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**EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON
ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: MEDIATING ROLE OF
ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION**

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Abstract

An extensive amount of research has been conducted regarding the effect of emotional intelligence on organizational performance. However, relatively little research examines this relationship together with the mediator effect of organizational identification. This study investigates the mediator role of organizational identification on the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational performance. It is also aimed to fill the gap in the literature by investigating the mediator role of organizational identity on the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational performance. Furthermore, it is aimed to demonstrate that the source of sustainable high performance is the individuals who have high emotional intelligence and who developed an organizational identity. The research model and related hypotheses are tested with structural equation model with a total number of participants of 314 people who are working in organizations. Findings indicate that all hypotheses are supported; mainly prove the mediator role of organizational identification on the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational performance.

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Keywords: Emotional intelligence, organizational performance, organizational identification.



1. Introduction

Given the intense competitive environment of the 21st century, the presence of advanced employees with high intelligence, technical and logical skills is not enough to ensure effective and productive work and high performance in organizations. Besides, there is also a need for employees who are emotionally and socially capable of knowing their own feelings, control them and also understand others. The root of the word 'emotion' comes from *motere*, which is fundamentally a Latin word. *Motere* means to move in Latin, and when *-e* is brought forward of the word; *emotere*, that is to say, to move away or to move beyond (Akgül, 2011). In other words, emotions are directors or navigators which are locomotives of human action. Goleman (1995) defines emotions as features that enable individuals to learn by activating their learning potential, enable to ask questions so that they can seek the unknown, enhancing their capacity and also translate what they learn into practice. Emotional intelligence; however, is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). From this point of view, in organizations where most of the employees have high emotional intelligence, it can be expected that the relationships and communication between individuals become more effective and efficient, and that employees connect with their colleagues and with the organization in a better way.

Organizations in which individuals work with their emotions, thoughts and actions can thought as social beings (Koçel, 2014) and like every living organisms, they also have certain attributes that distinguish themselves from other beings. Theorists working on this issue, developed the concept of organizational identity based on the theory of social identity. Albert and Whetten (1985) describe the features that composite an organization, distinguish it from other organizations and became permanent over time as the beliefs of organizational members. Additionally, van Dick (2001) defines organizational identity by bringing together the cognitive and emotional aspects of the social identity theory. Social identity is the awareness of self-perception that arises from the connection of individuals with a social groups or multiple social groups together with their values and emotions (Riketta, 2005). As seen in the definition, individuals participate in a social group or organization with values and emotions. These values and emotions are also factors that direct the actions of individuals. Moving from this point, one of the main aims of this study is to explain the relationship between organizational identity and organizational performance.

Studies show that the concept of emotional intelligence is mostly researched with areas such as leadership (Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005), career (Dong, Seo, & Bartol 2014), business performance (Côté & Miners, 2006), productivity, organizational citizenship and job satisfaction. However, in the literature review, there are very few studies explaining the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational identity. For this reason, this study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational identity. Lastly, it is also aimed to fill the gap in the literature by investigating the mediator role of organizational identity on the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational performance.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Emotional Intelligence

The term of intelligence has been a concept which is discussed for a long time. While the traditional approach goes through capabilities about intelligence, it ignores cognitive and emotional competences. The Binet-Simon test, which is developed by Alfred Binet and Simon (1905) and also considered to be the first intelligence test in the modern sense, shows traces of the traditional approach for cognitive and emotional intelligence is not given too much in it (Akın, 2004). Moreover, Intelligence Quotient (IQ) which is one of the important parameters related to the measurement of intelligence, was developed for the first time by psychologist William Stern. It is possible to say that this work of Stern was accepted as a standard in IQ measurement (Akın, 2004).

The traditional traces that exist in these modern studies can be considered to be diminishing over time. In the world of psychology, new approaches are beginning to be introduced that go beyond traditional approaches and also indicating that human intelligence is not only limited to IQ; beyond cognitive abilities that a number of emotional abilities are also related to intelligence. According to Baron (2006); it is possible to classify these intelligence models which have been developed since the beginning of the 20th century as social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920), social maturity or social skill (Doll, 1935), non-cognitive intelligence (Wechsler, 1940), multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) and emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

