Supervisor support and turnover intentions of yacht captains: the role of work–family conflict and psychological resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study was to investigate work–family conflict’s (WFC) mediating role and psychological resilience’s (PR) moderating role on the perceived supervisor support (SS) of yacht captains and their turnover intentions (TI) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors followed a quantitative approach and conducted a questionnaire survey of 320 Turkish yacht captains. The data were analyzed using SPSS 22 (Process macro v3.4) and AMOS 22 statistics package programs.

Findings – Perceived SS has direct and indirect effects on TI with WFC being the intermediate variable. WFC’s effect on TI varies according to the yacht captains’ levels of PR.

Practical implications – This study empirically uncovered the impact of supervisor support and PR levels, the most important factors for ensuring hospitality employees exhibit positive organizational attitudes and behaviors. This study shows that the success of yacht captains in this stressful work environment depends on positively perceived SS and PR levels. PR regulates the relationship between WFC and TIs. Thus, supervisors should prioritize meeting their employees’ expectations to effectively and efficiently manage their human resources, and supervisor support is essential for meeting these expectations.

Originality/value – According to the authors’ knowledge, this study is the first to assess the effect of supervisor support on TI, the mediating role of WFC and the moderating role of PR. In addition, the authors aimed to fill the research gaps on yacht captains, as a profession requiring expertise and field experience, and on PR in the tourism industry.

Keywords Supervisor support, Work–family conflict, Turnover intentions, Psychological resilience, Yacht captains

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has gravely affected the tourism industry, as many countries have halted their hospitality and tourism operations (Baum and Hai, 2020). As a result, by the end of 2020, the number of international tourist arrivals is estimated to decrease by 60% to 80% compared to the previous year, which poses a great risk for the world tourism industry (UNWTO, 2020a). The tourism industry has made numerous efforts to restart their services
while following COVID-19 guidelines. Before the pandemic, the demand for yacht tourism, which combines travel, hospitality and tourism, increased annually with tourists exploring virgin bays, visiting uninhabited islands and comfortably spending their time on the water (Hall, 2001; Sevinc and Guzel, 2017). Commercial yachts offer a service in which anyone can enjoy the experience, allowing yachting activities to reach a wider audience (Yorulmaz and Sevinc, 2020). During this pandemic, yacht tourism has become one of the favored tourism options, as yachts enable the practice of social distancing and passengers view them as floating boutique hotels. Although yacht businesses have been improving their service quality by complying with the COVID-19 measures, their employees’ attitudes, behaviors and psychological conditions are especially important during these times. Specifically, as the pandemic continues, yacht captains’ psychological resilience (PR), perceived supervisor support (SS) and work–family conflict (WFC) may have dramatic implications, with the most common being turnover intention (TI), as “employees do not leave places, they leave managers” (Gordon et al., 2019, p. 496).

Based on our literature review, organizations in the hospitality industry must design relevant policies and practices to retain their personnel (Lu and Gursoy, 2016; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Rasheed et al., 2020). The TI of yacht captains, who constantly and intensively communicate with the crew and tourists, can be an obstacle to the business goals because it can negatively affect the work environment and lead to customer dissatisfaction. Considering that the tourism industry is in a very sensitive period, such negative outcomes may worsen economic risks and crisis situations. By analyzing the factors that affect and play a mediating role in the TI of yacht captains, we expect to not only help them reduce their TI but also guide yacht businesses and hospitality managers. Most studies in the hospitality industry focus on hotel employees’ job satisfaction (Bangwal and Tiwari, 2019), SS (Gordon et al., 2019; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007), WFC (Chen et al., 2018; Pan and Yeh, 2019) and career adaptability (Rasheed et al., 2020). Additionally, researchers have discussed the importance of SS and TI’s impact from various perspectives (Afsar et al., 2018; Gordon et al., 2019; Jiang and Klein, 1999; O’Driscoll et al., 2003; Rasheed et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2019). Unfortunately, there is little research on PR’s moderating role in the relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and TI. Similarly, research tackling the pandemic’s impact on yacht captains’ WFC, PR, perceived SS and TI is nonexistent.

