The Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Punishment in the Relationship Between Ethical Values and Cyberloafing

Etik Değerler ile Sanal Kaytarma İlişkisinde Algilanan Örgütsel Cezanın Aracı Rolü

Video Link: https://youtu.be/vGE2l_AkAbI

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing. To this end, correlational survey model was used. In the study, data were collected from 784 teachers through random sampling. Data were collected through survey technique. The questionnaire form includes demographic information form, ethical values scale, cyberloafing scale, and perceived organizational punishment scale. The obtained data were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation modelling. The study found that ethical values have a significant, negative effect on cyberloafing and a significant, positive effect on perceived organizational punishment. Furthermore, perceived organizational punishment was determined to have no significant effect on cyberloafing and no mediation effect in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing.

Keywords: Ethic, Ethical Values, Cyber Loafing, Perceived Organizational Punishment, Teachers

Etik Değerler ile Sanal Kaytarma İlişkisinde Örgütsel Cezanın Aracı Rolü **

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, etik değerler ile sanal aylaklık arasındaki ilişkide algılanan örgütsel cezanın aracı rolünü araştırmaktır. Bu amaçla ilişkisel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada 784 öğretmenden tesadüfi örneklem yoluyla veri toplanmıştır. Veriler anket tekniği ile toplanmıştır. Anket formunda demografik bilgi formu, etik değerler ölçeği, sanal aylaklık ölçeği ve algılanan örgütsel ceza ölçeği yer almaktadır. Elde edilen veriler betimsel istatistiksel analiz, korelasyon analizi ve yapısal eşitlik modellemesine tabi tutulmuştur. Çalışma, etik değerlerin sanal kaytarma üzerinde anlamlı, olumsuz bir etkisi olduğunu ve algılanan örgütsel ceza üzerinde anlamlı, olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu bulmuştur. Ayrıca algılanan örgütsel cezanın sanal kaytarma üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığı ve etik değerler ile sanal kaytarma ilişkisinde aracılık etkisinin olmadığı belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Etik, Etik Değerler, Siber Aylaklık, Örgütsel Ceza Algısı, Öğretmenler

Introduction

Technology has increasingly become an indispensable part of people's lives. Today, individuals of almost all ages have at least one smart device, tablet, or computer connected to the internet. People's connection with these technological tools, which offer countless conveniences, is increasing gradually. This is true for workplaces, too. Many workplaces have a technology-oriented work environment, and with technology, people can work independently of the place. Thanks to technology, the speed of doing things has increased tremendously. In recent years, schools have become more technologically equipped as well. Out-of-school distance education opportunities have also increased a lot. Although the rapid development of technology in recent years makes our lives easier, it also causes some negativities. Cyberloafing is one of these negativities. Cyberloafing, which means that employees browse the internet for personal purposes during work hours (Blanchard & Henle, 2008), causes problematic internet use and reduces productivity in the workplace, and, in a managerial sense, it becomes increasingly difficult to prevent cyberloafing (Garret & Danziger, 2008: 289). It is considered that employees' ethical values and organizational punishment perceptions may be determinative of their display of cyberloafing behaviour. Ethical values refer to behavioural patterns that people develop about how and in what way they should behave or make decisions within the scope of responsibility and certain rules (Bayram, 2018: 234). In the context of workplaces, the concept of punishment, which arises when certain rules are violated, involves the exposure of the employee to a behaviour that they do not like and do not want. It is assumed that the employee will give up their undesirable behaviour freely and will not repeat these behaviours again, rather than encountering a situation that they do not like (Akçit, 2011: 17). Cyberloafing is considered as an inefficient and counterproductive behaviour that negatively affects the organization and is not desirable to be displayed by employees (Robinson & Bennett, 1995: 560). In this context, it is thought that ethical values will have a negative effect on cyberloafing, and perceived organizational punishment will play a mediating role in this relationship.

