results revealed that one-factor model (see Table 1) showed poor fit to the data (χ^2 (819, N = 645) = 6233.27, $p < .01$ ($\chi^2/df = 7.61$; CFI = .38; TLI = .35; RMSEA = .10; SRMR = .10). Consequently, we believed that CMV did not appear to present a problem in this study.

Table 1. Comparison of measurement models.

Model	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta \chi^2(\Delta df)$
Eight-factor model	1535.81	787	.91	.90	.03	.05	–
Seven-factor model	2062.64	798	.85	.84	.05	.05	526.83**(11)
Seven-factor model	2510.89	798	.80	.79	.05	.06	975.08**(11)
Five-factor model	3644.88	807	.67	.65	.07	.07	2109.07**(20)
One-factor model	6233.27	819	.38	.35	.10	.10	4697.46**(32)

Notes. N = 645. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; df = degrees of freedom. All alternative models were compared with the eight-factor model.

** $p < .01$.

Results

Validity and reliability

We conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS 24. This analysis was to see if the measurement model provides a good fit to the data and to ascertain the distinctiveness of the study variables. The fit of the measurement model was assessed based on five fit indices recommended by Hu and Bentler (1998): Comparative fit index (CFI should be close to .95), the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI; should be close to .95), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; should be close to .06) and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR; should be close to .08).

Our eight-factor measurement model treated self-emotion appraisal (SEA), other's emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), regulation of emotion (ROE), OCB-I, OCB-O, CWB-I and CWB-O as eight distinct factors. As shown in Table 1, we compared the fit of the eight-factor measurement model with the following models: a nested alternative seven-factor model (combining CWB-I and CWB-O), seven-factor model (combining OCB-I and OCB-O), five-factor model (combining SEA, OEA, UOE and ROE), and a one-factor model (combining all eight constructs), using chi-square difference tests.

After dropping problematic items because of low factor loadings, our eight-factor measurement model showed a good model fit and all indices met the respective criteria, χ^2 (787, $N = 645$) = 1535.81, $p < .01$ ($\chi^2/df = 1.95$; CFI = .91; TLI = .90; RMSEA = .03; SRMR = .05). Furthermore, the chi-square difference tests confirmed that this model fits the data significantly better than each of the other models. That is, the difference tests provided the construct distinctiveness of the eight study variables.

To evaluate measurement items' reliability, we computed Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) of each construct respectively. Our Cronbach's alpha values were well beyond or close to accepted level of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978), suggesting good internal reliability. As shown in Table 2, composite reliability estimates ranging from .71 to .86 and were higher than 0.70, indicating construct reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Descriptive statistics

The means, standard deviations and correlations among study variables were reported in Table 2. As shown in this table, all dimensions of EI were significantly and positively

Table 2. Means, standard deviations and correlations among variables.

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Self-emotion appraisal	4.42	0.46	(0.78)							
2. Other's emotion appraisal	4.01	0.56	0.26**	(0.79)						
3. Use of emotion	3.86	0.69	0.31**	0.20**	(0.78)					
4. Regulation of emotion	3.35	0.83	0.20**	0.18**	0.32**	(0.86)				
5. OCB-I	4.15	0.47	0.19**	0.27**	0.12**	0.13**	(0.79)			
6. OCB-O	4.00	0.58	0.31**	0.26**	0.33**	0.20**	0.34**	(0.85)		
7. CWB-I	1.29	0.33	-0.18**	-0.14**	-0.15**	-0.27**	-0.07	-0.10**	(0.71)	
8. CWB-O	1.70	0.58	-0.23**	-0.13**	-0.27**	-0.16**	-0.07	-0.34**	0.32**	(0.74)

Notes. $N = 645$; Composite reliability for each construct listed on diagonal in parentheses. OCB-I = organizational citizenship behavior toward the individuals; OCB-O = organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization; CWB-I = counterproductive work behavior toward the individuals; CWB-O = counterproductive work behavior toward the organization.

** $p < 0.01$.

related to OCB-I (ranging from 0.12 to 0.27) and OCB-O (ranging from 0.20 to 0.33). Moreover, The EI dimensions were negatively related to CWB-I (ranging from -0.27 to -0.14) and CWB-O (ranging from -0.27 to -0.13). The four dimensions of EI had also significantly correlated each other.

Additionally, the highest correlation was between OCB-O and CWB-O, negative and significant ($r = -0.34$, $p < .001$). This level of correlation did not suggest a problem of multicollinearity. The highest variance inflation factor (1.21) was below the recommended cutoff threshold of 10 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), suggesting the multicollinearity was not a problem in the data.

