



Research Article

## Does Workplace Friendship Influence Organizational Identification? The Mediator Role of Positive Affectivity

### İşyeri Arkadaşlığı Örgütsel Özdeşleşmeyi Etkiler Mi? Olumlu Duyguların Aracı Rolü

Esra Çınar<sup>a</sup>

#### ARTICLE INFO

**Keywords:**  
Broaden and Build Theory,  
Interpersonal Relationships,  
Organizational  
Identification,  
Positive Affectivity,  
Workplace Friendship.

**Article history:**  
Received 27 August 2023  
Received in Revised Form  
2 October 2023  
Accepted 6 October 2023

#### MAKALE BİLGİSİ

**Anahtar Kelimeler:**  
Genişleme ve İnşa Kuramı,  
Kişilerarası İlişkiler,  
Örgütsel Özdeşleşme,  
İşyeri Arkadaşlığı,  
Olumlu Duygular.

**Tarihler:**  
Geliş 27 Ağustos 2023  
Düzeltilme Geliş  
2 Ekim 2023  
Kabul  
6 Ekim 2023

#### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the mediator effect of positive affectivity on the relationship between workplace friendship and organizational identification within the framework of the broaden-and-built theory. In this context, data were collected from 205 people working in different sectors such as education, health, and information technologies, and the hypotheses of the research were tested. The relationships between the variables were examined by correlation and hierarchical regression analysis. Hayes's (2013) PROCESS macro program was used for the mediation test in the research. The findings showed that workplace friendship significantly and positively predicts organizational identification. In addition, a positive relationship has been found between positive affectivity and workplace friendship and organizational identification. Finally, positive affectivity was found to partially mediate the relationship between workplace friendship and organizational identification.

#### ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, işyeri arkadaşlığı ile örgütsel özdeşleşme arasındaki ilişkide olumlu duyguların aracı etkisinin genişleme ve inşa kuramı çerçevesinde araştırılmasıdır. Bu kapsamda eğitim, sağlık ve bilgi teknolojileri gibi farklı sektörlerde çalışan 205 kişiden veri toplanarak araştırmanın hipotezleri test edilmiştir. Değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler korelasyon ve hiyerarşik regresyon analizi ile incelenmiştir. Araştırmada aracılık testi için Hayes'in (2013) PROCESS makro programı kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular, işyeri arkadaşlığının örgütsel özdeşleşmeyi anlamlı ve olumlu bir şekilde yordadığını göstermektedir. Buna ek olarak, olumlu duygular ile işyeri arkadaşlığı ve örgütsel özdeşleşme arasında olumlu bir ilişki olduğu bulunmuştur. Son olarak, işyeri arkadaşlığı ile örgütsel özdeşleşme arasındaki ilişkide olumlu duyguların kısmi aracı etkisi bulunmuştur.

<sup>a</sup> Dr Öğr. Üyesi., Atılım Üniversitesi, Havacılık Yönetimi Bölümü, Ankara, esra.cinar@atilim.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0002-2319-8668

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The important effects of organizational identification on organizations have made this construct one of the core concepts in the organizational behavior literature, and heavy research has been carried out to understand the antecedents and consequences of this term. Strong identification motivates employees to display behaviors that benefit the organization (Bartels, Vuuren & Ouwerkerk, 2019). A high level of identification results in a high level of job satisfaction and a low level of absenteeism and intention to leave (Bartels et al., 2019). Because of the positive effects of organizational identification, organizations want their employees to identify with the organization.

Organizational identification refers to a psychological bond between the individual and the organization (Karanika-Murray, Duncan, Pontes & Griffiths, 2015). Several factors contribute to the identification of employees in the organization, one of which is workplace friendship. Employees may inevitably need to interact with each other within the organization. Workplace friendship creates interpersonal relationships between employees (Guohao, Pervaiz & Qi, 2021). Especially with the increase in teamwork in organizations, workplace friendships have become an issue that organizations give priority to (Zarankin & Kunkel, 2019). Teamwork requires interpersonal relationships and interactions between team members (Zarankin & Kunkel, 2019). The more team members have good relationships with each other, the more the productivity of the team will improve.

Employees can establish relationships with their colleagues as a requirement of their job in the organization, or they can voluntarily establish relationships with their colleagues for reasons such as personal closeness, feeling emotional bonds, or having common interests and values. While some of the relationships between people in the workplace turn into friendships, some of these relationships are only based on work. Social psychology explains how and why employees form close relationships with only some of their friends (Potgieter, Ferreira & Coetzee, 2019). Due to the critical role of workplace friendship on the attitudes and behaviors of employees, the effects of workplace friendship in organizational life are significant (Kanten, Pazarcık, Kanten, Durmaz, 2020). With workplace friendship, an emotional tie is formed between people (McGuire, 2007) and this situation enables the parties to have positive feelings towards each other. In that case, it can be stated that emotions have an

important place in the existence of workplace friendship. Affects are a crucial mechanism in organizational behavior as they influence the way people think and how they think (Forgas & George, 2001). Positive emotions will trigger favorable thoughts towards an organization and coworkers (Mostafa, 2017). Therefore, workplace friendship contributes to the emergence of positive emotions, these feelings enable the person to perceive the organization more favorably (Mostafa, 2017), and thus organizational identification processes will emerge. Consistent with these statements, the mediator effect of positive affectivity between organizational identification and workplace friendship was investigated in the present study. When the organizational behavior literature is examined, there is a limited number of studies examining the relationship between organizational identification and workplace friendship and no study examining the mediator role of positive affectivity in the relationship between these two variables. In this context, it is aimed to contribute to the literature by examining the mediator effect of positive affectivity on the relationship between these variables based on the broaden-built theory. Moreover, this study contributes to the literature in the sense of showing how important friendship relationships are in organizations and that the positive emotions created by friendship relationships contribute not only to the psychological well-being of individuals but also to the organization by providing positive organizational outcomes such as organizational identification.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Organizational Identification

