



## The Effect of Subjective Well-Being on Occupational Commitment: A Study on Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Students

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### Article History

Received: 16.03.2025

Accepted: 11.08.2025

### Keywords

Subjective well being

Occupational  
commitment

Kitchen staff

Kitchen employee

Gastronomy and  
culinary arts

### Abstract

This study examines the effect of subjective well-being on occupational commitment. A survey form containing scales for demographic information, occupational commitment, and subjective well-being was used. The study was conducted using a quantitative research method, and purposive sampling was employed in the sample selection process. The sample consisted of 184 students enrolled in gastronomy and culinary arts programs. Data were collected via an online survey between September 28, 2024, and December 29, 2024, and analyzed using SPSS 27.0. The findings revealed that gastronomy and culinary arts students have moderate levels of both occupational commitment and subjective well-being. According to the hypothesis testing results, subjective well-being (SWB) has a significant and positive effect on both dimensions of occupational commitment—namely, normative commitment and affective commitment. The results highlight the importance of actions aimed at enhancing well-being in educational, internship, and workplace settings. Increasing well-being through supportive workplace policies, stress management strategies, and the promotion of a positive work culture can strengthen the occupational commitment of kitchen staff.

### Article Type

Research Article

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DOI: 10.21325/jotags.2025.1691

## INTRODUCTION

Working as a kitchen employee undoubtedly involves numerous challenges and a significant workload. Although becoming a chef has gained popularity as a profession in recent years, it requires both physical and psychological sacrifices (Ariza-Montes, Arjona-Fuentes, Law & Han 2018; Ayachit & Chitta 2022; Bloisi & Hoel 2008; Johns & Menzel 1999; Murray-Gibbons & Gibbons 2007; Taheri, Thompson, Mistry, Okumus & Gannon, 2024). Kitchen staff often work in demanding conditions, including standing for extended periods, working more than eight hours a day, and operating without adequate opportunities for rest (Goeltom, Juliana, Kristabella & Florency, 2024). These challenging conditions may reduce the appeal of the profession and deter qualified individuals from entering the field, creating a substantial obstacle to enhancing service quality within the sector. Improving service quality requires identifying and recruiting individuals with a high level of occupational commitment to the culinary profession while selecting candidates who possess suitable personality traits. Therefore, conducting research that focuses on chefs (Ulu & Vatan, 2023) and students training in this field is essential to shed light on these understudied areas.

Occupational commitment is characterized by three dimensions: continuance, normative, and affective commitment (Meyer, Allen & Smith 1993). While the dimensions of continuance and normative commitment explain an individual's decision to remain in their profession due to obligation, affective commitment reflects their desire to stay voluntarily. Individuals with high affective commitment prioritize both personal and professional development, engaging in the necessary training activities for career growth (Meyer et al., 1993). This, in turn, leads to higher levels of job performance (Lee, Carswell & Allen 2000; Leung & Lin 2022; Sungu, Weng, and Xu 2019; Wang, Jiang, Weng & Wang, 2019).

Researches have demonstrated that employee performance plays a vital role in assessing service quality in the service businesses (Al-refaei et al. 2023; Alshaibani & Bakir 2017; Ramaseshan, Rabbane & Burford, 2018) where customer expectations can be boundless, and employees are frequently expected to go beyond their defined roles to fulfill customer demands. Job performance is defined as the effort and contributions employees make toward achieving organizational objectives (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). High levels of job performance contribute to a sustainable competitive advantage and are crucial for organizational success (Ramaseshan, Rabbane & Burford, 2018). One of the factors contributing to high job performance is occupational commitment, which can be explained as an employee's willingness to remain in and work within their chosen profession (Carson & Bedeian, 1994). Therefore, it is essential to identify the factors that enhance occupational commitment. In this context, gastronomy and culinary arts students represent a particularly significant target group for research, given their potential impact on the future of the industry. Factors such as subjective well-being (SWB), occupational commitment, job satisfaction, and job performance are critical areas of study among gastronomy and culinary arts students. Investigating these factors and uncovering the relationships among them is essential for understanding the psychological state of students in this field.

