Chapter 4

Think Positive, Focus on Positive:
How to Develop Psychological Capital in Tourism Businesses

Eda Ozgul Katlav
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4168-909X
Nevsehir Haci Bektas Veli University, Turkey

Nilufer Sahin Percin
Nevsehir Haci Bektas Veli University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

The concept of psychological capital (PsyCap) has attracted a great deal of interest from both academics and practitioners and has been linked to employee attitudes, behavior, and performance at different levels of analysis. Since tourism enterprises are service-intensive enterprises, it is important for employees to recognize and develop their positive aspects. In this chapter, positive organizational behavior, psychological capital, dimensions, and studies on tourism enterprises are discussed. In addition, the importance of psychological capital in tourism sector is mentioned.

INTRODUCTION

Developments experienced in environmental factors in recent years have reshaped rivalry in the work place. The changes, which globalisation led to, concern tourism industry closely. Tourism businesses take part among the businesses that feel the obligation of rapid adaptation to the changing environmental conditions due to their features peculiar to tourism industry such as the flexibility of the demand, the production and consumption of the service presented taking place in the same time period, and the service not being stored. Businesses which take part in tourism industry taking part in the service industry have entered a fierce competition environment (Coşar, 2008). The importance of the human element

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-1474-0.ch004
has gradually increased in terms of businesses in the process when the changes much more increasing the competition in the work place occur. Because the human resource has the knowledge, education and experience which can provide advantage over the rivals and they can be made widespread. Physical resources in the tourism businesses, as in the other businesses, decision making models in the administration, managerial procedures can not be very difficult to be imitated by rivals by way of comparison.

Many organisations in competition have been functioning with the same technological capacity recently. The products produced by using advanced technology are reproduced in a very short time and presented to consumers even at a cheaper cost by the rivals by using counter engineering methods (Luthans & Youssef, 2004, pp. 144–145). Therefore, businesses have given importance to the human resource, the only element, which can provide them with competition advantage. Because the human resource’s being imitated by rivals becomes rather difficult. This competition has more importance in tourism industry where service quality and customer satisfaction depend upon the performance of the employees.

It is required that the employee contentedness, satisfaction, motivation should be maintained and their performance be increased in order to gain the desired results from the employees. Psychological Capital (PsyCap) has the characteristics which can enable this. In this chapter positive organisational behavior (POB) and PsyCap are first defined, PsyCap dimensions, antecedents and consequences are included and then the importance of PsyCap in tourism industry and the studies conducted on it are included.

**BACKGROUND**

**Positive Organizational Behavior**

Ascertainments about the relation between the positive feelings of the employees and their performance in the organisational literature go back as far as Hawtorne studies (Luthans, 2002a). Besides, it is observed in the practice and academic literature that the negative perspective is more widespread; the employees and directors focus on unproductive behavior, problems in the organisation, employee weaknesses and how to solve them. In this respect, organisational behavior study fields such as increasing employee motivation, removing negative behaviors such as resistance to change, conflict and stress management, coping with the burnout syndrome can be given as examples (Özkan, 2018).

Maslow (1970) attracted attention to this subject in psychology field by using “positive psychology” term for the first time. Positive psychology promises subjective experience in positive meaning, personal traits and improving life quality and preventing disturbances emerging with negative thoughts. Martin Seligman emphasized that psychology science focused on human diseases but not tried to improve the strong and positive sides after he had experienced an incidence with his daughter (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Afterwards, Seligman made some studies on positive pyschology and an approach other than pathological pyschology was introduced.

Positive psychology is defined as the revealing the positive traits necessary for a human life, concentrating on what is right and how to improve it rather than what is wrong in humans by emphasizing the strong sides and virtues of individuals. The aim of the positive psychology is to make a move on the improvement of positive traits subject instead of psychological diseases occurring in human health and improving the bad events(Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Hence, it is possible to say that positive psychology adopts a proactive approach and takes the precautions which can prevent the development of
Related Content

Let's Get a Two-Sided Platform Started: Tactics to Solve the Chicken and Egg Paradox
[www.igi-global.com/article/lets-get-a-two-sided-platform-started/250364?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/lets-get-a-two-sided-platform-started/250364?camid=4v1a)

Impact of Workplace Diversity on Employee Performance: A Case of Some Selected Private Universities in Ghana
[www.igi-global.com/article/impact-of-workplace-diversity-on-employee-performance/250272?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/impact-of-workplace-diversity-on-employee-performance/250272?camid=4v1a)

Organisations’ Responsibilities towards Corporate Sustainability: A Content Analysis of Literature
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/organisations-responsibilities-towards-corporate-sustainability/177603?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/organisations-responsibilities-towards-corporate-sustainability/177603?camid=4v1a)

Developing a Taxonomy for Identifying Stakeholders in National ICT Policy Implementation
[www.igi-global.com/article/developing-a-taxonomy-for-identifying-stakeholders-in-national-ict-policy-implementation/250273?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/developing-a-taxonomy-for-identifying-stakeholders-in-national-ict-policy-implementation/250273?camid=4v1a)