Organizational identification is a psychological construction that firmly connects the organization and its employees (Vijayakumar & Padma, 2014). Organizational identification takes its theoretical basis from Social Identity Theory. Social identity theory, which handles organizational identification as a shared identity brings a new and strong framework for understanding organizational identification (Ashforth & Meal, 1989). The theory developed by Tajfel (1978) is of great importance in the field of social psychology. Social identity theory deals with group processes (Hogg, Hardie & Reynolds, 1995) and intergroup relations in a psychological dimension (Haslam, Reicher & Katherine, 2012), and shows why individuals behave in a certain way (Van Dick, Grojean, Christ & Wieseke, 2006). From the perspective of this theory, groups are important structures that provide social identity to the group members (Tyler &

Blader, 2003), shape their behaviors (Hekman, Bigley, Steensma & Hereford, 2009) and self-perceptions (Tropp & Wright, 2016). Put differently, a social group can be defined as two or more individuals having the same social identity or self-definition (Abrams & Hogg, 1990), and describing themselves with a certain social category (Stets & Burke, 2000). The social identity is defined as the perception of belonging to a particular group (Richter, Van Dick & West, 2004).

Through the lens of social identity theory, the more individuals define themselves as a part of an organization, the more their behavior is governed by the organizational/group membership (Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, Christ & Tissington, 2005). Consistent with this line of thinking, the perception of belonging to a particular group/organization (Pratt, 1998) or internalization of social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) reveals identification processes (Pratt, 1998). In other words, the strength of adherence to social identity will determine the level of organizational identification.

Social identity theory offers a theoretical explanation for understanding organizational identification and its many antecedents (Broch, Lurati, Zamparini & Mariconda, 2018). The association of social identity theory with organizational identification is based on the study of Ashforth and Mael (1989). The theory emphasizes that organizational identification is a cognitive process (Broch et al., 2018). Organizational identification can be defined as compliance between individual attributes and organizational attributes (Wan-Huggins, Riordan & Griffeth, 1998), the match between personal and organizational goals and values (Brown, 1969), the cognitive link between self-concept and perceived organizational identity (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994). Organizational identification boosts the solidarity between the self and the organization (Ahmad, Ishaq & Raza, 2023).

Organizational identification offering a sense of belonging to an organization enables individuals to understand who they are (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The match between the self-concept and organizational attributes will increase organizational identification which directs individuals' way of feeling, acting, or behaving (Dutton et al., 1994). Then, identified individuals feel themselves as part of the organization (Dutton et al., 1994). When individuals associate themselves with a particular group and identify themselves with this category, identification takes place (Van Dick et al., 2006).

## 2.2. Workplace Friendship

Friendship can be defined as individuals spending time together, the quality of interaction between individuals, or the benefits individuals derive from each other (Zarankin & Kunkel, 2019). Friendship, which is a socio-emotional need, affects the attitudes and behaviors of individuals in their social and organizational lives (Song, 2006). Workplace friendship is an informal (Alparslan, Çiçek & Soydemir, 2015) and mutual relationship between individuals in the organization (Wright, 1978). Workplace friendship which refers to psychological proximity among employees (Huang, 2016) creates interpersonal bonds among employees (Sias et al., 2008). It is crucial to differentiate work-based relationships and workplace friendships. Work-based relationships are formally defined, and these relationships are developed to achieve work goals (Dietz & Fasbender, 2022). Conversely, friendship in the workplace is formed voluntarily between employees (Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018).

Friendship in the workplace triggers many positive organizational outcomes including person-organization fit (Alparslan et al., 2015), work engagement (Şahinbaş & Erigüç, 2019), job performance (Uluçay & Zengin, 2020), and perceived job significance (Mao, Hsieh & Chen, 2012). Conversely, workplace friendship decreases the intention to leave (Büyükyılmaz & Biçer, 2008) and absenteeism (Berman, West & Richter, 2002).

Employees in the workplace can interact with each other constantly, but not every relationship between individuals turns into friendship. In other words, workplace friendship involves more than just being friendly or mutually acquainted (Berman et al., 2002). For such friendship, there must be trust, liking, shared interests, values, experiences, and proximity (Berman et al., 2002). Furthermore, being close to each other or interacting frequently can contribute to the formation of workplace friendships by allowing them to get to know each other better.

Frequent interactions of individuals in the organization and similarities such as age, gender, and education increase the likelihood of friendships in the workplace (Lee, 2005). Close relationships that increase trust, commitment, and the sharing of information between employees (Huang, 2016), and the sharing of social feelings/thoughts will be effective in bringing employees closer to each other and acting in the same direction (Alparslan et al., 2015).

## 2.3. Positive Affectivity

Affects are an important phenomenon that shapes the attitudes and behaviors of individuals in personal and organizational life. Affect refers to

specific emotions or more general moods (Rego, Sousa, Marques & Cunha, 2012b). Lee & Allen (2002) define affect as a broad and generic concept that includes both emotion and mood. Affects may be regarded as a term that covers a broad range of experiences that individuals have, such as feeling states, which are momentary moods and emotions, and feeling more stable traits (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Mood may be influenced by personality traits and situational factors, such as work-related and non-work-related events, affective reactions within one's group, group size, proximity and dispositional characteristics of group members, leader mood, and (Brief & Weiss, 2002) reactions to organizational punishments and rewards.

