



# The Role of Job Satisfaction between Individual Performance & Strategic HR Management

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**Abstract:** In this research, it is aimed to examine the mediating role of job satisfaction between individual performance and strategic human resources management. The research was designed according to the quantitative research design, and the sample group consists of 266 white-collar employees working in different automotive industry companies located in the Marmara Region. Data were collected by random survey method. In the research, descriptive statistics, validity and reliability analyzes, normal distribution, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), path analysis and mediation analyzes were performed. SPSS 24, for descriptive statistics and reliability analysis, and LISREL for CFA, path analysis and mediation analysis were employed. According to the analysis results, job satisfaction variable has a mediating role in the effect of strategic human resources management on individual performance. This research is unique in that it investigates the role of job satisfaction in the impact of strategic human resources on individual performance in the automotive industry. The results obtained are indicative for users.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Individual Performance, Strategic Human Resources Management

**JEL Classification:** M12

## 1. Introduction

In the automotive industry, where industrial production processes have three main sources, financial resources, physical resources and human resources, the last one is the most important factor that makes a difference in competition with competitors. It is a natural result that job satisfaction of human resources, which is so decisive in competition, has not only moral but also very serious financial rewards for both employers and employees. At this point, the first thing that comes to mind is the performance of the employee (Altındağ and Turnalı, 2015). All employers, independent of the sector, expect human resources to perform their duties with high performance. The idea that the way to provide this environment in organizations is possible with the

establishment of strategic human resources practices has become stronger in recent years (Demirtaş, 2014).

The aim of this research is to determine the existence of a possible permeability between job satisfaction and individual performance and strategic human resources management by making use of the literature; It has tried to reveal whether there are factors that complement and trigger each other.

## **2. Conceptual Framework**

In this section, the concepts of Strategic Human Resources Management, Job Satisfaction and Individual Performance are explained.

### **2.1 Strategic Human Resources Management**

As a natural extension of this inevitable process, human resources management in working life is becoming more and more complex in terms of meaning and dimension. This process, which was called personnel management until yesterday, took the name of human resources management in time, and when it was seen that it was inevitable to be handled in a strategic dimension, strategic human resources management terminology became one of the normal of working life.

Strategic human resource management (HRM) is planned human resource services and activities aimed at achieving an organization's goals (Wright and McMahan 1992). Recently, a growing number of studies have shown that an effective SHRM system is an important source of organizational competitiveness (Barney & Wright, 1998).

SHRM policies, practices and organizational procedures represent that organization's values, key strategic activities, while also providing primary guidelines for organizational performance. Therefore, there has been a significant increase in the desire to examine the relationship between SHRM and performance in the last decade (Delaney & Huselid, 1996).

### **2.2 Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction has been expressed by researchers in different ways. A few of them can be listed as follows; According to Duane P. Schultz, and Sydney Ellen Schultz, the attitudes of the employees towards their jobs are the emotions they feel in the workplace and the behaviors they show. According to another definition, employees evaluate their

work experiences with pleasant and positive emotions (Locke, 1976:, 1297–1349). Another researcher expresses job satisfaction as the positive attitude of the employee towards his job and the feeling of satisfaction he gets from his job (Özkalp and Kirel, 2005: 142). To put it simply, job satisfaction is the state of the employee being happy in his job and doing his job with pleasure.

Job satisfaction depends on two main elements: the individual's personal situation (individual's structure, feelings, thoughts, wishes and needs, etc.) and work-related conditions (the physical and psychological conditions of the job and how much they overlap with the expectations of the employee (Blenegen, 1993:37).

In terms of work and working conditions, the nature of the work, career opportunities, the way of distribution of wages and wages, colleagues, the rate of acceptance by the organization and the management style are effective (Gibson et al., 1997:106).

High motivation towards their work in some employees with high job satisfaction may lead them to high productivity (Carroll and Tosi, 1977). A sense of success will attract those who try to assert themselves to high productivity (Başaran, 1998: 206).