The concept of ethics, which derives from the Greek word "ethos", refers to the search for a good "way of being", a wise course of action (Pieper, 1999: 30). The concept of ethics suggests that the good and the right should be comprehended by individuals, and the goals should be established within this framework, pointing to the integration of individuals' moral experiences with their values in life (Cooper, Leung, Dellaportas, Jackling, Wong, 2008: 412). In another definition, the concept of ethics is integrated with the concepts of truth, justice, and honesty and defined as the judgments and beliefs that individuals develop for evaluating the wrongs and rights that affect others (Mosley, Paul, & Leon, 1996). These judgments and beliefs are the rules that determine people's behaviours and direct their social lives. Ethics is accepted as the set of values that form the basic structure of interpersonal relations (Cooper et al., 2008: 412). Ethical values derived from basic values refer to behavioural patterns that people develop about how and in what way they should behave or make decisions within the scope of responsibility and certain rules (Bayram, 2018: 234). Ethical values are a set of rules that help distinguish between the right and the wrong by determining the behaviours. It is a guiding factor in the decisions to be taken. The concepts of ethics and value are often used together in the literature as complementary concepts. Ethical values are accepted as

internal driving forces that lead people to certain behaviours. It is considered that people with certain ethical values have similar behaviours. While establishing ethical values was not a necessity for organizations before, it has now become an indispensable element for success in terms of human resources.

Punishment is a negative approach to reduce an undesirable behaviour and to prevent that behaviour from occurring again. The basis of imposing punishment is to provide management effectiveness with the power of rule and to emphasize the legal judgment. The concern of management is to ensure full compliance with the rules and how to eliminate a crime that has emerged. Violation of the rules is perceived as wilful and selfish (Barron, 1996: 171). If an employee is lazy, does their job poorly, or prevents things from getting done, the manager may consider warning, punishing, or even firing them. Punishment involves the employee's exposure to a behaviour that they do not like and do not want. It is assumed that the employee will give up their undesirable behaviour freely and will not repeat these behaviours again, rather than encountering a situation that they do not like. When punishment is considered as a motivational tool, its positive aspects emerge. It provides an insight into what kind of sanctions the employees will face in undesirable situations. Perceived organizational punishment is a deterrent element for individuals. Perceived organizational punishment is the belief of the employee in the negative feedback that is to be given to them because of their undesirable behaviours reducing their productivity in the organization and has the power of sanction (Akçit, 2011: 17). Perceived organizational punishment is defined as individuals' belief that they will be punished if they do not comply with certain rules existing in the organization they are in and affiliated with or if they act in ways that will harm that organization.

Literature Rewiew

Cyberloafing has become a topic of interest in recent years with the increase in digitalization and internet use. Many definitions have been made for cyberloafing, which has been studied with many different variables. In a general sense, cyberloafing is the employee's use of the internet systems that are offered for work purposes for personal purposes and thus wasting their time while at work by pretending to be working via computer and internet (Yıldız, Yıldız, & Ateş, 2015: 57). It is the use of the internet to which employees are connected through mobile technology devices for the realization of personal goals in matters not related to work during work hours (Örücü & Özüdogru, 2015: 6). It includes receiving, sending-reading e-mails, visiting sports, news, financial and adult sites, chatting through messaging programs, online social media platforms and virtual communities, shopping, and aimlessly surfing the internet, briefly any technology uses that are not related to work during work hours (Chen, Ross, & Yang, 2011: 195). These kinds of activities mean that human resources act contrary to the terms of the contract under which they work in the organization. Researchers have divided cyberloafing into two dimensions: (1) minor cyberloafing, which includes actions such as sending/receiving personal e-mails and visiting news, financial and sports sites, (2) serious cyberloafing, which includes online gambling, downloading music, and accessing adult sites. Serious cyberloafing, one of the dimensions of cyberloafing, causes legal problems (e.g., copyright, fees for accessing sites, rate differences) in workplaces, and some punishments and sanctions become possible for employees and organizations. Minor cyberloafing, the other dimension of cyberloafing, is not penalized, does not

