

Work, Success, and Career: Investigating the Academic Equivalent of a Triadic Relationship

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ABSTRACT Our research examines the impact of thriving at work on individual job performance through both direct effects and career satisfaction. The main purpose of our research is to empirically test the relationships between thriving at work, individual job performance and career satisfaction among higher education officials in Türkiye. The data of the research, which was conducted using the quantitative research model and correlational research design, were collected by convenience sampling method from 410 academicians working in the field of business administration at different universities in Türkiye. These data were analyzed using SPSS 25 and AMOS 25 statistical programs. Based on an extensive literature, we formulated two hypotheses that we tested in a single structural model using structural equation modeling (SEM) and the bootstrap technique. The findings demonstrated that there were positive and significant correlations between the variables of career satisfaction, individual job performance and thriving at work. Also, it was found that thriving at work had a mediating role in the effect of career satisfaction on individual job performance. With the understanding of the important effect of thriving at work in the relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance, it is important to keep career satisfaction at a positive level since academics are expected to be more productive for development. In this context, academics should be encouraged to feel willing to work, energetic and open to self-improvement at work by making their career satisfaction positive.

KEYWORDS

Career satisfaction
Individual job performance
Thriving at work
Academicians
SEM
Mediation effect analysis
Bootstrap

INTRODUCTION

Human development and thriving at work has been one of the main areas of social sciences for a period of time (Kleine *et al.* 2019). One of the leading role players who will contribute to the development of human and society is academics. Academics are expected to be qualified in universities located at the centre of higher education (Žnidaršič and Marič 2021). In this respect, it is important to understand the determinants of academic success and performance in higher education institutions (Schneider and Preckel 2017). Career satisfaction, as a concept related to people's internal states (Greenhaus *et al.* 1990), is also discussed in this context. Career satisfaction is considered an indicator of the happiness that employees feel regarding how they manage their careers (Strauss *et al.* 2012) and is seen as one of the determinants of individual job performance (Garandai 2021; Motowildo *et al.* 1997).

Career satisfaction, which highlights the individual and considers that the individual's internal standards are formed through the perception of satisfaction as a function of their success in the social environment, reveals the individual's work satisfaction and level of happiness (Ballout 2007). This affects the individual's life quality (Aytekin *et al.* 2016) and individual job performance. Indeed, individuals focus on improving themselves at work while aiming for a successful business life by improving their quality of life. Therefore, the relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance makes the development and thriving at work of the employee even more attractive.

The concept of thriving at work is a growing concept that has attracted considerable attention in organizational studies (Paterson *et al.* 2014; Spreitzer *et al.* 2012) and that has received great attention in the field of organizational behavior as a component of long-term performance (Abid *et al.* 2019). Despite the fact that research on thriving at work has increased in the recent years, this literature is still scattered and necessitates systematic and theory-based syntheses (Kleine *et al.* 2019). Researchers have noted that thriving at work is associated with various important organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, personal development, orga-

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nizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and performance. [Abid et al. \(2019\)](#) suggested in their meta-analysis that most research on thriving at work has been conducted in developed countries such as the United States, China, Australia, Belgium, and France.

In line with the explanations above, this study was conducted to examine the relationships between career satisfaction, individual job performance, and thriving at work. This purpose was addressed by answering the following question: What is the relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance, and what is the role of thriving at work among academic staff in Türkiye on their performance in this relationship? In this context, while the relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance was examined in the first stage, the mediating role of thriving at work in this relationship was determined in the second stage. As a result of the literature review, no study was found that addresses these three variables together. In this regard, it can be said that the present study represents an early and original contribution examining the relationship between these three variables in the context of higher education.

This research provides a novel contribution to the academic literature in three principal domains. Initially, a survey of the current literature indicated that no research has been identified that concurrently investigates the factors of career satisfaction, individual work performance, and thriving at work. This research represents a pioneering study that examines the relationships between these three critical concepts within the context of higher education, thereby filling a gap in the literature. Secondly, the study's most original theoretical contribution lies in its empirical testing of the mediating role of thriving at work in the effect of career satisfaction on individual job performance. This explains how career satisfaction influences performance not only directly but also indirectly, through the individual's sense of vitality and openness to learning that is, through professional development in the workplace. Finally, given that the vast majority of research on thriving at work has been conducted in developed countries such as the United States, China, Australia, Belgium and France ([Abid et al. 2019](#)), this study advances the literature within the context of a developing country and specifically regarding academic performance by taking academics working in higher education institutions in Türkiye as its sample.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Career satisfaction