### **2.3 Individual Performance**

While performance is defined literally as the level of being able to fulfill the task undertaken by a person; functionally, performance can be expressed as the effort and level of reaching the target to reach the previously determined targets (Fisher, 2001, p. 146). Individual job performance is the effort of an employee to fulfill a job assigned to him with existing resources, within the framework of predetermined rules. The job should be compatible with the knowledge and abilities of the employee, and the success criteria should be determined beforehand. The performance of the employee can be evaluated to the extent that these criteria can be reached (Yılmaz, 2012, p. 50).

As the performances of the employees differ from each other, there may be fluctuations in the same employee's own performance over time. Various factors play a role in this change in performance. In addition to personal factors such as talent, vocational education level, personal knowledge level, and personal characteristics of the employee that affect the performance of the employee, there are also organizational level factors such as organizational management style and employee policy, job design and organizational structure, working conditions, human relations within the organization,

and environmental factors. Individual performance consists of three elements: focus, competence and dedication (Paşa, 2007, p. 84).

#### **2.4 Developing Relationships and Hypotheses Between Job Satisfaction, Individual Performance and Strategic Human Resources Management**

Organizational-level performance consists of individual-level performances, which are directly related to job attitudes (Judge et al., 2001; Wright & McMahan, 2011). The positive effects of strategic human resources practices at the individual and organizational level have been confirmed by many researchers.

Based on the above data, the H1 and H2 hypotheses are formed as follows:

**H1:** Strategic human resources practices have a significant effect on individual performance.

**H2:** Strategic human resources practices have a significant effect on job satisfaction.

Employees who assimilate organizational goals, work with high performance for their organization and desire to continue working in the organization are employees with high commitment. The morale motivation of these employees is high, they come to work on time and their absenteeism rates are low. If the management aims to achieve organizational success, it should correctly identify the elements that bind the employee to the organization and keep him/her active in a motivating way in his/her work.

Based on the above data, the H3 hypothesis was formed.

**H3:** Job satisfaction has a significant effect on individual performance.

Blau (1964) argues that according to social exchange theory, it can explain the effects of employees' perception of human resources practices, their commitment to their jobs and their behaviors. According to the theory in question, the relationship between the employee and the organization is reciprocal. In cases where he feels that he is valued and benefited by the business, the employee begins to feel more responsibility towards the business. Since the main purpose of human resources practices is to make the employee feel important and to provide added value, employees perceive human resources practices positively and exhibit positive behaviors in the organization, just as social change theory refers (Wayne & Shore, 1993; Tüzün, 2013).

Based on the above data, hypothesis H4 was formed.

**H4:** Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual performance.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Model**

This study is a quantitative research. In the research model, strategic human resource management practices are included as dependent variables, individual performance and job satisfaction as independent variables. Gender, age, marital status, having a child, educational status, institutional experience, professional experience, status in the enterprise, monthly income were used as demographic control variables. The model of the research is based on investigating the mediating role of job satisfaction between individual performance and strategic human resource management.

#### **3.2 Participants**

In this context, an electronic questionnaire was applied to white-collar personnel working in many domestic and foreign automotive industry companies operating in the region. The survey application was carried out between March 2022 and October 2022. The questionnaire was conveyed to the participants via electronic communication tools, and 266 people answered the questions completely and these answers were included in the analysis.

#### **3.3 Data Collection Tools**

The questionnaire form consists of four parts: demographic information about the participants, Individual Performance Scale, Job Satisfaction Scale, Strategic Human Resources Management Scale. There are nine questions in the Demographic Information form.

The Individual Performance Scale was adapted into Turkish by Ünlü and Yürür (2011), the scale used by Goodman and Svyantek (1999) in order to measure employees' perceptions of task and contextual performance. The scale was taken from the study of Şen (2018).

The Job Satisfaction Scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) was evaluated by Judge et al. (1998), a five-item short form was used. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Keser and Bilir (2019).

There are 22 expressions in the Strategic Human Resources Management scale. The scale was taken from the study of Haile (2019).