To fill these gaps within the literature, this study examines the impact of yacht captains’ perceived SS on their TI during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as WFC’s mediating role and PR’s moderating role within this relationship. This study also argues that WFC’s impact on TI varies depending on the PR levels: WFC would have less of an impact on TI among yacht captains with high PR levels compared to those with lower levels. Moreover, we think that a perceived SS will decrease TI and WFC, thus indirectly reducing TI. Thus, our intention is to explore the feelings, perceptions and PR of yacht captains, which may greatly affect their potential TI and the tourism industry during this sensitive period.

To determine whether there is a causal correlation between the abovementioned factors, we used a quantitative methodology – which is appropriate for the purpose of this research and helps find an answer to the research problem – and tested five hypotheses accordingly. In the absence of face-to-face interactions due to the pandemic, we used a Google Form questionnaire to collect the relevant data. This study with a sample of yacht captains highlights the diversity of the hospitality industry and measures it empirically by considering the industry’s sophisticated nature.
Literature review and hypothesis development

As tourists prefer visiting areas that overlook bodies of water, most holiday experiences are geared toward water-based recreational activities (Sevinc and Guzel, 2017; Swarbrooke, 2020). Notably, with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, tourists’ internal and external motivations toward water areas and related activities have increased, with many opting for yacht tourism, as it permits social distancing practices. This attraction to water has brought yachting activities to the front line of the hospitality and travel industry. Furthermore, the 2030 goal of the United Nation World Tourism Organization for tourism and sustainable development is clean water and sanitation, and yachting activities have fully adapted to this new normalization process (SuperYacht Times, 2020; UNWTO, 2020b).

According to Global Industry Analysts (2020), the global market for the yachting industry was valued at US$64.1bn during 2020’s COVID-19 crisis, and this number is expected to reach US$84.7bn by 2027. Thus, the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is predicted to be 4.1% within a seven-year period. In the USA, the yacht industry market, having a 29.44% share in the global market, is estimated to reach US$18.9bn in 2020, and the estimated market size is predicted to increase in many coastal countries such as China, Japan, Canada, Germany, England, Italy and Turkey. Similarly, the global yacht charter market, which was US$11,271.12m in 2019, will grow to US$15,537.71m by the end of 2025 at a CAGR of 5.49% (Global Industry Analysts, 2020). In other words, investments in and demands for yacht tourism are growing during the pandemic and will continue to grow in the foreseeable future. Yacht tourism services can mitigate COVID-19’s negative impact on the tourism economy with the increasing demands and measure implementations. In this sense, it is essential to evaluate the current status of yacht captains, because although they occupy the top rank in the commercial yacht crew hierarchy, they are in fact the employees who are directly affected by the current situation in the sector. As such, the pandemic’s indirect or direct reflections on yacht captains may influence their PR and WFC. In addition, supervisor attitudes or behaviors may have an influence on or play a mediating role in yacht captains’ work performance, motivation, job satisfaction or TI.

Researchers have grouped the concept of support, which is one of the most important perceptions affecting employee work attitudes and outputs, under three types: organizational, supervisor, and colleague support. The social exchange theory explains these different types of social support in the workplace, involving social exchanges between employees and organizations. The theory posits that employees with a positive perception of organizational support and who are rewarded for their efforts develop positive business attitudes and outcomes (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Zhao et al., 2020). SS is the basis of this mutual social exchange between an organization and an employee, because the supervisor’s employee support is perceived more clearly, as he/she represents the organization and is authorized to distribute its resources. Leader–member exchange (LMX) theory is another theory based on perceived SS, arguing that mutual expectations shape and realize the interactions between a leader and a member. As the supervisor represents the organization, the level of support he/she gives, affects the leader–member interactions. Therefore, LMX is an important theory for this study, as it also discusses perceived SS (Dai et al., 2016; Harris et al., 2009; Wang, 2016). Within this context, all of these studies noted that SS affects employees’ behaviors. Moreover, Chang et al. (2020) argue that employees have frequent interactions with guests in the hospitality industry; therefore, their behaviors are important and their psychological states are critical.