Researches have shown that individuals who are unhappy are more likely to engage in workplace conflict, exhibit pessimistic and guarded behavior toward colleagues, and consequently receive negative responses from their peers. Truly unhappy or depressed employees are likely to display low energy and motivation, significantly reducing their potential for achievement. In contrast, happier employees are more responsive to opportunities, supportive of their coworkers, and trustworthy.

The theoretical contribution of this study is that it examines the impact of subjective well-being on occupational commitment among gastronomy students, providing a unique perspective on the limited literature in this field. Although this relationship has been examined by various researchers (Chen et al. 2022; Paul et al. 2019; Singhal & Rastogi 2018; Suparjo & Sunarsih 2019), this study differs by focusing on gastronomy students. Understanding the dynamics among these concepts will provide valuable insights for developing strategies to enhance the occupational commitment of both gastronomy and culinary arts students, as well as kitchen staff. In practice, it demonstrates that professional commitment positively impacts subjective well-being. Thus, it can contribute to the development of strategies to increase the commitment levels of individuals both in educational settings and in professional environments.

## **Literature**

### **Occupational Commitment**

Occupational commitment is defined as the psychological connection individuals have with their profession and their emotional responses toward it (Lee et al. 2000; Leung & Lin 2022; Meyer et al. 1993). It can also be described as the willingness of individuals to remain and work within their chosen profession (Carson & Bedeian 1994; Xiang et al. 2023). Occupational commitment is characterized by three dimensions: continuance commitment, normative commitment, and affective commitment (Meyer et al. 1993).

Continuance commitment refers to the attachment driven by the perceived costs of leaving a profession (Meyer et al. 1993; Wang, Guo & Duan, 2022) while normative commitment reflects the intention to stay in a profession due to a sense of obligation. For example, having family members in the same field may foster normative occupational commitment (Meyer et al., 1993). In contrast, affective commitment is defined as the "psychological and emotional attachment to the organization and the willingness to work toward achieving its goals and objectives" (Meyer et al., 1993). While continuance and normative commitment explain individuals' decisions to remain in their profession due to external factors or obligations, affective commitment illustrates their voluntary and intrinsic motivation to stay in their profession. Individuals with high affective commitment prioritize their personal and professional development and actively engage in training activities necessary for career growth (Meyer et al. 1993).

### **Subjective Well-Being**

Subjective well-being refers to an individual's personal assessment of the positive or negative emotions derived from their own experiences (Buecker et al. 2023; Diener, 1984). According to Diener (1984), subjective well-being is "an individual's self-assessment regarding the positive and negative feelings they experience and their satisfaction with life." In subjective well-being, the individual themselves determines whether they are leading a good life. Fostering positive emotions, experiencing overall life satisfaction, and finding meaning in life are key components of subjective well-being. Since emotions can fluctuate from positive to negative, individuals' subjective well-being may also change over time. While subjective well-being does not need to be stable, a balance between positive and negative emotions is necessary to "feel good" (Seligman et al. 2005; Tan et al. 2021).

Individuals with high levels of subjective well-being tend to report higher satisfaction with their overall life evaluations (Buecker et al. 2023). Work life, which plays a significant role in people's lives, is closely connected to their psychological well-being (Ulu & Vatan 2023). While the "right to work," a fundamental human right, ensures

individuals' right to employment, the conditions and dynamics of the workplace do not always guarantee subjective well-being. Employee well-being is essential across all occupational sectors. In the service industry, where employees have direct interactions with customers, employee dissatisfaction can directly contribute to business failure. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors associated with their subjective well-being.

## Hypothesis

Affective commitment to an organization reflects an individual's identification with the organization and their desire to remain a part of it based on personal choice and preferences. Occupational commitment, on the other hand, refers to an individual's dedication to their profession and career, as well as their acceptance of professional ethics and goals. Existing researches prove positive relationships between affective organizational commitment and various aspects of well-being, including general physical well-being (Siu, 2002), overall health (Bridger, Kilminster, & Slaven, 2007; Mor Barak et al. 2006), mental health (Grawitch, Tares & Kohler 2007), work-related well-being (Epitropaki and Martin 2005), and life satisfaction (Lu et al. 2009).