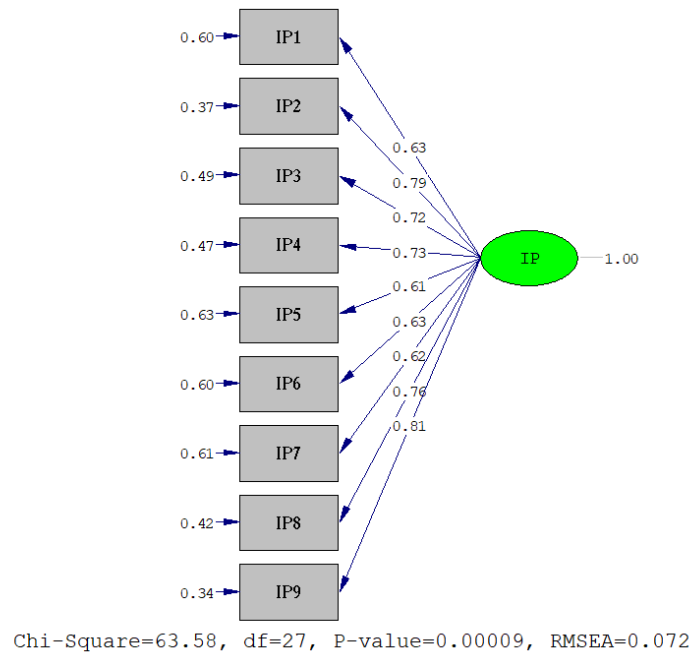
Data was collected via Google Forms.

### 3.4 Statistical Analysis

#### 3.4.1. Validity and Reliability of Scales and CFA Analysis Results

According to the analysis results, the reliability results of the scales are as follows: Individual performance  $\alpha = 0.89$ , job satisfaction scale  $\alpha = 0.86$ , strategic human resources management scale  $\alpha = 0.96$ . For reliability, the Cronbac'h alpha value should be above 0.70 (Büyüköztürk, 2003). According to these results, the reliability of all scales is high.

*Individual Performance Scale DFA Results.* In Figure 1, the path diagram of the CFA of the scale related to the individual performance scale is shown.

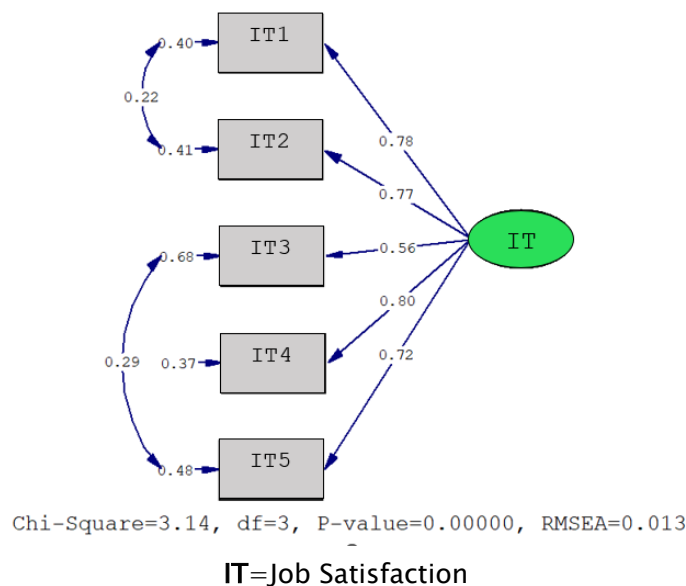


IP= Individual Performance

Figure 1. Individual Performance Scale – DFA Path Diagram

As can be seen in Figure 1, the factor load values of the items are between 0.62–0.81 according to the CFA findings of the individual performance measurement tool. These are the accepted values for the factor loading limits. Since the *t* value of each item in the scale was greater than 2.58, the effects of the factor loads of these items on the scale dimensions were considered to be significant at the 99% confidence level. The fit index results obtained as a result of CFA are  $X^2/df = 2,354$ ,  $RMSEA = 0,072$ ,  $CFI = 0,98$ ,  $SRMR = 0,014$ . This result indicates that the factor structure revealed is confirmed.