Multiple regression analyses

Multiple regression analyses were employed to identify which dimensions of emotional intelligence had made significant contributions to predict OCB and CWB. Tables 3 and 4 show the results of the regression analyses. These tables report the standardized β coefficient, t coefficient, variance explained (R^2) and significance level for predictors of each outcomes: OCB-I, OCB-O, CWB-I and CWB-O respectively. For each regression, all four dimensions of emotional intelligence (SEA, OEA, UOE and ROE) were included in equation.

Table 3 shows that two dimensions of emotional intelligence significantly and positively contributed to the prediction of OCB-I and OCB-O: Self-emotion appraisal ($\beta = 0.11$, $p < .05$ for OCB-I; $\beta = 0.18$, $p < .01$ for OCB-O), and other's emotional appraisal ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < .01$ for OCB-I; $\beta = 0.15$, for OCB-O, $p < .01$). Use of emotion was discovered as an additional significant positive predictor of OCB-O ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .01$). Among these

Table 3. Multiple regression analyses predicting organizational citizenship behavior.

	OCB-I		OCB-O	
	Standardized β	t	Standardized β	t
Self-emotion appraisal	0.11*	2.72	0.18**	4.87
Other's emotion appraisal	0.23**	5.86	0.15**	4.19
Use of emotion	0.02	0.50	0.22**	5.80
Regulation of emotion	0.05	1.44	0.06	1.65
R^2	0.09		0.18	
F	16.94**		37.59 **	

Notes. N = 645; OCB-I = organizational citizenship behavior toward the individuals; OCB-O = organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 4. Multiple regression analyses predicting counterproductive work behavior.

	CWB-I		CWB-O	
	Standardized β	t	Standardized β	t
Self-emotion appraisal	-0.11^*	-2.70	-0.14^{**}	-3.53
Other's emotion appraisal	-0.06	-1.71	-0.04	-1.11
Use of emotion	-0.03	-0.71	-0.20^{**}	-4.87
Regulation of emotion	-0.22^{**}	-5.65	-0.06	-1.55
R^2	0.09		0.09	
F	17.05**		18.58**	

Notes. N = 645; CWB-I = counterproductive work behavior toward the individuals; CWB-O = counterproductive work behavior toward the organization.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

predictors, self-emotion appraisal and other's emotional appraisal explained 9% of the variance of OCB-I ($F(4,640) = 16.94, p < .01$). Self-emotion appraisal, other's emotional appraisal, and use of emotion, moreover, explained 18% of the variance of OCB-O ($F(4,640) = 37.59, p < .01$).

Table 4 shows that self-emotion appraisal was significantly and negatively contributed to the prediction of both CWB-I and CWB-O ($\beta = -0.11, p < .05$ for CWB-I; $\beta = -0.14, p < .01$ for CWB-O). Regulation of emotion was found a significant, negative predictor of CWB-I ($\beta = -0.22, p < .01$). Use of emotion was found a significant, negative predictor of CWB-O ($\beta = -0.20, p < .01$). Among these predictors, self-emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion explained 9% of the variance of CWB-I ($F(4,640) = 17.05, p < .01$). Self-emotion appraisal and use of emotion explained 9% of the variance of CWB-O ($F(4,640) = 18.58, p < .01$).

Discussion

In the present study, we examined the relationship of the ability-based emotional intelligence (self-emotion appraisal, other's emotion appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion) with interpersonal and organizational forms of OCB and CWB. The findings largely supported our theoretical framework and contributed to the literatures of emotional intelligence, CWB and OCB in several ways.

First, this study found that self-emotion appraisal (SEA) significantly predicted all outcomes in the models. Specifically, while SEA is a positively related to OCB-I and OCB-O, it is negatively related CWB-I and CWB-O. These findings indicate that employees who appraise self-emotions accurately are more inclined to help their colleagues and organization. In parallel, such employees are less inclined to display harmful behaviors directed toward their colleagues and the organization. Thus, it can be suggested that self-emotion appraisal will positively contribute to employee performance by increasing OCB and reducing CWB.