In the field of positive psychology, it is seen that researchers' focus is on positive emotions rather than negative emotions in organizations (Wu, Zhang, Pirbhulal, Mukhopadhyay & Zhang, 2015). An individual's positive affectivity tends to reflect how enthusiastic, active, and alert they feel (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988). High positive affectivity is characterized by a state of high energy, complete concentration, and joyful interaction (Watson et al., 1988). Moreover, it indicates people's overall tendency to feel a state of positive affectivity as well as their tendency to interpret environmental cues such as leadership styles in positive ways such as energetically, or cheerfully (Gilmore, Hu, Tetrick, & Zaccaro, 2013).

On the other hand, negative affectivity is a subjective discomfort and unfavorable engagement that encompasses a wide range of adverse mood states such as rage, disdain, disgust, guilt, fear, and anxiousness (Watson et al., 1988). Negative affect is a broad dimension of sadness and discontent. Fear, anger, sadness, guilt, contempt, and disgust are examples of unpleasant emotional states associated with high negative affect (Watson & Clark, 1992). Its appearance in assessments of experienced emotion suggests that these distinct negative effects co-occur extensively within and across people. Similarly, the overall positive affect dimension reveals significant co-occurrences among positive mood states; in other words, someone who feels cheerful will also feel engaged, eager, confident, and attentive (Watson & Clark, 1992). Positive emotions extend the individual's attentional and behavioral repertoire, which in turn builds social, intellectual, and physical resources, whereas negative emotions narrow attention and action repertoire (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000).

In an organizational life, employees may experience both positive and negative effects. Positive emotions can promote favorable organizational

outcomes, whereas negative emotions can cause unfavorable organizational outcomes.

### 3. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1. Workplace Friendship and Organizational Identification

Friendship in the workplace promotes support and sociability and such a friendly atmosphere in the organization leads to positive organizational outcomes (Morrison & Nolan, 2007), one of which may be organizational identification. In the light of Kram and Isabella's (1985) definition of workplace friendship, workplace friendship allows employees to share information, encourage emotional commitment, and help each other in the workplace, and this is called organizational identification (Kelman, 2006). Interpersonal relationships based on workplace friendship between employees provide mutual support, commitment, shared interest (Berman et al., 2002), emotional support (Sias, Heath, Perry & Silva, 2004), socioemotional goals (Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018), emotional ties (McGuire, 2007), and trust (Burch, 2018). Moreover, workplace friendship facilitates information sharing among individuals and this creates a positive working environment in the organization (Abugre, 2007), which will positively affect organizational identification. Employees' high level of support to each other in the organization increases job satisfaction and in turn provides organizational identification (Ting & Ho, 2017). While workplace friendship creates a perception of social support in people, it improves people's feelings of trust toward their colleagues and ultimately the organizations they work for. Positive and supportive relationships at work can be regarded as a positive resource (Simbula, Margheritti & Avanzi, 2023), and such a positive atmosphere in the organization will provide an identification with the organization.

Employees' commitment to the organization and their emotional bond can be strengthened through workplace friendship, which improves employees' sense of belonging and increases their commitment to the company (Potgieter, Ferreira & Coetzee, 2019). Then, workplace friendship will connect the employees to the organization more, which can be accepted as an indicator of organizational identification. Therefore, it can be concluded that close interpersonal relationships in an organization are positive influences organizational identification (Jones & Volpe, 2011). In line with these explanations, recent studies reveal that workplace friendship positively influences organizational identification (Ting & Ho, 2017; Jones & Volpe,

2011). Depending on these statements, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1:* There is a significant and positive association between workplace friendship and organizational identification.

### 3.2. The Mediating Role of Positive Affectivity in Between Workplace Relationships and Organizational Identification

Affects are related to assisting coworkers, defending the company by offering helpful recommendations, having favorable judgments, and spreading compassion (George & Brief, 1992). When everything is going well, individuals may broaden their resources and friendships; they can extend their repertoire of skills for future use, or they can relax to refuel their energies after exerting significant effort (Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005). According to the broad-and-build theory, positive emotions broaden people's sense of self to include others, and expanding self-boundaries results in seeing close others as part of the self (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). This in turn may generate feelings of self-other overlap and "oneness" over time (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). The feelings of self-other overlap may foster a deep appreciation of others and cause the relationship to grow closer (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006).

Positive emotions broaden cognition, promote more inclusive social categorization, foster feelings of oneness (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006), cause

Furthermore, drawing upon the broaden-and-build theory, positive emotions extend individuals' sense of self to include others and lead the relationship to grow closer (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006).

On the other hand, employees' positive affect facilitates an optimistic worldview (Hill, Matta & Mitchell, 2021) and causes them to perceive their organization favorably, which in turn results in organizational identification. It is assumed that workplace friendship allows individuals to spend more time with each other, and to get to know each other better, and thus more positive feelings arise between the parties. In parallel with the statements above, it is inferred that positive affectivity may be a mediator in the association between workplace friendship and organizational identification. Given the above, the following direct and mediating hypotheses are developed:

*Hypothesis 2:* There is a significant relationship between workplace friendship and positive affectivity.

*Hypothesis 3:* There is a significant relationship between positive affectivity and organizational identification.

*Hypothesis 4:* Positive affectivity will mediate the association between workplace friendship and organizational identification.

The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1.