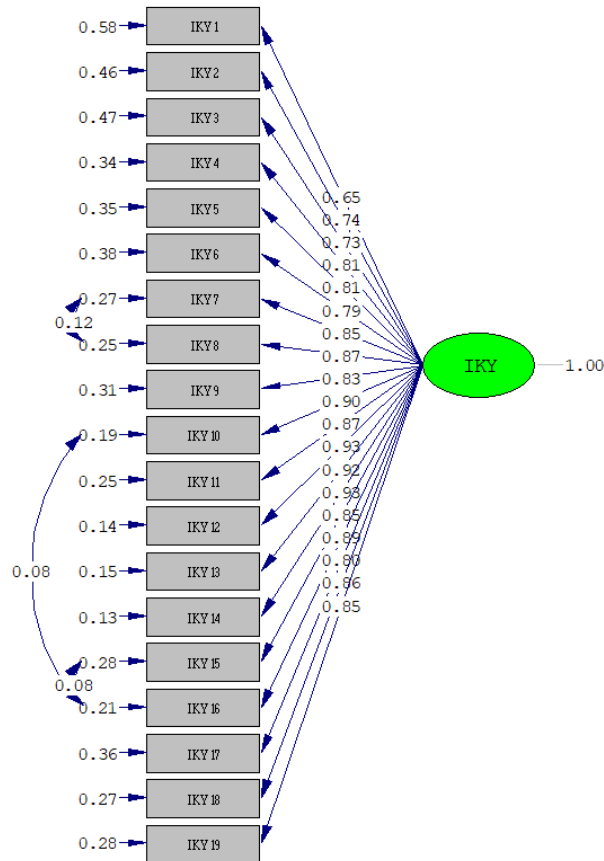
*Job Satisfaction Scale DFA Results.* In the main study, confirmatory factor analysis was performed and it was aimed to determine whether the job satisfaction scale confirmed the explained factor structure. Figure 2 shows the path diagram of the scale's CFA.



**Figure 2. DFA Path Diagram of the Job Satisfaction Scale**

According to the CFA findings of the job satisfaction measurement tool, it is seen in Figure 2 that the factor load values of the items are between 0.56 and 0.80. These are the accepted values in terms of factor load limits.

In order for the fit indices to be at the desired level in terms of path diagrams, it was necessary to make modifications between items 1–2 and 3–5. The fit index results obtained as a result of CFA are  $X^2/df = 1,046$ ,  $RMSEA = 0,013$ ,  $CFI = 0,98$ ,  $SRMR = 0,003$ . This result indicates that the factor structure revealed is confirmed.



Chi-Square=509.16, df=149, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.073

IKY= Strategic Human Resources.

**Figure 3. Strategic Human Resources Scale DFA Path Diagram**

According to the path diagrams, it was necessary to change between items 7–8, 10–16 and 15–16 in order for the fit indices to be at the desired level. The effects of factor loadings of all items in the scale on scale dimensions are significant at the 99% confidence level because the t value for all items is greater than 2.58. The fit index results obtained as a result of CFA are  $X^2/df= 3,417$ , CFI= 0,96, RMSEA= 0,073, SRMR= 0,031. This result indicates that the factor structure revealed is confirmed.

### 3.4.2. Data Distribution, Descriptive Findings and Correlation Analysis Results

The distribution of the data obtained, the participation levels of the participants according to the scores obtained from the scales, and the results of the relations between the variables are given in Table 1.



**Table 1. Normality Distribution of Research Data and Results of Descriptive Findings**

Variables	Avg.	S.D.	Median	Kurtosis	Distortion
Individual Performance	4,19	0,44	4,00	0,18	-0,04
Job Satisfaction	3,21	0,29	3,20	1,02	1,94
SHRM	3,96	0,57	4,00	-0,75	1,02

Measures of central tendency are used as a basis for examining the distribution of data. It shows that the distribution of the data comes from a normal distribution, the closeness of the mean value and the median value, which is one of the measures of central tendency, and the values of kurtosis and skewness between  $\pm 2$  values (George & Mallery, 2010). Likewise, starting from the central limit theorem, statistically stronger parametric methods were used because the number of participants included in the research was sufficient ( $n \geq 30$ ) (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012).