Previous studies indicated that SS affects TI, because SS is related to whether supervisors value employees’ work contributions, satisfaction, motivation and well-being (Gordon et al., 2019; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Kim et al., 2015; Kim and Jogaratnam, 2010).
TI, reflecting employees’ tendencies to seek alternative places to work, is common in the tourism industry and has a high cost for businesses (Blomme et al., 2010; Cho et al., 2009; Karatepe, 2009; Mobley, 1977; Rusbult et al., 1988). Research has shown that SS at the workplace decreases WFC and TI (Garcia-Cabrera et al., 2018; Gordon et al., 2019; O’Driscoll et al., 2003). Specifically, Cohen and Willis (1985) revealed that organizational support is related to the tensions that underlie employee WFC, and reducing these tensions can decrease WFC. Zhao et al. (2020), in their meta-analytic studies, which examined 54 studies in the field of tourism and hospitality, found that organizational support reduced WFC. Employee WFC increases when supervisors disrupt employees’ balance between work and family, leading to negative interactions between supervisor and employee (Paustian-Underdahl and Halbesleben, 2014; Dai et al., 2016). WFC that causes job and life dissatisfaction increases stress and decreases work performance, and perceived SS, as an organizational support resource, may decrease organizational commitment (Guest, 2002; Hammer et al., 2013; Kossek et al., 2011; Sharma et al., 2015). Based on this literature, we proposed the following hypotheses:

H1. Yacht captains’ perceived SS negatively affects TI.

H2. Yacht captains’ perceived SS negatively affects WFC.

Employees often go through a period of reflection before making a final decision on their TI (Chen and Wang, 2019; Hancock et al., 2013). During this period, the employees consider environmental conditions, work and family situations and individual feelings. Within this context, Karatepe (2009) argued that the interaction between SS and organizational tenure decreases WFC and TI in the hospitality industry. The intense work conditions of hotel employees are considered as one of the major reasons for the WFC and TI of female employees in particular (Chen et al., 2018). Pan and Yeh (2019) found that hotel employees’ WFC positively affects TI. With regards to our target population, yacht captains’ long and coordinated work, due to the schedules of yacht businesses or owners, may affect their work–family balance, leading to TI. Thus, we argue that WFC, as a type of inter-role conflict where pressure from work and family are mutually incompatible and can be twofold (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Frone et al., 1996; Netemeyer et al., 1996), forces yacht captains to seek alternative job opportunities, thus affecting their TI.

H3. Yacht captains’ WFC positively affects TI.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused uncertainties and inevitably affected the professional and personal lives of every individual, including tourism employees. Employees’ abilities to heal, reconnect, adapt and even improve after a change or distress is defined as PR (Dogan, 2015; Luthans et al., 2007). According to Jackson et al. (2007), PR is a characteristic or capacity that enables employees to positively cope with and adjust to adversity. In other words, it is a dynamic process that consists of a disruption and reintegration that enables employees to exhibit a positive adaptation, despite dealing with difficulties (Hall et al., 2018; Luthar et al., 2000). Prayag et al. (2020) claimed that managers and employees in small tourism businesses are likely to rely on their personal resilience to adapt and grow the business post-disaster, although this result has not yet been empirically verified. Previous studies determined that the PR of those who have experienced disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis and nuclear power plant meltdowns, can decrease adverse psychosocial consequences (Blackmon et al., 2017; Mann et al., 2018). Thus, PR seems to play a mediating role in promoting and improving one’s well-being and supporting life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2014; Pooley and Cohen, 2010), and the latter
factors play a mediating role in individuals’ WFC and TI \cite{Adams1996, Garcia-Cabrera2018, Rode2007}. Based on this literature, Figure 1 presents the research model, assuming that a psychological mechanism underlies yacht captains’ TI.