While constructs like occupational well-being and physical well-being are significant for understanding an individual's overall well-being, they are distinct yet related to subjective well-being. Although the relationship between subjective well-being and occupational well-being is influenced by various factors, the two are presumed to be interconnected (Bretones & Gonzalez 2011). Limited studies have specifically identified the impact of subjective well-being on occupational commitment. For example, Mansourlakouraj, Abdollahi, and Rasouli ((Mansourlakouraj, Abdollahi & Rasouli 2019) found a positive and significant correlation between subjective well-being and job commitment ( $r = 0.78$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) among hospital staff, indicating that subjective well-being alone explained 60.8% of the variance in job commitment. Similarly, Jeon and Choi (2021) showed that three subdimensions of workplace spirituality – meaning at work, membership, and inner life – were positively related to organizational commitment, which in turn mediated the relationship between these dimensions and life satisfaction, suggesting that stronger organizational commitment contributes to higher subjective well-being. Building on these studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Subjective well-being directly and positively affects continuance commitment.

Hypothesis 2: Subjective well-being directly and positively affects normative commitment.

Hypothesis 3: Subjective well-being directly and positively affects affective commitment.

## Method

### Research Design

The objective of this empirical study is to examine the relationship between subjective well-being and occupational commitment. A quantitative research method was employed, and the relationship was tested using a sample of undergraduate students enrolled in gastronomy and culinary arts programs. For the questionnaire method used in this study, permission was obtained from the İstanbul Bilgi University Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 2024-40140-163 in its meeting dated 19/08/2024.

### Population and Sample

The universe of this study comprises undergraduate students enrolled in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts

departments of private universities in Istanbul, specifically those in their 3rd and 4th years of study with a minimum of three months of internship or work experience. According to YÖKATLAS data, there are 25 foundation universities in Istanbul offering Gastronomy and Culinary Arts programs, with an average annual quota of 45 students per program. Targeting 3rd and 4th-year students, the estimated population size is approximately 2,250 students.

Purposive sampling method (non-random sampling techniques) was employed to select the universities to be included. This non-probability sampling approach facilitates the selection of populations that are particularly relevant and information-rich for the aims of the research (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim 2016). Among purposive sampling strategies, typical case sampling was specifically chosen, as it is suited for selecting cases that reflect average or commonly observed characteristics rather than extreme or rare conditions (Koç Başaran, 2017).

According to research, students who have completed internships or gained practical work experience tend to have a better understanding of the service industry. They also possess more realistic attitudes—both positive and negative—regarding their careers, such as their career goals and expectations (Kim & Park 2013; Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey 2016). Based on the relevant literature, it can be argued that third-year and fourth-year students with internship or work experience in tourism establishments have stronger and more realistic attitudes toward their profession (Kusluvan, Akova & Kusluvan 2022).

### **Data Collection Process**

The data for this study were collected through an online survey form, which included scales to measure the demographic information and model structures of undergraduate students in gastronomy and culinary arts departments. Support was sought from faculty members at various universities, who were asked to distribute the online survey form to their students. A total of 300 potential respondents were contacted during between September 28, 2024, and December 29, 2024 and 184 responses received. Our final sample consisted of 184 students with ages ranging from 19 to 40 years.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The specifics of the variables, measurement scales, sample, data collection process, and data analysis are outlined below. The questionnaire used in the study consists of three sections. The first section includes questions about demographic information. The second section contains the Occupational Commitment Scale, and the third section includes the Subjective Well-Being Scale.

Occupational commitment was measured using the 11-item Occupational Commitment Scale developed by Blau et al. (1993). The general subjective well-being levels of the participants were assessed using the 7-item short form of The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, developed by Hills ve Argyle (2002). This scale was adapted into Turkish by Doğan ve Çötök (2011).

The Occupational Commitment Scale, originally developed in English, was initially translated into Turkish by two academics specializing in the English language. Subsequently, the scale was back-translated into English by the same experts using the translation-back translation method (Brislin, 1970) to minimize potential meaning loss. Upon completion of the translation, the survey's language and content were evaluated by three experts: two specialists in English and one in Human Resources. To prevent any semantic discrepancies arising from the translation process, the questionnaire was finalized in accordance with the experts' recommendations, ensuring its appropriateness for

the Turkish context. The items in the scales were answered using a 5-point Likert scale.