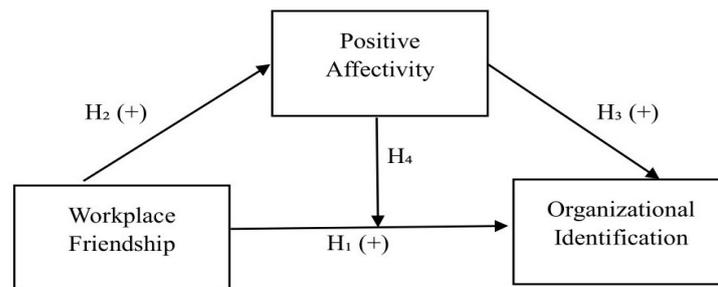


Figure 1: Theoretical Model

upward spirals toward increased psychological health and well-being (Galanakis, Galanopoulou & Stalikas, 2011), and encourage social bonds and interpersonal connections within the organization (Rego, Sousa, Marques & Cunha, 2012a). Individuals with a high positive affect view things from a good perspective and are thus more likely to feel favorable toward their company (Mostafa, 2017). Positive emotions enhance social bonds, interpersonal connections (Rego et al., 2012a), and feelings of oneness (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006).

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. Sample

In this study, an electronic questionnaire was sent to individuals working in different sectors such as education, health care, and information technologies by using a convenience sampling method. Individuals voluntarily participated in an online

electronic questionnaire which was sent via e-mail. A total of 205 (49% response rate) out of 419 individuals completed the survey. Of the 205 participants (mean [M]age=40.57 years; standard deviation [SD]=9.94; range=22 to 73; organizational tenure M= 10.39 years, SD= 9.11; range= 1 to 35), 63.4% (n=130) was female and 36.6% (n=75) was male. Of the total number, 34.1% had a bachelor's degree (n=70), 34.1 % a master's degree (n=70), and 31.8% a PhD degree (n=65).

#### 4.2. Data Collection

An electronic questionnaire was sent to participants to gather the data for the study. The purpose of the study was stated to the participants and the data were collected voluntarily. The questionnaire comprises the items of positive affectivity, workplace friendship, and organizational identification. Demographic information such as age, gender, educational status, and organizational tenure were included in the questionnaire for a better understanding of the demographics of the participants.

#### 4.3. Measures

*Organizational identification scale.* A six-item scale developed by Mael & Ashforth (1992) was used to measure organizational identification in the study. The scale was translated into Turkish by Tak & Aydemir (2004). The sample item of the scale is "I am very interested in what others think about my

(2000) was used in the study. One of the items was reverse-scored. The sample item includes "Being able to see my coworkers is one reason why I look forward to my job". Participants were asked to select, on a five-point Likert scale, their degree of agreement or disagreement with the items (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). High scores from the scale indicated a high tendency for building workplace friendship (M= 3.95, SD=.77). The internal reliability measured by Cronbach's alpha was found .90. The model fit indices which are shown in Table 2 shows that the scale has a good fit (CMIN/df: 1.33, CFI: .989, TLI: 0.985, RMSEA: .041).

*Positive affectivity scale.* The 20-item PANAS scale developed by Watson, Clark & Tellegen (1988) was used to measure positive affectivity. The scale consists of 10 positive affect items such as "inspired" and "proud" and 10 negative affect items such as "nervous" and "ashamed". On a 5-point scale (1—very slightly or not at all; 2—a little; 3—moderately; 4—quite a bit; 5—extremely), the extent to which each of the 10 items for positive affectivity represented how participants felt over the past month was asked. High scores from the scale represented high levels of positive effects felt over the past months (M=3.70, SD= .61). The reliability measured by Cronbach's alpha was .89. The model fit indices of positive affectivity which are shown in Table 2 shows that the scale has a good and acceptable fit (CMIN/df: 1.85, CFI: .974, TLI: .96, RMSEA: .065).

**Table 2:** Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of the Constructs

Construct	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Organizational Identification	1.85	.98	.97	.06
Workplace Friendship	1.33	.98	.98	.04
Positive Affectivity	1.85	.97	.96	.06

Notes. CFI: Comparative fit index; TLI: Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA: Root mean square error of approximation

organization". The extent to which the participants agreed to the items on the scale was inquired on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). High scores presented high levels of organizational identification (M= 3.51, SD=.91). The internal consistency measured by Cronbach's alpha was found .87. The model fit indices which are shown in Table 2 show that the scale has a good fit (CMIN/df: 1.85, CFI: .987, TLI: 0.976, RMSEA: .06).

*Workplace friendship scale.* A twelve-item scale originally developed by Nielsen, Jex & Adams

#### 4.4. Common Method Bias

Data collection based on the self-report of the participants through questionnaires, interviews, and surveys is the most widely used method in social sciences (Kline, Sulsky & Rever-Moriyama, 2000). We gathered the data through questionnaires based on the responses of the participants. As both dependent and independent variables are included in a single survey, participants' responses may cause a bias in examining the anticipated effect of one construct in another construct (Tehseen, Ramayah & Sajilan, 2017), and cause social desirability in choosing survey items (Kline et al.,

2000). Respondents' social desirability may be a source of common method variance and it may result in high correlation between dependent and independent variables (Theseen et al., 2017). Considering that the answers given by the participants may affect the results of empirical studies and that these answers may cause bias, it is seen that the issue of common method variance has been given importance in recent empirical studies in the field of organization and psychology (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015).