constitute a crime, and is mostly ignored (Blanchard & Henle, 2008: 1070). In other words, it is a dimension of cyberloafing with no notable negative aspects. The rate of internet use for non-work purposes in work environments and the loss of time caused by this are also studied. The research carried out by Sharma and Gupta in 2004 reports the rate of internet use for non-work purposes within work hours as approximately 50% (Sharma & Gupta 2004: 76). The study conducted by in the USA in 2013 found approximately 56% of the internet use time during work hours to be for non-work purposes (MySammy, 2013). Such uses are a serious loss of efficiency for organizations, which are faced with high costs because of them (Örücü & Yıldız, 2014: 100). In the early 2000s, the total annual cost of cyberloafing to businesses in the USA alone was stated to be 178 billion dollars (Saalfield, 2005: 70). Considering that the cost of cyberloafing to businesses has been quite high and increasing more in recent years, research on this subject is important for preventing it. Apart from all the negative effects of cyberloafing, some studies have emphasized certain positive effects such as providing employees with information on different subjects and allowing them to take a break from work and have a rest. It is stated that cyberloafing allows employees to improve their creativity and multidimensional thinking ability (Anandarajan, Devine, & Simmers, 2004: 67). It is also noted that cyberloafing should not be considered as a completely negative behaviour and that when it is effectively controlled, the internet can bring positive features such as innovation, creativity, and versatility to employees (Balenger & Van Slyke, 2002: 65). With this aspect, cyberloafing is deemed positive for employees to relax and be motivated to work again. Another study on cyberloafing (Arda & Fidan, 2021) detected some relationships between cyberloafing and dimensions of personality. That study revealed negative and significant relationships between cyberloafing and the extraversion and conscientiousness dimensions of personality (Arda & Fidan, 2021: 192). As the values of extraversion and conscientiousness increased, a significant decrease occurred in the level of cyberloafing.

In the study examining the relationships between ethical values, ethical code awareness and organizational commitment (Seyedin, 2013: 1), it was seen that the ethical values score is higher in organizations that are aware of the ethical code than in organizations that are not aware of it. It was stated that when the participants were aware of the existence of the ethical code in the workplace, they showed a high level of organizational commitment. In another study, it was revealed that the ethical values of the organization have a mediating role in the relationship between the ethical code perceived in the organization and organizational commitment (Valentine & Barnett, 2003: 359). As a result of the research, it has been revealed that the awareness of the ethical code has increased. It will increase the organizational commitment level to high levels by increasing the belief in the strong ethical values of the organizations.

In the research on the perception of organizational punishment, the punishment practices that are expected to be effective on the unproductive misbehaviours of the employees and the punishment perceived by the people are emphasized. Trevino (1992) researched the social effect of organizational punishment in the organization with organizational justice, suggested the future of organizations and managerial solutions.

Butterflield, et al. (2005) investigated organizational punishment by associating it with the managers' perspective. They investigated the relationships between administrators' beliefs, characteristics of the criminal case (justice-based punishment practices such as constructive punishment or specific punishment), and managers' perceptions of the criminal case regarding procedural and distributive justice. As a result, they expressed how organizational punishment should be perceived by managers as a factor that reduces work efficiency and that managers in different social environments should develop organizational punishment methods.

Within the scope of the research problem, ethical values and organizational punishment perception variables that are predicted to affect cyberloafing are included. The concept of cyberloafing has been associated with many variables in the literature. Ethical values are one of the oldest concepts that affect organizational behavior. Therefore, it is assumed that it will negatively affect cyberloafing. The concept of organizational punishment is an effective form of behavior management in bureaucratic organizations. For these reasons, it is predicted that teachers' perceptions of organizational punishment will negatively affect cyberloafing. The research model was created based on these assumptions and research hypotheses based on literature.

H1: Ethical values have a negative and significant effect on cyberloafing.