According to the emotional intelligence model of Thorndike (1920), which is one of the first approaches to the formation of the theoretical sub-structure of emotional intelligence, the ability of individuals to understand and perceive the feelings of others is a distinct ability from the general intelligence (Gürbüz & Yüksel, 2008). The term of emotional intelligence was first used in the doctoral dissertation of Wayne Leon Payne (1985). Two psychologists, Salovey and Mayer (1990), have also helped to gain popularity of this term with their work, which is named as 'Emotional Intelligence'. The book of 'Emotional Intelligence' by Daniel Goleman (1995) also made this concept increasingly foreground and made known to the wider social circles. From this date on, besides being a popular concept in fields such as psychology, sociology and educational sciences, the introduction of emotional intelligence into the literature of management has occurred in the 90's. Emotional intelligence concept has also taken its place in the management world by the book of Goleman (1998) which is called 'Working with Emotional Intelligence' and studied by academicians working on this subject after that (Zehir, Üzmez, Köle, & Öztürk, 2017).

Many definitions have been made about the concept of emotional intelligence since the 90's. In these definitions, Salovey and Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as "The ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action". Goleman (1995) describes emotional intelligence as the ability to sense one's own feelings, to show empathy towards others and to regulate their emotions to enrich life. According to Petrides and Furnham (2001), emotional intelligence is a composition of tendencies and perceptions related to the emotions. Baron (2006) defines emotional intelligence as "a personal, emotional and social competence and skill set that will help the individual to cope successfully with the environmental pressure and demands". Taking into account the outstanding features of the definitions; it can be defined in general as making sense of one's

own feelings and to arrange them in the behavioral dimension, and also the ability to empathize with others by making sense of others' feelings.

The concept of emotional intelligence, which is being discussed in different fields in academic writings, is also considered as a critical point for success in the business world. Employees with high emotional intelligence are expected to perform well as a result of their abilities such as self-awareness, awareness of their own emotions and thoughts, knowledge of their strengths and developments, management of their own feelings, thoughts and behaviors, and building positive and constructive relationships among individuals. In the business world, emotional intelligence traits are used as a decisive and important criterion in many phases of human resource practices such as recruitment processes, performance management and career development (Çetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011). As a result, lack of emotional intelligence plays an important role that can cause an organization to weaken against other organizations. An organization will be more resistant to coping with difficulties if it has the competences that are derived from conscious, self-control, motivation, empathy, leadership skills and open communication (Doğan, 2005).

2.2. Organizational Identification

Identity is a concept that has been questioned and attempted to be defined since the existence of mankind. It is known that philosophers of ancient period such as Socrates, Aristotle and Plato considered, discussed and tried to understand the concept of identity (Taşdan, 2017). Many researches and studies have been carried out in different fields of social sciences on identification, which is the answer to be given in the question of 'Who am I?'. Even though identification is not a new concept in management field (Taşdan, 2017); dynamics such as organic organization structures, the increase of horizontal hierarchy instead of vertical hierarchy, change of traditional organizational structures and institutionalization of organizations brought the necessity of establishing an organization both in the minds and hearts of individuals (Tüzün & Çağlar, 2008). For this reason, organizational theorists have developed and studied on the concept of organizational identification which investigates how members perceive the structures they work in, what they feel and think about these organizations (Uğurlu & Arslan, 2015).

In addition, organizational identity has become one of the key issues not only for the theoreticians but also for the managers. Albert and Whetten (1985) argue the concept of organizational identity, that is first proposed by March and Simon (1958) in a set of claims regarding central, distinctive and enduring issues. According to Albert and Whetten (1985) organizational identity is what is taken by employees to be the central attributes of the organization; what makes the organization distinctive and therefore unique from other organizations in the eyes of the employees; and what is perceived by employees to be enduring or continuing. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) defines it as the features that separate an organization from others and constitute a meaningful organization in itself. Lastly, van Dick (2001) identifies the identity of an organization by bringing together cognitive and emotional parts based on the theory of social identity. According to this constitution, social identity is the awareness of self-perception that occurs when individuals connect to a social group or more than one social group with their values and emotions (Riketta, 2005). The theory of social identity is shaped by four basic propositions. These propositions are as below; (1) individuals strive for positive self-esteem; (2) the sense that the individual feels belongs to a certain

group, that is social identity, influences the concept of self; (3) the individual protects and strengthens his/her positive social identity as long as he/she compares with an appropriate external group; (4) individuals perceive other individuals in the group more positively than those outside the group, cooperate more with them and associate them with positive attitudes and behaviors associated with the group (Mamatoğlu, 2010).