## Data Analysis

The data collected through the survey research were analyzed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), correlation, and regression analyses. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values of the variables, were calculated using SPSS 27.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). EFA was also conducted in SPSS 27.0 to explore the factor structure of the scales. Correlation and regression analyses were likewise performed in SPSS to examine the relationships between the variables. CFA was carried out using SPSS AMOS 27 software to confirm the measurement model.

## Results

### Dimensionality, Reliability and Validity of the Scales

Given that two of the scales had not been extensively tested for reliability and validity and two others had undergone cross-cultural adaptation, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), reliability analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were conducted to assess their dimensionality, reliability, and validity. Prior to performing EFA, the dataset was evaluated for its suitability and normality in relation to factor and regression analyses. According to Hair et al. (1986), values approaching 1 are considered indicative of adequacy for factor analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value should be at least 0,60 to be considered sufficient (Durmuş, 2013). According to results the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test of sphericity test results was 0,792 for subjective well being scale (Bartlett's test:  $\chi^2 = 293.460$ ,  $p = <, 0.001$ ), and 0.943 for the occupational commitment scale ( $\chi^2 = 1002,377$ ,  $p = <, 0,001$ ). To evaluate whether the dependent and independent variables followed a normal distribution, skewness and kurtosis values were analyzed. As presented in Table 2, the skewness and kurtosis values for both dependent and independent variables were examined, with values between -1 and +1 considered indicative of normal distribution (Hair et al., 2019).

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using the principal component extraction method. Items with insufficient factor loading below 0.50 were removed for analysis (Durmuş, 2013). For the "Occupational Commitment Scale", first factor is named as normative commitment and second factor is named as affective commitment. For the Subjective Well-Being Scale, the items initially produced a two-factor solution. However, reliability analysis revealed that the Cronbach's Alpha value for the second factor was 0.406, which is below the acceptable threshold. Furthermore, given that the SWB scale was originally developed as a unidimensional construct, it has been used in this study as a single-factor structure (Doğan & Çötök 2011; López-Guerra et al. 2025; Nima et al. 2020; Ulu & Vatan 2023). Factor analysis results are presented in Table 1. and Table 2.

**Table 1.** Occupational Commitment Factor Analysis Results

| Factor                                                 | Item | Factor Loading                                          | % of Variance | Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Affective C.                                           | OC1  | ,809                                                    | 36,065        | 0,880                         |
|                                                        | OC4  | ,791                                                    |               |                               |
|                                                        | OC6  | ,550                                                    |               |                               |
|                                                        | OC8  | ,849                                                    |               |                               |
|                                                        | OC10 | ,709                                                    |               |                               |
| Normative C.                                           | OC2  | ,808                                                    | 35,206        | 0,855                         |
|                                                        | OC3  | ,779                                                    |               |                               |
|                                                        | OC7  | ,780                                                    |               |                               |
|                                                        | OC9  | ,768                                                    |               |                               |
| Total:                                                 |      | 71,271                                                  |               |                               |
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0,884 |      |                                                         |               |                               |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity                          |      | Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ): 913,887 df: 36 p-value: <0,001 |               |                               |

**Table 2.** Subjective Well-Being (SWB) Factor Analysis Results

| Factor                        | Item                                                   | Factor Loading                          | % of Variance | Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| SWB                           | SWB2                                                   | ,832                                    | 60,426        | 0,833                         |
|                               | SWB3                                                   | ,852                                    |               |                               |
|                               | SWB4                                                   | ,705                                    |               |                               |
|                               | SWB5                                                   | ,717                                    |               |                               |
|                               | SWB6                                                   | ,770                                    |               |                               |
|                               | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0,792 |                                         |               |                               |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity |                                                        | Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ): 293,460 df: 10 |               | p-value: <0,001               |