H2: Ethical values have a positive and significant effect on perceived organizational punishment.

H3: Perceived organizational punishment has a negative and significant effect on cyberloafing.

H4: Perceived organizational punishment has a mediating role in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing.

Research Questions

The literature contains limited research focusing on the effect of ethical values on cyberloafing. On the other hand, the literature review found no study examining the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in the said relationship. Hence, this study investigating the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing will contribute to filling this gap in the literature, which is considered to make it significant. In this context, the aim of the study is to investigate the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing.

Method

Research Model

In this study, relational screening model was used to determine the existence and degree of variance between two or more variables (Büyüköztürk, 2012: 58). This quantitative study adopted the correlational survey model since it sought to investigate the relationship between organizational ethical values and cyberloafing and the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in that relationship. This is also a descriptive

and cross-sectional study. The research model developed within the scope of the study is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Model
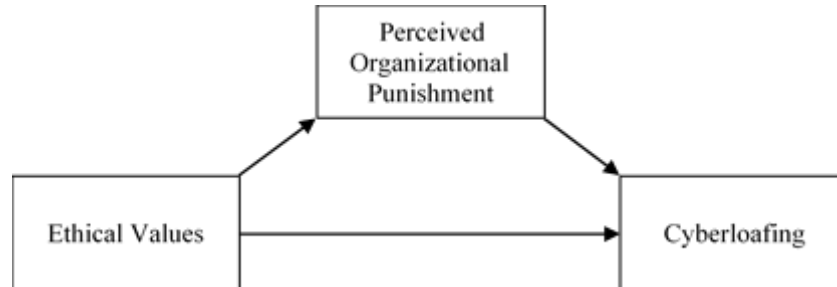
The hypotheses developed to test the relationships between the independent, dependent, and mediating variables within the scope of the study are as follows:

H1: Ethical values have a negative and significant effect on cyberloafing.

H2: Ethical values have a positive and significant effect on perceived organizational punishment.

H3: Perceived organizational punishment has a negative and significant effect on cyberloafing.

H4: Perceived organizational punishment has a mediating role in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing.

Population and Sample

This study covers all schools (high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, preschools) located within the provincial borders of Istanbul. In this regard, population of the study consists of teachers working in Istanbul. The sample of the study consists of 784 teachers reached by convenience sampling method. Descriptive statistical analysis results including frequency and percentage values for the participants' demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Information for the Participants

Variable	Groups	N	%
Age	18-30	141	18.0
	31-40	335	42.7

	41 and above	308	39.3
School Level	Preschool	83	10.6
	Elementary School	403	51.4
	Middle School	150	19.1
	High School	148	18.9
School Type	Public	735	93.8
	Private	49	6.2
Educational Attainment	Undergraduate	631	80.5
	Master/PhD	153	19.5

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected by survey method. All schools (high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, preschools) located within the provincial borders of Istanbul and listed on the official website of the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education were included in data collection. Permission was obtained from the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education to distribute the questionnaire to the sample group. The questionnaire was administered between February 5 and March 30, 2021.

Within the scope of the validity and reliability analyses of the scale, firstly, explanatory factor analysis and item analysis studies were included; finally confirmatory factor analysis studies were carried out. Explanatory factor analysis and item analysis studies of the research and confirmatory factor analysis It was carried out with the SPSS package program. Cronbach's alpha values were determined to check their reliability. Descriptive statistical analyses were made to determine the ethical values, cyberloafing, and perceived organizational punishment levels of the participants. The Pearson correlation coefficients (r) were calculated to determine the relationships between the variables. The effect of ethical values on cyberloafing and the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in this relationship were investigated by structural equation modelling. T-test and ANOVA were performed to examine whether the variables differed depending on the participants' demographic characteristics.

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modelling. T-test and ANOVA were performed to examine whether the variables differed depending on the participants' demographic characteristics.