The career phenomenon, which involves the idea of progressing with people's feelings and thoughts, knowledge and abilities, is a lifelong process ([Spurk et al. 2015](#)). In this process, many career-related concepts (like career planning, career determination & indecisiveness, career dedication, career awareness, career anxiety and career stress) have emerged. One of the concepts mentioned is "career satisfaction", and it has taken its place among the organizational and administrative issues that have been studied intensively in the recent years ([Ding et al. 2023](#); [Latan et al. 2022](#); [Park 2018](#)). Career satisfaction, defined as the positive psychological outcomes or gains that an individual accumulates as a result of work experiences ([Judge et al. 1995](#)), is considered as a dynamic structure that reflects how the individual feels about their job and career ([Durmuş and Akyüz 2021](#)). In this regard, career satisfaction is used to measure how consistent individuals' career improvement is with their own goals, values and preferences, and to evaluate their career positioning.

According to [Chang et al. \(2020\)](#), career satisfaction is evaluated both objectively and subjectively. Objective indicators like job title, salary, and number of promotions in a year can be observed directly. Therefore, they can be evaluated by others. However, subjective career success is an individual's feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction with their career achievement. Although the first studies on career satisfaction focused on the objective aspect of the concept, it has been determined that individuals who have made a certain progress in their professional careers over time and who have reached the desired status and income have become alienated from their careers both individually and socially ([Shockley et al. 2016](#)). Thus, the focus of career satisfaction has moved away from objective criteria towards subjective perceptions. Today, career satisfaction is evaluated with both objective and subjective aspects ([Rençber and Paşaoğlu Baş 2021](#)).

Career satisfaction is an antecedent of many individual and organizational variables such as subjective well-being ([Nae and Choi 2022](#)), organizational commitment ([Baidoun and Anderson 2023](#)), work engagement ([Timms and Brough 2013](#)), psychological empowerment ([Sun et al. 2022](#)), organizational citizenship behavior ([Lv and Yu 2020](#)), career commitment ([Onyishi et al. 2019](#)), work-life balance, proactive behavior ([Palabıyık and Yücel 2018](#)), happiness ([Denizli and Dündar 2020](#)), life satisfaction ([Hagmaier et al. 2018](#)), job satisfaction, and self efficacy ([Honicke et al. 2023](#)). Additionally, it has been proven that career satisfaction has positive effects in preventing or reducing negative behaviors such as burnout ([Opoku and Apenteng 2014](#)), intention to leave ([Osei et al. 2023](#)), career stress ([Yang and Yang 2019](#)), and job stress.

The relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance

Individual job performance is the quantitative or qualitative or qualitative expression of the extent to which an individual achieves the goals and desired standards set for themselves within the scope of the goals of the institution. [Motowidlo and Kell \(2012\)](#) defined individual job performance as "the total expected value to the organization of the discrete behavioral episodes that an individual carries out over a specified period". Individual job performance is dealt with two dimensions as task performance and contextual performance ([Borman and Motowidlo 1997](#)). Task performance refers to the person's performance in the tasks that are included in the job description and that constitute the basic work of the organization ([Koopmans et al. 2011](#)).

The individual's abilities, professional knowledge, skills, and experience are the main determinants of task performance ([Motowidlo et al. 1997](#)). In order to distinguish the work and activities within the scope of job performance from others, the work and activities performed must be those included in the official job descriptions ([Rotundo and Sackett 2002](#)). Contextual performance is important behaviors that are not directly related to the main task activities, but serve to create a clean atmosphere in the organizational, social, and psychological context for these tasks. Such behaviors include being volunteer to perform tasks that are not formally part of the job ([Borman 2004](#)). Contextual performance includes such activities as the good relationships that people establish with their colleagues, cooperation, or the extra efforts they make to complete work on time. With this regard, it creates the social and psychological basis necessary to achieve organizational goals ([Motowidlo et al. 1997](#)). Therefore, since individual job performance includes actions that contribute to organizational performance, it is expressed as the sum of the activities that enable the organization to operate efficiently.