There are various studies in the related literature analyzing the concept of organization identity within different perspectives such as organization theory, functionalist perspective, social constructionist perspective, psychodynamic perspective, postmodern and nonstandard perspectives. From these studies, Dutton and Dukerich (1991) mentioned the relationship between identity and image. Humphreys and Brown (2002) noted that organizational identity is a factor linking people to organization and it includes the formation and transformation of identity within the organization over time. Balmer and Greyser (2006) discuss organizational identity together with organizational communication, brand and corporate image and also suggest that they are creating corporate marketing by being together. Sillince and Brown (2009) also referred to the formation of identity and the promotion and maintenance of the legitimacy of the organization. Riantoputra (2010) addressed the identity of the organization in the strategic decision-making process of the top management and stated that managers use the identity of the organization effectively in the decision-making process. It is also one of the main elements in strategic change in organizations (Ravasi and Phillips, 2011).

When we look at the studies conducted in Turkey regarding the identity of the organization, we see that Ertürk, Demircan and Ceylan (2005) examined the effects of organizational communication and organizational commitment on the perception of identity. According to the results; in the manufacturing sector, task communication had a significant effect on perception of organizational identity whereas in the service sector, it was concluded that career communication had significant effect on organizational identity perception. In conclusion, Çobanoğlu (2008) addressed organizational identity in the context of organizational effectiveness and Tüzün (2006) examined the relationship between organizational identity, organizational identification and organizational trust.

2.3. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

In the light of literature review, the effects of individual factors have been observed in the development of an organizational identification besides the effects of organizational factors. In this context, it is foreseen that the identification of the individuals who are aware of their emotional situations of the self and their colleagues and also who are able to approach with empathy to the organizational processes, will be at a higher level. However, various studies also show that the organizational identification has an impact on the various organizational performance variables (Voss et al., 2006, Boehm et al., 2015). The concept of organizational identification has been investigated under functionalist, social constructionist and postmodern perspectives together with the issues relating to the organization, marketing and strategy. Additionally, this concept has been studied with other concepts such as leadership, organizational communication, organizational trust, corporate image, organizational commitment and organizational effectiveness in order to see the relationships between these concepts. In the literature review however, no

studies are found specifically related to the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational identification. In this context, relevant hypotheses have been developed as follows;

H₁; Emotional Intelligence is positively related to the organizational identification.

H₂; Organizational identification is positively related to the organizational performance.

The concept of emotional intelligence plays an important part as being an indicator factor in various dynamics such as performance, negotiation, leadership, trust, work-family conflicts and stress (O'Boyle et al. 2011) and with these aspects, this subject is discussed in many studies in the management field. Amongst these studies, Côté and Miners (2006) examine the effects of emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence together on business performance. According to the findings, it is found out that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and task-oriented work performance, and this relationship has an impact on organizational citizenship behavior. In the study of Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005), which examines the relationship between leadership and emotional intelligence; it is concluded that there is a positive relationship between effective leadership and emotional intelligence. Dong et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and decisions on career advancement or job abandonment and job performance of executive candidates working in an organization. According to the results, developmental job experience is positively related to turnover intention for only employees who have low emotional intelligence, but not for employees who have high emotional intelligence. In the light of these researches, it is seen that the emotional intelligence of the individuals affect an organization's qualitative performance values such as satisfaction, turnover, employee morale and wellbeing. However, among these studies, the effects of organizational identity on the basis of being identified with the organizations of the individual and expressing themselves with organizational values have not been examined. From this point of view, it is foreseen that there is a mediator role of organizational identity on the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational performance. The hypothesis formed within this framework is as follows;

H₃; There is a mediation effect of organizational identification on the relationship between emotional identification and organizational performance.

Our research model is shown below (see figure 1);