Second, our analysis found that other's emotion appraisal (OEA) is a positive predictor of OCB-I and OCB-O. Moreover, it had a stronger effect on OCB-I than OCB-O. This result indicates that OEA may increase employees desire to help their colleagues and organization. Indeed, OEA is closely related to empathy, and empathy might encourage one to help those who are in need (Côté, 2014). Therefore, if employees are good in OEA, they are more likely to give more empathetic responses to the emotions of others (Carmeli & Josman, 2006). Moreover, such employees tend to feel more empathy for their colleagues because good interpersonal relationships may compel employees to exhibit OCB (Côté & Miners, 2006). In other words, they are inclined to distribute helping behaviors preferentially toward close colleagues that may reciprocate (Decety, Bartal, Uzevovsky, & Knafo-Noam, 2016).

Third, the ability to use of emotion (UOE) was found to be a positive predictor of OCB-O and a negative predictor of CWB-O. That is, while this ability may increase OCB-O, it may reduce CWB-O. The ability to use emotions, meanwhile, concerns how well (productively or effectively) individuals use their emotions (Law et al., 2004). This finding indicates that employees with this ability do not only endeavor in favor of the organization but also try to avoid undesirable behaviors directed to it. Similarly, previous studies have shown that employees with this ability may use their emotions for constructive activities

that will benefit their organization (Law et al., 2004). Such employees may also avoid behaviors that will harm the organization because they are aware of the negative effects of these behaviors (De Clercq et al., 2014). Thus, they tend to use their emotions for positive purposes and may focus on to improve personal and organizational outcomes, including increased performance, OCB, job satisfaction, well-being (Fernández-Berrocal & Extremera, 2016; Hui-Hua & Schutte, 2015; Ouyang, Sang, Li, & Peng, 2015).

Finally, the results of this study show that the regulation of emotion (ROE) ability is a negative predictor of CWB-I, in line with previous related research (Greenidge et al., 2014). This finding suggests that ROE would reduce harmful behaviors directed toward colleagues within the workplace. Dan-Glauser and Scherer (2013) has also argued that individuals who lack this ability may experience relationship impairments and show inappropriate behaviors. Thus, it can be concluded that ability to regulate emotions may reduce CWB-I.

Practical implications

The findings of this study indicate ability-based emotional intelligence may play an important role in increasing organizational citizenship behaviors and reducing counter-productive behaviors in the workplace. Therefore, managers should take candidate employees' emotional intelligence into consideration in the recruitment process, as well as their technical knowledge and intellectual intelligence.

Our findings further suggest that others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion are important abilities for an employee to maintain healthy relationships with his/her coworkers. That is, while these abilities may increase helping behaviors toward other people in the workplace, they may also reduce harmful behaviors. Therefore, to enhance these abilities, empathy, and stress management training seminars can be given to staff. Additionally, senior management may appreciate employees' OCB who goes beyond in their work role to encourage them (Balkin & Richebé, 2007).

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be noted to interpret our results properly. First, all variables were collected using self-reports, which may increase common method variance (CMV). Although the confirmatory factor analyses showed that the constructs empirically discriminated, our findings may be susceptible to CMV. Second, OCB and CWB were measured with self-ratings. Employees may be more inclined to give favorable ratings to themselves. Therefore, future research may measure OCB and CWB by using multiple sources including, supervisors, coworkers, company records. A third limitation of this study is our data was cross-sectional, limiting to make causal inferences among study variables. Finally, our sample included only participants from universities. Yet, the participants were recruited from 50 different universities throughout Turkey, strengthening the generalizability of the results to academic staff in Turkey.

Future research

Future research may explore other employee-related and organizational outcomes of emotional intelligence, including work engagement, turnover, job embeddedness, employee

well-being or psychological distress (e.g. emotional exhaustion, burnout, detachment). Potential moderators can be included in the research model because the relationships discovered in this study may vary based on the levels of moderators. Such variables may be personality, job stressors, leadership styles or demographic variables. For instance, previous research indicated that younger employees display more CWB and less OCB than older employees (Ng & Feldman, 2008). This study can also be conducted in different context where interpersonal relationships are intense, including healthcare organizations, hotels, restaurants or the aviation sector. Employees of these industries are more likely to engage in undesirable behaviors since these industries are famous with high work demands, risk, pressure, and high failure costs (Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013).

Conclusion

Our findings illustrate that the four ability-based emotional intelligence dimensions might have different impacts on discretionary workplace behaviors, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and counterproductive behavior (CWB). Three conclusions can be arrived based on our findings: First, the ability to use emotion may carry out a critical role in increasing organizational OCB and reducing organizational CWB. Second, the ability to appraise other's may encourage employees to help their colleagues (interpersonal OCB) and organization (organizational OCB). Third, regulation of emotion represents the prominent dimension of emotional intelligence that would prevent employees to display interpersonally targeted counterproductive work behaviors.

Declaration of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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