In addition, it should not be forgotten that individual job performance is important for the individual as well as for the organization. While individual high performance is a source of moral pride, happiness and satisfaction, it also means financial promotion, being indispensable for the institution, or recognition in the sector. Individual job performance attracts attention as an important dependent variable of human resources management, organizational psychology, and organizational behavior, and there are many studies present to determine the factors that reveal individual job performance. When the literature is examined, career satisfaction is considered as an antecedent of individual job performance. In other words, it is accepted that career satisfaction has a positive effect on individual job performance (Garandai 2021; Nisar and Rasheed 2020; Dubbelt *et al.* 2019; Trivellas *et al.* 2015; Karatepe 2012). Given the this statements, the following hypothesis is developed and tested in the present study. H1. Career satisfaction has a positive direct effect on individual job performance.

The mediating role of thriving at work

Thriving at work has earned its well-deserved place in positive organizational behavior, and many scholars have emphasized the importance of its outcomes in the last decade (Ni *et al.* 2023; Okros and Virgă 2022). It is defined as a psychological state in which individuals experience a sense of both vitality and learning at work (Spreitzer *et al.* 2005). The first component, vitality, refers to the individual's feeling of being energetic, excited and passionate at work. Learning, which is the other component, emphasizes the improvement of the individual at work with new knowledge and skills (Spreitzer *et al.* 2012). These two components of thriving at work usually function simultaneously (Karataş and Çankır 2023). For example, individuals may feel alive at work, with a sense of steady improvement without the learning process, and with the influence of co-workers and a cheerful work environment. However, if the individual experiences vitality at work without the desire to learn, or if the individual does not want to improve their skills or acquire new knowledge about their job, they will not be able to improve themselves at work. Similarly, if a person wants to improve their professional skills with a feeling of burnout, they will still not be able to improve themselves (Spreitzer *et al.* 2005).

Therefore, although a person who feels one of these emotions at work may make some progress and development, they must improve their feelings of vitality and learning in harmony so as to improve themselves at work accurately (Porath *et al.* 2012). Thriving at work can benefit both individuals and organizations. Thus, when studies have examined about the thriving, it has seen that many positive outcomes such as job satisfaction (Jiang *et al.* 2020), voice behavior (Sheng and Zhou 2021), work engagement (Zhai *et al.* 2022), organizational commitment (Walumbwa *et al.* 2018), life satisfaction (Zhai *et al.* 2020), employee health (Kleine *et al.* 2023), thriving at work (Paterson *et al.* 2014), happiness at work (Qaiser *et al.* 2018), creative performance (Kleine *et al.* 2019) and job performance (Elahi *et al.* 2020; Farid *et al.* 2023; Okros and Virgă 2022).

Thriving at work also reduces negative organizational outcomes such as burnout, depression, stress, poor job fit, absenteeism, turnover intention, detachment, bullying or other illnesses (Bo-lat *et al.* 2018; Forbes 2013). In addition, the results of many studies indicate that thriving at work is used as a mediator variable (Abid *et al.* 2018; Alwahhabi *et al.* 2023; Baş 2022; Xie *et al.* 2023; Yang *et al.* 2021; Zhai *et al.* 2020; Zhu *et al.* 2023) Thus, the following mediation hypothesis is proposed: H2: Thriving at work as mediation role between career satisfaction and individual job performance. Based

on the above-mentioned studies, the theoretical assumptions and the hypotheses that were formed, career satisfaction was taken as the predictor variable, thriving at work as the mediating variable, and individual job performance as the dependent variable. The model that deals with these variables is presented in Figure 1.

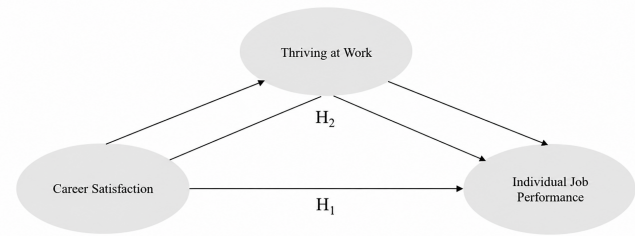


Figure 1 Hypothesized Research Model

METHODOLOGY

Sample and data collection

The intended audience for this study comprises scholars from business faculties at many state universities in Türkiye. The rationale for selecting academics can be explained as follows: The absence of studies examining the mediating effect of thriving at work on individual job performance, coupled with the necessity to more clearly observe and measure the relationship between career progression and individual development within an academic framework, substantiates the choice of this sample group. Furthermore, this situation is noteworthy in that it highlights how employees perform in their respective fields and how they interact with one another within the organisation (Altınsoy and Erdoğan 2023).