Different techniques namely preventive, detective, and corrective provide to understand the common method bias problems in the empirical studies. Preventive techniques, also named procedural remedies by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, (2003) are used in the design of surveys to decrease or prevent the occurrence of the common method bias (Aguirre-Urreta & Hu, 2019). We first used the proximal separation approach by altering the sequence of items in the questionnaire as a preventative technique. In other words, we

Reynaud, Yasin & Bhatti, 2018), which showed that common method bias did not exist in this study. Depending on the common method analyses' result, we made further analyses to check the mediator effect of positive affectivity between workplace friendship and organizational identification.

#### 4.5. Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among measured variables are indicated in Table 1. The relationships among variables of the model were supported by correlational analyses. Correlation results showed a positive correlation between workplace friendship and organizational identification ( $r=.426$ ;  $p<.01$ ), and positive affectivity ( $r=.332$ ;  $p<.01$ ). Positive affectivity is positively correlated with organizational identification ( $r=.334$ ;  $p<.01$ ). Participants had a high level of organizational identification (Mean= 3.81; SD= .77), workplace friendship (Mean= 3.95; SD= .91), and positive affectivity (Mean= 3.71; SD= .61).

**Table 1:** Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Constructs

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
Organizational Identification	3.81	.77	(.87)		
Workplace Friendship	3.95	.91	.426*	(.9)	
Positive Affectivity	3.71	.61	.334**	.332**	(.89)

\*\* $p<.01$ , \* Cronbach's alpha for each scale is shown in parentheses on the diagonal

applied physical distances between predictor and criterion variables. Detective techniques, the most widely used Harman's single factor test, provide information for the likelihood of common method bias in the data (Aguirre-Urreta & Hu, 2019). We applied Harman's single factor test, as a detective technique, in which all variables are inserted into an exploratory factor analysis to determine whether variance in the data is mostly loaded into a single factor (Change, Witteloostuijn & Eden, 2010). The result of 23,43% (threshold value of  $\leq .50$ ) revealed that a single factor does not account for most of the covariance between variables. Finally, corrective techniques are applied as a series of statistical analyses to understand corrective estimates of the relationships among variables (Aguirre-Urreta et al., 2019). At this point, we analyzed the common latent factor (CLF) in the Amos program.

After putting CLF into the structural model, we checked the differences between standardized regression weights for all items with and without CLF. The differences between them were less than the threshold value of .2 (Serrano Archimi,

#### 4.6. Hypotheses Testing

To test the hypotheses of the study, hierarchical regression analyses were performed. Hierarchical regression analysis results show that in the first step, workplace friendship positively predicted ( $\beta=.41$ ,  $p<.01$ ) organizational identification, and in the second step, workplace friendship had a positive and significant effect ( $\beta= .26$ ,  $p<.01$ ) on positive affectivity. In the third step, a significant and positive influence of positivity affectivity on organizational identification was revealed. The final step indicated the mediation role of positive affectivity between workplace friendship and organizational identification ( $\beta=.31$ ,  $p<.01$ ). When positive affectivity was inserted into the model, the value of workplace friendship on organizational identification decreased from  $\beta=.20$  ( $p<.41$ ) to  $\beta=.08$  ( $p<.01$ ). In other words, with the inclusion of positive affectivity into the model, some of the relationship between workplace friendship and organizational identification was explained by positive affectivity. This result shows that positive affectivity has a partial mediating role in the relationship between workplace friendship and

organizational identification. Hierarchical analysis results are displayed in Table 3.

Moreover, the mediator effect of positive affectivity between workplace friendship and organizational identification was examined. The findings

**Table 3:** Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results

	S.E.	$\beta$	95% Bootstrap CI	
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit
1. Workplace friendship and organizational identification	.07	.41	.26	.57
2. Workplace friendship and positive affectivity	.05	.26	.16	.37
3. Positive affectivity and organizational identification	.09	.31	.12	.51
4. Workplace friendship, positive affectivity, and organizational identification	.06	.08	.02	.16

## 5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of the study was to investigate the mediator effect of positive affectivity in the association between workplace friendship and organizational identification. The anticipated positive relationship between workplace friendship and organizational identification was supported, which means that workplace friendship increases organizational identification. This finding is in line with the study of Ting & Ho (2017). On the other hand, Ahmad et al. (2023) found that workplace friendship negatively effects organizational identification. Thus, the first hypothesis was supported.

Another finding of this study showed that workplace friendship positively influences positive affectivity. Hence, hypothesis 2 was supported. Although positive affect is a key element of workplace friendship (Zarankin ve Kunkel, 2019), to our knowledge, none of the studies empirically examined the relationship between these two variables. Similar to the result of this study, Kim & Oh (2023) revealed that occupying a central position in the workplace friendship causes positive affects. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by revealing the relationship between them. Furthermore, positive affects facilitate an optimistic view of the organization (Hill et al., 2021), and this situation contributes to organizational identification. Consistent with this notion, the finding of this study showed that positive affectivity positively influences organizational identification.

demonstrated that positive affectivity partially mediates the association between workplace friendship and organizational identification. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

The main contribution of the current study is indicating the mediation role of positive affectivity in the relationship between organizational identification and workplace friendship. This result shows that friendship in the workplace is a crucial variable in enhancing positive affectivity. Moreover, the findings revealed that workplace friendship is a predictor of both positive affectivity and organizational identification. Positive affectivity is an antecedent of organizational identification.

The findings of this study will guide the managers. Considering that organizational identification has fruitful benefits for organizations, managers can create a positive atmosphere within the organization that will allow employees to socialize and interact with each other. Accordingly, the social activities to be held within the organization will enable the employees to get to know each other better by providing interaction between the employees. In time, interpersonal relationships that begin ordinarily can turn into workplace friendships as employees discover their similarities and commonalities. Positive workplace friendships will lead to the emergence of positive emotions so that organizational identification processes will emerge. Employees who identify with the organization at a high level will exert a high for the benefit of the organization.