Following exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using the same data set and refined scales. Upon examining the goodness-of-fit indices derived from the confirmatory factor analysis, the model demonstrates a strong fit to the observed data ( $\chi^2/\text{df} = 2.35$ ; CFI = 0.921; TLI = 0.902; RMSEA = 0.073; SRMR = 0.073), meeting the criteria for acceptable fit as suggested (Karagöz 2021). All indicator variables loaded significantly on their respective latent variables, and their standardized regression coefficients were found to be above 0.50. To assess the reliability and convergent validity of the scales, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Explained (AVE) values were calculated for each scale (Table 4). The CR values for the scales were found to be satisfactory, but some AVE values fell slightly below the 0.50 threshold (Table 3). However, the results obtained were not at a level that would effect the convergent validity of the scales, as the Composite Reliability (CR) values were well above 0.60 (Malhotra 2020). Furthermore, similar cases in the literature have not regarded such values as a threat to the validity of the analysis (Kusluvan et al. 2022).

**Table 3.** Tests of normality of variables.

|                                | N   | Skewness | Standard Error | Kurtosis | Standard Error |
|--------------------------------|-----|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|
| <b>Occupational commitment</b> | 184 | -,567    | ,198           | -,585    | ,394           |
| <b>Subjective well being</b>   | 184 | -, 570   | ,198           | -,535    | ,394           |

**Table 4.** Reliability and Convergent Validity of Research Constructs.

| Scales                         |                      | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) | Composite Reliability (CR) | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Occupational commitment</b> | Normative commitment | 5               | 0,887                         | 0.861                      | 0.558                            |
|                                | Affective commitment | 4               | 0,852                         | 0.862                      | 0.609                            |
| <b>Subjective well being</b>   |                      | 5               | 0,831                         | 0.744                      | 0.374                            |

Discriminant validity was tested using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio method suggested by Henseler et al. (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt 2015). The HTMT method has superior properties in determining the presence or absence of discriminant validity. All average item correlations between the scales were below the recommended threshold value of 0.85 (Table 5). This indicates that the discriminant validity of the constructs used in the study was achieved (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2015).

**Table 5.** Discriminant Validity of Research Constructs

| Scales                         |                      | Normative commitment | Affective commitment | Subjective well being |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Occupational commitment</b> | Normative commitment | -                    |                      |                       |
|                                | Affective commitment | 0,4382102            |                      |                       |
| <b>Subjective well being</b>   |                      | -0,2849363           | 0,3094598            |                       |

### Descriptive Statistics About Research Participants and Variables

The majority of undergraduate students in the study were female (60%), while the remaining participants were male. Additionally, half of the students were in their third year, and the other half were in their fourth year. Nearly all participants (90%) were between the ages of 19 and 23. The most common internship experiences were in restaurant kitchens (76%) and pastry (10%). Further descriptive statistics on study variables are provided in Table 6. The mean scores in the table indicate a positive tendency for occupational commitment (3.40) while subjective well-being (3.15), on the other hand, is relatively lower.

**Table 6.** Mean Scores for Research Variables

| Scales                         | Grand mean <sup>a</sup> | Standart deviation |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Occupational Commitment</b> | 3,40                    | ,65128             |
| <b>Subjective Well Being</b>   | 3,15                    | ,74086             |

<sup>a</sup> Higher grand mean reflects a higher perception of occupational stigma, occupational self-esteem and occuational commitment (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)

**Table 7.** Correlations

| Variables                    | Subjective well being | Normative commitment | Affective commitment |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Subjective well being</b> | 1                     | 0.410**              | 0.566**              |
| Normative commitment         | 0.410**               | 1                    | 0.682**              |
| Affective commitment         | 0.566**               |                      | 1                    |

$p < 0.01$ , significance level (one-tailed test).

Based on Table 7, subjective well-being is significantly and positively related to both normative commitment ( $r = 0.410$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and affective commitment ( $r = 0.566$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, normative commitment and affective commitment exhibit a strong and significant positive relationship ( $r = 0.682$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of subjective well-being tend to report stronger occupational commitment, and the two dimensions of occupational commitment are closely related.