The study employed a convenience sampling method. The main reason for opting for this method is the lack of a comprehensive sampling framework that would enable us to reach all academics in business departments at state universities across Türkiye, as well as time and resource constraints. Whilst convenience sampling enhances the efficiency of the research process, it is acknowledged that it imposes certain limitations on the generalisability of the findings. The data was collected via a survey link shared via Google Forms between August and November 2023. The study was conducted with the approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee at KTO Karatay University, and the necessary permissions were obtained (decision no.: 2023/04/13, date: 28 April 2023). During the data analysis process, 18 questionnaires were excluded for various reasons, and the remaining 410 valid questionnaires were included in the analysis.

In multivariate studies, it is stipulated that the sample size should be 10 times or more than the number of variables in the research, and the sample size to be selected for the research should be at least 170 (Büyüköztürk 2012). Therefore, the required condition for the sample size was met in this study. The sample of 410 participants obtained in this study meets the relevant criterion. However, the fact that the sample comprises only academics from business departments at state universities limits the generalisability of the findings to other disciplines or private universities. An analysis of the demographic distribution of the sample reveals that participants were aged between 22 and 67, with the vast majority (39%) falling within the 36–45 age group. Of the participants, 210 (51.2%) were men, 214 (52.2%) were married and 157 (38.3%) were senior lecturers. In terms of professional experience, it was found

that the majority of participants (43.7%) had between 6 and 15 years' experience. It is considered that this demographic distribution largely corresponds to the general profile of academics in the business administration department in Türkiye. However, it is recommended that caution be exercised when generalising these findings to a wider population.

Measures

Each item in the scales was graded according to a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)". Career satisfaction The Career Satisfaction scale was developed by Greenhaus *et al.* (1990), was first adapted into Turkish by Kaya (2018). The Career Satisfaction scale is a one-dimensional five-item scale. The scale, which does not have reverse coded items, includes statements such as "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals" and "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills". Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed on the scale and the fit index values of the scale ($\chi^2/df = 3.22$; $p < .001$; GFI = .98; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .01) were found. Regarding reliability, the scale's coefficient of internal consistency was .87. (Kaya 2018). In this study, Cronbach's α coefficient was high ($\alpha = .945$, CR = .79, AVE = .81).

Thriving at work The Thriving at Work scale was developed by Porath *et al.* (2012), was first adapted into Turkish by Koçak (2016). The scale has 8 items in 2 dimensions (vitality and learning). The Thriving at Work scale includes items such as, "At work, I have energy and spirit" and "At work, I have energy and spirit". The fit index values of the scale ($\chi^2/df = 3.64$; $p < .001$; GFI = .96; CFI = .98; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .07) were found. The adapted into Turkish scale exhibited a high composite reliability and validity (Composite Reliability (CR): .86; Average Variance Extracted (AVE): .75). In the present study, the scale reliability coefficients reached a good level ($\alpha = .98$, CR = .79, AVE = .81).

Individual job performance The Individual Job Performance scale was developed by Kirkman and Rosen (1999) and later used by Sigler and Pearson (2000). The scale, which was adapted into Turkish by Çöl (2008), is a one-dimensional four-item scale. The Individual Job Performance scale includes items such as, "I complete my tasks on time" and "I make sure that products meet or exceed quality standards". The fit index values of the scale ($\chi^2/df = 3.08$; $p < .001$; GFI = .92; CFI = .93; RMSEA = .04; SRMR = .02) were found. Regarding reliability, the scale's coefficient of internal consistency was .83. (Çöl 2008). In this study, the scale's reliability coefficients were high ($\alpha = .98$, CR = .85, AVE = .80).

Data analysis

IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 25) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS 23) programs were used to analyze the data obtained in the research. The descriptive statistics, assumptions of normality and reliability coefficients were examined. The associations between the variables were analyzed using correlation analysis. Utilizing the bootstrap method, an analysis was conducted to ascertain whether thriving at work mediates the relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance. In the analysis, 5000 resampling alternatives were preferred using the bootstrap technique and to validate the research hypothesis, efforts were made to confirm that the 95% confidence interval (CI) values derived from the analysis did not encompass zero (0) values (Hayes 2018).