Data Collection Tools

A questionnaire consisting of four parts was used to collect data. The questionnaire includes the demographic information form prepared by the researcher in the first part, the ethical values scale (Morrow, 1983) in the second part, the cyberloafing scale (Blanchard-Henle, 2008; Kaplan-Çetinkaya, 2014) in the third part, and the perceived organizational punishment scale in the fourth part. Regarding research scales, there are 7 items on ethical values, 17 items on cyberloafing, and 3 items on the perception of organizational punishment. Scales do not have sub-dimensions. The data collected with Likert scales are open to testing, repeated and have a quality that will reveal structural stability in the long term (Şencan & Fidan, 2020: 687). Therefore, the Likert scale was used in this study.

The validity of the scales was checked with confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the factor loads of one item in the ethical values scale (item 2) and an item in the cyberloafing scale (item 15) were below 0.4. These items were removed from the analysis by removing them from the scales. Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the factor loadings of ethical values scale items were between 0.42-0.79, that of cyberloafing scale items were between 0.58-0.82 and that of perceived organizational punishment scale items were between 0.59-0.88. In addition, to decide the validity of the scales, it was checked whether the fit indexes of the scales obtained by confirmatory factor analysis met the acceptance conditions. Threshold values for goodness of fit were specified as ($\chi2/df<5$; RMSEA<0.08; CFI>0.90; TLI>0.90; SRMR<0.05, Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). Goodness-of-fit values for the ethical values scale; $\chi2/df$: 3.33, TLI: 0.97, CFI: 0.98, RMSEA: 0.05, AVE: 0,51, SRMR: 0,04. When the goodness of fit values of the ethical values scale are examined, it is seen that all compliance criteria are acceptable. As a result, it was confirmed that the 6-item and one-factor structure of the ethical values scale was compatible with the data collected from the sample group. Goodness of fit values of cyberloafing scale; $\chi2/df$: 4.93, TLI: 0.94, CFI: 0.96, RMSEA: 0.07, AVE: 0,52, SRMR: 0,06. When the cyberloafing scale's goodness of fit values are examined, it is seen that all fit criteria are acceptable. It was confirmed that the 16-item and single-factor structure of the cyberloafing scale was compatible with the data collected from the sample. Goodness of fit values of organizational punishment perception scale; $\chi2/df$: 0.00, TLI: 1.00, CFI: 1.00, RMSEA: 0.00, AVE: 0,53, SRMR: 0,00. When the goodness of fit values of the organizational punishment perception scale are examined, it is seen that all compliance criteria are acceptable. It was confirmed that the single-factor and three-item structure of the organizational punishment perception scale was compatible with the data collected from the sample. Cronbach's alpha values were also determined to check the reliability of the scales. For a scale to be considered reliable, its reliability value is expected to be greater than 0.40 and it is stated that a coefficient greater than 0.80 indicates high reliability (Kalaycı, 2010: 405). The validity and reliability analysis results of the scales

used in the study are given in Table 2. It is seen that the scales meet the validity and reliability criteria.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Analysis Results for the Data Collection Tools

Scale	Number of Items	χ^2/df	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	C.Alpha
Ethical Values	6	3.328	0.988	0.978	0.048	0.054	0.827
Cyberloafing	16	3.990	0.941	0.957	0.061	0.076	0.953
Perceived Organizational Punishment	3	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.759

Findings

Descriptive Statistics for the Variables

Descriptive statistical analysis results including the mean and standard deviation values of the variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Values of the Scales

Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation
Ethical Values	4.683	0.443
Cyberloafing	2.892	1.122
Perceived Organizational Punishment	3.548	0.877

The score ranges of the scales were categorized according to the (n-1)/n formula, which is frequently used in the literature (Parilla, 2013; Choeikan, 2014; Doğan, 2018). Accordingly, the score range was determined as (5-1)/5=0.80. As a result, rating was set as follows: 4.21-5.00: "very high". 3.41-4.20: "high", 2.61-3.40: "medium", 1.81-2.60: "low", and 1.00-1.80: "very low". Based on that, the participants were found to have a very high level of ethical values ($\bar{x}$=4.683; sd=0.443), a medium level of cyberloafing ($\bar{x}$=2.892; sd=1.122), and a high level of perceived organizational punishment ($\bar{x}$=3.548; sd=0.877).