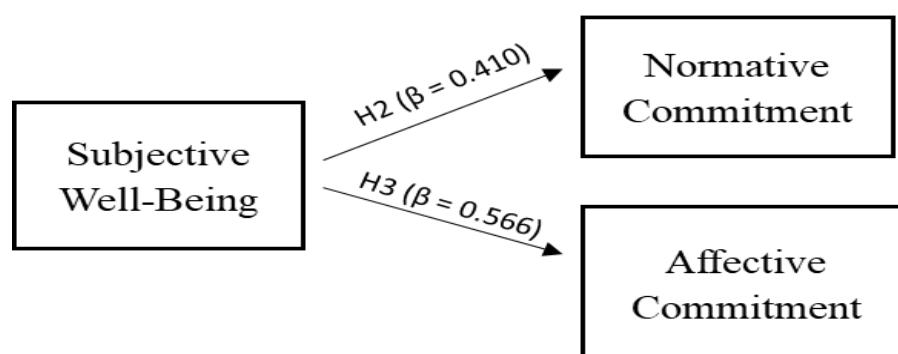
### Hypothesis Testing

In the study, simple linear regression analysis was applied to measure the effect of subjective well-being on the dimensions of occupational commitment. In the simple regression analysis conducted between subjective well-being and normative commitment, the model was found to be significant ( $F = 29.870$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.168$ ), indicating that normative commitment can be statistically predicted based on subjective well-being. Similarly, in the simple regression analysis conducted between subjective well-being and affective commitment, the model was also found to be significant ( $F = 18.711$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.32$ ), showing that affective commitment can be statistically predicted based on subjective well-being. In both analyses, it was determined that the explanatory power of subjective well-being regarding the dimensions of occupational commitment was moderate.

**Table 8.** Regression analysis results

| Independent:<br>Subjective Well<br>Being | B     | Std. Error | Beta  | t     | Sig.    |
|------------------------------------------|-------|------------|-------|-------|---------|
| Normative<br>commitment                  | 0.405 | 0.074      | 0.410 | 5.465 | < 0.001 |
| Affective commitment                     | 0.400 | 0.092      | 0.566 | 4.330 | <0.001  |

The significance values presented in the Table 8 ( $<0.05$ ) demonstrate that SWB positively and significantly influences both dimensions of occupational commitment. The Beta value (0.566) for the effect of SWB on affective commitment indicates a relatively strong standardized effect, while the Beta value (0.410) for the effect of SWB on normative commitment indicates a moderate standardized effect.

**Figure 1.** Research model according to results

## Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined the relationship between occupational commitment, and subjective well-being among gastronomy and culinary arts students. The descriptive statistics indicate that occupational commitment among participants is at a moderate to high level ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ), suggesting that the respondents generally feel dedicated to their profession. However, subjective well-being, with a mean score of 3.15 ( $SD = 0.74$ ), is comparatively lower than the other variables, indicating that while participants experience moderate levels of well-being, there may be room for improvement in their overall mental and emotional state.

According to the results of hypothesis tests, Hypotheses H2 and H3 were supported, indicating that subjective well-being (SWB) has a positive and significant effect on both dimensions of occupational commitment—namely, normative commitment and affective commitment. These results align with previous researches. Mansourlakouraj et al. (2019) found that both subjective well-being and quality of work life boost job commitment among hospital staff, while Singhal and Rastogi (2018) identified a strong positive link between subjective well-being and career commitment. Similarly, Sheldon et al. (2003) highlighted that positive emotions like life satisfaction and happiness improve work attitudes and performance. Anwar et al. (2024) found that quality of work life significantly influences lecturers' professional commitment. Moreover, our findings show that subjective well-being positively influences both normative and affective commitment, with a stronger impact on affective commitment—reflecting emotional attachment to one's profession.

These findings underscore the importance of well-being initiatives within culinary education and the professional environment for prospective employees in the sector. Enhancing well-being through supportive workplace policies, stress management strategies, and fostering a positive work culture could contribute to increased occupational commitment among kitchen staff. Ensuring occupational commitment is important in terms of various factors related to employees. For instance, a study conducted on chefs found that occupational commitment affects job satisfaction and employee creativity (Leung & Lin 2022), while another study revealed that it influences employee performance (Udin, Sukirno & Dananyojo 2023). When all these findings are considered, the positive contributions of occupational commitment become evident both at the individual and sectoral levels.