Finally, yachting has emerged as a tourism activity that holds special importance for the economic and social development of coastal countries, and these activities depend on yacht captains’ dedicated work and PR. As such, we argue that PR and WFC have less impact on TI among yacht captains with high PR levels during the COVID-19 pandemic:

\begin{equation}
H4. \text{ WFC plays a mediating role in the relationship between SS and TI.}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
H5. \text{ WFC’s effect on TI varies depending on PR levels.}
\end{equation}

\textbf{Methodology}

\textit{Sampling and data collection}

This study investigated yacht captains who serve in the hospitality and travel industries and specialize in offering yachting activities. We obtained the data from captains working in commercial yachts through an online questionnaire survey conducted between April and June 2020. The questionnaires were collected with the support of yacht businesses and professional yachting organizations. Through the survey form (Voluntary Informed Consent Form), the yacht captains willing to participate in this study were informed about the study’s purpose, scope, voluntary participation, confidentiality and conditions to withdraw from the study; after providing consent, they could access the questions in the survey form. The form was sent to the human resources departments of 47 yacht businesses operating in Turkey through Google form, as it is more easily accessible, which replied to our e-mail and agreed to send the form to the yacht captains working under them. The form was then submitted to a total of 916 Turkish yacht captains, who are members of professional yachting organizations. In total, 320 valid responses were obtained and analyzed.

Of the 320 Turkish yacht captains who participated in the survey, 98.8\% were male ($N = 316$). With regards to age, 37.2\% were aged between 35 and 44 years ($N = 119$), and 7.2\% were aged 55 years and above ($N = 23$). As for educational background, 65.6\% were high school graduates ($N = 210$), and 34.4\% were university graduates ($N = 110$). In terms of competency certificates, 52.8\% ($N = 169$) were certified for 499 gross tonnage (GT), 39.1\% ($N = 125$) for 149 GT and the remaining 8.1\% ($N = 26$) for an unlimited GT.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{model.png}
\caption{Research model and hypotheses}
\end{figure}
Measures
To measure SS, we adapted Jiang and Klein’s (1999) scale, which contains one dimension and six items (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.87). The scale includes items such as “My manager gives me useful performance feedback on the yacht I work for.” To evaluate yacht captains’ WFC, this study used Netemeyer et al. (1996) scale, containing one dimension and five items (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.88). The scale includes items, such as “It is difficult for me to fulfill my responsibilities toward my family, because of my job.” To assess PR, this study benefited from a one-dimension and six-item scale (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.83), found reliable and valid by Dogan (2015). The scale includes items, such as “I can quickly get myself together after hard times.” Finally, to assess TI, we used Rusbult et al. (1988) one-dimension and four-item scale (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.89) that includes items, such as “I am thinking of quitting my current job.” We measured the responses to all these items using a five-point Likert scale (1 = completely disagree, 5 = definitely agree).

Analytical strategy
As previous studies had tested the validity and reliability of the measurement tools we used to collect the data, conducting pretests was not necessary. We examined the obtained data via the SPSS (v22) and AMOS (v22) programs and performed convergent and discriminant validity analyses via the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) data to test the validity of the measurement model. We also used Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability coefficients to test the model’s reliability. In addition, to test the hypotheses, this study benefited from a bootstrap resampling with 5,000 replications and drew on Models 4 and 1 in the SPSS Process macro’s (v3.4) plugin, developed by Hayes (2019).

Findings
Validity and reliability analysis
The measurement tool included the SS, WFC, PR and TI scales. We removed one item from the PR scale, as the CFA revealed that it had a low factor load (sd. β = 0.38). The second CFA determined that the observed variables’ standardized factor loads were higher than the critical value (0.50), confirming statistical significance (std. β: 0.568–0.933; p < 0.001). Furthermore, we compared the measurement model to two different models (Table 1). The measurement model included four factors, consisting of SS, WFC, PR and TI scales. As seen in Table 1, the measurement model’s goodness-of-fit indices ($\chi^2$/sd = 2.433; CFI = 0.941; TLI = 0.930; RMSEA = 0.067; SRMR = 0.057) were in the acceptable limits (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Hair et al., 2014) and had the best values compared to alternative measurement models.