Findings on the Relationships Between the Variables

The Pearson correlation coefficients obtained to determine the relationships between the variables in the study are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis Results

Scale	Ethical Values	Cyberloafing	Perceived Organizational Punishment
Ethical Values	1		
Cyberloafing	-0.083*	1	
Perceived Organizational Punishment	0.216**	0.027	1

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 4 shows that there is a low negative correlation between ethical values and cyberloafing (r=-0.083; p<0.05), and a positive and significant relationship (r=0.216; p<0.01) between ethical values and perceived organizational punishment. On the other hand, there was no significant relationship between perceived organizational punishment and cyberloafing (r=0.027; p>0.05).

Findings on the Effects of the Variables

The results of the analysis performed with structural equation modelling to determine the effect of ethical values on cyberloafing for testing the first hypothesis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The Effect of Ethical Values on Cyberloafing

Path	B	t	p
Ethical Values → Cyberloafing	-0.209	2.32	0.021
$\chi2_{(190)}$=681.770; $\chi2$/df =3.588; CFI=0.955; TLI=0.945; RMSEA=0.057			

Table 5 shows the negative and low-level significant effect of ethical values on cyberloafing (β=-0.209; p<0.05). The goodness of fit values of the model ($\chi2(190)$ =681.770; $\chi2$/df=3.588; CFI=0.955; TLI=0.945; RMSEA=0.057) are within acceptable limits. Based on these results, the hypothesis H1 was accepted.

The results of the analysis performed with structural equation modelling to determine the effect of ethical values on perceived organizational punishment for testing the second hypothesis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The Effect of Ethical Values on Perceived Organizational Punishment

Path	B	t	p
Ethical Values → Perceived Organizational Punishment	0.236	5.76	0.000
χ2(25)=52.607; χ2/df =2.104; CFI=0.988; TLI=0.982; RMSEA=0.038			

Table 6 indicates that ethical values have a positive and significant effect on perceived organizational punishment (β=0.236; p<0.01). The goodness of fit values of the model ($\chi2(25)$=52.607; $\chi2/df$ =2.104; CFI=0.988; TLI=0.982; RMSEA=0.038) are within acceptable limits. Based on these results, the hypothesis H2 was accepted.

The results of the analysis performed with structural equation modelling to determine the effect of perceived organizational punishment on cyberloafing for testing the third hypothesis are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The Effect of Perceived Organizational Punishment on Cyberloafing

Path	B	t	p
Perceived Organizational Punishment → Cyberloafing	0.007	0.18	0.857
χ2(134)=621.643; χ2/df =4.639; CFI=0.951; TLI=0.937; RMSEA=0.068			

Table 7 indicates that organizational punishment perception does not have a significant effect on cyberloafing (β=0.209; p>0.05). The goodness of fit values of the model ($\chi2(134)$=621.643; $\chi2/df$ =4.639; CFI=0.951; TLI=0.937; RMSEA=0.068) are within acceptable limits. Based on these results, the hypothesis H3 was rejected.

Mediation Analysis Findings

To test the fourth hypothesis, the mediating role of the perception of organizational punishment and the ethical values of organizations on cyberloafing was investigated with the method proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). According to this method, a three-step analysis is required to test the mediation effect. First, the effects of the independent variable on the mediating variable should be analysed. In the second step, the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable should be analysed. In the third stage, the joint effects of both the independent variable and the mediator variable on the dependent variable should be analysed. These three analyses provide tests of the mediation model. To talk about the existence of a mediating effect, three conditions must be met. First, the independent variable in the first equation must affect

the mediating variable. Next, it should be shown that the independent variable in the second equation affects the dependent variable. Finally, the mediator variable in the third equation must affect the dependent variable. If all conditions are true in the predicted direction, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable should be less in the third equation than in the second equation. When the mediator variable is controlled, if the independent variable has no effect, it can be said that there is full mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1180). The structural model created within this framework is presented in Figure 2, and the analysis results are presented in Table 8.