When Table 1 is examined, it was determined that the strategic human resources levels of the participants included in the study were at a high level with an average of 3.96, their job satisfaction levels were at a medium level with an average of 3.21, and their individual performance levels were at a high level with an average of 4.19. It was determined that there was a positive and low-level significant relationship between job satisfaction levels ( $r=0.208$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), and a positive and moderately significant relationship between strategic human resources levels ( $r=0.425$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). These results mean that when individual performance is improved, job satisfaction will be low and strategic human resources attitudes will improve moderately. It has been determined that there is a positive and low-level significant relationship ( $r=0.219$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) between the job satisfaction levels of the participants and their strategic human resources levels, and this result means that when the job satisfaction levels are improved, the strategic human resources attitudes will improve at a low level.

## 4. Findings

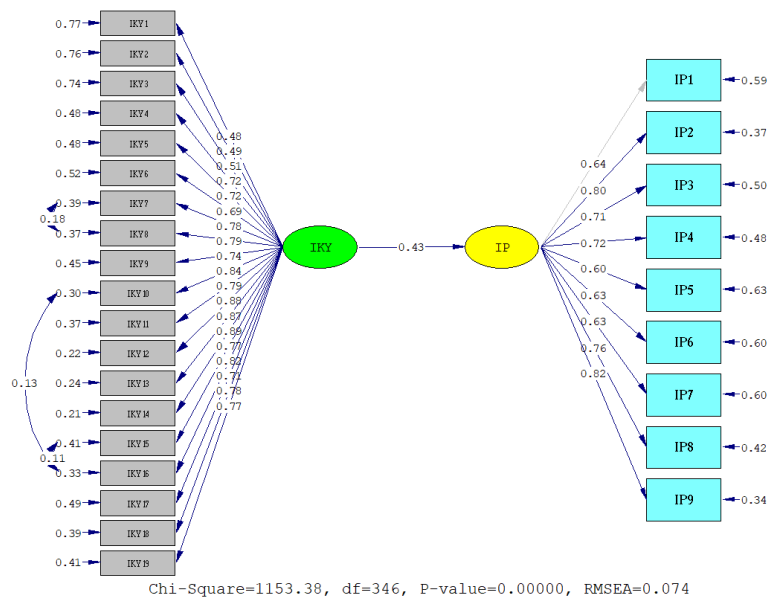
### 4.1. Findings on Demographic Characteristics

A total of 266 people were included in the study, and it was determined that 53.8% of the employees were male ( $n: 143$ ), while 46.2% were female ( $n: 123$ ). Participants are mostly between the ages of 31–40 (41.7%,  $n:111$ ), married (56.4%,  $n:150$ ), associate degree or undergraduate degree (71.4%,  $n:190$ ), 4–7 years of institutional experience (38.0%,  $n:150$ ), 11 years or more of professional experience (36.5%,  $n:97$ ), not a manager (17.6%,  $n:66.2\%$ ), monthly gross income between 10.001–12.500 TL (22.9%,

n:61). It was determined that 50% of the participants had children (n:133) while 50% had no children (n:133).

#### 4.2. Findings of the First Hypothesis of the Study

The SEM analysis path diagram of the model, in which the significant effect of strategic human resources practices, which is the first hypothesis of the research, on individual performance is measured, is given in Figure 4.



IKY= Strategic Human Resources, IP= Individual Performance

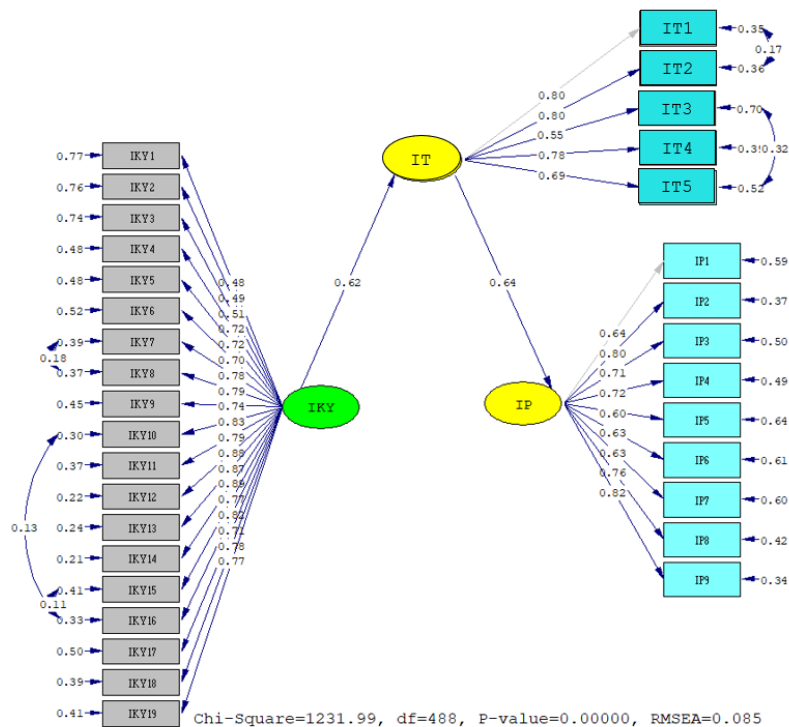
**Figure 4. Path Diagram of the Impact of Strategic Human Resources on Individual Performance**