RESULTS

Preliminary analysis

The means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis coefficients, and correlations are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and Correlations

	$\bar{x}$	s.d.	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3
1. Career Satisfaction	3.31	1.25	-.45	-1.28	1		
2. Thriving at Work	3.29	1.11	-.46	-1.39	.71**	1	
3. Individual Job Performance	3.69	1.14	-.94	-0.52	.79**	.76**	1

Note: ** There is a significant relationship at the level of $p < 0.01$

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the scales meet the condition of ± 1.5 range. The fact that the coefficients in question are within this range shows that the data exhibit a normal distribution (Tabachnick *et al.* 2013). The correlation analysis indicated that career satisfaction was positively and significantly related to both thriving at work ($r = -.71$, $p < .01$) and individual job performance ($r = -.79$, $p < .01$). Finally, results showed that thriving at work was significantly related to individual job performance ($r = .76$, $p < .01$).

Structural equation model

Before testing the hypotheses proposed within the scope of the research model, CFA was conducted to determine the structural validity of the scales used in the research. During the analysis, care was taken to ensure that the standardized regression coefficient of the items in the scale should not be lower than 0.70 and the p value should not be higher than .05 (Hair *et al.*, 2009, p. 679). Table 2 shows the fit index values obtained after modification.

Table 2 Criteria for Goodness of Fit Values

Model	p	α	CMIN/DF2< $\chi^2/df < 5$	GFI>.90	CFI>.90	RMSEA<.08	SRMR<.08
Model of Measurement	.00	.98	3.19	.89	.97	.07	.02

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the fit indices of the scales are in the range of the fit index values taken as reference (Thakkar, 2020).

Mediation analysis

In this study, we examined the mediating effects of thriving at work on the relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 3.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical implications

The current research is a study designed to understand the impact of career satisfaction on job performance. The research contributes to the existing literature as it is one of the pioneer studies to investigate the indirect effect of career satisfaction on individual job performance through thriving at work. According to the results of the analysis, it was revealed that the hypotheses supported the model. First of all, the positive relationship between career satisfaction and individual job performance was empirically confirmed in the study.

Table 3 Results of Standardized Coefficients for the Hypothesized Model

Prediction Variables	Outcome Variables			
	Thriving at Work		Individual Job Performance	
	β	SE	β	SE
H ₁ (Career Satisfaction → Individual Job Performance)	–	–	0.62***	0.044
R ²	–	–	0.66	
Career Satisfaction → Thriving at Work	0.81***	0.046	–	–
R ²	0.65***		–	
Thriving at Work → Individual Job Performance	–	–	0.24***	
R ²	–	–	0.68	0.052
H ₂ (Career Satisfaction → Thriving at Work → Individual Job Performance)	–			
Career Satisfaction → Individual Job Performance	–		0.19***	0.052
Thriving at Work → Individual Job Performance	–		0.61***	0.063
R ²	–		0.68	
Indirect Effect				
Career Satisfaction → Thriving at Work → Individual Job Performance	–		0.19, (0.061–0.321)	

Note: (*p < .01, **p < .001).

The findings mentioned above provided evidence that career satisfaction was an antecedent of individual job performance, which was suggested by various researchers. These findings are in line with the findings of the study conducted by [Aytekin et al. \(2016\)](#) that the scientific performance of the academic staff who invested in their careers and who were highly motivated would be higher. Previous studies on career satisfaction revealed that career satisfaction had correlations with important concepts related to many of the theory's job outcomes like performance.

[Dubbelt et al. \(2019\)](#) examined that job commitment, talent, and performance were related to career satisfaction. [Greenhaus et al. \(1990\)](#) argued that improving the career satisfaction of employees within organizations reduced the negative impact of stress caused by their jobs and thus increased the individual job performance of employees. The theoretical mechanism underlying these relationships can be explained through multiple complementary frameworks discussed in this study. From a Conservation of Resources (COR) perspective, career satisfaction functions as a personal resource that energizes individuals and fosters thriving at work, which in turn enhances individual job performance. Self-Determination Theory further supports this mechanism by suggesting that when individuals experience satisfaction in their careers, their fundamental needs for autonomy and competence are fulfilled, thereby cultivating a sense of vitality and a willingness to learn the two core dimensions of thriving at work. Additionally, consistent with Social Exchange Theory, academicians who perceive their career progress as rewarding are more likely to reciprocate through heightened engagement and superior job performance. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a coherent explanation for why thriving at work serves as a meaningful mediator between career satisfaction and individual job performance.