We calculated the average shared variance (ASV) and maximum shared variance (MSV) values to determine the measurement model’s discriminant validity, whereas the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) values were considered for convergent validity (Table 2). As shown in Table 2, the PR’s AVE value (0.463) was close to the threshold value (0.50). The AVE values for other factors were higher than 0.50, and their CR values were higher than both the threshold value (0.70) and the AVE values, confirming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement models</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>$\chi^2$/sd</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measurement model</td>
<td>350.336</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>2.433</td>
<td>0.941</td>
<td>0.930</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated model</td>
<td>430.487</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2.870</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>0.909</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-factor model</td>
<td>2028.197</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>13.521</td>
<td>0.467</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Comparison of alternative measurement models
Turnover intentions of yacht captains
the model’s convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2014). Additionally, the AVE values were higher than the ASV and MSV values, and the AVE root values shown diagonally were higher than the factors’ correlation coefficients, confirming the model’s discriminant validity. Furthermore, the CR and CA values were both higher than the 0.70 threshold, proving the measurement model’s reliability (Hair et al., 2014). Overall, Table 2 demonstrates a positive and moderate correlation between WFC and TI and a negative and low correlation among other variables.

After testing the measurement model’s validity and reliability, we calculated the skewness and kurtosis coefficients, means and critical rates (c.r.) of the factors (Table 3). Table 3 demonstrates that the mean values for the yacht captains’ perceived SS (X = 3.508) and PR (X = 3.450) levels were high, whereas the levels of other factors were moderate. The skewness coefficients of the variables varied between (−0.827; 0.618) and the kurtosis coefficients varied between (−0.795; 1.020); thus, the related coefficients were between ±3 and ±10, and their critical values were below 10, indicating a normal distribution (Kline, 2016).

When all variables in perception-based scales are derived from the same sources, common method bias may or may not produce incorrectly high or low correlations among the variables and cause socially desirable responses or systematic measurement errors (Chang et al., 2010). Thus, even though common method bias may not occur in such cases, research should look into. Thus, we performed Harman’s single factor test to determine whether or not a common method bias occurred. The questionnaire first included dependent variable items and then independent variable items. We conducted a principal components analysis and an explanatory factor analysis (EFA) without rotation on all the variables in the measurement tool. This yielded a structure that explained 67% of the total variance, with four factors and eigenvalues higher than 1, and the first factor alone explained 28.8% of the total variance. In other words, the EFA analysis without rotation yielded more than one factor and revealed that the first factor did not explain a significant amount of the variance. Lastly, we conducted a CFA in which all the observed variables in the measurement model were loaded on a single factor. Then, we concluded that there was no common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012), as the goodness-of-fit values of the single-factor model in Table 1 were below the acceptable limits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>CA</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>MSV</th>
<th>ASV</th>
<th>Std. β</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SS</td>
<td>0.902</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.568–0.933</td>
<td>0.777</td>
<td>−0.260**</td>
<td>−0.177*</td>
<td>−0.256**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. WFC</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.661</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.632–0.896</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>0.813</td>
<td>−0.163*</td>
<td>0.348***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PR</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.813</td>
<td>0.463</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.641–0.834</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>0.680</td>
<td>−0.135*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. TI</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>0.719</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.704–0.920</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>0.847</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Convergent and discriminant validity

Notes: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; values in diagonal are the square roots of AVE of each variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SS</td>
<td>3.508</td>
<td>−0.640</td>
<td>−4.677</td>
<td>0.318</td>
<td>1.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. WFC</td>
<td>2.786</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td>−0.795</td>
<td>−2.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PR</td>
<td>3.450</td>
<td>−0.827</td>
<td>−6.042</td>
<td>1.020</td>
<td>3.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. TI</td>
<td>2.208</td>
<td>0.618</td>
<td>4.513</td>
<td>−0.337</td>
<td>−1.231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Skewness, kurtosis, means and critical rates
Testing the hypotheses