When the fit criteria of the first model of the study were examined, it was in acceptable agreement with  $\chi^2/df=3.333$ , RMSEA value was in acceptable agreement with 0.074, and at the same time, other fit criteria were CFI=0.98, GFI=0.93, AGFI=0.91, NNFI=0.98, NFI=0.98, RMR=0.070, SRMR=0.033, these values were found to be within the limits of acceptance and perfect agreement.

The effect of strategic human resources practices, which is the first hypothesis of the research, on individual performance is statistically significant ( $\beta:0.43$ ;  $t=6.14 > 2.58$ ). From this point of view, it means that when there is a one-unit increase in strategic human resources application levels, it will cause an increase of 0.43 in individual performance.

### 4.3. Findings of the Second and Third Hypotheses of the Study

The SEM analysis road diagram of the model, in which the second hypothesis of the research, the effects of strategic human resources practices on job satisfaction and the effects of job satisfaction on individual performance is determined, is shown in Figure 5.



IKY= Strategic Human Resources, IP= Individual Performance, IT= Job Satisfaction

Figure 5. Path Diagram of the Second and Third Hypotheses of the Study

When the fit criteria of the second model of the study were examined, it was in perfect agreement with  $\chi^2/df=2.524$ , RMSEA value was in acceptable agreement with 0.085, and at the same time, other fit criteria were CFI=0.98, GFI=0.92, SRMR=0.033 values were found to be within the limits of acceptance and perfect agreement.

The effect of strategic human resources practices, which is the second hypothesis of the research, on job satisfaction was found to be statistically significant ( $\beta:0.62$ ;  $t=9.09 > 2.58$ ). Accordingly, it was concluded that when there is a one-unit increase in

strategic human resources application levels, it will cause an increase of 0.62 in job satisfaction levels.

The effect of job satisfaction, which is the third hypothesis of the study, on individual performance was found to be statistically significant ( $\beta:0.64$ ;  $t=9.84 > 2.58$ ). Accordingly, it was concluded that when there is a one-unit increase in job satisfaction levels, it will cause an increase of 0.64 in individual performance levels.

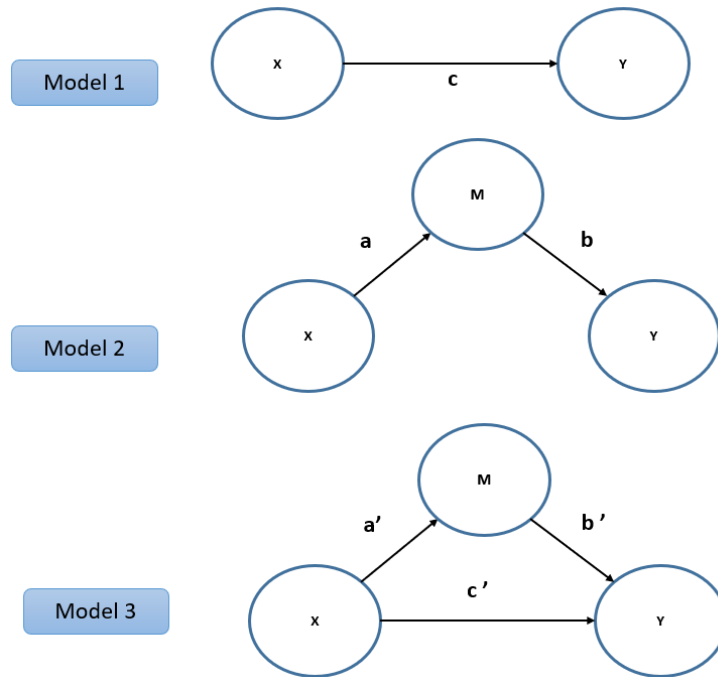
#### **4.4 Findings on the Mediation Effect**