Secondly, light is shed on the individual and organizational behavioral antecedents of thriving at work. Thriving at work provides an important self-improvement structure for the individual and plays an important role in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities at the workplace ([Elahi et al. 2020](#)). Previous studies revealed that it promoted the individual success of employees and positively affected individual job performance ([Elahi et al. 2020](#); [Abid et al. 2018](#); [Prem et al. 2017](#); [Paterson et al. 2014](#); [Porath et al. 2012](#); [Spreitzer et al. 2012](#)). From an organizational perspective, it was observed that it affected employees in terms of their organiza-

tional trust levels, commitments, and organizational citizenship behaviors ([Xie et al. 2023](#); [Baş 2022](#); [Zhai et al. 2022](#); [Walumbwa et al. 2018](#); [Carmeli and Spreitzer 2009](#)). The studies mentioned above confirmed that individuals tended to exhibit better individual job performance when they felt alive and were eager to work ([Spreitzer et al. 2005](#)). For this reason, this study contributed to the literature by examining thriving at work as a mediating variable that could explain the impact of career satisfaction on individual job performance.

Practical implications

This study offers important implications for administrators, practitioners, and academic staff. First of all, it was determined in the study that career satisfaction was an important determinant of thriving at work and individual job performance. Considering the fact that the studies and research carried out by academic staff as a result of their performance are effective in shaping the careers of individuals who will form the future of other sectors ([Baruch and Hall 2004](#), p. 9)([Dominic et al. 2021](#)), their career satisfaction should be kept at a positive level as the academic staff are expected to be more productive towards improvement by governments, institutions, organizations, and universities ([De Janasz and Sullivan 2004](#)).

Besides, the study explained the importance of examining the indirect effect of thriving at work on the correlation between career satisfaction and individual job performance. The setting and incentives for individuals to improve themselves at work bring together positive results ([Paterson et al. 2014](#)). Individuals who feel that they can improve themselves at work exhibit better individual job performance ([Spreitzer et al. 2005](#)). They become more creative, productive, adaptable and satisfied with their jobs ([Paterson et al. 2014](#)). In the light of this information, considering that the contribution to knowledge through academic publications, lecturing, and producing projects has a great impact on professional reputation and career advancement ([Altınsoy & Erdoğan, 2019](#)), academic staff should be encouraged to become open to thriving at work, be willing to work, and feel energetic by making their career satisfaction positive.

From the perspective of university administrators and policy-makers, these findings underscore the importance of developing institutional policies aimed at enhancing academic staff's career satisfaction. In this regard, measures such as making academic promotion criteria more transparent, expanding mentoring programs, and increasing research funding can have a positive impact on career satisfaction. In addition, fostering a workplace culture that supports thriving at work by providing autonomy, collaboration, and opportunities for continuous learning, can directly and indirectly enhance the individual job performance of academic staff. In the context of higher education policy in Türkiye, structural reforms implemented by relevant institutions, particularly the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) to improve the professional development environment for academics are likely to foster a more motivated, high-performing academic workforce, ultimately contributing to the broader goals of research productivity and educational quality in Turkish higher education.

CONCLUSION

Our study has some limitations that will guide future research. First, the direct effect of career satisfaction on individual job performance and the mediating effect of thriving at work in this relationship were examined by using a cross-sectional study design. In future studies, longitudinal and experimental designs can be used

to determine the causality between variables. Secondly, the data were obtained only from some public universities and business administration departments in Türkiye. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize the findings. Considering the differences in national and institutional culture, future studies can be planned and tested in different countries so that the findings can be generalized. Apart from public universities, the issue can also be examined in private universities established in Türkiye within the scope of Article 130 of the Turkish Constitution, provided that they are not aimed at making profit, or in private universities functioning around the world. In addition to all these, different findings can be revealed through different studies by not restricting the sample to academic staff only in the studies to be carried out, and thus research results can be improved. In addition, the data in this study were collected using a survey method based on the self-assessments of academic staff. The fact that all variables are reported by the same participants at the same time carries the risk of common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Recognizing this limitation, a multi-source approach is recommended for the future.

Ethical standard

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

Availability of data and material

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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