This study also has some suggestions for future studies. Just as workplace friendships benefit both individuals and organizations, it also has

detrimental effects on individuals and organizations. In this vein, examining the dark side effects of workplace friendship on organizational identification will contribute to the organizational behavior literature. Furthermore, interpersonal relationships and workplace friendships are much more essential in collectivist cultures than in individualistic cultures (Rhee, Yang & Yoo, 2013). Carrying out the same study in individualistic culture may reveal different results. Finally, the mediator effect of negative affectivity in the relationship between organizational identification and workplace friendship can be examined in future studies.

Although this study contributes to the organizational behavior literature in many ways, it also has some potential limitations. Firstly, the data was gathered at one point in time. Collecting data in different time series and conducting a longitudinal study will make the results attained from the data more reliable and reveal the causal relationships between variables. Secondly, as the data was gathered based on the self-report of the participants, it may cause social desirability. Even though, as stated above, preventive, detective, and corrective techniques were applied to minimize the possibility of the common method bias problem, this problem was not eliminated from the study.

## **ETHICS DECLARATIONS**

**Funding:** No grant funding was obtained or utilized for the completion of this study.

**Conflict of interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Ethical Approval:** All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were by the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Ethics Committee Approval was obtained for this research from the Başkent University Ethics Committee with the date of 19/04/2023.

**Informed Consent:** Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

## REFERENCES

- Abugre, J. B. (2017). Relations at workplace, cynicism, and intention to leave: A proposed conceptual framework for organizations. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 25(2), 198-216. doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-09-2016-1068
- Abrams, D. & Hogg, M. A. (1990). Social identification, self-categorization, and social influence. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 1(1), 195-228. doi.org/10.1080/14792779108401862
- Aguirre-Urreta, M. I. & Hu, J. (2019). Detecting common method bias: Performance of the Harman's single-factor test. *ACM SIGMIS Database: The DATABASE for Advances in Information Systems*, 50(2), 45-70. doi.org/10.1145/3330472.3330477
- Ahmad, R., Ishaq, M. I. & Raza, A. (2023). The blessing or curse of workplace friendship: Mediating role of organizational identification and moderating role of political skills. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 108. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2022.103359
- Alparslan, A. M., Çicek, H. & Soydemir, S. (2015). Birey- Örgüt uyumunu güçlendiren öncül: İşyeri arkadaşlığı. *Akdeniz İİBF Dergisi*, 15(32), 175-194.
- Ashforth, B. E. & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(1), 20-39. doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4278999
- Bartels, J., Van Vuuren, M. & Ouwerkerk, J. W. (2019). My colleagues are my friends: The role of Facebook contacts in employee identification. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 33(3), 307-328. doi.org/10.1177/0893318919837944
- Barsade, S.G. & Gibson, D.E. (2007). Why does affect matter in organizations? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 21(1), 36-59. doi.org/10.5465/amp.2007.24286163
- Berman, E. M. West, J. P., & Richter, Jr, M. N. (2002). Workplace relations: Friendship patterns and consequences (according to managers). *Public Administration Review*, 62(2), 217-230. doi.org/10.1111/0033-3352.00172
- Broch, C., Lurati, F., Zamparini, A. & Mariconda, S. (2018). The role of social capital for organizational identification: Implications for strategic communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 12(1), 46-66. doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2017.1392310
- Brief, A. P. & Weiss, H. M. (2002). Organizational behavior: Affect in the workplace. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 279-307.
- Brown, M. E. (1969). Identification and some conditions of organizational involvement. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 346-355. doi.org/10.2307/2391129
- Burch, A. (2018). *Workplace friendship, privacy management, and identity negotiation: An exploratory qualitative analysis* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Nebraska, Omaha.
- Büyükyılmaz, O., & Biçer, C. (2018). İşyeri arkadaşlığının işten ayrılma niyeti üzerindeki etkisinde işe bağlılığın aracılık rolü. *Social Sciences*, 13(2), 28-41.
- Change, S., Witteloostuijn, A. V. & Eden, L. (2010). From the editors: Common method variance in international research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41, 178-184.
- Dietz, L. & Fasbender, U. (2022). Age-diverse workplace friendship: A systematic literature review and recommendations for future research. *Work, Aging and Retirement*, 8(2), 163-197. doi.org/10.1093/workar/waab028
- Dutton, J. E., Dukerich, J. M. & Harquail, C. V. (1994). Organizational images and member identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 239-263. doi.org/10.2307/2393235
- Folkman, S. & Moskowitz, J. T. (2000). Positive affect and the other side of coping. *American Psychologist*, 55(6), 647-654. doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.6.647
- Forgas, J. P. & George, J. M. (2001). Affective influences on judgments and behavior in organizations: An information processing perspective. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 86, 1, 3-34. doi.org/10.1006/obhd.2001.2971
- Galanakis, M., Galanopoulou, F. & Stalikas, A. (2011). Do positive emotions help us cope with occupational stress? *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 7 (2), 221-240. doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v7i2.127
- Gilmore, P. L., Hu, X., We F., Tetrick, L. E. & Zaccaro, S. J. (2013). Positive affectivity neutralizes transformational leadership's influence on creative performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34, 1061-1075. doi.org/10.1002/job.1833
- George, M. J. & Brief, A. P. (1992). Feeling good-doing good: A conceptual analysis of the mood at work-organizational spontaneity relationship. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(2), 310-329. doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.112.2.310
- Guohao, L., Pervaiz, S. & Qi, H. (2021). Workplace friendship is a blessing in the exploration of supervisor behavioral integrity, affective commitment, and employee proactive behavior—An empirical research from service industries of Pakistan. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 1447-1459.

- Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D. & Reynolds, K. J. (2012). Identity, influence, and change: Rediscovering John Turner's vision for social psychology. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 51*(2), 201-218. doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.2011.02091.x
- Hekman, D. R., Bigley, G. A., Steensma, H. K. & Hereford, J. F. (2009). Combined effects of organizational and professional identification on the reciprocity dynamic for professional employees. *Academy of Management Journal, 52*, 506-526. doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.41330897
- Hogg, M. A., Hardie, E. A. & Reynolds, K. J. (1995). Prototypical similarity, self-categorization, and depersonalized attraction: A perspective on group cohesiveness. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 25*(2), 159-177. doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420250204
- Hill, E. T., Matta, F. K. & Mitchell, M. S. (2021). Seeing the glass as half full or half empty: The role of affect-induced optimistic and pessimistic states on justice perceptions and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal, 64* (4), 1265-1287. doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.1282
- Huang, S. P. (2016). A study on the effects of emotional intelligence and workplace friendship on job satisfaction and performance of employees in micro-enterprises. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Mathematics, 19*(3), 567-583. doi.org/10.1080/09720502.2016.1196050
- Jakobsen, M. & Jensen, R. (2015). Common method bias in public management studies. *International Public Management Journal, 18*(1), 3-30. doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2014.997906
- Jones C. & Volpe E. H. (2011) Organizational identification: Extending our understanding of social identities through social networks. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 32*(3), 413-434. doi.org/10.1002/job.694
- Kanten, P., Pazarcık, Y., Kanten, S. & Durmaz, M. G. (2020). İşyeri arkadaşlığının prososyal kural ihlali davranışı üzerindeki etkisinde affetme ikliminin rolü. *Turizm Akademik Dergisi-Tourism Academic Journal, 7*(2), 241-254.
- Karanika-Murray, M., Duncan, N., Pontes, H. M. & Griffiths, M. D. (2015). Organizational identification, work engagement, and job satisfaction. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 30*(8), 1019-1033. doi.org/10.1108/JMP-11-2013-0359
- Kelman, H. C. (2006). Interests, relationships, identities: Three central issues for individuals and groups in negotiating their social environment. *Annual Review of Psychology, 57*, 1-26. doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.57.102904.190156
- Kim, N. Y. & Oh, H. (2023). The effects of workplace friendship network centrality on deep acting. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, 1162086. doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1162086
- Kline, T. J., Sulsky, L. M. & Rever-Moriyama, S. D. (2000). Common method variance and specification errors: A practical approach to detection. *The Journal of Psychology, 134*(4), 401-421. doi.org/10.1080/00223980009598225
- Kram, K. E. & Isabella, L. A. (1985). Mentoring alternatives: The role of peer relationships in career development. *Academy of Management Journal, 28*(1), 110-132. doi.org/10.5465/256064
- Lee, H. E. (2005). *Exploration of the relationship between friendship at work and job satisfaction: An application of balance theory* (Master Thesis). Michigan State University, Michigan.
- Lee, K. & Allen, N. J. (2022). Organizational citizenship behavior and workplace deviance: The role of effect and cognitions. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87* (1), 131-142. doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.1.131
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L. & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin, 131*(6), 803-855. doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803
- Mael, F. & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*(2), 103-123. doi.org/10.1002/job.4030130202
- Mao, H. Y., Hsieh, A. T. & Chen, C. Y. (2012). The relationship between workplace friendship and perceived job significance. *Journal of Management & Organization, 18*(2), 247-262. doi.org/10.5172/jmo.2012.18.2.247
- McGuire, G. M. (2007). Intimate work: A typology of the social support that workers provide to their network members. *Work and Occupations, 34*(2), 125-147. doi.org/10.1177/0730888406297313
- Morrison, R. L. & Nolan, T. (2007). Too much of a good thing?: Difficulties with workplace friendships. *University of Auckland Business Review, 9*(2).
- Mostafa, A. M. S. (2017). High-performance HR practices, positive affect, and employee outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 32*(2), 163-176. doi.org/10.1108/JMP-06-2016-0177
- Nielsen, I. K., Jex, S. M. & Adams, G. A. 2000. Development and validation of scores on a two-dimensional workplace friendship scale. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 60*(4), 628-643. doi.org/10.1177/00131640021970655
- Pillemer, J. & Rothbard, N. P. (2018). Friends without benefits: Understanding the dark sides of workplace friendship. *Academy of Management Review, 43*(4), 635-660. doi.org/10.5465/amr.2016.0309

- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y. & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(5), 879. doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879
- Potgieter, I., Ferreira, N. & Coetzee, M. (2019). Perceptions of sacrifice, workplace friendship, and career concerns as explanatory mechanisms of employees' organizational commitment. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 17*(1), 1-9.
- Pratt, M. G. (1998). Central questions in organizational identification. *Identity in Organizations, 24*(3), 171-207.
- Rego, A., Sousa, F., Marques, C. & Cunha, M. P. E. (2012a). Optimism predicting employees' creativity: The mediating role of positive affect and the positivity ratio. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 21*(2), 244-270. doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2010.550679
- Rego, A., Sousa, F., Marques, C. & Cunha, M. P. E. (2012b). Retail employees' self-efficacy and hope to predict their positive affect and creativity. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 21*(6), 923-945. doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2011.610891
- Rhee, M., Yang, D. & Yoo, T. (2013). National culture and friendship homophily in the multinational workplace. *Asian Business & Management, 12*, 299-320.
- Richter, A., Van Dick, R. & West, M.A. (2004). The relationship between group and organizational identification and effective intergroup relations. *Academy of Management Proceedings, E1-E6*. doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2004.13862786
- Şahinbaş, F & Erigüç, G. (2019). Pozitif örgütsel davranış yaklaşımıyla işyeri arkadaşlığı ve işe adanma ilişkisi: Sağlık çalışanları üzerine bir araştırma. *Uluslararası Yönetim İktisat ve İşletme Dergisi, 15*(4), 1201-1225.
- Serrano Archimi, C., Reynaud, E., Yasin, H. M. & Bhatti, Z. A. (2018). How perceived corporate social responsibility affects employee cynicism: The mediating role of organizational trust. *Journal of Business Ethics, 151*, 907-921. doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3882-6
- Sias, P.M., Heath, R.G., Perry, T. & Silva, B. (2004). Narratives of workplace friendship deterioration. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 21*(3), 321-340. doi.org/10.1177/0265407504042835
- Sias, P. M., Drzewiecka, J. A., Meares, M., Bent, R., Konomi, Y., Ortega, M. & White, C. (2008). Intercultural friendship development. *Communication Reports, 21*(1), 1-13. doi.org/10.1080/08934210701643750
- Simbula, S., Margheritti, S. & Avanzi, L. (2023). Building work engagement in organizations: A longitudinal study combining social exchange and social identity theories. *Behavioral Sciences, 13*(2), 83. doi.org/10.3390/bs13020083
- Song, S. H. (2006). Workplace friendship and employees' productivity: LMX theory and the case of the Seoul city government. *International Review of Public Administration, 11*(1), 47-58. doi.org/10.1080/12294659.2006.10805077
- Stets, J. E. & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 224-237*. doi.org/10.2307/2695870
- Tajfel, H. (1978). *Differentiation between social groups*. London: Academic Press.
- Tak, B. & Aydemir, B. A., (2004). *Örgütsel özdeşleşme üzerine iki görgül çalışma*, 12. Ulusal Yönetim ve Organizasyon Kongresi 27-29 Mayıs, Uludağ Üniversitesi- Bursa
- Tehseen, S., Ramayah, T., & Sajilan, S. (2017). Testing and controlling for common method variance: A review of available methods. *Journal of Management Sciences, 4*(2), 142-168. doi: 10.20547/jms.2014.1704202
- Tyler, T. R. & Blader, S. L. (2003). The group engagement model: Procedural justice, social identity, and cooperative behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 7*(4), 349-361. doi.org/10.1207/S15327957PSPR0704\_07
- Ting, S. C. & Ho, M. H. (2017). The influence of workplace friendship, job involvement, and organizational identification on job performance: administrative staffs of private science and technology universities in south Taiwan as an example. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 9*(6), 46-57.
- Tropp, L. R. & Wright, S. C. (2001). Ingroup identification is the inclusion of ingroup in the self. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*(5), 585-600. doi.org/10.1177/0146167201275007
- Uluçay, E. & Zengin, Y. (2020). İşyeri arkadaşlığı ve işgören performansı arasındaki ilişki: Bir Araştırma. *Turkish Business Journal, 1*(1), 29-50.
- Van Dick, R., Wagner, U., Stellmacher, J., Christ, O. & Tissington, P. A. (2005). To be (long) or not to be (long): Social identification in organizational contexts. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs, 131*(3), 189-218. doi.org/10.3200/MONO.131.3.189-218
- Van Dick, R., Grojean, M. W., Christ, O. & Wieseke, J. (2006). Identity and the extra mile: Relationships between organizational identification and organizational citizenship behavior. *British Journal of*

*Management*. doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2006.00520.x

- Vijayakumar, V. S. R. & Padma, R. N. (2014). Impact of perceived organizational culture and learning on organizational identification. *International Journal of Commerce and Management*, 24(1), 40-62. doi.org/10.1108/IJCoMA-01-2012-0003
- Waugh C. E. & Fredrickson, B. L. (2006). Nice to know you: Positive emotions, self–other overlap, and complex understanding in the formation of a new relationship. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1(2), 93–106. doi.org/10.1080/17439760500510569
- Wan-Huggins, V. N., Riordan, C. M. & Griffeth, R. W. (1998). The development and longitudinal test of a model of organizational identification. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 28(8), 724-749. doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1998.tb01728.x
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A. & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(6), 1063-1070. doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063
- Watson, D. & Clark, L. A. (1992). On traits and temperament: General and specific factors of emotional experience and their relation to the five-factor model. *Journal of Personality*, 60(2), 441-476. doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1992.tb00980.x
- Wright, P. H. (1978). Toward a theory of friendship based on the conception of self. *Human Communication Research*, 4, 196-207. doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.1978.tb00609.x
- Wu, W., Zhang, H., Pirbhulal, S., Mukhopadhyay, S. C. & Zhang, Y. T. (2015). Assessment of biofeedback training for emotion management through wearable textile physiological monitoring system. *IEEE Sensors Journal*, 15(12), 7087-7095. doi: 10.1109/JSEN.2015.2470638
- Zarankin, T. G. & Kunkel, D. (2019). Colleagues and friends: A theoretical framework of workplace friendship. *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, 19(5).