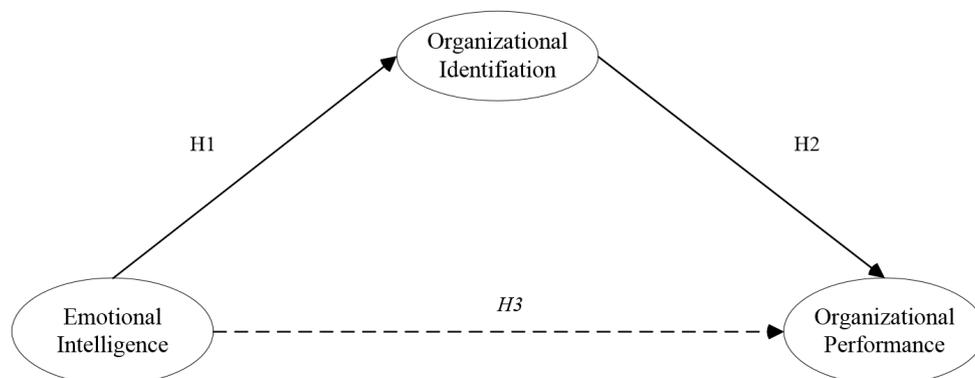


Figure 01. Research Model

3. Research Method

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

In order to collect research data, the questionnaire method was used by face-to-face interactions. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were carried out to determine whether the scale validity and reliability analyzes and questionnaires constituting the research scales form the predicted factor structure. Then the research model and related hypotheses were tested with structural equation model. The total number of participants for this study is 314 people who are working in organizations in different levels. As shown in Table 1, a great majority of the participants (57,6%) are graduated from university and with a 58,9% participants are in the age between 25-35. Emotional intelligence scale, which includes four dimension as self-emotion appraisal, others emotion appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion, is used by Law, Wong and Song (2004). To measure organizational identification, 6 item-scale of Mael and Ashforth's (1992) is used. Organizational performance scale is adopted from Prieto and Revilla (2006) which uses 4 items.

Table 01. Demographic Information of the Participants

Title	Frequency	Valid Percent	Gender	Frequency	Valid Percent
Top Level Manager	10	3,2	Male	168	55,3
Middle \ Bottom Level Man.	43	13,8	Female	136	44,7
Specialist	126	40,5	Education	Frequency	Valid Percent
Sales Representative	53	17,0	Secondary Education	4	1,3
Other	79	25,4	High School	24	7,7
Age	Frequency	Valid Percent	Collage	23	7,4
Below 25	73	24,6	University	179	57,6
25-35	175	58,9	Master	79	25,4
35-45	44	14,8	PhD	2	,6
45 and more	5	1,7	Total	314	100

3.2. Validity and Reliability of Factors

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is applied to determine whether the theoretically predicted variables making up the scales were separated into predicted factor components (Table 2). Principal components analysis and varimax rotation methods are used in the exploratory factor analysis. For testing the suitability of the data set for factor analysis; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample adequacy test and Bartlett sphericity test were applied.

As a result of the analysis, it is found that the KMO value for this study is 0.884 which is above the desired level of 0.50 (Field, 2009) and the Bartlett test is significant at 0.001 significance level. In addition, the diagonal values in the anti-image correlation matrix are looked at and these values are found to be over 0.5 as it should be. Accordingly, it has been found that the sample data is suitable for the factor analysis.

In the exploratory factor analysis, the lower limit of factor loads is accepted as 0.5 considering the sample size. The communality values of all variables are above 0.5. The Cronbach's Alpha value is used to measure the internal consistency of the factors, and each factor exceeded Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7. Accordingly, it is revealed that the factor structures have internal consistencies (Hair et al., 2010).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is conducted using the Maximum Likelihood estimation method to verify the results of the EFA, to analyze the validity and reliability of the research scales. Modification indices are examined and error values with high modification values in the same factor are combined with covariance. In this instance, the fit index values are examined as follow; $X^2/df = 1,625$, $GFI=0,904$, $TLI=0,947$, $CFI=0,955$, $PNFI=0,764$, $RMSEA=0,045$ (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schumacker & Lomax, 2012).

Convergence validity is obtained since all factor loads are statistically significant (Bagozzi et al., 1991) and factor loadings are higher than 0.7 (Hair et al, 2010). In addition, unidimensionality (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) is also being provided because the goodness of fit indexes is at a good level.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and Scale Composite Reliability (SCR) (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) values are used to test the reliability of the factor constructs. When AVE value is greater than 0.5 and the CR value is greater than 0.6, it is possible to say that the relevant factor has validity and reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The AVE and SCR values of research factors are given in Table 2. Accordingly, the validity and reliability of the factors are found to be at the desired level. Correlations of factor variables are given in Table 3. Accordingly, it is found that the interrelationships between the variables are sufficient and statistically significant.