This study's unique contribution is its examination of the impact of subjective well-being on two important dimensions of professional commitment: normative and affective commitment using a sample of gastronomy students. It is significant because it provides evidence to the literature on how the psychological well-being of individuals studying in fields such as gastronomy, culinary arts, or cooking influences their professional commitments. The findings suggest that supporting students' subjective well-being throughout the gastronomy education process can contribute to developing more committed, and motivated employees in the sector. This is open to evaluation from both educational policies and human resources practices and serves as an important reference for future research.

## Practical Implications

The SWB of kitchen staff plays a crucial role in their occupational commitment therefore on their job performance (Lee et al. 2000; Leung & Lin 2022; Sungu et al. 2019; Wang et al. 2019). Chefs and other culinary professionals frequently operate under intense pressure, juggling multiple orders while ensuring exceptional food quality and presentation. The demanding nature of the job, including long hours, high stress levels, and strict management, can

take a toll on their mental health (Ariza-Montes et al. 2018). However, fostering a workplace that supports employee well-being—through fair scheduling, positive leadership, and a culture of mutual respect can significantly improve job satisfaction and performance through occupational commitment.

Maintaining a balance between work and personal life is a key factor in employee happiness and productivity. The rigorous schedules of kitchen employees often make it difficult to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Research indicates that employees who successfully manage this balance are less prone to burnout and tend to perform better at work (Greenhaus et al., 2003; Kreiner et al., 2009). Introducing workplace policies that support work-life balance, such as flexible shifts, mental health resources, and wellness initiatives, can enhance employee well-being and lower turnover rates in the hospitality sector.

Leadership also plays a vital role in shaping a positive work environment. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes motivation, encouragement, and support, has been associated with increased job satisfaction and performance (Bass, 1990; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Kitchen leaders who invest in employee development, acknowledge achievements, and promote teamwork cultivate a workplace where employees feel appreciated and engaged, ultimately strengthening their commitment to the profession and enhancing overall job performance (Kim & Brymer, 2011). Moreover studies highlight the lack of connection between education and the industry for culinary education (Gray & Farrell 2020). Considering that students are prospective employees, it is important to foster various factors that will positively influence their future professions through collaboration between academia and the industry starting from the school years.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The findings of this study contribute to the literature on occupational commitment and well-being within the culinary field by reinforcing the positive impact of subjective well-being on professional dedication. The study supports theories linking emotional well-being to professional engagement, confirming that higher subjective well-being fosters stronger occupational commitment. Additionally, the differentiation between normative and affective commitment emphasizes that emotional investment plays a more significant role in culinary students' and professionals' dedication to their careers.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

One limitation of this study is that only one independent variable, subjective well-being, was included in the model. A more comprehensive analysis could be achieved by incorporating additional influencing factors such as job satisfaction, job performance and stress levels.

This study was conducted with a sample of 184 university students from private universities in Istanbul. The sample size met the minimum requirements for the statistical analyses performed (e.g., factor analysis and regression). However, limiting the sample to private universities in Istanbul may limit the generalizability of the findings. However, private universities in Istanbul represent a meaningful cross-section of the target population, as they include students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. In future studies, the generalizability of the findings could be further enhanced by including students from different cities and state universities.

Future research could explore other potential influences on occupational commitment, such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, job burnout, and intrinsic motivation, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of

occupational commitment in culinary professions. Additionally, longitudinal studies could assess how these relationships evolve over time as kitchen staff gain more professional experience.

## Declaration

Ethics Statement: For the questionnaire method used in this study, permission was obtained from the İstanbul Bilgi University Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 2024-40140-163 in its meeting dated 19/08/2024.

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**Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Permission****ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU  
RESULT OF EVALUATION BY THE ETHICS COMMITTEE**

(Bu bölüm İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır  
/This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in Research on Humans)

**Başvuru Sahibi/Applicant:** Efe Kaan Ulu

**Proje Başlığı / Project Title:** Aşıllarda Mesleki Bağlılık, Öznel İyi Oluş ve İş Performansı İlişkisi

**Proje No / Project Number:** 2024-40140-163

|    |                                                                       |   |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision | X |
| 2. | Ret /Application Rejected<br>Reddin Gerekçesi /Reason for Rejection:  |   |

**Değerlendirme Tarihi / Date of Evaluation:** 19.08.2024