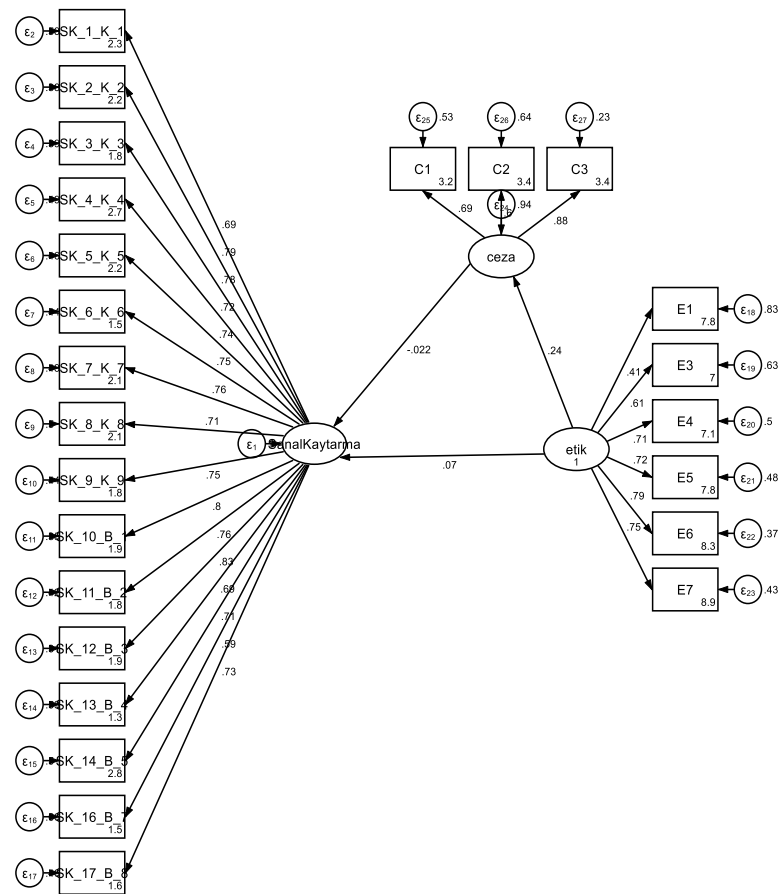**Figure 2.** Structural Equation Model Mediation Analysis

Table 8. Mediation Analysis Results

Path	Stage	Stage	Stage
Ethical Values → Organizational Perceived Punishment	0.236**		0.235**
Ethical Values → Cyberloafing		-0.209*	-0.070
Organizational Perceived Punishment → Cyber Loafing			-0.021
Goodness of Fit Values	$\chi2_{(25)}$=52.607 $\chi2$/df=2.104 CFI=0.988 TLI=0.982 RMSEA=0.038	$\chi2_{(190)}$=681.770 $\chi2$/df=3.588 CFI=0.955 TLI=0.945 RMSEA=0.057	$\chi2_{(254)}$=840.841 $\chi2$/df =3.310 CFI=0.950 TLI=0.940 RMSEA=0.054

*p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table 8 shows that in the first stage, ethical values affect the mediating variable organizational punishment perception (β=0.236; p<0.01) positively, and in the second stage, ethical values affect cyberloafing negatively (β=-0.209; p<0.05). However, in the third stage, organizational punishment perception has no significant effect on cyberloafing (β=-0.01; p>0.05). Based on these results, the H4 hypothesis was rejected since the perception of organizational punishment could not be said to have a mediating role in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing since the three conditions stated by Baron and Kenny (1986) were not met.