Table 4 reveals that the results of WFC has a mediating effect on the relationship between SS and TI. We performed this test in the plugin of Process macro (v3.4) (Hayes, 2019) in the SPSS (v22) program and with a bootstrap resampling with 5,000 replications on Model 4. As seen in Table 4, all the models were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). SS's total effect on TI was negative ($B = -0.321$; $t: -4.712; p < 0.001$) and WFC was negative ($B = -0.316$; $t: -4.800; p < 0.001$) and statistically significant. Additionally, SS's negative and significant effect on TI decreased with WFC, whereas WFC had a positive effect on TI ($B = 0.311$; $t: 5.628; p < 0.001$). Furthermore, SS and WFC together explained 15% of the variance in TI. The confidence intervals (CI) obtained using the bootstrap method confirmed WFC's mediating effect in the relationship between SS and TI. As the accelerated and corrected bias confidence interval (BCA CI) in the bootstrap method was significant and did not include zero (Effect = 0.098; $p < 0.05$; 95% BCA CI [-0.161; -0.046]), we concluded that WFC was an intermediate variable in the relationship between SS and TI (MacKinnon et al., 2004). Moreover, the Sobel test ($z = -3.653$; SE = 0.026; $p < 0.001$) proved once again that WFC's effect, as a mediating variable, was statistically significant ($z = -3.653$; SE = 0.026; $p < 0.001$). Based on these findings, $H1$, $H2$, $H3$ and $H4$ were accepted.

Table 5 presents the results of our analysis, determining whether the yacht captains’ PR levels had a moderating role in the relationship between WFC and TI. We performed the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>WFC</th>
<th>TI</th>
<th>TI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>$t$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.897</td>
<td>0.237</td>
<td>16.394***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>-0.316</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>-4.800***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Summ.</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.07$; $F(1;318) = 23.045$; $p &lt; 0.001$</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.06$; $F(1,318) = 22.211$; $p &lt; 0.001$</td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.15$; $F(2,317) = 28.014$; $p &lt; 0.001$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bootstrap indirect effect

Effect = 0.098; $p < 0.05$; 95% BCA CI [-0.161; -0.046]

Note: ***$p < 0.001$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.199</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>41.259***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFC</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>6.044***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>-0.200</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>-2.374*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFC*PR</td>
<td>-0.222</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>-2.868**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>0.467</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>6.969***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>6.044***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H (Mean + 1SD)</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>2.362*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Summary

$R^2 = 0.155$; $F(3;316) = 19.435$; $p < 0.001$; $(WFC*PR) \Delta R^2 = 0.022$; $F(1,316) = 8.227$

Notes: *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$; dependent variable = TI
tests in the plugin of Process macro (v3.4) in the SPSS (v22) program and with the bootstrap resampling with 5,000 replications on Model 1. The model and the interaction concept (WFC*PR) had a statistically significant impact on TI, and the lower and upper values in the 95% CI did not include zero (Table 5). As the interaction concept was statistically significant, this signifies that WFC's positive effect on TI varies according to yacht captains' PR values.

Figure 2 presents the outcomes of the slope test (Aiken and West, 1991) conducted to determine PR's moderating effect based on low, moderate and high levels. Considering PR’s mean in the Figure 2, the slopes for the high, medium and low values of a standard deviation were different than zero. Moreover, as seen in Table 5, the mentioned mean values’ regression results were significant, and the values in the 95% CI did not include zero values ($p < 0.01; \text{LL} < 95\% \text{ CI} < \text{UL}$), indicating that PR has a moderating effect on the relationship between WFC and TI (Aiken and West, 1991; MacKinnon et al., 2004). Based on these results, H5 was accepted. Figure 2 indicates that the lower the yacht captains’ PR levels, the higher the positive effect of WFC on TI. That is to say, the positive effect of WFC on TI was stronger among the yacht captains with low PR levels, compared to those with higher levels.