Table 02. Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Constructs	Items	Factor Loadings		Validity and Reliability Values
		EFA	CFA	
Self-Emotion Appraisal	a1	0,842	0,819	Cronbach α ; 0,884
	a2	0,803	0,882	SCR; 0,895
	a3	0,831	0,858	AVE; 0,682
	a4	0,661	0,737	
Others Emotion Appraisal	a5	0,674	0,747	Cronbach α ; 0,836
	a6	0,783	0,825	SCR; 0,838
	a7	0,743	0,673	AVE; 0,565
	a8	0,749	0,754	
Use of Emotion	a9	0,648	0,704	Cronbach α ; 0,805
	a10	0,780	0,587	SCR; 0,809
	a11	0,660	0,77	AVE; 0,517
	a12	0,699	0,796	
Regulation of Emotion	a13	0,734	0,684	Cronbach α ; 0,823
	a14	0,675	0,84	SCR; 0,844
	a15	0,823	0,698	AVE; 0,576
	a16	0,770	0,803	
Organizational Identification	b2	0,736	0,644	Cronbach α ; 0,840
	b3	0,702	0,589	SCR; 0,838
	b4	0,782	0,805	AVE; 0,512
	b5	0,819	0,845	
	b6	0,777	0,662	
Organizational Performance	c1	0,709	0,728	Cronbach α ; 0,805
	c2	0,667	0,554	SCR; 0,812
	c3	0,728	0,704	AVE; 0,520
	c4	0,694	0,54	

(i) Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation

(ii) $KMO = 0,884$, Bartlett Test; $p < 0,001$ (iii) Total Variance Explained (%); 66,001

(iv) All CFA trait is statistically significant at $p < 0,001$

$X^2/df = 1,625$, $GFI=0,904$, $TLI=0,947$, $CFI=0,955$, $PNFI=0,764$, $RMSEA=0,045$

Table 03. Correlation Analysis

Constructs		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Use of Emotion	1					
2	Organizational Identification	0,350	1				
3	Self-Emotion Appraisal	0,590	0,304	1			
4	Regulation of Emotion	0,630	0,188	0,371	1		
5	Others Emotion Appraisal	0,569	0,320	0,672	0,463	1	
6	Organizational Performance	0,495	0,425	0,374	0,506	0,350	1

All correlations are statistically significant at $p < 0,001$

4. Findings

In this study, structural equation modeling is used to test the hypotheses. The structural equation model which is developed to investigate the effects of emotional intelligence and organizational identification on organizational performance is given below at Table 4. The fit values of the model are of the following form; Model 1 Fit; $X^2/df = 1,677$, $GFI=0,886$, $TLI=0,928$, $CFI=0,937$, $PNFI=0,756$, $RMSEA=0,047$ which are all at an acceptable fit.

Table 04. SEM Results on the Mediator Effect of Identification on EQ – Organizational Performance Relationship

	IV		DV	Standardized Estimate	Indirect Effect ^a		
					Estimate	Lower	Upper
Model w/o Mediator	Emotional Intelligence	□	Organizational Performance	0,574***			
Model with Mediator	Age		Organizational Performance	(Controlling Variables)	-0,064 ns		
	Gender	□			-0,016 ns		
	Education				0,039 ns		
	Emotional Intelligence	□	Organizational Identification		0,399***		
	Organizational Identification	□	Organizational Performance		0,228***		
	Emotional Intelligence	□	Organizational Performance		0,457***	0,091**	0,036

*** $p < 0,001$, ** $p < 0,01$, a; 5000 Bootstrap Samples, %95 Confidence Interval
 $X^2/df = 1,677$, $GFI=0,886$, $TLI=0,928$, $CFI=0,937$, $PNFI=0,756$, $RMSEA=0,047$

According to the results of structural equation model, there is a significant effect of Emotional Intelligence ($\beta=0,399$, $p < 0,001$) on Organizational Identification and also there is a significant effect of Organizational Identification ($\beta=0,228$, $p < 0,001$) on Organizational Performance. For this reason, H_1 and H_2 are supported.

A number of analyses have been conducted to test the mediation effect of the organizational identification. According to the results of these analyses, before the inclusion of the mediating variable into analysis, we saw that Emotional Intelligence influence organizational performance ($\beta=0,574$; $p < 0,001$) positively and significantly. When we include the mediating variable into the model, it has been observed that the effect of the emotional intelligence on organizational performance ($\beta=0,457$; $p < 0,001$) is not removed completely but decreased. According to Baron and Kenny (1986) it is possible to say that there is a mediator effect in our analysis. In addition, the mediator effect through the indirect effect (Preacher and

Hayes, 2008) has been investigated. In order to validate the potential mediating effects, indirect effect of the emotional intelligence on the organizational performance has been researched in the 5000 sample size level by using 'Bootstrap' method. It has been understood that the mediating effects are valid due to the existence of the indirect effects which are significant at 95 percent confidence level. Accordingly, H₃ is supported too. Thus, it has emerged that organizational identification has made a partial mediating effect between emotional intelligence and organizational performance. The figure 2 below shows the results of the related path model.