According to the results of the analysis, it was determined that the perception of organizational punishment did not have a significant effect on cyberloafing (p>0.05). Since the mediating variable does not have a significant effect on cyberloafing, it cannot be said that the perception of organizational punishment has a mediating role in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

The research aimed to investigate the effect of the ethical values of the organizations on cyberloafing and the mediating role of perceived organizational punishment in this relationship.

According to the results of a series of analysis, it has been seen that the ethical values of the organizations have a negative and low-level significant effect on cyberloafing, and that ethical values have a positive and significant effect on the perceived organizational punishment. In summary, the increase in the level of ethical values leads to an increase in the level of perceived organizational punishment and a decrease in the level of cyberloafing. On the other hand, it was determined that perceived organizational punishment did not have a significant effect on cyberloafing and that there was no mediation effect in the relationship between ethical values and cyberloafing. The literature contains very limited number of studies investigating the relationships between ethical values, cyberloafing, and perceived organizational punishment, and such studies have reached similar results to the ones obtained in the present study. In the study covering 62 school administrators and 227 teachers, Akça (2022) found that the professional ethical behaviours of school administrators working in public schools have a low, negative effect on their cyberloafing behaviours. Ugrin, Pearson, Odom, (2008) determined that individuals knowing that others have been punished for cyberloafing have a lower cyberloafing tendency. However, it is stated that punishment alone is not effective, and it is effective if there are control systems that detect evidence of cyberloafing (Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Olivares-Mesa, 2010: 1045-1046). Glassman, Prosch, Shao, (2015) examined the internet use of 275 employees in the workplace and emphasized that the internet should be limited, and employees should be controlled to prevent cyberloafing. Hence, it can be said that the findings obtained in the present study are consistent with the inter-conceptual relations and previous research in the literature.

Some recommendations can be made based on the results of this research. The study concluded that ethical values have a negative effect on cyberloafing, which is adverse for organizations. Businesses may choose to give priority to people with high ethical values using methods such as surveys for determining the ethical perceptions of potential employees prior to recruitment. Also, training programs may be carried out to improve the characteristics in organizations. In addition, the internet may be limited in some time periods in areas where the work does not require constant internet connection. Internet use may be controlled, provided that such control complies with legal obligations and requirements on the processing of personal data.

Punishment is the most used, least understood, and poorly practiced form of teaching. By its inherent complexity, punishment should be defined in detail, its boundaries should be set well, and it should be imposed very carefully (Luthans, 1995: 206). If the punishment method is applied fairly, the morale, motivation, and performance of the staff may be increased as it will ensure that all employees in the organization comply with the same standard rules (Akçit, 2011: 22). Before the punishment system is implemented in businesses, it is necessary to turn to possible ways of preventing it and employ corrective solutions for initial violations. There should be sufficient warnings about rules and regulations. Employees should have the right to be informed about the

rules in the business, represent, apply to, inquire, and defend it. While taking these measures in the business, the crimes or violations of rules should be determined very well, and these crimes should be based on officially provable concrete data (Hickey, 2004: 490). At the same time, all practices should be designed in such a way that they do not damage the goodwill between the organization and the employees. Maintaining and improving mutual love, understanding, kindness, and positive organizational climate should be minded in any act.

As to recommendations for future research in this field, different sample groups may be selected. More explanatory results may be obtained by adding different variables to the research model. Unlike this study investigating the mediating effect, a different study may be conducted to explore the moderating effect of perceived punishment. Finally, differently from this cross-sectional study, a longitudinal study may be carried out.

Yazar Katkıları/ Author Contributions

Çalışmanın Tasarlanması | Design of Study: AA (%60), YF (%40)

Veri Toplanması | Data Acquisition: AA (%60), YF (%40)

Veri Analizi | Data Analysis: AA (%60), YF (%40)

Makalenin Yazımı | Writing up: AA (%60), YF (%40)

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Çıkar Çatışması/ Conflict of Interest

Yazarlar çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir. | The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Reference / Kaynakça

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