Discussion and conclusions

Conclusions

The hospitality industry involves all the hospitable services performed at specially designed venues, including accommodations, food and beverages, travel venues and various service
concepts, and seeks to increase the mutual welfare of the parties (Slattery, 2002; Pizam and Shani, 2009; Lashley and Morrison, 2000). The hospitality industry is represented in every country of the world, and the more its scope, diversity and complex structure develop, the more different the approaches to explain it become (Slattery, 2002). This industry focuses not only on commercial but also on social and cultural factors (Lashley and Morrison, 2000), whereas addressing and professionally evaluating the skills, behaviors, attitudes and personal characteristics required by employees (Reichel and Pizam, 1984). Therefore, the contemporary hospitality industry emphasizes the necessity of providing a service that will create unforgettable experiences (Hemmington, 2007; Williams, 2006). Compared to other industries, the hospitality industry depends on labor to meet tourists’ expectations and is an important human relations sector. Therefore, understanding the employees is necessary, as this industry involves long working hours, shifts, work discipline and a variety of services that can negatively affect one’s psychological well-being, family and social life (Pizam, 1982; Pizam and Shani, 2009). In yacht tourism, the transportation service and employee attitudes and behaviors determine the tourists’ first impressions of their holidays. Furthermore, as yachts travel to unspoiled destinations, offer social distancing and are being favored more as floating boutique hotels during the COVID-19 period, more attention has been paid recently to the services provided in yachts and to the yacht captains, who are in constant and intense communication with the crew and tourists. Therefore, this study is on yacht captains who are the strongest component of yacht tourism, and it provides different insights into the traditional features of the hospitality industry.

This study determined that yacht captains’ perceived SS and PR levels were high, WFC levels were moderate and TI levels were low. We also found that perceived SS had a negative impact on TI, whereas WFC had a positive impact. Furthermore, WFC appeared to be an intermediate variable in the relationship between SS and TI. Thus, the higher the yacht captains’ perceived SS, the lower their WFC and TI. In addition, as TI increased WFC, it was found to be an intermediate variable in the relationship between SS and TI. Thus, perceived SS directly decreases TI, reducing WFC and indirectly, TI. Similarly, García-Cabrera et al. (2018) reported strong correlations among these areas in the lives of hotel staff, and showed the perceived SS’s effect on employees as well as differences in the effect of work–family spillover. Similarly, Gilbreath and Benson (2004) noted that perceived SS leads to an increase in employee well-being and job satisfaction and a decrease in TI. Due to the labor-intensive nature of the hospitality industry, it is rather sensitive and vulnerable, and this vulnerability may yield dramatic results. Hence, SS is of great importance for yacht captains, who interact and are in direct contact with tourists. The increasing demand for yacht tourism also directly affects captains and crews. Accordingly, tourism literature highlights that organizations must provide relevant support to retain their employees (Chen et al., 2018; Gordon et al., 2019; Lu and Gursoy, 2016; Rasheed et al., 2020; Safavi and Bouzari, 2020). Furthermore, employees in the hospitality industry occasionally experience role conflicts between heavy workloads and familial–personal responsibilities (Zhao and Namasivayam, 2012). Unpredictable environmental conditions, such as pandemics, make it possible to recognize the importance of employees’ PR and SS. This study empirically confirmed that because of the nature of the yachting profession, which requires performing even in difficult working conditions while adapting to the adversities caused by the pandemic, yacht captains with high PR levels experience lower levels of WFC and TI when their organizational supervisors support them.
Theoretical implications
This study contributes to the literature by conducting a study on yacht tourism employees, a relatively new research demographic. We also analyzed PR’s moderating role in the association between the COVID-19 pandemic and TI, not only to fill the gaps within the literature but also to follow the scholarly interests in COVID-19’s effects on the tourism industry (Baum and Hai, 2020; Hudson, 2020), and the feelings and thoughts of employees in the hospitality industry (Gordon et al., 2019; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; O’Driscoll et al., 2003; Rasheed et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2019). This study is the first to analyze the indirect effect of yacht captains’ perceived SS on TI, mediated by WFC and PR’s role in the relationship between WFC and TI. Our findings are congruent with those of other studies in the hospitality industry (Blomme et al., 2010; Gordon et al., 2019; Jung and Yoon, 2015; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007) not only adding new insights but also supporting the related literature.