Below are the results of the SEM analysis of the model, in which the fourth hypothesis of the research, the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual performance, is determined by the mediating role of job satisfaction.

Three different methods were used in this study. It is the method by which Baron and Kenny determine the mediating role of a variable with 3-stage modeling. This is one of the most used methods. Examining the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (path c in the model) is the first model, the mediator of the independent variable, the second model in which the effect of the mediating variable on the dependent variable is examined (paths a and b in the model), and the third model in which the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is added in the mediator variable. From the point of view of Baron and Kenny, the mediation effect can be examined as the path c in the first model is significant and the path a and b in the second model is significant. In addition, according to Baron and Kenny, if the beta value of the c' pathway decreased compared to the value of c in the first model but did not lose its significance in the third model where the mediation effect was examined, then partial mediation can be mentioned if it has lost its significance, full mediation. These paths are shown in Figure 4.

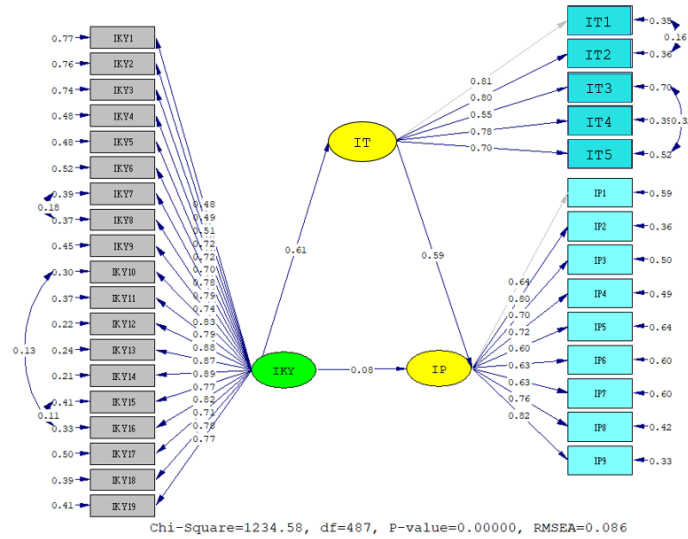
The method of Zhao et al. has also been used. Zhao et al. (2010) claimed that the mediation effect classification (full, partial, and no mediation) introduced by Baron and Kenny (1986) caused false results in studies. On the other hand, in their study, they revealed three methods for the mediation effect (complementary mediation effect, competitive mediation effect, and only indirect mediation effect) and two methods (direct non-mediation effect and ineffective non-mediation effect) regarding the no-mediation effect. If the indirect effect is significant (path a and b in the model), the direct effect is checked, and if the direct effect is not significant, full mediation is checked, if the direct effect is significant (path c' in the model), the product of the a, b and c' paths is positive

or negative. If these pathways are positive, partial integrative mediation is mentioned, and if negative, partial competitive mediation is mentioned.



**Figure 6.** The Model Established for Determining the Mediator Role of the Research

The results of the final model (Model 3), which will be decided whether there is mediation or not, are shown in Figure 7.



IKY= Strategic Human Resources, IP= Business Performance, IT=Job Satisfaction  
**Figure 7. Path Diagram of the Mediator Role of Job Satisfaction in the Impact of Strategic Human Resources Practices on Individual Performance**

When the fit criteria of the third model of the study were examined, it was found that it was in perfect agreement with  $\chi^2/df=2.535$ , the RMSEA value was in acceptable agreement with 0.086, and the other fit criteria were CFI=0.996, GFI=0.92, AGFI=0.90, NNFI=0.96, NFI=0.96, It was seen that RMR=0.067, SRMR=0.032 values, these values were within the limits of acceptance and perfect agreement. Since these results allow the interpretation of the beta coefficient in the model, the results of the mediation hypothesis of the research are given below.