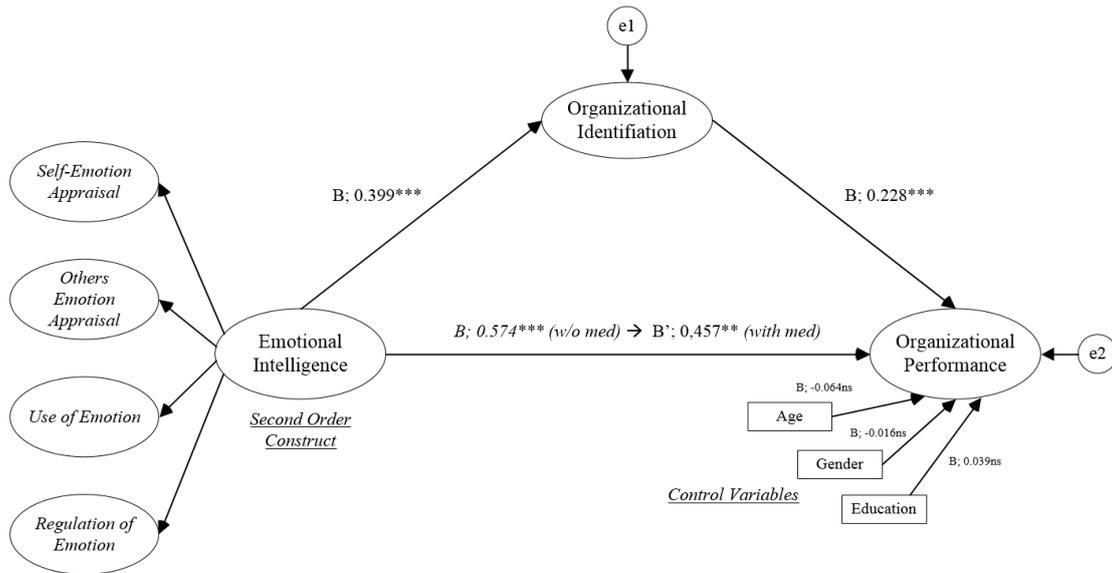


Figure 02. Final Research Model

5. Conclusion and Discussions

As claimed by many scientists and practitioners operating in the field of management and organization, the most important resource for businesses is neither money nor technology; but the human factor that constitutes these resources. It is obvious that employees who developed an organizational identity by building commitment with many organizational values make great improvements in performance to their organizations. In the context of organizational identity, it is foreseen that the identification of the individuals with institutions, who are aware of not only their own emotional conditions but also their colleagues', and who can approach empathy with organizational processes, will be at a higher level. For this reason, in this study, the effects of individual's emotional intelligence on organizational identity and organizational performance through organizational identity are investigated.

According to the results of the structural equation model conducted with the data obtained from the field survey, emotional intelligence of the individuals positively affect the organizational identity. In addition, it is also found that organizational identity positively influence the qualitative performance of the organization. These findings are similar to the works of Dong et al. (2014); Voss et al. (2006) and Boehm et al. (2015). Again, according to the results of the research, there is a mediator effect of organizational identity on the relationship between emotional intelligence and qualitative performance. This result

supports the findings of Côté and Miners (2006) that the emotional intelligence has an effect on the performance, and besides, it has been shown that this effect can be realized through organizational identity.

In this study, it is aimed to demonstrate that the source of sustainable high performance is the individuals who have high emotional intelligence and who developed an organizational identity. From the findings of the study, it is revealed that organizations wishing to survive in such an intense competitive environment should support their employees' organizational identity development processes. It is also recommended that priorities should be given in the recruitment process for the key positions to those candidates who have high emotional intelligence and also for the promotions; since the most efficient way of using business resources is to invest in the right person and to support these people.

The limitations of this study are the implementation of small-medium sample, studying only in the context of emotional intelligence and also using the perceptual performance indicators. We suggest that increasing the sample size would be beneficial for further researches. In addition, besides emotional intelligence, it is suggested that cultural intelligence and social intelligence should be studied and that the effects of different individual factors on organizational identity and performance should be examined too.

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