Yacht captains, who occupy the top position in the commercial yacht crew hierarchy, are part of the contemporary hospitality industry. They are subject to tough working standards with strict professional obligations. Hence, long shifts and professional responsibilities may affect the family and social lives of yacht captains. The negative characteristics of the hospitality industry as well as the uncertainty caused in the sector by the COVID-19 pandemic can also influence the attitudes and behaviors of employees. From this perspective, there have been ongoing efforts in the hospitality industry to prevent situations that may damage organizational structure and cause problems related to customer satisfaction. In this regard, this study offers insights into the factors that affect and play a mediating role in the TI of yacht captains. The ultimate purpose was to find ways to decrease their TI and guide yacht businesses and hospitality managers.

Moreover, the measurement model of this study was tested with SEM, which is considered a powerful method, and the methodological gap, which was stated as a constraint in previous studies, was filled by calculating the goodness of fit values, structural validity and reliability of the model. As a result, the relationship between SS and TI was tested using a stronger research model to overcome the limitations of previous studies. In addition, the model was further strengthened methodologically by the inclusion of WFC’s mediation and PR’s moderating effects.

Practical implications
This study empirically uncovered the impact of SS and PR levels, the most important factors for ensuring that employees in the hospitality industry exhibit positive organizational attitudes and behaviors. This study shows that yacht captains’ success in this stressful work environment depends on the positively perceived SS and PR levels. PR levels moderate the relationship between WFC and TI. Thus, supervisors should prioritize meeting their employees’ expectations to effectively and efficiently manage their human resources, and SS is primary for meeting these expectations. In fact, employees who are supported by their supervisors have more positive work attitudes and outcomes. Nonetheless, considering the restrictions that have been put in place to combat the pandemic, further measures are necessary to both properly manage its effects and ensure that employees remain efficient and productive. The findings of this study can enhance our understanding of yacht captains as members of the hospitality and travel industry. They also help in furthering the literature on the work environment of yacht captains and examining it within the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SS has a considerable impact on the work commitment and wealth of yacht captains, which has been mostly overlooked. Furthermore, considering employee health as a component of workplace culture, rather than a financial investment, strengthens the
adaptation of yacht captains and all tourism employees to the environment. Thus, while making work-related decisions, companies and managers need to consider the WFC and TI of yacht captains together, their PR levels and the impacts of the pandemic. The findings clearly indicate the need for further research on not only yacht captains but also their PR in the light of the pandemic’s effects. Within this context, the study has the potential to contribute to the field of human resources practices, particularly in tourism and hospitality industry, in developing economies.

In conclusion, given the harsh working conditions and the negative impacts of the pandemic, it seems that the PR of the yacht captains has become more important for business managers. Therefore, managers need to make efforts to improve the yacht captains’ PR levels and monitor their effects. Furthermore, for professional development training or psychological consultancy, seminars and events aimed at improving social or life skills individually or in groups may be offered to yacht captains to enhance their PR levels. Managers also need to adopt behaviors and develop human resources policies designed to make them feel valuable, successful and useful and to increase their self-confidence. This can enhance PR, which has a dynamic nature and may change with time. Last but not least, based on the findings of this study, the PR levels of yacht captains should be measured during recruitment and those with high PR levels should be prioritized for the organization’s success and also for future efforts to decrease the WFC and TI levels of yacht captains. In addition, it is possible to identify yacht captains who experience WFC within their organizations and to work with managers who have quality relations with their subordinates and motivating practices.

Limitations and future research
Although the design of this study is strong, there are a few limitations. First, we collected the data during the two-month period when the COVID-19 measures were the strictest, thereby limiting the validity period of the findings. Second, we examined Turkish yacht captains only during the pandemic, and as Podsakoff et al. (2012) proposed, such studies require a longer time allocation. Therefore, it is important to examine and assess any possible differences in findings by testing this research model during normal working periods. Third, following a very difficult training process, yacht captains periodically undergo physical and psychological checkups to continue their profession and receive refresher training. We obtained the research data from yacht captains who had undergone this challenging and difficult process, and the findings are specific to these yacht captains. However, further research with different sector employees may yield different results. Fourth, though previous studies have examined the bilateral correlations between the research variables, no study has discussed all the variables together using this research model, according to the authors’ knowledge. Therefore, this study’s greatest contribution lies in its testing of a holistic model. However, the research model should be retested with other employees in the tourism industry.

References


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