**Table 2. Mediation Hypothesis Effect Coefficients of the Research.**

Directions	Effect Coefficients		
	standardized $\beta$	t	p
IKY $\rightarrow$ IT	0,61	8,93**	<0.001
IT $\rightarrow$ IP	0,59	6,17**	<0.001
IKY $\rightarrow$ IP	0,08	1,03	>0.05

\*\*p<0.01

When Figure 7 and Table 2 are evaluated, it is determined that the effect path of strategic human resources application on job satisfaction for the intermediary role is 0.61 and it is significant at 99% confidence level, and the effect path of job satisfaction on individual

performance is 0.59 and its effect is significant at 99% confidence level. has been done. According to Baron and Kenny's point of view, in order to say that there is mediation, the first model in which the effect of the independent variable without a mediating variable on the dependent variable is given should be looked at. Accordingly, as a result of Model 1 given in Figure 3, the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual performance was determined to be 0.43 ( $t=6.14 > 2.58$ ). When the model in Figure 7 was evaluated after the mediator variable was included in the model, it was seen that the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual performance was 0.08 ( $t=1.03 < 1.96$ ). Normally, the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual job performance is 0.43, but full mediation is mentioned because it has been determined that this effect loses its significance when the intermediary variable is included in the model.

According to Zhao et al., it shows that the effect of a and b pathways in model 3 is significant, but because the c pathway, which measures the direct effect, is meaningless, there is full mediation.

#### **4.5. Results of the Research Model and Hypotheses**

According to the analyzes made, the validity and reliability levels of the scales used in the research are high.

The first hypothesis of the research, "Strategic human resources practices have a significant effect on individual performance." judgment is significant. Because the statistical increase in human resources application levels has led to an increase in individual performance levels.

The second hypothesis of the research, "Strategic human resources practices have a significant effect on job satisfaction." judgment is meaning. Because the statistical increase in strategic human resources application levels has also led to an increase in job satisfaction levels.

The third hypothesis of the research, "Job satisfaction has a significant effect on individual performance." judgment is significant. Because the statistical increase in job satisfaction levels has also led to an increase in individual performance levels.

The third hypothesis of the research, "Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual performance." According to the result of the first model, in which the effect of the independent variable on the

dependent variable in which there is no mediating variable in the judgment, strategic human resources practices have an effect on individual performance. After the mediator variable was included in the model, the effect of strategic human resources practices on individual performance lost its significance. Normally, while strategic human resources practices have an impact on individual job performance, full mediation is mentioned because it has been determined that this effect loses its significance when the intermediary variable is included in the model.

It is shown that the effect of a and b paths in Model 3 is significant, but since the c path, which measures the direct effect, is meaningless, there is full mediation.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### Limitations of the Research

The limitation of the research is that it covers people in a certain geographical region and is based on volunteerism.

*Suggestions for Researchers.* At the time of our study, our country is going through a tough economic crisis. In this financially turbulent period, wage and career expectations of all employees have changed, and their job satisfaction and individual performance perceptions have changed compared to previous periods.

Conducting similar studies in different sectors and including gray-collar and blue-collar personnel in the sample group in these studies will enable the employees in Turkey to be researched in a wider range, and the general inclusiveness of the results we have reached will be revealed.

*Recommendations for Practitioners.* In the study, structural equation models were used in order to examine the results of the research hypotheses. It was determined that the strategic human resources levels of the participants included in the study were at a high level, their job satisfaction levels were at a medium level and their individual job performance levels were at a high level. With the individual job performances of the participants included in the research; It has been determined that there is a positive and low-level significant relationship between job satisfaction levels, and a positive and moderately significant relationship between strategic human resources levels. It has been determined that there is a positive and low-level significant relationship between the job satisfaction levels of the participants and their strategic human resources levels,



and this result means that when the job satisfaction levels are improved, the strategic human resources attitudes will improve at a low level.

In this study, it has been evaluated that when employers handle human resources strategically and implement their practices properly, they will positively affect job satisfaction and both individual and organizational performance.

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